

Graduate Student Spotlight



Elizabeth Unni

PhD - Pharmaceutical Socioeconomics

*BS, Pharmacy - The University of Iowa
MBA, - The University of Iowa*

**Winner of Honorable Mention in the
Biological & Health Sciences Division at the
2007 James F. Jakobsen Graduate
Conference**

Please describe your thesis project in a short sentence.

Developing a new typology of medication non-adherence and understanding the predictors of various types of medication non-adherence

How did you decide to go to graduate school?

When I was getting my MBA, I became friends with a few students who were in the PhD program in Pharmacy Administration. My interactions with them gave me some idea of healthcare research. Later, while working as an intern pharmacist with CVS, I noticed the importance of pharmaceutical care services and felt the need to learn more about it and hence decided to go to graduate school.

What made you decide to go to graduate school at Iowa?

I was interested in joining a reputed graduate program that was deeply involved with research in pharmaceutical care services. My research among graduate schools led me to the pharmacy school at Iowa which is well known for its graduate program and faculty in the area of pharmaceutical care services. Going over the graduate school website and the credentials and research activities of the faculty, it did not take me long to decide to apply to this school.

What are your long-term goals beyond your graduate degree?

To become a good researcher and work for various health care projects in the developing countries.

How has being a graduate student at Iowa prepared you to achieve those goals?

The graduate program in pharmaceutical socioeconomics at the University of Iowa is a wonderful program in developing strong research skills among its students. The department has equipped me with a strong theoretical background in addition to exposing me to different research areas through various faculty.

You are a winner of one of the top awards at the Jakobsen Conference in a previous year. What did you enjoy most about the Jakobsen Conference experience?

The conference provides a wonderful opportunity for seasoned as well as first-time researchers to showcase their research as well as observe research by other students and peers. It also gives a wonderful feeling to be a part of a great University. What I enjoyed most about this conference was the healthy competition among students from different research streams and the ability to interact with them.

What are some of your interests outside of school?

Reading, traveling, meeting new people

Hometown: Aluva, Kerala, India

Advisor: Karen Farris

Are there any particular challenges you've faced as a graduate student at Iowa?

The challenge I faced the most was being away from my home and family. At times, I underwent a lot of stress and during those times wished that my family was with me.

Do you have a particular mentor who has played an important role in the development of your thesis or your career trajectory?

Dr. Karen Farris

Please note any significant honors you've received .

2004 – Recipient of Department Fellowship in Division of Clinical and Administrative Pharmacy, University of Iowa, 2006 – Received first place for paper submitted to the Jakobsen Conference in March 2006, 2006 – Finalist for Wiederholt podium presentation at the Midwest Social and Administrative Pharmacy Conference, University of Minnesota, Minnesota in July 2006, 2007 – Received Honorable mention for the paper submitted to the Jakobsen Conference in March 2007

