

Plans advance for University High School

Grace Elkus
Senior Reporter

The Alamance-Burlington School System and Elon University are joining together to create a non-traditional high school for academically talented students. The school will be called University High School, and will be run from ninth to 12th grade.

"If you look at the Elon Commitment, there is material in there that talks about a growing relationship between the Alamance-Burlington School System and Elon University, and how we can help each other grow," said Gerry Francis, executive vice president at Elon. "We've got a vested interest, because we think if we can help the school system make itself even stronger, we help ourselves."

Students will participate in a liberal arts curriculum for their freshmen and sophomore years, and then will take college-level courses at Elon during their junior and senior years. These courses will be a combination of regular Elon courses and cohort courses, which are classes such as college writing that would count as both a high school and university course.

"The students would, with guidance, be able to choose their own courses," said Peter Felten, assistant provost and director of the Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning. "There's a little bit of flexibility there."

University High School will be similar to the Early College at Guilford in terms of size and student performance. The idea is to have 30 students in each grade, with students coming from all six of the Alamance County high schools. The application process will be selective, assuming the demand is high.

"We're talking about students who have mostly A's in their coursework," Francis said. "Students that are scoring high in standardized tests. Folks who may have some talent that could come through in the interviews."

Because the school will be considered a public high school, there is no tuition fee. Additionally, all of the students' books will be paid for. Funding will come from three sources: the Alamance-Burlington School System, Elon University and fundraising.

The coursework will be liberal arts based in order to appeal to a variety of

students. If students are interested in specific topics, they can take electives in that area their junior and senior years. But because the focus is solely on academics, certain social aspects of a typical high school will not be incorporated.

"There's a huge sacrifice in this," Francis said. "You're not going to be in the band. If you play soccer, you're not going to have a soccer team at this high school, but you can go back to play with your sender school. I know people who have talented students who would not send them to this school. It's the social aspects that are going to keep people from making the decision."

Although Francis recognizes the downside, he knows the need for a school of this nature will fill a hole in the current school system. Right now, students are looking for more choices in the system, and this will potentially motivate students to work harder in their classes so they can attend University High School.

"If there are middle schoolers that are interested in the school, they are going to take a more rigorous curriculum," Felten said. "If they are inclined to take rigorous academics in

middle school, they will be prepared for high school no matter where they end up."

The Alamance-Burlington Board of Education will vote on the school Sept. 26, and the hope is that the hiring process will begin by the end of the month.

"We've looked at the curriculum pieces of it, what it means to finish high school and to take college credits," Francis said. "We looked at the administration pieces of it. We looked at the student life component. So now the admissions has to get rolling, and the hiring of people. The main player in this is the principal of the high school."

Ideally, the school will open somewhere on Elon's campus in fall 2012. Francis knows there are a lot of details that still need to be worked out, but he is certain the school will have a positive impact on the community.

"There might be some inequities running this way and that, but we've got to keep in mind is it worth it," Francis said. "And there are individuals who think that it's worth it. If this is done, it could hopefully make a significant difference in lots of folks' lives."

Controversial parking policy revised after student complaint

Parking policies in The Crest

Former Policy

Students were given a \$50 parking fee for parking an unregistered vehicle. The fee was waived if they purchased a \$160 parking decal, mandatory for all residents.

Revised Policy

By Sept. 26, residents must register their car under one of two decals.

A CR decal, for \$160, will allow students to park in Koury Business Center lots (behind Colonnades) from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

A EW decal, available for free, will allow students to park on campus after 5 p.m. on weekdays.

Students who purchased a CR pass under the former policy can switch to the EW decal and have their money refunded.

Caitlin O'Donnell
News Editor

Resolution of a miscommunication between Elon University administration and students has resulted in a revised parking policy for residents of The Crest Apartments. Students can pay \$160 for a parking pass that will allow them to park on campus during the day, or they can receive a free pass that will allow for parking on campus only after 5 p.m.

This change comes as a result of student feedback when about 25 people were given a \$50 ticket last week for parking in The Crest without a parking pass. Originally reported as a \$100 ticket, Sue Johnson, assistant to Campus Safety and Police, said two infractions were circled, but students were technically only charged for one. They were then notified they would be required to purchase a \$160 pass.

Under the new policy, students who purchased a \$160 pass but wish to switch to the free pass will be refunded. The \$50 ticket has been waived.

The complex was formerly considered off-campus housing available through B.C. Parker Real Estate. The university acquired the apartments through the Preiss Company last semester, meaning on-

campus policies, including parking, went into effect.

Juniors Rachel Stanley and David Brown and senior Kileigh Browning were three students who voiced their opposition to the policy, contacting administration and representatives from Campus Safety and Police and Residence Life. Their main concern is the lack of communication between residents and administration regarding the policy change.

