

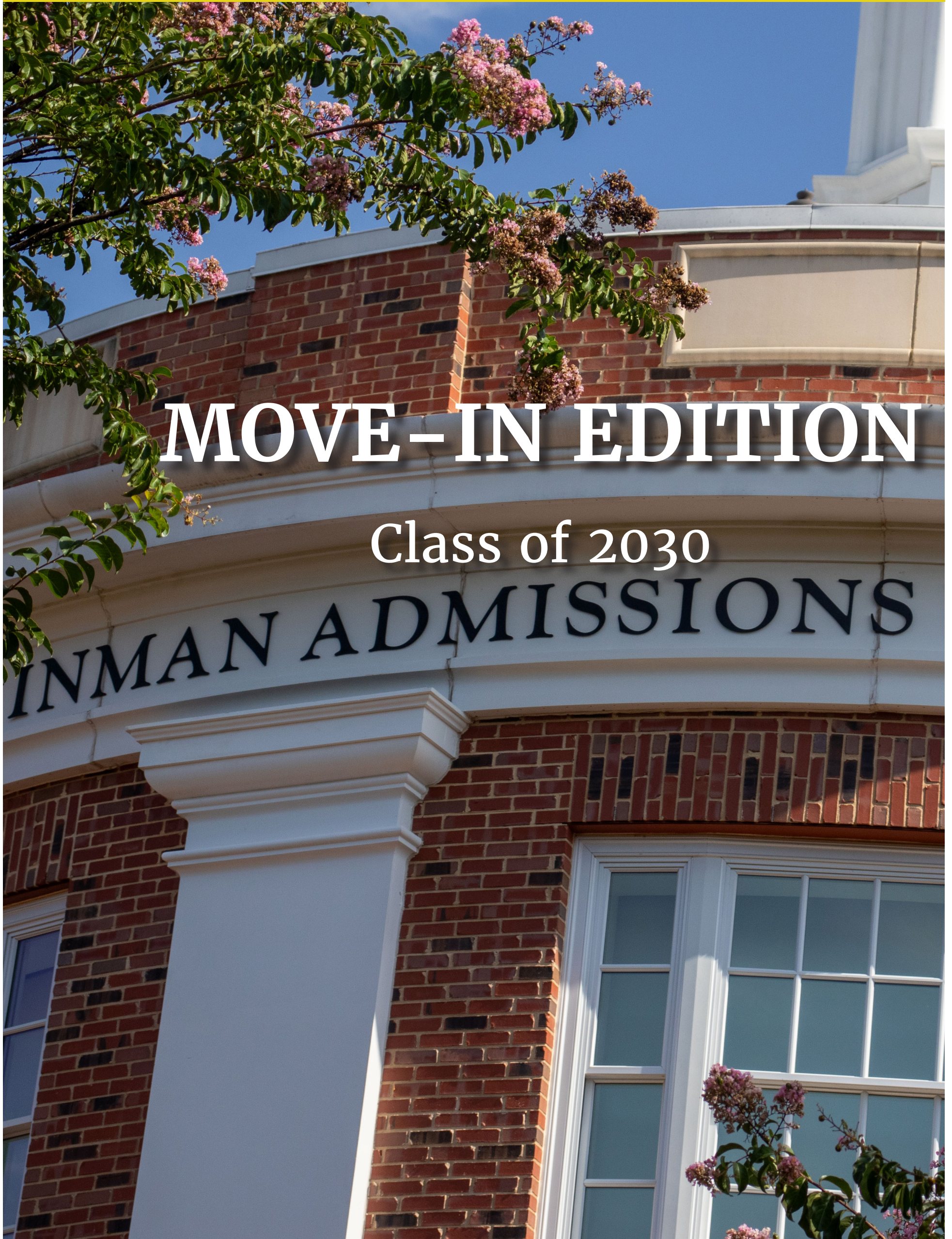
THE PENDULUM

ELONNEWSNETWORK.COM

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VOLUME 56, EDITION 1

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THE PENDULUM
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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 staff@elonnewsnetwork.com 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.

CORRECTIONS POLICY:

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.

Contact
corrections@elonnewsnetwork.com
to report a correction or a concern.



CORRECTIONS

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

NAMES TO KNOW

on Elon University's campus

RODNEY PARKS

UNIVERSITY REGISTRAR



PHOTO COURTESY OF ELON UNIVERSITY

Rodney Parks serves as Elon's registrar, who oversees course registration, academic records and transcripts. Students should contact the Office of the Registrar, located in Alamance, for any questions about transfer credits, their academic record or requesting a transcript.

