

# International, minority student enrollment declines

**Martha-Page Ransdell**  
Reporter

Although Elon University is home to students from 44 states and 41 foreign countries, the number of minority and international students to enroll has been decreasing, and admissions officials attribute this to a lack of scholarships.

In the past two years, fewer African-American freshmen have arrived at Elon. In 2003, 101 African-American freshmen attended Elon and in 2004, 103 African-Americans enrolled. However, in 2005, the number of African-Americans enrolling dropped to 73, a 29 percent decrease.

Annette Orbert, associate director of Admissions and Director of Minority recruitment, relates the decrease to the lack of scholarship money set aside for minorities.

"The money is not there," Orbert said. "We need to double the amount of money we have for scholarships."

One scholarship in particular

helps to recruit more minority students to Elon. The Leon and Lorraine Watson N.C. Scholarship offers a \$5,000 scholarship with a \$3,000 study abroad grant. It is available for students with high financial needs and strong academic backgrounds.

"The Watson scholarship is getting a more diverse group of students into Elon," Orbert said. She stressed the importance of raising the endowment in order to recruit more minority students to Elon.

Watson recipients say receiving this scholarship played a major role in their decision to attend Elon and the benefits of the program have been rewarding.

"Financially, the scholarship offers the assistance needed and the program components, especially the study abroad grant, made the award even more attractive," said L'Tanya Richmond, director of Multicultural Affairs.

The same lack of funding for minority student scholarships is true for international students.

## African American freshmen enrollment

2003 - 101  
2004 - 103  
2005 - 73

*From '04 to '05, a 29 percent decrease*

International student enrollment at Elon has slightly decreased over the past few years. While some believe that this is due to the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, Hiromi Sumiyoshi, Foreign Student advisor and assistant of the ESL program, said the real problem is the absence of scholarships. "The main difficulty we face in recruiting international students is funding," Sumiyoshi said.

There are no scholarships specifically for students from foreign countries, but international students can receive financial aid that is available to all Elon students.

International students are eligible for athletic, presidential, fellows and honors scholarships. However, it is often difficult for international stu-

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—Susan Klopman, dean of Admissions and Financial Planning

dents to compete for these.

"They can't come for interviews and fellows weekends like American students can," Sumiyoshi said. "It's harder for them to get to Elon, since they are obviously overseas."

There are ways in which Elon accommodates international students who are applying for scholarships.

According to Sumiyoshi, Elon will allocate one to two scholarships for international students. If those don't work out, the opportunity for a scholarship will go to American students.

Even though Elon is home to about 90 international students, admissions officials believe that more needs to be done to make Elon

a more diverse and international place.

"We want to see a drastic increase in the number of international students in the future," Sumiyoshi said.

Susan Klopman, dean of Admissions and Financial planning, agrees.

"In five years from now, we hope to have greater numbers of international students and multicultural Americans at Elon, maybe even as high as 20 percent," Klopman said.

"We are working hard not only for more diversity among ethnic and multicultural groups, but for international enrollment as well."

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