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THE PENDULUM

Established 1974

The Pendulum is a daily operation that includes a newspaper, website, magazine and web show. Letters to the editor are welcome and should be typed, signed and emailed to pendulum@elon.edu as Word documents. The Pendulum reserves the right to edit obscene and potentially libelous material. Lengthy letters may be trimmed to fit. All submissions become the property of The Pendulum and will not be returned. The Pendulum is located on the third floor of the Elon Town Center on Williamson Avenue.

Editor-in-Chief
Rebecca Iannucci

Managing Editor
Jonathan Black

News Editor
Katherine Blunt

News Editor
Ethan Smith

Assistant News Editor
Michael Bodley

Opinions Editor
Audrey Horwitz

Assistant Opinions Editor
Alex Francis

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Alana Romans

Features Editor
Kyra Gemberling

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Sports Editor
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NC Supreme Court puts Ochsner case to rest with tied vote

Katherine Blunt
News Editor

The North Carolina Supreme Court voted 3-3 this month on a North Carolina Court of Appeals ruling that North Carolina Public Records Law is not applicable to state-commissioned police departments of private universities within the state. The tied vote leaves the appellate court ruling undisturbed.

The June 2012 appellate court ruling upheld and extended a decision of the Durham County Superior Court to dismiss a complaint filed in April 2011 by former Elon University student Nick Ochsner. In his complaint, Ochsner argued the Elon Campus Safety and Police Department violated the North Carolina Public Records Law by refusing to provide documents related to a fellow student's arrest.

Although the appellate court ruling was upheld in the Supreme Court, it stands without precedential value. Ochsner said he considers this a glimmer of hope despite a disappointing outcome.

"This is not the direction I thought the court would go, not with the energy I've felt behind the case regarding open government and open access," he said. "However, this decision comes with a silver lining. Basically, no one wins. Elon doesn't have to give me anything else, but the Court of Appeals decision does not set a precedent."

Ochsner's case has garnered much attention from universities, legal organizations and news outlets across the nation since it came to fruition nearly three years ago. It inspired a bill proposed to the North Carolina General Assembly last month, Ochsner said.

The legislation, filed Feb. 21, 2013, is "an act to provide public access to certain information maintained by campus police agencies affiliated with private, nonprofit institutions of higher education." It passed in the N.C. House March 13 and is now being heard by the N.C. Senate.

The battle began in March 2010, when Ochsner, then an Phoenix14 News

reporter, requested a complete incident report on the arrest of Stephen Connors, a student at the time.

"The campus police handled the arrest, even though it was made off-campus," Ochsner said in August 2012. "I wanted to get the narrative because it showed that the student ran from the police and was tackled to the ground. If you look at public records law, police must disclose circumstances surrounding arrests, and I felt that the foot chase warranted the need to make the narrative public record."

But the campus police department released only the arrest report and the first page of the incident report. Ochsner wrote to Chuck Gantos, then director of Campus Safety and Police, to request the full incident report, in which he listed the report's qualifications as a public record under North Carolina law.

His request was not granted, but Ochsner stood his ground. With a grant from the Society of Professional Journalists, he filed a lawsuit at the trial court level. The complaint was dismissed. Ochsner appealed, and the case took a new turn.

"We sent our briefs to the Court of Appeals, and Elon responded and got the help of four special interest groups to file an amicus brief arguing that Elon's campus police department was not subject to public records law," Ochsner said.

The question became not whether the Elon campus police department was in compliance with North Carolina Public Records Law, but "whether Defendant Elon University, a private university, is subject to the North Carolina Public Records Act," Judge Cressie Thigpen wrote in the court ruling.

Because the Public Records Act does not clearly define campus police departments as public law enforcement agencies subject to public records law, the court ruled in favor of Elon University.

"We believe if the legislature had intended for campus police departments to be subject to the Public Records Act, it could have listed campus police departments as public law enforcement agencies," Thigpen wrote.

At the time, Elon's administration felt the ruling was just.

"Elon University is pleased that the North Carolina Court of Appeals has upheld the decision of the trial court, and affirmed that the university followed the law in release of campus police investigation information to Nick Ochsner," said Dan Anderson, vice president of University Communications, in a statement on behalf of the university issued June 2012. "Even though Elon's campus police is not

an entity covered under the state public records act, the university has consistently shared campus police investigation report information as it understands public law enforcement agencies do."

Now, the legal battle is over for Ochsner. He said he does not regret the time he spent pursuing the case.

"I've spent almost to the day three years fighting this," he said. "It's been time well-spent when you look at the attention that has been drawn to the issue."

OCHSNER CASE PROGRESSION

March 2010

Ochsner requested a complete incident report on the arrest of Stephen Connors, a student at the time. Elon's Campus Safety and Police provided only part of the report.

April 2011

Ochsner filed suit against Elon University and N.C. Attorney General Roy Cooper for withholding records of a fellow student's arrest. The Society of Professional Journalists gave him a grant to pursue the case.

July 2011

Durham County Superior Court Judge Mike O'Foghludha ruled Elon's Campus Safety and Police Department provided adequate information upon Ochsner's request. Ochsner appealed the ruling.

June 2012

The North Carolina Court of Appeals upheld and extended the lower court's ruling. The court decided North Carolina Public Records Law is not applicable to state-commissioned police departments of private universities within the state.

August 2012

The North Carolina Supreme Court agreed to review the appellate court's ruling.

March 2013

The North Carolina Supreme Court voted 3-3 on the appellate court's decision. The tied vote left the ruling unchanged and without precedential value.

@TheElonD accused of promoting campus rape culture

Katherine Blunt
News Editor

@TheElonD, one of Elon University's many anonymous Twitter accounts, appears to have been deactivated after several Elon students and administrators criticized the account for exacerbating "rape culture" on a college campus.

The account sparked controversy with a tweet it posted after the Elon baseball team won its game against North Carolina State University March 6. It read, "The elon baseball team just gave @ncstatebaseball #TheElonD. Waiting on the Smith Jackson email because that may or may not be rape."

Several students found the post offensive and tweeted back to express their distaste. @TheElonD responded by tweeting, "For the record, #TheElonD is not meant to offend anyone in any way, it is a parody account about daily life at ELON."

Others appeared unfazed by the tweet. @ElonConfessions, another anonymous account, tweeted, "I don't think anything is wrong with @TheElonD...and I'm an Elon feminist."

Sophomore Quinn Bower entered the online conversation by tweeting, "Elon U needs to learn there are no breaks on the rape train #CommonKnowledge." @TheElonD retweeted the tweet, provoking an outcry from several other students.

Sophomore Delaney McHugo responded by tweeting, "Oh good, another joke about rape. When will the ignorance

train stop? #RapeIsntFunnyItsCommonKnowledge" at both Bower and @TheElonD.

"When I saw that @TheElonD had retweeted Bower's tweet, that's when I realized it was more than just a misogynistic Twitter," McHugo said. "It's promoting a huge problem that we refuse to acknowledge."

Bower retaliated by posting several photos of the "rape sloth," a meme centered on rape-related humor, on McHugo's Twitter page. McHugo said she was taken aback by the lewdness of the post.

"I was appalled," she said. "It was a little frightening because it was tweeted at me from someone I didn't know."

After reading the exchange between @TheElonD, Bower and McHugo, senior Erica Young, a SPARKS peer educator, scrolled through @TheElonD's previous posts. The account, which had nearly 800 followers, often tweeted about female students and whether they wanted "The D," a sexually charged euphemism that has inspired other Twitter accounts and hashtags. Most recently, @TheElonD had tweeted, "The amount of random new snatch that will receive #TheElonD this spring is absurd #NewBabies."

Young said she thought both the photos and the account perpetuated rape culture on campus. Rape culture is a colloquial term referring to language and actions that objectify women and undermine the severity and prevalence of sexual violence, according to Young.

"Basically, the account says there's nothing a girl can do on this campus that doesn't insinuate she wants the 'Elon D,'" she said. "When you add it all up, that leads into this idea of rape culture."

Young brought the tweets to the attention of Jordan Perry, coordinator for health promotion and substance education advisor for SPARKS. Perry said Smith Jackson, vice president and dean of Student Life, may coordinate a meeting with Young, Bower, McHugo and the student behind @TheElonD to discuss rape culture and its impact on students, especially those who are victims of sexual assault.

One in four female college students are victims of attempted or completed rape, according to a study conducted in 2000 by the National Institute of Justice. The results aligned with those of several other studies conducted between 1995 and 2005.

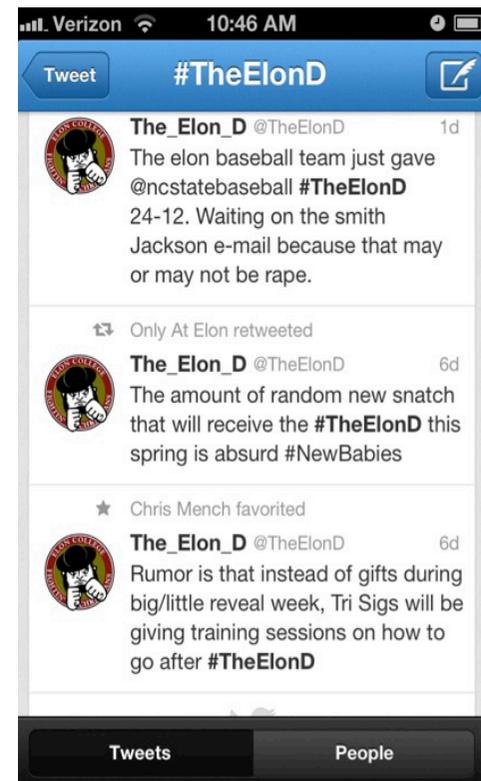
Bower said he regrets engaging in the exchange with @TheElonD and McHugo.

"It was obviously the wrong decision, now looking back on it," he said. "It was pretty stupid and not funny to anyone."

He said he would like to meet with SPARKS coordinators to talk about the issue.

"I know I messed up," he said. "I mean, one out of every four is a lot, and I never knew it was that big of a problem. I'd like to talk about what I can do to help and how I can reach out and apologize."

Rape culture extends well beyond Elon's social media sphere. Twitter is rife



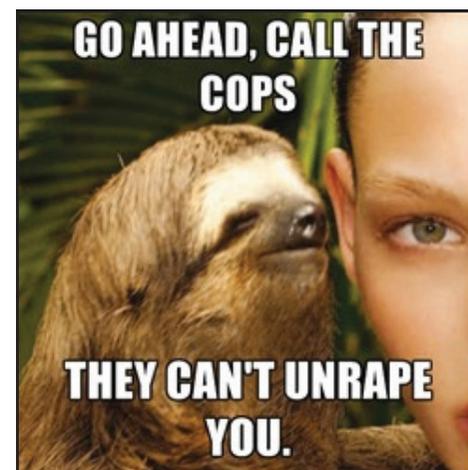
@TheElonD deactivated its account in the wake of a controversy sparked by a tweet about Elon baseball.

with anonymous accounts centered on rape humor, and #TheD is a frequently used hashtag. @ImNotARapist, an account with 388,063 followers, tweets several times daily, often about statutory rape. The account's posts include, "Old enough to pee, old enough for the D" and "Newton's third law of Emotion: For every male action, there's a female overreaction."

The person behind the account, which features a dark photo of a windowless red van advertising free candy, states he or she is "not in any way affiliated with being a rapist. Only here for laughs!"

Perry said it's important to understand the implications of promoting rape culture through social media and other platforms.

"When we have a culture where we laugh about it, we're not taking it seriously," she said. "It seems like less of a big deal. We do that as a culture when we're not comfortable with something to take away the discomfort. That's not something that's helpful. When we don't take an issue seriously, when we talk about rape culture, that's a way of dismissing it."



Sophomore Quinn Bower posted six "rape sloth" memes on sophomore Delaney McHugo's Twitter page. McHugo said she was appalled by the nature of the photos.

Sequestration may trim budgets of Elon students, Alamance County organizations

Michael Papich
Senior Reporter

The sequester is often discussed in broad, technical terms, but real people in Alamance County, including Elon University students, may be affected by the automatic spending cuts enacted by the federal government earlier this month.

Sequestration refers to a plan to activate \$1.2 trillion in spending cuts across an eight-year period, \$85 billion of which will take place in 2013. The cuts will affect almost all non-entitlement spending.

The cuts were scheduled to impel Congress to create more practical deficit reduction legislation, but a bipartisan deal proved elusive before the March 1 deadline. Now, the government may decrease funding for food inspection, federal college grants and domestic abuse programs.

If its budget is reduced, the Department

of Justice will withdraw \$20 million from its Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) programs. Money distributed by the VAWA benefits many Alamance County organizations, including CrossRoads and Family Abuse Services, which use federal money to offer legal services and shelter for abuse survivors.

“When one partner is so dependent on the other because the abusive partner tends to want power and control over the survivor, it comes out in economic abuse and isolation,” said Rebecca Bishopric, coordinator for violence prevention and response at Elon. “So the partner that is the survivor might not have any other resources. Homelessness is a huge result of domestic violence in the United States.”

Bishopric works with abuse resource organizations near Elon and helps them raise funds. Last October, Elon partnered with Family Abuse Services to raise awareness and money through its “Walk a Mile in Her Shoes” event. Bishopric is also trying to obtain fund-



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY AL DRAGO

ing for abuse prevention efforts on campus.

“We’re applying currently for a campus grant through the Violence Against Women Office in the Department of Justice, so them losing that money decreases our chances of getting funded,” Bishopric said.

College loans and grants may also be affected by federal spending cuts. According to Pat Murphy, director of financial planning at Elon, these programs will not receive less funding, but rather less funding increases in coming years.

“What’s happening is not really a cut in those programs, it’s a reduction of the fair share increase,” he said. “So we’re still going to see a natural increase in the funding from what we had this year to what we will be able to use next year.”

The sequester will reduce the increase in funds for federal work-study grants by \$49 million and supplemental educational opportunity grants by \$37 million. The origination fee for federal Stafford loans will also increase.