RANDY WILLIAMS

INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE



PHOTO COURTESY OF ELON UNIVERSITY

Randy Williams serves as a member of the university president's leadership team, as the chief diversity officer in his role as the vice president and associate provost for inclusive excellence. Williams works to guide Elon's diversity, equity and inclusion goals.

JON DOOLEY

VICE PRESIDENT OF STUDENT LIFE



PHOTO COURTESY OF ELON UNIVERSITY

Jon Dooley, the vice president of student life, oversees the Office of Student Life, which provides a range of services, initiatives and events for the campus community. Dooley will also often send out many emails to students, updating the community about health issues, campus safety updates and upcoming events.

KIRSTIN BOSWELL

UNIVERSITY CHAPLAIN



PHOTO COURTESY OF ELON UNIVERSITY

Rev. Kirstin Boswell serves as the university chaplain and dean of multifaith engagement. She works with the Truitt Center for Religious and Spiritual Life to guide students of all faiths and help facilitate educational and spiritual experiences. She is also an assistant professor of religious studies.

Elon's three dining halls

Clohan

Clohan offers a variety of options including scratch-made pizza and made-to-order sandwiches. The Burger Joint serves burgers made with Niman Ranch beef. Isabella's Daily Special rotates through Asian-inspired dishes and offers customizable stir fry. Phoenix Fuel serves post-workout refuel. Sip n' Sweets offers fresh-squeezed juice made from local produce and desserts.

Lakeside

Lakeside offers international dishes, street-food-inspired options and classic favorites. The Allgood station provides allergen-free menus for students with dietary restrictions. The Harvest 9 pantry offers a specialized area for food-sensitive guests. The Confectionery station serves homemade desserts.

McEwen

McEwen offers a mix of made-to-order and self-serve options. The Chef's Counter offers a new special every day. Restaurant Rotation cycles through options like barbecue and Asian dishes. Al Dente serves made-to-order pasta with a choice of toppings. McEwen also has a salad bar and dessert station.

Retail Locations

The Belk Library

Acorn Coffee Shop

Fresh-brewed coffee, pastries, sandwiches and snacks.

McEwen Dining Hall

Nolé Ice Cream Shop

Locally sourced, hand-scooped ice cream from renowned NC creameries.

Billy D's Fried Chicken

Farm fresh North Carolina fried chicken and southern sides.

Village Juice & Kitchen

Cold-pressed juices, nut milks, smoothie bowls, freshly made salads and toasts.

*Use Meal Exchanges at the retail locations listed above to receive a meal combo.

Clohan Hall

Fountain Market

Snacks, health items, coffee, smoothies, cold beverages, staple and specialty foods, locally sourced products, ready-to-eat meals and fresh sushi.

Boar's Head Deli

Made-to-order sandwiches with a variety of deli meats, cheeses, hummus, dips, spreads and condiments.

Daniel Commons

Qdoba Mexican Grill

Customizable burritos, bowls, tacos, salads and more.

Einstein Bros. Bagels

Freshly baked bagels, a selection of cream cheese flavors, on-the-go snacks and freshly brewed coffee.

Winter Garden Cafe

Biscuitville

Classic southern food, specializing in hearty breakfasts but also offers lunch and dinner.

Flat Out

Made-to-order personal flatbreads.

Freshii

Variety of wraps, salads, bowls, soups and burritos.

Did you know?

Students can order food ahead using the Transact Mobile Ordering app, which accepts Meal Exchanges, Meal Dollars, Food Dollars, Phoenix Cash, and Credit. The app is available for download in the App Store and Google Play.



2026-2027 Meal Plans

All Access +14

Annual Total
\$10,442.00

Meal Dollars
Fall: \$170 | Winter: \$60 | Spring: \$170

Benefits
Unlimited visits to all dining halls, 14 meal exchanges per week and 30 free guest meals per year.

All Access +7

Annual Total
\$9,826.00

Meal Dollars
Fall: \$170 | Winter: \$60 | Spring: \$170

Benefits
Unlimited visits to all dining halls, 7 meal exchanges per week and 20 free guest meals per year.

300 Block

Annual Total
\$5,071.00

Meal Dollars
Fall/Winter: \$200 | Spring: \$200

Benefits
300 meals per year, redeemable at any dining hall and select retail locations.

