

Dr. Alex Poole, WKU Modern Languages Department Head

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Written: Spring 2022

“Students are very dynamic. Most are double-majoring, working, and doing interesting projects. I’m impressed and encouraged by the careers they pursue after graduation.”



Dr. Alex Poole was recently appointed as chair of the Department of Modern Languages in spring 2022. He is a strong advocate for language studies, and he has a passion for students, languages, and research. He is excited for this opportunity and for the future of the department.

Dr. Poole finished his doctorate at Oklahoma State University in 2003 before coming to WKU. He has taught for the Department of English since his arrival in 2003, and he has served as Interim Department Head for the Department of Modern Languages since fall 2020. He says he always knew he wanted to go into teaching and research, so he took a fairly traditional route to get here.

Over the past 18 years, Dr. Poole has been researching college students’ reading strategies for academic texts. He says, “The results paint a fairly clear picture: stronger readers are better at figuring out unknown vocabulary, engage in more selective reading, and more actively take notes while they are reading.” In October 2020, Dr. Poole became a published author. His book, *Learning a Foreign Language: Understanding the Fundamentals of Language*, is designed to help language students understand the process of learning a language and give them tools to help them reach their goals.

In the classroom, Dr. Poole has three goals: “Improve students’ critical thinking skills, make them better writers, and give them the ability to learn by themselves.” He hopes to pass these qualities on to his students, but his students have an impact on him as well. He says he is impressed and encouraged by students in the department, and he describes them as “dynamic.” Currently, Dr. Poole is teaching History of the English Language, but he also teaches grammar and teaching methods courses.

Outside of the classroom, Dr. Poole enjoys playing tennis and reading. He and his wife have two teenage daughters, and he also loves spending time with his family. Additionally, he is currently working on a project about students' knowledge of punctuation, which he says is "essential for effective writing."

His advice for Modern Languages students is, "Don't get discouraged! The process is difficult, but you will get there. Also, don't be afraid to talk. You have to take risks, so go for it! Finally, keep in mind that you are obtaining a skill which few possess."

