

Elon University's Weekly Student Publication

# The Pendulum

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Graphic by J. McMerty

## Elon finds a home on West Coast Internship program in Los Angeles will take 15 to 20 students

Lesley Tkaczyk  
Reporter

Students weren't the only ones who went exploring this winter term. Elon administrators were traveling too, establishing opportunities for students to spend some time under California skies.

Paul Parsons, dean of the School of Communications, and Gerry Francis, provost and vice president for academic affairs, traveled to Los Angeles in January to work out details for the "Elon in Los Angeles Program," a new domestic study abroad opportunity for students set to start this summer.

The program is looking to find 15-20 students to travel to Los Angeles for the summer to participate in an internship for credit. Students will also take a currently untitled 2-credit course on the business of Hollywood.

The program is focused on students in the School of Communications but is open to all majors. Parsons hopes "to accommodate any student who has a compelling reason to want to be in Los Angeles." It is also currently open to all grade levels although juniors and seniors are strongly encouraged to apply.

The cost is estimated to be about \$6,000 to \$7,000 for the summer, which would include tuition for six

credit hours as well as housing and programming costs, according to Connie Book, associate dean of the School of Communications.

Parsons and Francis met with leaders of other Los Angeles based communications programs from Ithaca College and the University of Texas during their visit and explored options for facilities and housing. They are currently planning to use Oakwood Toluca Hills Apartments in Burbank as the home-base for this summer.

This facility is used by Ithaca College for their Los Angeles program and Parsons thinks it's a "perfect fit" for Elon as well.

"We decided that it looked like a very good place for student housing since they also have a classroom available for us to lease," Parsons said. "We'd imagine students staying there, having the class there and then, of course, going to their internships."

One of the most appealing features of the Oakwood housing to Elon is that they have special arrangements with rental agencies where people under the age of 25 can rent a car. This is essential in Los Angeles where transportation can be an issue.

The program will be led by School of Communications staff member, J. McMerty who is anxious to start the first year.

"I am very excited to be part of the first Elon in

L.A. program," McMerty said. "My hope is that all of our students will get a great internship that will let them gain valuable experience in their chosen profession."

Help finding that internship may be the biggest draw of this new program. The existing relationship Elon has with Ithaca's Los Angeles Program has enabled the School to secure access to Ithaca's database of internships, which Parsons calls a "wealth of information."

This partnership with Ithaca was where the idea for the program began. Elon was referring students interested in a West Coast internship experience to Ithaca and, according to Parsons, after a while it just no longer made sense.

Parsons said he has high hopes for the program and looks forward to expanding it to be year-round in the near future.

"In some ways this is an experiment," he said. "We plan to continue it, but right now, since we've never done this before, we'll do our best to publicize it and then just how it goes."

Applications for the program are tentatively due the first week of March. Book and Parsons encourage interested students to attend one of the two information held on Feb. 18 at 7:30 p.m. and Feb. 22 at 3:30 p.m. in McEwen 011.

## Harden gets revamped food options this spring

Alex Moss and Kaylyn Swankoski  
Reporters

Many students were surprised to find Harden Dining Hall closed during Winter Term. During that time, there was a series of preparations being made in anticipation for its grand re-opening Feb. 4.

Harden Dining Hall will remain the same structurally, but the food options are set to change.

Highlighted in this food renovation is the expansion of the salad bar, which will consist of more toppings, both hot and cold. Also included is a new wok station and stir fry option, a running rotisserie, homemade soups with a large selection of fresh breads, a menu board for the grill and an assortment of desserts.

ARAMARK also plans to respond to student requests and change the dining hall hours. Upon re-opening, the lunch/brunch hours will be from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. and dinner from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.

According to Laura Thompson, director of food services at Elon,

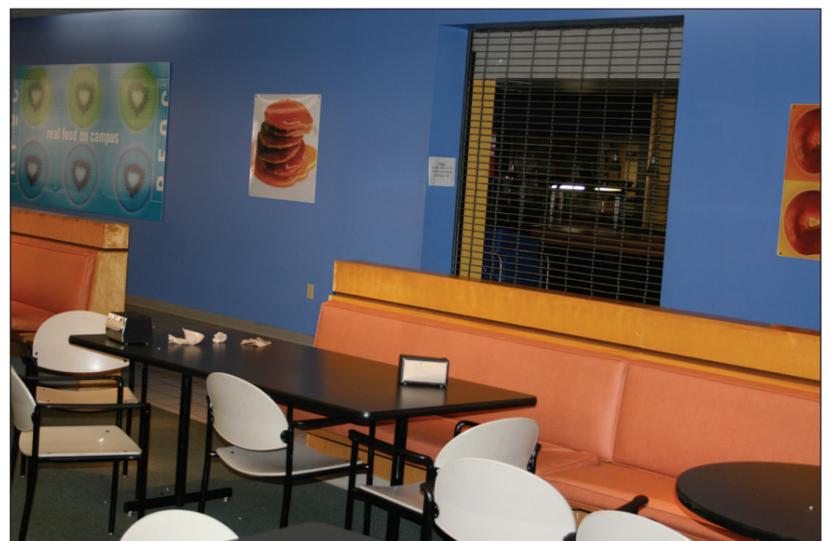
Harden's decline in traffic was "drastic and immediate" following the opening of the Colonnades.

In previous years, upwards of 300 students would dine at Harden for dinner, yet this past semester there was a decline to around 175. With such a decrease in numbers, the transformations at Harden are an attempt to boost its popularity.

Senior Lindsay Dombert was a residential assistant in Staley dormitory for two years and remembers how crowded Harden used to get. She believes the current shift in attention is no surprise with the opening of the Colonnades.

