Sonal Bhadauriya is currently studying to earn her doctorate in Polymer Engineering under Dr. Alamgir Karim. Read more about Sonal and her academic journey in CPSPE.

How does your major fit into your life’s plan?
Polymer engineering is one of the most versatile majors and I say this because it routinely requires me to visualize how a plate of cooked spaghetti would behave as it is processed further. Being a doctoral student in polymer engineering requires me to encounter multi-faceted problems ranging from instrument troubleshooting to working on algorithms required for high-throughput data processing. I’m sure all the skills I have accumulated here while pursuing my Ph.D., I can apply later in my professional life.

What have you learned that makes a difference to you?
Collaborating with scientists all over the country has transformed me into a well-rounded researcher and I feel like my capability to work in a team has increased manifold.

Why did you choose The University of Akron, specifically the College of Polymer Science and Polymer Engineering?
The College of Polymer Science and Polymer Engineering at The University of Akron is one of the most well renowned colleges for pursuing graduate studies in the field of polymers. I wanted to pursue my Ph.D. in this field after my undergraduate degree in Chemical Engineering and Akron was the place to be, as recommended by my mentor back in India.

Tell us about your experience in an internship or research project.
I recently worked at NIST in Gaithersburg, MD for almost 2 months, and that was the most enriching research experience I have ever had. I worked on custom instruments, troubleshooting so many different aspects of the problem and got to work with some of the best material researchers in the world. What more can a graduate student ask for?

Who is your favorite professor or staff member and why?
My favorite CPSPE staff member is Diana Woolf. She always has the biggest smile on her face, and she is the most driven person I have seen. She loves what she does and makes our college so much safer. I have gone to her with problems nowhere related to safety and she has always lent a helping hand. And I love her emails, they are always so funny!!

What are your plans after graduation?
I want to work as a process/research engineer developing technologies and production strategies for devices of the future.