“When you get a loan, the government takes 1 percent off the top, so if you’re getting a \$3,000 loan, you’re only getting 99 percent of that,” Murphy said. “What they’re going to do is increase that fee to about 1.05 percent. Unfortunately, the student is still on the hook for the full amount of the loan.”

While Pell grant funding will not change this year, the 10 percent of Elon students who

receive Pell grants may be affected if Congress does not act to end the sequester.

“If it maintains, it is supposed to issue these cuts over an eight-year range, so for 2014 and beyond, if they don’t get things worked out, we would begin seeing cuts in the Pell grant program,” Murphy said.

Plans to trim funding from the Food and Drug Administration and the U.S. Department of Agriculture are still unfolding, but the cuts are expected to total \$51.8 million. This will likely decrease the number of food safety and meat inspectors, resulting in a reduction of the meat supply.

Although a smaller supply of meat would mean higher prices, ARAMARK, Elon’s food service provider, said its management of the supply chain allows it to bypass price increases.

“Our purchasing power enables us to lock in pricing for a longer period of time, giving us more stability with pricing and menu planning,” said Kate Nelson, marketing manager for ARAMARK at Elon.

According to Nelson, this supply management, as well as ARAMARK’s efforts to minimize waste, enables the supplier to adjust for increases that may come if food inspectors have been laid off or furloughed.

“Controlling food waste gives us some flexibility to handle price increases, such as those seen recently with meat, dairy and grain,” Nelson said.

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Elon faculty promoted to new roles on campus

Michael Papich
Senior Reporter

Two Elon University faculty members recently assumed new positions on campus, a shift that has allowed them to apply their skills and knowledge in different ways.

Rhonda Belton, former director of application technologies, became associate director of institutional research (IR) and Tait Arend, former associate director of major gifts, became interim director of alumni engagement.

As director of application technologies, Belton was part of the team that launched the database Datatel in the mid 1990s. Datatel pools Elon's student data so different departments can utilize the information.

"As I've watched Elon grow, I feel like this system has made a big contribution to help us get to where we are today," Belton said.

In addition to Datatel, Belton helped launch OnTrack in the 2003-2004 academic year, as well as online applications that allowed students to easily change their housing and meal plans.

As associate director of institutional research, Belton will process information and disseminate information relevant to deans, department chairs and the provost. The IR department also gives campus data to publications that compile college rankings, including USA Today and Newsweek. Belton said she feels her experience in application technologies has prepared her well for this

new position.

"I really know Elon's data," Belton said. "This new position in institutional research will be using Elon's data with employees and students to provide information to external agencies that have to have these numbers."

Belton will also help create a data mining system to collect information about students and employees on campus.

"I think that we'd like to have a history of all the data instead of just starting fresh each year," she said.

Regarding alumni engagement, Arend will only be director until the end of May 2014. The university will start looking for a permanent director of alumni engagement starting in 2014.

Arend, an Elon alumnus, worked in Student Life and university advancement before securing his current position. Arend said he is interested in alumni engagement because Elon takes an interest in its student body.

"I think it's a place that really invests in the people that are here," he said. "There are meetings that happen all across this campus and I've been in different environments where people meet just to meet and this is a place where every meeting that I've been in is ultimately about how to improve the quality of the experience that's provided here at Elon."

Elon's alumni engagement program works to help graduates promote the university, fund academic resources and create postgraduate connections.



Rhonda Belton, former director of application technologies, recently became associate director of institutional research. She will process university information and distribute it to faculty and staff members.

MICHAEL PAPICH | Senior Reporter

"We have 20 chapters and clubs in the major metropolitan areas and we're trying to bring programming and information to them that are relevant to their professional lives," Arend said.

According to Arend, Elon has developed a distinguished alumni engagement pro-

gram. A new Alumni Welcome Center is scheduled to open Fall 2013.

"There's other places that I know where they just hope the alums connect with the alumni," Arend said. "Well, at Elon, we are thinking incredibly intentionally about how we are reaching out to our alumni."

Vendor Policy Study Committee expected to release research soon

Corinne James
Senior Reporter

Elon University's Vendor Policy Study Committee is anticipated to reveal its findings regarding the university's partnership with Chick-fil-A within the next several weeks.

The Vendor Policy Study Committee was created in October to examine Elon's relationship with the franchise in the wake of a controversy that divided the student body last fall. Led by Spectrum, Elon's queer-straight alliance, some students argued Chick-fil-A's donations to anti-gay

organizations do not align with Elon's non-discrimination policy, while others insisted the vendor does not actively discriminate against anyone.

The 15-member committee is composed of trustees, alumni, students, faculty and staff members. It has been working for nearly five months to examine Elon's vendor policies, the community's opinions regarding Chick-fil-A and other universities' partnerships with the franchise. The committee is working to create a report for Elon's Board of Trustees, which will ultimately decide whether Chick-fil-A stays on campus.

According to Connie Book, committee co-chair and associate provost for academic affairs, the committee was tasked with three charges.

"The charge associated with Chick-fil-A asked us to complete a study of what had unfolded with Chick-fil-A for the Board of Trustees to use in its decision-making," Book said.

The committee was also charged with proposing guidelines and options for the Board of Trustees to address concerning the university's vendor policies.

Book said she anticipates the Board of Trustees will convene this spring to discuss

Chick-fil-A's presence on campus once they receive the committee's report. The board will then vote on whether to continue its contract.

Junior Ricky Rosati, a student committee member, said the committee is tasked with finding important information.

"I feel a great responsibility to the issue at hand," Rosati said. "The committee has been working regularly for months, and I foresee our work concluding within the next couple of weeks."

Chick-fil-A will remain open in Octagon Cafe while the policies are discussed and developed.

Catholics celebrate the election of Pope Francis

Kaitlin Dunn
Design Editor

When Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio was elected as the new pope of the Roman Catholic Church last week, many Catholics on Elon University's campus rejoiced at the decision.

"My first impression was jubilation," said the Rev. Gerry Waterman of the Catholic Campus Ministry. "Finally a pope from the Americas and a Jesuit. This is monumental."

The new pope has decided to take the name Francis, after Saint Francis of Assisi, a move that many said will define his papacy. Saint Francis was a second century preacher from Italy. He was born an aristocrat but left his family to work for the church. He founded a community called the Lesser Brothers, known today as the Order of Friars Minor. The organization advocates work with nature, animals and the poor.

"His name choice shows that he will look

out for the poor and the marginalized and it's a wonderful statement," Waterman said. "This name obviously has meaning to him and shows that he wants to focus on rebuilding and repairing the church."

Even after his election as the leader of the Roman Catholic Church, Pope Francis has chosen to work, live and travel like regular people do.

"I like that he's so humble," said freshman Allie Kornacki. "One of the first things he said in his speech was asking the people to pray for him. It's quite remarkable."

He has washed the feet of AIDS sufferers, baptized children of unwed mothers, visited the slums of Buenos Aires and engaged in many other acts that students said have demonstrated his humility and sympathy for the poor.

"I think he will be emphasizing charity work and the reconciliation of the church a lot more, if his work in Argentina is any indica-

tion," said senior Josh McGee.

"It shows a really big message that he is from the new world," McGee said. "It shows how international the church is. It makes sense to elect him because 40 percent of Catholics are from South America today."

Bergoglio was a runner-up in the 2005 conclave, but his age caused many to discount him as a frontrunner in the most recent conclave.

"He was overlooked because of his age, but the Holy Spirit did not overlook him," Waterman said. "The Holy Spirit worked through the cardinals and chose him."

Pope Francis succeeds Pope Benedict XVI, who abdicated the position at the end of February. Pope Benedict will continue to serve the church as a cardinal.

"I think that his term as pope will be very different," said Trung Huynh-Duc, business manager for Catholic Campus Ministry, "But it's nice that Pope Benedict will still be around in case he needs guidance.

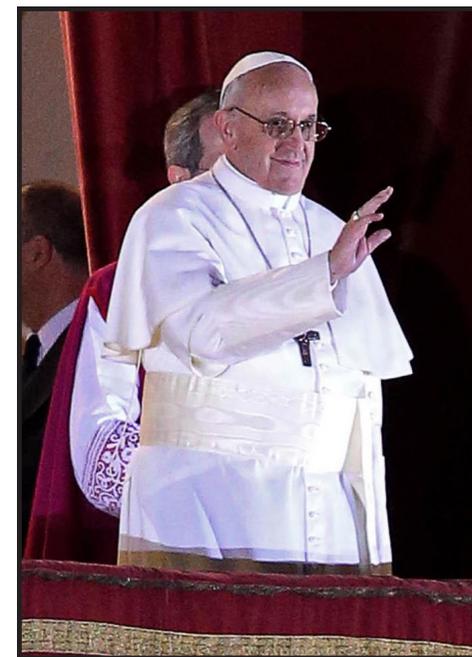


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Pope Francis was formally installed as the new leader of the Roman Catholic Church March 19.

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NC high schools consider bible study elective

Corinne James
Senior Reporter

When North Carolina high school students return to school next fall, they may find the opportunity to enroll in a new religious elective.

N.C. Senator Stan Bingham recently introduced a bill designed to offer local school boards the option to provide high school students with a chance to study the Bible in school. The bill proposes the creation of an elective course on the Old Testament, New Testament or both. The courses would relate biblical content to modern literature, art, music and public policies, according to the bill.

North Carolina high schools already have the option to offer religious studies electives, but Bingham proposed the bill to spark discussion within the state's school districts. Some high schools in Montgomery and Cabarrus counties already offer Bible electives.

If high schools in the state choose to offer the elective, they must adhere to federal and state laws regarding religious neutrality and nondiscrimination, according to Kent Byrd, executive director of secondary school leadership for the Alamance-Burlington School System (ABSS).

If the bill becomes law, the ABSS will decide whether to offer the course within its district. Byrd said teachers, principals and other district curriculum support professionals analyze new courses and provide feedback to a curriculum committee that ultimately recommends the course for the upcoming year.

"Feedback from students, community members and parents may be considered in this process," Byrd said. "Students ultimately determine the likelihood of this course being available, even if the board selects it as an offering."

The preregistration process prior to the school year will help the board determine whether an adequate number of students are interested in taking the biblical elective. If the ABSS decides to introduce the course, it will be treated as any other new elective provided by the Department of Public Education, according to a statement by the ABSS board.

"The principal of each high school has the last call on whether the course can be taught based on student demand, teacher allotments and required courses that must be offered," Byrd said. "This course will be offered differently on a school-to-school basis."

Sydney Plovsky, an Elon University freshman from Greensboro, N.C., questions the focus on biblical teachings within public



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY AL DRAGO

schools.

"Public high schools are made up of such diverse religious affiliations," Plovsky said. "It seems unfair to focus on one religion's teachings."

As a Jewish student who attended public high school, Plovsky said she predicts a controversial response to the bill from students of

non-Christian religions.

But some school districts have expressed interest in offering the course. Bingham told The Burlington Times-News he has received positive responses from school districts that were not aware of the option to offer a Bible study elective, as well as some parental support for the legislation.

College Scorecard leaves room for improvement

Jonathan Black
Managing Editor

In his State of the Union address Feb. 12, President Barack Obama promised to make the cost of universities across the nation more transparent. That same night, the White House revealed the College Scorecard.

The website allows anyone to view the collective cost of attending colleges across the country, rather than the cost of tuition alone.

"The government has a good idea that is to try to simplify and come up with some standard way for people to compare institutions' costs," said Dan Anderson, vice president of University Communications at Elon University. "The motivation is certainly a good one."

The College Scorecard was started by the U.S. Department of Education's College Affordability and Transparency Center to make it easier for families to understand the true cost of colleges across the country.

"This website could have assisted me in matching my financial situation," said sophomore Kaitlyn Osborne. "I really wanted to go to Elon, but if there was a school that I liked just as much and its tuition was cheaper, there would have been a large possibility that I would have gone there instead."

Junior Michelle Lewandowski said the website didn't reveal anything new to her about Elon.

"It wouldn't have made a major difference in my college decision-making process," she said. "After looking at the site, it basically tells me that Elon is an expensive university,

something I was very aware of at the time of my application."

The scorecard takes into account four different criteria in order to determine the net cost of attending a university: budget increases from 2007-2009, the six-year graduation rate, the loan default rate and loan payment rate.

"The one thing that is hard for families to do is figure out what it will actually cost them," Anderson said. "Usually schools won't give you the financial aid package data until you make your decision."

According to the website, Elon's net cost is \$28,208 — \$425 less than the cost of tuition. The website also shows the net cost of Duke University and Davidson College at \$43,056 and \$40,809, respectively. The numbers are lower than the institutions' tuition

rates.

"A net cost number is interesting from a statistical point of view but it means almost nothing to any given family," Anderson said. "The financial aid calculator that a lot of schools use, including Elon, where they let you put in your own family's finances, that's more helpful to you."

The Department of Education said it is working on improvements for the website, including a tool that would show how many graduates receive jobs and how much money they make.

Despite the comparable net cost of Elon and other private schools within the area, Lewandowski said she has no regrets.

"The cost of Elon is worth the benefits" she said. "I have found my best friends, my passion and my future career."

STUDYING ABROAD: A GAME WITH

Students, faculty take responsibility for safety measures while abroad

Stephanie Butzer
Arts & Entertainment Editor

On a fall evening in London, an American student rode the Tube home with the blood of a stranger seeping from her shoes.

Ashley Barnas participated in a London study abroad program through Elon University in 2008. Little did she know this experience would test the limits of her safety while abroad.

As performers sang on stage at the Urban

Music Awards, Barnas moved around the room, taking pictures of the artists and talking to her friends. She was an intern for a company called Invincible Media Group, where her main concentration was to help organize the event. It was a fun, light-hearted night and she was happy to see her work coming together.

Suddenly, chaos erupted in the room.

“All of a sudden you see and hear crashing and wine bottles flying everywhere, bottles smashing on the floor,” Barnas said. “Tables are overturning and chairs flipping over. It was literally from the inside out.”

A man had been stabbed. Barnas and her friends were close to the victim and their shirts and shoes were covered in his blood. They frantically shoved their way to an exit and tried to contact people from her internship for assistance.