Food service employees hope that Elon students will now understand that regardless of the dining location, the food quality is equal throughout. This will hopefully attract more people to Harden.

Though Harden is now seen as the oldest dining hall on campus, it was renovated less than three years ago. The main goal of that renovation was to introduce ARAMARK's Real Food on Campus program, which brought



David Wells/ Assistant Photo Editor

The chain doors stayed closed in Harden Dining Hall this Winter Term.

cooking in front of the students.

Last semester, a survey was sent to students about on-campus dining services. The results were hugely influential and might even lead to a

summer renovation of Harden. But, because they have not been entirely analyzed, specific plans and a budget have not been set.

# Elon takes part in competitive recycling program

University officials say on-campus recycling is already poised to break records

**Eugene Daniels**  
Reporter

Once again, Elon is competing in RecycleMania, a 10-week nationwide recycling competition.

Currently, more than 350 colleges and universities are participating in RecycleMania between Jan. 28 and April 15. Participants are trying to collect the largest amount of recyclables per capita.

Dave Worden, manager of environmental services, stresses the importance of recycling and hopes, like last year, this event will bring heightened attention to this issue through campus-wide participation.

The purpose of the event is to increase student awareness of campus recycling and waste reduction, with hopes of making achievements in both areas.

"[Recycling] is the right thing to do," Worden said. "We live in a world where we need to preserve, and recycling is a part of that."

Sophomore Dan Martins enjoyed last year's competition and anticipates seeing how Elon fares in RecycleMania 2008.

"It was pretty fun to see how we stacked up against other SoCon schools. It was cool to see how we made a difference," Martins said.

Since last year's competition, Elon has made momentous advances towards campus-wide recycling

with the 2007-2008 academic year garnering the highest total amount of recyclables in the university's history.

Significant improvements can be seen in campus-wide recycling of paper, cans, glass and cardboard. In the month of October alone, overall recyclables increased by five tons from the previous October.

Returning students Martins and sophomore Katie McKee attribute this year's success to Elon's ability to make recycling more accessible.

"The recycling bin is right next to the garbage can. It's so easy to do it. All I have to do is put it in the bin," Martins said. "I noticed there are a lot more recycling bins around campus."

There is a recycling location in every dining facility, residence hall and academic building including one in every classroom.

The emphasis on recycling has definitely become more visible.

Freshman Kaya Forstall quickly became aware of the recycling agenda when she arrived on campus last year.

"I could tell from the removal of the trays, the many recycle bins, the recycle bag from the Resident Assistant and from watching other students recycle," Forstall said.

Recyclable materials are to be deposited in appropriate containers throughout the campus and are then picked up by members of the Environmental Services staff.

For those items students might not



be sure are recyclable or not, Worden gives some advice.

"If you're not sure, put it in the recycling bin," said Worden. "It's better to put it in and hope it will get recycled than go to the trash bin."

The newest addition to Elon's green options include drop-off locations to recycle batteries in: Belk, McEwen 105, Danielly Center Commons and Moseley Center by the Phoenix Card Office.

"People don't recycle because

they're lazy, don't care that much, and don't take the time to separate the non-recyclable items from the recyclable," Forstall said.

"It's going to take some effort to recycle," Worden said.

If you have any additional questions about RecycleMania or want to see how Elon ranks against competing schools, visit [recyclemaniacs.org](http://recyclemaniacs.org) or [org.elon.edu/recyclemania/](http://org.elon.edu/recyclemania/).



# 2008

## Professional Discovery Week

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to

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# Elon to host sectional chapters at service fraternity conference

## Organizers have spent weeks preparing for event

Laurie Craft  
Reporter

Over the weekend of Feb. 15, members of the Alpha Phi Omega service fraternity will be told to "serve or walk the plank" for their sectionals conference.

Conference planning co-chair, senior Amy Mahon, said they are expecting to host anywhere from 100 to 300 college students that weekend from every North Carolina chapter, and a few others.

"It's a bigger deal than we thought," Mahon said. "There are students coming from Maryland, D.C., South Carolina and Tennessee as well."

Because Elon's chapter is not as well-known as some of the more prominent chapters in the state, this is a tremendous opportunity for the organization and for the school.

Sectionals conferences are usually geared toward building cohesiveness between the chapters of one particular state, and normally other states do not participate in the conference. But this year when some chapters found out that Elon would be hosting the conference, they became interested in attending.

"People are coming who don't have to," public relations chair Rachel Jones said.

The weekend is for APO members to learn more about the founding goals of the fraternity: leadership, service and fellowship. It will be a weekend filled with hands-on workshops that Mahon said each chapter can actively take back to their chapters.

The workshops will focus on real scenarios each chapter may face, such as dealing with a budget, getting new pledges and even handling a break-up within the co-ed chapter.

Each of these workshops will be lead by former

brothers of APO. According to Mahon, the main goal of their presentations will be to teach leadership skills through APO.

Elon's chapter of APO has been working hard to plan this event since they were nominated to host the weekend last spring.

"There are so many small details," Jones said. "From the hotels, budget, making sure we have enough room on campus and food."

To keep the cost per person down for the weekend, APO completed two fundraisers, along with one additional drive to keep up with their service hours.

Jones and Mahon said they saw many of their brothers step up and take an active role in planning the event. They were impressed with their pledges who, shortly after joining, rose to the challenge and helped plan and organize the event.

While APO is part of the Greek system, it is not a social organization, but rather is considered to be a professional organization. By going through the process of planning such a large scale event, APO's members say they've gained valuable, real-world experience.

