

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2022
ELON, NORTH CAROLINA
VOLUME 51, EDITION 19

THE PENDULUM



LUKE JOHNSON | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Burlington resident Jasmine Scottton fills her car with gas at the Exxon gas station located at 1846 N. Church St. in Burlington on Feb. 22. Inflation is on the rise resulting in higher gas prices today. Alamance County residents are starting to feel the pump.

LIVING LARGE: ALAMANCE’S RISING COSTS REFLECT LARGER TRENDS

Elon sees increase in student wages and tuition, as
Alamance County endures effects of inflation, price hikes

Gram Brownlee | Elon News Network

INTEREST RATES, GAS PRICES and a high demand for home building. For Tonmoy Islam, professor of economics at Elon University, these are all casualties of the current state of inflation in the United States. Increased gas costs and home prices in Alamance County are following trends throughout the country, and that’s because inflation is more than just a regional issue. According to the U.S. Bureau of

Labor Statistics’ Consumer Price Index, which represents the value of the U.S. dollar against the price of various products to judge inflation, a dollar in January this year is worth 7.5 cents less than that of 2021, putting inflation at a current rate of around 7.5%. But this number isn’t wholly representative of Alamance’s price increases, Islam said. “With inflation, officially it’s just one number for the whole country,

which does not make sense, because the cost of living in New York is very different from the cost of living here and in Burlington and Elon. And the price increases are also different,” Islam said. “But inflation, the number at least gives us some idea that overall prices are going up.” Though the national inflation rate isn’t specific to Alamance County, the effect it has on commodities nationwide is still reflected locally.

“Price increases will be similar across the nation,” Islam said. “So California gas prices will be much higher because their taxes may be higher than North Carolina, but the price of one barrel of oil, if that goes up, all of us basically face that price. Compared to last January, so January 2021, inflation rose by almost 8%.”

See **LIVING** | pg. 7

Students continue to express concerns over Yik Yak content

The social media app is taking campuses by storm and some students are calling for reform

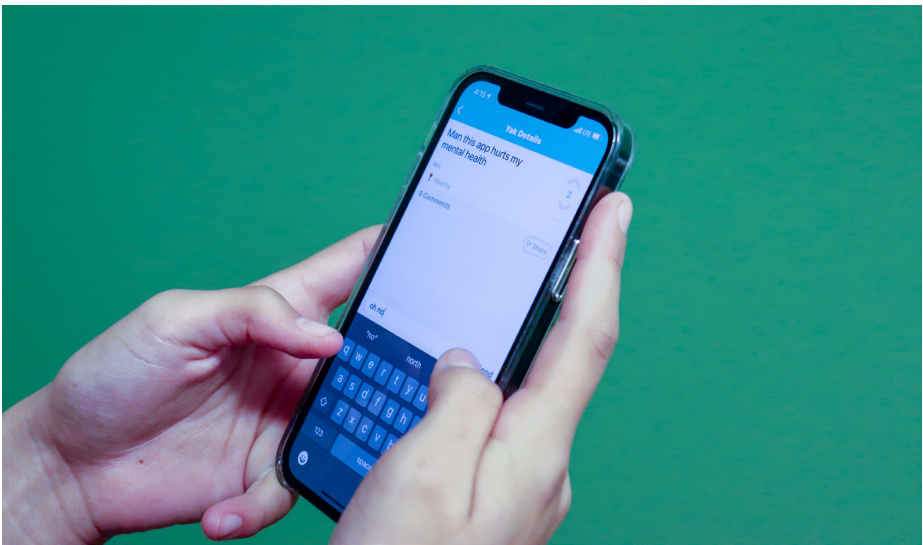
Hope Valenti
Elon News Network

Everyday, sophomore Maya Phinney scrolls through the social media app Yik Yak. Reading the anonymous posts, she pauses at a familiar name. As she reports the vulgar message targeting her friend, she can’t help but wonder who wrote it. “People can turn any social media site or just any app in general into something negative,” Phinney said. “And that’s an unfortunate thing.”

Yik Yak originally launched in 2013,

quickly gaining popularity among teens. Prior to its removal from the app store, Yik Yak had over 200 million users. But the app became a hub for cyberbullying, and was shut down in 2017. The rights to Yik Yak were procured by new developers in 2021, and now, the Yak is back. The social media site allows individuals to post and view anonymous messages to the feed of other users in close proximity to their current location. These posts, called “yaks,” can be upvoted, downvoted and commented on by other users. According to the current owners of the site, this anonymity is intended to provide “a place to be authentic, a place to be equal and a place to connect with people nearby.”

See **YIK YAK** | pg. 6



DELANEY DANIELS | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Scrolling through Yik Yak, one can see a multitude of relatable posts, or “yaks,” as they’re known to users.



NEWS • PAGE 4
Elon prepares for eighth annual Black Solidarity Day conference



LIFESTYLE • PAGE 9
Student creators work toward personal goals from their dorms



SPORTS • PAGE 11
Pickleball takes over physical activity classes at Elon

THE PENDULUM

A PUBLICATION OF
**ELON NEWS
NETWORK**

Established 1974
Volume 51, Edition 19

Elon News Network is a daily news organization that includes a newspaper, website, broadcasts and podcasts. Letters to the editor are welcome and should be typed, signed and emailed to enn@elon.edu as Word documents. ENN reserves the right to edit obscene and potentially libelous material. Lengthy letters may be trimmed to fit. All submissions become the property of ENN and will not be returned.

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EDITORIAL POLICY:

ENN seeks to inspire, entertain and inform the Elon community by providing a voice for students and faculty, as well as serve as a forum for the meaningful exchange of ideas.

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ENN is committed to accurate coverage. When factual errors are made, we correct them promptly and in full, both online and in print. Online corrections state the error and the change at the top of the article. Corrections from the previous week's print edition appear on this page.

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WHEN WE PUBLISH:

The Pendulum
publishes weekly on Wednesdays

Elon Local News
broadcasts Mondays at 6 p.m.

ELN Morning
broadcasts Thursdays at 10 a.m.

ENN On Air
broadcasts Tuesdays at 4:30 p.m.

ENN Radio Podcast
publishes Friday afternoons

CORRECTIONS

There are no corrections from the last edition of The Pendulum.

CHEAT SHEET

THE CHEAT SHEET IS AN INTERVIEW WITH A RELEVANT EXPERT TO EXPLAIN COMPLEX TOPICS

Book bans, challenges impact local Burlington bookstore



NYAH PHENGSIITHY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Book banning, considered a form of censorship, has swept across the country in recent months. These books have been banned in 2021.

Persnickety Books owner Ian Baltutis explores how book bans, challenges intersect with used bookstores

Kyra O'Connor
Executive Director | @ko_reports



Ian Baltutis

When a book is placed on a banned book list, owner of Persnickety Books Ian Baltutis '08 notices right before the title flies off the shelf.

The Burlington used bookstore has everything from textbooks and classics to graphic novels and children's chapter books, but banned books can also be found on the shelves, too.

"I see every time we get a book that's banned, it becomes a conversation within the community," Baltutis said. "The danger, or the concern, would be if the book disappears and nobody's able to access it."

Book banning is considered a form of censorship and occurs when individuals, government officials or organizations remove a book from libraries, school districts or bookstores. According to The First Amendment Encyclopedia, "book banning is the most widespread form of censorship in the United States," particularly within children's literature.

In the past two years, book bans have swept across the country. A Tennessee school district removed the Pulitzer Prize-winning graphic novel "Maus" from their curriculum about the Holocaust because the book had depictions of nudity and curse words. In Oklahoma, Senate Bill 1142 was put forward prohibiting public school districts, public charter schools and public school libraries from having or promoting books about topics relating to sex, sexual preferences or gender identity.

In the 2021 State of America's Libraries report, compiled by the American Library Association, 273 books were affected by "censorship attempts." Bans, which completely remove a book from a particular space, are less common than challenges, which are when books are called into question based on objections by a person or group, according to the ALA. According to censorship statistics compiled by the Office for Intellectual Freedom, 50% of challenges were initiated by parents and 43% of challenges took place in libraries.

Elon News Network spoke with Baltutis about the different types of book bans, books that are currently banned and the intersection of book

bans and used bookstores.

This interview has been edited for clarity.

You said you sell banned books here at Persnickety, but which banned books do you sell? Are there different types of bans?

"There's lots of different bans. The books that we carry, we don't filter any of them when they come to the store other than for condition, and so if it's a book, we'll put it on the shelf. There's lots of different banned lists around the country for specific school districts or states or library systems, and we don't use that to preclude any books from going onto our shelves."

You said you notice an impact when a book is placed on the banned list. Could you elaborate on that?

"Yeah, we see when a book gets banned and shows up in the news and people hear about it, they all of a sudden take notice and ask, 'Well, why was this book banned?' and a lot of people will reach out and try to get a copy because they want to read it. They want to see what in it was so controversial that somebody would think about putting it on a banned books list."

And so oftentimes we see something, like right now with 'Maus,' we've seen that we're out of stock on that one."

