

James H. McGavran III

Associate Professor of Russian
Department of Modern Languages and Literatures
Kenyon College
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Gambier, Ohio 43022

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EDUCATION

Princeton University	2002–2008	Princeton, NJ
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- ◇ Ph.D., Slavic Languages and Literatures, 2008. Dissertation: *Vladimir Mayakovsky and the Poetics of Humor*. Advisor: Michael Wachtel.
- ◇ M.A., Slavic Languages and Literatures, 2005.

Moscow State University	2005–2006	Moscow, Russian Federation
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- ◇ Fulbright Research Fellowship to Russia, affiliated with Moscow State University's School of Journalism and the State Mayakovsky Museum in Moscow.

Charles University	2003	Prague, Czech Republic
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- ◇ Czech language summer study program.

Kenyon College	1998–2002	Gambier, Ohio
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- ◇ B.A., Modern Languages and Literatures (Russian and French), 2002. 2nd in class.
- ◇ Senior Honors Thesis: *Translating Contemporary Russian Poetry: Elena Shvarts and Sergei Stratanovsky*. High Honors.

TEACHING POSITIONS

Kenyon College	2015–present	Gambier, Ohio
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Department of Modern Languages and Literatures

Associate Professor of Russian (tenure awarded 2019), Assistant Professor of Russian (2015–2019)

COURSES TAUGHT

- ◇ INTENSIVE INTRODUCTORY RUSSIAN: First-year language course taught using the Kenyon Intensive Language Model. Textbook: *Troika* with supplements.
- ◇ INTERMEDIATE RUSSIAN: Second-year language course incorporating literary texts, music, and film. Textbooks: *Nachalo: Book Two*, *Golosa: Book 2*, *Stories from Today's Russia*, and Chekhov's «Дама с собачкой».
- ◇ SURVEY OF 19TH-CENTURY RUSSIAN LITERATURE IN TRANSLATION: Featuring works by Pushkin, Gogol, Lermontov, Dostoevsky, Leskov, Tolstoy, and Chekhov.

- ◇ RUSSIAN POETRY AND POETICS: Hybrid language/literature class featuring readings in the original by Lomonosov, Pushkin, Lermontov, Tiutchev, Fet, and others.
- ◇ ADVANCED RUSSIAN: Third-year language course incorporating literary texts, regular student presentations on culture, and weekly conversation hour with the Russian Fulbright Language Teaching Assistant.
- ◇ LAUGHTER THROUGH TEARS: THE COMIC TRADITION IN RUSSIAN LITERATURE: A survey of humorous and satirical literature by Fonvizin, Gogol, Khvoshchinskaya, Sologub, Ilf and Petrov, Kharms, Bulgakov, Zoshchenko, and Venedikt Erofeev, with theoretical texts by Bergson and Bakhtin.

University of Pennsylvania	2014–2015	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
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Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures
Lecturer in Foreign Languages

COURSES TAUGHT

- ◇ ELEMENTARY RUSSIAN I AND II: First-year language course for non-heritage learners. Penn language faculty develop all teaching materials for the elementary level.
- ◇ INTERMEDIATE RUSSIAN I AND II: Second-year language course for non-heritage learners. Textbook: *B nymu* with supplements.
- ◇ FROM THE OTHER SHORE: RUSSIA AND THE WEST: Interdisciplinary seminar on perceptions of the West through roughly one thousand years of Russian cultural history.
- ◇ MADNESS AND MADMEN IN RUSSIAN CULTURE: Interdisciplinary course exploring the theme of madness in Russian literature and the arts from the medieval period through the October Revolution of 1917.

Rutgers University	2013–2014	New Brunswick, New Jersey
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Department of German, Russian, and East European Languages and Literatures
Instructor of Russian

COURSES TAUGHT

- ◇ FIRST-YEAR RUSSIAN: Introductory language course for non-heritage learners. Textbook: *Beginner's Russian* with supplements.
- ◇ FIRST-YEAR RUSSIAN LANGUAGE LAB: Technological and multimedia component of first-year Russian course, met once per week for 80 minutes.
- ◇ AFTER THE HAMMER & SICKLE: RUSSIAN CULTURE SINCE THE FALL OF THE SOVIET UNION: A survey of contemporary Russian culture including literature (Pelevin, Tolstaya, Petrushevskaya, Ulitskaya, Sorokin, Akunin), journalism (Masha Gessen, Politkovskaya), film (Sokurov, Lungin, Fedorchenko, Loznitsa), and popular music (Zvuki Mu, Auktyon, Leningrad).