Mahon and Jones each appreciate the opportunities APO has given them, and even while conference planning can be time-consuming and exhausting, they say they are glad they have been able to participate in this process.

The last large APO event was the regional conference in fall 2003. Not only is this year special for APO at Elon, but it is also their 40th anniversary as an organization.

"So, if you see blue and gold everywhere that weekend," Mahon said, "Don't worry, APO has just taken over Elon."

## theBRIEFS

### Lumen Prize meeting

An information session about the \$15,000 Lumen Prize will be held at 5 p.m. Feb. 12 in McMichael 115. Anyone interested in learning more about the program is invited to attend.

The Lumen Prize will be awarded to 15 second-semester sophomores whose cumulative GPA is 3.5 or above. The award was established to encourage and reward intellectual and creative excellence. Prize money can be used for study, travel or scholarly/creative pursuits while at Elon.

### Etiquette Dinner deadline Feb. 6

The Career Center is hosting a Professional Discovery Week from Feb. 11 to Feb. 14 to help assist students with their transition from campus to career. To find a complete listing of programs offered visit the career center Web site at [www.elon.edu/careers](http://www.elon.edu/careers).

All programs during Professional Discovery Week are free except for the Professional Etiquette Dinner, which requires registration and a \$25 fee to cover the cost of the meal and program materials. Deadline for registration is Feb. 6.

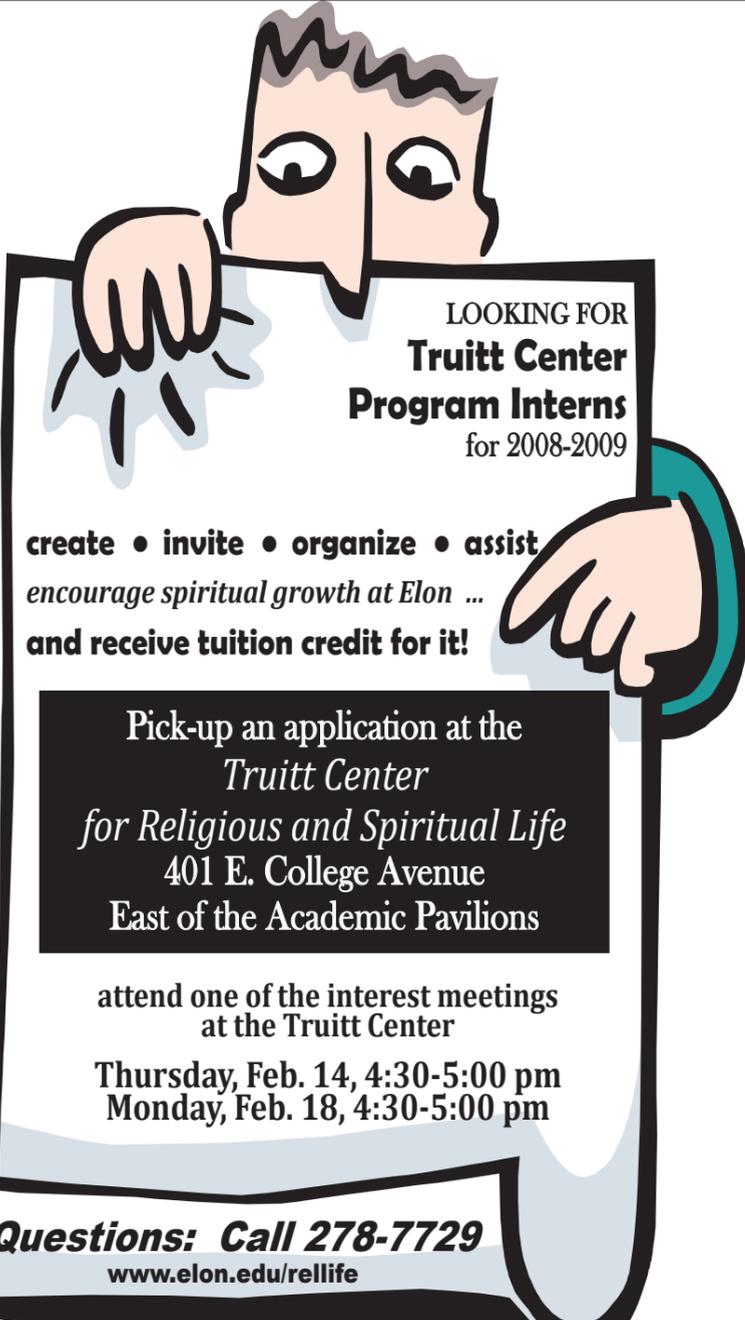
### Textbook loan applications

A limited number of textbook loans are available to those with financial need. Applications are available in Moseley 213. Loans are in the amount of \$250 and will be given on a "first come, first apply" basis. Loan pay back date will be May 9, 2008. For more information call the Residence Life Office at 278-7300.

### New Student Orientation applications due

New Student Orientation is looking for individuals who possess leadership skills, a passion for Elon and a commitment to character. If this fits your profile, and you believe you could be Elon's Next Top OL, apply today.

Applications to be an orientation leader are due to Moseley 226 by Feb. 13. Questions? Contact [compass@elon.edu](mailto:compass@elon.edu) or call 278-7777.



