

University guides important, yet imperfect admissions tool

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Just as Elon's No. 2 ranking on Princeton Review's list of beautiful campuses draws so many prospective students, Elon's tour guides play a role in marketing the university. Recently, concern has been raised among students regarding the accuracy of information delivered by tour guides to prospective students.

"I definitely think the way tour guides present information is sugar-coated," said sophomore Keisaundra Henderson. "I think it's all accurate, but they don't necessarily show the negative aspects of what they are saying."

This is not the first time that concern has been raised over the extent that the Office of Admissions controls prospective students' image of the university.

Controversy was sparked on Elon's campus when the Nov. 6, 1989 edition of *The Pendulum* was removed from its stands by Admissions before an open-house weekend because of drug-related coverage on the front page. However, a number of students and faculty did not agree with the office's censorship of information. The office's actions were later deemed inappropriate and the same information was allowed to be reprinted and distributed to the campus community the following week.

However, a number of students have pointed to factual inconsistencies in some tour guides' presentations, blaming them for creating an inaccurate image of the university. Many students on campus feel that the role of alcohol and involvement in Greek life on campus is downplayed during tours.

Dean of Admissions Susan Klopman said that Admissions has a number of programs in place, including extensive training and feedback systems, to help keep all of

the guides on the same page.

"So, do you hear crazy things? Yes you do, because we only have so much control. We do everything we can with feedback and training to make sure prospective students get an accurate picture of Elon," she said. "But if we wanted this to be perfect, we wouldn't have student tour guides."

Klopman said that student guides offer an invaluable perspective to students taking the tours. However, she said tour guides are expected to memorize an incredible amount of information about every aspect of the university and often that makes it hard to keep things consistent. Klopman said keeping everyone in Admissions informed who may be questioned about any situations on campus helps to prevent uncomfortable situations from arising during the tour process.

"We really trust our student guides," she said. "Sometimes our students are placed into very difficult situations and they need to have the information they need to handle it effectively."

Klopman explained that some tour guides may choose to avoid bringing up sensitive topics during tours to avoid being placed into uncomfortable situations. This raises concern because it may omit some information about the university that is crucial for prospective students to get an accurate picture of Elon.

"You know, sometimes to let sleeping dogs lie is a good idea," Klopman said.

Still, university guide Kate LaVanger said she tells parents and students on tours that Elon is not a dry campus, but still follows the North Carolina state laws for alcohol consumption.

"We don't lie about it. We say that Elon is a wet campus," LaVanger said.

For training on how to handle questions about alcohol, Director of Substance



Matt Belanger / Photographer

University guide Sarah Debock starts a tour in Moseley Center Wednesday afternoon. Tour guides are often asked by prospective students and parents to discuss issues such as Greek life and alcohol use during their tours.

Education Resa Walch gives periodic presentations to the tour guides about Elon's stance on drinking. Throughout the year, tour guides receive additional training and updated information from a variety of sources, including updates to the university guide training manual. Tour guides also have a fact book that states how the guides should handle tough questions.

"In tour guide training we bring up different issues and discuss them as a group and talk about how to truthfully answer them but not give an inaccurate portrayal," said Nan Perkins, vice president for institutional advancement.

According to Elon statistics, 98 percent of the current freshman class visited Elon's

campus at some point before enrolling. Kelly Herndon, who coordinates prospective student's visits to campus, said that tour guides are one of the most important aspects involved in selling the school to prospective students.

Nevertheless, Perkins, explained the importance of giving prospective students an accurate portrayal of the school.

"The last thing they want to do in Admissions is mislead students," she said. "If you tell them things that are not true, once they get here you are going to have a number of unhappy students."

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Changes in effect for game day and homecoming weekend parking policies



The following parking lots must be vacated by 8 a.m. Saturday:

Jordan Center #1 (SWV tags may remain), Harper Center, Moseley Center, McMichael Science Center and McMichael Lot #2

Students may move their vehicles anytime after 5 p.m. on Friday to the following locations:

Danieley Center, Elon East, Railroad Tracks, Whitley Staff Lot, Elon Elementary and Mooney Staff lot

Individuals using the library need to use visitor's parking only. The remaining spaces in Moseley Center, McMichael Science Center and Greek Courts parking will be used for homecoming events. Students are advised that if they have visitors on campus they must also move their cars to one of the approved lots.