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Elon prepares for new Spanish center

Sarah Smith

Contributing Reporter

The best way to learn Spanish is to go where it is spoken. This fall Elon provides that place — all you have to do is walk across campus.

The Centro de Español de Elon, referred to as el Centro for short, is scheduled to open mid-semester in the former Art Lounge on the first floor of Moseley Center. The room will keep its lounge atmosphere, but an interactive computer sta-

tion, salsa music and a heart dose of Spanish will be added. Anticipated hours will be from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. This is to accommodate faculty and staff who work during the day.

"I think there is a really strong growing influence of Hispanic culture in this area," said Kevin Gilmore, who was the summer interim director. "This is Elon saying we recognize that."

Stephen Hyde and Tracey Herling, student coordinators, have taken over where Gilmore left off.

"El Centro will be open to everyone, regardless of Spanish-speaking level," Hyde said. "We

want this to be a fun place for the entire campus to become bilingual."

One ideal audience for the center is students traveling abroad to Spanish-speaking countries. Jessica Chatham, a sophomore who will spend winter term in Costa Rica, said she thinks the center is a great idea. She studied German in high school and, in her own words, "doesn't speak a word of Spanish."

"I will definitely take advantage of it," Chatham said. "And others will too that don't speak Spanish and need to learn before leaving."

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Emily MacDonnell/The Pendulum

Darren Lowe and Mindy Pinnell sell sweatshirts at the Festival of the Oaks. This annual festival was held in downtown Elon College on Oct. 4. For more photos from the Festival of the Oaks see the photo essay on page 13.

Basketball teams slam into a new season

Chrissie Taylor

Pendulum Reporter

Imagine being able to win \$11,000, roundtrip airline tickets, free pizza and coke and also being able to see great basketball.

Alumni Gym doors will be opened to kickoff the 1997-98 Elon basketball season at 11:00 p.m. Friday, Oct. 17, with the fourth annual "Friday Night Madness."

"Friday Night Madness" is a time to catch up on everything after fall break and to see and be seen," Tripp Durham, director of promotions and marketing in athletics, said.

At "Friday Night Madness" students can check out the 1997-98

editions of the men's and women's basketball teams and register to win many great prizes.

Guard Adam Robert's father, Dave Roberts, will begin the pre-event music at 11:15 p.m., and the first 500 fans into Alumni Gym will receive a free coke.

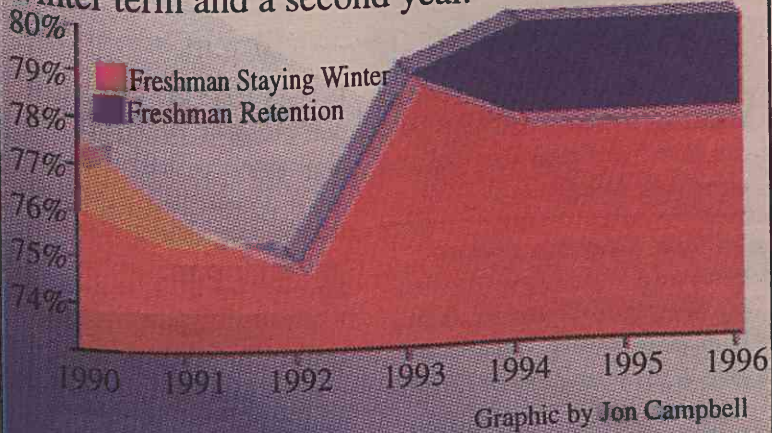
Men's basketball coach Mark Simmons said he is excited about this event.

"We are hoping to get the same kind of support as in the past. This is a big event because it gives us a chance to introduce new players and get the students on campus

see BASKETBALL, page 5

Pendulum F.Y.I. Plan on Returning?

Percentage of Elon Freshman who stay for winter term and a second year.



Retention rates crucial to finances

Kristy Rawls

Contributing Reporter

Freshmen retention is a serious issue at Elon College because if a freshman doesn't return for his or her sophomore year, the college essentially "loses" money.

Both graduation and retention rates have increased in the past seven years.

The freshman class of 1989 had 76 percent retained. In 1990 and 1991 it dropped to 75 percent but rose in 1992 to approximately 80 percent retained and has re-

mained at a plateau for five years.

Brooks Cates, director of institutional research at Elon, said he believes the freshmen attendance in winter term makes a difference in the retention rate.

In the past six years, the average of freshmen attending winter term has been about 78 percent.

Most students do stay for their entire freshman year. About seven percent of freshmen have left during that first year from 1989 through 1996.

"The students who leave Elon are usually not involved in any clubs

or organization and simply did not latch onto the campus, Cates said. "This is why organizational fairs and Elon 101 classes were brought to Elon in hopes of helping the freshmen become integrated on campus."

Cates has conducted surveys for freshmen at both the beginning and end of the year, as well as for seniors and alumni. By researching he said he hopes to increase the retention and graduation rates even

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