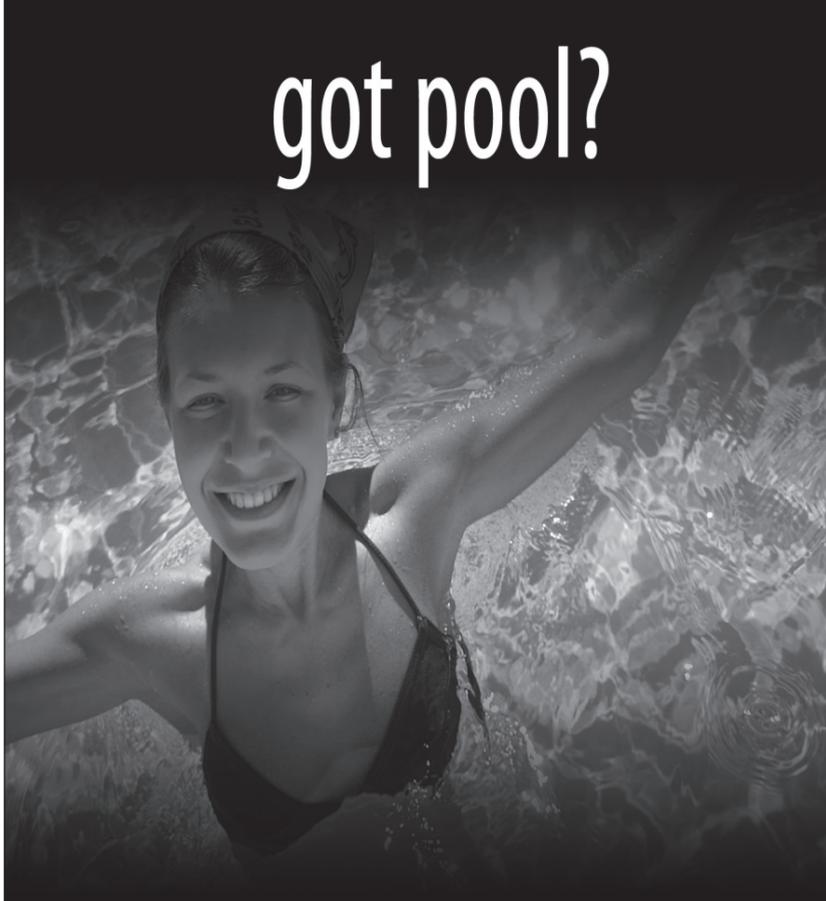
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## Candidates drop from presidential race

Laura Wainman  
Reporter



Angie Lovelace/ Photographer

Sen. John Edwards and former Mayor Rudy Giuliani made the voters' decision a little easier last week when they withdrew themselves from the campaign after disappointing results in the Florida primary. Edwards received 248,604 votes and Giuliani totaled 281,781.

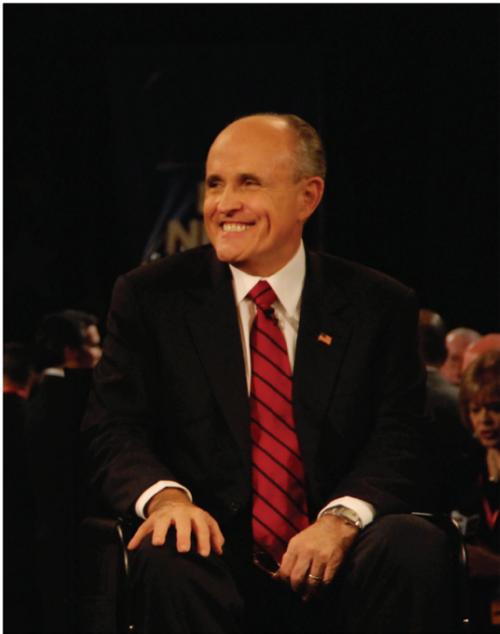
After campaigning only lightly in earlier primaries, Giuliani put all his energy into winning Florida. Though he spent three weeks campaigning in the Sunshine State, his efforts only yielded him a third place finish behind Sen. John McCain and former Gov. Mitt Romney. Planning a late entry and focusing only on winning one state is a strategy that has been employed by numerous candidates before Giuliani, but it has yet to lead to a candidate successfully securing a party nomination. Upon bowing out of the race, Giuliani announced that would endorse McCain.

Edwards reached his decision after consistently

failing to match the funds of Sens. Clinton and Barack Obama. His distant third place finish in the South Carolina and Florida primaries also contributed to his choice to exit the race. Edwards has not yet officially announced whom he will be supporting.

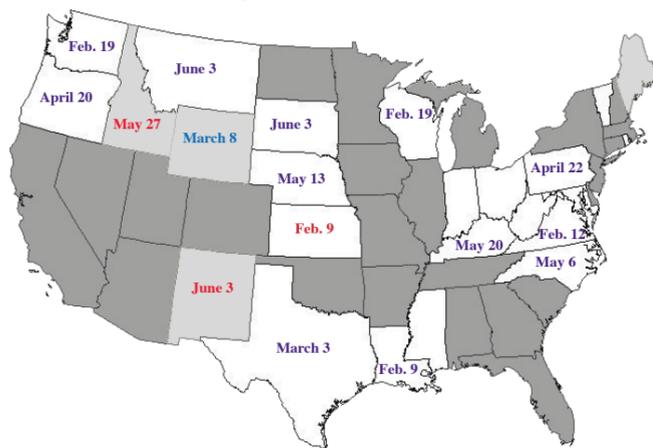
Edwards' decision to leave the campaign race could be the best thing for Obama. The Clinton's and the Bush's have lead America since 1988, and many want that to change with this election. Before last Thursday, this group could split their votes between Obama and Edwards. With Edwards gone, the anti-Hillary faction only has one candidate to choose from: Barack Obama.

