

## **Stephen Casazza Interview:**

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

Psychology, broadly defined is the study of the mind, mental functions, and behaviors. More specifically my area of study, counseling psychology works with individuals on a wide range of aspects of their lives that may be causing them distress and aims to increase their ability to better function in their lives.

### **What is your primary motivation for persevering through graduate school?**

My primary motivation for persevering through graduate school was to work towards being in the best position possible to help others with their difficulties. It is my belief that the knowledge and skills that would best prepare me for this could only be found in a very thorough graduate program, such as those Radford has to offer.

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

Definitely. I think there is always value in hearing opinions from other students regardless of their field of study. One of my favorite graduate courses was one which students from several different programs were taking. This helped to open my eyes to the different ways we are taught to look at the same thing through the years of education in our respective fields. Additionally, you never know when it will be professionally beneficial to have a good contact in a non-related field.

### **What is your favorite stress-reduction technique?**

I really enjoy to cook new things. Experimenting in the kitchen allows me a creative outlet and provides a healthy way for me to take my mind off of things that may be causing stress in my life.

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

I am currently reading Terry Goodkind's *Wizard's First Rule*, the first book in the epic fantasy series *The Sword of Truth*. I enjoy reading fantasy novels because they allow me to escape to a whole other world.

### **Please describe your most meaningful academic relationship.**

This is a difficult question to answer because I have developed so many meaningful academic relationships with faculty since coming to Radford just two years ago. I have yet to meet an advisor, instructor, or supervisor who was not kind, open, and caring. However, one relationship that sticks out to me is the one I have with Dr. Ann Elliott. She has provided me invaluable guidance in both course work and outside of the classroom. I have learned so much from her and would not likely be in the position I am today without her advice and encouragement. I have also learned a great deal from Dr. Pam Jackson and Dr. Tracy Cohn in many ways.

### **What surprised you the most about graduate school?**

There were several things that surprised me about graduate school including the amount of work, both inside and outside of the classroom, the multitude of research that was available to apart of, and the amount of dedication required in order to be successful. Perhaps the best and most surprising aspect about graduate to me was the closeness of relationships between the students and professors and the amount of guidance and support they provided.

**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?**

Yes, I would jump at the opportunity to be one of the scientists on board a shuttle to Mars. Not only would this appeal to my adventurous side, but would also allow me to provide what I would consider to be a much needed service aboard such a mission.

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

This is another difficult question to answer but I would have to say chicken wings would probably be my favorite comfort food. My Grandma used to make them for me all the time when I was a child and it is one of the first things I learned to cook. I would say I probably prepare them once every month or so.

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

If I hadn't been admitted to graduate school, I would likely be gaining all the related research and clinical experience possible without a graduate degree with the intention of reapplying. Graduate school has always been a goal of mine and it would take more than not being accepted to give up on this pursuit.

**When do you expect to complete your degree?**

I recently completed my Master's degree in May, 2014 and I expect to complete the Doctoral degree in the summer of 2018.