

# The Pendulum

Established 1974

## Involvement is the key to finding your niche at Elon

After two days of moving in and getting oriented, that whole “college thing” is starting to set in. It may have been an intangible concept before, but it’s starting to seem like it’s really going to happen. You’re really here and your parents have really gone home. Believe it or not, the decisions you have made in the last year just to get here have really just begun.

People have been giving you college advice for months now—don’t sign up for any 8 a.m. classes, don’t date people on your hall, wear flip-flops in the shower and avoid the dining halls at all costs.

But there’s one salient point that should rise above the rest—it’s not where you go, but what you do when you get there.

Soon, the rest of Elon’s student body will arrive and the sea of friendly faces will grow. Along with those faces come mottos, slogans and Greek letters that help identify those people. Soon, you will decide whether these mottos or letters will become part of your identity.

On Aug. 30, Elon’s brick paths will be lined with tables from more than 140 organizations that thrive on this campus. The opportunities will be overwhelming.

Elon is one of few institutions that genuinely function as a small family. No matter how farfetched your ideas may seem, there is always a campus leader, a suitemate, a professor or another faculty member who will believe in your idea as much as you believe in it.

If you don’t know what you believe in, start dreaming. Just because you weren’t a star quarterback does not mean you wouldn’t be the MVP of one of Elon’s intramural teams. Just because you never tried making a movie doesn’t mean you won’t love it. And if you can’t find the perfect fit in your search to get involved, start your own club.

In an environment that nurtures creativity and leadership as much as this one, you can make anything happen, and you should. And although four years seems like a long time, it will fly by faster than anyone can tell you. In the words of Ferris Bueller, “Life moves pretty fast. If you don’t stop and look around once in a while... you might miss it.”

## Allow the wave of change to carry College is a time of self-discovery

The day has come and you are finally here. Welcome to college! You have carried over-stuffed boxes into your residence hall, decorated your room with pictures of family and friends, purchased over-priced books, stood in line for your Phoenix Card and scouted out the campus. The wave of change has begun.



Christian Wiggins

The waves of the ocean can either knock you down or they can carry you to a new destination. How you respond to the force determines your success. You can fight the changes that are happening around you and struggle to keep your head above water. But life will be easier if you accept these changes and use them to propel you through challenges.

One of the trials you will face is adapting to the academic requirements of college. In high school, you were expected to learn what the teacher presented in class. In college, your professors will expect you to take an outline of materials presented in class and research your own conclusions. Over your

college career, you should begin to seek out information that is important and interesting to you. You have a unique opportunity to take learning to the next level and challenge yourself and those around you.

As you begin this process of acquiring new knowledge in your new environment, don’t forget the people and experiences that have brought you here. Thank your parents for helping you move-in, but more importantly for bringing you to this point in your life. As you transition to college life and adulthood, you may begin to see that your parents actually do have some good advice. You might even find that your parents are among your closest friends. Grow in the relationship you share with the people partially responsible for your success.

No matter where your experiences take you within the next few years, you will begin to question and redefine the principles that guide your path. At the beginning of my senior year, I’ve found that the only constant in my life is the change that my mind and spirit is experiencing.

Sometimes in the wave of change we find our true direction. Elon has helped me find

who I am and where I am going. Over three years, I have moved closer to being the person I want to become. I became closer to my family, gained lifelong friends, learned from my successes and failures and recognized more of the opportunities life offers.

While you are laboring over the decisions you have to make, such as what classes to take, where to spend your time or what organizations to join, be sure to slow down and enjoy the moment. You only get to live today once, so make the most of it.

To make each day count, take advantage of the little opportunities that present themselves. Speak to the person sitting next to you in class. Stop to talk to your professor at College Coffee. Remember peoples’ names, including the staff member who cleans your building. Say hello when you pass others on campus. Make a list of things you would like to accomplish while you are at Elon and then do them.

Good luck and may you let the wave of change guide you.

*Christian Wiggins is a guest columnist and SGA President. Contact him regarding this column at pendulum@elon.edu.*

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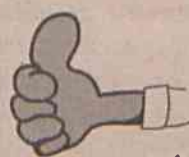
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Each individual is entitled to one free copy.



### Lauded & Applauded

- ❖ Wal-Mart
- ❖ La Fiesta
- ❖ Cook Out milkshakes
- ❖ West End Cinema
- ❖ O’Charley’s
- ❖ The Pendulum
- ❖ North Carolina weather
- ❖ Blockbuster
- ❖ Books-A-Million

### Inspected & Rejected

- ❖ The crowd at Wal-Mart
- ❖ Harden
- ❖ Downtown Burlington
- ❖ West End Cinema is the only theater
- ❖ Colonial Mall
- ❖ Two sets of police: town and campus
- ❖ Big Lots

