

Words of Wisdom

Advice for tomorrow from a few familiar faces

The Pendulum spoke with several seniors and members of the Elon community to collect advice to share with graduates of the Class of 2008. Mentors shared their favorite events from the past four years, their hopes for the graduates and what they wish they knew when they graduated. They shared what they would miss most, something they wish they would have done while at Elon and something they recommend to incoming or current students.

Compiled by Andie Diemer, Laura Wainman and Jessi Dexheimer

From your mentors:

Ernie Nestor, Men's Head Basketball Coach

Q: What advice would you give this graduating class?

It is so important that you move in a forward direction even though the future seems so uncertain. It is the uncertainty that will call on your most creative efforts to help you be successful in the coming years.

Nothing is guaranteed. You must be prepared to compete for your place in our society. To do that, find something that not only interests and rewards you, but something that summons up your passions and excites you.

It is now your time to make a change in your status. While you may return to school, your days as a undergraduate student are over and moving forward into a new life status is necessary. Your parents have helped you get here and they will continue to support you. You must demonstrate to them what they have taught you by how you live your life.

Go forward and enjoy the future knowing that each day you have ownership over your destiny.

Jerry Tolley, Elon Mayor Emeritus and Director of Annual Giving & Elon Society

Q: What do you know now that you wish you had known when you had graduated?

The importance of building a network of lifelong acquaintances and friends who can help you grow in your chosen profession. Also the importance of knowing that life is a continuous learning experience and to succeed in life you must always be willing to learn new things and to embrace change.

Q: What event from the past four years is most memorable to you?

The opening of the Koury Business Center and the Law School, the performance of "The Phantom of the Opera" and many other theater productions, the convocations with outstanding speakers, the annual dance marathon and our highly successful athletics teams.

Q: What advice would you give this graduating class?

Always have a positive outlook on life and view your cup as half full and not half empty. And by all means, always find a way to turn every "setback" into a "comeback." Remember the old Chinese proverb: "The greatest glory in life is not never falling down but getting up every time you do fall down."

Q: What do you hope that these graduates will take with them from their time at Elon?

I would like to see every Elon graduate take with them a continued thirst for knowledge and adventure as well as the many memories and friendships they have made at Elon.

Remember above all, you will leave Elon, but Elon will never leave you.

Jay Anhorn, Director of Greek Life

Q: What do you know now that you wish you had known when you had graduated?

Being in college was much easier than graduate school or my first job. You realize that your advisers and professors may have held you accountable or have been harsh on you, but that it was for a good reason. Once you are out of Elon, you are on your own, and the only one looking out for you, is you. Unfortunately, you cannot appeal a decision or look for extra credit.

Q: What event from the past four years is most memorable to you?

My favorite memory has got to be watching Dr. Lambert get on stage at Elonthon this year and dance.

Q: What advice would you give this graduating class?

Remember that everything you learned inside and outside the classroom is what you made of it. Elon gave you the tools, but you decided which ones to use and how to use them. And don't forget to come back and visit.

Q: What do you hope that these graduates will take with them from their time at Elon?

From a Greek Life stand point, 35 percent of you will look back and realize that if it wasn't for your involvement in a fraternity or sorority, your lives would have been totally different. Most of you remember realizing how important your particular organization was to you, but I bet now as you leave, you see that you were all just one big family. Remember that Greek Life did not make you who you are today, but you are Greek Life and you made Elon a better place being part of it.

From your fellow seniors:



Crystal Grandison

What is something you will miss?

Being a part of the "Elon bubble," always seeing familiar faces wherever you go, Lighthouse, Cantina and watching people trip over bricks.

What is something you wish you could have done?

Studied abroad more and not worry so much about things because everything will always get done.

What is something you would recommend to incoming or current students?

Don't take anything for granted. You're in college: Have fun, be smart and do big things. Your time here is going to fly by ... live it up.



Johnathan Hatch

I will miss all my friends, both graduating seniors and underclassmen, who I won't see anymore. Also, I will miss not having much responsibility at all outside of class.

I wish I would have gone out more when I didn't have anything to do the next day. Soon that lifestyle will be frowned upon.

Go out and meet as many people as possible. Do everything you can to learn from others about their cultures, lifestyles, where they're from and what they consider to be the norm.



Jake Emerson

Living in the bubble.

I wish I would have come to Elon from day one instead of having to transfer in. I feel like I screwed myself out of three great semesters of college!

Get involved in organizations and activities that are new to you, but don't stretch yourself too thin by being overly involved. Choose two or three things that you're really passionate about and give it your all.



Nikki Allem

I'll miss being able to walk or drive to my friends' places in less than five minutes, and I'll really miss reunions with friends who studied abroad for a semester in Denmark with me.

I wish I would have gone to Arizona Pete's (country line-dancing place in Greensboro) before my last few weeks here. It is so fun.

Take advantage of the fact that Elon has an amazing theater arts department. Go see every musical or play, and definitely go see the dance concerts.



Allison Barbieri

I will definitely miss seeing Anonymous and 3 Day Weekend play at the various local venues. Their music is the soundtrack to my four years at Elon.

I wish that I would have studied abroad for an entire semester. My winter term in Brazil was amazing, but way too short.

Don't take yourself too seriously, and enjoy these short years. Ten years from now you will remember the late nights spent procrastinating with your best friends — not the grade you got on a test.



Charles Adams

I am going to miss all of my friends and having the entire world at my fingertips.

I wish that I had been involved in more organizations on campus. I would have loved to have been involved in a service organization.

Just enjoy every second here because it will all be over before you know it.



Leigh Sassone

The biggest thing I will miss is having all of my friends not even five minutes away from me at all times. Elon is a small community and everyone lives so close, it will be sad when we are all so far away.

Take more winter term trips. Although I went away for a semester and a winter term, they keep adding more and more cool trips that I would love to participate in.

Use every service Elon has to offer because there is a lot. At Elon, people's entire jobs are dedicated to helping you as a student. In the real world, no one's job is to help you. Take advantage of it now while you can.