You walk through the double glass doors. Flags hang from the balcony and side walls. A large couch, two arm chairs and a cushioned footrest adorn the center of the foyer. The smell of Asian cuisine wafts down the large stairwell to the right. The sound of laughter rings through one of the classroom doors. Students are probably watching a movie on the large pull down screen.

You have arrived at the Isabella Cannon International Studies Pavilion. It is an academic building found in the Academic Village at Elon University. It is one of two dorm buildings in the ‘quad.’ It is a Learning Community. It is home.

The International Pavilion (IP) is one of 18 Learning Communities at Elon University. It is a community focused on intercultural experiences and friendships. What kinds of students are gathered under its roof? International students, international studies majors, foreign language majors, international business majors, students who have studied abroad, and just about any student interested in the international community all come together in the IP to learn from each other.

Community Events

Like all Learning Communities at Elon, the 22 students who reside in the International Pavilion get together for activities related to their theme. “We pick a country to concentrate on every month,” said Beth, the Resident Assistant who lives in the only non-suite style room. “Then we do activities related to that country like movie nights and we usually try and get someone to cook something unique to that area of the world. It’s actually a lot of fun because it gives the residents a chance to take charge and teach us about their culture. The person or people in charge for that month get to pick the events we have and make the food for people to try.”

Ling Zhou, second year IP resident from China enjoys the idea of concentrating on a particular country for the month. “This month (January) we actually decided to do more of a ‘region’ of the month. We’re doing Asia since there are about 4 Asians in the IP. One night we watched ‘Curse of the Golden Flower,’ which has one of my favorite Chinese actresses in it. Another night we watched ‘Memoirs of a Geisha.’ This weekend, we’ll be celebrating the Chinese New Year. We Asians are getting together and making dishes from our different countries. I’m really looking forward to it. It reminds me of home sometimes.”

“It reminds me of home sometimes.”
The International Pavilion also has events that are attended by various International Students around campus. The Local Friends, a group of community members from several Baptist churches in the area, enjoy holding various events for students in the International Pavilion and other international students are invited as well. The Local Friends hosted a welcome dinner outside the IP at the beginning of the year and a Thanksgiving Dinner indoors right before the break. “It’s really nice of them to do it for us,” Maggie, a first year student in the IP, said. “We get delicious home cooked meals and a chance to meet other international students that don’t live the IP and the local friends are great people to know. They’ve taken us to see the Christmas lights display at Twin Lakes and we’re making plans to visit the zoo in the spring.”

**Trips**

The International Pavilion is one of a few Learning Communities that has the funding to take weekend trips to culturally educational locations outside the Elon area. One trip is taken during the fall semester and the other during the spring semester. The past two years, the fall trip has been to Asheville, NC. Lauren Corbin, a first year student, enjoyed the Asheville trip. “It was just nice to be away for the weekend. And it wasn’t overly planned so we just got to chill and spend time with each other. I liked shopping and sitting around the campfire.”

Last year, for their spring semester trip, the IP residents went to the country’s capital. Tyler Molinaro, a second year IP resident, said that the trip was his favorite thing the IP had done as a group. “We spent 3 days and 2 nights there...Even though I’ve been to D.C. before, I still enjoyed the trip because I was able to go see different museums that I wouldn’t normally go to by myself just because others wanted to go there. I got to see a different side of D.C. We spent most of the day sightseeing in smaller groups and then we came together to go see the Vietnam Memorial and have dinner.”

The trip for spring of 2012 has yet to be decided. The residents are picking between returning to D.C. or going to Charleston, SC two weekends after Spring Break. They will collaborate with their live-in faculty advisor, Amy Allocco, to decide which trip will be the most beneficial.
The Learning Community (LC) Challenge is a competition amongst the Elon Learning Communities that spans a semester. Communities receive points for doing group activities and letting the LC Assistants know about it. Extra points are awarded if the activity is related the LC’s theme and if the report comes with a picture. Points are also given for participation in various competitions put on by Residence Life. At the end of the semester, points are tallied and winners receive monetary rewards that go towards their Learning Community.

For the 2011 fall semester the International Pavilion came in second place after the Communications Learning Community. “It wasn’t too difficult,” said Maggie who is in charge of reporting points. “We’re all really close here so we usually do things together anyway. There’s a group of us that went to breakfast every morning, and we got points for that.”

Lauren: “(The challenge) is a little silly because you get points for everything but I think it’s good that we get money for our community.”

The IP also received points for their trip to Asheville, the gatherings they had for their country of the month and attending cultural events around campus. The International Pavilion received points for various competitions they participated in, including a mural contest and Powerless, in which residence halls are encouraged to cut back on as much energy use as possible. The IP came in 3rd place for the mural competition and 2nd place for Powerless. The IP got really serious about Powerless to a point where halls and rooms would be pitch black for most of the night. There were mixed feelings about the Powerless competition.

Maggie: “It’s Scary!”
Tyler: “I’m all for not using extra energy if we don’t need it.”
Sophia (first year student): “People waited to scare you in the dark. I got a bruise.”
Lauren: “I thought it was a good idea. We should have Powerless every month.”
Le (first year student): “Powerless was my favorite! With Conor and everyone else hiding. It was dangerous though. Angel (East Area Director) freaked out about it and installed emergency lights so that the hallway wasn’t always dark.”

Le said that in general, the LC challenge was very competitive but beneficial. “It brought us together because we had to work as a team to get those points. We did it not just to win the prize but also for our pride in the IP.”

“*The mural took a lot of teamwork. It was challenging but beneficial. It was the first big project we had to do together and it really brought out our different personalities and we had to learn to work as a team and really cooperate.*” - Le To

When as what she would say to interested, Le replied: “The IP is like a family and so you have the responsibilities of one. In an organization you can just drop out. Here, everyone really cares about each other and supports one another. It’s a lot of give and take. Next semester we’ll have a few new members in the IP. We hope that they can share their international experience with us and we hope to give them back the family that is the IP.”

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Each resident painted the flag of the country they were associated with — born there, lived there, or ancestors from there.