200 Block*

Annual Total
\$4,039.00

Meal Dollars
Fall/Winter: \$250 | Spring: \$250

Benefits
200 meals per year, redeemable at any dining hall and select retail locations.

*For commuting students only

All Access Basic

Annual Total
\$8,229.00

Meal Dollars
Fall: \$65 | Winter: \$20 | Spring: \$65

Benefits
Unlimited visits to all dining halls and 10 free guest meals per year.

Student guide explores human skills in AI age

Guide is designed for students, teachers to promote AI literacy

Kate Gray
News Editor

As professors and students prepare for another semester in a higher education landscape increasingly impacted by artificial intelligence, some are turning to a new student guide to artificial intelligence.

Elon University's Imagining the Digital Future Center recently published a Student Guide to Artificial Intelligence. Mustafa Akben, director of artificial intelligence integration at Elon University, said he sees AI as a fundamentally just system, but the way students integrate AI into their learning determines how it impacts them.

"There is no good or bad AI; there is a way that you can use AI in a good or bad way," Akben said. "And I believe there is a good way and a bad way that students can utilize these tools."

He said this is why student input is crucial in research and guidance about AI use.

"Whatever you come up with, AI is moving very fast and AI should be discussed with the whole stakeholders," Akben said. "I'm not very in favor of the idea, 'Let's put the policies and guidance top down.' I'm more in favor of the idea that we need a dialogue with our students."

Elon University leaders, with input from scholars around the world, first presented a statement of principles guiding higher institutions through emerging artificial intelligence technologies in October 2023 at the United Nations Internet Governance Forum in Kyoto, Japan.

One of six foundational principles in the statement was that people, not technology, must be at the center of higher institutions. Special assistant to the president Dan Anderson says that this message is still at the core of Elon's AI guidance.

"Elon is a very hands-on place and a very student-centered place," Anderson said. "Right from the beginning, the fact that we chose a student guide to AI is very much in keeping with our culture, with our mission, to stay student-focused."

The original statement evolved into Elon's first Student Guide to Artificial Intelligence in August 2024. The guide served as a straightforward introduction to what AI is and how to use it, and promoted AI literacy when large language models were just becoming mainstream.

The second edition, published in May 2025, contained more comprehensive information about artificial intelligence and discussed emerging ethical concerns. According to Anderson, students, faculty and staff at about 4,000 schools across 180 countries have downloaded the guide, which is offered for free under creative commons licensing.

The most recent edition, titled Human Wisdom for the Age of AI: A Field Guide to Cultivating Essential Skills, was released in



ENN FILE PHOTO

Elon News Network created this image using Imagen 3, a text-to-image model, on Google Gemini with the prompt: Generate a futuristic image of a student using ChatGPT.

May 2026 and is the third guide to AI published by Elon in less than two years. Anderson is the lead author and explained this edition focuses less on how to use AI and more on what increasing AI use means for humanity.

“

HOW ARE WE GOING TO USE IT
AND NOT DEGRADE OUR OWN
HUMAN CAPABILITIES?

DAN ANDERSON
SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT

"We know that AI is being used by nearly everyone in higher education at this point," Anderson said. "The question is, how are we going to use it and not degrade our own human capabilities? How can we use it to further and extend our education, but not enfeeble ourselves by assigning over some of the basic human capabilities?"

The guide draws from 10 voices across history and cultures — such as Aristotle, Cicero and Descartes — to identify human capacities and why those skills matter in the age of AI. For example, one page identifies storytelling as a human skill exemplified by Aristotle through his persuasion triangle,

and a target of AI concerns for potentially preventing creativity. The guide discusses how AI may be able to provide facts and logical reasoning, but only humans can contribute personal and emotional experiences.

"I hope that our students are going to utilize it in their development of AI literacy and use it to benefit themselves and understand it's not only telling AI what to do, but bringing these human ingenuity and skill sets to the table," Akben said.

Anderson also said maintaining inherently human skills is crucial to using AI effectively. He said teachers have a responsibility to help students develop curiosity, critical thinking, creativity and communication skills that cannot be learned from AI.

"The only way you could help students develop those human skills is to do it through intentional instruction and activities and practice," Anderson said. "You're not going to just learn these things through osmosis. You actually have to practice them and do them."

