

Graduate Student Profile

Babita Shrestha, Master's Student, Sociology

Babita Shrestha comes from the Patan area of Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal. Nepal is a country about the size of Arkansas, bordered on the north by the Himalayas (and north of that, China) and on the south by India.

Unlike Arkansas, which has about 2.5 million people, Nepal is home to 27 million.



Babita is the first in her family to come to the United States, so naturally her parents were a bit apprehensive when their daughter left Nepal to come to Arkansas. But her first trips to the state were not to come to the University of Arkansas. Since 1998, Babita has been working with Heifer International, a global nonprofit based in Little Rock, whose mission is to help families in underdeveloped areas of the world improve their lives through livestock and training.

"While I enjoyed my work, I always felt an absence of sociological training," Babita says. "I certainly collected invaluable experience by working in Heifer International-Nepal. However, I thought that supplementation with an academic study in sociology might further my potential in helping the socio-economically

How Would You Teach This Class?

Too many doctoral students are ill-prepared to talk about their teaching when it really matters -- in the job interview

By PATRICIA ARMSTRONG, KATHLEEN L. MANNHEIMER, and KATHERINE STANTON

Summary of this article:

The authors present a timely article for those students who will interview in the near future for positions in their field. While many students are quite ready to answer interviewer's questions about their research, their dissertation or thesis, many are not prepared to discuss how they would teach a particular class. However, this may be an area that "makes or breaks" your interview.

The authors provide advice and information to help one prepare for such questions. Sections of the article include: "Teaching in the discipline," "Promoting and assessing student learning," "Using research to inform your teaching," and "Putting it all together." The authors are a career counselor at Princeton University, and two assistant directors of teaching centers (Princeton and Vanderbilt University).

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How Would You Teach This Class?

By PATRICIA ARMSTRONG, KATHLEEN L. MANNHEIMER, and KATHERINE STANTON

From the issue dated June 24, 2005

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Babita, continued... deprived community."

Babita Shrestha began her master's program at the University of Arkansas in Fall 2004, and expects to finish by May 2006. Although she applied to several universities, the UA had an edge because of her familiarity with Arkansas through her previous trips to the state.

Babita says that studying in the U.S. seems easier than in Nepal, where examinations are managed and monitored by an impartial Board. "Here in the U.S.," says Babita, "professors know the student's intellectual ability via both formal and informal meetings, so students are judged by their totality, not solely by their written examinations."

A master's student in Sociology, Babita studies social structure and values in society. Discussions include social discrimination, oppression, and other social issues and problems. "I am excited to see the application of theoretical knowledge in the practical field," says Babita. "During my 2005 spring and

continued on pg 2

Time Management Tips for Graduate Students

By Tara Kuther, Ph.D.

So much to do and so little time. It's easy to feel overwhelmed during those first few months of graduate school. Who am I kidding? It's easy to feel overwhelmed throughout much of graduate school! How do you find time for all of the work? The best advice for avoiding burnout and getting bogged down is to keep track of your time: record your days and maintain daily progress towards your goals. Time management is essential to your success in grad school. Learn how to manage your time with these tips for time management.

Use a Calendar System

By now, you probably use a calendar to keep track of weekly appointments and meetings. Grad school requires taking a long term perspective on time. Use a yearly, monthly, and weekly calendar.

Year Scale. It's difficult to keep track of today and remember what needs to be done in 6 months. Long term deadlines for financial aid, conference submission, and grant proposals creep up quickly! Plan at least 2 years ahead with a yearly calendar, divided into months. Add all long term deadlines on this calendar. Your monthly calendar should include all paper deadlines, test dates, and appointments so that you can plan ahead. Add self-imposed deadlines for completing long term projects like papers.

Week Scale. Most academic planners use a weekly scale of measurement. Your weekly calendar includes your day-to-day appointments and deadlines. Have a study group on Thursday afternoon? Record it here. Carry your weekly calendar everywhere.

Use a To-Do List

Your daily to-do list will keep you moving towards your goals on a daily basis. Take 10 minutes every night and make a to-do list for the next day. Look over your calendar for the next couple of weeks to remember tasks that need to be planned in advance: searching for literature for that term paper, buying and sending birthday cards, and preparing submissions to conferences and grants. Your to-do list is your friend; never leave home without it.

