

## International Student Spotlight Interview Questions

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YEAR AT K-STATE: 2<sup>nd</sup> Year

MAJOR: PhD Electrical & Computer Engineering, Graduate Research and Teaching Assistant

HOME COUNTRY: Pakistan



- What was it like coming to K-State? How did you decide to come here?  
Honestly speaking I didn't know much about K-State before applying. As I was busy in my Master's thesis I missed the deadlines and this was the only university where I had a chance to apply. I am grateful that I got admission here. The project I am working on matches my Research interests.
- What has your experience been like so far?  
It's a great experience. This place is quite similar to my hometown Islamabad in terms of cleanliness, peace and calmness. So I didn't find much difference except the winters are much colder than my hometown. I have my own apartment here and I am enjoying my independent life.
- What were some of the big differences when you first arrived (social, academic, weather, etc.)? Was there anything that was really surprising?  
There are not many Pakistanis at K-State. I am the only one in PhD Electrical and Computer Engineering. My friends in US suggested me not to come here as this is not a high ranking university in Engineering. Before arriving at K-State I heard about hate crimes in Midwest. But when I came here I was surprised to see Muslim women wearing Hijab and nobody teases them. One day a random Christian lady greeted me with "Assalam o Alaikum"... I found it really surprising on the respect I received as a Muslim here unlike what I have heard earlier. The people here are more helpful, friendly, hospitable and welcoming than any of the big cities I have visited like Dallas and San Francisco.
- Was K-State what you expected? Was Manhattan what you expected?  
Not really. The university from where I came in Pakistan (NUST) is much bigger than K-State College of Engineering. In fact, in my country one department of engineering was comparable to the whole K-State College of Engineering. But in terms of research K-State is far better and that's why I am here. There are no Halal restaurants available in Manhattan which is the biggest problem for me as a Muslim. K-State should take this issue seriously because it has a big Muslim population. Overall I like the peaceful environment and people of K-State.
- Is classroom culture a lot different here?  
Yes. It is much more conducive to learning.

- What do you like about being a student at K-State?  
The Purple Pride. Willie the Wildcat.
- What kinds of things are you involved in on campus?  
Activities arranged by Nation to Nation, Helping International Students, Indian Student Association and International Student Services.
- What do you do for fun in Manhattan?  
I hang out with my international friends. Engage in different activities arranged by the student associations. Go to recreation center.
- If you could have known one thing before moving here, what would it be?  
Interstate bus services and air travel is very expensive. Halal food options are not available here.
- Do you have any advice for incoming international students?  
I have been to France, Netherlands, Dubai and China for academic and professional reasons but I found US the most favorable place to study and work as there is no discrimination between locals and internationals. Manhattan is a good place for studies and social activities. But if you are coming just for party it's not Manhattan New York!
- What would you like others to know about being an international student at K-State?  
Study/Work is just one part of the whole PhD Journey; I learnt many interpersonal skills when I started living and working at K-State. As I am a Pakistani and a Muslim there are a lot of misconceptions in people's mind. So I am more responsible for projecting a real image of my country because I am not only representing myself I am representing my country and my religion too.
- Would you mind sharing a phrase from your native language and what it means?

دل سے میں نے دیکھا پاکستان  
 اس وطن پہ جان و دل قربان یہ وطن ہمارا  
 اس وطن سے پہچان ہماری یہ وطن ہمارا  
 قربانیاں کتنی دے کر آزادی لائے  
 میں تو یہ چاہوں ساری دنیا ہی یہ جانے  
 دل سے دل سے میں نے دیکھا پاکستان  
 جاں سے جاں سے میرا دھرتی پہ ایمان

**Translation:** I love Pakistan from my heart. I will sacrifice my life for the betterment of my country. My country is my Identity. I want the whole world to know that we got Pakistan after tremendous sacrifices. I have a firm belief that Pakistan will rise above all odds (menace of terrorism and corruption).