The pool of candidates has narrowed significantly since the start of 2008 from eight Democrats and seven Republicans. Now the two remaining Democratic nominees, Clinton and Obama, are roughly even nationally, while McCain has emerged as the clear front-runner for the Republican ticket followed distantly by Romney, Mike Huckabee and Ron Paul.



Angie Lovelace/ Photographer

### So, Who's Left?



Graphic by Olivia Hubert-Allen

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# Hollywood sends a farewell to Ledger

Alexa Milan  
A&E Editor

Many Elon students, and other fans around the world, received a shock Jan. 22 when actor Heath Ledger was found dead at age 28.

Police found several prescriptions, including sleeping pills, in his Manhattan apartment, but the initial autopsy was inconclusive. At press time, the cause of death was still unknown, pending toxicology results.

After a private memorial service in Los Angeles, Ledger's body was flown to Australia where he was laid to rest in his hometown of Perth. Ledger leaves behind Matilda Rose, his 2-year-old daughter with actress Michelle Williams.

Ledger managed to avoid most of the tabloid attention that follows other young stars in Hollywood. Though fans might have occasionally read about his relationships, he will no doubt be remembered for his remarkable, though tragically short career.

After beginning his acting career in Australia, he first received attention in the United States in 1999 with his role in "10 Things I Hate About You," a romantic comedy based on Shakespeare's "The Taming of the Shrew." Not wanting to be typecast as a teen heartthrob, Ledger chose his roles carefully and on his own terms.

After starring alongside Mel Gibson in "The Patriot," Ledger won his first leading role in "A Knight's Tale." He next won critical acclaim for his role as Billy Bob Thornton's

son in "Monster's Ball."

His most memorable performance came in 2005 with "Brokeback Mountain," the film that earned Ledger his first and only Oscar nomination. His daring portrayal of a cowboy in love with another man proved his incredible versatility. This role led him to "I'm Not There," a film in which he played one of the many faces of Bob Dylan.

Ledger's final complete performance will be as The Joker in the sequel to "Batman Begins," "The Dark Knight," opening July 18. Fans and critics alike were intrigued by his dark portrayal based on the film's trailer alone.

At the time of his death, Ledger was halfway through filming Terry Gilliam's "The Imaginarium of Doctor Parnassus." In an interview with Entertainment Weekly, Christopher Plummer, Ledger's co-star, said that Gilliam wants to dedicate the film to Ledger and hopes to salvage his last performance. Plummer said that due to the film's fantastical nature, it may be possible for other actors to step in and complete Ledger's part. Gilliam, who also directed Ledger in "The Brothers Grimm," has not yet made a final decision.

Ledger's death has had a profound impact on Hollywood. At this year's Screen Actors Guild Awards, best actor winner Daniel Day-Lewis dedicated his award to Ledger. Ryan Gosling wore a black ribbon on his lapel to honor the late actor.

Ledger's passing has also stunned and

saddened fans, including those at Elon.

"I feel more of a connection to Heath Ledger's death than I have to other celebrities ... just because he gave the impression that he wasn't in the business for the fame and fortune side of it," sophomore Paul Mirek said. "It's tragic to lose someone who seemed not only to be a great example of the human side of the movie business, but also a good person in general."

"As an actor, it was really tragic to hear the news," sophomore Chris

Staskel said. "He took his craft so seriously and was an inspiration in that respect. The saddest part about it was that he was truly at the start of his career — I feel we'll be missing out on a lot of good work."

Heath Ledger accomplished a lot in his short life and showed tremendous promise to achieve even greater things in the future. He will be remembered as a talented and dedicated actor and a loving and devoted father. He will be sorely missed by his family, friends and fans.

## MOVIE REVIEW ★★★★★



## 'Savages' brings human element

Alexa Milan  
A&E Editor

"The Savages" is a smart little independent film that fits right in with this year's other Oscar contenders. The film gives audiences a very real and very human look at a dysfunctional family faced with some tough choices.

Wendy (Laura Linney) and Jon Savage (Philip Seymour Hoffman), a pair of unhappy, selfish, middle-aged siblings, did not have a typical upbringing. Their father left when they were young, leaving them to be raised by their incapable mother, who one day goes on a date and never returns.

Wendy is now a struggling playwright working as a temp and having an affair with Larry (Peter Friedman), a married man. Jon is a theater professor who is so afraid of commitment he opts to allow his Polish girlfriend to be deported rather than marry her when her visa expires.

Their father, Lenny (Philip Bosco), lives in an idyllic community in Arizona and suffers from dementia. When his live-in girlfriend dies, her children sell the house and Wendy and Jon must take their father back to New York. They struggle with the decision to place their father in a nursing home, where he will surely deteriorate and ultimately die.

Jon wants to face the situation and continue with life as usual while Wendy becomes wrapped up in the guilt she feels from sending their father to a nursing home. Through all of this, Wendy and Jon try to reconnect with each other and find meaning in their own lives as they come to terms with taking care of a father who never took care of them.

"The Savages" is a largely character-driven film, and Linney and Hoffman carry it beautifully.

Linney, who definitely deserves her Oscar nomination for this role, breathes life into flawed Wendy. Her immature, self-involved, pill-popping character is very real. The audience can't help but hope she is somehow able to succeed. It is clear that she has potential, but as Larry points out to her, her choices have been less than ideal.

Hoffman's Jon appears to just skim the surface of life. He goes to work, focuses most of his energy on his research and attempts to deal with any situations or disruptions as they come. But Hoffman subtly lets Jon's emotions peek through as they boil beneath the surface. His nuanced performance makes Jon very human and relatable.

