College Access Handbook

May 2021

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Revised 6/1/20
Dear Elon Academy Scholar and Family Members:

The summer of 2021 will be significantly different for us. COVID-19 and societal restrictions on large gatherings mean that we cannot hold our summer program in its original form. Instead of a 4-week residential program, we will hold a two-week nonresidential day program.

In 2022 we hope to be back for our regular schedule. A summer filled with opportunities to:

● Engage in academic courses on Elon’s campus where you will be challenged to stretch your mind and develop your intellect.

● Participate in year-round academic programs and mentoring that will help you succeed in high school and college.

● Develop your leadership skills so that you are empowered to take on leadership positions at your high school and beyond.

● Enhance your sense of social responsibility and civic engagement through authentic and relevant service projects in the community.

● Access financial aid, scholarship, and college planning information that will ensure that you have the support necessary to pursue college and the career of your choice.

● Dance, explore the arts, and enjoy athletic activities.

● Enjoy field trips and visits to other college campuses.

● Make new, lifelong friends.

● Have the time of your life!

The most exciting and memorable journeys take detours, shortcuts, and side trips as opportunities arise. So, be flexible, take advantage of every challenge and opportunity, and, most importantly, enjoy the trip. We guarantee that every minute will be worthwhile. We have a wonderful faculty and staff as well as fantastic mentors. We all look forward to getting to know each and every one of you and your families. We are very excited about this summer! Welcome to the Elon Academy!

Dr. Terry Tomasek
Mr. John Pickett
Dr. Kim Pyne

Mrs. Katie Wicke-LaPlante
Ms. Princess King
Mrs. Denise Teeters

Elon Academy Scholars Speak Out

Revised 6/1/20
We asked Elon Academy scholars to share their favorite part of the program or their most valuable experience. Their words highlight the aspects of the Elon Academy: connectedness, learning, and leadership.

“*My favorite part about the Elon Academy was the amazing individuals that I had the privilege to meet. I feel as though most of the staff, mentors, and scholars touched me in some way.*”

“I love how motivated I have become. I don’t know where I would be without the Elon Academy.”

“The Elon Academy has changed my perspective of college. It has made me realize that it will be challenging, but with the right mindset I can persevere. It has made me realize that I should set my goals high because I achieve more.”

“It’s like we’re all one big family.”

How does the Elon Academy Program change “students” into “scholars”? Once again, Elon Academy scholars provided their insight and reflections.

“I have a better vocabulary, my morals are better rooted, and I have learned not to judge but to respect.”

“I feel like I’m more confident in the way that I interact with people. I’m also more interactive in my classes.”

“I have learned to get along better with others. I have started to go the extra mile in school and also explore my mind.”

“I am more confident about myself, and I am not afraid to try new things.”

“The Elon Academy has opened my eyes and mind to all of the opportunities available for me after high school. It made me realize that a college education is very much in reach, in fact, it is closer than I ever thought it would be.”
The Elon Academy Program Overview

The Elon Academy is an intensive, multiphase college access and success program based on academic accomplishment, leadership development, college attendance knowledge and culture, service and family involvement. This innovative program serves academically promising Alamance County high school students who have limited financial resources and/or no family history of college — known barriers to considering a college education. Once a student is accepted into the program in ninth grade, they remain an Elon Academy Scholar until they graduate from college — a seven-year commitment.

Phase I: The College Access Program provides enriching experiences for high school students. Scholars uncover their passions, build academic skills, find meaning in their lives and imagine new futures for themselves and their families. Each spring a cohort of ninth graders is selected based on an application and interview process. The year-round program combines three intensive four-week residential summer experiences at Elon prior to the 10th, 11th and 12th grades with monthly Saturday Academy during the academic year.

The residential component of the program mirrors college life, providing exposure to academic classes; co-curricular, service and cultural experiences; college planning; and college visits. In addition, families and scholars meet for an advising session with a college planning staff person during each summer program. University faculty high school teachers and community members teach classes while college students serve as teaching assistants and mentors. Local businesses provide paid internships for many of our scholars during the second half of the summer helping to develop work and leadership skills.

The Saturday Academy includes SAT preparation, essay writing, college grant and scholarship information, college selection guidance and community service. Since family involvement is crucial, parallel programs are offered for family members four times per year. Scholars are mentored between Saturday programs by specially trained college students who answer questions and offer college selection guidance and encouragement. The Elon Academy also provides academic coaches on an as-needed basis to support scholars in taking a rigorous high school curriculum. Counseling services and referrals to community agencies are also available to both scholars and their families.

