

# IT DOESN'T MATTER IF I GO TO THE HOSPITAL



STAFF EDITORIAL

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## Elon's updated alcohol policy leaves room for improvement

### HOW WE SEE IT

Elon's new alcohol policy needs to find balance between education and punishment

For this academic school year, Elon University updated its honor code, specifically changing some sanctions for alcohol consumption with the help of input from students.

One of the new policies states that students who come forward seeking treatment or resources will not be charged with a code of conduct violation. This is an expansion on the previous policy, commonly known as the "Innocent Bystander Policy," which protected students who help a friend in need of medical attention from being charged with a code of conduct violation. This decision was made in hopes of encouraging students to come forward when they are in need of help.

The university also lessened the impact on leadership and study abroad opportunities for students charged with their first offense of underage drinking. Community service was also removed or reduced as a sanction for many policy violations.

The decision to no longer use community service as a sanction for underage drinking was based on feedback from students and university or community partners who do not want students seeing community service as a form of punishment.

The university is taking a step in the right direction by placing priority on the physical, mental and emotional safety of students. But the policy as it stands right now may not deter

students from making similar mistakes in the future.

Students in college drink — there is no denying that and it's likely not changing. It is unfair and redundant to take away opportunities that can enrich a student's learning and development, such as leadership opportunities and study abroad, based on their decision to drink underage. But there must be some repercussions for binge drinking so students are discouraged from making the same mistakes again.

The new policy focuses consequences of the first offense for underage drinking on educational and developmental experiences, as opposed to punishment. Now, students charged with a first-time offense will have to complete a new, longer online education course as well as an in-person educational experience.

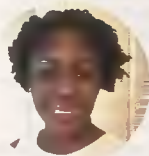
In theory, this idea of focusing on education is an admirable way of tackling the problem. But students are already required to complete an online

drinking education course before coming to campus and many are taught about the dangers of drinking in their Elon 101 classes. If students are still binge drinking after these educational experiences, what difference will these subsequent classes make?

Some form of community service requirement should still be in place for students charged with underage drinking. Community service allows students to reflect on their decisions and makes a positive impact on the community.

Or, if the university wants to make consequences for a first offense more like a warning, the sanctions used for the second offense should be more severe. But as it stands right now, students only receive a slap on the wrist for their first offense. If Elon wants to change the culture of college drinking on campus, it needs to find a balance between educating offenders while also levying a punishment that discourages them from doing it again.

## Dream on: Immediate results not guaranteed



Stephanie Ntim  
Columnist

If I had to choose one mantra to describe the mindset of contemporary American society, the 1970's rock band Aerosmith's "Dream On" would top the list. The power ballad features a forceful beat of a drum, offset by a string of recognizable guitar chords and the electro sound of a mellotron.

It starts slow then builds to a crescendo. "Dream On," the band sings, describing a wanting to be somebody. Its lyrics mimic Steven Tyler's journey to writing the song: there are lapses of intense music — or progress — forcing a fist pump into the air, and a lull follows before the pattern restarts.

Dreaming to become somebody is not an action

that results in immediate rapturous applause. Tears may be involved and several doubts, too. But even on our most difficult days, there's still a tomorrow we crave.

When acclaimed author of "Make Your Home Among Strangers," Jennine Capó Crucet, spoke at the 2017 Elon University Common Reading & Conversation lecture earlier this month, she evoked a similar sense of wanting to dream on. Her colloquial delivery helped lessen the apparent difficulty she faced in navigating the waters of being a first generation college student.

She had mixed feelings about college at first. It's something we all can understand. In the lecture, she described the second when you realize

you're finally on your own and you simultaneously feel fear and relief.

But her experiences as a first-generation college student were uniquely challenging. Access to certain vocabularies, for example, was a privilege she had not yet recognized. We aren't always so forthright about these shortcomings of institutions of learning, some of which are growing pains of acclimating to a new environment.

In those first days, her Cuban parents escorted her to class, unfamiliar with the good old know-how of orientation weekend. The Miami native also struggled to find her niche, until she met a professor she could relate to.

Crucet's development as a

writer was met with challenges and moments of discomfort. But in the cruces of surviving undergrad, she learned valuable life lessons on how to challenge herself when uncomfortable. Her personal story is loosely tied to her novel, in which the main character, Lizet, is a first generation college student who applies and is accepted to a liberal arts college. In the midst of her journey through her first year, Lizet has an epiphany in her science lab, courtesy of her lab instructor.

"Mistakes are vital to every scientist's problem," Crucet read from her novel, "You must look at it, put a line through it and keep going."

As the character, Lizet, distinguishes herself with

the title, "scientist," Crucet does the same, calling herself "writer." To the audience, whom she addressed as budding scholars, Crucet emphasized a wanting to belong somewhere that is predicated on the ability to move on from our mistakes, and a willingness to adapt when life is unpredictable.

Envisioning a dream is easy, but carrying it out can be tough. As budding scholars, either facing an internal struggle of identity or belonging in this specific chapter of our lives, let's encourage each other to dream on.

It took Steven Tyler six years to dream Aerosmith's massive hit into existence. How long will it take you to actualize your dreams?