As more and more bans keep coming, obviously there's the impact of Persnickety selling out of some titles. But what do you think the larger, overall impact will be with this upward trend of a lot of books being banned?

"I'm not entirely sure what the impact is going to be. I see every time we get a book that's banned, it becomes a conversation within the community. Folks again want to read it, they want to talk about what's the content in it that made it so controversial — or some people think it's controversial for — and ultimately that becomes part of that community conversation. The danger, or the concern, would be if the book disappears and nobody's able to access it."

That's why I think used bookstores have this unique responsibility in a community to enable people to access reading materials and to enable them to access some that may be out of print, that may be more obscure or that may be banned."

You have some of the banned book titles with you. Could you show us a couple of the ones that you have?

"There's numerous different banned books lists around the country, so books like 'The Hunger Games' may be something that we're all fairly familiar

with, but some of the themes and narratives in them can get different groups to ask that they not be available to readers. Something like Tolkien and 'Lord of the Rings' can be controversial. Sometimes it's based on content like sexual content, exposure about racism, or can even be magic and specific religions. So, 'The Glass Castle' is another one, 'The Book Thief,' so a lot of these titles that we're familiar with, and even something like 'A Farewell to Arms' from Ernest Hemingway; everything from new to old.

There are different pieces in a book that can cause it to be banned. But a lot of times, I look at that as that's a window into what the world was like when Hemingway was writing. It's the way people spoke. It's the way they acted. It's the culture at the time, and it's a snapshot for us to know what life was like and what people were talking about. And the danger is when we forget about that — when we forget about the atrocities that humans have been able to create, the hatred that humans have had towards each other. And so, making sure that literature like that is still available helps us all widen our perspective and have that hindsight."

Is there anything you'd like to add?

"Yeah, I'd say, in addition to book bans, we do have that kind of filter of, we really only have access to what people are reading locally. So, our selection is dependent upon what people trade in or donate to the store."

Each used bookstore, bookstores around the country can have a different selection, whether they've got a university with certain academic programs, or they've got different reading groups in the community that are bringing books in, buying new books, and then making those available through used bookstores and little free libraries around the community.

But then too, when we're talking about banned books, there's another category that I think of which is historic and vintage books. You see a lot of people coming in looking for old textbooks, and textbooks in particular because they are that window into how people were learning, what was being taught. I've found some really amazing ones. When you look at elementary social studies books from North Carolina, people trade them in from decades ago, and you look at the way things like the Civil War are framed, and the way different pieces of history are framed based on when it was written into that textbook. And so again, those can be amazing lenses on how our culture has changed over time. To ban those — to try to wipe them out, to try to get those out of our cultural history — only blinds us to our history."



Senior center Tyja Traore jumps in the beginning of the Elon vs. Hofstra game on Feb. 18 securing possession of the ball for the Phoenix. The Phoenix next game is Feb. 23 against University of North Carolina Wilmington.

ERIN MARTIN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER



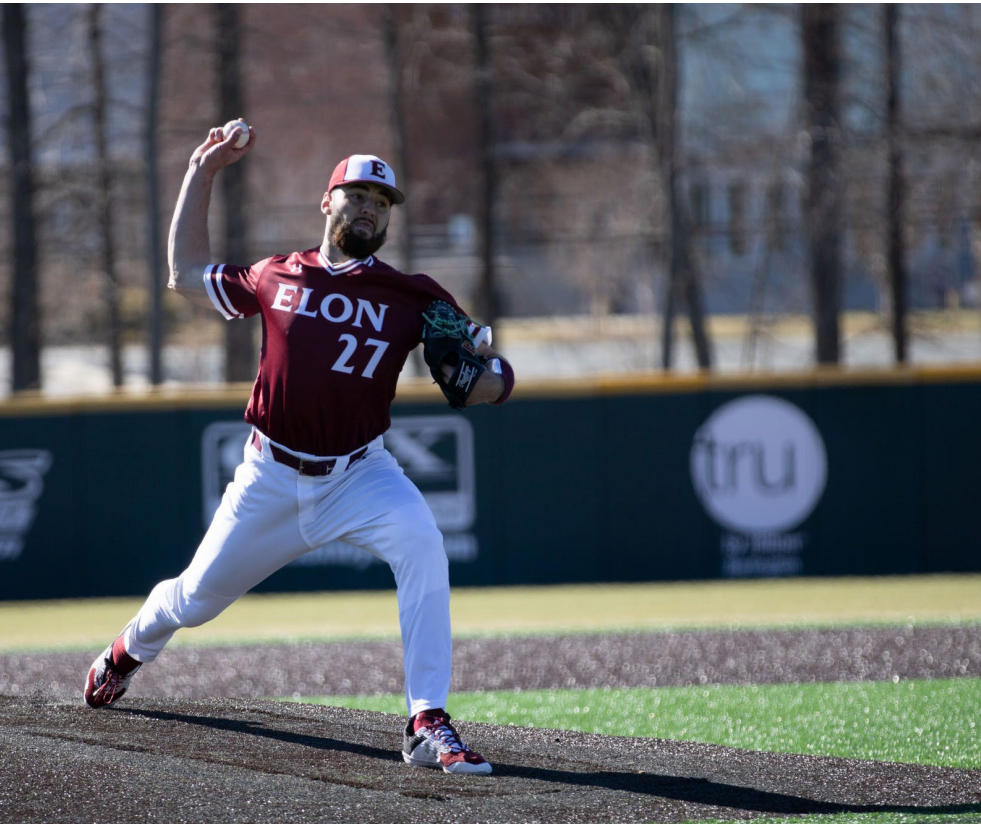
Elon freshman Hunter Siegel prepares to play the guitar inside of LaRose Commons during the Limelight Open Mic event on Feb. 20, the first open mic event of the semester.

JOSEPH NAVIN | PHOTO EDITOR



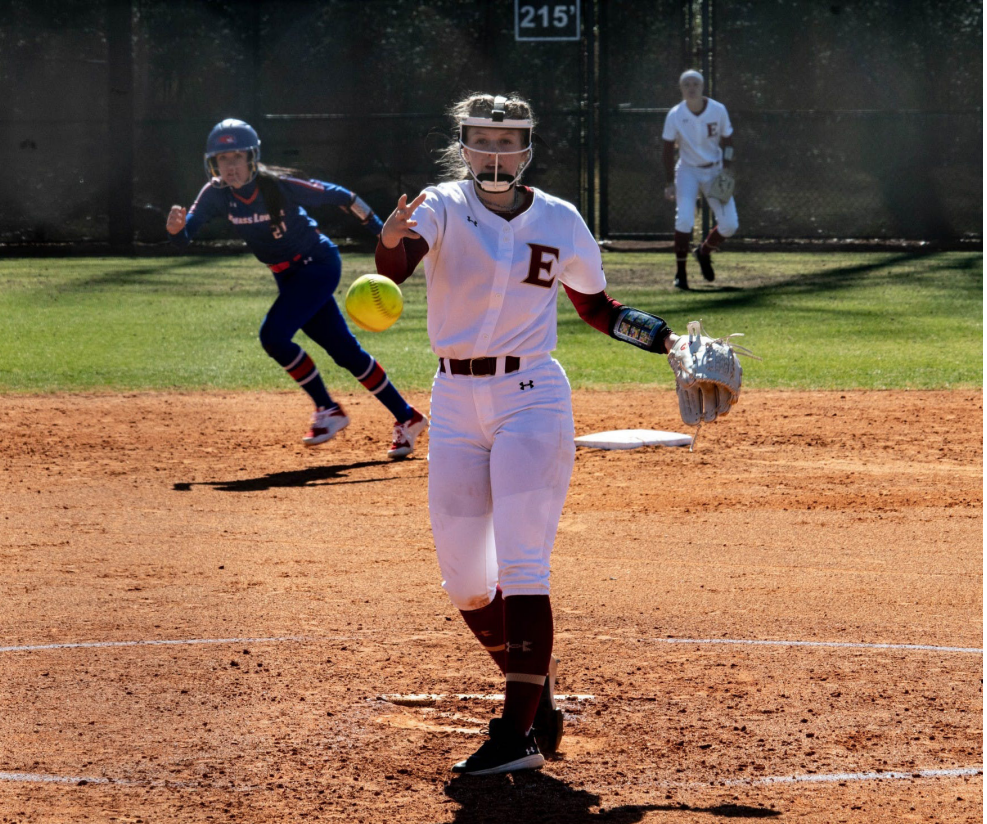
Freshman Uwera Izabayo sells rings at the first spring Marketplace Under the Oaks pop up of 2022 on Feb. 17 at Young Commons.

ABBY REED | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER



Redshirt sophomore pitcher Joe Savino tosses a pitch against Fairfield University on Feb. 19. Elon lost 5-3. Elon's next home game is Feb. 25 against Longwood University.

JACOB KISAMORE | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER



An Elon softball pitcher throws the ball during the game against the University of Massachusetts Lowell on Feb. 19 at Hunt Park. Elon lost 3-0. Elon's next game is Feb. 23 at Duke University.