Prioritize your to-do list. Rank each item by importance and attack your list accordingly so that you don't waste time on nonessential tasks.

Schedule time to work on classes and research each day, even if it is just a few 20 minute blocks. Think you can't get much done in 20 minutes? You'd be surprised. What's more important is that the material will stay fresh in your mind, enabling you to reflect on it at unexpected times (like on your ride to school or walk to the library).

Be flexible. Allow time for interruptions and distractions. Plan just 50 percent or less of your time so that you'll have the flexibility to handle unexpected interruptions. When you're interrupted, ask yourself, "What is the most important thing I can do right now? What's most urgent?" Use your answer to plan your time and get back on track.

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Babita...Cont. from p.1

summer break, I served Heifer International Headquarters and I applied my sociology theoretical knowledge while conducting research in Nepal and conducting

Graduate School Calendar

Important dates for graduate students--Spring / Summer 2006

Feb 24--deadline to apply to participate in 2006 Commencement

Mar 20 to 24--Spring Break

April 1--deadline for priority consideration for Fall admission to Graduate School for international students

April 15--deadline for priority consideration for Summer admission to Graduate School for domestic students

May 5--final copies of thesis or dissertation due, for a May 2006 diploma

May 5--Dead Day

May 6 to 12--Final Exams

May 13--Commencement

May 22--First Summer Session begins

Aug 1--deadline for priority consideration for Fall admission to Graduate School for domestic students

Babita...continued

training in Cambodia. I am really happy to see the outcome of the knowledge in my real work."

After completing her master's in Sociology, Babita plans to continue her work with development organizations like Heifer International. Future plans include earning her doctorate in possibly Public Policy, Sustainable Development, or Planning and Evaluation.

When she's not studying, Babita enjoys reading, listening to music, involvement in International Students and Scholars activities, and getting together with her friends.

Graduate Student Profile

Will Black
Ph.D. Candidate
Microelectronics - Photonics

Will Black has lived in both a small town and a big city, in the arid Southwest and in east Texas. All of this combined to affect his choice of where to go for his Ph.D.



Born in Commerce, Texas, Will grew up in this small town of about 8,000 located 60 miles east of Dallas.

Will was working as a software engineer in Phoenix when a friend told him about the Microelectronics-Photonics (MicroEP) Ph.D. program here at the University of Arkansas. Drawn to the interdisciplinary nature of the program, Will was also attracted by Northwest Arkansas. "I decided I would rather live in the Ozarks than in the desert," says Will. "I really like hiking and canoeing, and I appreciate the opportunities here to do these things, although I don't get many chances because my research keeps me so busy."

Microelectronics-Photonics is an interdisciplinary program, which was a big draw for Will Black. "MicroEP covers disciplines ranging from engineering, physics, and electronics to business. The advantage of having a background in such an array of subjects is that you become well versed in how the inner workings of today's large technological businesses operate, what they want, and how you may fit into the whole picture. Above all MicroEP teaches you to look at a multifaceted problem from multiple perspectives, and attempts to give

Graduate Dean's Student Advisory Board

Graduate Deans Host Luncheon to Discuss Diversity on Campus

By **J. Freer**, GDSAB Member and Ph.D. Candidate in Public Policy

The Graduate Deans hosted a group at the Hog Haus restaurant on Dickson Street December 14, 2005. Invited to hear the presentation of visitors and members of the Graduate Dean's Student Advisory Board (GDSAB) were Carmen Coustaut, Associate Vice Chancellor for Institutional Diversity and Education; Lynn Mosesso, Director of Graduate and International Admissions; and Johnny D. Jones, Assistant Dean for Graduate Recruitment and Retention. GDSAB representatives were asked to bring a guest to attend the luncheon who could share a personal experience regarding the diversity climate on campus. Guests could be any person on campus-undergraduate or graduate students, staff, faculty, or part-time personnel.

As the group shared stories, each one added a richer perspective to help understand what some students still face in terms of diversity on the University of Arkansas campus. Stories included experi-

ences of adversity in terms of race and gender clashes and power conflicts regarding international countries of origin, physical ability, and sexual preferences were mentioned.

