

DIVISION *of* STUDENT LIFE

**FIVE-YEAR PLAN HIGHLIGHTS
& ACCOMPLISHMENTS
2020 - 2025**





DIVISION *of* STUDENT LIFE

The Division of Student Life at Elon University facilitates a **transformational student experience** that integrates in-and-out-of-class learning, promotes holistic development, and encourages student engagement. We are committed to fostering an inclusive community that supports student learning, thriving, and success. As we serve our students and each other, we are also guided by core professional values that inform our work and help us to be deeply caring, committed, and innovative educators:

- Leadership that is visionary, transformative, and learning-focused
- Decision-making that is purposeful, strategic, and data-informed
- Relationships that are supportive, inclusive, and based on mutual respect



DIVISION OF STUDENT LIFE DEPARTMENTS

- Campus Recreation
- Center for Leadership
- Center for Race, Ethnicity, and Diversity Education
- Counseling Services
- Dean of Students
- Gender and LGBTQIA Center
- Health Promotion
- Kernodle Center for Civic Life
- Moseley Center
- New Student Programs
- Residence Life
- Student Care and Outreach
- Student Conduct
- Student Health Services
- Student Involvement
- Truitt Center for Religious and Spiritual Life



INTEGRATING LEARNING

EMPOWERING GROWTH

Student Life's Five-Year Progress Report

In 2020, the Division of Student Life launched a five-year plan to guide our efforts through 2025, a period that coincided with the first half of the university's *Boldly Elon* strategic plan implementation. The Student Life plan featured areas of focus aligned within seven key themes: mentoring relationships, leadership and skill development, inclusive excellence, wellness and well-being, vibrant residential campus, civic engagement, and divisional excellence.

Amidst these efforts, we navigated the unprecedented challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, adapting swiftly to ensure our community's health, safety, and success while simultaneously maintaining a commitment to advancing our plans and priorities.

This brief report demonstrates the ways we have worked collaboratively to implement the five-year plan and build on a tradition of excellence. As we reflect on our accomplishments from 2020-2025, the Division of Student Life celebrates our progress in shaping a student-centered environment where every individual can learn, grow, and thrive.



A photograph of two women standing and talking in a modern, brightly lit office or community space. The woman on the left has long braids and is wearing a purple t-shirt. The woman on the right has long dark hair, wears glasses, and a denim jacket over a patterned top. They are both looking at each other and gesturing with their hands.

MENTORING *RELATIONSHIPS*

HIGHLIGHTS

- Provided significant **leadership** to the research and design process for advancing Elon's mentoring goals:
 - ACE Mentoring for Learner Success Committee (2020-2022), including co-leader Sylvia Muñoz and committee members Bob Frigo and Evan Small
 - Mentoring Design Team (2022-2024), including co-chair Emily Krechel, executive team member Jonathan McElderry, and team members Sylvia Muñoz, Destiny Payne, Jodean Schmiederer, Marilyn Slade, and Paul Tongsri





HIGHLIGHTS

- Conducted multiple **pilot projects** as part of the mentoring design process, including efforts focused on peer mentoring, supervising student employment, and first-year experiences
- Integrated **mentoring outcomes** into New Student Orientation and Residence Life programs
- Participated in retention data analysis and subsequently established **campus leadership for retention** with the appointment of Paul Tongsri as the inaugural Assistant Dean for Student Success and Retention
- Launched a **student success dashboard**, graduation and persistence modeling project, and first-year student check-in survey to strengthen data-driven, community-focused approaches to enhance student retention and success



Visit elon.edu/mentoring-relationships
to learn more about the
Mentoring Design Team (MDT)



LEADERSHIP & *SKILL DEVELOPMENT*

HIGHLIGHTS

- Through the efforts of a divisional committee supporting student employment as a high-impact practice, developed and implemented the **Elon GROW** (Guided Reflection on Work) student employment program across Student Life departments and the university
 - Elon GROW features brief, structured conversations between student employees and their supervisors to help students connect the skills and knowledge they are gaining in the classroom with the work they are doing and vice versa
- Developed a framework for potential future implementation designed to strengthen the connection students make between leadership roles in student organizations and campus programs and the career skills that make them **“Elon ready”** for impact as alumni in the workforce
- Expanded Leadership Experiential Learning Requirement (ELR) completion by embedding **leadership ELR requirements** in several campus programs and leadership roles, and establishing a new Leadership ELR course designation to better signal to students those academic courses which fulfill the requirement



HIGHLIGHTS

- Revised and rebranded the leadership development retreats and workshops to expand access, create opportunities that reach students over the course of their Elon experience, and deliver **leadership education** more effectively
- Expanded the **Leadership Fellows** program from 21 to 30 students in each entering cohort and expanded scholarships so that every participant now receives a Leadership Fellows scholarship, consistent across university fellows programs
- Established a working group that is developing strategies to reimagine the use of the **Elon Experiences Transcript** as a tool for students to be more intentional about selecting co-curricular opportunities to reflect on the development of skills through their participation in the five Elon Experiences



INCLUSIVE *EXCELLENCE*

HIGHLIGHTS

- Created a new **Multifaith Strategic Plan**, which will guide university efforts through 2030 to foster a more religiously diverse and inclusive campus community and expand multifaith learning and engagement across the institution
- Strengthened professional development for intercultural learning through the establishment of **Intercultural Learning Plans**, which offer Student Life staff the opportunity to engage in a process that guides participants through assessment and reflection and the development of an individualized learning plan, which they implement through the support of a facilitator and learning cohort
- Created and implemented a framework for **Student Life Departmental Equity Audits**, which engage departments in a process to thoughtfully examine their practices and outcomes related to inclusivity and the engagement of the broadest possible student population in the programs, services, and opportunities of their department
- Established a **new Dean of Student Inclusive Excellence** role to provide stronger senior-level leadership to student experiences and opportunities that advance university-wide goals for inclusive excellence



HIGHLIGHTS

- Transitioned the responsibilities for **gender-based violence response and prevention** into the Gender and LGBTQIA Center (GLC) and expanded the part-time coordinator position into a full-time assistant director role
- Successfully received and implemented a 3-year, **\$300,000 grant** from the U.S. Justice Department Office on Violence Against Women's Campus Grant to expand efforts to reduce sexual violence, intimate partner violence, and stalking on campus
- Provided significant leadership to the research, recommendations and implementation of university workgroups supporting **Latinx and API/MENA communities**





WELLNESS & *WELL-BEING*

HIGHLIGHTS

- Implemented the strategies and recommendations of a university work group on student wellness and well-being and the **JED Campus strategic planning process**
- Implemented **TimelyCare**, a virtual medical and mental health resource, expanding the availability of care to students 24/7, no matter where they are in the United States
- Established a direct-access phone number for university **after-hours mental health crisis support**
- Launched **HealthEU**, a university-wide initiative that supports holistic health and well-being across six dimensions: community, emotional, financial, physical, purpose, and social





HIGHLIGHTS

- Successfully received and implemented a **\$257,000 grant** from the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services to increase access to recovery services and support on campuses for students with substance use disorders
- Partnered with Blue Cross / Blue Shield of NC to offer the university's first **student health insurance plan**, ensuring that all full-time undergraduate and graduate students have access to affordable health care
- Completed and opened a **new team challenge course**, just west of the Phoenix Activities and Recreation Center in the Danieleey Neighborhood
- Developed plans for the **HealthEU Center**, a 135,000 square foot integrated wellness facility that will bring academic programs and key health and wellness support functions together under one roof



RESIDENTIAL CAMPUS

HIGHLIGHTS

- Completed a renovation of the **second floor of the Moseley Center**, creating new meeting and gathering spaces, improving traffic flow and space utilization, and expanding space available to Student Life departments
- Completed the implementation of recommendations from the **Presidential Task Force on Social Climate and Out-of-Class Engagement**, improving orientation experiences and messaging, increasing access to mentoring experiences, expanding social programming and campus traditions, strengthening the vision and support for fraternity and sorority life, enhancing the physical campus environment, and updating policies and practices related to student organizations and activities
- Established new **outdoor community gathering spaces**, with the support of the Student Government Association, including new picnic tables with umbrellas, Adirondack and rocking chairs, hammock stands, firepits, and an outdoor fitness court and walking trail





HIGHLIGHTS

- Opened **new residential facilities**, including:
 - East Neighborhood Commons, a 93-bed facility which also features important neighborhood resources, including indoor and outdoor community gathering spaces, faculty/staff apartments, and the neighborhood office
 - EcoVillage, the first phase of a sustainable living community at Loy Farm, which includes six two-person small houses, each of which features unique, sustainable construction elements, and a community gathering space renovated from a former single-family home that stood on the site
- Established the **Office of Student Care and Outreach** as a stand-alone office, with staff that collaborate with campus and community partners to provide outreach and support networks for students experiencing significant and complex challenges affecting their success and well-being
- Strengthened **Residence Life student staff roles**, including increased leadership development, compensation, and the establishment of a student staff council that provides a venue for student voice in departmental decision-making and leadership
- Expanded and deepened **faculty/staff engagement in academic-residential partnerships**, including opening six new Living Learning Communities (LLCs), increasing the number of staff and faculty serving as LLC advisors and instructors for residentially-linked academic courses, and updating the Residential Campus Plan for the strategic implementation of initiatives through 2030



CIVIC

ENGAGEMENT

HIGHLIGHTS

- Implemented **election-related programming** for the 2020 and 2024 national elections and the 2022 mid-term elections, including sponsoring robust nonpartisan voter registration and education efforts, hosting candidate forums for county-wide elections, establishing an one-stop early voting site on-campus, and issuing a new Elon Phoenix Voter ID to ensure student access to voting
- Created ongoing **Active Citizen Series programs**, which feature educational workshops, speakers and panels, deliberative dialogues, and other events that foster civic and political engagement
- Supported the establishment of the **Campus Alamance program**, which places Elon students in eight-week summer internships at no expense to the Alamance County employers, partners, businesses, nonprofit organizations, and government entities that host the interns for a mutually beneficial experience





HIGHLIGHTS

- Shifted the ELR course designation from service learning to **community-based learning** to respond to the evolution in the field and to expand community partnerships to include locally owned businesses in addition to the previously recognized nonprofit organizations, schools, and government agencies
- Established new campus partnerships to support community organizations, including the **K.I.N.G. Academy** mentor program with the Mayco Bigelow Center that is the result of a collaboration between the Kernodle Center, Gender and LGBTQIA Center, and Center for Race, Ethnicity and Diversity Education, and new fraternity/sorority fundraising initiatives for **Habitat for Humanity** created through a partnership between the Kernodle Center and Student Involvement
- Implemented **Phoenix Serve**, a new technology platform, that improves student access to information about volunteer service opportunities and streamlines service activity tracking for the Elon Experiences Transcript and collective impact reports





DIVISIONAL *EXCELLENCE*

HIGHLIGHTS

- Revised the **Student Life professional development funding structure** to increase flexibility and access and to double the university investment in staff professional development
- Improved the **Emergency Response System** through a revised structure, training, and compensation
- Developed and implemented an **Early Career Professionals Institute** and a **Mid-Level Professionals Institute** which were initially envisioned and launched as Student Life professional development experiences, but later expanded campus-wide
- Strengthened the division **Professional Development Committee** and increased the program offerings to include workshops, webinars, book discussions, and other programs that complement the monthly division meetings, annual Division Retreat, and Winter Symposium
- Strengthened supervision and leadership in the division through the implementation of **supervisor feedback structures** in the annual performance review process, 360 reviews for all department directors and reporting deans, and division leadership development activities focused on supervision

Elon

IS RANKED #1
IN FIRST-YEAR
EXPERIENCES
AND LEARNING
COMMUNITIES
BY THE U.S. NEWS
& WORLD REPORT



HIGHLIGHTS

- Strengthened staff recruitment and hiring practices through the development of **Student Life Search Guidelines**, the creation of consistent job descriptions, and the establishment of a centralized “Work with Us” recruitment website
- Piloted **stay interviews** across the division as a strategy for gathering information about the staff experience and used that information to enhance division strategies for recognition, retention, flexibility in schedules, time management, and staff well-being
- Continued to support multiple staff who have taken on **significant leadership roles** with student affairs professional associations and projects, including ACPA and NASPA, and staff who have given **conference presentations** at regional and national association events
- Named each year (2021-2025) to the list of **‘Most Promising Places to Work in Student Affairs’** — a national recognition that celebrates student affairs workplaces that are vibrant, diverse, supportive, and committed to staff work-life balance, professional development, and inclusive excellence
- Achieved several top rankings in the annual U.S. News & World Report surveys of college leaders, including **#1 in the nation for first year experiences** and **for learning communities**, and **#2 for service learning**



COVID-19 PANDEMIC *RESPONSE*

HIGHLIGHTS

Student Life made significant contributions to the **university response to the COVID-19 pandemic**, maintaining community health and safety and ensuring continuity of operations.

5,545 STUDENTS

supported with quarantine and isolation protocols

160,301 COVID-19 TESTS

administered in weekly testing clinics

3,130 VACCINATIONS

for influenza and COVID-19 vaccinations administered on campus

133 WEEKLY EMAIL UPDATES

about COVID-19 and community health sent between February 2020 and November 2022

789 GRADUATES FROM THE CLASS OF 2020

returned to campus in September 2021 to celebrate their commencement Under the Oaks

- Student Life staff also made significant efforts to **transition programs and services** to adapt to changing conditions, helping students check out of their residence hall and ship items home in Spring 2020, redesigning programs and services over the summer of 2020 to plan for fall return to campus, and creating new strategies for orientation, residential living, community-building, and recreation as social distancing and gathering size restrictions altered daily life on campus.



**KEEP YOUR
DISTANCE**

**AT LEAST
12 SQUIRRELS APART**





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ABOUT ELON

Elon University is a nationally recognized leader in engaged, experiential learning that prepares graduates to be creative, resilient, ambitious and ethical citizens of our global culture. At Elon, more than 7,000 students learn through hands-on experiences and close working relationships with faculty and staff. More than 70 undergraduate majors are complemented by professional and graduate programs in law, business administration, business analytics, accounting, education, higher education, physician assistant studies and physical therapy.