JOSEPH NAVIN | PHOTO EDITOR

Elon University holds eighth annual Black Solidarity Day

Breakout sessions, keynote speakers focus on the theme “A Black Joy Love Letter”

Kyra O'Connor
Executive Director | @ko_reports

As the student organizer for the eighth annual Black Solidarity Day conference at Elon University, sophomore Amanda Carter wears many hats. From planning and running her own session to shopping for snacks at BJ's with other student staff members, Carter has spent countless hours preparing for the conference taking place Feb. 25 in McKinnon Hall.

This year, Carter worked with Interim Program Coordinator for the Center for Race, Ethnicity, & Diversity Education, Simone Royal — who planned Elon's very first Black Solidarity Day conference in 2015.

“It's a day for people of all different backgrounds and identities to come and learn and grow and heal,” Carter said. “Come with an open mind, open heart and ready to learn and ready to heal.”

Black Solidarity Day began in 1969 as a demonstration of Black liberation, due to the work of Brooklyn College Professor Dr. Carlos Russell. Black Solidarity Day came to Elon's campus in 2014, and the first conference took place in the fall of 2015.

Royal, who was a student coordinator in the CREDE at the time, planned the first conference for Black students, staff and faculty. The event remained solely for Elon's Black community until 2019, when it was first opened up for the entire campus community. Similarly to when the event was first held, Royal hopes the conference will build “unity amongst the community.”

“It's been full circle now to see how things have changed and evolved over time,” Royal said.

This year's conference features keynote speaker Jaki Shelton Green, the first African American and third woman to be appointed as North Carolina's Poet Laureate. The conference also includes 12 educational sessions and nine roundtable discussions, including one from Carter. Carter's roundtable discussion is titled “Let It Go,” all about working through past trauma through the form of letter writing.

“Journaling is a great way to free your mind and clear your mind of everything. So, getting it on paper, recognizing the trauma, or the person who hurt you, and then close it up,” Carter said. “When you're ready to let go of that situation, let go of that person, you can dispose of it yourself.”

Carter said she has found personal benefits through journaling, and hopes participants at the conference will reap the benefits at the conference and



LUKE JOHNSON | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Elon University sophomore Amanda Carter, the organizer of the eighth annual Black Solidarity Day sits in the Black Community Room on Feb. 22. This year's conference which Carter worked with the Center for Race, Ethnicity, and Diversity to plan will take place from 12-8 p.m. on Feb. 25 in McKinnon Hall.

beyond.

For both Carter and Royal, Black Solidarity Day is a day for everyone on Elon's campus to heal. That want for healing is reflected in the conference's theme “A Black Joy Love Letter.”

“Everyone's joy matters, no matter what identity or background you are part of,” Royal said. “The

love that is shown amongst one another is how we continue to uplift our community and how we continue to uplift that joy within our own identity groups, our own friend groups.”

While there are over 100 people signed up to attend the conference, Royal encourages students passing by McKinnon Hall on Friday to

sign up the day of and enjoy the conference.

IF YOU GO
Black Solidarity Day: A Black Joy Love Letter
Where: Moseley Student Center
When: Friday, Feb. 25, 12 – 8 p.m.

Black Alamance hosts awards ceremony to honor Black accomplishments

The long-awaited event will honor Black businesses, community members in Alamance County

Nyah Phengsiththy
Managing Editor | @nyahphengsiththy

It all started with a pack of press-on nails. Burlington resident Tori Mitchell began running around Tucker Street offering manicures to her neighbors. This love for painting nails landed Mitchell first job straight in a salon in East Burlington when she was 17 years old. Now Mitchell, 45, serves as the founder and CEO of Nail Fiendz Nail Institute, a nail tech school that provides skills and experiences for local residents.

The build up of her business and the accomplishments behind it will be recognized at the first Black Alamance County Awards on Friday, Feb. 25. Her nomination for Best Black Nail Technician will be featured at an awards ceremony that will showcase Black owned businesses, community organizations, entrepreneurs, individuals and services in Alamance County.

“I was surprised I was nominated,” Mitchell said. “The nominee is for nail tech. I'm an instructor, I'm an educator ... Of course, I had to get my nail tech license to become an educator, but I'm an educator.”

The Black Alamance County Awards mission is to celebrate Black owned and operated businesses, serving as a marketing and recognition platform for individuals. The awards give the community a voice in identifying and promoting businesses they most support. The project was also a way to ask the community about Black owned businesses and organizations while identifying those companies with the best brands, customer service and reputations. With this year being the first for the event, plaques will be given to winners in each category and nominees will receive certificates.

According to Dreama Caldwell, one of the event's organizers, this event has been long awaited, and the night will finally recognize those who need to be recognized in the community. Having the awards



NYAH PHENGSIHTHY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

CEO of Nail Fiendz Nail Institute Tori Mitchell stands outside of her nail tech school. Mitchell, who grew up in Burlington, said she purposely placed her shop in East Burlington so that residents in that area can attend her school. Mitchell will be recognized as a nominee at the first Black Alamance County Awards on Friday, Feb. 25.

ceremony during the month of February is also another way to celebrate Black History month.

“During Black History month people often begin out history with slavery or the trauma of Jim Crow. It is important to celebrate Black Excellence that has always existed in the past, present and future,” Caldwell said. “Oftentimes these achievements and acknowledgments go unnoticed. It inspires future generations to continue to push forward.”

Mitchell said when it comes down to honoring businesses, it's important to recognize that getting to where she is now wasn't easy. Her nail technician curriculum, evaluation and building her clientele from the ground up took years, and when she finally opened her doors to Nail Fiendz in February 2020, she was only met with a delay because of the pandemic.

The location of her shop in east Burlington was also a major choice Mitchell had to make for her business. She mainly chose that location so that individuals similar to her with the same dream of being a nail technician could

reach their goals.

“I think God chose me for the spot,” Mitchell said. “I wanted to offer something to my community that they wouldn't otherwise get. I have empathy for people that come to me. And for some reason, those are the ones that were just in my way. And I put myself in their shoes. And I try to do all I can for my students.”

Looking forward to the event itself, Mitchell said she hopes that the first Black Alamance County awards will not only recognize her achievements, but also take the time to spread the word on everyone else's too.

“It gives us a platform to be able to celebrate our accomplishments and our goals and not only that, for the community to know about,” Mitchell said.

IF YOU GO
Black Alamance County Awards
Where: Mebane Arts Center, 633 Corregidor St, Mebane, NC 27302
When: Friday, Feb. 25, 7:30 p.m.

- AWARDS CATEGORIES**
- Black barber
 - Black hairstylist
 - Best nail technician
 - Best black barber
 - Best black event location
 - Best black car detailer
 - Best black child care
 - Best black adult care home/assistant living
 - Black female scholar athlete
 - Black male scholar athlete
 - Best black real estate agent
 - Best black travel agent
 - Best black restaurant
 - Best black community group/non-profit
 - Black elder living legacy award
 - Black Human Services/ Public Service- Male/Female
 - Black Community Leader Award
 - Best Black Clothing/ Jewelry/ Retail Store
 - Best Black Bartender
 - Best Black Small Business

Preliminary Report reveals concerns in multifaith engagement

The Multifaith Strategic Planning Committee released a survey results highlighting Elon’s diversity, equity and inclusion concerns

Ryan Kupperman
Enterprise Story Coordinator

Junior Maddy Starr was sitting inside the Chabad House when she heard a loud bang. Observing the Jewish holiday of Yom Kippur, she was breaking the fast surrounded by students and community members of the same religion. Starr was horrified to find out the bang was a gunshot that hit a car parked directly in front of the house. This memory, though two years old, still follows her as a Jewish student at Elon.

“I was pretty horrified,” Starr said. “I was pretty scared not necessarily as a Jewish woman, more of like I felt scared going to events held by Chabad and Hillel.”

But Starr wasn’t the only person who felt this way.

In the 2022 Preliminary Report, students, faculty and staff — Jewish and non-Jewish alike — recollected this incident on various surveys sent out by the Multifaith Strategic Planning Committee in fall 2021. Released in January, the survey highlights Elon University’s religious, spiritual, secular, ethical and cultural identities. Concerns over this incident back in 2019 were reflected in that report.

According to chair of the Department of Religious Studies and co-chair of the Multifaith Strategic Planning Committee Geoffrey Claussen, the preliminary report is part of the Boldly Elon strategic plan to support multifaith engagement at the university.

The first part of the committee’s charge was to compile a report which analyzed Elon’s current state of diversity, equity and inclusion. The second part of the charge will take place by the end of the spring 2022 semester, where the committee will create a final report detailing recommendations in actions to be taken by the university to ensure DEI.

“It’s both disheartening and encouraging to know that this has stayed in people’s memories. Disheartening, of course, because it was a really horrible incident,” Starr said. “But it’s encouraging to know that people recognize that it was an act of antisemitism, and that people recognize that it’s something that needs to be addressed — not only antisemitism, but any sort of prejudice or discrimination against any religion on campus.”