- ◇ LAUGHTER THROUGH TEARS: THE COMIC TRADITION IN RUSSIAN LITERATURE: A survey of humorous and satirical literature by Fonvizin, Gogol, Sologub, Ilf and Petrov, Kharms, Bulgakov, Zoshchenko, and Venedikt Erofeev, with theoretical texts by Bergson and Bakhtin.
- ◇ RUSSIAN POETRY AND POETICS: a close-reading course featuring texts in the original by Lomonosov, Derzhavin, Pushkin, Lermontov, Tiutchev, Fet, Blok, Mayakovsky, Akhmatova, Mandelstam, Pasternak, Tsvetaeva, and Brodsky.

St. Olaf College	2012–2013	Northfield, Minnesota
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Department of Russian Language and Area Studies
Visiting Assistant Professor of Russian

COURSES TAUGHT

- ◇ BEGINNING RUSSIAN II: Second-semester Russian (two sections). Textbook: *Nachalo: Book One* with supplements.
- ◇ INTERMEDIATE RUSSIAN I: Third-semester Russian (two sections). Textbook: *Nachalo: Book Two* with supplements.
- ◇ INTRODUCTION TO RUSSIAN LITERATURE I: A writing-intensive survey of 19th-century Russian literature in translation featuring works by Pushkin, Lermontov, Gogol, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, and Chekhov.
- ◇ SUBVERSIVE SOVIET FICTION: A survey of Soviet-era fiction in translation featuring works by Zamyatin, Olesha, Ilf and Petrov, Platonov, Kharms, Bulgakov, Venedikt Erofeev, and Petrushevskaya.

Kenyon College	2010–2012	Gambier, Ohio
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Department of Modern Languages and Literatures
Visiting Assistant Professor of Russian (2011–2012), Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow in Russian (2010–2011)

COURSES TAUGHT

- ◇ INTENSIVE INTRODUCTORY RUSSIAN: First-year language course taught using the Kenyon Intensive Language Model. Textbook: *Troika* with supplements.
- ◇ INTERMEDIATE RUSSIAN: Second-year language course incorporating literary texts, music, and film. Textbooks: *Nachalo: Book Two*, *Stories from Today's Russia*, and Chekhov's «Дамa с собачкой».
- ◇ SURVEY OF RUSSIAN LITERATURE IN TRANSLATION: Featuring works by Gogol, Lermontov, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Chekhov, Sologub, Olesha, Platonov, and Venedikt Erofeev.

Princeton University	2005–2008	Princeton, New Jersey
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Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures
Assistant Instructor, Preceptor

COURSES TAUGHT

- ◇ HISTORY OF RUSSIAN LITERATURE TO 1860 (3 SECTIONS): Survey of literature in translation, featuring works by Karamzin, Pushkin, Gogol, and Dostoevsky. Professor: Caryl Emerson.
- ◇ INTRODUCTORY RUSSIAN (3 SECTIONS): Intensive first-year Russian language course. Professor: Frank McLellan. Textbook: *Live from Moscow* with supplements.

GRANTS & AWARDS

- ◇ April 10, 2018. Recipient of 2018 Junior Faculty Trustee Teaching Excellence Award, Kenyon College.
- ◇ May, 2014. Inducted as a permanent faculty member into Dobro Slovo, National Slavic Honor Society.
- ◇ 2014. *Selected Poems* (2013), trans. James McGavran, nominated by Northwestern University Press for the 2014 Griffin Poetry Prize.
- ◇ 2014. *Selected Poems* (2013), trans. James McGavran, nominated by Northwestern University Press for the 2014 American Literary Translators' Association's National Translation Award.
- ◇ 2010–2011. Mellon Postdoctoral Fellowship, Kenyon College.
- ◇ 2007. Summer grant for travel and study in Moscow. Princeton University Graduate School.
- ◇ 2005–2006. Fulbright Research Fellowship, Moscow, for dissertation research at the State Mayakovsky Museum and collaboration with scholars at Moscow State University and the Gorky Institute of World Literature.
- ◇ 2003. Summer grants for travel and study in Prague and St. Petersburg. Princeton University Graduate School.
- ◇ Russian Prize, Kenyon College Department of Modern Languages and Literatures, 1999 and 2002.
- ◇ French Prize, Kenyon College Department of Modern Languages and Literatures, 2002.
- ◇ Phi Beta Kappa, inducted Fall 2001.

PUBLICATIONS

BOOK

- ◇ Mayakovsky, Vladimir. 2013. *Selected Poems*. Translated, edited, and annotated by James McGavran. Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press.

