

# Tom Nelson laughs and learns through his third year

Chuck Buckley  
*The Pendulum*

When you first step into the office of Professor Tom Nelson, you feel like you are walking into a shrine. Dominating the wall behind his desk is a map of the world. Hanging on the walls to the left and right of you, are framed newspaper front-pages announcing in huge boldfaced text the sinking of the Titanic and the Hindenburg crash.

At first glance, Nelson strikes you as a fast-talking, hard hitting man with no time to slow down to help people who can't keep up. However, after three years of teaching at Elon, all journalism and communications students know that impression is miles away from the truth.

Nelson can almost always be found between classes in deep conversation with one or more of his students. His door is never closed.

Tom Nelson is probably the most continuously upbeat professor in not only the communications department, but the entire school.

Nelson is very happy to be working at Elon. He likes the feeling of the campus and the rapport between the students and the teachers.

Nelson thinks Elon is one of the best places for himself and for students.

"[The students] are lucky to be at Elon," Nelson said. "I've worked in a few places and Elon is a pretty good deal for everybody involved. Much better than some students know. You'd be hard-pressed to find a more pleasant environment to attend school. I tell them that all the time. Because I think a lot of the times many students think that the Elon experience is the average college experience. It's not. It's a whole lot better."

Nelson was born and raised in New York City. He went on to graduate from Boston College with a B.A. in History. After graduation, Nelson bounced around for a while before he went back to school.

At Syracuse, Nelson earned himself a M.S. in Television Management and got into TV news right after he got out of school. From there on it seemed fated. He then went on to work in television for the better part of a decade, including a stint in Germany.

"In terms of credibility," says Nelson, "I would like [the students] to know that I have done what I teach, and I've done a lot of it, not a

little of it, for my age, relative of my age."

After a while, Nelson stumbled into teaching and discovered that he absolutely loved it.

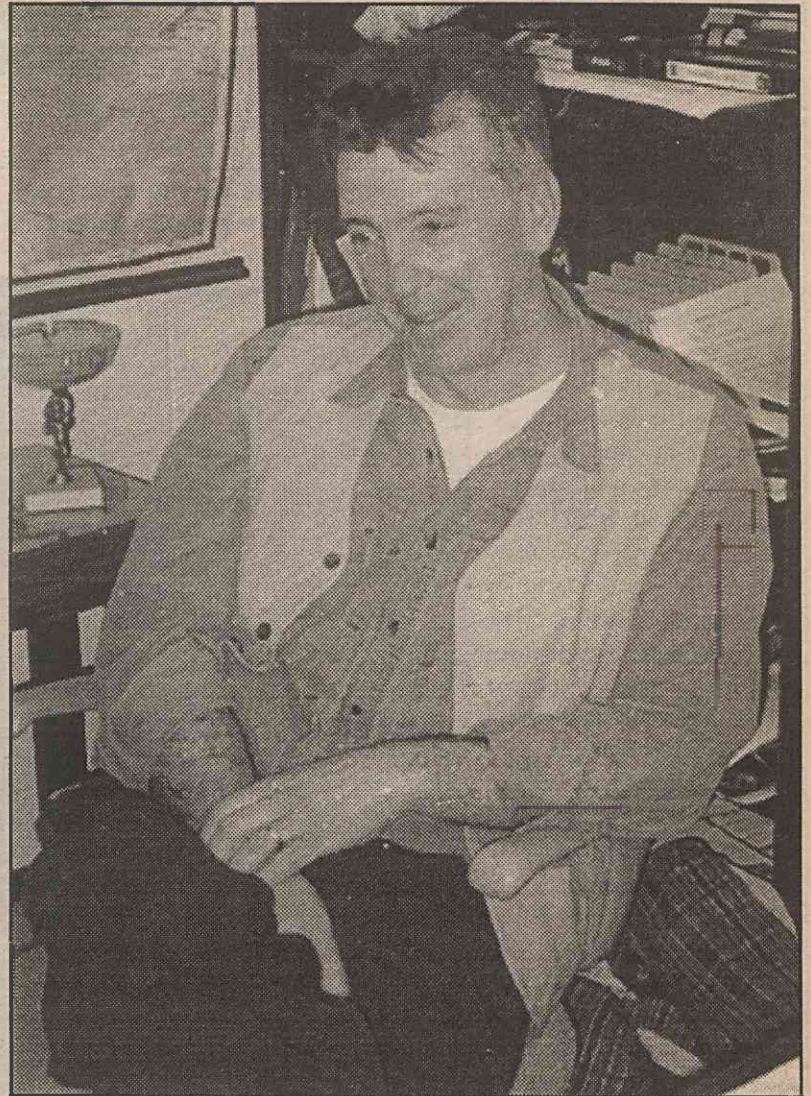
"I like being Daddy," Nelson said. "That's my favorite part. I like being Daddy. I enjoy the sense of 'They're my students.' [Teaching] is a very paternal profession. And I enjoy that about it."

Nelson plans on remaining at Elon for some time to come, with his three year old son, Nick and his wife Joan.

This semester Nelson is teaching two television production classes, a public speaking class and a Writing for the Electronic Media class which will incorporate the cameras, editors and other media technology.

His plans for the future:

"When we move into the new building, there will be new broadcast news classes. There is a limitation on how much we can do [in the Model Center] with production classes, but when we move into the new building that limitation is then removed from us, and we can do what we want. What I want to do is create a broadcast news sequence of some sort where we would teach by going into the field."



Chuck Buckley/ *The Pendulum*  
Tom Nelson reflects on his time at Elon

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