Data collection comes from various surveys sent out over the course of the fall 2021 semester: one to all junior and seniors and one to a mix of 390 freshmen, sophomores and graduate students who indicated a minoritized religious identity. Elon faculty and staff also received a survey request. Out of the 3,090 surveys sent out to the junior and senior class, only 434 students completed it. As for the survey sent to the remaining student population, only 18 responded. A total of 276 employees also completed the survey.

Analyzing results

To understand respondents’ personal backgrounds and identities, the committee also surveyed the community in various identity categories — including race and ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation.

Claussen said the most prominent aspect of the report to him was the fact that more than half of the students surveyed — 55% — reported that their religious, spiritual or secular identities were “moderately to extremely important to them.”

Sophomore Alena Jain, another student on the Multifaith Strategic Planning Committee, said she was also surprised by this result. Although Jain would classify her religion as very important to her as an international student, she didn’t realize how important religion was to others in the community.

“I come from a culture where religion is given immense importance,” Jain said.

Similar findings in the report revealed that antisemitism was overwhelmingly the top area of concern for survey respondents when asked about bias at Elon. Anti-Muslim bias and Islamic ignorance were also expressed in the survey, although they were reported more

Religious representation, Preliminary Report 2022

Elon University's top five most common religious groups, according to 544 students, faculty and staff surveyed in the 2022 Preliminary Report.

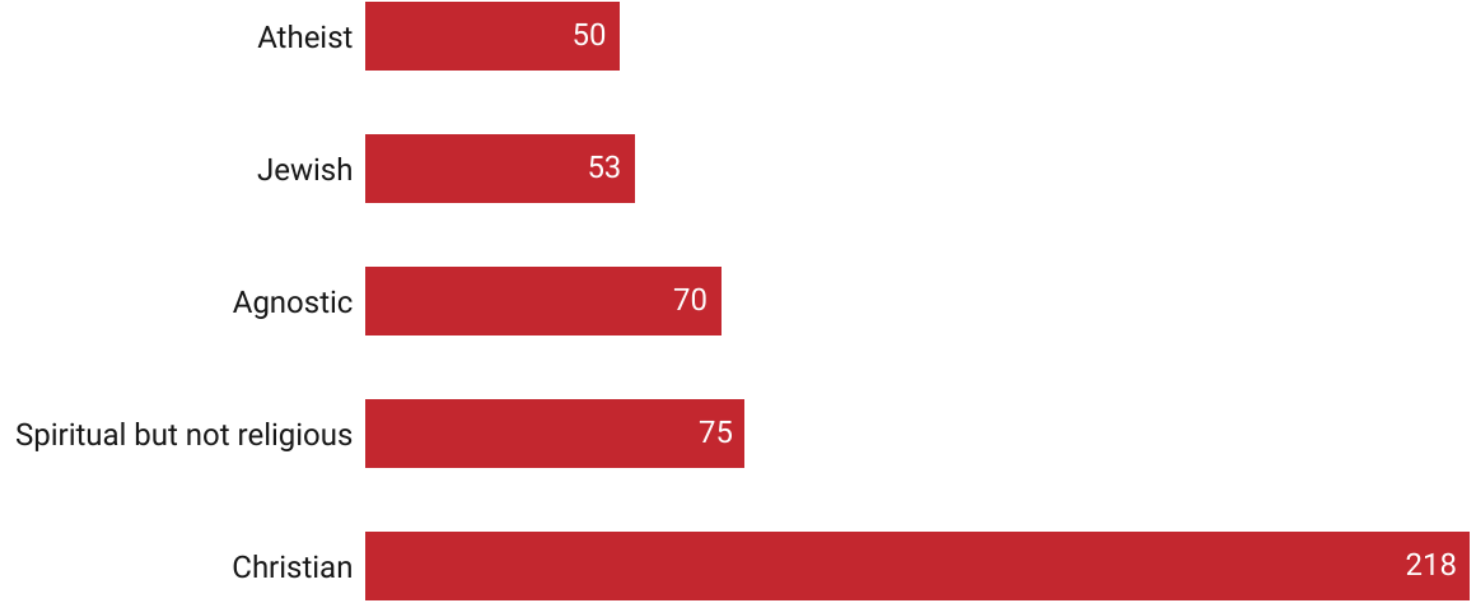


Chart: Ryan Kupperman • Source: Preliminary Report • Created with Datawrapper

frequently by faculty and staff than by students.

As a student, Starr was most surprised by the differences of opinion surrounding “Christian privilege and anti-Christian bias” present in the report. According to Starr, while only a few students had reported instances of anti-Christian bias on campus, there were many more reports from faculty and staff members.

“It leaves a really powerful message, to us at least, about how we move forward in a way that engages all religions and not just minority religions,” Starr said. “But engaging minority religions also, in a way that makes them feel included but not in a way that makes Christians feel excluded.”

Claussen said the different identities of students portrayed in the report presented a noteworthy divide. Concluded in the report, Christian students reported “especially high levels of belonging, welcome, inclusion, safety and feeling understood” when it came to their religious identities.

“Students from minoritized religious groups ... tended to feel much less included and safe and welcome on campus,” Claussen said. “Not unwelcome, not unsafe, not excluded. But it’s interesting, I think, that there’s a gap there.”

Areas for growth

Another portion of the report focused on evaluating Elon’s religious diversity, co-curricular programs and academic departments, comparing them to other educational institutions that are engaged in informative or pioneering work in diverse engagement.

Originally selected based on committee members’ prior knowledge and experience, the report analyzes institutions such as Oberlin College, Binghamton University, College of Charleston and University of Southern California.

The committee came to the conclusion that many areas on campus do not reflect a consideration of religious, spiritual and secular identity when considering issues of diversity, equity and inclusion. The report also stated that while Elon’s co-curricular programs parallel those of the other institutions studied, Elon does not lead in the intersection of race, religion, identity and spirituality.

Claussen also said that about half of Elon’s religion courses are taught by part-time faculty every year, and while the department teaches issues of religion and race in the classroom, there is no faculty member whose primary expertise is in the area of religion and race.

“That’s an issue that’s really important for understanding the category of religion in the United States, and in the world today,” Claussen said. “That’s one particular priority.”

Adjunct professor of religious studies Sumeyye Pakdil — who identifies as a Muslim and whose expertise is in Islamic studies — teaches political, gender and sexuality Islamic courses at Elon.

Pakdil said she believes that accepting religious diversity comes from education and

“

IT LEAVES A REALLY POWERFUL MESSAGE, TO US AT LEAST, ABOUT HOW WE MOVE FORWARD IN A WAY THAT ENGAGES ALL RELIGIONS AND NOT JUST MINORITY RELIGIONS. BUT ENGAGING MINORITY RELIGIONS ALSO, IN A WAY THAT MAKES THEM FEEL INCLUDED BUT NOT IN A WAY THAT MAKES CHRISTIANS FEEL EXCLUDED.

MADDY STARR
JUNIOR

safe spaces to ask questions. She estimated her classes are often 90 to 95% Christian, and she does her best to foster this environment.

“There is no right or wrong answer for any questions about religion, because even though it’s a sensitive topic, I want them to feel as free as possible, especially in class because that is the place that they could learn,” Pakdil said. “They could learn how to respect other ideas, but by telling their own ideas, their own opinions and hearing other opinions.”

To Pakdil, one of the most important things she stresses on is educating other students about the various religions.

“I try to show them, when I teach other religions, they have very big similarities, they share those similarities even though they have differences,” Pakdil said. “I wanted them to see ... diversity in different religious faiths and what they share with other groups.”

While Pakdil said she wasn’t surprised by the student, faculty and staff feedback issued in the report, she did not expect to learn that other universities did not require students to fill out a religious observation form in order to be excused for their religious holidays. Instead, the other institutions generally direct students to let their instructor know about religious holidays in advance, so instructors will regard their absences as excused.

Planning ahead

Based on the report, Starr said that the committee will begin to hold focus groups — representative of faculty, staff, undergraduates and graduates alike — throughout the spring semester in order to garner recommendations from smaller groups who have read the report.

Both Claussen and Starr welcome community feedback as they construct their final report for May 2022.

Pakdil and Jain also said that continuing to educate the community will play a prominent role in expanding DEI efforts.

“A lot of people don’t realize some comments are perceived as discriminatory,” Jain said. “A large part of what we’re working toward is really spreading awareness on the work that we’re doing to bring people together and really understand different cultures and religions.”

Jain said that providing more spaces on campus for people to practice their religion will also help in making minoritized groups feel more included.

Pakdil also said she believes inviting guest speakers to Elon who could talk both about religion and about how current events correlate with religion would greatly benefit the Elon community.

“Whether you are majoring in finance, whether you are majoring in math, biology, sociology, anthropology — religion is always there and you need to know more about religion because religion is all about people,” Pakdil said. “If you know religion, you would know more about people, about culture, about society, so that is what I have been trying to do.”