PEER-REVIEWED ARTICLES

- ◇ McGavran, James. 2019. "Comic Confrontations with Tradition: Three Poems by Maiakovskii." *Slavic and East European Journal* 63 (3): 388–407.
- ◇ McGavran, James. 2014. "How to Sharpen Words: Mayakovsky's Machines of Poetic Humor." *Slavonica* 20 (1): 17–33.
- ◇ McGavran, James. 2013. "Laughing like a Child in Two Mayakovsky Poems." *Slavic and East European Journal* 57 (2): 253–273.

ENCYCLOPEDIA ARTICLE

- ◇ McGavran, James. 2020. "It's Early to Rejoice': Vladimir Mayakovsky's Revolutions." *A Companion to World Literature*. Edited by Ken Seigneurie. West Sussex, United Kingdom: John Wiley & Sons: 3271–3280.

REVIEWS

- ◇ McGavran, James. 2019. Review of *Found Life: Poems, Stories, Comics, a Play, & an Interview* by Linor Goralik, edited by Ainsley Morse, Maria Vassileva, and Maya Vinokour. *Translation and Literature* 28: 134–139.
- ◇ McGavran, James. 2018. Review of *Oz Behind the Iron Curtain: Aleksandr Volkov and His Magic Land Series* by Erika Haber. *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* 43 (4): 491–493.
- ◇ McGavran, James. 2016. Review of *Silence and the Rest: Verbal Skepticism in Russian Poetry* by Sofya Khagi. *Modern Language Review* 111 (3): 912–913.
- ◇ McGavran, James, and Natalia Olshanskaya. 2010. Review of Henry M. Hoyt's translation of *Eugene Onegin: A Novel in Verse* by Alexander Pushkin. *Canadian Slavonic Papers* 52 (3–4): 439–440.

TRANSLATIONS

POETRY

- ◇ McGavran, James. 2019. "The Heavenly Language of Hellas: Pushkin's Elegiac Distichs." *Pushkin Review* | *Пушкинский вестник* 21: 213–224.
- ◇ Skidan, Aleksandr. 2019. "Three Poems." Translated by James McGavran. *Kenyon Review Online* [July/August](#).
- ◇ Abdullaev, Shamshad. 2018. "Zoom-Shots: Four Poems." Translated by Suzanna Frank, James McGavran, Kevin M. F. Platt, Ariel Resnikoff, Val Vinokur, and Michael Wachtel. *Common Knowledge* 24 (3): 464–473.
- ◇ Mayakovsky, Vladimir. 2014. "Mama and the Evening Killed by the Germans." Translated by James McGavran. *ЧтениюReadings* 8 (3): 122–123.

- ◇ In *Russian Writers on Translation: An Anthology*, edited by Brian Baer and Natalia Olshanskaya (Manchester, United Kingdom: St. Jerome, 2013):
 - ◆ Sumarokov, Aleksandr. “Epistle on the Russian Language.” 141.
 - ◆ Nekrasov, Nikolai. “A Business Conversation.” 141–142.
 - ◆ Mandelstam, Osip. “Tatars, Uzbeks, and Nentsy. . .” 143.
 - ◆ Tarkovskii, Arsenii. “The Translator.” 143.
 - ◆ Matveeva, Novella. “The Translator.” 143.
 - ◆ Neiman, Iulia. “A Translator to a Poet.” 144.
 - ◆ Martynov, Leonid. “Poets.” 144.
 - ◆ Marshak, Samuil. “1616–1949.” 145–146.
 - ◆ Pasternak, Boris. “For Paolo Iashvili.” 146.
- ◇ Shvarts, Elena. 2010. “A Selection of Poems by Elena Shvarts.” Translated by James McGavran. *Slavonica* 16 (2): 131–138.
- ◇ Shvarts, Elena. 2005. “A Portrait of the Blockade through Genre Painting, Still Life, and Landscape.” Translated by James McGavran. In *An Anthology of Contemporary Russian Women Poets*, edited by Valentina Polukhina and Daniel Weissbort, 168–170. Iowa City, Iowa: University of Iowa Press.
- ◇ Shvarts, Elena. 2002. “Free Ode to the Philosopher’s Stone of Petersburg (with two offshoots)” and “A Portrait of the Blockade through Genre, Still Life and Landscape.” Translated by James McGavran. In *Russian Women Poets | Modern Poetry in Translation*, no. 20, edited by Valentina Polukhina and Daniel Weissbort, 214–218. London: Kings College London.

