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‘BOLD STEP’



WALT UNKS, WINSTON-SALEM JOURNAL

Elon University plans to merge with Charlotte's Queens University. The universities said in a joint news release their planned merger is expected to be completed by summer 2026.

Elon University to expand Charlotte presence by acquiring Queens University

RICHARD CRAVER
Winston-Salem Journal

Elon and Queens universities announced Tuesday plans to merge with the goal of enhancing Elon's presence in Charlotte while providing Queens with additional financial stability.

The universities said in a joint news release their planned merger is expected to be completed by summer 2026 with Elon operating Queens in partnership with existing and legacy leaders.

The universities did not disclose potential financial terms. They said information about community efforts, leadership structure and programming will be disclosed by early 2026.

According to media reports, there have been concerns about the long-term financial stability of Queens, citing a \$6 million loss from operating activities in 2024, as well as declines in overall revenue and net tuition revenue.

A ProPublica analysis of a Queens Form 990 federal tax filing for fiscal 2022-23 found total revenues of \$88.4 million and total expenses of \$109 million.

"Both institutions are strengthened by this merger — a bold step taken in the face of the headwinds confronting higher education, and at the same time aligned with the key growth and opportunity emerging in Charlotte," the universities said.

"The vision is clear: to create a stronger, more sustainable model of higher education in Charlotte that expands access, enhances opportunity, prepares a future-ready workforce and honors the storied legacies of both institutions."

Mergers and acquisitions in higher education have become more common in recent years and this trend is likely to continue, said Zagros Madjd-Sadjadi, an economics professor at Winston-Salem State University.

"As federal resources become scarce, and the number of recent high school graduates declines due to demographic changes, scale, scope and network economies start to dominate," Madjd-Sadjadi said.

"Universities that realize this and reposition themselves accordingly will be the survivors in the coming educational

shakeout.

"Both universities will likely see synergies as administrative positions are consolidated and students obtain access to the expanded curriculum that a larger institution can provide."

Merger details

Elon has about 7,000 students with more than 70 undergraduate majors, along with professional and graduate programs in law, business, education and health care.

By comparison, Queens has about 2,000 students in undergraduate and master's-level programs across the liberal arts and sciences, as well as the business, communication, nursing, health and education.

The universities touted Queens' nearly 170-year history of academic and civic impact, as well as "long-standing relationships with Charlotte's business, nonprofit and faith-based communities and a legacy as a champion for civic dialogue and service."

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Officials charge suspect

Authorities: Robinson wrote a confession note, left behind DNA

JESSE BEDAYN, HANNAH SCHOENBAUM
AND JOHN SEEWER
Associated Press

PROVO, Utah — Prosecutors brought a murder charge Tuesday against the man accused of killing Charlie Kirk and outlined evidence, including a text message confession to his partner and a note left beforehand saying he had the opportunity to kill one of the nation's leading conservative voices "and I'm going to take it."

DNA on the trigger of the rifle that killed Kirk also matched that of Tyler Robinson, Utah County Attorney Jeff Gray said while outlining the evidence and announcing

charges that could result in the death penalty if Robinson is convicted.

The prosecutor said Robinson, 22, wrote in one text that he spent more than a week planning the attack on Kirk, a prominent force in politics credited with energizing the Republican youth movement and helping Donald Trump win back the White House in 2024.

Kirk was gunned down Sept. 10 while speaking with students at Utah Valley University. Prosecutors allege Robinson shot Kirk in the neck with a bolt-action rifle from the roof of a nearby building on the campus in Orem, about 40 miles south of Salt Lake City.

Robinson appeared briefly Tuesday before a judge by video from jail. He nodded slightly at times but mostly stared

Please see **KIRK KILLING**, Page A2



ALEX GOODLETT, ASSOCIATED PRESS

Utah County Attorney Jeff Gray speaks during a news conference Tuesday announcing charges filed against Tyler Robinson in Provo, Utah.