Barnas discovered her internship director had fled the scene, leaving the students to fend for themselves. She later learned the stabbing was the result of a gang-related fight. She was allowed to terminate the internship early and finished the semester in London.

Barnas was one of the 260,327 students to

study abroad for academic credit in the 2008–2009 school year, according to Open Doors, a comprehensive resource for international and U.S. students looking to study abroad. Elon University will send 348 students abroad next fall, an increase from 286 students last fall.

While most of these students did not face an experience like Barnas’, there have been scattered instances when students and study abroad program faculty had to face and immediately respond to an emergency, like the earthquake in Japan in 2011 and the SARS epidemic in Hong Kong in 2003.

Universities nationwide have acknowledged this and responded by adjusting their study abroad programs, including added safety measures to help students stay safe and avoid instances as nightmarish as Barnas’ experience.

The world can become a classroom when students step into foreign countries. Open eyes, an educated mind and street smarts can help students enjoy the experience and exercise safety measures.

A new country is a new home

Every country is a new environment. There are different diseases, foods, health risks, laws, customs and accepted norms. These differences provide fresh challenges for students to immerse themselves in a foreign place and grasp new and inviting information.

“You’re in a new place,” said James Buschman, senior director of the office of global programs at New York University. “You’re a stranger in a strange land. As a result, things that are very basic — things that in your own culture you don’t think twice about — suddenly you really have to relearn.”

While students try to grasp new customs, languages, currencies or mannerisms, the world and its people continue daily life. With their eyes on maps or up at street signs, natives can label them as foreign tourists or students, said Woody Pelton, dean of global studies at Elon University.

“I don’t know how they do it, it’s like we have a big USA on our forehead,” Pelton said. “That distinguishes you.”



PHOTO SUBMITTED

August Armbrister, a student at UNC, was studying as an exchange student at the Waseda University in Tokyo at the time of the 2011 earthquake and tsunami.

RISK OF ADVENTURES, DANGERS

Pelton said some citizens approach American students with genuine curiosity. Others ignore them. But some people make a living from taking advantage of outsiders who appear lost and unaware.

“It’s typically pickpocketing,” said Kevin Morrison, director of study abroad and assistant dean of global studies at Elon University. “It’s not a violent kind of mugging. It’s usually just you go to reach for your wallet to pay for something and it’s not there.”

Trial and error can help students avoid these issues and understand cultures, Buschman said. New York University tells students that experiencing studying abroad is doing something wrong daily.

“Part of studying abroad is being in unpleasant situations every day, feeling frustrated every day,” Buschman said.

Study abroad experiences can open students’ eyes to places that are stereotyped as violent, poor and unattractive regions of the world. Because they can immerse themselves in the culture, students have the potential to gain knowledge they may not have fully understood had they stayed at their designated school.

Cassandra McClellan, a junior at Elon, studied in Amman, Jordan, during the fall 2012 semester. Through pre-departure information set up by her school and hands-on experience in the country, McClellan learned how to blend into the culture. Jordan has remained one of the few countries in the Middle East without significant societal or political problems even through the Arab Spring and its aftermath.

“I am so grateful to be in the Middle East and see firsthand that it is not the scary place so many people make it out to be,” McClellan said. “Jordan is a wonderful, safe place with friendly and hospitable people.”

McClellan said she felt surrounded by global citizens every day because she studied at the Jordan Institute of Diplomacy. Eye-opening experiences like visits to Syrian refugee camps and speaking with natives in Arabic created a semester she won’t forget.

“I think most people understand what a study abroad experience will do for one’s global awareness,” McClellan said. “The opportunity to travel abroad for four months is amazing

and truly a once in a lifetime experience.”

Preparation, organization before departing

Elon pre-departure courses have existed for four years. For the past two years, all study abroad programs were required to have a course prior to departure. Before these sessions were mandatory, students met and discussed the course. But no credit was awarded and the meetings could be as formal or informal as the faculty member(s) thought necessary.

“Historically, orientation has always involved logistical issues: visas, what to pack, when we’re going to leave, how to prepare for it if you need immunizations,” Pelton said. “Now, that course is much more than that.”

The pre-departure courses have been very successful so far, possibly even more so than people originally anticipated, Pelton said. Students can walk confidently into a foreign country with months of preparation behind them.

“Knowing those things in advance lets students properly prepare themselves for those potential problems,” Morrison said. “The more informed you are, the more prepared you are to handle whatever might come your way, the positive and potentially negative.”

Morrison emphasized to students that risks should be avoided at all costs.

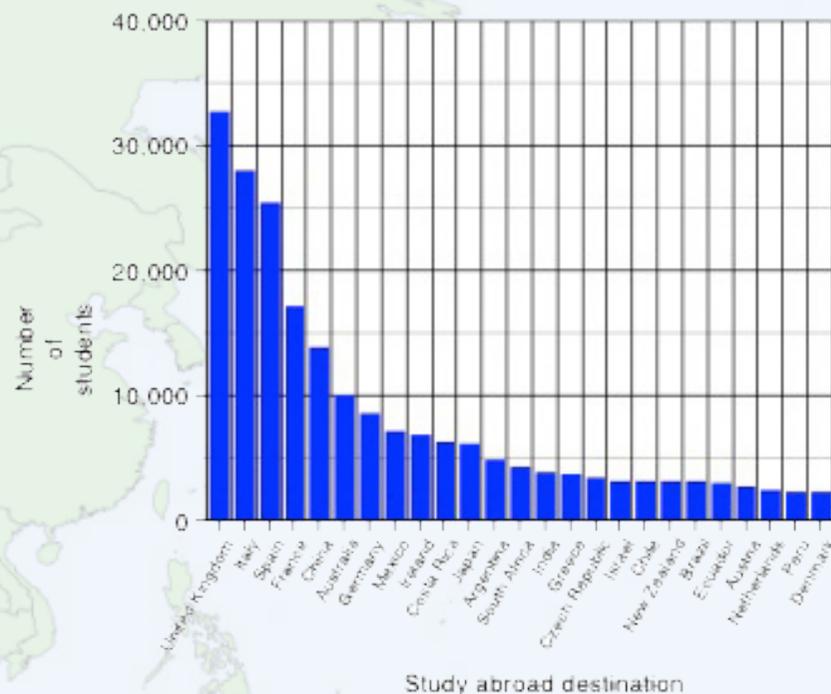
“You don’t walk down a dark street by yourself here at Elon, why would you walk down a dark street in Barcelona?” Morrison said. “If you wouldn’t go out to a bar alone here in the U.S., why would you do it in Madrid?”

Throughout Elon’s pre-departure courses, faculty try to sound like advisers, not parents, Morrison said. It is important for students to recognize themselves as adults and pursue their fields of study, all while exploring the world based off their own choices. Morrison said he hopes they do so without letting their guard down.

“There’s only so much we can do,” Buschman said. “We can give them a lot of advice. We can organize everything for them. But we can’t force students to always make the best decisions.”

Like Elon, NYU requires students to attend a pre-departure session, but it lasts just one day. After this intensive orientation, students are

Top 25 Destinations of U.S. Study Abroad Students (2010-2011)



Source: Open Doors Data

encouraged to examine NYU’s website for additional information relevant to their program.

Buschman said the students have full access to the page and are encouraged — in some cases required — to look at specific material. The department can monitor who visits the site, but it cannot ensure that the material has been read. That power lies with the student.

The information is available to program participants throughout the semester and is updated as the departure date nears and more questions come up.

“One of the things that we’ve learned is that students, and parents too, frankly, are ready for certain information at certain times,” Buschman said. “Our staff understands that orientation never ends. Students may well need some orientation a week before they’re going home. That’s just the nature of study abroad.”

These curiosities usually start as general questions and narrow down to specifics as they explore the country and what it has to offer, Buschman said. A growing curiosity, paired

with information from the web pages, can provide tools for students to explore an unfamiliar area confidently and responsibly.

Global communication connects countries into a safety net

New updates and proposals help university faculty around the nation understand more efficient and foolproof ways to keep students safe, healthy and happy while abroad.

Many schools subscribe to receive email emails from the Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC) or travel warnings from the United States Department of State.

The OSAC allows schools to stay up to date with the status of each country. As helpful as this is, Pelton said it is faster and more accurate to communicate with host partners.

If the U.S. Department of State issues a travel warning, entire study abroad programs can be canceled or reevaluated. Travel warnings are only announced when conditions make a country unstable or hazardous for

outside travelers.

“It’s one thing to get a newsfeed from CNN but it’s another thing to be right there and look out of the window and say, ‘Well, it doesn’t look as bad to me as it does on CNN,’” Pelton said. “You have to remember that the news medium is a business.”

NYU had 4,156 students study abroad during the 2009–2010 academic year, ranking it No. 1 for quantity of students studying abroad. The university sends its students almost entirely to its own international facilities, which allows the school to control the buildings the students live in. It also lets them make necessary measures for student safety, such as removing access to a building’s balcony in Berlin, Germany.

“Typically what we will do in a place where we don’t own the buildings is we take out very long leases, like 20-year leases, and build into those leases some incentives for us to remodel the property within whatever the regulations are,” Buschman said.

Buschman was part of a group of faculty that helped each of NYU’s overseas sites to install computer-coordinated key entry to the buildings. The key tracks when and where students are moving and faculty can limit access to certain places at specific times.

Faculty members who stay on the international campuses are required to talk to police officers about the level of crime activity in the area before NYU commits to send students to a specific neighborhood.

“That’s helped us because no place is completely crime-free,” Buschman said. “That gave us a good way to build into our orientation some guidance to students on how to stay safe. We could specifically warn them of dangers that were there in the neighborhood and how they should watch out for them.”

Sexual assault prevention has become more prevalent because females made up 64.4 percent of the students studying abroad in 2011.

Some colleges give students instruction manuals containing step-by-step guidance in case of an emergency. For example, to prepare students for earthquakes in Japan, Earlham College offers handbooks for them to review during the first days of on-site orientation. The program in Tokyo also takes a field trip during the second week of orientation to visit an earthquake simulation and fire safety center in the city.

Goucher College requires all of its students to study abroad at least once. Their study

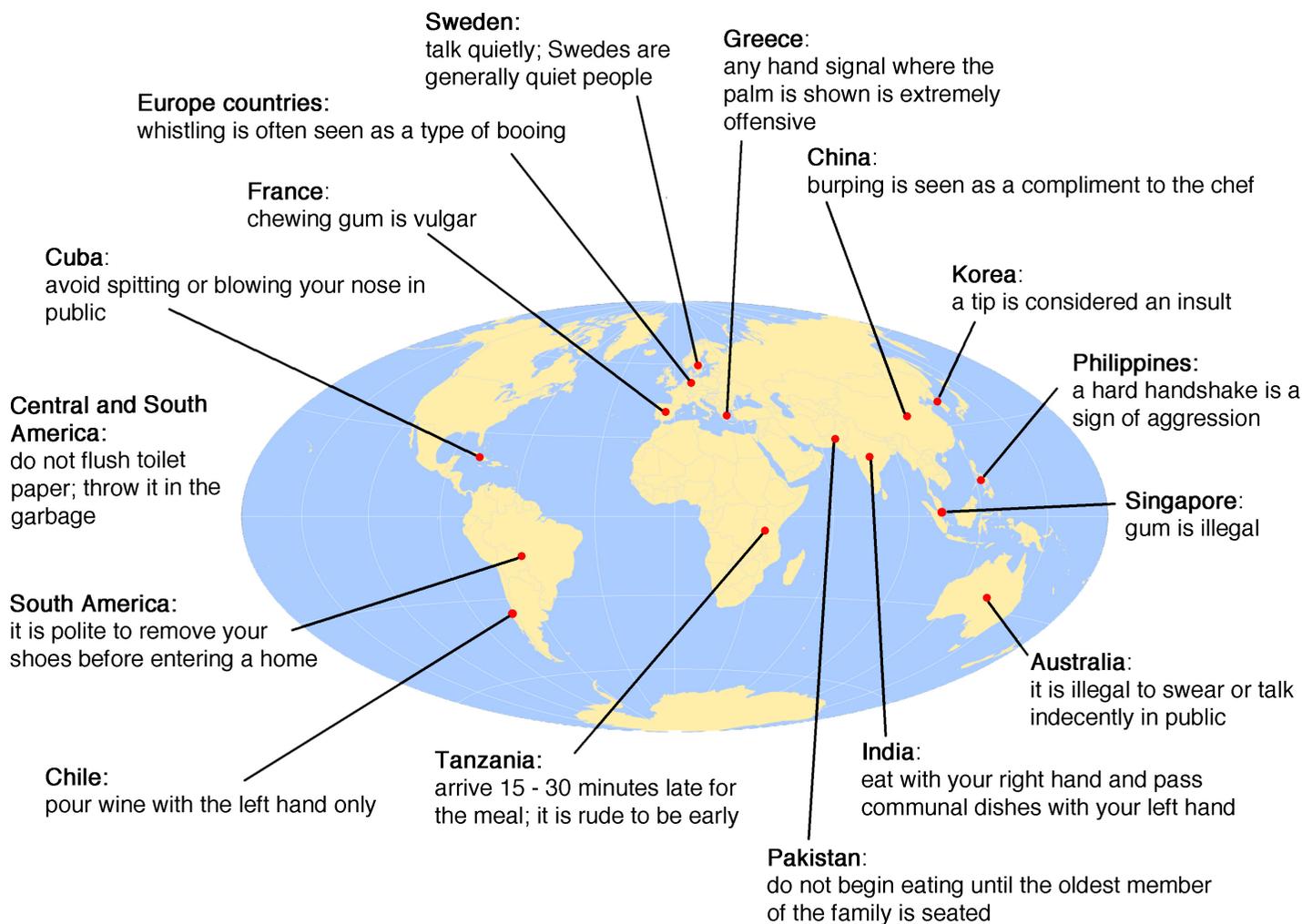
abroad rate is between 120 percent and 177 percent, meaning it is not unusual for a student to go abroad a second or even third time.

With such a high number of students off the main campus, Goucher takes extra care when prepping students to travel.