PROSE

- ◇ Skidan, Aleksandr. 2020. “The Works and Days of Daniil Ivanovich.” Translated by James McGavran. Introduction by Matvei Yankelevich. *Common Knowledge* 26 (2): 333–352.
- ◇ Azadovsky, Mark K. 2018. “The Sources of Pushkin’s Fairy Tales.” Translated by James McGavran. *Pushkin Review | Пушкинский вестник* 20: 5–39.
- ◇ In *Russian Writers on Translation: An Anthology*, edited by Brian Baer and Natalia Olshanskaya (Manchester, United Kingdom: St. Jerome, 2013):
 - ◆ Tsar Peter I. “Edict 4438: On the Preparation of Translators of Books for Instruction in the Sciences.” 3.
 - ◆ Kantemir, Antiokh. “Foreword to the Epistles of Horace.” 3–4.
 - ◆ Lomonosov, Mikhail. “Russian Grammar.” 4–5.
 - ◆ Radishchev, Aleksandr. “A Journey from Petersburg to Moscow” (excerpt). 6.
 - ◆ Karamzin, Nikolai. “Letter to Ivan Dmitriev.” 8.
 - ◆ Zhukovskii, Vasilii. “Homer’s Odyssey. In Place of a Foreword.” 12–13.

- ♦ Gorkii, Maksim. “World Literature.” 65–66.
- ♦ Akhmadulina, Bella. “A Poem Offered for Translation.” 135–136.
- ♦ Shvarts, Elena. “A Few Thoughts on the Translation of Russian Verse.” 137–138.

PRESENTATIONS

- ◇ January 11, 2020. “Polyphonic Pushkin.” Princeton University. Presentation on my new translation initiative [Polyphonic Pushkin](#), with public reading of translations, for Pushkinalia 2020, an invitation-only workshop. Princeton, New Jersey.
- ◇ March 16 and 19, 2019. “Your Language My Ear Bilingual Public Readings.” Princeton University and the University of Pennsylvania Kelly Writers’ House. Public readings in connection with [Your Language, My Ear](#), an invitation-only symposium on poetic translation. Princeton, New Jersey, and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
- ◇ March 8, 2018. “Nabokov’s *Bend Sinister*.” Princeton University. Guest lecture for Olga P. Hasty’s undergraduate course on Vladimir Nabokov. Princeton, New Jersey.
- ◇ March 6, 2018. “A Productive Opening Idea: A Brief History of the Soviet Chess Movement.” Invited talk. Princeton University. Princeton, New Jersey.
- ◇ June 3, 2017. Position paper in response to Wai Chee Dimock’s “Infrastructure Art.” Planetary Roundtable Discussion, GLCA Mellon World Literature Symposium. Ann Arbor, Michigan.
- ◇ April 9, 2017. “Bromancing the Classics with Mayakovsky.” 2017 Midwest Slavic Conference. Columbus, Ohio.
- ◇ February 27, 2017. “The Soviet Chess School.” Invited talk for the Kenyon College Chess Club and Russian Club. Gambier, Ohio.
- ◇ April 10, 2016. “A Productive Opening Idea: Chess and Soviet Culture.” 2016 Midwest Slavic Conference. Columbus, Ohio.
- ◇ May 12, 2014. “Love Without Death: Mayakovsky’s “Tamara and the Demon.”” 2014 Penn Slavic Symposium: The Dangers and Pleasures of the Russian Love Lyric. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
- ◇ September 3, 2014. 15-Board Simultaneous Chess Exhibition for Penn Slavic Department. University of Pennsylvania. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
- ◇ January 10, 2014. “Making Comrades of the Classics: Mayakovsky’s Comic Confrontations with Tradition.” Early Soviet Literature and Film Panel, 2014 AATSEEL Conference. Chicago, Illinois.
- ◇ January 6, 2013. “The Last Place You’d Look: Humor in Mayakovsky’s Political *Poemy*.” Silver Age Poetry Panel, 2013 AATSEEL Conference. Boston, Massachusetts.

- ◇ April 13, 2012. “At the Top of *Whose* Voice? Translating Mayakovsky into English.” Invited talk. Davidson College. Davidson, North Carolina.
- ◇ January 6, 2012. “Laughter’s Lone Wolf: Public and Private Humor in Two Mayakovsky Poems.” Russian Futurism Panel, 2012 AATSEEL Conference. Seattle, Washington.
- ◇ April 15, 2011. “Vladimir Mayakovsky and the Poetics of Humor: An Introduction.” 20th-Century Poetry Panel, 2011 Midwest Slavic Conference. Columbus, Ohio.
- ◇ January 8, 2011. Panelist, Roundtable Discussion in Memory of Elena Shvarts. 2011 AATSEEL Conference. Pasadena, California.
- ◇ November 4, 2009. “Vladimir Mayakovsky and Russian Futurism.” Invited talk. University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Charlotte, North Carolina.
- ◇ November 26, 2007. “Dostoevsky’s *Notes from the Underground*.” Guest lecture for *History of Russian Literature to 1860*, Prof. Caryl Emerson. Princeton University. Princeton, New Jersey.

