Greetings from the Teaching Fellows Office! It has been a whirlwind first semester as a new Director and I have to thank everyone for so warmly welcoming me into the Teaching Fellows family. We began the fall semester by also welcoming 25 new Class of 2018 Teaching Fellows into the Program. Many of these Fellows braved the ice-maggedon Fellows Weekend experience, so we know they REALLY want to be at Elon University! They hail from 11 states, and have quickly bonded into a tight nit group through their participation in the Challenge Course, and participation in other activities with upper-class Fellows such as the Mentor/Mentee Luncheon and Fall Social.

This year’s sophomores, the Class of 2017, are the second cohort to participate in the Life Entrepreneurship Program which includes an off-campus retreat and a follow-up seminar taught by Elon faculty. They are the second cohort to begin planning their Inquiry Projects, also working with Elon faculty. We are excited to see what they learn and how much they grow during their spring semesters abroad. The current juniors have been the brave Inquiry Project pioneers, and we look forward to seeing the culmination of their work in our first spring poster session colloquium. One Inquiry Project has already helped lead to the publication of a book - we’ll hear more about that in a future newsletter!

Finally, this is a bittersweet year for the Elon Teaching Fellows Program as our last class of North Carolina Teaching Fellows are progressing through their senior years. Elon University was the first private university to begin offering the North Carolina Teaching Fellows program in 1989, and the 25-year-long partnership with the state has yielded many benefits for Elon students and the state’s education system. Although the state program will apparently come to an end, we are excited that at Elon we are able to continue the Teaching Fellows legacy with our enhanced national model.

In terms of past and upcoming Teaching Fellows events, in October the program hosted an Alumni Panel titled “The Tough Questions of Teaching.” We thank the ten Teacher Education alumni who contributed their valuable time and shared their experiences dealing with unexpected and challenging situations related to their work. Looking forward to spring semester, Elon will host the 4th Triad Intercollegiate Conference (formerly known as the Triad Teaching Fellows Conference) on February 21. Elon teacher candidates will be joined by peers from UNC-G and NC A&T for a day of networking and professional development.

We are also excited to welcome Dr. Christine Sleeter to campus as our sponsored spring speaker on April 14-15. Dr. Sleeter is one of the most important scholars and educators of her generation, having published more than 19 books on various topics related to diversity in education. Check out her blog at http://christinesleeter.org/ to learn more. We hope to see many alumni and other community members attend her main presentation on the evening of April 15th. Keep your eyes out for information about a Teacher Education alumni reception to be held before her presentation.

Dr. Jeff Carpenter
On Sunday September 14th, the First-Year cohort participated in a low ropes challenge course. The day started out with several group icebreaker games that allowed everyone to learn each other’s names as well as become more comfortable trusting others in the group. The first of the actual ropes course activities had the objective of getting the entire group from one side of a low-hanging log to another, with the catch of needing to pass another person going the other way without either person falling off. At first, there were a lot of ideas but no real plan of action. After many failed attempts, the group quickly realized that not having a set goal wasn’t productive. With a little more trial and error, a plan that worked emerged and everyone was able to make it across the log.

After struggling with the first obstacle, the group moved towards the trust fall. This was composed of a wooden platform a few feet off the ground, where one member of the group would stand and fall backwards to be caught by their peers waiting below. Ben Maloney volunteered to be the first to fall. Unfortunately, those of the group set up to catch him weren’t completely ready for what they had to do, and Ben fell through their arms to the ground! There were luckily no injuries, and he got right back on the platform a second time to try again. This time the group was successful in catching him, and the rest of the cohort followed suit. For some of the members who were more reluctant to fall, the group was very encouraging and made each person feel as comfortable as possible. The sense of support was great to see.

The last obstacle required the entire cohort to climb over a ten-foot wall using only each other. The group quickly came up with a plan and was able to complete the task quickly and efficiently by boosting one person up and having a few members on top pull them over the wall. Despite the rough start, this cohort really came together by the end of the day and was able to work as a cohesive unit to complete their goals. This was definitely the start to the new cohort creating close bonds and building up trust between one another, which will continue through the next four years together.

-Jossie Geyer ’18
First-year Teaching Fellows started off the week on Monday night November 3rd by attending an Education Faculty Dinner. Everyone dressed up nicely to gather with faculty members in the education department to enjoy a nice meal together. Seats were assigned so that Teaching Fellows were at a table with a faculty member that was in the area of specialty that they were thinking of pursuing. Each table got to know each other and what field of education they want to go into, and then chatted about all sorts of topics related to education. It was nice to hear the faculty’s perspectives and advice about being a teacher, and it was beneficial for both students and faculty to hear different viewpoints.