Bosco also holds his own as Lenny. He captures the pain and confusion of dementia, and the viewer's heart is captured in spite of his abandoning Wendy and Jon. He gives the audience a different side of the story, and it is his side that is truly heartbreaking.

Writer and director Tamara Jenkins, who has also received an Oscar nod for her script, has developed a story that balances serious realism with comedy and Wendy and Jon's perspective with Lenny's. On the one hand the story is quite bleak, so true to the point of discomfort. But Jenkins also succeeds in showing the humor in otherwise heavy situations, moments that viewers are not sure they should laugh at but that frequently happen in reality all the same.

"The Savages" is a refreshingly human look at a difficult situation. At times it is so human that it can be difficult to watch, but it is nonetheless a moving story that ultimately leaves the audience with a sense of hope.



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# Video game controversy challenges media ethics

**Bryan Ray**  
Columnist

It goes without saying that videogames have been the favorite whipping boy of parents, politicians and, most surprisingly, the press. Videogames have been accused of not only contributing to poor grades and child obesity, but even the moral degradation of society. Some games deserve such criticism, such as the Grand Theft Auto or Soldier of Fortune, which include graphic violence and sexual references.

The most recent game to be targeted is Mass Effect. Unlike the previously mentioned games, the criticism leveled at Mass Effect is not only unwarranted, but entirely false. Mass Effect is a role playing game which follows a human Special Forces Operative who must unravel a plot to destroy the universe. Along the way, the character has the option to explore and travel to dozens of planets, as well as develop relationships with their crewmembers, male and female, human and alien, friendly and romantic.

For those uninformed, the controversy began when a conservative blogger, Kevin McCullough, stated that Mass Effect "allows its players... to engage in the most realistic sex acts ever conceived."

Soon afterwards, Fox News picked up on this untruth, and invited both Cooper Lawrence, a psychologist of questionable credentials, and Geof Keighley, a Spike TV Game Expert to discuss the topic. Cooper Lawrence went onto discuss how the game

objectifies women, yet she herself has authored such titles as The Fixer Upper Man: Turn Mr. Maybe into Mr. Right in 5 Easy Steps and Been There, Done That, Kept the Jewelry: Find True Love. She and the host went onto accuse the game and its designers of marketing to children, and containing explicit sex scenes. While Keighley seems to be the "expert" most capable of discussing the topic, he is talked over, cut off and ignored. Lawrence, however, is most verbose in her criticism of the game, saying that adolescents will be playing the game, and that the game leads to the objectification of women. When asked if she had played the game, Lawrence laughs and concedes that she had not. The interview can be found on Kotaku.com.

Since this travesty of a discussion took place, both McCullough and Lawrence have recanted their statements. Both received a massive backlash from fans of the games, who accused the pundits of slander and libel. Lawrence's comment section for her book on Amazon was closed down due to the complaints and criticisms about her remarks concerning Mass Effect. She has since admitted that her statements on Fox News were the result of a brief introduction given to her by a staff member of Fox, and having recently seen the sex scene in action, believes that her statements were unwarranted.

Mass Effect does contain a single sex scene, yet it is mostly implied. The dialogue, "action" and resolution is about as graphic as an afterschool

special; a far cry from the "most realistic sex acts" written about by McCullough. To be clear, this event lasts about 45 seconds, in a game that takes between 50 and 60 hours to complete.

What is completely overlooked in the condemnation of this game is that Mass Effect is a game about choices, of which the player is forced to make many. At times, the player is forced to choose between good and evil, whether to kill hostage takers and risk the lives of the captives or to resolve the situation peacefully, which member of his crew should sacrifice himself, and whether to jeopardize his fleet to protect the government or to destroy the enemy's super ship.

Yet, this argument goes beyond any single game, but extends to broader questions of media, decency and fact. It is apparent that not only were the critics mistaken, but they also lied in this situation.

Their assertion that these games are falling easily into the hands of children is absolutely false. GameStop, the number one game retailer in the country, carries the punishment of immediate termination and a \$50,000 fine for the sale of an "M" rated game to anyone under the age of 17. In New York, this violation is a prosecutable felony.

The events mentioned above emphasizes the need for media organizations to act with more responsibility when dealing with any story.

## Security is student's responsibility

**David Koontz**  
Opinions Editor

Since the year began, Elon students have received a number of e-mails regarding break-ins on and off campus. Over Fake Break students received an e-mail stating that a room in Danieley Center had been broken into. A laptop computer and a television were discovered to be stolen when the room's inhabitants awoke the morning after. Earlier in the year Smith Dormitory also had a robbery issue and an off-campus house was broken into as well.

Many students may be discouraged by these incidents. They may assume that they aren't safe, even with campus security patrolling the streets.

Don't be quick to judge and assail campus security or Elon Police with complaints about inadequacy.

Remember that the window in the dorm was left unlocked by the students; all the suspect had to do was cut through the screen, the challenge level of which can rival that of ripping a piece of paper. Students who are fortunate enough to still have their window screens need to realize that a wire screen will not ward off unwanted guests.

Elon provides its students with more than enough security measures for the dorms. Most dorm buildings can't be entered without card access. Even with or without card access, all individual dorm rooms can be locked. The majority of walkways are well lit and there are emergency call box phones spread throughout campus.

What students should be doing instead of placing the blame on campus security is taking more personal responsibility for their own safety. While campus security is here to help keep students protected, they are not omnipotent.

A little more individual action can go a long way in securing a student's personal safety as well as the safety their property. When heading out for the day, be smart and close and lock the windows. While cruising around campus during any late night antics, don't walk alone. And just because a building has card access doesn't mean doors shouldn't be locked.