Yik Yak’s cyberbullying policy fails as negative posts continue

YIK YAK | from cover

Many forget that freedom of speech on social networks can sometimes lead to consequences. Yik Yak has become an outlet for cyberbullying and deception, and students like Phinney are calling for reform in how it’s used.

Director of the North Carolina Open Government Coalition Brooks Fuller explained that the anonymity Yik Yak provides is nothing new. He said anonymous speech has been vital to political participation and letting people speak on the internet.

“People have used speech on the internet, under anonymous accounts, to share political dissent, important political speech all over the world. And at the same time, people have hidden behind the cloak of anonymity, to spread abuse and disdain for people and hateful rhetoric,” Fuller said.

As the app has made a comeback, so have its negative impacts. Fuller explained that the harassment present on Yik Yak has once again proven detrimental to the emotional and mental wellbeing of individuals. He noticed no change in the use of the platform.

While Yik Yak does have new guidelines in place meant to prevent cyberbullying, it hasn’t necessarily come to an end. Phinney said she frequents the app and has seen messages ranging from random information to targeting individuals. It can be anything from complaints about the McEwen ice cream machine to comments criticizing an individual’s weight.

“There’s some random things, random funny things that people say,” Phinney said. “And then there are some not so nice comments, or people calling people out by name.”

On the occasion that Phinney

knows a student identified in a Yak, she follows the guidelines, downvotes and reports the Yak. Otherwise, she said she does not interact with the app beyond scrolling through posts.

Phinney believes the app is merely being used by the wrong people for the wrong reasons, and that many don’t realize that the mask of anonymity only goes so far. Fuller said many users do not read the terms and conditions of the app. He warns students that there are limits to the protection provided by their screens. In this case, Yik Yak may be anonymous to other users, but it doesn’t mean the app has to safeguard an individual’s identity if they are subpoenaed by law enforcement to turn it over.

“When someone communicates a threat over any social media platform, as long as the social media platform is built so it has the ability to turn over that information, then they have to turn that information over to law enforcement — or they have to fight the subpoena,” Fuller said. “Most social media platforms are not willing to fight subpoenas on behalf of their users who threatened people.”

Though she sees more negative Yaks than positive ones, Phinney said she has never come across any messages that could be life-threatening to one’s safety. Ultimately, she maintains that the primary issue lies within the user, not the app.

“I think there’s just a very fine line between using it appropriately and using it to be nasty,” Phinney said. “A lot of people don’t really understand that, and they just kind of hide behind this anonymous profile and say whatever they want, but I think it should exist. I think just the wrong people have been using it.”

Freshman Mason Kaiser’s use of Yik Yak has declined since he noticed an increase in the hostility on the platform. He originally downloaded

the app for entertainment and connection, but he has since then watched the app turn into a place harboring hostility, not community.

“Yik Yak is a great, fun platform for people to freely express themselves and ask questions that they might be too scared to ask directly to a source,” Kaiser said. “But with that comes a noticeable amount of hate between people.”

Fuller cautions users against believing everything they read on Yik Yak, as the confidentiality attracts cyberbullies aiming to deceive individuals or instigate arguments. Kaiser has identified false information about individuals he knows on campus.

“It creates these conditions that make it more likely that speech will appear on that platform that is either unreliable, or offensive or harmful in some way,” Fuller said. “It’s like a lot of the internet, some of the mundane stuff is not really all that problematic. It’s just kind of stupid or silly. But it can rise to the level of serious pretty quickly depending on what the content is. That anonymity tends to invite more inflammatory rhetoric.”

Fuller anticipates Yik Yak facing a similar fate as it did years ago. He does not believe its premise is sustainable, especially since the app hasn’t changed since its downfall. Unfortunately, many students don’t always take action when they encounter hateful or hurtful speech, and the way users engage with the app is revealing about the values of today’s society.

“The fundamental aspects of the design are not that different,” Fuller said. “It’s just the terms and conditions and some of the internals that are a little bit different, but the way people use the app hasn’t really changed. If it sticks around longer, it might tell us something about who we’ve become and who we are.”

I have 4 papers due within the next week

can y’all stop dropping names on here



124

why do homework just want to sit in the sun

9 comments

already maxed out on my excused absences... tough

soft serve at mcewen is working!

78

why so many tours today?

CAROLINE MITCHELL | DESIGN CHIEF

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SOPHIE ROSENTHAL
COPY EDITOR

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Elon sees increase in prices as Alamance County endures inflation



Construction on the Innovation Quad continues on Feb. 22 as inflation increases throughout the nation and in Alamance county. According to Vice President of Finance Janet Williams, with prices for construction materials on the rise, projects around campus are feeling the financial burden as they near completion.

LUKE JOHNSON | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

LIVING | from cover

Ben Trainum, sophomore and stagehand for cultural and special programs at Elon, said that the increase in gas prices has made driving much more expensive. “I don’t drive on campus, I walk to all my classes, so it’s not as bad. But if I’m driving around with friends or whatnot, on a weekend, it’s noticeable because the cost of a tank went from \$45 to like, \$55, or \$60,” Trainum said.

Prices have also gone up due to the pandemic. Production and shipping problems with items involving international distribution are causing a spike in prices of many consumer goods, on top of inflation increases.

“Initially, there were a lot of supply side issues, logistical issues,” Islam said. “Those improved a little bit, but then they got worse, because there’s so much pent up demand, people want more stuff, that suppliers and other providers are not able to produce all those products.”

On Elon’s campus, these increases have affected housing and tuition prices. Increased demand and shipping delays involving construction materials such as lumber have also increased building costs across the board.

Elon University Vice President of Finance Administration Janet Williams said that the university is a tax exempt organization, so the increase in value of university-owned land hasn’t affected student housing prices at all. However, the increasing costs of building materials and food prices have caused increases in both tuition and room and board fees.

Ongoing construction in the Innovation Quad, School of Health Sciences and Moseley Center have

all become exponentially more expensive, Williams said.

“We’re also seeing that just getting the materials delivered is, there’s a backlog on supplies,” Williams said. “So we’re doing things to try to schedule and manage around that, but COVID has definitely impacted even the supply chain.”



I AM THANKFUL THAT I BOUGHT MY HOUSE FIVE YEARS AGO WHEN IT WAS MUCH MORE AFFORDABLE. ALTHOUGH I DON’T ALWAYS NOTICE INCREASED PRICES FOR SPECIFIC ITEMS, I DO SOMETIMES NOTICE THAT AS TIME GOES ON I HAVE LESS MONEY LEFT OVER AT THE END OF THE MONTH.

KIRSTIE DOEHLER
PROFESSOR OF STATISTICS AND
ALAMANCE COUNTY RESIDENT

Elon’s tuition is increasing just over 9% compared to last year, from \$38,725 in 2021-22 to \$42,241 in 2022-23, according to the university’s Tuition and Fees webpage. The room and board fee increased by just over \$400.

Williams said the recent tuition increases were made to pay for construction and renovation across campus. The 3.5% increase in room

and board expenses are a direct product of inflation and supply chain issues, Williams said.

But it’s not just university costs that are increasing. Student wages have just increased by \$1 an hour, from a starting rate of \$9 to \$10. Student wages increased to help students cover inflation as well as making campus jobs more competitive, according to Williams.

“We really believe that we have great opportunities for students to engage in and have engaged learning through their student work,” Williams said. “So we want to be competitive as much as we can. That’s part of the reason for the increase.”

Sam Porozok, a senior and Elon tour guide, said the wage increase is very exciting, and much needed.

“It feels like everything’s really expensive right now,” Porozok said. “And it makes it feel like the time I’m putting in is more worthwhile on actually spending time on these things as opposed to doing my schoolwork or hanging out with people.”

The \$1 base wage raise, an 11% increase over the previous starting wage, is a larger percentage raise per hour than compared to inflation rates. According to Islam, this is a step in the right direction.

“It may seem like a \$1 increase is very low. ... Percentage wise we’re all benchmarking it against inflation rates. So if inflation went up by 7%, then I would say, OK, the salary increase would be 7%, or higher,” Islam said.

Kirstie Doehler, professor of statistics and Alamance County resident, wrote in a statement to Elon News Network that although the increases haven’t hurt her too much, they have led to some noticeable changes.

“I have noticed an increase in gas prices and especially housing

BY THE NUMBERS

9%

is the increase in Elon University’s tuition, according to the university’s Tuition and Fees webpage. The room and board fee increased by just over \$400. The 3.5% increase in room and board expenses are a direct product of inflation and supply chain issues, according to Vice President of Finance Administration Janet Williams.

\$1

is the increase in Elon University’s student wage, going from \$9 to \$10. Student wages increased to help students cover inflation as well as making campus jobs more

prices,” Doehler wrote. “I am thankful that I bought my house five years ago when it was much more affordable. Although I don’t always notice increased prices for specific items, I do sometimes notice that as time goes on I have less money left over at the end of the month.”