SERVICE

- ◇ 2018–present. Member, Committee on Academic Standards (CAS) and Petitions Subcommittee, Kenyon College.
- ◇ Spring 2018. Manuscript reviewer, Columbia University Press.
- ◇ April 24, 2018. Leader and co-organizer, Workshop on Contemporary Russian Poetry Translation. Department of Germanic and Slavic Languages & Literatures, University of Colorado Boulder. Boulder, Colorado.
- ◇ 2016–2017. Chair, Russian Tenure-Track Search Committee, Kenyon College.
- ◇ 2016–present. Faculty Liaison to Fulbright applicants, Kenyon College.
- ◇ 2016–2017, Fall 2017. Coordinator, FLATnet Language Tutoring Program, Kenyon College.
- ◇ Fall 2015. Peer reviewer for *Scando-Slavica*.
- ◇ 2015–present. Member, Steering Committee and Colloquium Planning Subcommittee, Andrew W. Mellon Grant in Languages, The Five Colleges of Ohio and The Ohio State University.
- ◇ 2015–present. Faculty advisor, Kenyon College Chess Club.
- ◇ 2015–present. Supervisor, Russian Fulbright Language Teaching Assistants at Kenyon College.
- ◇ 2015–present. Senior Russian faculty and Russian discipline coordinator, Kenyon College.
- ◇ Spring 2014. Coordinator, American Council of Teachers of Russian (ACTR) Post-Secondary Essay Contest for all Rutgers University students of Russian.
- ◇ November 14, 2013. Co-organizer and participant, “Evening of Russian Poetry”: students of Russian of all levels studied, memorized, and recited poems of their own choosing. Rutgers University.

- ◇ Fall 2013. Peer reviewer, *Russian Literature*.
- ◇ 2012–2013. Advisor, senior exercises in Russian language and area studies. St. Olaf College.
- ◇ 2012–2013. Faculty advisor, Russian Club. St. Olaf College.
- ◇ 2012–2013. Faculty advisor, Russian House. St. Olaf College.
- ◇ 2011–2012. Advisor and first reader, senior exercises in Russian and Russian Area Studies. Kenyon College.
- ◇ October 20, 2011. Organizer, “From Russia with Love”: a panel discussion with returning students on study abroad in Russia. Kenyon College.
- ◇ April 15, 2011. Panel Chair, Translation Panel. 2011 Midwest Slavic Conference. Columbus, Ohio.
- ◇ April 10, 2011. Panelist, pre-departure orientation for students studying abroad. Kenyon College.
- ◇ 2010–2011. Second reader, senior exercises in Russian and Russian Area Studies. Kenyon College.
- ◇ Spring 2011. Member, search committee for Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow in Russian (2011–2012). Kenyon College.
- ◇ 2010–2011. Member, organizational committee for Mellon Summer Seminar on KILM evaluation. Kenyon College.
- ◇ October 12, 2010. Co-organizer and panelist, panel discussion on study abroad in Russia: Returning Student Perspectives. Kenyon College.

RESEARCH INTERESTS

- ◇ 20th-century Russian poetry and poetics: Mayakovsky, Mandelstam, Tsvetaeva.
- ◇ Late Soviet and post-Soviet poetry: Elena Shvarts, Sergei Stratanovsky, Aleksandr Skidan, Andrei Rodionov, Linor Goralik.
- ◇ Russian and Soviet satire: Fonvizin, Griboedov, Gogol, Sologub, Ilf and Petrov, Olesha, Platonov, Bulgakov, Zoshchenko, Venedikt Erofeev.
- ◇ Chess and its intersections with Russian literature, culture, and politics.
- ◇ Theory and practice of translation, especially poetic.
- ◇ Connections between the French and Russian literary traditions.
- ◇ Humor; theories of the comic.

LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

- ◇ Russian: near native.
- ◇ French: advanced.

- ◇ Czech: intermediate.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- ◇ American Association of Teachers of Slavic and East European Languages.
- ◇ Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies (formerly AAASS).
- ◇ American Council of Teachers of Russian.
- ◇ Modern Language Association.