When it comes down to it, students have to realize that they are in college now. Mommy and Daddy aren't here anymore to lock the door and keep the Boogiemans at bay. It's the real world and bad things can still happen, even in the picture-perfect, happy-go-lucky Elon "bubble".

## Politicians are wasting time with NFL trials

**Stephen Murray**  
Columnist

Since the Democratic Party assumed control of both houses of Congress after the 2006 elections, members of the Republican Party and conservative media have been quick to brand the national legislative branch as ineffective and content to waste the money and time of American taxpayers.

With Sen. Arlen Specter's (R-Pa.) request to speak with National Football League commissioner Roger Goodell regarding the New England Patriots' destruction of videotapes allegedly obtained by spying, Americans must realize that the capacity to squander America's resources knows no political party.

Specter's investigation of a body of professional sports is certainly different from Congress' attempts to probe steroid use in Major League Baseball. The rationale for investigation in the case of Major League Baseball was to stop illegal use and shipment of drugs in athletics and to discourage drug use among America's youth.

Specter's reasons for wishing to speak to Goodell range from the petty to the absurd. Specter has expressed interest in the tapes' destruction because it attacks the integrity of the NFL. He has also drawn allusions that equate the destruction of video of an athletic contest to the CIA's destruction of tapes allegedly of agents engaging in water boarding, an interrogation technique declared to be torture by the Geneva Convention.

Unless Patriots' videographer, Matt Estrella, has some connection to the CIA, there is no relationship between the CIA tapes and the NFL.

Specter's request to investigate the destruction of the Patriots' tapes is just as detrimental as the earmarking that Democrats have been chastised for since they took office. Useless committee hearings and earmarks share a common trait: they are two of the most effective ways to waste time and money. Those earmarks generally result in a project that benefits someone, somewhere, though perhaps such a project is not in the best interest of the entire country. An investigation of the destruction of videos of football players in practice is unlikely to result

in any groundbreaking resolution for either Congress or the NFL.

Specter, as the ranking member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, should realize that the nation has more important matters to tend to.

In case he has forgotten, the United States is engaged in a war that needs his and the Committee's utmost attention. That, combined with the actions of a president who has taken his executive privilege to a level the Founding Fathers certainly never intended, should keep Specter and his colleagues busy for at least the next 11 months.

Inaction in Washington should not be associated with any particular political party. It has no place in politics to begin with.

The American public is holding on to a faint glimmer of hope that the politicians in Washington can make an orchestrated effort to strengthen the nation prior to the November election. For now, all members of Congress should share the blame for the inaction that plagues the Capital and conservative critics should look to their own before pointing the finger of blame squarely at the Democrats.

Do you have something to say?  
We'd love to hear from you.

Letters to the Editor can be sent to:  
pendulum@elon.edu

Submissions should be no longer  
than 300 words.

### THE PENDULUM

Established 1974

The Pendulum is published each Wednesday of the academic year. The advertising and editorial copy deadline is 5 p.m. the Friday before publication. Letters to the editor and guest columns are welcome and should be typed and e-mailed with a telephone number for verification. Submissions are accepted as Word documents. The Pendulum reserves the right to edit obscene and potentially libelous material. Lengthy letters or columns may be trimmed to fit. All submissions become the property of the Pendulum and will not be returned. You can reach The Pendulum by e-mail at pendulum@elon.edu. Visit our Web site at www.elon.edu/pendulum.

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# Interested in Getting Involved in SGA?

Are there things you want to change about Elon? Then become a senator in the Student Government and make a difference.

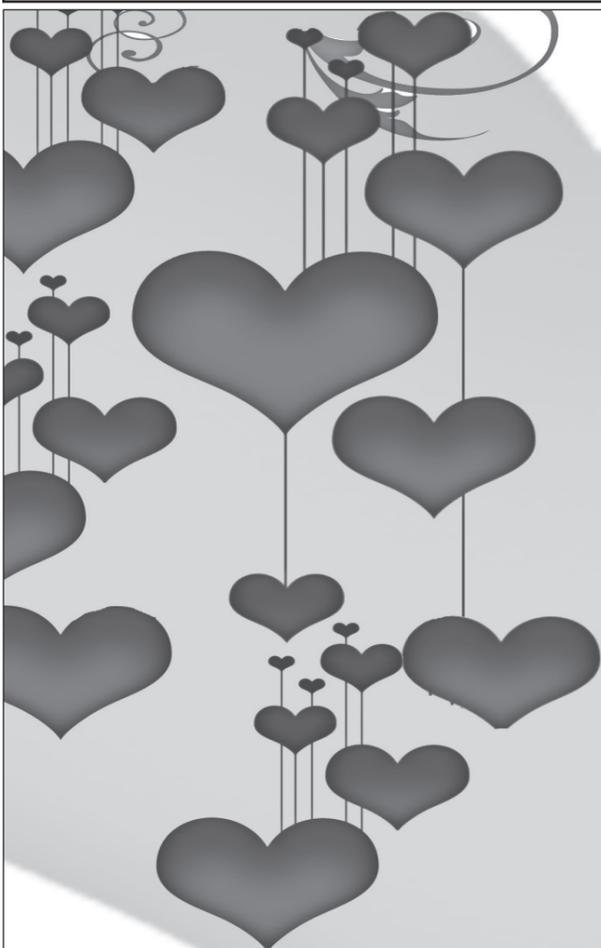
To be eligible all candidates must complete an elections packet. Packets are available in the SGA office as well as online on the SGA Web site. The last day to turn in completed packets is February 11th.