After students are accepted into a study abroad program at Goucher, they are required to submit a comprehensive health form, which contains both physical and mental health issues. Then, the Office of International Studies works closely with the student and faculty program leaders to ensure the issues can be accommodated.

“It’s much more work on the front end, but it eliminates the challenges that students and faculty face when undisclosed challenges have to be dealt with overseas with little or no preparation,” said Daniel Norton, associate dean of the Office of International Studies at Goucher.

Goucher also requires its faculty program



GRAPHIC BY STEPHANIE BUTZER | Arts & Entertainment Editor

leaders to attend a risk management workshop so they are prepared to handle a situation with a distressed student.

In Elon University’s “Costa Rica: Jungle Service” study abroad program, students take part in several service projects and work in villages in Sierpe, Costa Rica.

For some of the group’s time there, they do not have cell phone service. The program leaders carry a satellite phone in case they encounter an emergency out of the cell phone service range and require communication. In addition, Jeff Carpenter, assistant professor of education and the program leader, completed a Wilderness First Aid course so he would be able to respond quickly and efficiently to an emergency in the jungle.

“We don’t have students in a situation that I would consider overall more unsafe than what one normally experiences in life,” Carpenter said. “Yes, for some of the course we are more isolated off in the jungle than the

norm. But we also don’t face any of the risks of, for example, driving in a car, or petty crime that people face when they are in the ‘civilized’ world.”

Ensuring exit strategies are ready

Incidents are bad enough when they occur at home. When something happens abroad, it’s important for students to understand how to handle the issue or know somebody who can guide them to safety.

Barnas said that even though her boss abandoned her at the Urban Music Awards, she knows it could have happened anywhere in the world, so she does not hold a grudge against her experience. London still remains her favorite city in the world.

“Some places overseas may be safer, in fact, than Raleigh and Charlotte for example, certainly Detroit and Chicago,” Pelton said. “But somehow it becomes a story when it happens

overseas.”

Emergencies vary, but the University of Oklahoma defines an emergency as an assault, injury, natural or political disaster, arrest, detention or any other serious risk to a student's well-being.

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, like several other schools, subscribes to email blasts from the U.S. State Department containing information about the conditions of countries around the world. The study abroad office also monitors the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for updates on diseases that may affect students.

If a student should fall ill, NYU is prepared to take action and bring him or her to an English-speaking medical facility. In case of an evacuation emergency, Buschman said they have always ensured there is a place for students to go outside of the city or area where they resided.

The faculty at NYU know train schedules and bus companies that would be available to transport students out of the affected region in an evacuation.

Although most schools will not run their programs in an area under a travel warning, students can still go abroad if they sign a waiver that releases the university from liability. Through this process Duke University, for example, has allowed students to study in places such as Kenya, Lebanon and Israel.

Worldwide emergencies call for worldwide communication

Natural disasters strike a different chord because they can rarely be predicted and can't be stopped. Many schools around the country had students studying in Japan in May 2011 when the earthquake and subsequent tsunami hit.

“Who would have thought Japan would have been a dangerous place to be 18 months ago?” Pelton said. “But all of a sudden — earthquake, tsunami, nuclear reactor. It was suddenly an issue.”

Elon was able to keep contact with the three students they had abroad at Kansai Gaidai University. For some time, it seemed like the best option would be to pull them out of Japan, Pelton said. But the area the students were studying in was unaffected, and after discussions with the school Elon allowed the students to stay and complete the semester.

Others were not as lucky. August

Armbrister, a student at UNC Chapel Hill, was studying as an exchange student at the Waseda University in Tokyo when he experienced the earthquake firsthand. He was babysitting at his host family's home when the initial quake and aftershocks hit.

“The house was shaking severely, cabinets were opening, dishes were falling down, shelves were moving back and forth,” Armbrister said. “The house felt like it was supported by Jell-O.”

UNC was in touch with Armbrister right away and asked about his access to food and any health concerns, Armbrister said. Between the intense radiation and lack of water and other necessities, UNC decided to terminate the program and bring him and the other students back to North Carolina. But when Armbrister arrived in the United States, he faced another surprise.

“Because we were withdrawn from our exchange program and we did not complete the term, we had to re-enroll as students,” Armbrister said. “For a few weeks, I and those who participated in UNC exchange programs in Japan were technically not students at UNC.”

Armbrister was told he needed to re-enroll and pay the fee for the school's application. Armbrister said he was frustrated his school made him leave Japan only to punish him with a rule he felt should not have applied to him.

“I felt like UNC should have taken care of that as soon as they told us to leave Japan,”

he said.

When campus and national media interviewed him about how UNC handled the situation, Armbrister expressed his disappointment. Once that news began to spread, he received an email saying he no longer needed to re-enroll as a student.

In other situations, reluctant students ignored safety precautions and evacuation plans.

Students from Syracuse University still wandered into the night when the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) epidemic hit Hong Kong in 2003. This highly contagious disease spread quickly in the big city, so Syracuse faculty began canceling classes and assembling the students in special residencies. They also started to make plans to get out of the country.

But the students did not take the epidemic seriously.

“On the ground to a student it didn't look all that serious,” said Buschman, a former Syracuse professor. “We had various people even petitioning the president of the university to be allowed to stay.”

By the end of the week, SARS became a large enough issue that a flight was arranged to fly the students back to the United States. At this time, student opinion had drastically changed.

“We no longer had students and parents protesting that they had to go,” Buschman said. “We had them protesting that they

couldn't get out on an earlier flight.”

The students missed the last portion of the study abroad, but they were lucky enough to receive most of their credits. An emergency evacuation or program termination in the beginning or end of a semester is easier to navigate because most of the students' academic credit is safeguarded and the school can usually offer them a return to their home campus.

Evacuations in the middle of a semester present a bigger challenge.

“That's very, very hard because the investment has already been made,” Buschman said. “The funds from the student tuition have already been used to cover the cost of instructors, flying students out or whatever it is. There's not much of a refund that can be given at that point.”

Duke University had to address this issue during the fall semester in 2003. But the students were lucky enough to not lose their credit.

“One of the Bolivia evacuations was in the middle of the semester,” said Margaret Riley, assistant vice provost for undergraduate global education at Duke. “We reinserted the students into Bolivia when the situation had stabilized, so they were able to complete the semester.”

When emergency strikes, students, faculty answer

More students are studying abroad now than ever before. In the 2010–2011 academic year, almost 274,000 students traveled to another country to study. With so many students abroad, accidents are bound to happen simply because there are so many students off campus, Pelton said.

No program can guarantee safety, health, academic credit or financial investment, Buschman said. But with correct preparation, students can carefully examine and respond to issues as they present themselves. Armed with common sense and pre-departure information, students are more prepared to make educated choices.

Now, with advanced communication, schools around the nation have altered their programs to ensure the greatest safety for their students. The times have changed, but many schools are keeping the pace.

“What's happened is that we've become better prepared at how to deal with it,” Pelton said. “We take safety very seriously.” §



Woody Pelton and Kevin Morrison are vigilant about ensuring study abroad safety at Elon University.

STEPHANIE BUTZER | Arts & Entertainment Editor

Campus Watch

Video
Surveillance

A loophole in the law: power without transparency

On March 8, the North Carolina Supreme Court made a decision that directly affects Elon University students. According to the ruling, private university campus police in North Carolina are effectively exempt from public records laws that require public records be disclosed in reasonable circumstances. This is a major loophole in the law.

Any member of the public can walk into a police station and request public records from state and local government bodies. All 50 states have public records laws to ensure these bodies remain transparent. An excerpt from the public record law of North Carolina reads, "The public records and public information compiled by the agencies of North Carolina government or its subdivisions are the property of the people. Therefore, it is the policy of this State that the people may obtain copies of their public records..."

The N.C. Supreme Court was split 3-3 on whether to affirm or reverse the Court of Appeals decision, which dictated that campus police are not public law enforcement agencies. Since the previous decision is left undisturbed, the appellate decision stands although no precedent was set.

The case got its start in 2011 when for-

mer Elon student Nick Ochsner requested the arrest records of a fellow Elon student for a report on Phoenix14. Bur, Elon's campus police withheld many details of the report, including the arrest narrative. He filed suit in Alamance County Civil Superior Court against Elon, but the judge found the Elon campus police complied with public records laws. Ochsner appealed to the North Carolina Court of Appeals, which found Elon's police records are not public records and its campus police department is not a public law enforcement agency.

Elon campus police may not be a public law enforcement agency, but it has the same powers in making arrests and enforcing laws. The difference lies in their responsibility to remain transparent to the public.

Although Elon is a private university, its campus police operate under North Carolina's Campus Police Act, which says its officers have full law enforcement authority, including the power to make arrests. Such power should not come without accountability to the public.

Public servants are meant to enforce the laws, not decide what information should be withheld or disclosed. The

citizens need to stay informed in order to maintain checks on their law-enforcing bodies. Elon campus police perform a function of government by enforcing the law and ought to be transparent when carrying out state functions.

As it stands now, Elon and other private universities in North Carolina are not held to the same standards as other law-enforcing bodies. Public universities like the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill are required to include a full summary and description of the crime, while private universities can be as confidential as they want with their information, according to individual campus police policies.

But, the fight is not over. House Bill 142 recently passed and has now gone to the Senate. The bill would essentially make the following information public record for campus police agencies: contents on arrest and incident/investigative reports, the circumstances surrounding the arrest, recordings or transcripts of emergency calls to campus agencies, communications between campus police employees pertaining to arrests and investigations and a daily log of crimes reported to the agency.

Furthermore, Elon's values seem to be aligned with open records laws. On March 11, Elon hosted workshops, lectures and panel discussions in support of North Carolina Sunshine Day. The events were presented by the North Carolina Open Government Coalition, whose aim is to enhance the public's access to government activity, recordings and meetings. The organization's central goal is to educate people about their right to gather public information.

Accountability and transparency are two of the most important vehicles by which we, as college students, are guaranteed fair and equal treatment under the law. By not releasing records, Elon students could be at risk. What if the details of Alexis Gray's arrest weren't disclosed by the police? We wouldn't have known about a serious threat to our safety.

The issue of whether campus police reports should be as transparent as state public records is a crucial one to Elon and to the rest of the state. By giving campus police departments the powers of a public law enforcing body but not requiring the same accountability and transparency, we are allowing a police force that cannot be challenged by the public.

Private sector apathy hinders a city in peril

Something most of us did not predict or even know was feasible is the possibility that an American city can go bankrupt.

The governor of Michigan announced the appointment of Kevin Orr, an emergency manager for the once prosperous city of Detroit.

Municipal bankruptcies are rare. In 1975, New York City almost fell into bankruptcy but was saved by a state-appointed oversight board.

In 1991, Philadelphia ceded management to the state of Pennsylvania instead of facing bankruptcy.

The chance that Detroit will file for bankruptcy is low, but the intentional appointment of an expert bankruptcy attorney is more than symbolic. It's a wake up call.

The current economic state of Detroit is grim, contrary to the thriving private sector it houses. Detroit suffers from an annual cash shortage, a plummeting quality of life and a huge debt — \$14 billion in long-term liabilities, according to *The New York Times*. Police officers and firefighters are cripplingly

underfunded and the city is littered with run-down, uninhabited buildings. Unemployment is at 18.2 percent and a third of the population is impoverished, according to Reuters.com.

History shows us Detroit will prevail, but at what cost?

The emergency manager is given near-autonomy when controlling Detroit's finances. Some may perceive Orr as a financial despot, as he has the power to restructure financial plans, change labor contracts, privatize services and even sell city assets. Protestors have become active, voicing their disdain at the city's decision.

Many believe it is undemocratic to have an unelected leader with so much power. But there comes a time when heavy government intervention is necessary, and a city on the verge of bankruptcy seems like an appropriate time for that.

As a quasi-Keynesian (someone who advocates fiscal programs by government to increase employment and spending), I believe hiring an emergency manager is warranted. But this is only appropriate because of the private sector's negligence.

It seems corporations need to take a stand for the "small government" so many of them endorse. This is their chance to prove the private sector is up to the task and government



Washington D.C. lawyer Kevin Orr addresses the media March 14 at the Cadillac Center in Detroit after being named the emergency financial manager. PHOTO COURTESY OF MCT CAMPUS

doesn't need to stick its nose everywhere. I'm not suggesting the private sector overhaul this operation, but aid it.

Chrysler was given new life by the government and now they're bigger than ever and ruling Detroit. If Chrysler were to help save Detroit, they would be killing two birds with one stone, reviving the city that twice made them while making a statement that the pri-

private sector has what it takes to supplant some of the government's programs and subsidies.

The City Council has expressed its disagreement, but has yet to directly challenge the course of action. In a time when government is bigger than ever in Detroit, perhaps the private sector can show its influence and ability to aid the city. If done right, the private sector can show the power of small government.

Why New York's failed soda ban matters to you

As the American public defends its title as back-to-back world obesity champions, state and city legislatures are taking it upon

themselves to curb the health problems of an overweight nation. According to a study by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, a staggering 34 percent of the U.S. population is obese, making it the largest epidemic in America.

In one effort to quell obesity, New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg proposed a policy that would ban the sale of sugary drinks larger than 16 ounces in public establishments including movie theaters and restaurants.

The ban was set to go into effect last week, but was rejected by a New York judge.

The soda ban represents the government policing our bodies and controlling routine activities the ever-increasing reach of the law.

The ruling by New York Supreme Court Justice Milton Tingling is a triumph for personal freedoms and should serve as a foundation for shooting down intrusive government policies in the future.

Arbitrary implementation of nanny state enforce-

ment is far worse than adverse health effects of a sugary drink. The ban would set a dangerous precedent in which overreaching governmental power would become the norm.

If someone in New York wants a cheeseburger that replaces the bun with more cheese and bacon, that is his choice. If somebody wants enough sugary Mountain Dew Baja Blast to fill a swimming pool, who is the United States government to tell him otherwise?

In all seriousness, the failure of the ban is crucial in that it protects Americans freedom to make decisions for themselves. Bloomberg's effort to pass this ban is an inappropriate extension

of his personal fight against American obesity.

