



## Students prepared before travel

**Courtney Wells**  
*Contributing Reporter*

This term, 565 Elon College students and faculty will travel abroad for Winter Term. As many as 90 students and faculty will spend their entire spring semester abroad. But their families want to know, will they be safe?

"You are more likely to be killed in your hometown than studying abroad," said Bettina Brown of the International Studies office.

Elon takes numerous precautions to insure the safety of the students and faculty while abroad, starting with the education of those who will be going abroad. The faculty has an orientation of procedures that will be used on a day-to-day basis as well as procedures that will be used in emergency situations.

Students have at least two orientation meetings before studying abroad for either Winter Term or a semester. During the orientation sessions students are given safety guidelines and handouts such as "The Ritual of Being a Guest" which details see TRAVEL, page 7

## Student death shocks Elon

**Jennifer Guarino and Taresa LaRock**  
*The Pendulum*

Elon junior Megan Tripp died Sunday, Jan. 14 in Sydney, Australia after falling from a room balcony at the Rydges Cronulla Beach Hotel.

The accident happened about 10:30 p.m. Australia time. Tripp, 20, was rushed to St. George Hospital where she underwent surgery. She was pronounced dead at 2 a.m.

According to Vanessa Allan, media liaison officer with the News South Wales Police Service, Tripp "fell from her hotel balcony on the 9<sup>th</sup> floor and landed on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor balcony."

A final report will not be available for weeks, pending the closing of the investigation. Allen said police reports are not public record in Australia, and will not be available to the media.

"She was taken to the hospital with broken bones and internal injuries," Allen said.

Police investigators and a counselor have been working on this case and say there are no suspicious circumstances. According to Bill Rich, dean of international and special programs, "The police have not found anything suspicious to suggest anything other than it was an accident." Tripp was enrolled in

Sport in the Global Community The general studies class is taught by Peter Farmer, associate professor of leisure/sports management, and Barry Beedle, professor of physical education.

The afternoon before Tripp's death, students attended an authentic Australian barbecue. "Reports are that Megan and perhaps some other students took off [after the barbecue] and went back to the hotel," Rich said. "Sometime in the evening they decided to go out. As some other point they came back to the hotel, and Megan came back to her room. A receptionist said there was a commotion on the 9<sup>th</sup> floor. Beedle was called; he found Tripp's door locked."

Rich said Beedle was the first to enter Tripp's room. He found it empty, but the balcony door was open. He saw something on the second floor balcony, which extends out further than balconies above it. He went down to the second floor to investigate. Beedle found Tripp there unconscious, but breathing. The medical authorities were called. There were no apparent witnesses to the accident, Rich said.

Farmer was away from the hotel when the accident happened, Rich said. He went straight to the hospital when called.

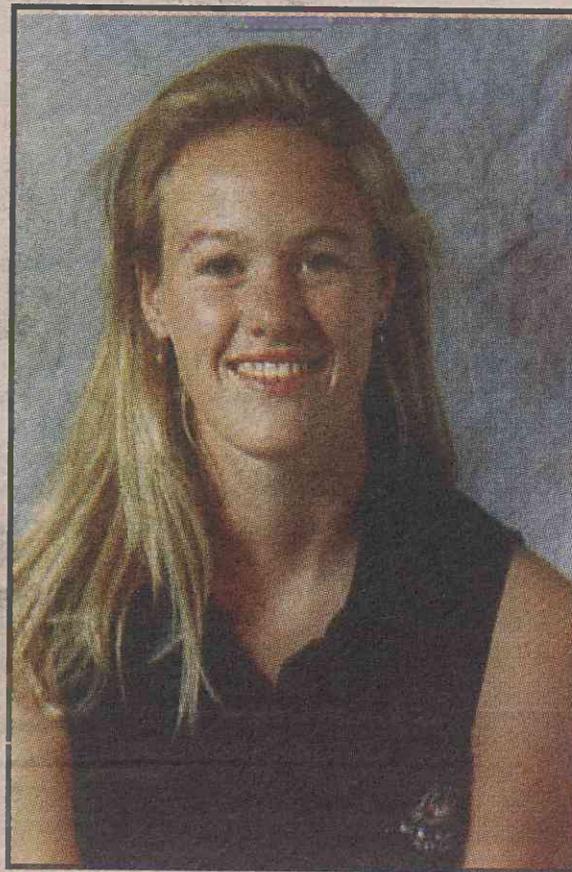
"The authorities have told us that she had been drinking," Dan

Anderson, director of college relations, said Rich said authorities have not said if alcohol caused the accident. The legal drinking age in Australia is 18.

Elon administrators were quick to respond to the students' needs. "In the end there was nothing we could do for Megan, but there were

many things that needed to be done to support the other students and faculty members," Anderson said. All students' parents were contacted by a college administrator, although most students had already called home. Hospital and police counselors on the scene spent many hours working with the Elon group to help them deal with their shock and grief.

Rich also credited the support of Australian travel agent Craig Douglas, who had arranged the Elon itinerary. He stayed with students



Courtesy of College Relations

while Farmer and Beedle went to the hospital. Douglas made the arrangements for students to switch hotels. "His role was absolutely central," Rich said. "There was a pretty good support system in place to help the group deal with it."

"It's been hard for everyone, especially the two faculty members," Rich said.

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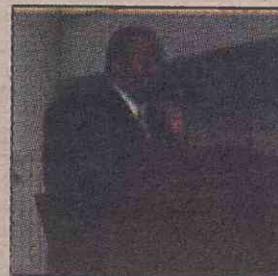
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