Many tables chatted about the upcoming winter term History Study Tour that first-year Fellows will soon embark on, as well as the semester long study abroad in either Costa Rica or London. Some of the faculty members have been on these trips during previous years, so they were able to give insight as to what to expect on these Teaching Fellows trips.

Throughout the night, Fellows had the opportunity to ask the faculty any questions they had, and the faculty members did an excellent job of providing clear and solid answers. It was a beneficial night to get to know the faculty members who may become teachers or advisors for some of the Fellows throughout their 4 years at Elon. Overall, this faculty dinner was a great way to start off that week and allow the first-year Teaching Fellows to have fluid conversations with faculty members.

-Bryanna Schoenblatt ‘18
On Friday October 24th, the First-Year cohort visited Woods Charter School. Most of the members didn’t know much about this type of school, so the day started with a presentation explaining not only what a charter school is, but how Woods Charter in particular had been created, funded, and changed over time. This was a wonderful opportunity to learn the differences between different types of schools first hand. Getting a tour of the entire facility after this presentation helped even more with the understanding of how charter schools work.

The group then split up and had the chance to observe two different classrooms related to their choice of major. Everyone agreed that the teachers were passionate and engaging towards their students and the general atmosphere of Woods Charter was warm and welcoming.

After observations, Principal Cotton Bryan talked to the cohort about his background and ideas about this school. He also answered any questions the Fellows had ranging from classroom policies to government funding. This trip ended up being extremely informational as well as an enjoyable experience for the cohort. Thanks to alums Amanda Ketner ’11 and Chris Beeson ‘10 for hosting and organizing our day!

- Jossie Geyer ‘18
Meet Our New Director: Dr. Carpenter

QUICK FACTS:
- **Favorite Teaching Fellows Office Snack:** Reese’s Peanut Butter Cups
- **Funniest Office Moment:** Angie Edwards’ various interesting seating methods for chairs.
- **Height:** 6’6”

Dr. Carpenter took the position of Director of Teaching Fellows this past fall. Dr. Carpenter first moved to North Carolina because his wife received an opportunity to work at Durham Academy. He took a job at Carborro High School while writing his dissertation. After receiving his doctorate, Dr. Carpenter began searching for a job in higher education and found one at Elon. After four years as a professor, Dr. Carpenter was offered the role as Director of the Teaching Fellows program. Upon accepting this position, he was very excited to work with the fellows and be a part of their four-year experience. However, he was quite nervous about following up on Dr. Crawford’s impeccable fashion sense. His main goals for the program during his first years as Director are to enhance the inquiry project experience and to deepen the study abroad experience. Dr. Carpenter is conducting research on educator professional development and technology use. Many educators are enthused with voluntary forms of professional development such as using Twitter, Edcamps, and professional learning networks. His focus is to determine why teachers participate in these forms of professional development and what benefits they derive.

Outside of Teaching Fellows, Dr. Carpenter spends most of his time chasing his son, Mateen, who treats everything like a soccer ball. Mateen was born on September 4, 2013. Dr. Carpenter’s wife, Shabnam, is the Director of Admissions and Financial Aid at Durham Academy. She is originally from Afghanistan and the two of them met in grad school.

If you are worried about your first day in the classroom, imagine Dr. Carpenter’s! His first teaching job was in a little mountain village in Japan co-teaching English where even his co-teacher did not speak his language. Dr. Carpenter struggled to understand how the school system worked and even showed up to work one day to find that no one was there!

Through all of his experiences, we know that Dr. Carpenter will make a fantastic Director, and we are excited to spend the next few years with him! So far, he has proven to be a strong leader, and we know he will have the ability to help each of us to succeed.

- *Nicole Ammerman ‘17*
Greetings!

The Teaching Fellows Class of 2018 is so excited to be part of the Program. This past semester, we’ve done many memorable things such as the Challenge Course, visit to Woods Charter School and the Mentor/Mentee Social. We look forward to the History Study Tour in January and the future Fellow experiences!