Exploring the human impact of emerging technologies is not new to Elon faculty. Janna Anderson founded the Imagining the Digital Future Center — then the Imagining the Internet Center — in 2000 to analyze thousands of projections of the positive and negative impacts of the internet.

"For more than 25 years we have been surveying and interviewing experts to gather their hopes and fears, holding a mirror up to our world to help us better understand the impact of the technology that has gradually insinuated itself into our lives to a point at which it seems we cannot thrive without it," Janna wrote in a statement to Elon News

Network. "We examine how we are changing as our tools change."

Janna said the research naturally turned to AI and students' and professors' desire for guidance.

"Our surveys and canvassings of experts for their input are our primary work - through these we also saw the great need for digital literacy education, thus the Student Guides became another extremely important aspect of what we do," Janna said in a statement.

According to Akben, students now want to learn how to use AI in an effective, ethical and responsible way. He worked with Dan Anderson to incorporate student and faculty feedback in the most recent edition.

Human Wisdom for the Age of AI includes teacher's guide learning modules with group exercises, worksheets and discussion questions, and a self-assessment tool for students to reflect on how reliant they are on AI in their studies.

"All of us in humanity are trying to learn about these technologies as they evolve in real time," Anderson said. "We're producing materials that I think are useful for everybody at whatever level they are at in their own AI education."

Anderson said he hopes students, particularly incoming freshmen, will download the most recent student guide and use it as a resource to inform and reflect on their AI literacy.

"There's so much, especially for new students, to digest and to know about when they start," Anderson said. "They could easily miss this, and I think it's just important that people find out about it"

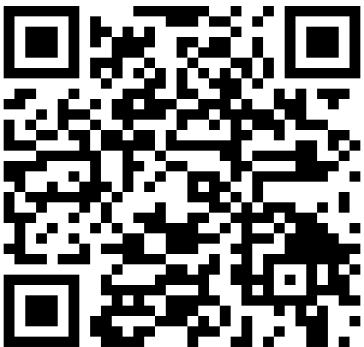
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- ☐ Design Team

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Health & well-being

Student Health Services: Get care for illnesses, minor injuries and other health needs at the R.N. Ellington Center. Schedule appointments online.

TimelyCare: Access free, 24/7 virtual medical and mental health care from anywhere in the U.S.

Campus Recreation and Wellness: Find fitness facilities, club sports, group exercise, outdoor programs and more. Download the Elon RecWell app for schedules and registration.

Student Care and Outreach: Get support navigating significant personal or academic challenges and connect with appropriate campus and community resources.

Counseling Services: Access free, confidential mental health support, including individual and group counseling, at the R.N. Ellington Center.

Subscriptions & technology

Microsoft 365: Elon students can download Microsoft 365 for free, including Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Outlook, Teams and OneDrive.

Adobe Creative Cloud: Elon students have free access to Adobe Creative Cloud tools, including programs for design and photo and video editing.

Free News Subscriptions: Elon students can activate complimentary digital subscriptions to *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post* and *The Wall Street Journal*.

The Maker Hub: All students can use 3D printers, sewing and embroidery machines, laser engravers and more for free.

Media Services: Check out laptops, cameras, microphones, adapters and other equipment for free from Media Services on the first floor of the Belk Library.

Academic support

Writing Center: Get help with academic, professional, personal or extracurricular writing at any stage of the writing process. Located in Belk Library.

Academic Accommodations & Accessibility (AAA): Works with students with disabilities to provide equitable access to courses, campus programs, facilities and university services.

Peer Success Coaching: Meet one-on-one with a peer coach for help with time management, organization, study strategies, note-taking and other academic skills.

Learning Assistance & Tutoring: Get free drop-in or appointment-based tutoring, plus other academic support through the Koenigsberger Learning Center located in Belk Library.

Safety & transportation

Security Escort Service: Campus Safety & Police provides escorts between on-campus locations from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. Call (336) 278-5555 to request an escort.

E-Ride: Request a one-way ride from campus to nearby residences or between campus locations during designated evening hours. Call (336) 278-5555.

RAVE Guardian App: Connect directly with Campus Safety and Police, submit tips and use the Safety Timer to let someone virtually monitor your walk.

Elon Express: Elon University's free shuttle system connects campus, nearby housing, shopping and other destinations.

Campus life & career

Student Professional Development Center (SPDC): Get help with career exploration, resumes and cover letters, interviews, internships, jobs and graduate school planning. The SPDC also offers free professional headshots and resume printing on select dates.