Phase II: The Transitions to College Program is designed to prepare scholars and their families for the financial, academic, personal and social challenges of transitioning to college. This program takes place during the summer between high school graduation and the first year of college. Older Elon Academy College Scholars serve as peer leaders during the transitions retreat and as peer mentors during the academic year.

Phase III: The College Success Program is designed to ensure college completion for scholars once they enter college. Elon Academy staff visit scholars on their campuses to provide additional academic, social and mentoring/advising support, as well as assistance in securing additional financial aid. The role of the Elon Academy is to facilitate campus connections for scholars no matter where they are attending school. In addition, information about career transition and graduate school is provided to those college scholars who are nearing graduation. The impact of the program is expanded when Elon Academy college scholars return to the campus and the community to inspire and support Elon Academy Phase One scholars, who also dream of a college education, by serving as mentors and teaching assistants during the residential summer program.
2021 SUMMER PROGRAM

Because of COVID-19 restrictions, we will not hold our regular 4-week residential program during the summer of 2021. Instead, we will provide 2 weeks of day programming. The 2021 summer schedule will be as follows:

Week 1- June 14-18 (Monday- Friday)

Check in at the Koury Business Center lobby (KOBC) (parking in Colonnades Parking Lot)

Monday, 8AM check in and COVID testing

Tuesday-Friday, 8:45AM

9:00-9:55 Peer Groups
9:55-10:05 break
10:05-11:05 Academic Seminars
11:05-11:20 Peer Groups
11:30-12 Lunch
12:15-1:45 College Planning
2:00-3:00 Activities- Several co-curricular learning experiences are provided. These experiences provide scholars with the opportunity to make new friends, gain self-confidence, and acquire new knowledge and skill. In the past we had activities such as Yoga, Personal Defense, Weight Training, Sand Volleyball, Step, Art and Comedy Improv.

3:00 Check out

Week 2 – June 21- 25 (Monday-Friday)

Check in at the Koury Business Center lobby (KOBC) (parking in Colonnades Parking Lot)

Monday, 8AM check in and COVID testing

Tuesday-Friday, 8:45AM

9:00-9:55 Peer Groups
9:55-10:05 break
10:05-11:05 Academic Seminars
11:05-11:20 Peer Groups
11:30-12 Lunch
12:15-1:45 College Planning
2:00-3:00 RECESS- Scholar Choice Time
3:00 Check out

Cell phones- At check in, scholars will leave their cell phones with EA staff. When scholars check out at the end of the day, they will retrieve their cell phones. Scholars are not permitted to have cell phones with them during the summer sessions.

Parking- Scholars may drive themselves to campus for the 2021 summer program. All scholars should park in the Colonnades Parking Lot. They SHOULD NOT park in the Inman Admissions Parking lot (cars will be towed at owner’s expense from this parking lot).
College Visits- We are unable to visit other college campus this summer.

Service- We will not have service projects during the summer of 2021.

Summer Visitation- Family members WILL NOT be able to join scholars during lunch during the summer of 2021.

Summer Academic Advising- Family advising sessions will be offered during the summer of 2021. Some sessions may be offered at the end of the daily summer sessions, June 14-25. No advising sessions will be offered between 9AM and 3PM June 14-25. College planning staff will communicate with their scholars about scheduling these family advising sessions.

COVID Procedures

Elon’s Honor Code. Elon’s Honor Code is the foundation for our shared accountability: Honesty, Integrity, Respect and Responsibility. Students participating in reckless, repetitive behavior and disregard of COVID policies and protocols will be sent home from the Elon Academy summer program. To return to the summer program, students who are sent home are required to submit a written letter to staff recommitting themselves to the Honor Code and the Healthy Elon Commitment. Elon Academy staff will review the letter and determine student’s eligibility to return to campus.

Healthy Elon Commitment: “To continue to demonstrate our commitment to the core values of Elon,” all students, staff and faculty must review, sign and uphold the tenants of the commitment, agreeing to personal responsibility for their health, respect for the health of others, and compliance with university guidelines. We make this commitment to support one another during this unprecedented time. All community members are encouraged to remind each other of behavioral expectations and actively advocate for safe and healthy practices.

