

## Dr. Wayne Arnold M.A. English Language & Literature, 2007

By Lindsey Houchin & Max Chambers

### Associate Professor, University of Kitakyushu

*“Encouraging students to think creatively and look at things from a different perspective has always been one of my joys of teaching.”*



Dr. Wayne Arnold earned his master’s degree in English Language & Literature from Western Kentucky University in 2007. Arnold also earned an MBA from Wright State University in 2001. He simultaneously earned a [PhD in American Literature](#) and his third master’s degree in [Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages](#) (TESOL) from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, graduating with both in 2013. Arnold is currently a tenured Associate Professor of American Literature at the [University of Kitakyushu](#) in Japan.

Arnold earned a bachelor’s degree in Electrical Engineering in 1999, then worked as a design engineer for two years before pursuing his MBA. Realizing he was not passionate about either career direction, he joined the U.S. Peace Corps, where he found his calling to English. “As a volunteer living in the Kingdom of Tonga, I spent a lot of time reading the literature I had always wanted to read,” said Arnold. “I also became good friends with Dr. Tony Paquin. After we finished the Peace Corps, Tony was hired at WKU [in the Psychology department]. So, when I came back to the states to start pursuing the next stage of my life, WKU looked pretty welcoming.”

Arnold found the sudden switch to English coursework challenging but rewarding. “Since I came from a completely different background, I had to take four literature survey courses the first semester,” said Arnold. “These courses were crucial to building my foundation and exposing me to the world of literary studies. They also helped me decide where to put my focus in terms of what specific area in American literature I wanted to research.” Dr. Wes Berry’s passion for English further encouraged Arnold to pursue teaching English.

Arnold credits much of his success at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette to the “rigorous curriculum” at WKU. “The department really helped bring out the strong points of my academic interests,” said Arnold. He built on his master’s degree from WKU by teaching in Japan through GEOS Languages PLUS and in Cameroon with [United Action for Children](#). After obtaining his PhD and TESOL master’s degree in 2013, Arnold taught a summer intensive English course at Harvard University, then accepted a teaching position at Kansai Gaidai University in Osaka, Japan. In 2014, he was offered his current Associate Professor position at the University of Kitakyushu.

Arnold enjoys designing interesting course options such as *Urban Studies* and *Travel Cultures* for his students. He also teaches *American Drama*, *Media Studies*, *American Studies Overview*, and a four-semester seminar on the elements of the American Dream. “Encouraging students to think creatively and look at things from a different perspective has always been one of my joys of teaching,” said Arnold.

In his free time, Arnold enjoys exploring Japan through sea kayaking and hammock camping. “Japan is a natural wonderland with a plethora of options,” said Arnold. He is also an amateur chef, and he enjoys reading Lovecraftian horror stories when he isn’t reading academic literature.

Arnold encourages English students to actively pursue conference and publishing opportunities. “Make sure you have at least one publication before you graduate,” said Arnold. “Find an online journal seeking book reviewers. There are plenty.” He also recommends that students seek out advice and mentorship from their professors like he did. “An active professor is involved in their field and can see areas where you, as a student, excel,” said Arnold. “Listen to their advice, and then take it to the next stage for yourself.”

