

**James H. McGavran III**  
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## Education

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

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

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

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

## Teaching Experience

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<b>University of Pennsylvania</b> Slavic Languages and Literatures	2014–	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
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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 (i.e., we create our own textbook), and I have begun collaborating in this ongoing process.
- 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: Multidisciplinary first-year seminar on perceptions of the West through roughly one thousand years of Russian cultural history.
- MADNESS AND MADMEN IN RUSSIAN CULTURE (Spring 2015): Multidisciplinary course exploring the theme of madness in Russian literature and arts from the medieval period through the October Revolution of 1917.

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**Rutgers University**Germanic, Russian, and East European Languages and Literatures 2013–2014 New Brunswick, New Jersey

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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 (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, Kharmis, 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.

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**St. Olaf College**

Russian Language and Area Studies

2012–2013

Northfield, Minnesota

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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 19<sup>th</sup>-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, Kharmis, Bulgakov, Venedikt Erofeev, and Petrushevskaya.

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**Kenyon College**

Modern Languages and Literatures

2010–2012

Gambier, Ohio

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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 «Дама с собачкой».
- SURVEY OF RUSSIAN LITERATURE IN TRANSLATION: Featuring works by Gogol, Lermontov, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Chekhov, Sologub, Olesha, Platonov, and Venedikt Erofeev.

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**Princeton University**

Slavic Languages and Literatures

2005–2008

Princeton, New Jersey

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Assistant Instructor, Preceptor.

Courses taught:

- HISTORY OF RUSSIAN LITERATURE TO 1860: Prof. Caryl Emerson's survey of literature in translation featuring works by Karamzin, Pushkin, Gogol, and Dostoevsky. I led three weekly discussion groups and assisted with grading and online course management (Blackboard).
- INTRODUCTORY RUSSIAN: Prof. Frank McLellan's intensive first-year Russian language course. Textbook: *Live from Moscow* with supplements. I taught three sections twice per week and assisted with grading and preparation of course materials.

**Grants and Awards**

- Dobro Slovo, National Slavic Honor Society: inducted as a permanent faculty member in May 2014.
- My book of Mayakovsky translations, *Selected Poems* (2013), has been nominated by Northwestern University Press for the 2014 Griffin Poetry Prize and the 2014 American Literary Translators' Association's National Translation Award.
- Mellon Postdoctoral Fellowship, Kenyon College, 2010–2011. I taught first-year Russian, participated in conferences and workshops, and worked intensively on my Mayakovsky translations.
- Fulbright Research Fellowship, Moscow, 2005–2006. I did dissertation research at the State Mayakovsky Museum and consulted with scholars at Moscow State University and the Gorky Institute of World Literature.
- Summer Travel/Study Grants from the Princeton University Graduate School: St. Petersburg (2003), Prague (2003), Moscow (2007).
- 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**

## BOOKS

- Mayakovsky, Vladimir. *Selected Poems*. Trans. James McGavran. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2013.
- Baer, Brian and Natalia Olshanskaya, eds. *Russian Writers on Translation: An Anthology*. Manchester, UK: St. Jerome, 2013. (I translated many texts by a wide range of authors for this anthology—see details below.)

## ARTICLES

- McGavran, James. "Laughing like a Child in Two Mayakovsky Poems." *Slavic and East European Journal*. Vol. 57, No. 2 (Summer 2013): 253–273.
- McGavran, James. "How to Sharpen Words: Mayakovsky's Machines of Poetic Humor." *Slavonica*. Vol. 20, No. 1 (April 2014): 17–33.

