

Savannah LeBarre Interview:

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

My area of study is counseling psychology. Basically, I am learning about counseling psychology and how to counsel others. My goal in counseling is to listen empathically and provide clients with skills to increase self-efficacy and empower clients. My main interest is in health psychology and helping with disease management, prevention, increasing positive health behaviors, mindfulness and relaxation, and providing support during stressful moments.

What is your primary motivation for persevering through graduate school?

My primary motivation for persevering through graduate school is my hope of helping the world become a better place, even if my contribution is small. I want to help as many people as I can.

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

Yes, I really think it is valuable. One can learn different skill sets and different perspectives from others in non-related fields. This can keep one from becoming too narrowly focused as well.

What is your favorite stress-reduction technique?

I practice mindfulness and yoga to reduce stress. Also, just being in nature helps me reduce stress.

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

I read Charlaine Harris's Sookie Stackhouse Book *13 Dead Ever After*. I read this book last summer so about a year ago. I love reading, but there has not been much time for that lately. I started reading *Darkly Dreaming* and had to pause on that.

Please describe your most meaningful academic relationship.

My relationship with my mentor and advisor Dr. Ruth Riding-Malon. She has been not only an advisor academically, but has been a source of great support for me this year. I really value that relationship.

What surprised you the most about graduate school?

Nothing really surprised me. I was excited to learn about how much I have in common with others who are in my graduate program. We took some personality and vocational assessments and we were all very similar.

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?

Well, as a future counseling psychologist I would possibly counsel those who are going to Mars or coming back from Mars. I personally would not really want to go there. I am happy where I am.

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

My favorite comfort food is macaroni and cheese. I think it is my favorite because I seriously love cheese and also because my mother would always make it for me when I was not feeling well.

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

Taking the GRE again, doing more research, and taking extra classes until I could get into graduate school. I would still be a pharmacy technician while I was preparing more applications and interviewing for graduate programs.

When do you expect to complete your degree?

I expect to complete my degree in May 2017.