In order to help students with the rising costs, Williams said that in addition to the wage increase, student financial aid is budgeted to increase proportionally with tuition. Williams also said that Elon is still prioritizing the university’s position as a “Best Value” school, meaning it’s tuition and board costs are intended to be lower than colleges offering similar programs.

“Last year, the increase was only a 2.1% increase,” Williams said “And even with the increase this year, Elon’s cost remains more than \$15,000 lower than the average for peer private universities.”

Community responds as Elon looks to ease restrictions



CAROLINE MITCHELL

KATHY MATERA
CHAIR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY

“As long as the virus is at high levels, which it is right now, masks are the easiest way to keep people from getting sick. As long as the virus levels are high I am absolutely on board with masking.”



ALICIA CLANTON

NIKIDA JEFFREYS
EVENING LIBRARY ASSISTANT

“I know some people on campus may not feel the same way but I still feel like people should wear masks. There’s still people with underlying conditions. For example my mom had a heart attack in December. People are still susceptible to COVID.”



JESSICA NUZZACI

MADELEINE WALSH
SOPHOMORE

“Everyone’s saying the pandemic is dying down, we’re in the endemic stages. But it could ramp back up just as quickly. We’re all burnt out from wearing masks, but I think it’s too soon.”



CAILEY CETANI

RENEE MAKIN
PROGRAM ASSISTANT, PROVOST'S OFFICE

“On a personal level, I would probably choose to wear a mask for a bit longer, but I understand that things are looking better.”

An email from the Healthy Elon committee about the future of indoor masks prompts conversation

Sophie Rosenthal
Chief Copy Editor | @sophrosenthal

The Healthy Elon committee anticipates COVID-19 restrictions will change in weeks ahead for Elon University. According to a university email on Feb. 17 from chair of the Healthy Elon committee Jeff Stein, guidance for the next steps will come from public health officials.

The email did not give specific dates of when students, faculty and staff can expect the indoor mask mandate to end, but said the university may be able to modify the mandate later in the spring semester. Daily COVID-19 case counts have been declining in the past two weeks, Stein wrote, and as of Feb. 17, 98% of students are booster compliant and 86% of faculty and staff are boosted or waiting to become eligible. Students were required to get the vaccine and booster, but faculty and staff were not.

Communication design professor Hal Vincent said he’s looking forward to the end of the mandate.

“I want this to be over as much as anybody but also want it to be ready to be over. And I am very excited that we might one day be out of this,” Vincent said. “So for me, I will keep the mask on. But I will gladly celebrate — more than anyone, possibly — the day that we are as a people confident to know that we’re not hurting others. I’m going to rip that sucker right off and party like it’s 1999”

Vincent said teaching in a mask has been difficult for him, not just on a physical level with enunciation and volume, but also on a personal level from not being able to see his students’ facial expressions.

“Reading student reactions, and even hoping that students can understand anything that I’m saying, even on a personal level, we lose so much about human interactions when we can’t see the smile in the face, or the frown, or the gnashing of teeth, whatever it is,” Vincent said.

Despite the high vaccination rate and decrease in daily positive cases at Elon since mid-January, some professors have concerns of what the Elon environment will soon look like.

Professor of religion Lynn Huber said she’d like to see the mask mandate continue in the future for one simple reason: masks work. While teaching in Italy over Winter Term, Huber said the mask mandate allowed her to feel safe with students abroad.

“It was possible to do things and be out in public and go out to eat, and that was great,” Huber said. “But the only reason that I could do that or we could do that as a study abroad course was because people were really good about wearing masks.”

As long as any decision made to remove the mask mandate is backed up by health experts, Vincent said he’ll trust that he can safely take his off.

“I personally am all about, ‘Hey, let’s follow and do what evidence, research and science experts lead us to do,’” Vincent said. “And if we have to err, generally, maybe it’s a little better to err slightly on the side of caution and public health.”

English professor Tita Ramirez said she’s conflicted about whether she believes it’s time to remove the mandate.

“Part of me is like, ‘Oh, my God, yes, let’s take the mask off,’” Ramirez said. “Then the other part of me is like, ‘Oh, my God, no, let’s permanently attach them to our faces through a surgical procedure.”

In the email, Jeff Stein said large gatherings and social events can still cause unexpected surges in COVID-19 cases on campus. If masks come off, Ramirez and Huber wonder whether classes will be the same.

Vincent, however, said he doesn’t believe classes will be any more of a risk than other maskless activities.

“In my opinion, the classrooms are probably going to be no more unsafe than just about any of the other human interactions that I have in the course of the day,” Vincent said. “So personally, when the time comes to say that we don’t have to do it anymore, I’ll be as comfortable as I can — as comfortable as I am going to eat, to visit my grandma and to buy groceries.”

If the mask mandate is removed from Elon University, Huber said it could be a threat to at-risk individuals — such as her immunocompromised spouse.

“I’d like us to be more cautious and mindful of the fact that we do have people in our community — and not just faculty and staff, it’s students too — who have compromised immune systems and family members who are ill, and that they need to protect themselves,” Huber said. “I’d like the university to take the initiative in thinking about those folks first, maybe instead of just having to fend for themselves.”

“

I’D LIKE US TO BE MORE CAUTIOUS AND MINDFUL OF THE FACT THAT WE DO HAVE PEOPLE IN OUR COMMUNITY — AND NOT JUST FACULTY AND STAFF, IT’S STUDENTS TOO — WHO HAVE COMPROMISED IMMUNE SYSTEMS AND FAMILY MEMBERS WHO ARE ILL, AND THAT THEY NEED TO PROTECT THEMSELVES.

LYNN HUBER
RELIGION PROFESSOR

Ramirez has young children, but said her worry isn’t that she’ll bring COVID-19 home; it’s that her children will give it to her, and then she’ll give it to fellow professors and students.

“They’re like walking petri dishes, even when you’re not having a global pandemic,” Ramirez said. “I’m a vector; I have little kids. So, I’m not quite as terrified that I’m going to bring something home to my kids.”

A recent study by the Centers for Disease Control released on Feb. 11, showed that the effectiveness of the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna booster shots wanes substantially after four months. But Ramirez said because the initial vaccination and remaining effectiveness of the booster is successful at keeping people out of hospitals, she’s not as worried about getting COVID-19.

“I guess the big question is, are we supposed to keep our COVID restrictions? Not Elon, but like the world,” Ramirez said. “Are we supposed to keep our COVID restrictions in place until we figure out vaccines that keep us continually protected from hospitalization and death year-round?”

Though Huber understands the urgency people feel to move on with the pandemic, she said continuing to mask is a minor concession.

“Masking seems like a small thing that people can do to make it possible for everyone to get on with their lives,” Huber said.



ELSPETH ALLEN

AYESH AWAD
SOPHOMORE

“I think we should still wear masks in classes, just for the sake of our faculty members.”



ABIGAIL HOBBS

MADISON WILLIAMS
FRESHMAN

“I feel like it needs to stay in. I don’t know how I feel about it being removed yet because not long ago they just had everyone upgrade to N95’s, so I feel like it should wait a little bit.”



ABIGAIL HOBBS

JOHN DUBIA
SOPHOMORE

“I think it’s a good step toward reopening the campus. The sporting events are bigger capacity now, so I feel like it’s just another step to reopening campus and going back to normal. So I think it’s a good step that the administration should take toward reopening the campus.”



ABIGAIL HOBBS

SHRIYA BARU
SOPHOMORE

“I think the mask mandate has to be removed because so many people aren’t following the rules here, you can just look around. So I don’t think it’s making much of a difference.”

LIFESTYLE



Freshman Lucy Horn holds up a freshly completed sweatshirt in her workspace and dorm room. Horn made the design on her laptop then printed it out with her Cricut before applying it to the sweatshirt.

SAMANTHA SUSSMAN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

CREATORS ON CAMPUS

Students work toward their goals by producing music and brands from their dorms

Samantha Sussman & Ava Giardi
Elon News Network

Freshman Christopher Murphy, also known by his stage name “Khari Levard,” is pursuing the one thing he’s dreamed about since eighth grade — his music career. Though there was a time when he dreamed of being a professional athlete, he realized his real passion was for music, with or without the fans.

“If there was no incentives for making music I feel like I would still love to do it. But I feel like as far as sports, I only love to do it because people are watching,” Murphy said. “I look at that as having more passion for music than sports.”

Murphy, like many other student creators on campus, is following his passion through content creation. Becoming a recording artist is his dream, but it all starts with what Elon has to offer. Students around campus run small businesses, make music, choreograph dances and more to follow their dreams or work toward setting themselves up for a brighter future.

Perfecting his craft

In eighth grade Murphy’s friend Daelon Carr, who goes by the stage name “Deezy,” told him

he was good at lyrical writing and then rapping them. Before he knew it, Murphy was making music with Deezy, which then began his music career.

Murphy draws inspiration for his music from J.Cole. Murphy studies his music and the production that goes into it to learn and shape his craft.

“I use that as motivation and put it in my own form, but every now and then I guess you can kind of see a little bit of his inspiration in my music,” Murphy said.