Shared were some negative experiences that since heard may be able to help guide university policies, and possibly new educational ventures regarding acceptance of differences. Also shared were some stories of how far education on the U of A campus has come. It seemed as though all present reflected an increased understanding and knowledge and

The conversation seemed to spur an understanding that diversity benefits us all...

the discussion opened for conversation some issues that can be difficult to share.

Ending the luncheon, Vice Chancellor

Coustaut asked what particularly students present experienced when classes are not diverse in our programs. The conversation seemed to spur an understanding that diversity benefits us all, that appreciating diversity not only on paper, but in practice is not only a nice thing to do, but is imperative for our understanding of our increasingly smaller global community.

Hopefully this conversation will be the first of many forums held with campus groups to keep pushing the envelope and help to create a diversity climate that embraces all who choose to work and study at the University of Arkansas.

Will Black, continued...

you the background necessary to intelligently and efficiently develop a solution," Will says.

Will works in the lab of Dr. Greg Salamo, his major professor, on an international team of researchers. "In our lab, we research the characteristics of magnetic field sensors and the materials they are composed of-we are researching exotic systems to see if improvements can be made in these materials. We have scientists in our lab from Ukraine, China, the Middle East, the U.S. and elsewhere. Some are postdocs, some are staff, and some are visiting professors-we have a visiting professor from Brazil working in the lab currently."

continued on pg 4

Graduate Student Professional Learning Series

Will Black, cont. from p. 3

Asked what he thought was the one character trait a Ph.D. student must have, Will immediately replied, "Perseverance. In research, you don't always get the results you hope for. Perhaps it's a problem with the mechanics of the experiment, or the equipment, or another variable. So you have to dig deeper and deeper into your knowledge base as you try to determine what has happened." He adds, "This is good, though, because you learn so much as you do that work. You need perseverance to get you through those tough spots. Then, something exciting happens, and suddenly you don't mind being in the lab all night, because you know that you're moving forward. It's very energizing, then."

Will plans to finish his dissertation by December 2006, or if all goes extremely well, by this August. After earning his Ph.D., Will plans to seek either an industry position or a post-doctoral research position.

Hosted by the Graduate School and open to all graduate students, this information series presents topics of interest intended to broaden the knowledge and experience students gain while attending the University of Arkansas. It is the goal of the Graduate School to provide valuable career information.

The fall series, titled **Research Ethics³**, offered case studies with ethical issues at their core. After discussing each case study in small groups, all the students in attendance discussed possible outcomes of the case. Research ethics topics covered in the series included values and policies in research; responsible conduct by researchers; ethical issues in publication of research; and peer review issues. About 120 students attended each session.



Standing room only--but the food is good! (L to r) Sneha Priya, Sheva Ram Boda, Venkatasubram Venkatakrishnan, Keerthi Srinivas, Aditya Aryasomayajula, Senthil Kumar Chinnava, Jithesh Velichamthotu Veetil, Vamsi Mallangi.

Spring 2006 Professional Learning Series Events

Feb 6--Sexual Harassment, presented by Kay Fairchild, Office of Affirmative Action

March 13--Conflict of Interest and Commitment, presented by Provost Bob Smith

April 10--Ethics and Policies Governing Research with Human Participants, Presented by Dr. Doug Adams, Sociology & Criminal Justice, and Rosemary Ruff, Director, Office of Research Support and Sponsored Programs

All programs will be at the Reynolds Center for Executive Development. Program 4:00 - 5:00 p.m. with a light supper immediately following. All graduate students are invited and there is no charge for this event, which is funded by the Graduate School. To register to attend, email Diane Cook at DLCOOK@uark.edu or phone her at 575-5622.

Your programming ideas are welcome! If you have an idea for a seminar, please forward it to us.

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Editor:
Diane Cook
Graduate School
119 Ozark Hall
University of Arkansas
Fayetteville, AR 72701

PH: 479-575-5622
email: DLCOOK@uark.edu

**THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
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Attendees enjoy dinner and discussion following the November seminar. (L to r) Hilary Pavlidis, Jana Cornelison, Chris Hansen, and Dr. Young Min Kwon.



Students listen to a presentation by Dr. Doug Adams -- November 2005