

Eric Tucker Interview:

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

Quality Management is all about doing the right thing the first time and every time. Supply chain management is about getting the right thing to the right place, under budget, on time, every time. My career goal is to obtain a position in supply chain quality where I can work on both issues at the same time.

What is your primary motivation for persevering through graduate school?

I knew going back to school full-time in my 50's was going to be a challenge, but I figured I could do it if I set my mind to it. I'm here to update my job skills and to get the right position for the next phase of my career.

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

Absolutely. We all bring different knowledge and capabilities to Radford, and some of the most memorable discussions I've had have been with folks from unrelated disciplines. Often, your academic peers have similar opinions to yours. It's the ideas of those from dissimilar backgrounds that can get you scratching your head.

What is your favorite stress-reduction technique?

Two things: 1- a peaceful walk along the river in Bisset Park, and 2- exercise (have you checked out the new Student Recreation and Wellness Center? It's AWESOME!)

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

I read all kinds of stuff, from mysteries to sci-fi to military thrillers. The last one was Tom Clancy's *The Teeth of the Tiger* (2003). Last month.

Please describe your most meaningful academic relationship.

Wow, this one goes back a long time. I had a professor years ago at Radford University, Dr. George Parish, which greatly impressed upon me the importance of being able to synthesize my thoughts and put them in writing in a clear and concise way. All his exams were essays, and he graded everything from spelling, grammar, and context to the actual subject matter at hand. He was tough, but he knew those skills would serve us well when we left Radford. And for me, he was not just any professor; he was my academic advisor, my trombone instructor, and taught one mean Music History class. Thank you, Dr. Parish!

What surprised you the most about graduate school?

Several things. First, it is possible to have fun, it's not just classwork. Second, the faculty in COBE sincerely wants you to succeed and is willing to help; they go out of their way to make sure you have what you need to grow and learn.

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?

Nope. I'd rather watch the streaming video and say "isn't that cool?"

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

Mac and Cheese. The real stuff, not that yellow powder stuff. You know what I mean ... creamy, sharp cheddar, and very gooey. Yeah, that's what I'm talking about! I gotta have it at least once a month.

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

Hmm, not sure. I might still be working for the small Mom & Pop business where I used to work. If not, I might be doing some traveling.

When do you expect to complete your degree?

Spring, 2016.