"It's unprofessional to assume a fee and not tell people who are affected and then let them know by penalizing them," Stanley said in a previous interview. "If it was two business entities conducting business, they would have to lay all the conditions out on the table ahead of time."

Smith Jackson, vice president and dean of Student Life, was instrumental in constructing the revised policy and admits the university could have done a better job of making the students aware.

While the parking regulation was included in summer preregistration materials, Jackson said the students were obviously still not expecting it. He praised the students who came forward with their concerns.

"When the students brought it forth, it created awareness," he said. "It's

a good thing when students petition to do things like that. I saw it was a real concern, not an isolated student concern. In this case, it worked out where everybody was happy. I wish it was always that way."

Brown said he was pleased to see student concerns taken into consideration.

"I have received positive feedback from all students in regards to the outcome, and we were able to meet the needs and wants of (the) residents at The Crest," he said. "I am excited that I was able to make a change in the decision."

While Stanley is glad a resolution was possible, she said the lack of communication between residents and university administration has continued.

"All of the information I have received is from students, and I feel that we only obtained these options because of student pressure," she said.

But there continues to be a disconnect between Residence Life and residents of The Crest, according to Stanley.

"Even though this confusion has resolved in favor of the students, it is still disheartening to see that major communication problems have not been resolved," she said.

Phi Beta Kappa report identifies area of concern

Kassandra Cloos
News Editor

A report recently issued by the Eta chapter of Phi Beta Kappa at Elon University compares the current status of the liberal arts program at Elon with the status of the program at the time of application to PBK in 2007. Two areas of concern were identified by faculty compiling the report.

"What we want of course is to have a nice bunch of students inducted into PBK every year," said Russell Gill, president of the Eta chapter and an English professor. "But PBK has just emphasized language requirements for induction. When you look at what they require versus what Elon graduating students have, there's a big difference. In other words, we're not coming up to the standards that PBK is asking inductees to have."

In order to maintain membership in PBK, there are certain standards which must be upheld by participating universities. While Elon is in no danger of losing its chapter, there are areas of improvement Elon should address, according to Gill. Foreign language proficiency and the number of full-time faculty are at the top of the list.

The number of Elon students who graduated with language proficiency at the 200-level or higher has decreased since 2007 from 27.6 percent to 25.1

percent in the Class of 2011. A committee appointed to revise the General Studies program has proposed to amend the language requirement so students will graduate with proficiency, and the vote will take place near the end of October.

"We want to be a full-fledged participating member in the national organization and we want to be doing what other schools are doing," Gill said. "I think a lot of people, in fact, most people at Elon, think if we're going to emphasize study abroad and international study and engagement and all of that, you've got to have a higher percentage of people who have at least an intermediate level of language proficiency."

The second area of concern cited in the report is the decrease in the percentage of classes taught by full-time faculty members. The number of sabbaticals granted to faculty has almost doubled since 2007, but undergraduate research projects, which require faculty-student partnership, can be inhibited by large numbers of sabbaticals, according to the report. The university should strive to maximize the number of full-time faculty, Gill said.

But the decrease represents a positive move for faculty to pursue more opportunities for scholarship, according to Steven House, provost and vice president for Academic Affairs.

"When we started the PBK initiative,

one of the things we wanted to do was to give faculty more time to interact with students," House said. "Whether that would be on study abroad or mentoring or doing undergraduate research or service. One of the things we wanted to do, therefore, was reduce the amount of classroom teaching so faculty could interact with students in all of those other things that go on outside of the classroom."

Lightening the load for faculty members was a significant financial investment for the university, House said, and consisted of lessening the number of classes they are required to teach to be considered full-time. As a result, more full- and part-time faculty members were hired.

"If you're going to have those full-time professors be on top of their field, be abreast of scholarship, be leaders in the field, they've got to do scholarship," Gill said. "There's just no question."

Gill said he hopes the report will encourage Elon to continue working to improve in the areas of concern.

"PBK, as an organization with some prestige, wants to use its influence to emphasize certain worthwhile goals," he said. "These worthwhile goals would be pursued if there were no PBK. We've got a good administration and a good faculty and they're going to do high quality things."

BY THE NUMBERS:

In 2006, **74.2%** of classes were taught by full-time faculty members.

70.3% in 2007.

68.7% in 2008.

67.6% in 2009.

68.4% in 2010.

In 2007, **27.6%** of students graduated with credit for 200-level foreign language or higher.

24.2% in 2008.

22.8% in 2009.

22.0% in 2010.

25.1% in 2011.

Information courtesy of the Eta North Carolina Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa.