ELON DPT

DOCTOR OF PHYSICAL THERAPY AT ELON UNIVERSITY
You’ve always pushed yourself to give a little more. To explore beyond the academic frontier. To assist others to the best of your ability. Now you’re ready to combine your passion for science with your dedication to helping others.

When you join Elon’s DPT program, you’ll become part of a community of learners. Faculty and students regularly collaborate on research and, as early as their first year, DPT students visit a local medical center to observe, and practice their new skills.

In your three years of study you’ll enjoy working with peers, Elon professors, local physical therapists and health care professionals from across the state as you problem-solve the best ways to help patients face their challenges with courage and compassion.

When you graduate, you will join a rapidly growing field with broad career opportunities. Physical therapy has experienced an explosion of growth in its nearly 90 years of existence. When Elon enrolled its first PT class in 1998, the university offered a master’s degree. As PTs began to take a more substantial role in the direct care of patients, the profession recommended programs raise the bar and begin transitioning into doctoral-level education. Improving the quality of patient care continues to be the driving force behind the DPT. In 2003, Elon debuted an innovative DPT program integrating dynamic classroom instruction with an impressive number of hands-on clinical opportunities.

A fully accredited program

The Doctor of Physical Therapy program at Elon University is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE) of the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA).
Elon's Doctor of Physical Therapy program is built on solid principles of science and research. At the same time, we recognize a quality physical therapist is much more than just an academic expert. That's why compassion, listening, respect, organization and communication are deliberately integrated into instruction. The three-year, full-time program focuses on critical thinking, with an emphasis on treating the patient as a whole person with physical, emotional, mental and spiritual needs.

Here are some key features of Elon's DPT program:

**INNOVATIVE MODULAR CURRICULUM** Elon takes a bold departure from the traditional semester setting with its innovative modular curriculum. Unique to Elon, the DPT curriculum is carefully designed to build on a physical and social science foundation while integrating hands-on clinical practicums. Each module is made up of related courses; the length of the modules – ranging from four to 24 weeks – is driven by course content. Core modules include a clinical seminar in which students practice their new skills in a mock clinical setting on campus, cementing the concepts they just learned in the classroom.

**EARLY CLINICAL EXPERIENCE** Elon’s DPT program includes 48 weeks of clinical practice – above the national average. Beginning the second year, students complete three eight-week clinical practicums. Elon has contacts in more than 400 patient-care settings in 38 states, including 204 in North Carolina. The program culminates with a 24-week internship, generally at select North and South Carolina facilities that have developed clinical and research partnerships with Elon.

**SMALL CLASSES** Students progress through the program with a cohort of approximately 36 peers. With 14 full-time and seven part-time faculty, there is a low student-to-faculty ratio that allows DPT students to work closely with their professors. Elon professors are skilled and passionate teachers, and many students collaborate on research projects with faculty outside the classroom.

**ENGAGING COURSES** DPT courses are grounded in basic sciences, such as anatomy, physiology and biomechanics, along with more advanced study in areas such as differential diagnosis, pharmacology, radiology and imaging. Concepts are reinforced with hands-on applications. For example, in the psychosocial course, students use wheelchairs for two days to grasp how limitations on their movement affect all aspects of their lives. In the human anatomy course, a tone of respect is set on day one; for example, the human anatomy lab is called the human donor lab, and a donor is regarded as a student’s first patient.

**LIFE-LONG LEARNING** Learning does not stop once a student’s degree is in hand. In order to stay at the top of their field throughout their careers, Elon students are taught to critically evaluate and discuss scientific literature and review statistical data and experimental procedures. In addition, professors regularly collaborate with students on research. For example, 2007 alumni Shannon Norbet and Lindsay Clark Swift published a research article in the Journal of Neurologic Physical Therapy with Dr. Bill Andrews and Dr. Steve Folger. The article was the first to comprehensively identify the tests and measures most frequently used by clinicians with neurologic or geriatric specialization when they work with stroke patients.

**PROVEN RESULTS** One of the best ways to measure a program’s success is to look at its graduates. At Elon, 96 percent of students pass the licensure exam, which is above the national average. In addition, 94 percent of enrolled students graduate from the program, and **100 percent find jobs after graduation**, based on 3-year averages.
Glen Saldanha's career ambitions go beyond helping people. Of course he wants to do good. But there is something more that drives him. You might call it a more practical side. Saldanha wants to understand the details at the root of his patients’ ailments and find treatments combining the best equipment and the most progressive medical knowledge. He wants to meld his scientific background as a biomedical engineer with his intrinsic ability to connect with people.

With Elon's DPT program, he began building that foundation right away. Like all first year students, Saldanha began the DPT program working in Elon’s human donor lab. The seven-month course teaches students the details of anatomy while they develop respect, understanding and appreciation for the life story of their first patient.

"Toward the end of the course, we gathered to celebrate the donors’ lives and how much they gave us," he said.

For Saldanha, the best part of his DPT experience is the rapid application of classroom knowledge to real-world practice. "I haven’t had so much fun in my college career. Yes, it is a lot of work. Yes, I’m studying more than I ever thought I could. But it's the fact that I’m using everything I am studying that drives me."
Elon’s unique modular curriculum builds from one discipline to the next and incorporates opportunities to apply classroom knowledge in a clinical setting. Students learn all aspects of physical therapy, from traditional science, research and movement studies to communication skills, ethical responsibilities and the psychological effects of medical problems.

In the DPT program, students go through the full-time, three-year program as a class, meaning the students you start with on day one are the same ones you’ll graduate with three years later. Competition to enroll in Elon’s DPT program increases each year. More than 250 students apply for approximately 36 available openings in each class. The result is a group of highly motivated students who are eager to learn.

**January start date**

Elon graduates enter the job market at a different time than most schools – a valuable asset when seeking employment. In addition, Elon’s January start date allows highly motivated students to complete undergraduate degree requirements in three-and-a-half years and enter the program a semester early. Students often view early graduation as an opportunity to save money or to travel prior to beginning graduate school.

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**Sample module schedule**

**YEAR ONE**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Courses</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Module I</td>
<td>4 weeks</td>
<td>Psychosocial Aspects of Health Care, Today’s Health Care Systems, Principles of Teaching and Learning, Human Anatomy I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module II</td>
<td>12 weeks</td>
<td>Human Anatomy I (continued), Human Physiology and Pathophysiology I, Physical Therapy Science I &amp; II, Research Design I, Clinical Seminar I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module IV</td>
<td>16 weeks</td>
<td>Biomechanics and Management of Musculoskeletal Dysfunction I-III, Clinical Seminar III, Clinical Imaging, Therapeutic Pharmacokinetics, Research Design II</td>
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**YEAR TWO**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Courses</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Module V</td>
<td>8 weeks</td>
<td>Clinical Practicum I</td>
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<tr>
<td>Module VI</td>
<td>16 weeks</td>
<td>Neuroscience, Management of Neuromuscular Disorders, Clinical Seminar IV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module VII</td>
<td>8 weeks</td>
<td>Clinical Practicum II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module VIII</td>
<td>8 weeks</td>
<td>Clinical Practicum III</td>
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**YEAR THREE**

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<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Courses</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Module IX</td>
<td>12 weeks</td>
<td>Principles of Electrotherapeutic Examination and Intervention, Physiology of Exercise, Management of Cardiopulmonary Dysfunction, Prosthetics and Orthotics, Directed Research I, Management of Integumentary Disorders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module X</td>
<td>4 weeks</td>
<td>Clinical Decision Making with Complex Patient (Client), Management of the Pediatric Client</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module XI</td>
<td>4 weeks</td>
<td>Principles of Administration and Management, Geriatric Health and Wellness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Module XII</td>
<td>6 weeks</td>
<td>Advanced Clinical Practice Selective Tracks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Module XIII</td>
<td>24 weeks</td>
<td>Internship, Directed Research II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module XIV</td>
<td>1 week</td>
<td>Electives</td>
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</table>
Michelle Spees
DPT— second year student

Michelle Spees’ career plans keep changing.
Not to worry. That’s a good thing, she insisted, explaining why she’s having a hard time settling on a specialization. Like all of the second year students in Elon’s DPT program, Spees, a former health and physical education teacher, has worked through three eight-week clinical practicums and will culminate her DPT experience with a 24-week internship.

At the conclusion of each experience she was determined to focus on that specific field. Her first clinical was in an outpatient facility. Next she worked with acute patients in a hospital. Her experience concluded with work in another hospital where she specialized in neurological care. She loved it all.

“Now I think I’d like to work in a hospital to rotate through in-patient, out-patient and then a skilled nursing facility so I can work with geriatric patients,” she said.

Spees wasn’t always this confident about her post-graduation prospects. There was a time when the idea of clinical practicums left a knot in her stomach.

“After a year of intense studying, I didn’t think I was ready for so much hands-on work — I went to my first clinical, had no choice but to throw myself into the work and quickly realized that I did have a clue. I knew exactly what to do,” she said.

She learned not only was she ready to apply the skills gained in her first year, she also gained confidence in her abilities as a physical therapist.

“The clinical experience is an absolute must,” Spees said. “It gave me a taste of my options and the confidence to know my education was sound. I can’t imagine not having this experience.”
Beyond the basics: a program built on COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

Elon and Alamance Regional Medical Center (ARMC) began a partnership in 1998 when the university launched its physical therapy program. Students gain valuable clinical experience, and several ARMC therapists serve as adjunct faculty members. In 2006, Elon and ARMC celebrated the opening of the new Center for Fitness & Human Movement Studies on the ARMC campus. The center allows Elon students and faculty to work with ARMC staff on joint research studies and provides expanded educational opportunities for Elon.

The 4,300-square-foot Center for Fitness & Human Movement Studies features:

- **Biomechanics Laboratory** – used to study and treat abnormal gait in adult and pediatric patients as well as research the risk of injury during sports and exercise
- **Metabolic Testing Laboratory** – used to evaluate aerobic fitness in patients and athletes
- **Vestibular Rehabilitation Center** – used to evaluate and treat individuals who have balance disorders
- **Electrophysiology Laboratory** – used to evaluate muscle and brain activity during therapy and sports activities
On campus, the Department of Physical Therapy is housed in the fully equipped McMichael Science Center, which features three skills laboratories – two set up as musculoskeletal clinics and one as a rehabilitation area.

Audiovisual technology enhances the learning process. DPT students use flat-screen TVs and DVD recorders to capture real-time data during examinations and later use those recordings to reinforce concepts and check their techniques.
Not only are Elon professors exceptionally qualified, they love to teach. Classes and labs are small, so students have uncommon access to the faculty.

Elon’s DPT faculty includes experienced, board-certified specialists in the three key areas of the profession: neurology, orthopedics and geriatrics. One hundred percent of the full-time faculty holds doctoral degrees. They have doctorates in fields such as exercise science, human movement, physical education and biomedical engineering as well as adult education and healthcare management. Their research interests cover a wide range of topics, including how children and adolescents with neurological impairments respond to exercise, the effects of fatigue on brain activity and the long-term effects of strokes.

In addition, most faculty members maintain clinical practices, helping them stay current in their fields. Several hold national or state leadership positions in the American Physical Therapy Association.

A core of experienced, full-time faculty provide the foundation of Elon’s DPT program.

- **Dr. Elizabeth Rogers**, associate dean/chairperson of Department of Physical Therapy Education
  - **Expertise**: founded Elon’s physical therapy program, founded physical therapy program at Western University Health Sciences in Pomona, Calif, clinical rehabilitation experience
  - **Research interests**: admissions criteria and success on licensure exam, study of curriculum models of physical therapy education, accreditation areas

- **Dr. Bill Andrews**, assistant professor of physical therapy education
  - **Clinical expertise**: neurologic certified specialist, maintains clinical practice in neurologic rehabilitation
  - **Research interest**: long-term functioning and strength in stroke patients

- **Dr. Stephen Bailey**, associate professor of physical therapy education, program research coordinator and director of the Center for Fitness and Human Movement Studies at ARMC
  - **Clinical expertise**: cardiopulmonary physical therapy, named a Fellow in the American College of Sports Medicine, maintains clinical practice in cardiopulmonary rehabilitation
  - **Research interests**: impact of exercise and fatigue on cognitive function, nutritional and physical fitness needs of local Hispanic community

- **Dr. Susan Chinworth**, associate professor of physical therapy education
  - **Clinical expertise**: musculoskeletal physical therapy, manual therapy, biomechanical qualitative analysis of movement patterns
  - **Research interest**: applied biomechanics of exercise techniques

- **Dr. Janet Cope**, assistant professor of physical therapy education
  - **Clinical expertise**: occupational therapist, clinical anatomist, anthropologist, skeletal pathology, disorders of the musculoskeletal system with a focus on the hand
  - **Research interest**: examination and interventions for patients with upper-extremity injuries

- **Dr. Steve Folger**, associate professor of physical therapy education and program technology coordinator
  - **Clinical expertise**: neuroscience
  - **Research interests**: effects of fatigue on brain activity, technology applications for teaching and research

- **Dr. Jane Freund**, assistant professor of physical therapy education
  - **Clinical expertise**: neurologic certified specialist, maintains practice in vestibular rehabilitation
  - **Research interest**: abdominal muscle function in stroke patients

- **Dr. Paula Hudson**, assistant professor of physical therapy education
  - **Clinical expertise**: pediatric physical therapy, maintains practice in pediatric care
  - **Research interests**: function of the pediatric client in a pool, gait analysis

- **Dr. Marianne Janssen**, director of clinical education
  - **Clinical expertise**: certified athletic trainer, physical therapist
  - **Program expertise**: instructional technology, distance education and application of evidence-based practice in developing clinical experiences for DPT students

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Outstanding, accessible **FACULTY**

“The American Physical Therapy Association’s new vision, in which patients will have direct access to physical therapy by 2020, means PTs face the highest level of education ever required for the profession. I firmly believe our graduates will be more than ready to embrace this new role. Elon has a well-established tradition of graduating PTs who are compassionate, skilled and confident.”

Elizabeth Rogers,
Associate Dean/Chairperson
Department of Physical Therapy Education
Dr. Charity Johansson, professor of physical therapy education
Clinical expertise: geriatric certified specialist, maintains practice in geriatric rehabilitation
Research interests: psychosocial aspects of health care such as patients’ responses to illness, providing healthcare to underserved populations locally and around the world

Dr. Carolyn Johnson, assistant professor of physical therapy education
Clinical expertise: worked in skilled nursing facilities rehabilitating patients following discharge from the hospital, acute care hospitals working with patients following orthopedic surgery and outpatient pediatrics, maintains clinical practice at ARMC
Research interest: function in the elderly after a total joint surgery, including the risks for falls following such a surgery

Dr. Daryl Lawson, assistant professor of physical therapy education
Clinical expertise: musculoskeletal/orthopedic physical therapist, wound care expert
Research interests: analysis of human movement, wound care interventions

Dr. Cynthia Lewis, associate professor of physical therapy education
Clinical expertise: pediatric physical therapy, spinal mobilization
Research interest: exercise response in children and adolescents with neurological impairments

Dr. Deborah Stetts, assistant professor of physical therapy education
Clinical expertise: orthopedic certified specialist, Fellow in the American Academy of Orthopedic Manual Physical Therapists
Research interest: abdominal muscle function in patients with strokes

Elon’s part-time professors complement the full-time faculty with their varied clinical experiences.

Robert Bartlett
Expertise: Fellow and former president of the American Physical Therapy Association, former president of APTA, professor emeritus at Duke University

Dr. Carrie Brice
Clinical expertise: certified lymphedema specialist, musculoskeletal and neurologic arenas; clinical coordinator at ARMC for outpatient and off-site clinics

Dr. Gray Carpenter
Clinical expertise: musculoskeletal issues, received the 2006 North Carolina Excellence in Clinical Practice Award, certified in orthopedic manual therapy, orthopedic clinical specialist

Dr. Gail Deyle

Dr. Keri Harrison
Expertise: licensed pharmacist at ARMC

Lisa Pennington
Expertise: certified in speech-language pathology; director of rehabilitation, lifestyle and employee services at ARMC

Dr. Robin Waldron
Clinical expertise: clients with amputations including those with diabetes, orthotics
The DPT enrolls cohorts each January. The final application deadline is 12 months prior to the January start date. See below for admissions deadline details. Please submit all required application materials as early as possible prior to deadline.

Admissions Schedule

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<th>Application Deadline</th>
<th>Notification Date</th>
<th>Enrollment Deposit Due</th>
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<tr>
<td>Early Decision</td>
<td>Nov. 3</td>
<td>Dec. 1</td>
<td>Jan. 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Early Action</td>
<td>Dec. 1</td>
<td>Jan. 20</td>
<td>Feb. 13</td>
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<tr>
<td>(nonbinding)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Application</td>
<td>Jan. 15</td>
<td>March 6</td>
<td>April 3</td>
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<td>Deadline</td>
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(Dates may vary annually)

Financial assistance available

Students accepted to the Doctor of Physical Therapy program have several options for financial aid. Each year, Elon awards three scholarships of $6,000 (over three years) based on academic performance, interviews and potential contribution to the field of physical therapy.

Federal loans are available, including the Stafford Loan and the unsubsidized Stafford Loan, which provide up to $20,500 per year. The Graduate Plus federal loan covers up to the cost of attendance, including living expenses. North Carolina residents can apply to the College Fund of North Carolina for up to $8,500 per year. The loan is forgiven for every year the student works in North Carolina following graduation.

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Early Decision Plan

Students whose first choice is Elon are encouraged to apply Early Decision. Students accepted under Early Decision agree to withdraw applications from other DPT programs and submit a nonrefundable $1,000 deposit by Jan. 2.

Early Action Plan

Students who would like an earlier answer on their application status may apply Early Action. Early Action is nonbinding, and students are permitted to apply to other schools as well as Elon.

Final Application Deadline

This is the final application deadline for the DPT program. Applications received after this date will be considered on a space-available basis.

For a complete list of requirements and additional admissions information, please visit www.elon.edu/dpt.

DPT Admission Checklist

1. Complete the application form.
   (Apply online at www.elon.edu/dpt)
2. Send official transcripts from all colleges and universities attended.
3. Submit official GRE scores.
Brittany Phillips
DPT — third year student

Brittany Phillips is a few short weeks away from a major life change.

For seven years she’s worked as a full-time Elon student. As an undergraduate, Phillips enrolled at Elon so she’d be one step closer to the DPT program after completing her bachelor’s degree in biology.

Now the 24-year-old is finishing up her culminating experience in the DPT program — a 24-week internship at Springwood Care Center, a nursing home in Winston-Salem, N.C.

“I am seeing my own caseload of patients, evaluating, treating and documenting each patient that I see,” she said.

Phillips wants to work with geriatric patients when she graduates and notes this experience sets her up to understand exactly how skilled nursing facilities are run and also how the facilities are reimbursed for treatments so she can help the company as well as her own patients.

“This internship provides a great, long-term opportunity to learn, grow and apply what has been taught in the classroom,” she said. “It’s an interesting time, and is great experience in the field you want to work in after graduation.”

Phillips decided on a career as a physical therapist when she was in high school after watching the recovery of a young girl injured in a car accident, and she still has an interest in exploring pediatric physical therapy.

After completing Elon’s DPT program, Phillips is certain she’ll be able to create positive changes in the lives of her own patients whether they’re two or 92. She’s thrilled to work with patients who need her help and urge them along on a journey to better, more fulfilling life
A doctoral degree in physical therapy opens the door to an exciting array of career options. Physical therapists enjoy working in private practice, outpatient rehabilitation centers, schools, hospitals, home health care services and nursing care facilities.

Employment of physical therapists is expected to grow 27 percent from 2006 to 2016, much faster than the average for all occupations, according to the U.S. Department of Labor. Job outlook is good for licensed PTs in all settings and excellent for those with specialized knowledge of particular types of treatment. Median earnings range from $65,000 to $71,000.

U.S. News & World Report identified physical therapy as an "Excellent Career" in the magazine's 2006 list of "Best Jobs to Have," and in 2008, the magazine pointed to health care careers as "megatrends" promising further growth.

Blake Russell MPT ’01
2008 Olympian, Marathon
After graduating from Elon, Russell worked full-time as a physical therapist in Boston before moving to California to focus on her racing career.

Like many elite athletes, Russell has had to battle injuries and said her physical therapy education has come in handy many times.

“It has helped a lot to know the difference between good pain and bad pain,” she said. “I’ve got friends in the running world who are always calling me with their issues, and I try to problem solve with them.”
Brad Banker graduated from the DPT program several years ago but feels almost as connected to the program now as he did when he was a student.

Banker is a witness to the DPT program’s deep community roots in his daily work. His clinic regularly works with first year DPT students who learn by observation and practice.

“It’s great. I’m right across town, I work with some of the same professors I knew as a student, and I have the wonderful opportunity to work with students and help them as they learn,” he said. “I’m able to share a bit about where the years have taken me and reflect with them on the benefits of an Elon education.”

The DPT’s modular curriculum is a huge asset in virtually assuring that every student will have the opportunity to explore multiple fields to find the perfect niche for his or her career, Banker said.

Elon also excels in teaching students about the psychosocial side of the profession. Physical therapists do much more than treat physical issues — they work hard to treat the whole person emotionally, mentally and physically.

Banker points to mock patient interviews as a component of the program that really put him at ease when he took on his own case load. He embraced the opportunity to test his skills and improve in a teaching environment.

“Early exposure to working with patients, getting that critical face time as you’re learning to become a physical therapist is intertwined throughout the DPT curriculum,” he said. “I appreciated it as a student, but I appreciate it even more as a practicing professional.”
About Elon

National Rankings
Elon was named the nation’s top “School to Watch” by U.S. News & World Report in its 2009 “America’s Best Colleges” guide. The guide also ranked Elon #2 among 118 Southern master’s-level universities. The Princeton Review lists Elon among the nation’s top schools in its 2009 “The Best 368 Colleges” guide. The National Survey of Student Engagement consistently names Elon one of the top schools in the country for actively engaging students in their learning experience.

Faculty
Eighty-five percent of Elon’s full-time faculty holds the highest degrees in their fields. The student-to-faculty ratio is 14-1, and the average class size is 22.

Enrollment and Location
Elon’s 4,992 undergraduate and 636 graduate students come from 43 states, the District of Columbia and 51 other countries. Located in Elon, North Carolina, Elon’s 575-acre historic campus is a designated botanical garden and is ranked one of the most beautiful campuses in the country by The Princeton Review. Elon is 30 minutes east of Greensboro and 45 minutes west of Chapel Hill and Durham.

Majors and Degrees
Elon offers 50 majors leading to the bachelor of arts, bachelor of fine arts or bachelor of science degrees. Master’s degrees are awarded in business administration, interactive media and education. Elon offers a doctorate in physical therapy, and the Elon University School of Law offers the J.D. degree.