Elon Job Network (EJN): Elon's online career platform for finding internships, jobs and on-campus employment and scheduling appointments with career advisers.

Elon University's SGA prepares for school year, aims to increase presence on campus

E-Rides, freshman parking lot shuttle to get expanded hours

Evan Cooper
Elon News Network

As the Class of 2030 arrives at Elon, the Elon University Student Government Association is preparing for another year of representing students on campus.

SGA serves as the representative body for the entire student body. SGA regularly works with university administration to advocate for student needs and allocate funding to student organizations.

Junior Tyler Mastrangelo, vice president of communications, said that while some students may only know SGA for funding student organizations, SGA can be a connecting point for students.

"We exist to represent the rights of students and opinions of the student body," Mastrangelo said. "To provide for the student activities and to work alongside faculty, and to be that connecting point for students who want to make a change."

SGA Senate and Executive Board

The SGA Senate votes on proposed legislation, discusses student concerns, appoints executive positions and discusses large funding requests. Business meetings are open to all students, whether or not they are involved in SGA.

Senators can represent their class years, academic colleges, or SGA initiatives like sustainability or HealthEU.

Senior Michael Swartz — executive president of SGA — said he recognizes the importance of his position, being able to speak on behalf of students who can't meet one-on-one with higher ups.

"That's where hearing from the students is most important because we can't bring things to the table that we don't hear about," Swartz said.

SGA Finance Board

Student organizations are able to request funding from SGA to support their events. Funding requests are reviewed by the SGA finance board. Funds are given on a quarterly basis.

SGA's funds come from a percentage of the Student Activity Fees charged in undergraduate tuition. After the change to a quarter system last year, some on-campus organizations saw their funding decrease due to changes in funding periods and what SGA would fund.

The finance board considers funding based on factors listed in their bylaws, including student appeal, location on or off-campus, expected attendance and inclusivity.

The 2026-27 bylaws included updated rules. Some changes from last year to this year are that organizations requesting more than \$5,000 must submit requests 90 days before the deadline, individuals requesting funding will need to meet with the vice president of finance at least two months before submitting a request, and conference attendance will not be funded.

Another change to the bylaws is that all members of the finance board will undergo training on the funding bylaws. Senior Cayce Becker, vice president of finance, will be leading this training and said it will help ensure new members understand the request process before reviewing applications.

"It's helpful because our goal is that finance board members are liaisons with different student organizations, it just makes it easier for them to find meeting times," Becker said. "While they're always welcome to meet with the vice president of finance, they have an additional person so that there's more times to meet."

Looking back, looking ahead

One of the most prominent pieces of legislation passed in the 2025-26 school year was the implementation of suggestion boxes across campus. These suggestion boxes allowed students to more readily submit ideas to SGA.

After the legislation was passed, it continued to be discussed as the senate amended the bill. One amendment included adding an online submission form, accessible through SGA's page on Elon's website. Mastrangelo said that in the 2026-27 school year the senate will be shifting student feedback to the online submission form, making it easier to track submissions and route them to the right person.

"We're going to make sure it succeeds in the way that the people who authored the bill and the people who supported it intended for it to



Then-sophomore Tyler Mastrangelo speaks about his past experience and future goals as the Vice President of Communications to the SGA Senate April 9.

be," Mastrangelo said.

Over the summer, the SGA executive board met with Elon's director of transportation to improve on-campus transportation. Swartz said that E-Rides transportation service will have expanded hours on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, and the shuttle to and from the first-year parking lot will now operate until 11 p.m. instead of 9 p.m.

"Coming back from London and being an RA in a freshman neighborhood, one of the biggest things I heard was how this new Gateway lot has been impacting students," Swartz said. "That's just what we do throughout the summer, work to make it the best it can be with the situation that we have."

The Gateway lot is the parking lot for first-year students, located near the Francis Center. Students were frustrated with the parking lot being a roughly 1 mile walk from many

first-year neighborhoods, and raised safety concerns about the walk at night after shuttle services ended.

Swartz said that for the 2026-27 school year, he is working to make SGA more accessible and present on campus. Swartz campaigned on these principles in the spring, and he wants students to see SGA as more than just a funding entity but as a body they'll approach with concerns and ideas for improving campus.

Upcoming Events

Applications for the Fall 2026 election are open on PhoenixCONNECT, held for first year class officers, and for the new School of Engineering and Computing senator. The SGA Interest Meeting for those interested in running for these positions is at 5:30 p.m. Aug. 27 in Moseley 215. The election will be held Sept. 9.