A Music Production and Recording Arts major, Murphy said school work sometimes interferes with his music creation, but other times it helps him learn more about the art.

“There’s other times where I have to do work for school with classes and it’s not like that is work to me,” Murphy said. “It’s just like doing what I love.”

Running a business

Freshman Lucy Horn started her business during quarantine when she saw other sellers make large profits off of her own purchases on Instagram. She began reselling thrifted clothes, but now makes her own products.

Horn sells sweatshirts and tote bags with original designs printed onto the material with a Cricut. She creates the designs, prints them out and adheres them to the product.

“I started kicking it up and started making a pretty good amount of money,” Horn said.



COURTESY OF CHRISTOPHER MURPHY

Freshman Christopher Murphy raps in his unreleased music video. As a music production and recording arts major, Murphy hopes to learn more about the art and produce more music.

“Then once I did start making my own things, the amount that I was bringing in probably tripled ... last year I think I made about \$20,000.”

According to Zip Recruiter, the average small business owner salary for North Carolina is \$45,748, which Horn makes around half that amount.

Though her business keeps her busy, Horn prioritizes her academics, where she puts on her “vacation mode” to put school first.

“If it comes down to having to talk to a customer and tell them that I will not be able to complete

it on time, and that I’m willing to give them a refund or send them another sweatshirt, I’m more willing to do that than I am to miss something for school,” Horn said.

Engaging as an artist

Students who place orders from Horn can receive free campus delivery as a way to engage more with the Elon community. Murphy, on the other hand, said he doesn’t advertise his music much on campus.

“I have a couple of people here on campus that know about me making music. I’m kind of a quiet guy so I don’t really tell too many

people,” Murphy said. “I would like to expand my fan base a little bit.”

Murphy finds inspiration in the world around him and takes a few months to brainstorm the lyrics for his songs. He said he will think of what to write for a while then will sit down and write the whole song at once.

“A lot of my ideas come from what I see, what is around me, what I find interesting,” Murphy said. “If there are certain feelings or things that I’m going through, that’s where a lot of my inspiration for writing comes from.”

CAMPUS VOICES CAMPUS VOICES IS A SECTION WHERE ELON STUDENTS CAN CONTRIBUTE THEIR OPINIONS

GREEK LIFE: IT NEEDS TO CHANGE



Chloe Yoon
Senior

Preface: I speak of my experience in Elon Panhellenic and the conversations I've engaged in with others. I'm learning more to better understand the movement as a whole, and the calls for reform that people of color, amongst

others, have collectively called for in recent years across the country. Greek life has larger issues beyond just one college's Panhellenic organization that extends to national and fraternity organizations as well. As a person formerly in Greek life, I've grown to understand my complicity and the naive approach I took of believing "that's just the way it is." I hope to add just one perspective to the greater conversation, as there are many that go untold.

As the sorority events pile up in the spring semester, the buzz of Greek life always dominates conversations of Elon, my own included. While we recognize the issues of Greek life in passing comments or brief conversations, the narrative continues to not only exist, but thrive, that Greek life reflects an intrinsic value about people. Since my first year at Elon, I've engaged in conversations with administrators, Greek life members and completely random strangers — all of whom expressed concern for the harmful effects of Greek life. Yet, as my senior year comes to an end, the system, and thus the narrative, around Greek life fails to become recognized as a serious and legitimate issue our campus needs to address. Greek life creates damaging mindsets and atmospheres for those both affiliated and unaffiliated. You may not feel the damage, and you may not even recognize there is damage to begin with. But that doesn't make it any less real, or any less vital for our attention and action.

As I recall the day before recruitment, all the potential new members gather in a large auditorium to listen to a speaker talk about the next few days and her own experience with rush. She reflects on her anxiety, her anticipation, but her eventual happy ending on bid day in her sorority. It was repeated over and over to "just trust the process." So I did. I was convinced that recruitment would be an experience of meeting other women who just wanted to get to know me. And then I got to recruitment, and the process of evaluating me began.

During recruitment, I felt discriminated against for being Asian American. I wasn't what they wanted. I knew my experiences could never match theirs, and sometimes neither would my values. I wouldn't share things in common because the reality was we were different. I forced myself to push away the anxiety, when the reality was I was so uncomfortable standing in a room of girls who looked all dressed up and gorgeous, but absolutely nothing like me. How do you explain the feeling of a stranger looking you up and down and knowing, even though they might not realize, that they are analyzing anything they can about you — the things you share about yourself, your outfit, your conversation skills. Then, they get to make conclusions about who you are, all of which lead to the final decision about you. The claim is that they want to see how well I aligned with their "values," but to what extent could they truly determine this? In a ten-minute conversation, are they truly analyzing who I am? The reality is they analyzed the initial impressions of appearance. No person is limited to that time, that process, or that evaluation. It was the concept of this process that made me so self-conscious about who I am, and I just couldn't stop

thinking about my race. And the worst part was, I had nothing to "prove it" — just my experience.

Though I ended up in an organization, I was left so deeply unsatisfied. Not because of the organization I chose, but because of the way the process, and the system, now made me think about myself and others. It's hard enough to see a lack of diversity on campus, but it's even harder when the school's social structure reflects standards and stereotypes that aren't diverse. Instead, we encourage specific molds of women. The constant conversations filling the air to this day infuriate me; nevertheless, I unconsciously engage in them. "What sorority are they in?" "Oh. She's unaffiliated." "She can't come, she's not in the sorority." I kept thinking to myself: "How did my Elon experience now become this?" Even more prominently, "How did people become this?"

Over half of women on Elon's campus are in Greek life — to be precise, 54.5%, according to Elon University. What about the women who don't — and shouldn't have to — fit that mold? What about the women who find the process not just anxiety provoking, but so damaging that they drop out or leave campus because they can't physically be in this environment? What about women who can't afford "sisterhood?" What about women who simply don't want to be labeled by an organization? Greek life is premised on hierarchies. Greek life is premised on exclusion. Greek life is premised on elitism. If this is going to be our school's dominant social life, there has to be more — more accountability, more conversations, and more reform.

After dropping my organization, I faced isolation because I was no longer contributing to the system. I wasn't 'in' anything anymore; I was 'out.' Eventually, I was lucky to have found other people and other organizations where I was more than just an initial appearance. As I entered new spaces on campus, I embraced the refreshing diversity of thought that came from diversity of experiences. However, that fresh breath of air wasn't immediate. Living in an environment where the constant and core understanding of people is rooted in a system so broken from beginning to end is suffocating. I want to use my experience, not for sympathy, but for advocacy.

The concept of 'sisterhood' holds a special bond and meaning between groups of women. It can go so far that it blinds us to the point where we feel uncomfortable being critical of each other, or uncomfortable advocating for people beyond the Greek life system. I urge people to step outside of that sisterhood and

understand the perspectives of other women — women not in your immediate sisterhood. Step outside of yourself. The late scholar bell hooks reflected on this "shield against reality" that we allow ourselves to hide under in her article "Sisterhood: Political Solidarity Between Women," writing:

"Women are divided by sexist attitudes, racism, class privilege, and a host of other prejudices. Sustained women bonding can occur only when these divisions are confronted and the necessary steps are taken to eliminate them. Divisions will not be eliminated by wishful thinking or romantic reverie about common oppression despite the value of highlighting experiences all women share."

hooks then went on to connect these concepts to the term "sisterhood."

"We must unlearn them [assumptions of women] if we are to build a sustained feminist movement. We must learn to live and work in solidarity. We must learn the true meaning and value of Sisterhood."

While hooks was not explicitly referring to sisterhood of sororities, she notes the protection white women have in avoiding these uncomfortable realities. We stray away from discussing the core of these conversations: the sisterhood of sororities are undoubtedly rooted in race, appearance, status, connections — all the privileges hooks discusses. Women's personalities are being rated with numbers on a scale. Their social media accounts are investigated and given scores to determine one's standing. Even on the sister side, top recruiters are considered those who are attractive, or 'cool' — but by what standard? It is no secret that there is also a racial divide at Elon that is only amplified by the Greek life system. Just look at the system that "tiers" women, consequently having the most diversity in sororities considered "bottom tier." Women, both affiliated and unaffiliated, are pitted against each other. It cannot be true sisterhood if it comes at the cost of excluding other women. If we allow the uncritical continuation of this system, how can this promote diverse perspectives? Or equity in general? One cannot advance themselves in the efforts of feminism or diversity, equity and inclusion if the only people we surround ourselves with are only ones that reflect our own interests.

Minorities struggle with power in numbers, and that's where we need the help — the voices. Ending discrimination of all kinds — race, gender, sexuality, socioeconomic status, disability, religion — means recognizing the historical and current harm it brings to these communities. It means critically

examining and dismantling structures, including ones that may be benefiting some of us. Over the years, I've realized how important it is to look critically at every system we exist in. Not just the ones in politics, and not just the ones that might blow up on the news. Every system has an impact, and every impact matters. Greek life may not seem on any level in need of desperate reform, but any type of reform can still change someone's life — someone's outlook of themselves.