The government should know better than to try and pass this legislation. The American people do not need a nanny state. We need a government that stops imposing arbitrary laws on our bodies and instead works proactively to engineer real change. The government has enough resources and capable minds to foster change without infringing on our basic civil liberties. Yes, something must be done about obesity, but it must extend past applying a cosmetic cover-up that extends into the pores of American society.

The soda ban will surely resurface with new amendments and provisions. When that happens, just remember: Your right to drink soda is based on the right to control your own body — a right that the government has demonstrated with increasing intensity it has no interest in letting you have.



Ryan Lee
Columnist



Alex Francis
Columnist

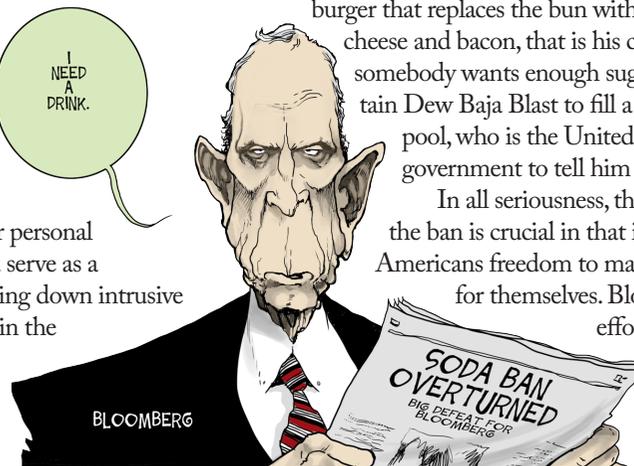


PHOTO COURTESY OF MCT CAMPUS

Firsthand account offers local perspective on Israel

Kyla Sokoll-Ward
International Reporter

HAIFA, ISRAEL — “The Middle East” is a term often associated with fear in the United States. With problematic and controversial conflict regularly surrounding the region, the American opinion has been fairly low in recent years regarding the Middle East.

Haifa is a city in northern Israel that borders Lebanon. Teeming with a rich and diverse cultural history, Haifa is surrounded by mountains and beaches all within 15 minutes of the heart of the city. Historically, the city has been conquered, destroyed and rebuilt by Persians, Bedouins and Germans, to name a few.

The city emerged as an industrial port in the 20th century as its population grew. At that time, nearly the entire population was of Arab descent. Haifa is now known in Israel as one of the more religiously and

ethnically diverse cities in the country. Students in Haifa are peers to not only Jewish Israelis but also Muslims, Christians, Baha’i, Druze and non-religious students.

Diversity exists in Haifa within both religious and political context. With President Barack Obama’s visit to Israel in March, students are interested in the potential for future negotiations and peace-making efforts. Obama has been charged with maintaining the very poor relations with both Israel and with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Esther Polacheck, an Israeli native from the Golan Heights area, is currently working on her bachelor’s degree in Haifa. She said she believes Obama does not have a solid understanding of the issues surrounding Israel and Palestine.

“I wake up every morning and feel safe,” Polacheck said. “There are times that are not peaceful, that are pretty intense, but in general, I live my life well.”

Polacheck said she believes peace in the Middle East can be promoted and established if all countries in the region aim to keep one another safe.

“If only [one country] needs peace, there will be no peace,” she said.

Polacheck explained that Israelis understand political problems and are subsequently able to handle them in a more appropriate way because of their consistent exposure to conflict. When there are political problems in Israel, their presence is not perceived as a huge issue. Israelis live inside the tension and are forced to understand why certain political issues occur.

Many American students studying in Israel do not share the view that Israel is a conflicted place. Polacheck’s hopeful view of the Middle East’s future resonates strongly with many American students studying in Haifa.

Michelle Goldstein, a student from Stamford, Conn., said she believes Israel is

wrongly depicted and dramatized as a dangerous place in the news.

“Everyone has been through the military, so they have a basic understanding of protecting themselves and others,” Goldstein said. “Israel is much more about the ‘we.’”

Goldstein attributes her feelings of safety in Israel to the Israeli Defense Forces, Israel’s military unit that all citizens are required to join for a minimum of two to three years at the age of 18.

She said she also feels Israelis generally want her to feel safe as a foreigner in their country.

“It’s like extra eyes watching over you,” she said.

Goldstein described the difference between Israel on the news and Israel in real life as night and day.

“The country portrayed in the media is nothing like the one I’m living in,” Goldstein said.



M

**Kristina Wulber
Marshall**

Attorney at Law

106B S Maple St.
Graham, NC 27253

336.269.7296
krwulber@gmail.com

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Divide in Italian parliament threatens national stability

Kyle Whitaker
International Reporter

FLORENCE, ITALY — The results of Italy's most recent general election have left citizens more concerned for their nation's stability than in the weeks leading up to the vote.

As of last week, the Italian Senate, one of two houses in Italy's parliamentary system, lacks a clear party majority. A new political party known as Movimento 5 Stelle (M5S, The 5 Star Movement), earned an unexpected 25.5 percent of the popular vote, winning the support of many voters who normally stood behind the democratic left. The percentage of each party represented in parliament is based on the percentage of votes each party wins. After last month's election, M5S now holds 25.5 percent of the seats in parliament, which prevents both the right and the left from holding a majority.

Such an unusual division between the right, the left and M5S has created what many political experts refer to as a hung parliament, in which the governing houses are unable to work effectively because no one party has enough power to enact legislation or make decisions regarding leadership. Parliament typically elects the country's government based on a partisan majority. Because this no longer exists, it is impossible for the Italian parliament to give a government their support, leaving the republic without unified leadership.

Many Italian citizens are concerned this lack of leadership comes at a time when Italy is already experiencing economic and political hardship. It is estimated that one-third of Italians under the age of 25 are unemployed, and last year the average Italian citizen paid approximately 45 percent of their income in taxes to the government.

Elizabeth Butler is an American citizen who has lived in Florence, Italy for the past 10 years. She has worked closely with Italian politicians and citizens who seek to change the country's current political climate.

Butler was heavily involved in this year's primaries and said this most recent



PHOTO SUBMITTED BY KYLE WHITAKER
The Piazza della Repubblica in Florence, Italy was the site of many political demonstrations in weeks leading up to the election. Inserted above is Italian newspaper "La Nazione" the morning after the election. The caption references the support earned by Beppe Grillo and his Five Star Movement.

election saw a lot of distrust surrounding Italian politics.

"For the past 20 years Italians have been trying to change the way politicians work," Butler said. "Many simply want to change their politicians."

This disillusionment with the government led to the creation of M5S in 2009. Launched by Italian comedian Beppe Grillo, M5S is a party constructed almost entirely through online elections and on an extremely anti-political platform. In light of past governmental failures and in hopes of securing what Butler deems "the protest vote," M5S advocates for transparency in government, direct democracy and

environmentalism.

Because of the party's unconventional and slightly radical methodology, very few expected M5S would win enough votes to disrupt the balance in parliament.

Because all parties in the Italian political arena run on a system of alliances, some have suggested a new alliance be formed between M5S and the liberal left. In this case several smaller factions would agree to work together in creating a larger and more powerful political force. While representatives from both groups have spoken out against each other, especially in the months leading up to the election, there are rumors they are now consider-

ing such an arrangement. But it is unlikely an actual alliance will be formed, as both parties seem unwilling to concede their unique positions in parliament. The left could potentially give support to some of M5S's reforms in return for a majority vote for government.

As uncertainty lingers in the air, Butler predicts the inconclusive results of this election will bring about a change in Italy's complicated electoral laws and in the mindset of the people.

"I have met many young Italians with great energy and amazing ideas. It's getting them to the forefront of the political scene that's the hard part," Butler said.



MARIJO SAULON | Staff Photographer

Freshman Shane Dittmar has a genetic disease called leber congenital amaurosis that has left him blind since birth.



MARIJO SAULON | Staff Photographer

Dittmar is currently majoring in music education but would eventually like to pursue a career in music theater.

SEEING BLACK,

Music education student overcomes

Abby Franklin
Reporter

Tucked in the stage right corner of Elon University's Yeager Recital Hall, an accompanist sits at his keyboard.

As the movement on stage shifts and performers enter and exit, the booming notes from the keyboard continue.

The accompanist's rapidly moving hands on the keyboard spark curiosity about the source of the prominent piano line. But curiosity may linger for those that notice he is not using sheet music.

The pianist is Shane Dittmar, a freshman music education major, accompanying the Department of Performing Arts' production "It Gets Better" last October.

For more than four hours, Dittmar played an entirely memorized piano part in the back-to-back productions. And for 18 years, Dittmar has been living with a disability.

Dittmar is blind.

Being a person, not a "blind person"

Diagnosed with a genetic disease called leber congenital amaurosis, Dittmar and his twin brother Derek have been blind since birth.

Just like Dittmar had to memorize music measures for "It Gets Better," he has had to memorize innumerable daily methods in order to adjust to life being blind.

Coincidentally, Dittmar's adjustment to his disability and his exposure to music happened almost simultaneously.

"I got a keyboard for Christmas when I was three," he said, remembering the gift from his parents. "They were sick of me hitting the upright piano and they figured a keyboard would work better because it had a volume knob."

He said singing has played an equally substantial role in his life.

"I've basically been singing since I was born," he said. "I just started crying and then I didn't shut up and there were notes."

Of the 15 years Dittmar has been playing piano, he spent 12 learning to play by ear. He credits the latter for his possession of a unique talent — perfect pitch.

"I'm thinking that it's aptitude that I've developed into this skill," he said. "Some people say you're either born with it or you're not. I think it's just a lot of practice and I got the practice at the right time where I was developing. Eventually you just start to recognize that the note you're hearing is an A."

Dittmar said he disagrees with many of the stereotypes surrounding blindness.

"There's this fairly perpetuating myth that says being blind increases your other senses, and that's not physiologically true," he said. "It is true in that to not use one sense means you rely extra upon the others. In that way I guess I have better hearing only because I practice using it more and it's more fine tuned."

But above all, Dittmar doesn't want to be defined by his disability.

"My goal in life is sort of not so much be the person who is blind as to be a person," he said.

Living in the pursuit of art

Freshman Emma Hughes, a hallmate of Dittmar's in the fine arts learning community, said a fellow hallmate once needed Dittmar to accompany him for an upcoming audition. According to Hughes, Dittmar heard the audition song once and could automatically play it on the piano.

"He's so talented," Hughes said. "Amazingly talented."

In middle school, Dittmar learned to read braille music, where the rule system used in

feeling color

disability to explore, express art

typical music theory is abandoned and replaced by a more complex system.

"Piano music is atrociously hard to read in braille," Dittmar said.

Challenges aside, he auditioned and was accepted to all three of Elon's chorale groups — university chorale, camerata and élan, all of which require reading music.

Through music, Dittmar said he has surpassed fundamental obstacles to reach a level of comfort with his disability.

"Music is what I want to do for the rest of my life," he said.

If given a choice, Dittmar said there is no question he would pursue a career in music theater. His commitment and partiality to theater came in high school, but not without hesitation.

"I can't dance," he said. "I shouldn't be doing musicals. I know nothing about theater or acting or dancing, and all of those things are things that mean I shouldn't do musicals."

But a teacher convinced him otherwise when he was young and he performed in his first show, "Annie."

"I started listening to every musical on the planet, falling in love with the theater and loving acting," Dittmar said. "The show opened and it was wonderful and it was the best night of my life. Then the show closed and it was the worst night of my life and I was like, 'When do I get to do another one of these?'"

Throughout the course of his high school career, Dittmar immersed himself in music and music theater, winning best actor of the year at his high school.

Still, there are limitations inflicted by his disability that Dittmar finds jarring.

"I think being blind has meant I can't find as much beauty in visual art or film," he said. "I can't find an artistic medium in which I find really true beauty, so that's something I have to do with music."

Freshman Caitlyn Balkcum, a music education major, described Dittmar as "more talented than anyone I've ever met" and said his disability does not impede his success.

"He can sing just as well as anyone and he plays better than most people, so I don't think it's really hindered his musicianship at all," Balkcum said.

Overcoming challenges

Dittmar is certainly able to look at his disability lightheartedly.

"It is impossible to ignore the fact that I walk around with a huge stick and hit people and run into bushes a lot," he said. "It's a thing that happens. I think it's just as embarrassing to use the wrong form of 'there' or 'their' on Facebook as it is to run into a bush."

But Dittmar understands the goals he wants to accomplish in life.

"Everyone has a challenge in their lives and a basic goal in life," he said. "The point of being alive and being here is figuring out how to overcome your challenge and not let it define who you are. You have to find ways to live the life you want to live regardless of what's in your way."

In regards to what music means to him, Dittmar finds it better to show something he has written down because he feels he can't adequately express it verbally.

"Music is amazing for so many reasons," he wrote. "I think perhaps the best part of it is the ability it has to replace, to act as a substitution. It can replace the feelings, the thoughts and the words you cannot say with something expressible."

But there's one thing about music Dittmar believes above all.

"Music is absolute, undeniable truth," he said. "It's the expression of your thoughts in colors as black and white as the keys." §



MARUJO SAULON | Staff Photographer

Dittmar learned to play piano by ear because he said he finds it too difficult to read piano music in braille.



MARUJO SAULON | Staff Photographer

Dittmar and freshman Emma Hughes both live in the fine arts learning community and spend time rehearsing together.

Adventure abounds for alumna working in yacht industry

Kyra Gemberling
Features Editor

Many students study abroad during their time at Elon University, but they don't often make traveling the world into a career.

As a stewardess in the yachting industry, 2008 alumna Danica Sands has turned a dream into reality. She's traveled everywhere from Greece to France as part of her job and she plans to continue her travels, all while aboard some of the world's most luxurious boats.

Hailing from Spanish Wells in the Bahamas, Sands first heard about Elon when she was in high school because a friend on another island had graduated from the school. Though no one on her island usually took the SAT, Sands said her father convinced her to take it so she could go to college.

"After I took the SAT, I applied to Elon and got in, so my dad took me to visit the school," Sands said. "I had never been to a U.S. school

before and I was like, 'Wow, this is cool.' I didn't even look anywhere else."

