

Visiting professor Nuria Alonso Garcia from USA Providence College: 'I learnt a lot of valuable information at SPbPU'

The professor from the Providence College (Providence RI, USA) Nuria Alonso Garcia has come to Peter the Great St. Petersburg Polytech University for the third time. According to Polytech students Nuria is an open-hearted person. Nuria says that she is charmed by Saint-Petersburg: she likes walking along the embankments and exploring the greatest architecture of the city on the Neva river. What did the professor Garcia learn from Polytech students? Why does she love St. Petersburg metro (subway),. What is globalistics and digital storytelling? You may found out more about all this in the interview with the professor.



- Nuria, what subjects do you teach in the USA?

- I teach globalistics in the Providence College. This science is about common to mankind worldwide problematic issues and about their interrelations. This program is designed to cultivate open-mindedness and perceptivity to other cultures among students and develop ability and wiliness to be engaged with civic activities useful for society, and sole large-scale problems.

- What made you to come to St. Petersburg?

- I was awarded with the Fulbright program grant for teaching in Russia in 2014. I've been always interested in exploring more about Eastern Europe, particularly about Russia, and living in entirely social environment and learning new foreign language – as a matter of fact I didn't speak Russian before.

- Do you remember your first impression about Polytech?

- I was really happy to see nature on the university campus. I like walking in a park, and watching how students fuss and hurry to their lectures. I love learning culture of Russian students.



- What are your outcomes of teaching at SPbPU?

- The most valuable outcomes have been always deriving from Polytech students. The university is developing students' critical thinking. Lots of students show good abilities to analyze cultural trends, language culture and global problems from different points of view. I do appreciate their foreign language skills and willingness to expand their outlook beyond a classroom. They are very trustful and believe me as a process manager, and they are still quite encouraged to cooperate. After all, I think, our interaction changed a lot in us.

- Please, tell us more about the course that you are delivering at Polytech

- I'm trying to get students familiar with basic principles and approaches in linguistics, inspire them to learn new languages, encourage their keen perceptiveness of other cultures, language structures and images, analytical skills for social linguistic features. It is awesome when students are able to compare and set against cultural norms of their country and the countries they are studying. At my classes we discuss the topics of society, power of authorities, solidarity, intercultural literacy, cultural heritage. I also involve them into such processes as digital storytelling.

- Digital storytelling? What is it?

- In general – it is a way of how to deliver the information with the use of modern visual aids. We normally resort to infographics, photo and video. It allows elaborating the topic and going deeper into details, make it more interesting and useful.

- What else can you tell us about our students?

- The first what I've noticed is that your students are not confident and cautious when expressing their opinions. Probably, it's due to their fear of making mistakes because they are extremely prudent and striving for perfect answers. I always remind them that mistakes are natural part of an educational process.



- It's not your first time in St. Petersburg. Are there any places which you like best?

- AN atmosphere in your city is just marvelous. I fond of arts, music, energy of streets. Architecture of St. Petersburg is stunning – palaces and cathedrals can thrill anyone. I'm also inspired with an observation how newly-born tendencies are displayed in the city through arts and business projects: for example, loft-projects «Etazhi», «Tsiferblat» or «Golytsyn loft». I love the city metro as well. I have recently started my creativity project about this type of transport. Its name is 'Passangers: Он называется «Пассажиры: metro system mapping». We have our own web-site where each person may explore metro systems of different cities.

- What can you say about communication with Russians?

- I consider Russians to be thoughtful and loyal. You are the community with extremely high sustainability to any stressful exposure. I'm really astonished with such national features.

- Nuria, we thank you very much for your interview and wish all the best to your projects!

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