



Dr. Dawn Winters, M.A. Class of 2009

By Melissa J. Rush

Western Kentucky University Senior Director of Academics English as a Second Language

“A long time ago, I learned that women from all over the world possess strength and wisdom that is often times negated, objectified, or reduced. You taught me, and now the world, that the stereotypes that precede you do not define you. Your stories should empower you and others to navigate this world with confidence, wisdom, and grace. Masha ‘Allah! “

Dr. Dawn Winters made the decision to begin her undergraduate studies at Western Kentucky University when her family moved to Bowling Green for her mother’s job with General Motors. After graduating with a B.A. in English and Applied Arts in 2007, she continued her education by receiving her M.A. in English Language and Literature, General in 2009. During her academic career, Winters was the recipient of the Willson Wood award and the Potter College Adjunct award.

Winters began her professional career at WKU teaching English in Cherry Hall. From the connections made through the English as a Second Language program, Winters made the move to the International College and later received her Doctor of Education in 2015 and become the Senior Director of Academics for WKU’s English as a Second Language Institute.

WKU and eleven additional universities work together under the ESLi program and as the Senior Director of Academics it is Winters’ responsibility to coordinate curriculum materials, oversee committees within the academics for the international students, and ensure that all schools have the proper accreditation needed for all schools. She still continues teaching English 100, 200, 300, and 302 on a rotating basis for Potter College.

Winters uses her ability to critically read, write, and communicate on a daily basis within the International College. She does advise English majors to “hide your writing skills from your friends, or they’ll always ask you to be the editor.” She also noted she is an

avid reader in her personal time, but “is constantly trying to repeat the university experience” in her book club. Her friends also find her to be highly critical of movies adapted from books.

She had another very good tip for current students she received from Dr. Joe Hardin in the idea “to practice saying I’ve not read that yet.” She finds that students often are afraid to open themselves to criticism if they don’t know a particular book or theory. She also suggested “don’t read Derrida, read about Derrida.” Winters credited many of the English faculty with her success throughout each of her degrees, but gave special thanks to Dr. Barbara Burch in her doctoral thesis.