Namratha, Master’s/International, Computer Science

Why did you decide to come to UNT?

* Well the overall university profile looked good, not just with respect to the area of specialization that I’ve been wanting to study in. There were a lot of options for on campus employment which basically helps a lot of international students in their living here. Of course as we know the international fees are something as a bigger number as compared to the local resident fee rates. So I think a lot of on campus opportunities were really good along with those opportunities you also have finding opportunities be it grants, or financial aide, or scholarships. So I thought that is a great thing for me to be chosen for a specific university where I would like to study, and because its gonna help me grow in an overall perspective and not just be with a respect to academics all the time. But there are other facilities be it the rec center here, there are a lot of sports, activities going on all the time. And more over the students work actually fascinates me the most; it’s a diverse group of people here, where they just come across from all parts of the world-I mean in every university that eventually happens-it’s a very difficult question to say why exactly UNT, but there are a lot of factors to consider. One is definitely the opportunities that we have as students, the facilities that are given to the students, I would like to say that I am…I have been seeing UNT as a student centric institution where the focus is primarily on the students interest and how the organization could be adjusted accordingly so the student feels homely even though they stay on campus or they stay out of their home off campus or whatever, so I think yeah that’s about it..
* Yeah there were other universities I looked at; I got admits from two of them, even though the other one was good I wasn’t sure I would be given as extensive employment opportunities while I’m at my study program. I thought that UNT had the best one among the two others so

How would you describe your transition?

* Well the transition wasn’t that difficult; I mean yes there was a major cultural shock not just I was in a foreign country, to be really honest I’m the only person from my hometown, from where I’m from, so that was a major cultural shock for me. But apart from that, the transition seemed to be very smooth, everybody seems to be very nice, and very sweet, and very open here. That’s one thing that strikes me the most. So the transition hasn’t been difficult and that’s one of the reasons, and the second reason is; I’m actually, I actually come from a professional environment where I worked for three years in an IT industry, so I’ve been around people and my mode of communication has been English all through it and even at school and college level I have taken up English as my primary subject as well. So I don’t think the transition has made much of a difference to me so its going great here.
* It was actually easy since the UNT systems are almost like 99% of them are automated and its all digitalized everywhere, so…and I have been from a computer science background, so I kind of find the transition to be very smooth. And to be really realistic, I don’t have any paper textbooks at home, the physical books, but I always refer to the online PDF or any electronic resources for that matter. So I think that’s one thing for that matter. And the transition to come back to my studies from work as you asked, I think that hasn’t been that difficult for me either because I’ve always been a person who’s been open to learning anytime of the day. Even at work, even though I knew what exactly I had to do I always used to kind of go out of the way and kind of learn new things and keep myself in that student study mode of the aspect there. So I think the transition hasn’t been all that difficult.

What information were you able to acquire?

* A great deal of information I got from my sister because she study at UNT and she graduated from UNT as well. So she was the primary source of information for me to see where exactly is what, and whom you’re supposed to contact in case of certain things. Apart from that I did check out on the UNT university website, so that gave me a lot of information as to where I might have to converge my way of research, or…exactly what I need to look in. So be it the department, or be it any other facilities that I’m interested in, or be it…especially when it comes to finding opportunities or facilities, which we wouldn’t be piorly informed about. So I think…and the staff and UNT, I think they have been very well interacting to via e-mails before I could come here, so I think the process of interacting them via e-mail communication was really good. As a constant thing going on so it didn’t feel much of a long distance communication or something like that..

How good is the website?

* As per the information of the website, but there were certain instances where I’d hit a page and it didn’t lead me anywhere or it lead me to a blank page, which I kind of got frustrated about, but then I just traverse back and saw if I was just following the exact route as mentioned. But it eventually led me to a blank page at the end of it. There were just minor instances of such things, apart form that, the information was very extensive on the website. It’s just that the people have to have patience to kind of dig in through each and every tab that’s open there.
* The too much information would actually come in when you speak about people who don’t know about UNT, so that would help them. You just have to know exactly what the university is doing and how its been throughout the years, so hence the long list of information is there. But somebody like my sister who studied already here, she would give a brief explanation of how it works here. So I think the lot of information should be mandatory. Just that the patience level should be high for you to read through it.

What are you looking to achieve from college experience?

* That’s slightly difficult to answer, but I’m actually looking at…overall I’m just aiming at meeting different people and having to interact with them. Because I want grow my network; not just at professional level, but I would want to have people, and be around people who come from various domains across. This is something, being with people around is what I looked at, looked upon at. So interacting with a lot of people here, having to grow my network, and being in good terms with people around and getting a sense of the culture around is what I’m actually looking forward too here.
* Probably yes because we are into a totally new education system altogether so here…let be open…here the entire semester, the performance throughout the semester is actually taken into consideration. Whether you have your assignments, multiple quizzes and project works and all that. But back in my home country they consider what you do at the final exam level. They don’t take into account your performance throughout the semester. So adapting to the busy schedule, running schedule here, assignment submissions; it’s that multiple submissions overlap on the same due date, so that’s kind of difficult to kind of fit in at the right point of time, but it just takes it’s own sweet time.
* No, no, no. It’s not even about the work load, it’s that the due dates kind of overlap for two or three different courses and it’s just that you have to toggle your mind between all the three course and try to finish it up all at the same time, so that what is the problem.

What extra-curricular are you involved with?

* Coming to extracurricular activities I’ve been a sports person, I’ve been a volleyball player. The only drawback for me to not continue to play volleyball is the company that I haven’t found yet right now, so I’m just waiting for people to turn up, or whenever I meet people I ask them, ‘do you play any sports?’, and I hope that there answer is going to be volleyball but it doesn’t happen. I kind of try to give it a shot of whatever is thrown at me, be it different sports for that matter. I just do want to try, but my interest lies somewhere else, but it just doesn’t get my time.