

# Jean Schwind continues to make impact on students' lives

**Jeff Sanders**  
*The Pendulum*

After 10 years at Elon, English Professor Jean Schwind's goals haven't changed.

"I want to be a teacher who has an impact on students' lives," she said.

"Elon students tend to be very extroverted and active, and I think they underrate...chewing on ideas. I want them to come to value introversion and meditative thinking." Those who don't know her might ask who Schwind is to make such generalizations.

Those who do know her, though, have a different opinion.

"She just won't hand us the information," said one of her students.

"She makes us think — really think — about things and then discuss. She's the kind of professor we need.

What brought her to Elon, a college known for its volunteerism that has been criticized by its own students in recent years of a lack of intellectual depth?

"Well, I hate to admit it as a feminist, I followed my husband to North Carolina," she said. Her husband, Thomas, with whom she has no children, is an administrator at The University of North Carolina at

Chapel Hill.

"I was lucky there was an opening here," she said.

A St. Olaf's and University of Minnesota graduate, Schwind serves in more organizations at Elon than the new library has delays. She is the faculty adviser for Omicron Delta Kappa, Chair of the General Studies Council, Coordinator of Literature Concentration for the English Department and a member of the Women's Studies subject committee, Academic Ethos Committee and the College's Mission Statement Revision committee.

She spends her little free time reading, and doing some writing of her own.

"I think it's a tragedy that students don't read unless it's required," she said. "That's one of the things I'd really like to change." Schwind's favorite authors include Tony Morrison, author of *Beloved*; the verbose serial novelist Charles Dickens; and well-known author William Faulkner.

"I'm kind of a workaholic, too," she said. "I'm in awe of people who can raise kids and stay involved in their career at the same time."

When it comes to her favorite class to teach, Schwind says she believes College Writing to be of paramount importance.

"It's just such a strong foundational element," she said. "People make all kinds of judgments about how educated you are and how smart you are based on how well you write. I like it the most because there's just so much at stake there."

As judgments go, even in today's culture people continue to make snap judgments about those with disabilities.

Schwind, who suffered from a debilitating bout of the measles as a child, was left with severely decreased hearing in both ears. The measles gave her a severe fever, which in turn burned out the nerve endings in her eardrums.

"I've adapted pretty well," she said, "and sometimes I actually like it. Sometimes students are tired and just want to sit in the back and do nothing — to not be visible. Hearing aids can only do so much, and I have to supplement what I do hear with reading lips. I can't read lips from the back of the room, so I hold my classes in a roundtable, group discussion."

Schwind also said that what she does miss are the conversations one hears in passing: the things that aren't intended for her, or as she puts it, "The Juicy Stuff."

"Other times, though, it really is a blessing," she said. "I've had students with learning disabili-



Alan Medeiros / *The Pendulum*

Jean Schwind talks to *The Pendulum* about her Elon career and her goals for the future.

ties, who are shy, or for one reason or another can't participate as other students can, and I get it. I get what they're going through, and I hope that they can identify with me like I can identify with them."

With her dedication to bettering Elon, her involvement and her compassion with her students' needs, Schwind will easily be remembered as a teacher who has made an impact.

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### CAREER EXPLORATION SERIES

Room 115 McMichael Science Center  
5:00 - 7:00 p.m.

- Careers in Science - November 8
- Careers in Communications - November 9
- Careers in Social Service - November 10
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**Wake Forest University**  
**Graduate/Professional School Fair**  
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Benson Center - Room 401  
**Elon Students Invited**  
Stop by the Career Center for list of schools and directions to WFU

#### WORKSHOPS

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Success at the Job Fair	Wednesday, November 10	3:30 - 4:30 pm
Interview Prep and Practice	Friday, November 12	10:00 - 11:00 am
Success at the Job Fair	Monday, November 15	3:00 - 4:00 pm
Interview Prep and Practice	Tuesday, November 16	1:30 - 2:30 pm

All workshops held in the Career Center in Duke 101