Town of Elon prepares for annual influx of students

Return of around 6,000 students brings increased activity to downtown, local businesses

Emma Perman
Elon News Network

After a quiet summer, the town of Elon is preparing to welcome around 6,000 Elon University students back to campus. According to Elon Mayor Emily Sharpe, for a town with about 6,000 permanent residents, the return of thousands of students can have an effect on everything from public services to local businesses.

"When you double the population when the students are here, that does mean more police and fire calls," Sharpe said. "With more people comes more services being rendered."

Those services extend beyond responding to calls. During the university's 2025 move-in, Elon Campus Safety and Police implemented traffic and parking changes around campus including different traffic patterns, road restrictions and parking lot closures to accommodate new students and their families.

While the town remains active throughout the summer and continues to provide services to permanent residents, Sharpe said the absence of students creates a quieter environment. According to Sharpe, the town and university's partnership has helped

strengthen the Elon community as a whole.

"I think that things are very solid," Sharpe said. "We have two-way communication, and I think that will just continue because what's good for the town of Elon is also typically good for the university and vice versa."

Sharpe said the town supports university events when the return of students brings an increase in activity. The increase in students is also felt by local businesses.

At All That Jas, a locally owned clothing and embroidery store on North Williamson Ave. Beth Kelley, an employee, said summer is significantly quieter than the academic year and that the influx of students helps sales.

"As far as walk-in traffic goes, it helps tremendously," Kelley said.



WHEN THE STUDENTS
ARE HERE, THEY ARE OUR
RESIDENTS AS WELL.

EMILY SHARPE
TOWN OF ELON MAYOR

During the summer, All That Jas reduces its retail hours to three days a week. The store returns to its regular schedule of six



Traffic appears light in downtown Elon on Aug. 17, a little over a week before the semester starts.

days a week as students begin returning and shopping.

This return also requires preparation well before move-in. Kelley said she spends the majority of summer preparing merchandise for the upcoming academic year, including handmade stitched letter shirts for Elon's sororities.

Kelley said the store typically hires three to five students during the academic year, including graphic artists and employees who help with social media and store operations.

"We're just this cute little locally owned shop, that we won't survive if people don't shop or they don't support us," Kelley said.

For Sharpe, students' return also provides

an opportunity for them to become more connected to the town beyond the university.

"When the students are here, they are our residents as well," Sharpe said.

Sharpe encouraged students to explore local businesses and become involved in community events and organizations while also being mindful of the permanent residents who call Elon home.

The town of Elon hosts community events like the farmers market, Music at the Plaza and other programming downtown.

"Why not be part of this community?" Sharpe said, "Get to know your neighbors, but also respect that there are people who live here full time."

Volunteer with the Town of Elon Fire Department



Benefits

- Don't need any certifications to join
- Obtain volunteer or clinical hours
- Learn fire suppression, life-saving, and leadership skills

Requirements

- Complete a 90-Day Book and a 6-month probationary period
- Complete a minimum of 24 hours of standby time and atleast 12 hours of training each quarter

Application open
July 1 to Aug. 31



Scan the QR code for more information and the application

Questions? Contact Asst. Fire Chief Ray Pruitt rpruitt@elon.gov

Elon's club sports offer competition, community

STORIES BY: KATHAN GANDHI



PHOTOS COURTESY OF ELON CLUB MEN'S VOLLEYBALL, ELON CLUB FENCING, ELON RUNS AND ELON CLUB CLIMBING.

Students participate in Elon club sports including fencing, volleyball, climbing and running, which offer opportunities for competition and community outside of varsity athletics.

Club fencing offers distinctive competitive opportunity

Club Fencing relaunched at Elon in August 2025, after the university's previous fencing club ended during the COVID-19 pandemic. Since then, the club has rebuilt largely from the ground up, with most current members picking up the sport for the first time, according to club president Blair Berenson.

"It doesn't take a long time to sort of get used to it, and soon you'll be at tournaments, and you'll be having a blast," Berenson said.

Practices follow a consistent structure: members warm up, work on footwork and basic technique, then move into practice bouts on the strip. Teaching beginners is one of the team's main focuses, and many new members develop enough skill to compete within their first few months.

Berenson said some members who started last year with no fencing experience have since gone on to be coaches for the new batch of fencers.