Sands majored in journalism during her time at Elon. Michael Skube, associate professor of communications, taught her in several of his classes, including Media Writing and Feature Writing.

"I always sensed something different about Danica," Skube said. "I knew she was not from the cookie-cutter mold of Elon students. She had ambitions that were entirely admirable. She wanted to do something different from other people."

Just as Skube predicted, Sands didn't follow a traditional path after graduation. She said there weren't many feasible work opportunities for her in the United States because she isn't a U.S. citizen, and there weren't many journalism jobs at home in the Bahamas either.

Luckily, she soon heard about the perfect opportunity.

"I was talking to a friend who lives on a sailboat and his daughter worked as a yacht stewardess," Sands said. "He said it's a good opportunity for some extra cash and you don't need a visa, so I went for it."

She started her job in September 2008 working aboard a yacht called the Casino Royale. She's worked on three other private yachts since then, all ranging from 142-163 feet long.

"Depending on the size of the boat, there can be anywhere from one to 12 stewardesses," she said. "We're responsible for what goes on in the interior of the boat. I deal with cleaning, laundry, food and bar service, taking care of the guests and managing the crew area."

Sands said the workload can be challenging, especially when there are guests on the boat. When a yacht lands and guests depart for a few days, it's the role of the stewardesses to get everything on the boat ready for the guests' return.

"Sometimes there are 19-hour long days when you're on a charter and you don't get time off and you don't get to get off the boat," she said.

Still, Sands said the travel opportunities are well worth the work. The yacht industry typically observes two seasons: winter, when the boats travel the Caribbean, and summer, when the boats travel the Mediterranean. This has allowed Sands to visit a variety of countries and work with people from all over the world.



PHOTO SUBMITTED BY DANICA SANDS

Danica Sands, Class of 2008, did a pirate-themed table setting for guests as part of her duties as a yacht stewardess.

"I love meeting all these people, not just the crew, who are entirely multinational," she said. "I've worked with Australians, Mexicans, Scots — people from all over. You get to meet some people in social spheres who you would've never met otherwise."

Some of her favorite experiences as a stewardess came unexpectedly. Once, guests on a yacht had tickets to a Gucci fashion show in Italy but no longer wanted them, so they gave the tickets to Sands.

"Another crew member and I got to put on dresses and go to the event in Capri," she said. "Sometimes, something like that happens that makes all the work seem worth it."

Sands said she can see herself working on yachts for another five years, but she'd eventually like to do something else in guest service, like opening her own restaurant. She said she hopes her career choice can show college students they don't have to be locked into their major.

"It's your life," she said. "Don't be afraid to take a few years off and travel before settling down and locking yourself into where you'll be living."

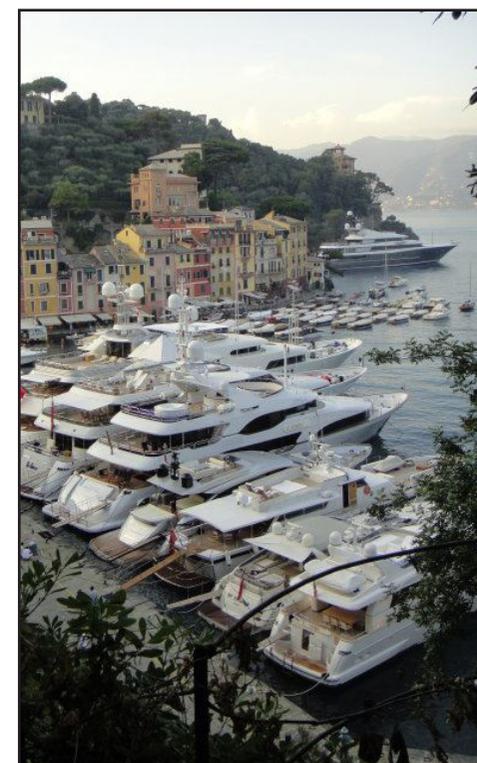


PHOTO SUBMITTED BY DANICA SANDS

Sands has worked aboard yachts that have traveled to exotic locations including this marina in Portofino, Italy.

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'The Invisible War' shocks students, enhances awareness of military injustice

Jessica Petrocchi
Senior Reporter

"The Invisible War," a documentary about military sexual trauma, noted in 2009 more than 3,000 men and women reported rape in the military. But statistics show only 80 percent of rape victims actually report the incident.

The documentary, directed by Academy Award nominee Kirby Dick, made its debut at the Sundance Film Festival in 2012. Elon's Women's and Gender Studies program brought the 90-minute documentary to the university and held a discussion after the film to discuss its impacts.

"This film evokes many emotions for me, including anger, sadness, shock and outrage," said sophomore Delaney McHugo. "This film sheds light on issues that we as a society refuse to recognize. It is appalling that so many women who are serving our nation are sexually assaulted. It is even more appalling that the perpetrators are not being prosecuted or held accountable."

Many individual victims spoke out for their rights through the film, but others were threatened to keep quiet. The victims, both male and female, spoke throughout the documentary about the permanent emotional, psychological and physical damage they endured and continue to endure.



PHOTO SUBMITTED

Elon's Women's and Gender Studies program presented "The Invisible War" March 12 in McEwen.

The film said rape victims in the military have higher rates of post-traumatic stress disorder than those in combat.

"[The movie] discusses the issue of sexual violence that is pervasive throughout all branches of the military," said senior Rachel Zimmermann. "Following the lives of a few specific individuals, the film reveals the traumatic experiences those people endured while

serving their country, the aftermath and the structural problems."

Zimmermann, a women's and gender studies minor, said LGBTQ issues that affect militaries around the world are important for Elon students to be aware of because many students don't know the problem exists.

"I found it so shocking that I felt it needed to be brought to Elon's campus," Zimmer-

mann said. "Although the documentary deals specifically with the military as an institution, I think it encourages viewers to think critically about those individuals and organizations that we assume to be trustworthy and further empower with our support."

Other students found the film just as shocking.

"Most students were at a loss of words because the film was so intense," McHugo said. "Many students voiced their anger as to why no action was being taken and how the system itself seems hopeless for survivors to get the respect they deserve. Many wanted to take action and spread the word about getting involved."

"The Invisible War" was shown on campus to inform students about this problem, but also to help educate them about some lesser-known injustices of the world. The discussion not only took a closer look at the film, but forced students to realize they can make a positive impact, too.

The presentation's goal was to call students' attention to the problem and get them thinking about ways to improve society.

"If we as students can begin to recognize those injustices, we have the power on campus, as well as when we graduate and move on, to challenge the status quo, whatever that may be," Zimmermann said.

SPRING BREAK: WHAT TO PACK IN YOUR BEACH TOTE

Alyssa Baxter
Reporter

Swimsuit:

Stroll the shore in one of this season's swimsuit trends. Vintage high-waisted suits are making a comeback, but may not be your best choice if you're looking to maximize your tan and minimize tan lines. Mix up your traditional halter-suit with a top that emphasizes your shoulders. Finally, don't forget the ruffles. From hip ruffles to shoulder ruffles, you can't go without this flare on your suit.



Sandals:

Easy-on flip-flops are a great beach shoe, but for a little more style, pair your outfit with strappy sandals. Leather, jeweled or patterned sandals can be more fashionable and comfortable than flip-flops for a beach outing. While you may not always be wearing them on the beach, don't forget this staple.

With spring break just a few days away and the weather at Elon finally warming up, it's time to gear up and start packing for some fun in the sun. If your destination is a sandy spot, here are some beach tote staples to keep you prepared and stylish.

Cover-up:

Your cover-up should revolve around what you're planning to do that day besides hitting the beach. If you're planning on beaching it all day, go for a breezy sundress or a flowy skirt with a tank. But if you're planning on sightseeing or exploring after, you may want to go with shorts to be more comfortable.

Towels and Blanket:

When lying out in the sun or dipping in the water, a towel is a must-have. What is even better is having a blanket to share with friends along with a towel to avoid getting sandy after taking a dip.



Sun protection:

Nothing ruins a beautiful bronze more than a bad burn. Don't forget to put sun protection in your tote. Sunscreen, sunglasses and hats are all ways to protect your skin from getting overworked by those UV rays.

Plastic bags for electronics:

If you're planning to bring speakers or an e-reader to the beach, bring plastic bags to put them in so they can travel safely. These bags will keep them from being destroyed by sand and water.

Canvas tote:

Pack all your beach essentials in a canvas tote. Durable and large enough to store all your needs, a canvas tote is a must-have if you're going where the sand is this spring break.

Disposable or waterproof camera:

While almost everyone has a smartphone these days, bring a disposable or waterproof camera for a little more picture-taking fun. It is much more relaxing and risk-free to get in the water with a cheap disposable camera than an expensive smartphone.



ALL PHOTOS BY RACHEL INGERSOLL | Staff Photographer

All five of Elon University's a cappella groups performed at Acappalooza March 16 in Whitley Auditorium. Sweet Signatures, Elon's all-female ensemble who hosted the performance, extended invitations to four a cappella groups from around the country, including Williams College's Springstreeters, Bowdoin College's Meddiebempsters and North Carolina State University's Grains of Time.

"There's nothing like getting all the groups together and having this giant festival-type situation," said sophomore Nick Cook, president of Vital Signs, a coed a cappella group at Elon. "It's such a community to see everyone come together and hear all the stuff."

See the full story online at elonpendulum.com.

Senior explores full CD production process with self-made jazz album

Casey Brown
Senior Reporter

As spring break approaches, many students in Elon University's Class of 2013 are busy applying for jobs and mapping out a plan beyond graduation. But for senior music and theater double major Alicia Varcoe, there is one additional mania on her mind: the release of her debut jazz CD, "Since I Fell for You."

Varcoe's musical endeavor is not just a personal project but an academic one, too. Varcoe is part of the Elon College Fellows program, which requires all of its students to conduct a research project throughout their time at Elon. Varcoe said she originally thought she could produce a themed concert, but after talking to her mentor, music professor Jon Metzger, she decided a CD would be more beneficial.

"[Jon and I] talked about [the idea of a concert] and decided to make a CD, because that's what would bring my career to the next level," Varcoe said. "So, my project is about promotion and what's it like to begin a career as a jazz musician and how to do it independently."

She researched demographics and the market in which she would be releasing her music to see what was popular in the jazz field. She would create her CD around that information. There were no publicists or labels involved. The release and publicity were a self-reliant effort for her.

"I was responsible with this huge task of recording the CD," Varcoe said. "I was in charge of picking the songs, hiring musicians, recording the CD and getting it mixed and mastered. Also, I was involved with the design of the album artwork and obtaining a copyright. Every facet [of this project] I did in some way."

In order to pick a title for the CD that would fit perfectly, Varcoe reflected on the pieces on the album and found a unifying theme among them.

"I was thinking about my experiences and what I was drawing upon for my music — break-up, make-up, broken hearts, things like that," Varcoe said. "Since I Fell for You" is a song on the CD and I thought it was an appropriate way to encapsulate the album. [Most of the music] is motivated by love, about love or involves different facets of love."

Varcoe said a self-made album had been an unexpected undertaking. Music has always been a part of Varcoe's life — she has played piano since age 5, which led to involvement with



AL DRAGO | Photo Editor

Senior Alicia Varcoe, a member of Elon Jazz Ensemble, performs a song March 17 at Jazebel's Jazz Bistro.

choir and band — but she said she was going to focus her collegiate studies in theater.

College fostered another important passion for Varcoe: jazz. Varcoe had little experience with jazz music until joining the ensemble. But after auditioning with the jazz ensemble and getting the coveted vocalist spot as a freshman, Varcoe realized she had an equal passion for music, and it was worth pursuing.

"I did a little bit of jazz growing up, but it was never a thing in my house," Varcoe said. "The only jazz I knew anything about was through middle school and high school band. My jazz education came through music with the big band and working with professors."

Elon gave her an extensive education in jazz, she said. While she minored in jazz studies and learned about the style through class, most of her education happened outside the classroom. Varcoe said she gives a lot of credit to Metzger for her exposure to it and everything was a learning experience while she worked with him. A trip with the jazz ensemble to Europe in 2010 also cultivated her interest in the music, she said.

"[The jazz ensemble] played all over the place in Europe," Varcoe said. "We played a jazz festival in Denmark two days in a row, and the audience was really receptive to our jazz music. The whole experience simulated a professional tour. I got to see what it was like traveling around and doing this for a living."

Before Elon, Varcoe wanted to attend a conservatory and focus on music and theater with

other majors in the arts. Her parents persuaded her to attend a liberal arts university, and, to this point, Varcoe is glad they did.

"I wanted to just do music and theater," Varcoe said. "[But attending a liberal arts university], everything has influenced my music whether that was a sociology class or a study abroad program. It has all in some way impacted me and the art I'm creating."

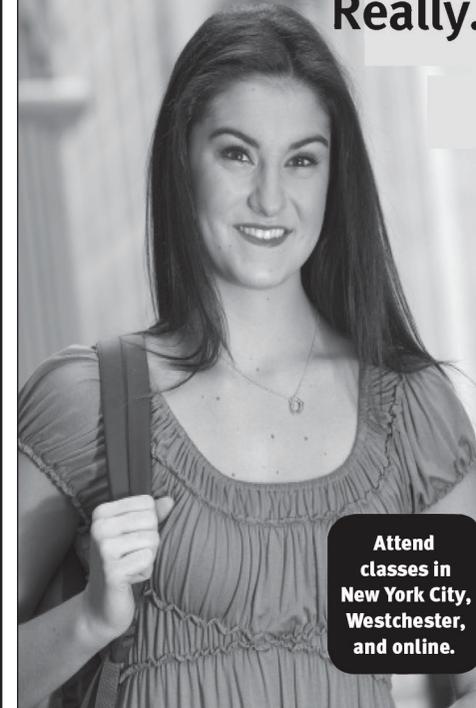
The choices Varcoe made led her to complete her CD. Like everything else she has done in college, this project has been a growing process for her, far more than a concert would have been, she said. She has learned how to work in all aspects of the music industry, even the ones she would rather not do.

