

# Yertty VanderMolen, WKU Professor of Spanish

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*“Speak—connect yourself! If you want to watch something on Netflix or YouTube, do it in Spanish.”*

Yertty VanderMolen, originally from Peru, is a Spanish instructor on the Hill with a wide array of past experiences and an organizer of many on-campus events related to the Spanish language and culture. Originally an English teacher in her home country, she came to the United States and served as an instructor at Luther College in Iowa for nine years. Today, she is an active part of the WKU Spanish faculty and frequently teaches Spanish 101 and 102 courses, designs cultural events, and works closely with the WKU Spanish Club.



VanderMolen’s teaching philosophy aligns with the advice that she possesses for all language majors. During her recent interview about her teaching style, she said “My major advice for students is to speak—connect yourself! If you want to watch something on Netflix or YouTube, do it in Spanish.” As such, VanderMolen’s classes take a communicative approach to learning Spanish where the focus is speaking, along with practice in the three other skills—reading, writing, and listening. VanderMolen uses various styles and resources to augment her students’ skills, including using role playing, interviews, authentic materials, total physical response (TPR), and dances in her classroom. She also uses comprehensible input (CI), movie talks, and free voluntary reading (FVR) in her classes to augment students’ interest in the language.

Currently, VanderMolen is working on an event in April 2022 centering on *Afrolatinidad*—or African Americans in the Latinx community along with a whole slate of cultural events with Spanish Club and other organizations on campus (including the Intercultural Student Engagement Center and Global Learning). Her identity on campus as an instructor of Spanish language and culture is strong and her students would call her approachable, energetic, passionate, enthusiastic, and fun. It is a pleasure

to have VanderMolen on the Hill and we look forward to her continued contributions to augmenting students' linguistic and cultural awareness.

