

International Student Spotlight Interview Questions

NAME: Obiribea Ofori- Bah

YEAR AT K-STATE: 2nd year masters

MAJOR: Agricultural Economics

HOME COUNTRY: Ghana

- What was it like coming to K-State? How did you decide to come here?
I came to KSU to pursue a master's program in Agricultural Economics. I did my research and saw that this university has one of the best programs in the country and has produced some of the best economists. My department has also made some contributions in Africa through a number of projects including a few in Ghana, where I am from. It was good coming here. Manhattan was smaller than other places I had been in the US, but given that I did my research, I wasn't too shocked. It is a college city.
- What has your experience been like so far?
Eye-opening, because I have learned more than I anticipated. I have made good friends. I have been able to visit many states and visit some of my family members in other states too. I also managed to travel to the East Coast with one of my roommates and became a lot closer after traveling together. We went to Florida and Georgia then up to New Jersey and New York. I find appealing that KSU has so many organizations to help students. For example, the KSU Student Services provides valued support to international students.
- What were some of the big differences when you first arrived (social, academic, weather, etc.)? Was there anything that was really surprising?
I enjoy the flint hills and adore seeing them from season to season, I was told Kansas was flat. The weather is so unpredictable. I remember a day when we had a tornado warning then got sun, rain and hail within minutes.
- Was K-State what you expected? Was Manhattan what you expected?
I researched online quite a bit and looked at photos, it did meet my expectations.
- Is classroom culture a lot different here?
I know that the masters level classes are equally as small as they would be back home. The professors here seem to invest a lot of time in students, and I appreciate the time they make for student consultations. There are more assignments, projects, and research than what I am used to. There are lots of learning experiences.
- What do you like about being a student at K-State?
Everything. People being helpful and engaging. The bonds with friends and professors are amazing. Everything.

- What kinds of things are you involved in on campus?
I am involved with Bridges International, HIS and I like to help international students when I can. I am also the Secretary for the African Students Union and do event planning. I am also a member of Chi Alpha and have been a part of their Bible studies. My church, St. Paul's Episcopal also have youth service and programs!
- What do you do for fun in Manhattan?
I like to travel around like I did over the summer. With HIS and Bridges International, I have participated in some outdoor activities like horseback riding, kayaking, and archery. The African Student Union has gatherings like BBQ's which enhances togetherness.
- If you could have known one thing before moving here, what would it be?
The weather! Back home, temperatures are always averagely high. I knew it would be cold, but the winds can be cruel.
- Do you have any advice for incoming international students?
If you are a graduate student be prepared for the amount of work that needs to be done. However, there are people and events to help you adjust and get along. There are support systems as far as academics, career and leadership development are concerned, or also opportunities to relax if you need a break from school. I think that is also the difference with KSU in a smaller college town versus a big city; a lot of help, resources available and a strong sense of community in Manhattan.
- What would you like others to know about being an international student at K-State?
For one thing, being away from home is hard. I am family orientated which makes it a bigger move, but I talk with my family every day.
Also, I am from Africa, but my country is Ghana. Africans tend to have pride for their respective countries. Though we are one big family, Africa is huge, and each country is extremely unique. For example, Ghana's official language is English, but the countries we are surrounded by are French-speaking. So even things like that make our culture distinct. I have enjoyed learning things from other cultures. My roommate is from Uganda and how she peels her potatoes is different from the way I was taught; She peels it towards her. I tried to do it and couldn't, we laughed any time I tried. I do like being here because I am meeting different people and learning more about cultural differences around the world.
- Would you mind sharing a phrase from your native language and what it means?

A patriotic song by Ephraim Amu entitled "Yen Ara Asaase Ni" translated "This Is Our Own Native Land".

TWI	ENGLISH
<p>Yɛn ara asase ni Ɛyɛ abodenden ma yɛn Mogya a nananom hwie gu, nya de too hɔ maa yɛn Aduru me ne wo nso so Sɛ yɛbɛyɛ bi atoa so Nimdeɛ-ntraso, nkokrane ne apɛsɛmenkomenya Adi yɛn bra mu dɛm Ama yɛn asase ho dɔ atɔm' sɛ</p>	<p>This is our (<i>own</i>) homeland It is priceless to us Acquired with the blood our ancestors shed for us It is the turn of you and I To continue the legacy Know-it-all behavior, cheating and selfishness Has maimed our character And diminished our love for our land</p>
<p>Ɔman no sɛ ɛbɛyɛ yie oo! Ɔman no sɛ ɛrenyɛ yie oo! Ɛyɛ nsɛnnaɔ sɛ, ɔmanfo bra na ɛkyɛɛ</p>	<p>Whether this nation prospers! Or it (the nation) doesn't prosper! Clearly depends on the character of the citizenry</p>
<p>Nwoma nimdeɛ huhugyan Anaa adɛnya ara kwa Ne ɔbrakyew de, ɛsɛɛ ɔman na ɛbɔ no ahohora Asoɔmmɛɛ ne obuɔ pa Yɔnkɔɔ yiediepɛ daa Ahofama ntetekwaam' Ma onipa biara yiedie Enonom na ɛde asomdwoɛɛ ne nkɔsɔɔ pa brɛ ɔman</p>	<p>Bragging of educational achievements Or useless greed for material things And bad lifestyles, destroy and disgrace our nation Obedience and respect Care for others' welfare daily Selflessness in the traditional way Ensures each person's welfare These are what bring peace and prosperity to our nation</p>