"I was required to do some things as a musician that I'm not so good at," Varcoe said. "I was picking up the phone and calling clubs, which was nerve-wracking. But now I know that it's something I have to do to be successful. You have to be talented, hardworking and good at music, but also understand the business aspect."

Now, her album is complete, aside from finalizing copyrights and obtaining royalties. But her project has brought up plenty of thoughts about the future. While she does not have her plan set in stone, "Since I Fell for You" has taught Varcoe that life as a musician is possible and her passion can pay off in the long run, she said.

"I always want to be singing," Varcoe said. "In what capacity, I'm not sure, but I'm hoping to maintain some sort of life as a musician."

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Senior guard looks to finish strong after solid SoCon Tournament

Zachary Horner
Web Editor

In the last three minutes and one second of the Elon University men's basketball team's loss to the College of Charleston in the semifinals of the Southern Conference Tournament March 10, Elon senior guard Josh Bonney went off.

He scored eight points in the final stretch, trying to spark a Phoenix comeback, but the Cougars' lead was too large.

"I was just trying to attack and trying to keep us in it the best I could, just do my part," he said.

Bonney ended the game with 15 points, tying a season high in a rough senior year.

The Houston, Texas native came to Elon back in 2008, making him the only player on this season's roster that played under former head coach Ernie Nestor. He started 19 games and averaged 5.4 points and 3.1 assists per game his freshman year.

Then, Nestor was fired and Matt Matheny was hired as the head coach prior to the 2009-2010 season. Bonney started just seven games his second season but still averaged 5.7 points per game. After playing in two games his junior year and taking a redshirt after an injury, he played in 26 games in the 2011-2012 season without

starting once.

This season was a similar situation. He played in 26 games, made one start on Senior Night and averaged 3.6 points per game in 8.6 minutes per contest. Not a whole lot of action.

But in the last two SoCon Tournaments, he shined.

Last season, he scored 13 points and had seven assists in two tournament games, a win against Georgia Southern University March 3 and a loss to eventual tournament champion Davidson College March 4.

This year was no different.

With starting point guard junior Jack Isenbarger ailing, Bonney played 16 minutes in the quarterfinals against the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, mostly running the point. He scored eight points, snagged three rebounds and recorded two assists as the Phoenix escaped the Spartans 68-61.

"Josh Bonney was terrific, absolutely terrific," Matheny said postgame. "Josh Bonney has been dealt a very difficult hand throughout his career at Elon, and for him to play the way he played made a huge difference tonight."

Junior forward Lucas Troutman echoed his coach's sentiments.

"Josh has really stepped up," he said. "That's the great thing about our team is the guts we have, the guys that we have to be able to step up. Josh did that great tonight."

So when Isenbarger struggled early against College of Charleston, it was time for Bonney to step up again. In 15 minutes of playing time, Bonney scored 15 points and dished out three assists on 5-for-9 from the field.

Thinking his basketball career had ended, Bonney was not happy, but he remained positive.

"It's not a great feeling," he said. "I enjoyed my career. Since [Matheny's] been here, I've been here. I was here when we won nine games one year, and now we came this far, and I don't think a win and loss column can really prove how much progress we made, because it's in the locker room. I couldn't be happier."

Now, Bonney and the rest of the men's basketball team have the chance to play at least one more game and continue the season after accepting an invitation to the CollegeInsider.com Tournament. It's the first postseason tournament appearance for the Phoenix since the end of the 1996-1997 season, Elon's last in Div. II. The tournament is just the ninth postseason

appearance for the Phoenix in 104 years of action.

The Phoenix will take on Canisius College on March 20 in the first round of the tournament in Buffalo, N.Y. The two teams have never met before.



AL DRAGO | Photo Editor
Senior Josh Bonney tied a season-high 15 points in Elon's loss to the College of Charleston March 10.

UPCOMING EVENTS

BASEBALL	SOFTBALL	MEN'S TENNIS	WOMEN'S TENNIS	WOMEN'S TRACK&FIELD	MEN'S BASKETBALL
Princeton 2 p.m. – Wed., March 20 Elon, N.C.	North Carolina Central 4 p.m. – Wed., March 20 Durham, N.C.	Dartmouth 3 p.m. – Wed., March 20 Elon, N.C.	Davidson 4 p.m. – Wed., March 20 Elon, N.C.		
Western Carolina March 22–24 Cullowhee, N.C.	Dartmouth & Iowa State Sat., March 23 Boca Raton, Fla.	Chattanooga 10 a.m. – Sat., March 23 Chattanooga, Tenn.	Georgia Southern 2 p.m. – Mon., March 25 Statesboro, Ga.	Raleigh Relays March 29 – March 30 All day Raleigh, N.C.	Canisius 7 p.m. – Wed., March 20 Buffalo, N.Y. CollegeInsider.com Postseason Tournament

Junior college transfers proving valuable up the middle

Andrew Wilson
Sports Editor

Range at the middle infield positions was an issue for the Elon University baseball team during the 2012 campaign. For a team that came one game away from winning the regular season Southern Conference title, head coach Mike Kennedy felt like the middle infield could get better.

"It's not that we had bad players," Kennedy said. "We were a game away from winning the conference championship again. We just didn't think we were real good in the middle. We weren't good enough for our standards."

Associate Head Coach Greg Starbuck, the "unofficial" recruiting coordinator for the team [but "official" if you ask him] set out to rebuild the middle infield.

First on his list was replacing departed shortstop Garrett Koster. In 2009, Starbuck and Kennedy had their eye on a young shortstop from Florida Christian Academy, Antonio Alvarez. Elon was the first school to offer Alvarez a scholarship, but he passed after getting offers to play in the Atlantic Coast Conference at North Carolina State University.

"I got into the big deal of the ACC and forgot about Elon, really," he said. "It was a really close race. I just ended up going with N.C. State."

The decision came as somewhat of a surprise to Starbuck.

"We recruited him hard," Starbuck said. "I really thought we were going to get him out of high school."

Elon opened the 2011 season — Alvarez's freshman year at N.C. State — against the Wolfpack in Raleigh. Though at this point Elon had given up on swaying Alvarez, Starbuck still watched him intently.

After the season, Alvarez made the choice to transfer.

"I feel like I didn't get the opportunity to play," Alvarez said. "I had to make the best decision for me and that was to move on."

At the same time, a second baseman named Wil Leathers was redshirting at the University of South Carolina. Unlike Alvarez, Leathers was not recruited out of high school by Kennedy and Starbuck.

"We don't recruit South Carolina high

school a whole lot," Kennedy said. "It's just not a good area for us."

While Leathers was at South Carolina, head coach Ray Tanner, now the school's athletics director, led the Gamecocks to the national championship. Despite the title, Leathers transferred to Spartanburg Methodist Community College for the 2011 season — a place Kennedy and the Phoenix have had some success recruiting in the past.

Around the same time, Alvarez decided to transfer to Miami Dade Community College.

"As soon as I left N.C. State, I contacted a guy who's really good friends with Coach [Starbuck] and I asked him very first off the bat, 'Is there any chance to go to Elon?'" Alvarez said. "He actually told me right while I was talking to him that he had just got off the phone with 'Coach Buck.'"

Having watched Alvarez at the beginning of the 2011 season in Raleigh, Starbuck knew what Alvarez could do.

"We didn't need to see him again," Starbuck said. "We actually ended up getting a commitment before we even saw him play again."

Leathers wasn't so easy, though. He originally wasn't on Elon's radar, but Starbuck received a call from Spartanburg Methodist saying, "Listen, we got a kid here I think you need to come look at."

"We weren't really going to recruit another second baseman," Starbuck said. "But we went into our offseason last year thinking toughness was an issue. We were playing Wofford [College] when I got the call and we went and watched him. I actually missed a game to see him play."

Starbuck liked what he saw, but with Spartanburg Methodist in the midst of a Junior College World Series run, Leathers didn't make a decision on his next stop on the line until well after the deadline.

"It was tough at the time because my mind was on a championship," Leathers said. "In the back of my mind, I wanted to play at the next level, but at the same time I didn't feel like it was right for me to worry about where I was going next year with my team in the postseason."

Leathers said Elon gave him time to process the decision after Spartanburg Methodist won the Junior College World Series. That, paired with the successful culture in place at Elon, is

the reason Leathers made his decision.

"It's a winning program," he said. "I love winning. That's one of the biggest things for me. I felt this program was my best opportunity."

Current junior Sebastian Gomez had played second base his first two years at Elon. He even made the freshman All-American team at second base after the 2011 campaign. Displacing the second baseman came as an easy decision to Kennedy because of Gomez's athletic ability.

"It's like having two shortstops on the left side," Kennedy said. "He can really move over there. Heck, just the other day I looked at him in practice and said, 'Hey, Gomez, we might need you in left field.' What does he do? He goes out and plays left field. That's the kind of

kid he is. He can play anywhere."

To start 2013, Gomez moved to third base to allow Leathers to slide in at second base while Alvarez took over at shortstop.

"We're doing what's best for our team," Kennedy said. "We went after both of those guys with that in mind. We felt like we didn't cover enough ground out there. We wanted them to come in and anchor the middle of our field."

The pair has done just that. Leathers had played in all 19 games this season, making 18 starts. Alvarez got a day off in Myrtle Beach, S.C. against then-No. 8 University of Kentucky, but has started the other 18 games. Alvarez leads Elon with a .387 batting average while Leathers places fourth with a .310 mark.



Junior shortstop Antonio Alvarez (above) has moved his way to the No. 3 spot in the Elon lineup. He leads the Phoenix with a .387 batting average in 18 games this season with three home runs and 16 runs batted in.

AI DRAGO | Photo Editor

Elon's Watson a leader in home runs —

Matt Krause
Assistant Sports Editor

Grandma. Genuine. Chaotic. Team-first. These are all words that teammates and coaches have used to describe Tomeka Watson, a senior outfielder for the Elon University softball team. Though she is not one of the most well-known athletes on campus, Watson is certainly

one of the most successful. She was the first Elon player to be picked for Southern Conference Freshman of the Year in 2010. That honor was only the first of her illustrious career, which has since included three All-Southern Conference preseason picks and two second team All-Conference postseason selections. Then, Feb. 24, Watson etched her name in the Elon record books with her 27th career home run, a new softball record.

All the while, Watson has not prioritized these personal achievements. When asked about her personal improvement as her career has progressed, Watson did not focus on her records and achievements.

"I know what it takes to help these younger girls," she said. This sort of attitude is what has made the Jackson, Ga., native so popular with her teammates and coaches.

A life in the game

Watson began her softball career in tee-ball at the age of 5 thanks to her parents, Tommy and Daphne Watson. The influence of her parents has had a major impact on Watson and her career to this day.

"Her mom and her dad have made her to be a very grounded young lady," said Elon head softball coach Kathy Bocock.

As Watson's career began to take off, she encountered an opponent who would soon become a teammate: senior catcher Camille Hill. After years of having to face Watson, Hill was relieved to have Watson on her team at Elon.

"We're both from Georgia, so I'm very familiar playing against her," Hill said. "I know the power that comes whenever Tomeka is hitting."

When the time came to pick a college, Watson narrowed her choices to two schools — Elon and the University of Georgia. But when she visited Elon, her decision became easy.

"When I came to Elon, I just felt like I was at home," she said. "That's how I made my decision."

As fate would have it, Watson hit a three-run home run Feb. 8 to help the Phoenix upset the No. 8 Georgia Bulldogs 5-2 in a homecoming of sorts for Watson.

Early success

In 2010, the Phoenix won 38 games en route to the Southern Conference championship and the program's first-ever NCAA tournament appearance. Then a freshman, Watson hit .373 with eight

home runs and earned SoCon Freshman of the Year.

Even with many other accolades and moments since then, winning a conference championship still sticks out as Watson's favorite moment in maroon and gold.

"It was an exciting year and we worked hard that year," she said. "It was a really exciting moment and I'll never forget that day we won it."

By her sophomore campaign, Watson had earned her first All-SoCon pick, a second team nod that reflected her .351 season with five home runs.

Even as a sophomore, Watson was already demonstrating her leadership by helping guide then-freshman outfielder Carleigh Nester.

"Freshman year, I started out in right field," Nester said. "Being out there next to Tomeka, I know she's going to catch the ball. She taught me to not be so high-strung. To just let it happen and that success is just going to come."

Watson's junior campaign was the prelude to her success this year. She hit seven home runs and batted .371, but began to buy into the hitting approach of then-first year hitting coach Mike Steuerwald.

"One of the big things we talked to the lineup about was understanding how they are as a hitter and understanding how good they can be," Steuerwald said. "That's a jump Tomeka made toward the end of last season."

A senior season to remember

Watson's home run in the upset against Georgia was the first of seven she hit in the season's first nine games. Her teammates and coaches credit the season-opening tear to hard work throughout the offseason.

"Every year Tomeka comes out and is very consistent at the plate," Nester said.

"She's worked very hard over the off-season, she came out and was seeing the ball well."

Steuerwald agreed.

"She understands how good she's ca-



FILE PHOTO BY AL DRAGO

Senior Tomeka Watson has been a four-year starter in left field for the Elon University softball team. Her efforts led her to win the Southern Conference Player of the Month award this February.

and in life

pable of being when she puts the work in," he said.

Watson entered Elon history books with her first-inning home run Feb. 20 against Campbell University. The blast was the first Phoenix home run hit in the new Hunt Softball Park.

Four days later, Watson entered the history books again with her 27th career home run in an 8-2 win against Hampton University, giving her the new all-time Elon record.

"It shows that all my hard work has paid off," Watson said after that game. "It's a big accomplishment. I want to keep it going and just be consistent throughout the rest of the season."

Now that the record has had some time to sink in, Watson views the home run as equal to the other 29 home runs she has hit in her career.

"Every time you hit a home run it's always a good feeling," she said. "There's no big change in the fact that I broke the record."

Watson said being aggressive and using Steuerwald's advice on patience have led to her home run barrage, yet the success of the team is her overall goal.

Confidence on the field...

When Watson is playing defense, typically in her normal position of left field, she has the trust of her teammates and coaches.