Last year, the club had 34 registered members and about 57 students in its GroupMe. Practices typically drew around eight people, though some sessions saw more than 20.

Berenson said the club tries to keep the atmosphere light — members joke around, play music and experiment with variations of fencing during practices. Beyond the social side, the sport also builds hand-eye coordination, balance and reaction time.

This year, the club hopes to grow its membership and compete in tournaments against other colleges, with possible matchups in Greensboro and the Research Triangle area.

Students interested in fencing can attend a practice. The club usually meets Sundays from 3-5 p.m. at South Campus Gym, and equipment is available for those who are new to the sport.

Club climbing provides off-the-wall community, bonding

With a new climbing facility coming to campus in the soon-to-be open Slattery Center, Elon's Club Climbing is preparing to welcome more students to the sport this upcoming school year.

The club usually meets twice a week, traveling to Ruckus Climbing Gym in Greensboro on Thursdays and Triangle Rock Club in Durham on Fridays. Members meet on campus before taking club-provided transportation to the gyms, where they spend about two hours climbing.

The club welcomes students of all experience levels, from experienced climbers to those who have never climbed before. Members can choose between bouldering and top-rope climbing, while more experienced climbers often help newcomers learn the basics.

"We have climbers of all levels," said Leah Brooker, president of the club. "Everyone's super welcoming."

The club typically reaches its 30-person capacity for each trip. Brooker said much of the club's community comes from the time members spend together during the rides to and from the gyms.

The club has grown to about 60 active

members, and Brooker said building a welcoming community has been one of its biggest priorities.

Brooker said one of the club's strengths is how the community has banded together to support newcomers.

"Our exec board is really focused on making sure that new members feel really welcomed," Brooker said. "People are there to help you along the whole time."

The new on-campus rock climbing wall in the Slattery Center, which is set to open this fall, is expected to give the club more opportunities to climb together and potentially host friendly competitions. Club members have already competed in an intercollegiate competition at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, where several Elon climbers finished in the top five.

For students who have never climbed before, Brooker encourages them to give the club a chance.

"You never know. It might not be your thing, and that's okay. But for the people it might be your thing: it's one of the best things I ever did in my college experience," Brooker said.

Elon Runs brings students together through running

From first-time runners to students training for marathons, Elon Runs brings together students of all experience levels through a shared passion for the sport.

The club has more than 200 students in its GroupMe and usually meets Mondays and Wednesdays at 5:30 p.m. inside McCoy Commons before heading out on runs around campus. Members can split into different pace groups, allowing runners to find a speed that works for them.

"We have people of all levels," said junior Lily Botten, a co-president of Elon Runs. "I love meeting people who share a passion for running."

For Botten, the club's twice-weekly runs provide an opportunity to slow down and connect with other runners. While she trains for longer races outside of the club, she described the group runs as her "slower, easy recovery runs."

Members participate for a variety of reasons, whether they are training for races, staying active or simply looking to meet new people, according to Botten.

Some runners are experienced athletes, while others are trying the sport for the first time.

Botten said the variety of experience levels is part of what makes the club welcoming, giving students an opportunity to run at their own pace while connecting with others who share an interest in the sport.

**CLUB SPORTS PHOENIX
CONNECT PAGE**



Club volleyball brings varsity-level intensity to club competition

Twice a week, Elon's men's club volleyball team takes over the PARC Fitness Center and Gym for two hours of practice. Without a varsity program, club volleyball is the highest level of men's volleyball on campus — and players approach it with that mindset.

Practices are filled with constant communication, high-energy rallies and competitive scrimmages. Players call out plays and reads throughout drills before finishing the night with full-team play.

The team competes in tournaments throughout the season, often traveling every other weekend. With limited practice time and a busy tournament schedule, players emphasize making the most of each session.

Sophomore Oscar Gutierrez said the team's competitive nature became clear during his first road tournament at High Point University.

"The moment I realized that this team

wasn't casual was the first tournament we had on the road at High Point," Gutierrez said. "Every practice I go to gets harder."

The commitment extends beyond the gym. Players balance practices and weekend travel with academics and other responsibilities. For many, the trade-off is worth it, both for the level of play and for the relationships built along the way.

Despite the team's competitive approach, players also point to its sense of community as one of its biggest draws. Team bonding has become an important part of the experience, particularly for newer students still adjusting to life at Elon.

The season builds toward nationals in Kansas City, where the team will face other collegiate club programs from around the country.