

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

By Lindsey Houchin

Associate Professor The University of Kitakyushu

As a tenured Associate Professor of American Studies at [The University of Kitakyushu](#) in Japan, Western Kentucky University alumnus Dr. Wayne E. Arnold



combines his scholarly research focus in modern American literature with his career interest in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL).

“Encouraging students to think creatively and look at things from a different perspective has always been one of my joys of teaching, and it holds true in Japanese classrooms,” he said. For example, Arnold will lead a seminar in which students learn English while studying New York City-themed literature.

In Japan, Arnold experiences “a significantly higher level of respect for researchers,” including those in the humanities. “It is rewarding to feel that the university respects and financially supports productive output,” he noted.

After earning an MA in English at WKU in 2007, Arnold completed an MA in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) and a PhD in American literature at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette in 2013. He credits much of his success to the “rigorous curriculum” at WKU, as “the department really helped bring out the strong points of my academic interests.”

Though a master’s degree in English or TEFL enables academics to teach as contracted instructors in Japan, Arnold said a PhD is usually required to secure a tenured faculty position. Before working as a tenured associate professor, Arnold was a contracted assistant professor of TEFL at Kansai Gaidai University in Japan.

Arnold built upon his graduate degrees with international teaching experience in Asia and Africa, teaching in Japan through [GEOS Languages PLUS](#) and in

Cameroon with [United Action for Children](#). He also taught a summer intensive English course at Harvard University, as well as completing a French immersion program in Canada.

For scholars of English to succeed in the competitive job market, Arnold recommends that students supplement their studies with journalism or TESOL courses. He also encourages scholars of English to actively pursue conference and publishing opportunities, adding that he has found “great value in writing book reviews” for print and online scholarly journals.

