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Cutting master's pay spells trouble for graduate programs, teachers

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For Jessica Mahon, getting a master's degree went hand in hand with becoming a teacher. But Mahon is from New York, where a master's degree is required for public school teachers to become fully certified. Now, in her sixth year at Newland Elementary School in Burlington, her master's degree is considered extraneous.

Mahon is lucky. She graduated from Elon University's Master's of Education program before the North Carolina legislature instituted a series of cuts and adjustments to the state's public education system. Others have felt the effects more, and Mahon has seen this firsthand.

"I know probably half a dozen or a dozen people who are looking to leave," she said. "Some are looking to go back north. Some have gone to Virginia and Michigan."

Sweeping changes to the North Carolina education system passed by the General Assembly in July 2013 dealt another blow to teacher salaries by eliminating pay raises for teachers with advanced degrees.

Before the new legislation took effect in December 2013, teachers with master's degrees could earn about 10 percent more than teachers with only a bachelor's degree.

North Carolina's stingy salary for teachers has been discouraging even with her master's pay raise, Mahon said.

"As a teacher here, it feels like they don't value what we're doing," she said. "It sends the wrong message to everyone who's been here working hard."

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Elon eliminates International Fellows program



International students Omolayo Ojo (left) and Le To (right) from Nigeria and Vietnam, respectively, are roommates in the International LLC in the Global Neighborhood. CAROLINE OLNEY | Photo Editor

Morgan Abate
Senior Reporter

When the class of 2019 begins to look into Elon University, one Fellows program will no longer be on the list.

The International Fellows program, which began with the class of 2015, was created by admissions to draw more international students to Elon. But, according to the international admissions office, it has not come across as an added benefit for these students.

The program consists of about 15 non-U.S. or dual citizens each year who are awarded a \$3,500 scholarship and a \$1,500 grant for any Elon Experience. In addition, students take a class on U.S. culture and travel together during their first two Winter Terms.

The removal of the International Fellows program is one of several changes being made to Elon's recruiting and retaining strategies for international students.

Elon classifies international students

in three different ways: students studying on non-immigrant visas, dual citizens and Americans who graduated from high school overseas.

As part of the strategic plan, Elon wants to triple the number of students studying on non-immigrant visas. The goal is to have between 600 and 650 students with an international background on campus by 2020.

As of fall 2013, there were 90 students

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