Emily Gaa ‘18
Alumni Spotlight - Amanda Ketner

Amanda Ketner ‘11, alumni of Elon University and the Teaching Fellows family, has recently rocked the waters of not only Woods Charter School (where she teaches mathematics) but also the United Nations! On October 10th, at the annual Girls Speak Out event, Amanda and her students, who formed a chapter of GLI (Girls Learn International), presented their video of “What it means to be a Girl”. The video itself is only about four minutes long, but packs a large punch. It features testimonies of local girls from Chapel Hill North Carolina describing what it means to be a girl in the USA, and how they feel about it.

I had the opportunity to interview Amanda, who explained that this organization has done incredible things for Woods Charter School, and her own teaching practice. Because Amanda mostly teaches math, she explained that she doesn’t get a lot of opportunity to teach about other areas of life, but recently showed Emma Watson’s UN speech to her math class to great success. This organization has prompted Amanda to further realize her abilities as a mentor and as an educator, and the students are running with it! Amanda described a much more feminist atmosphere at the school, claiming that she heard a girl call out a moment of gender stereotyping when a boy was told to “take it like a man” at a soccer game.

Woods Charter School’s chapter of GLI has also begun other awareness campaigns, including an art installation piece featuring stacked cardboard boxes with words written on them that represent female oppression. Amanda said that they plan to wait until the boxes fully stack up and then kick them all down, so that they will literally be breaking down barriers. But if you ask me, it seems that Amanda and her students have already begun breaking down those walls. We are so happy for you and your students Amanda! Way to make a change!

http://www.woodscharter.org/amanda-ketner/

-Kelly Richard ‘17
On Sunday, September 7, the Teaching Fellows enjoyed their first official event of the year. The Mentor-Mentee social annually held in Oaks allowed First-Years to meet and socialize with their mentors. This year’s social was also special as it was Dr. Carpenter’s first official Teaching Fellows event involving all classes as the new Director.

After dining on hamburgers and hotdogs (and not Tex-Mex for the first time in three years,) a variety of games were played to add energy to the room. As it turns out, Teaching Fellows have quite competitive spirits when it comes to games involving absurd skills. Ridiculous supplies for games included Oreos, straws, and slinky hats. Overall, the Teaching Fellows had a great time at a great start for the new school year.

- Abby Peel ’17
She’s The First: Kelly Richard Interview

Education is something we all care about. Too often however, we get wrapped up in thinking about issues facing education in our schools, in our towns, in our own country. Issues regarding education are not just confined to our country, but instead are worldwide and deserve attention.

Kelly Richard, a sophomore English Education major, is passionate about addressing these issues. Specifically, Kelly is passionate about the issue of international education for girls. In many other countries, girls are not given the same opportunities or access to education and often do not get to complete secondary school.

Because of this, Kelly, a native of Apex, NC began a chapter of She’s The First here at Elon University. She’s The First is a national organization that raises awareness for female education in developing nations. The purpose of this organization is to raise money for girls in developing countries so they can be the first in their family to graduate secondary school. The money raised sponsors specific girls in specific countries. When money is raised, there is the option to choose which country the scholar is from. Elon’s chapter of She’s The First elected to send the money to girls in whichever country needed it the most. Currently, the goal is to sponsor one girl through her secondary education, which will be about $700.

She’s The First currently has 15-20 members, and at least half are boys, which Kelly is very pleased about. This membership is despite all the hardships of starting a new organization on campus, mostly involving paperwork, getting people involved was not hard.

There is a core group of dedicated members, but it is never too late to get involved.

Be on the lookout for She’s The First events on campus. This past October members held a tye-dye bake sale which raised over $500 and is a national She’s The First event. In the spring, members will launch the Who Run The World campaign where people will be able to download an app that rec-
ords their exercise information and then donates money accordingly. This will provide a wonderful incentive to stay fit, while also raising lots of money for female scholars. Hopefully, as the organization grows, members will also be able to engage campus in more awareness events and teach students how to be advocates.

In the future, Kelly hopes She’s The First will gain a bigger presence on campus. She thinks that they might join with EFFECT, Elon’s Feminist organization, or I Am That Girl, an organization which promotes female empowerment to sponsor events and raise awareness. Kelly hopes that someday in the future She’s The First will be able to sponsor more than one girl. With the help of dedicated and passionate individuals, this goal will undoubtedly be realized.

If you are interested in learning more about She’s The First, or getting involved in any way, email Kelly at krichard3@elon.edu or she’sthefirst@elon.edu. Kelly encourages everyone to come to meetings to engage in stimulating conversation and plan meaningful fundraising events.

