

Mary Biltz Interview:

How would you describe your area of study to a novice?

Learning to become a teacher may sound pretty basic, but there is more to the Education program than I really expected. Becoming a teacher is about knowing how students will learn best and trying different methods until the right one works. Through my program of study, I have learned not just about teaching in the school but how the entire system works in a district, state, and the nation. Overall, the Education program at Radford produces competent teachers that truly know and understand how to become an effective instructor at any grade level.

What is your primary motivation for persevering through graduate school?

I can't wait to become a teacher to help students learn about history and how our society has changed over time. I hope to inspire students to become better people and make a difference in the world.

Do you think there is any value in social networking with other graduate students in non-related fields?

Yes. I always feel that it is a good idea to make friends and connections with other people. It is especially beneficial to know people who are different from you so that you are constantly learning.

What is your favorite stress-reduction technique?

Watching a movie on the couch with popcorn and some kind of chocolate snack.

What is the last book you read strictly for pleasure and how long ago was it?

A few weeks ago, I reread the book *Divergent* by Veronica Roth. It is a young adult novel about a dystopian future that anyone who read the Hunger Games will love.

Please describe your most meaningful academic relationship.

Almost all of the teachers I have had at Radford have been wonderful, caring, and effective instructors. The professor who stands out the most is Dr. Kristan Morrison. She helped me come into the program gracefully and is the best teacher I have ever had! I cannot say enough good things about Dr. Morrison and I am so thankful for all of her help!

What surprised you the most about graduate school?

What surprised me the most about graduate school is how much the teachers care about their students. All of the teachers at Radford really want the students to succeed and are willing to help students in any way.

If travel to Mars happens in your lifetime, would you want to be one of the scientists on board? If yes, what would you contribute to the mission?

I would most definitely not be on any trip to Mars. I am so afraid of heights I don't even ride rollercoasters.

What is your favorite comfort food and why? How often do you consume it?

My favorite comfort food is potatoes. I will eat just about any kind of potatoes at least three times a week.

If you hadn't been admitted to graduate school, what do you think you would be doing right now?

I would probably be earning my licensure without a Master's degree or trying to find a job with my Bachelor's degree in History at a museum or in a similar environment.

When do you expect to complete your degree?

Spring 2014