

Dr. Derick Strode **B.A. English, Literature, 2003**

M.A. English, 2012

By Sarah K. Miller, Max Chambers, & Christina West

Director for Regional Campuses **WKU**



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but we land in great places.”*

Dr. Derick Strode graduated from Western Kentucky University in 2003 with his bachelor’s degree in Literature, and he obtained his master’s degree in English from WKU in 2012. He also completed his Doctor of Education degree at WKU in 2016. In the fall of 2021, Strode became the Director for Regional Campuses at WKU.

Since obtaining his first degree, Strode has held four different positions on WKU’s campus. Working for the university, Strode toured Kentucky as an Admissions Counselor, then worked as an International Student Advisor from 2007-2008. “I worked to orient international students to WKU and American academic life, put on international themed programs on campus, and handled necessary immigration documents for the students,” said Strode.

From 2008 to 2021, Strode was the Assistant Director of Academic Services at The Gatton Academy, a two-year residential STEM school for gifted high school juniors and seniors located in WKU’s Florence Schneider Hall. “My role involved working with students above and beyond their curriculum in academic pursuits,” said Strode. “We had robust programs in student research, study abroad, summer internships, cultural language study, and scholarships. I worked with our students on all of these fronts. Among the fun things I did, I planned a literature study abroad program each summer with WKU English faculty.”

Strode’s time in the English department helped him develop the skills he needed for his position leading academics at The Gatton Academy. “My English degrees shaped me to

think differently,” said Strode. “I used my English degrees every day as I worked with students, teaching them how best to communicate their ideas and experiences in writing as they apply for scholarships and internships. I helped students articulate their experiences in ways that tell micro-stories, are informative, and interesting.”

Though Strode felt passionate about working at The Gatton Academy, he decided it was time to elevate his career to a leadership role. “I was there for 13 years, and it was hard to leave. In the end, I needed a chance to take on new challenges for me, and I needed to grow and be a leader of something myself,” said Strode.

Currently, Strode is the Director of Campuses at WKU. He oversees the staff at WKU’s [regional campuses](#) in Glasgow, Elizabethtown, Owensboro, Fort Knox, and Somerset. “Sometimes there might be reasons that students can’t leave their local area to pursue higher education,” said Strode. “We are out there for those students who can’t move away from home for the college-going experience.”

Strode is enjoying this new position and the way he has been able to help students feel more connected to the university. “The students are really grateful to have the opportunity to get a bachelor’s degree or a master’s degree. I have a love for WKU, so part of it is helping them go all in as a WKU student,” Strode stated.

Strode is married to fellow WKU English department alum Cameron Carr-Calvert, who graduated with an MA in English in 2013. “We have one dog, one cat, and a happy home,” said Strode.

Strode’s advice to current students is to appreciate every experience in their undergraduate years. “Enjoy the days in Cherry Hall,” said Strode. “How fun it is to be an English major! Our direction upon graduation is not clear, but we land in great places. English majors must understand that we can tackle many, many jobs, and we are great fits to create and lead an array of interesting organizations.”