Prior to the start of the Summer Program:

1. Families will complete a medical information sheet for their child. Families will also sign permission forms for COVID testing. All of this paperwork will be stored in the Assistant Director of Counseling and Family Program’s office. EA staff will make a list of scholars who have documentation of COVID diagnosis or vaccination and share this information with Madelyn Pastrana and the Elon University Student Health Physician or designate.

Arriving Procedures:

1. The first day of the summer program all students, faculty and staff must complete mandatory COVID-19 testing on campus (free of charge). Abbott BinaxNow rapid antigen tests will be used. Everyone 15 years and older may self-swab, while those younger than 15 years old will be swabbed by a medical professional. If students, faculty or staff tested positive for COVID in the last 90 days they should not be tested but must provide documentation of previous positive test results.

2. Students with positive antigen test results will immediately be given a COVID-19 PCR test and sent home to await the results. Students who receive a negative PCR test result will be allowed to return to campus.

3. All PCR test results (positive and negative) will be reported to the Elon University Student Health Physician or designate, to the appropriate health department, or Elon University Human Resources (if a faculty or staff member).

4. Students, faculty, and staff who have waited 14 additional days since being fully vaccinated (received both doses for vaccines that require two doses) for COVID-19 and submitted documentation, do not need to be tested. Documentation of vaccination must be provided to the Elon Academy.

Daily Check In Procedures

1. If any scholar shows COVID-19 symptoms (see the CDC website for potential symptoms) or is in contact with any individual(s) who shows signs for COVID-19 or has tested positive for COVID-19, we require they stay home for their own health and the health of the rest of the group.

2. There will be a table set up at the check in location. There will be a brief health check at this table including questions about current symptoms and COVID-19 exposure.
3. Anyone experiencing COVID-like symptoms will need to return home for further evaluation by a healthcare provider.

Cleaning Protocols
Students will be educated about the following protocols at the beginning of the program (Orientation to summer program as well as the first day of the program) and provided daily prompts and reminders to ensure a clean and safe learning environment. The following policies will be shared with students:

1. Appropriate cloth or disposable face coverings (no gaitors) must be worn by all faculty and students in classrooms, labs, and studios as well as common areas such as Belk Library, Moseley or Lakeside.
2. Classrooms are configured to promote physical distancing. Students should not rearrange furniture.
3. Each classroom is equipped with a sanitation station near the entrance to the room. Elon Academy faculty and staff as well as each student should clean all desk, podium and tabletop surfaces as they arrive and leave the classroom.
4. Every classroom is disinfected each night.
5. There is no eating or drinking in classrooms.
6. Students must not share materials (e.g. pens, papers) or other items (e.g. food and beverages).

Communicating with us during the summer
The best way to communicate with Elon Academy staff during the summer program is through our office phone, 336-278-6109 or email at elonacademy@elon.edu. Staff monitor this telephone number between 8:30am and 5pm (this is the time period when we are most likely to have Spanish speaking staff to answer the phone).

Year-Round Program for Scholars
Saturday Academy for 2021-2022; 9:00-12:30

| September 11, 2021 (all families and scholars) | January 22, 2022 (all scholars) |
| October 16, 2021 (all scholars) | February 19, 2022 (all scholars and Pi/Omicron families) |
| November 13, 2021 (all families and scholars) | March 19, 2022 (all scholars & Xi families) |
| December 11, 2021 (all scholars) | April 2, 2022 (all scholars and Pi/Omicron families) |

Each month during the school year, Elon Academy scholars return to campus for a Saturday morning program that includes academic enrichment programs, college planning, leadership, service, and special projects. The expectation is that all scholars will attend every Saturday program. Excused absence is only given for sickness, family emergency or death in the family. School related or sports conflicts are not considered excused absences. The learning experiences that occur during the Saturday program cannot be duplicated at a different time and cannot easily be made up outside of class. Missing a Saturday program will put a scholar behind in important college planning work. Our expectation is that you will let us know of an absence and the reasons for that absence as soon as possible (unless an emergency) and that scholars will make up any work missed in a timely fashion.

