

Features

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From the Internet to Alamance, Campus Grumble could capture student complaints

Kaitlyn Stahl
Reporter

When complaints such as Acorn Coffee Shop lines and internship requirements pile up on social media, the Elon University administration might not hear about it.

This might change with the launch of Campus Grumble, a new website that launched at Elon Sept. 7. It intends to publicize students' commentary and feedback.

"I realized that small, everyday annoyances and even sometimes major problems, flew under the radar of the administration very frequently," said creator and Wake Forest University graduate John Kirkpatrick "I decided to make a platform where students and administrators can collaborate on issues and make things a lot easier and efficient."

Campus Grumble is just that — a fast way to make complaints to a specific university's administration.

The site currently features only four schools: Wake Forest University, Davidson College, High Point University and Elon University.

The website is straightforward and user-friendly, according to Kirkpatrick. Any student, after registering with his or her university email, can submit a grumble, or a statement of an issue on campus that students want resolved by their administration.

Kirkpatrick said the site is not campus-bashing because complaints will be written in detail and suggest potential solutions. The author's name will also be attached to all grumbles, which wards off anonymous slandering.

Students may also "mumble" their grumbles, which promotes a complaint and helps administrators see what issues are most important to the students.

Once a university agrees to be affiliated with the site, all grumbles will be sent to the administration in a monthly report. At this time, Elon has not begun its affiliation with the site, according to Dan Anderson, vice president of University Communications.

Should the university comply, students will have the opportunity to voice concerns about issues all over campus. They would also have the promise that the university is at least considering the suggestions students sent.

Kirkpatrick developed the idea in his living room and after a few months of planning and mapping later, it was launched.

"My hope for the project is that it will continue to expand from its grassroots launch in just four North Carolina schools to many more campuses nationwide," Kirkpatrick said. "I think it will be successful as long as administrations can realize that face-to-face communication is definitely valuable, but they have to respect that the convenience my platform brings gets them the information they need while being more convenient for the student."

Kirkpatrick travels to campuses to meet with administrators and ensure the site is working properly. He knows it is essential to account for how different administrations function. He focuses on showing the administration the website's convenience. Beyond a platform for students to complain, it is also a place for potential students to learn about



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY GLORIA SO | Staff Photographer
Campus Grumble is available at only four universities, including Elon. It is designed to give students a place to file complaints that administrators have access to and have already agreed to check regularly.

a university.

"As a student or a prospective student, if you see an administration solving and responding to problems publicly that are affecting your campus, it really makes you feel proud and attracts you to the school," Kirkpatrick said.

Elon students can also see its potential success. Some said it could be a good source of improvement in the school. And while others said they would not personally use it, they think it would be used on campus.

"I would be curious to see what kinds of com-

plaints would come up," said sophomore Susanna Dechant. "I think it will be a useful tool because even though students can talk to SGA, an online service would be easier for those who don't bring complaints to SGA. It's less formal and time-consuming."

Kirkpatrick said he had that in mind while creating the platform. By using the site's values of accountability, collaboration and communication, he plans to build a new bridge between students and university administration. And that's something few would grumble about.

Elon University seal still represents history, future of institutional values

Alex Francis
Reporter

What now stands as a nationally recognized institution was once struggling college with 200 students in three buildings.

In 1911, following the resignation of President William Staley, who chose to continue pastoring his church in Virginia, new President William Harper sought to address three of the main issues affecting the development and progress of Elon College: gaining accreditation from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, absolving the debt the college had racked up and working to secure funding for desperately-needed new buildings.

During that time, a professor of psychology and mathematics named Walton Wicker began to develop what is now the Elon University seal, hoping to solidify Elon's new commitments.

"The seal represents the goals and objectives we have for our students, which have not changed over the past 120 years," said George Troxler, professor emeritus of history.

Wicker relied on his vast knowledge of masonic symbolism in order to use the seal to represent the core values that Elon still holds today.

"The fact that Numen Lumen is the official Latin motto matches well with what the university represents: spiritual and intellectual light," said Dan Anderson, vice president of University Communications.

Despite the changes that have taken place on campus since the seal was created, it has only been modified once. In 2001, when Elon College officially became a university, the school implemented the name change on the seal, but the rest remained intact.

"The seal held a more important significance back then," Troxler said. "It was more important in the early years of Elon than it is today because the school was young and still struggling and did not have a strong identity. It was the symbol that showed Elon's goals and objectives because Elon did not have a strong identity at that point."

Today, the seal is used only in official university business and can be seen at important university events such as Convocation and Commencement.

"We do not use it as a logo in any sense of the word," Anderson said. "Its use is for official documents like diplomas and contracts. The other main use is in the Office of the President as the official and formal logo of the business of the university."

The all seeing eye demonstrates the watchful entity that presides over the school, students and faculty, the campus and all those involved with Elon University.

Two columns signify the power and strength central to Elon and its students.

The lamp and flame represents light Elon hopes to spread across the world.

The books one representing knowledge and the other culture, embody the value the university gives not only to the academic improvement, but that students use their knowledge for the betterment of the world.

The Bible represent the religious values and ideals the university was founded on.

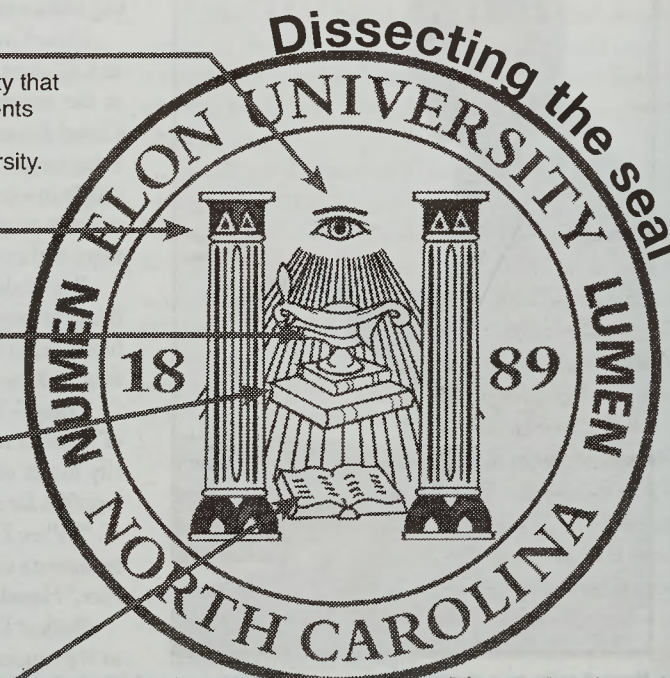


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