## Elections will be held February 19th and 20th.



Student Government Association  
Located in Moseley 221A

<http://org.elon.edu/sga/>



# Red Bull

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*Treat your sweetheart on Valentine's Day  
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## Couples Menu

Filet Oscar for two served with two salads and two side items.

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Stuffed mahi mahi with crab meat imperium

Desert for two: fried banana with ice cream and banana foster sauce

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Ashley Barnas/ Photographer

Catherine White Berheide (left), Lynn Pasquerella (center) and Don J. Wyatt (right) visited Elon earlier this week as part of the review process for Elon's application for Phi Beta Kappa membership. The group stayed for three days earlier this week.

## Phi Beta Kappa committee visits Elon

"The school told us you were good, so we said, 'Show us,'" said Catherine White Berheide of Skidmore College. Berheide is one of four professors representing the Committee on Qualifications for Phi Beta Kappa, a liberal arts and sciences honors society.

The committee members were at Elon from Sunday through Tuesday, examining everything from academic freedom to general studies courses to the accessibility of library materials.

Academic freedom is evident when "you can look at a campus, and walk on it and see competing issues," said Berheide. "You can just tell there is a vibrant conversation going on with a wide range of ideas."

With no set criteria for how a university is worthy of obtaining a Phi Beta Kappa chapter, the four professors came with open minds. "Our idea of excellence is not subjective or arbitrary," said Dr. Don J. Wyatt of Middlebury College. "It's not something we're doing on the curve."

While at Elon the four committee members met hundreds of students, faculty and staff members. Their evaluation of the school will play a large part in whether or not Elon is granted a Phi Beta Kappa chapter.

- Ashley Barnas, News Editor

A full review on the Phi Beta Kappa visit will be in next week's edition of The Pendulum.

### Meet the committee members

Catherine White Berheide  
Department of Sociology  
Skidmore College

Lynn Pasquerella  
Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and  
Dean of the Graduate School  
University of Rhode Island

Don J. Wyatt  
Professor of History  
Middlebury College

Les G. Butler  
Professor of Inorganic & Materials  
Science  
Louisiana State University

## Textbooks prices rise, students find alternatives

Olivia Hubert-Allen  
Editor in Chief

After tuition and expenses have been paid, and meal plans purchased, it is easy to assume the brunt of spring expenses is over. But with rising textbook prices, for many students, a final bill still awaits. Students everywhere are feeling the pinch, spending as much as \$900 a year on books.

There are many problems contributing to the issue of high textbook costs. Publishers are hounded for being the root of the problem because they set the initial prices of their products. Bookstores also are criticized for taking commission on textbooks that are already very expensive.

"Textbook prices rise at the same rate of inflation," says Elon Campus Shop Manager, Kathy Scarborough. "The campus shop here is very aggressive to faculty about early book orders. This allows the bookstore the ability to purchase those books back at 50 percent of the retail price ... putting those books on the shelf at a 25 percent discount from the new retail price."

Students are also saving cash by purchasing used books. The Elon Campus bookstore always gives students the option to buy a used book if it is available. Unfortunately, frequent book updates cut into the life span of used books.

California Public Interest Research Group (CALPIRG)

has conducted an ongoing study on textbook prices. Their most recent study found that on average, new editions of textbooks come out every three years. CALPIRG sees unnecessary new editions as a move by the publishing industry to dampen the market for used textbooks. Often they only have updated pictures and charts from their predecessors.

According to the study, only 76 percent of faculty surveyed found that new editions were justified "only half the time or less."

The problem goes beyond new editions. A growing trend in the publishing world is bundling. By attaching workbooks, CD-ROMs or online study guides, prices spike regardless of whether the student needs the supplies or not. The CALPIRG study found that 55 percent of books that come in bundles are not sold separately, forcing students to pay more for unnecessary supplements.

Undergrads have started to get creative when buying textbooks. With resources like the Internet and college libraries, many are trying to beat the publishing industry by opting for cheaper alternatives. The birth of Napster, a file-sharing program, was powerful enough to rock the music industry back into affordability. Could books follow a similar fate?

Probably not anytime soon. No-frills books, such as black and white, or



Photo courtesy of The Collegian

spiral bound, are becoming more common, as well as e-books that can be accessed online. But, the most popular textbooks are still found lining the bookstore shelves in hardback cover - and with lots of color, of course.

"I spent \$262 on three textbooks at a campus shop, and then found the same books online for \$149," senior Merissa Baxter said. Baxter is part of the growing population that has turned to Web sites like amazon.com and half.com for used textbooks.

Web sites give consumers access to merchants overseas that are able to produce the same textbooks at a cheaper price. Students are warned against buying some of these books since shipping can take weeks and customer service is

often scarce.

Other schools have explored alternatives to textbook purchasing. Students at North Carolina State University can reference most of their textbooks in the library while Appalachian State University has had success with a textbook rental program.

"All the basic books that your teacher requires you to have can be checked out and then returned at the end of the semester, for free," said Appalachian student, Horton Redhage. "It's like checking something out of the library."

A similar program is something Elon students are asking about.

"I would definitely participate in a check-out program because I always end

up losing money at the end of the semester when I sell my books back to the campus bookstore. I think a program would really help keep costs down," said junior Mary Austin Slate.

Elon's dedication to be cutting edge may be preventing such a program here.

"Appalachian State often has to use old editions or outdated information to keep the program going," Scarborough said. "Freedom of academic choices is often hindered to keep the books being offered in circulation."

It looks like until a better alternative emerges, book buying will continue to be a least favorite time of the year.