- Isabelle Thibault ’17

About Kelly

Kelly is a sophomore English education major from Apex, NC. In the future, she would like to teach English in high school or work at an educational nonprofit. She always had a passion for girls education and finds it very unfair that some people have opportunities based on birth circumstances. She believes it is unfortunate that circumstances determine opportunities and it is important for people in college to realize how lucky they are. Her passion and dedication are abundant and apparent.
Fall Social

On November 10, 2014, the Teaching Fellows said a final goodbye to seniors before their student-teaching experiences in the spring at the annual Fall Social. As always, the food was amazing and laughs were shared while everyone was looking particularly snazzy. From rapping to crying, senior Teaching Fellows enjoyed the nostalgia of the night. We, all of the Teaching Fellows, are going to miss all the seniors. Good luck in all of your endeavors!

Abby Peel ‘17

Major Spotlight - Early Childhood Ed

Teacher Education’s newest major of early childhood education prepares teacher candidates to work with students from birth to kindergarten in settings such as preschools, kindergarten classrooms, and day care centers. Teacher candidates are involved early in practicum experiences where they make connections with coursework on assessment and evidence-based practices in early childhood.

A key component of the program is developing close relationships with children and their families, especially those whose backgrounds are different from the teacher candidates. Like other education majors, there is a service-learning requirement. Elon students in the early childhood education program work with the early literacy program, The Little Village. This great major provides teachers with the opportunity to work with children early and build the foundation for success in school and life. Elon students can also minor in early childhood education. For more information on the major and minor, check out the School of Education’s website.

- Nicole Ammerman ‘17
The LEP Retreat was a great part of the sophomore year Teaching Fellows experience. Leaving campus for the night and having time set aside to think about future goals and aspirations away from the immediate stresses of school was highly beneficial. On campus, it is easy to get caught in the “Elon bubble” and forget there is a world outside of it and after it. The retreat was also a great bonding opportunity for our cohort and allowed us to get to know each other even better through Life Maps, group discussions, and one-on-one conversations.

One of the most noteworthy activities of the retreat was the life map. It was strange to think back and realize what moments truly stuck out and shaped the person I am today. This time was also a great way to learn more about other Teaching Fellows. Even after spending two weeks on a bus with the same people, as we did in American History Study Tour, you would think you would know them pretty well. However, the LEP life maps provided an opportunity to learn about everyone’s life before Teaching Fellows.

The LEP retreat and course was a great experience that opened my eyes about all the possibilities of working in education—not just teaching. I encourage the class of 2018 Teaching Fellows cohort to go into the retreat with an open mind in order to get the most out of the experience.

- Nicole Ammerman ‘17
On a sunny and bright October 2nd, hundreds of Elon University students and faculty members filed into the Alumni gym in order to hear a presentation by Nicholas Kristof and his wife, Sheryl WuDunn. Pulitzer prize winning journalists, this dynamic duo have written several books together, including *Half the Sky* which has also been turned into a film, available on Netflix. In their speeches, Kristof and WuDunn discussed their journey into foreign cultures, and realization that a lot of the world’s problems seem to be incredibly complicated, when in fact there is often an easy solution. WuDunn explained that many children in the developing world will stop going to school because they had stomach parasites which made it too difficult for them to sit comfortably and learn. For a few dollars, children can be given a medicine to eradicate this parasite. Here is only one example of a simple solution to what appears to be a deal breaking problem.

Over the course of their presentation the couple discussed troubling statistics and stories about inequality and lack of opportunity in the world. In their new novel *A Path Appears*, the couple hopes to open doors and inspire others to become advocates for social change. As future teachers, I believe we can all agree that it is our responsibility to become advocates, not only for our students and their opportunities, but also for education as a whole and its dire importance. I left convocation feeling empowered, as I hope the rest of the Elon student body did as well. Yes, I am simply one person and I will not be able to change the world on my own, but I can do small things which might make a difference in one life. As a teacher, my job will be to advocate and create change in my classroom. It is a small step towards a better world, but it is still a step all the same.

*Kelly Richard ’17*
Photo Gallery
NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE
2014-2015

Editors:
Abby Peel, 2017
Aly Lucas, 2017
Jossie Geyer, 2018

Journalists:
Bryanna Schoenblatt, 2018
Emily Gaa, 2018
Isabelle Thibault, 2017
Maia Salinger, 2018
Nicole Ammerman, 2017
Kelly Richard, 2017

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Nicole Ammerman, 2017

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