## TRANSLATIONS

### Poetry

- Mayakovsky, Vladimir. “Mama and the Evening Killed by the Germans.” *Чтению Readings*. Vol. 8, No. 3 (Summer 2014): 122–123.
- Sumarokov, Aleksandr. “Epistle on the Russian Language.” *Russian Writers on Translation: An Anthology*. Ed. Brian Baer and Natalia Olshanskaya. Manchester, UK: St. Jerome, 2013. 141.
- Nekrasov, Nikolai. “A Business Conversation.” *Russian Writers on Translation: An Anthology*. Ed. Brian Baer and Natalia Olshanskaya. Manchester, UK: St. Jerome, 2013. 141–142.
- Mandelstam, Osip. “Tatars, Uzbeks, and Nentsy . . . .” *Russian Writers on Translation: An Anthology*. Ed. Brian Baer and Natalia Olshanskaya. Manchester, UK: St. Jerome, 2013. 143.
- Tarkovskii, Arsenii. “The Translator.” *Russian Writers on Translation: An Anthology*. Ed. Brian Baer and Natalia Olshanskaya. Manchester, UK: St. Jerome, 2013. 143.
- Matveeva, Novella. “The Translator.” *Russian Writers on Translation: An Anthology*. Ed. Brian Baer and Natalia Olshanskaya. Manchester, UK: St. Jerome, 2013. 143.
- Neiman, Iulia. “A Translator to a Poet.” *Russian Writers on Translation: An Anthology*. Ed. Brian Baer and Natalia Olshanskaya. Manchester, UK: St. Jerome, 2013. 144.
- Martynov, Leonid. “Poets.” *Russian Writers on Translation: An Anthology*. Ed. Brian Baer and Natalia Olshanskaya. Manchester, UK: St. Jerome, 2013. 144.
- Marshak, Samuil. “1616–1949.” *Russian Writers on Translation: An Anthology*. Ed. Brian Baer and Natalia Olshanskaya. Manchester, UK: St. Jerome, 2013. 145–146.
- Pasternak, Boris. “For Paolo Iashvili.” *Russian Writers on Translation: An Anthology*. Ed. Brian Baer and Natalia Olshanskaya. Manchester, UK: St. Jerome, 2013. 146.
- Shvarts, Elena. “A Selection of Poems by Elena Shvarts.” *Slavonica*. Vol. 16, No. 2 (November 2010): 131–138.
- Shvarts, Elena. “A Portrait of the Blockade through Genre Painting, Still Life, and Landscape.” *An Anthology of Contemporary Russian Women Poets*. Ed. Valentina Polukhina and Daniel Weissbort. Iowa City, IA: University of Iowa Press, 2005. 168–170.
- Shvarts, Elena. “Free Ode to the Philosopher’s Stone of Petersburg (with two offshoots)” and “A Portrait of the Blockade through Genre, Still Life and Landscape.” *Russian Women Poets (Modern Poetry in Translation*, No. 20). London: Kings College London, 2002. 214–218.

### Prose

- Tsar Peter I. “Edict 4438, On the Preparation of Translators of Books for Instruction in the Sciences.” *Russian Writers on Translation: An Anthology*. Ed. Brian Baer and Natalia Olshanskaya. Manchester, UK: St. Jerome, 2013. 3.
- Kantemir, Antiokh. “Foreword to the Epistles of Horace.” *Russian Writers on Translation: An Anthology*. Ed. Brian Baer and Natalia Olshanskaya. Manchester, UK: St. Jerome, 2013. 3–4.
- Lomonosov, Mikhail. “Russian Grammar.” *Russian Writers on Translation: An Anthology*. Ed. Brian Baer and Natalia Olshanskaya. Manchester, UK: St. Jerome, 2013. 4–5.
- Radishchev, Aleksandr. “A Journey from Petersburg to Moscow” (excerpt). *Russian Writers on*

*Translation: An Anthology*. Ed. Brian Baer and Natalia Olshanskaya. Manchester, UK: St. Jerome, 2013. 6.

- Karamzin, Nikolai. "Letter to Ivan Dmitriev." *Russian Writers on Translation: An Anthology*. Ed. Brian Baer and Natalia Olshanskaya. Manchester, UK: St. Jerome, 2013. 8.
- Zhukovskii, Vasilii. "Homer's *Odyssey*. In Place of a Foreword." *Russian Writers on Translation: An Anthology*. Ed. Brian Baer and Natalia Olshanskaya. Manchester, UK: St. Jerome, 2013. 12–13.
- Gorkii, Maksim. "World Literature." *Russian Writers on Translation: An Anthology*. Ed. Brian Baer and Natalia Olshanskaya. Manchester, UK: St. Jerome, 2013. 65–66.
- Akhmadulina, Bella. "A Poem Offered for Translation." *Russian Writers on Translation: An Anthology*. Ed. Brian Baer and Natalia Olshanskaya. Manchester, UK: St. Jerome, 2013. 135–136.
- Shvarts, Elena. "A Few Thoughts on the Translation of Russian Verse." *Russian Writers on Translation: An Anthology*. Ed. Brian Baer and Natalia Olshanskaya. Manchester, UK: St. Jerome, 2013. 137–138.

#### REVIEW

- (with Natalia Olshanskaya) Review of *Eugene Onegin: A Novel in Verse* by Alexander Pushkin, trans. Henry M. Hoyt. *Canadian Slavonic Papers*. Vol. 52, Nos. 3–4 (September–December 2010): 439–440.