All scholars COME TO CAMPUS by 9:00am on Saturday morning. Our program begins at 9am so it is important to arrive by about 8:50am to be able to sign-in and settle into the main room. All scholars MUST BE PICKED UP FROM CAMPUS at 12:30 pm on Saturday unless staying for special afternoon programs. Scholars should be picked up and dropped off near the Koury Business Center (KOBC). If scholars are driving themselves, they need to park in the Colonnades Parking Lot (see campus map). If transportation is a hardship, please call the Elon Academy office by the Wednesday before a Saturday Program and we will attempt to arrange transportation.

Inclement Weather Policy
Should bad weather threaten on the day of a Saturday program, scholars should check their Elon email, the Elon Academy
webpage, Elon Academy Twitter, or Facebook for information about potential cancellations. CAT mentors will also be notified of any cancellations and they will be asked to contact their scholars via telephone or text.

**Family Programs**

Multiple Saturday programs consist of special sessions designed especially for families (see schedule below). Our programming has been designed to build from year to year and corresponds to a student’s year in high school. Family attendance at these Saturday programs is expected. Families may also invite others interested in learning more about college access. We only ask that you call the Elon Academy office and let us know that guests will be joining you so that we can have enough materials. Our family sessions are provided in both English and Spanish. For questions about family programs, please contact Mrs. Katie LaPlante, kwicke@elon.edu, Assistant Director of Counseling and Family Programs.

- September 11, 2021 (all families)
- November 13, 2021 (all families)
- February 19, 2022 (Pi and Omicron families)
- March 19, 2022 (Xi families)
- April 2, 2022 (Pi and Omicron families)

The **goal** of Elon Academy family programs is to provide Elon Academy scholars and their families with the knowledge and resources to successfully plan for college. Our hope is that families feel confident enough to become involved in the college-going process and support their scholars through this experience. During the sophomore and junior years, families participate in three hour-long workshops on topics related to college access and success during each Saturday program (4 per academic year). During the senior year, families attend three on-campus programs and spend a considerable amount of time outside of formal programming working on financial aid paperwork, both independently and under the guidance of Elon Academy staff. Families also receive information relevant to supporting their student’s transition to college, and information on the next phase of programming for scholars, which occurs throughout their college years. Family involvement doesn’t end with the high school phase and families are welcome and encouraged to contact staff at any time during their scholar’s college experience for information or advice on supporting their college student, to share successes or concerns, or for connection to community or campus resources.

We view our work with families as a partnership that empowers them with information and support as they collaborate with their scholar on the journey to college. All families in the Elon Academy are part of our Family Network and come together once per semester at a family Saturday program. These meetings provide an opportunity for all cohorts of family members to gather and hear program updates from staff, and to share feedback, comments, and suggestions on our programming and services. The Elon Academy values feedback and uses it to inform our work and to best meet the needs and preferences of our families. Additionally, we hope that families will consider actively participating in the Elon Academy through attendance at family Saturday programs, and by volunteering to assist staff with special events throughout the year, such as scholar recruitment and Orientation Day. Opportunities for socializing with other families and Elon Academy staff allows our Family Network to gather and build relationships.

A typical year in family programming will cover:

- **Financial Literacy**
  - Budgeting, bank accounts, credit cards
  - Financial goal setting
  - Financial aid process and requirements
  - Financial resources
- **Important topics for successful high school completion**
Understanding the high school transcript
- Course selection
- How to access the school counselor and available resources in the school counseling office
- The importance of extracurricular involvement

Preparing for college application and admission
- Making the most of a college visit
- College and scholarship application timeline
- Standardized testing, including the SAT and ACT
- Available resources for preparedness, including online tools

Social and Emotional Well-being
- Managing stress
- Communication skills
- Accessing mental health services

Campus Life and Culture
- Study abroad
- Academic resources and advising
- Support programs for marginalized and first-generation students

Language Interpretation
The Elon Academy is committed to ensuring that all of our families experience our information and services as equitably as possible. As part of that, we recognize the importance of families accessing information in the language in which they are most comfortable. When your scholar is admitted to the program you may indicate the language in which you prefer to receive both printed materials and verbally presented information. We routinely provide Spanish interpretation at our Saturday programs and special events and translate all major documents, monthly newsletters, and evaluation forms. For languages other than Spanish, we make every effort to provide interpretation services, but cannot guarantee availability. If you prefer a language other than English or Spanish, please contact the Elon Academy office.

