

iMedia program delivers for grads



COREY GROOM | Staff Photographer
The Interactive Media program is housed on the second floor of the Powell Building. Last May, 34 students graduated from the program.

Becca Tynes
Senior Reporter

Thirty-four students graduated from Elon University's 10-month Interactive Media program last May. Students learned how to plan and create interactive media content and help chart the future of media communication. Most graduates agree that completing the iMedia program enhanced their skills and has given them an edge in today's highly

competitive job market.

"Interactive projects permitted me to gain valuable experience through practice and allowed me to expand my designing skills," said Conor Britain, Elon and iMedia graduate.

According to Britain, the program was well-worth completing.

"Everything I learned in school is being directly applied to what I do now," Britain said. "Even if I didn't have a job right now, I'm not sure I'd say it wasn't

worth it. I was able to learn new skills and meet new people."

Britain currently works as an Interactive Designer at RED Interactive Agency. He said that because he knew exactly where he wanted to go with his degree, he was able to tailor his experience.

"I focus on interactive design using flash," Britain said. "Anytime I had a project to do, I tried to make sure it was flash-based."

Britain said that he is positive that the skills he learned in the program will only continue to help him in the future.

According to David Copeland, professor of communications and director of the iMedia program, the tools and skills used in interactive media can even transfer across discipline lines.

"The whole purpose of the program is to understand the use of interactive media, and how it is used to achieve certain goals in any area of work," Copeland said. "Our students who graduated last year were pretty successful in finding jobs."

Although many students in the program received their undergraduate degrees in journalism and communications, students of all majors and backgrounds participate in the program.

"It is a program that is open to students of all disciplines," Copeland said. "For Elon students, it's an excellent chance

to remain at Elon for another year. The program is pretty intensive. Students tend to spend almost all of their time here in the lab working."

Britain agrees with Copeland. Students take 11 courses, or 36 semester hours, beginning with the Summer II session and concluding at the end of the spring semester.

"You have to be able to tell yourself what you want to get out of it," Britain said.

The program consists of four stages. The first stage occurs during the summer session and is a non-graded course that focuses on media tools. It ensures that students are skilled in working with various devices, including audio recorders, still cameras and video cameras.

The second stage occurs during the fall and focuses on classroom interaction. Students learn to use higher-level software packages in order to create and enhance interactive media.

During Winter Term, students travel in teams to an international site for a week in order to complete the third stage. There, they gather content and return to campus to complete an interactive project.

Students complete the final stage with an individual capstone project during the spring semester.

Added fee to tuition payments by credit card contributes \$1 million to The Elon Commitment

Eva Hill
Copy Editor

Elon University has saved about \$1 million in money previously directed to credit card companies as fees, a year after university officials instated a policy that added a 2.75 percent fee to tuition payments made with credit cards.

Ken Mullen, assistant vice president for business and finance, said the money saved from the credit card transactions is going toward he Elon Commitment as well as other initiatives and institutional priorities.

According to Jay Harper, the university's bursar, the total dollar amount paid with credit cards went from 42 percent before the fee to 3 percent after the fee was established. Last year, during the fall 2009 payment cycle, there were 2,850 individual credit card transactions for tuition

payments. This year, during the Fall 2010 pay cycle, only 250 people paid for tuition with a credit card, according to Harper.

Although it's important to take into account an increase in the student body and tuition charges, Harper said some of the 39 percent decrease in dollar volume can be attributed to the addition of the convenience fee.

"I don't think the decrease will go further, but this was a good indicator for the year and this set of options versus another set of options," Harper said. "There were still three percent of people who paid with a credit card, because the convenience does not make a difference to some families."

There were virtually no complaints from families, Harper said, and the university ended up saving a substantial amount of money.

Sophomore Emily Dietrich supports the university's decision to add a fee to

credit card payments for tuition.

"I think that if it is saving the university money, then it is beneficial and it is the university's way of ensuring that they get the money," she said. "I think that it was a good decision, looking at it from a year later."

Sophomore Blair Stout said her dad paid for her tuition with a check, but not because of the added fee.

"I don't believe he chose that method of payment because of the fee," Stout said. "I think that method of payment was easier and just as convenient."

Mullen said university officials were nervous because of the convenience that comes with paying with a credit card, but many parents and students were willing to sacrifice convenience to better the university through using another method of payment.

Elon student back in action after automobile accident last spring

Melissa Lockley
Reporter

Elon University junior Laura Levitt returned to classes and campus this fall after a high-speed chase and car accident last spring sent her home because of severe injuries.

Levitt was returning to campus after spending a weekend in Maryland last April, when a man involved in a police chase struck her vehicle at more than 100 miles per hour on Interstate-85.

According to Levitt, the transition back to Elon has been interesting.

After spending nearly four months at home, Levitt is working hard to juggle classes, meetings, therapy and makeup work. Levitt's professors worked closely with Jana Lynn Patterson, assistant vice president for Student Life, to create a reasonable extension for Levitt's makeup work.

"I'm pretty close to being done," Levitt said.

She is still attending

physical therapy for her left shoulder and left knee. She has been attending therapy for her shoulder since she arrived home after the accident.

"I'm making progress but it's slow," Levitt said. "I left the hospital in a wheelchair and had to relearn how to walk."

She said the doctors and physical therapists are optimistic about the healing process. They expect both her shoulder and knee to be completely healed by the end of her therapy.

The recent hit-and-run bike accident involving Elon freshman Toorialey Fazly has stirred up some memories Levitt said she has tried to keep at bay since last April.

"I knew how serious my situation was, and I hate the thought of someone else going through that," Levitt said. "I was worried."

But when it comes to thinking back on her own scary situation, Levitt has nothing but positive things



PHOTO SUBMITTED
Elon junior Laura Levitt returned to campus this fall.

to say. Elon's faculty and students showered Levitt with support throughout her recovery, she said, reinforcing Elon as her home away from home.

"I was never one to take life for granted, so I didn't ever have a moment where I thought that I needed to start living life to the fullest," she said. "I guess it showed me that something like this can happen to anyone."

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