## Presentations

#### CONFERENCE PAPERS

- "Love Without Death: Mayakovsky's 'Tamara and the Demon.'" [The Dangers and Pleasures of the Russian Love Lyric](#): The 2014 Penn Slavic Symposium. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. May 12, 2014.
- "Making Comrades of the Classics: Mayakovsky's Comic Confrontations with Tradition." Early Soviet Literature and Film Panel. 2014 AATSEEL Conference, Chicago, Illinois. January 10, 2014.
- "The Last Place You'd Look: Humor in Mayakovsky's Political *Poemy*." Silver Age Poetry Panel. 2013 AATSEEL Conference, Boston, Massachusetts. January 6, 2013.
- "Laughter's Lone Wolf: Public and Private Humor in Two Mayakovsky Poems." Russian Futurism Panel. 2012 AATSEEL Conference, Seattle, Washington. January 6, 2012.
- "Vladimir Mayakovsky and the Poetics of Humor: An Introduction." 20<sup>th</sup>-Century Poetry Panel. 2011 Midwest Slavic Conference, Columbus, Ohio. April 15, 2011.

#### OTHER PRESENTATIONS

- 15-Board Simultaneous Chess Exhibition. University of Pennsylvania campus, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. September 3, 2014. I gave a simultaneous chess exhibition to curious passersby to raise awareness of the Slavic Department at Penn.
- "At the Top of *Whose* Voice? Translating Mayakovsky into English." Davidson, North Carolina. April 13, 2012. Invited talk for a senior seminar on translation at Davidson College. I visited the seminar to discuss with students my Mayakovsky project, then gave a formal presentation and reading.
- Panel Chair, Translation Panel. 2011 Midwest Slavic Conference, Columbus, Ohio. April 15, 2011.
- Panelist, Roundtable Discussion in Memory of Elena Shvarts. 2011 AATSEEL Conference, Pasadena, California. January 8, 2011.
- "Vladimir Mayakovsky and Russian Futurism." Charlotte, North Carolina. November 4, 2009. Invited

talk for a Russian Civilization course at UNC Charlotte.

- “Dostoevsky’s *Notes from the Underground*.” Princeton, New Jersey. November 26, 2007. Guest lecture for Caryl Emerson’s History of Russian Literature to 1860 survey course.
- *A “Kreutzer Sonata” Evening*. By Leo Tolstoy, Ludwig van Beethoven and Caryl Emerson. Narrated by Ksana Blank and James McGavran. Princeton, New Jersey. November 30, 2006. (An event sponsored by the Princeton Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, featuring a lecture by Caryl Emerson, readings in Russian and English from Tolstoy’s short story, “The Kreutzer Sonata,” and a performance of Beethoven’s Violin Sonata No. 9 in A, Op. 47 “Kreutzer.” I selected, edited, and read the English passages from Tolstoy’s story.)

### Service

- Administrator of American Council of Teachers of Russian (ACTR) Post-Secondary Essay Contest for all Rutgers University students of Russian, spring 2014.
- 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, New Brunswick, New Jersey. November 14, 2013.
- Article reviewer for *Russian Literature*, fall 2013.
- Advisor, senior exercises in Russian language and area studies. St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minnesota. 2012–2013.
- Faculty advisor, Russian Club and Russian House. St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minnesota. 2012–2013.
- Advisor and first reader, senior exercises in Russian and Russian area studies. Kenyon College, Gambier, Ohio. 2011–2012.
- Organizer, “From Russia with Love”: a panel discussion with returning students on study abroad in Russia. Kenyon College, Gambier, Ohio. October 20, 2011.
- Panelist, pre-departure orientation for students studying abroad. Kenyon College, Gambier, Ohio. April 10, 2011.
- Second reader, senior exercises in Russian and Russian area studies. Kenyon College, Gambier, Ohio. 2010–2011.
- Member, search committee for Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow in Russian (2011–2012). Kenyon College, Gambier, Ohio. Spring 2011.
- Member, organizational committee for Mellon Summer Seminar on KILM evaluation. Kenyon College, Gambier, Ohio. 2010–2011.
- Panelist and co-organizer, panel discussion on study abroad in Russia: Returning Student Perspectives. Kenyon College, Gambier, Ohio. October 12, 2010.

### Research Interests

- 20th-century Russian poetry and poetics: Mayakovsky, Mandelstam, Pasternak, Tsvetaeva.
- Late Soviet and post-Soviet poetry: Elena Shvarts and Sergei Stratanovsky.
- 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 and theories of the comic.

### **Language Proficiency**

- Russian: near native.
- French: advanced.
- Czech: intermediate.

### **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.