

## Dr. Samuel Stinson M.A. Literature, 2012

*By Melissa J. Rush & Madelyn Chambers*

### Assistant Professor, Minot State University

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Dr. Samuel Stinson graduated from Western Kentucky University in 2003 with a BS in Computer Science, double majoring in English Writing. Stinson also earned a BA in Biblical Studies from Florida College in 2006. He returned to WKU for his master's degree in Literature, graduating in 2012. In 2018, he earned his [PhD in Rhetoric and Composition](#) from Ohio University. Stinson is currently an Assistant Professor of English at [Minot State University](#), a public university located in Minot, North Dakota.

Stinson chose WKU for his BS and MA because WKU was like a second home. "Ultimately, I chose to attend WKU because the school had already been a significant factor in my life and development," said Stinson. "Having lived in Bowling Green, many of my friends already attended WKU. While in high school, I would often join my college-age friends as they studied in the Helm-Cravens Library."

Stinson believes that his professors at WKU played a critical role in his success, both as a graduate student and as an English professor. In particular, Professor Walker Rutledge helped Stinson develop his critical thinking skills through repeated exposure to great literature. "My greatest learning experience at WKU during my undergraduate years was in taking [Professor Rutledge's] literature class on Hemingway and Faulkner," said Stinson. "This class gave me the opportunity, along with my peers, to travel to Hemingway's home in Oak Park, Illinois, and to Faulkner's home in Oxford, Mississippi. As happens in many experiences of this kind, the students who traveled together during the trip formed a social bond that transcended the class."

After obtaining his BS from WKU, Stinson took several years before deciding to return for his master's in Literature. "After years of working toward a degree, there are often indicators for future paths that may be discovered," said Stinson. "I began to reflect on

these indicators and eventually realized that teaching, working with students, was what I wanted to do.” He obtained his MA in 2012, then began pursuing his PhD and working as a Teaching Assistant at Ohio University. In 2018, he earned his PhD and moved from Ohio to West Virginia to teach English for Shepherd University. “Within composition studies, a willingness to relocate still seems to lead to impressive opportunities for jobs,” said Stinson. That willingness led Stinson to accept an Assistant Professor position in North Dakota, where he moved in 2019.

At Minot State University, Stinson mainly teaches composition courses, as well as a junior-level Professional Writing course. He hopes to offer courses focused on technology in the future, to prepare students to engage with emerging forms of writing. “While a MA student at WKU, I had hoped to have such an opportunity to continue researching, writing, and teaching,” said Stinson.

In his free time, Stinson enjoys spending time outdoors walking, biking, and enjoying nature. He also has a passion for video games, which were the subject of his dissertation.

Stinson knows that the job market in higher education can be tough, but he encourages students to follow the path that they are most passionate about. “Be open,” said Stinson. “Try new classes and innovative approaches to learning. Discover what indicators you have for future paths and reflect on them. Branch out by inquiring of your roots. Sometimes the most direct path is the one that first veers.”

