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THE PENDULUM



University looks to become hub for political engagement

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When the North Carolina Association of Broadcasters reached out to Elon University last spring to see if the institution would be willing to host a gubernatorial or senatorial debate, Elon jumped at the opportunity.

Elon saw the debate as a way to engage community members in the political process, expose students to prominent figures and strengthen the university's national reputation. As conversations about hosting a debate began to take shape, the university faced several challenges.

ENTERPRISE

The ENN Enterprise Team is a long form-focused team that tackles pressing, impactful issues affecting the Elon community.

Prospects of hosting the senatorial debate appeared to be in good shape, but the campaigns failed to set a date. Elon tried to hold off on booking speakers, but its hands were tied by the end of the summer.

Equipment setup, rehearsal and teardown would have been a four-day process. When the campaigns finally came out with a proposal in late August, it was

already too late.

The proposed debate date was Oct. 3, which would have been the day before Kathleen Parker's Baird Pulitzer Prize lecture and days after Fall Convocation with Bob Woodward, Vint Cerf's sold-out "Internet of Things" talk and Family Weekend.

"It wasn't for lack of desire, but it was that it just logistically didn't work out," said Dan Anderson, vice president for University Communications.

Though efforts to host a debate were unsuccessful, they reflect Elon's growing desire to host premium political events on campus.

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Commencement moves from Under the Oaks

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As a tour guide and Elon University SGA senior class president, one of Kelsea Johnson's favorite stories to tell is that New Student Convocation for freshmen and Commencement for seniors happen Under the Oaks.

But she will now have to modify the line this year, for the second time.

According to a letter from Jeffrey Clark, executive director of Cultural and Special Programs,

the Commencement Ceremony for December 2016 and Spring 2017 Elon graduates will be held again in Scott Plaza — retreating from the original plan to return to university tradition and host Commencement Under the Oaks.

Commencement in May 2016 was held in Scott Plaza due to ongoing Schar Hall construction. The return to the new location this year was based primarily on the motivation to maximize the

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