The majority of programs will feature consecutive interpretation, in which the English speaker and Spanish interpreter will take turns sharing the same information in both languages. At a few special programs and events, we are able to offer simultaneous interpretation, in which the interpreter communicates through a headset worn by those who would like to hear the information presented in Spanish. As a nonprofit responsible for raising our own funds, cost prohibits us from offering simultaneous interpretation at every event and program. Suggestions or feedback regarding interpretation and translation is welcome and will help us to meet our goal of accurate and inclusive services.

Additional Scholar Support
The Elon Academy assigns all scholars a College Access Team (CAT) Mentor. These are Elon University students, hired and trained by the Elon Academy. CAT Mentors meet with scholars a minimum of three times per semester to offer guidance and support on the journey to college. These meetings focus on college research, goal setting, problem-solving, and college planning. Meetings must take place in a public place such as a public library, Belk Library (Elon University’s Library), a restaurant, coffee shop, or at the scholar’s school at the end of the school day. These meetings typically last for about an hour. Scholars may request additional assistance from CAT mentors as needed. All scholars are expected to meet with their CAT mentor AT LEAST three times per semester. The best time for these meetings are one each in September, October, and November as well as February, March, and April. Scholars are required to communicate effectively with their CAT mentors to arrange for these meetings. Should you have any questions or concerns about CAT mentoring please immediately contact Mr. Pickett, jpickett@elon.edu or 336-278-6110.

Elon Academy scholars are also provided with an Academic Coach on an as-needed basis. Scholars making below a C in their high school courses will be required to seek extra help at their schools or from the Academy. Coaches must be requested by October 31st for the fall semester and by April 1st for the spring semester. Coaches are Elon University students, well-versed in the subjects they coach, and paid by the Elon Academy. Academic Coaches differ from tutors in the sense that Academic Coaches focus on continuous student mastery of a subject. Similar to a coach for an athletic sport, Academic Coaches meet with scholars on a regular basis to assist scholars in maintaining and increasing
understanding of academic content. While Academic Coaches certainly assist with scholars’ understanding of homework and help scholars to prepare for tests, this should not be the sole focus of an Academic Coaching session. Academic Coaches should not be viewed solely as resources to be used when a student is already having difficulty in a course, but rather as a way to ensure that the student has the best possible handle on the content of a course. Academic Coaching sessions typically last for about an hour to an hour and a half. **This is a free service offered by the Elon Academy; however, families are responsible to provide scholar transportation to coaching sessions.** If a coach is requested, the scholar should utilize the coach for maximum benefit. For questions about Academic Coaches, please also contact Mr. John Pickett, Assistant Director of Scholar Support.

**Family and Scholar Support**

The Elon Academy recognizes that there will be challenges on the journey to college for both the scholar and their family. While academic achievement is important for college admission, the most successful scholars are those that prioritize their emotional health, proactively manage stressors, and seek support and resources to overcome barriers.

In recognition of the importance of emotional well-being, the Elon Academy provides free, confidential counseling to both scholars and families in the program, as well as connection to community agencies/resources that may be of benefit. Counseling may be requested for individuals or for families/groups. Additionally, Elon Academy staff may request or require counseling support and/or connection to community resources as part of a comprehensive approach to preparing a student for college success.

Please be aware that there are limits to confidentiality, most notably: (1) when there is a clear risk of harm to scholar and/or family member; (2) when there is reason to believe that a child needs protection; (3) when the law requires the release of confidential information (e.g., court-order); and (4) when there is a need to obtain appropriate professional consultations. The limits of confidentiality may include sharing pertinent information with other Elon Academy staff in order to properly structure support and services for the scholar.

For more information on these services, please contact Katie LaPlante, Assistant Director of Counseling and Family Programs at (336) 264-1963 or kwicke@elon.edu. Mrs. LaPlante is a licensed psychologist.

**SAT Prep Sessions: Optional**

During the fall and spring semesters, scholars are given the option to sign up for SAT preparation sessions. These sessions take place after the regular Saturday program hours (typically 12:30-3:30PM excluding holiday party day). Sometimes SAT prep sessions may take place on ABSS teacher workdays. There are typically three sessions during the fall semester and three during the spring semester. Scholars are required to commit to at least two of the three sessions in each semester. Participation in SAT Prep sessions is on a first-come-first-serve basis. If space is available, scholars may choose to attend sessions in both semesters, but first preference is given to those scholars who have not attended SAT prep sessions. Elon Academy staff provides support for scholars during these prep sessions. The Assistant Director of Scholar Support oversees this program.