"If the ball goes to left field and there's someone on second base, Tomeka takes care of me so I don't get run over [at the plate]," Hill said. "She calls a great game



Senior outfielder Tomeka Watson (21) crosses the plate after hitting one of her 10 home runs in 2013, which has allowed her to break Elon's all-time home run record.

FILE PHOTO BY AL DRAGO

out there in the outfield, just a great communication that we have."

...and laughs off the diamond

"On a Friday night, Tomeka is apt to fall asleep by 8:00," Hill said. "She's like a very, very old woman. You get her at home and all she wants to do is eat some chocolate-covered pretzels and lay on the couch."

Even when the team is on the road, Bocock said she knows where to find Watson at curfew time.

"When we're at the hotels, I don't even have to check on Tomeka because she's always in the bed," Bocock said. "She's pretty much a grandma."

Moving on

As Watson's career winds down, her head coach said her smile is going to be missed among the team both on and off the field.

For Watson, she said she has no career regrets, as she said she will go "wherever life takes me."

Thus far, life has taken her deep into the Elon record books and into the heart of an entire team. §



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Games: 21 **Average: .435**

Hits: 30 Strikeouts: 2

RBI: 21 Runs: 24

Home Runs: 10

On-base percentage: .506

Stolen Bases: 11

Match point made in heaven?

Johnston and Jansaker leading women's tennis into new territory

Kyle Maher
Reporter

The Elon University women's tennis team has a lot to smile about these days. Behind star juniors Jordan Johnston and Frida Jansaker, the Phoenix are 12-3 overall and have solidified themselves among the nation's elite programs.

"They're doing a great job, they're a really good doubles team," said head coach Elizabeth Anderson. "They add a lot of leadership and energy to the team. They really do a lot for our team in so many ways, both on and off the court. They're two of our hardest workers and two of our most determined players. They're tremendous."

The two have gone 13-2 this season while competing in Elon's No. 1 doubles spot, a rate of success so difficult to attain in collegiate tennis that neither is bothered by their doubles loss March 14 against the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, a match the Phoenix would eventually lose overall 4-3. The loss was just their second on the season.

"We lost to UNCG, but that's fine," Jansaker said. "That's the thing. Real champions have the shortest memory, so I already forgot about that."

The duo is ready to move on, and with their complementing styles of play, Jansaker sees no reason why the duo can't use the rapport they've established to continue to find success as doubles partners throughout the remainder of the season.

"We're very focused. When we're on the court, it's all business," Jansaker said. "Another thing is we adjust our game to who we're playing. We're a very smart team, and tennis is a game of intelligence sometimes. We have a lot of tools that we can pull out at the right time."

Johnston echoed Jansaker's sentiment, but pointed instead to the pair's friendship off the court to explain the success they enjoy as teammates.

"We're very close off the court, and I think that speaks a lot to our success," Johnston said. "We know each other, we know our games and we know what the other needs to succeed. Whether that's pumping up the other or whether it's being really firm. We kind of talk within each other, both game styles and personality-wise, because we both bring the best out of each other."

Anderson has no trepidation in sending her two stars out in the No. 1 doubles position, knowing they'll come out on top more often than not, helping her team to win a crucial doubles point toward the winning total.

"I have a lot of confidence in them, I think that they know exactly what they need to do in order to win and be successful," Anderson said. "They prepare really well and when the time matters they go out there and they win a lot of matches for us, in both doubles and singles."

Johnston believes Jansaker, whose 13-3 record at the No. 2 singles spot is tied with fellow junior Bryn Khoury for the best record on the team, is a valuable teammate to have because of her high character and her outstanding record in both doubles and singles.

"She is a very, very solid, strong part of this team," Johnston said. "It's always nice to look right next to me and know the person there is always going to be fighting, always going to be there for the team. She's worked her way up the lineup and gained some confidence from having some key wins. She works hard and she's always there for the team, both on and off the court."

Johnston, whose self-admitted struggle in the No. 1 singles spot is evident in her 9-7 record, was nevertheless named the Southern Conference Player of the Week March 5, an honor Jansaker believes is well-deserved.

"She is leadership by example," Jansaker said. "She's won a lot of crucial matches



FILE PHOTO BY MERISSA BLITZ

From the No. 2 singles position, junior Frida Jansaker (above) is 13-3 this year. She and doubles partner, junior Jordan Johnston, are 13-2 and have led the Phoenix into the Intercollegiate Tennis Association rankings.

for us at the one spot. She's always ready to go. You never see her give up a match. She's always someone you can depend on. She fights harder than anyone on our team. She's always stepping up in both singles and doubles."

Behind Johnston and Jansaker, the Phoenix was ranked in the Intercollegiate Tennis Association (ITA) rankings for the first time in school history, at No. 59 — an accomplishment in which the significance is not lost on Johnston.

"Coach called us up and was like, 'Guess what team is 59th in the country,'" Johnston said. "The ranking sheet, I've grown up following it and reading it week by week and to be on the list of the elite teams is something that I've always dreamed about. I'm so proud to say I was on this team that did it."

After a loss March 10 to the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, the Phoenix then dropped to No. 73 in the most recent national rankings. They then lost their sec-

ond straight match to UNCG. Elon got back on track March 16 with a sweep of Western Carolina University, a win they hope will keep them among the nation's elite.

Currently sitting on a 12-3 record, Anderson said no matter where the Phoenix is ranked, the ranking is a verification of her players' year-round dedication to the program.

"It's a big honor that we've been ranked," Anderson said. "I think it's a great testament to all the hard work that the girls are putting in. The rankings are a nice reward for that, because there are a lot of good teams out there. It's very difficult to get ranked."

Looking to rekindle the form that brought them an 11-game winning streak, the Phoenix will return to the Jimmy Powell Tennis Center on March 20 against the Davidson College Wildcats looking to improve upon the team's first ever national ranking.

THE LAST WORD: An introvert's guide to spring break

If Julie Andrews were a college student preparing for spring break and she was asked to sing about her favorite things, what would they include?



Jonathan Black
Managing Editor

Parties on beaches and Budweiser in buckets. At least, that's what they would be if she lived in a stereotypical spring break filmed for MTV.

I'm here to fight the stereotype that college students are harbingers of poor decision-making in Panama City, Daytona Beach and Cancun.

I am going to reclaim spring break for the homebodies.

On Friday afternoon, some of my

peers — who I will call “spring breakers” — will be packing up a car, cramming all their worldly possessions and friends into a single vehicle to drive nine hours. I'll be partially filling up my trunk to drive an hour to get home.

When the stereotypical spring breakers arrive to their beach house three hours later than expected and are greeted by the ghosts of spring breakers past — the smells, stains and messiness of past renters of the house — I'll be greeted at the door by my dog and best friend of 11 years, Sadie. She loves me unconditionally, unlike the landlord who will be charging the “wild” spring breakers fines upon fines for damaging his house.

One thing spring breakers and I can agree on is somehow there is always someone on the trip that no one wanted to be there. In most cases this is a friend

of a friend that somehow weaseled their way into coming. Known as a frenemy, you love them one hour and hate them the next. Mine so happens to be my cat.

While I will need months to rebuild the bridges that were burned between my cat Cashmere and me last summer, I only have one short week to figure out why she torments and awakens me at seven in the morning, every morning.

My complicated feelings aside, spring break is a great time to get ahead on the overwhelming number of papers I have due in the weeks after it.

At least, that's the lie I tell myself every day. In reality, I am not going to get any more work done than the average spring breaker. So at least I'm saving money by being home?

If so, it is only slightly. I will more than likely spend just as much money compulsively buying food to deal with

the stress of my parents making me realize I'm not going anywhere in life because I have only applied for two internships this summer.

Spring breakers can run away from their troubles. I'm facing them head-on by sleeping under my parents' roof.

In fact, I won't even be able to escape them by hanging out with my friends at home because our spring break is so late this year. My only company will be the sweet, soothing Barefoot Contessa from 3-4 p.m. on the Food Network until I'm forced to turn the channel as Mrs. Diabetes herself — Paula Deen — appears on the TV.

Maybe 20-year-old Julie Andrews named her favorite things correctly after all.

Huh.

Maybe I should have gone to the beach.

Sudoku

	1	5	2	9	7			
			1				8	5
	8				9	7		3
					4			
		1		7	6	8		9
				3		4	9	1
	4			8			6	
5		7						

Complete the grid so that every row, column and every three-by-three box contains the digits 1 to 9.

Difficulty Level: Medium

Top Tweets

@tcb830

Having a pretty wild spring break spent in the elon library.

@HeadPhoenix

Couldn't be prouder of @ElonMensHoops. You've demonstrated success and heart and taken Elon to an exciting new place. Thanks, guys.

@ElonConfessions

In my free time I like to scream at people in the quad from the window in my dorm and then hide when they look

@kellysmith192

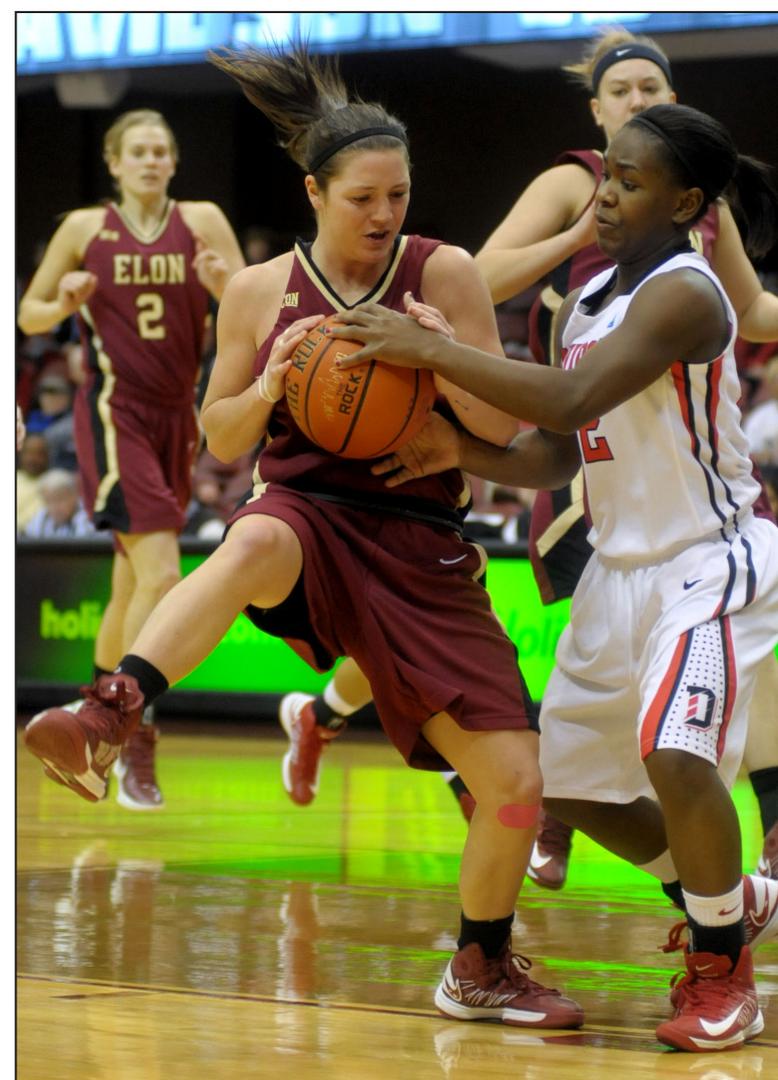
Beware the Ides of March...and droves of uber-excited Class of 2017ers. #orientationweekend

@Emilygilvar5

I easily picked the most amazing place to call my home for the next four years #elon

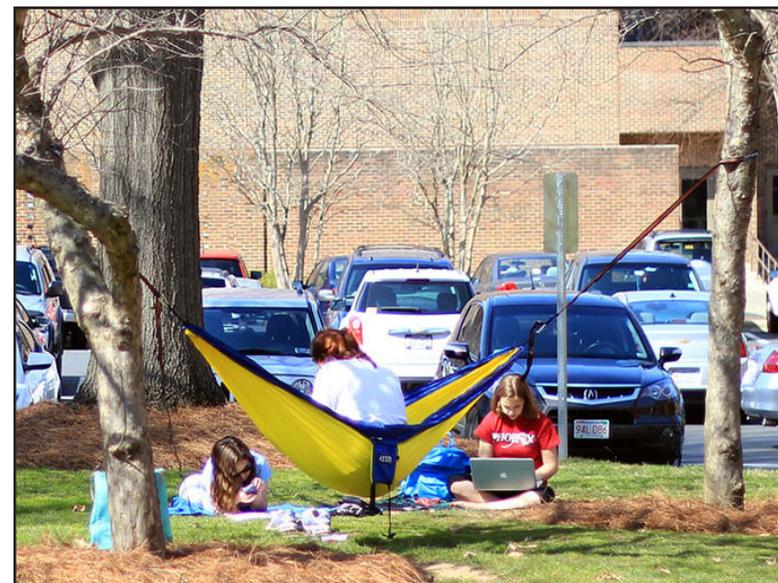


TOP photos



AL DRAGO | Photo Editor

Elon senior guard Ali Ford (center) fights for the ball against Davidson College March 10 during Elon's eventual loss in the SoCon Tournament semifinals. Elon lost 71-61.



MARIJO SAULON | Staff Photographer

Elon University students enjoy the warm weather on campus March 16, opting to do their homework outside and relax in the sunshine during a 75-degree day.

Elon senior guard Josh Bonney (left) scored 15 points March 10 against the College of Charleston in the SoCon Tournament semifinals. The Phoenix ultimately fell to the Cougars 68-60 after defeating the University of North Carolina at Greensboro March 9.

AL DRAGO | Photo Editor



CAROLINE OLNEY | Staff Photographer

Freshman Robert Lindgren (left) and sophomore Brian Kowalski celebrate after winning a point March 16.



AL DRAGO | Photo Editor

One-woman band Laura Thurston performs March 14 at the Front Street Public House in Burlington.



RACHEL INGERSOLL | Staff Photographer

Sweet Signatures, Elon University's only all-female a cappella group, perform "Blown Away" by Carrie Underwood at Acappalooza 2013. The ensemble hosts Acappalooza every spring in Whitley Auditorium.

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