Elon is not Greek life. Elon is a community — of people who meet in class or people who just became so close through a distant line of friends. Elon has proved that we can make communities beyond Greek life, yet when recruitment rolls around, we continue to rely on the system. We need people both in and outside of that system to not just recognize it, but change it; call it out on both the level of individual chapters and nationals. To put the emphasis we do on Greek life dehumanizes people to such limited traits, perceptions, and individual worth. Though Greek life can bring new and existing members a sense of pride for those within that community, each recruitment cycle comes with a cost. Feelings of happiness and comfort does not mean the concept is not actively harming others.

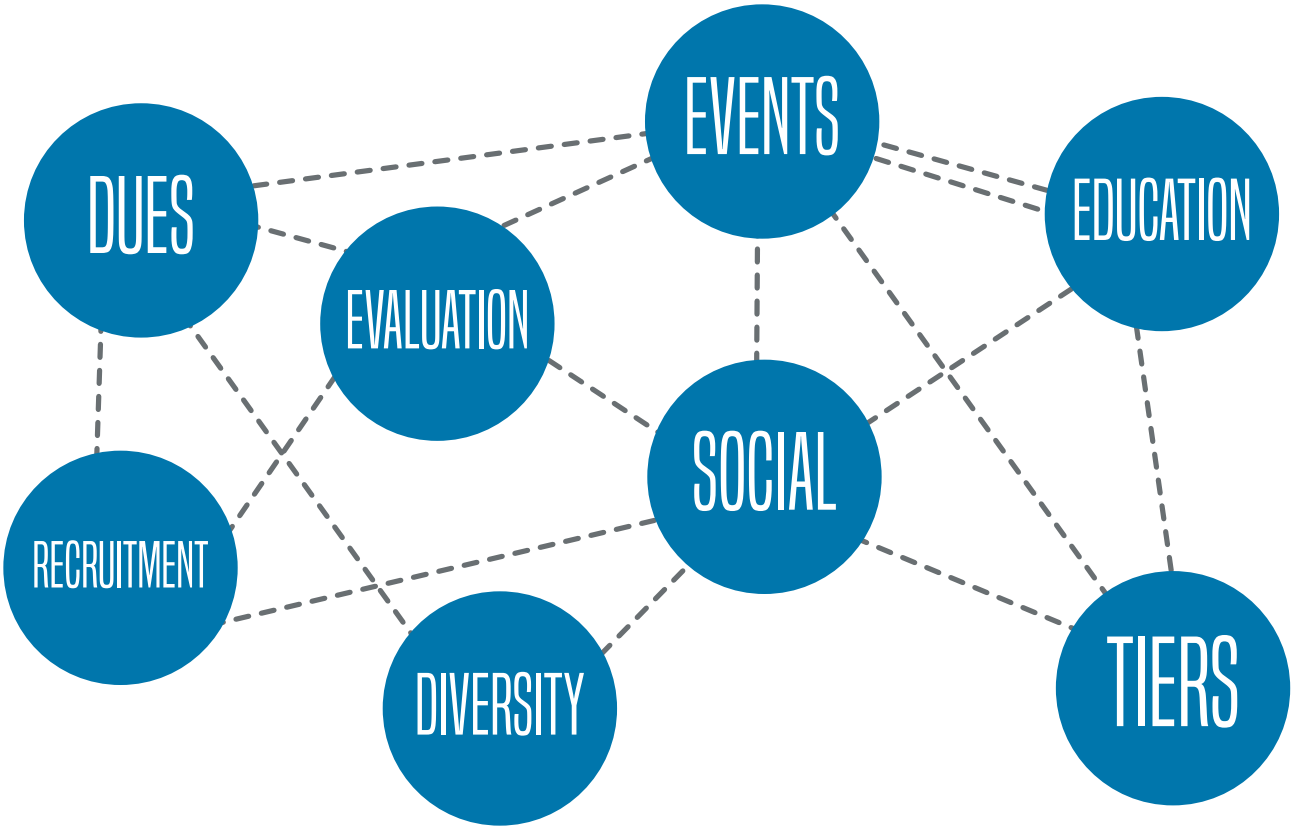
In a study conducted by former Institute for Policy Research graduate research assistant and current Northwestern PhD student, 53 women were interviewed in a series of over 117 interviews over the course of three years. The following issues were consistently discussed:

- They complained about a social status system that rewards women for beauty, wealth, and fashion over anything else.
- They expressed outrage about a rush process that excludes and marginalizes women of color and women from lower-income backgrounds.
- They criticized Greek party culture for allowing a male-controlled social environment, as fraternities tended to host parties and fraternity members determined the lighting, music, and alcohol (Karter).

If you are looking for resources to learn more about the conversation around Greek life, please visit the following websites for more information. There is so much more to learn.

Instagram Account:
@abolishgreeklife

Podcast:
Abolishing Greek Life- Neem Talks Race: Interview Series



SPORTS



Two students celebrate winning a pickleball game 11-10 in their physical activity class.

ERIN MARTIN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Elon’s physical activity classes are a way for students to de-stress, stay active and learn a new sport

Erin Martin
Elon News Network | @erinmartin35

After taking her first physical education class last year, senior Grace Lawhorn jumped at the chance to take a class about pickleball this spring.

“I took Frisbee last year, which was really, really fun. It was my first PE class that I’ve taken since middle school, and this is finally the first semester where I’m not completely loaded down with coursework,” Lawhorn said.

Elon University offers a variety of physical activity classes for credit, and this year, pickleball is a popular one. The sport is similar to tennis, where players are set on a badminton-size court and hit a plastic ball back and forth over the net with a paddle. The paddle is about twice the size of a table tennis paddle. Pickleball is becoming more popular in the states as it has now reached 4.8 million players, according to the Sports & Fitness Industry Association.

Lecturer in wellness Bryan Hedrick oversees the entire activity course program and is teaching Pickleball/Badminton this semester. Hedrick has spent 18 years at Elon and said he is happy to teach classes that are fun and enriching. Because physical education classes are worth one credit hour, there is some required coursework such as researching the history of the sport and reading articles. However, the class is mainly centered around learning through practice.

“I want them to get exposure and learn through doing, so it’s a very much hands-on activity type class,” Hedrick said.

A student in Hedrick’s class, Lawhorn said she is grateful for the engagement.

“I think it’s really fun to have two times of the week carved out to just go and have fun, and not be in class and not take yourself seriously,” Lawhorn said.

Join the club

Senior Halley Telaak took a frisbee physical activity class last year with Lawhorn, and she enjoyed it so much that she decided to join Elon University’s club frisbee team. She similarly hopes to join the intramural pickleball team this year with her friends. As a senior, Telaak said the class is a great way to experience her last semester at Elon.

“A few of my friends are in the class and

“

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GRACE LAWHORN
SENIOR

a lot of us don’t have a lot of classes this semester, so what better way to spend our last semester through playing pickleball and to play intramural sports,” Telaak said.

Elon’s physical activity courses vary by semester, but some of the previous offerings include Self Defense, Bait and Fly Casting, Whitewater Canoeing, Golf, Frisbee, Pickleball and Badminton. Hedrick said he hopes to see new sport combos held in the future.

“I’d love to see a hybrid like disc golf, maybe a combo with ultimate and I don’t know, some type of soccer,” Hedrick said. “I think there’s a lot of sports that could hold their weight.”



Lecturer of wellness Bryan Hedrick teaches seniors Halley Telaak (left) and Grace Lawhorn (right) about where the best location is on the court to hit the pickleball during his physical education class.

ERIN MARTIN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER



A student in the pickleball class hits a ball. Elon offers a variety of physical activity classes for credit, and this year pickleball is a popular option.

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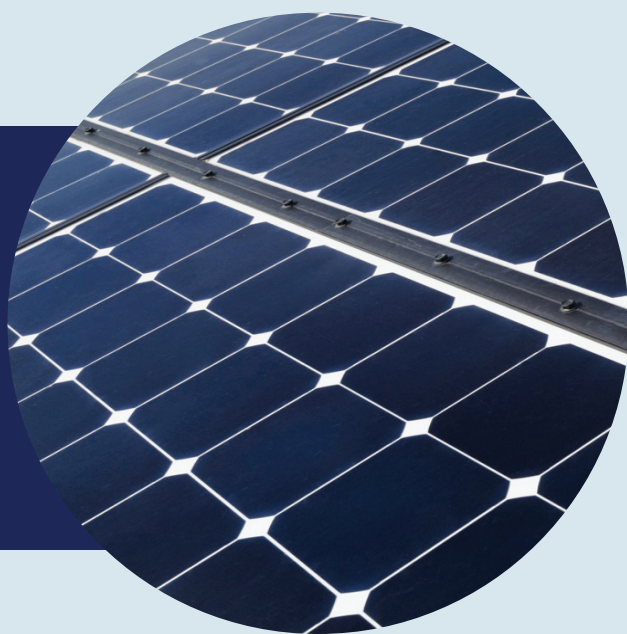
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