

# Application: Brendan Mooney

Posting number: 041602

Posting: Asst Teaching Prof of Modern Lang & Lit (Russian) (Faculty/Executive)

Form: Faculty

Submitted: November 30, 2024 at 05:38 PM (EST) (confirmation number: CN000525823)

## Personal Information

### Personal Information

|                                   |                          |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Legal First Name:                 | Brendan                  |
| Legal Middle Name:                |                          |
| Legal Last Name:                  | Mooney                   |
| Preferred/Chosen First Name:      |                          |
| Address:                          | 6171 Vereker Drive       |
| City:                             | Oxford                   |
| State:                            | Ohio                     |
| Zip Code:                         | 45056                    |
| Country:                          | United States of America |
| Primary Contact Number:           | 8032709769               |
| Alternate Contact Number:         |                          |
| International Contact Information |                          |
| Email Address:                    | mooneybg@miamioh.edu     |

### Additional Information

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| For purposes of compliance with the Immigration Reform and Control Act, are you legally eligible for employment in the United States?                                 | Yes |
| If not, state reason:   |     |
| Do you currently work for Virginia State Government?  | No  |
| If so, what was the most recent agency?   |     |
| If so, what was the most recent agency? (Historical)  |     |
| Do you have immediate family members (defined as (i) a spouse or (ii) any other person who resides in the same household) who are employed by William & Mary or VIMS? | No  |

|   |                                   |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| Do you have any relatives who reside outside of your household who are employed by William & Mary or VIMS?                              | No                                |
| Do you or any immediate family members currently provide services to William & Mary or VIMS as a business owner or as a contractor?     | No                                |
| Have you or any immediate family members previously provided services to William & Mary or VIMS as a business owner or as a contractor? | No                                |
| Do you give the university permission to retain application information for future recruitment purposes?                                | No                                |
| Where did you hear about this job?  | Other (please specify) - SEELANGS |

## Professional References

### Professional References

|                          |                      |
|--------------------------|----------------------|
| Reference Name           | Benjamin Sutcliffe   |
| Email                    | sutclibm@miamioh.edu |
| Reference Contact Number |                      |
| Relationship             | Colleague/mentor     |

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| Reference Name           | Judith Kalb                                     |
| Email                    | kalbj@mailbox.sc.edu                            |
| Reference Contact Number |   |
| Relationship             | Dissertator director/former teaching supervisor |

|                          |                        |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| Reference Name           | Andrew Drozd           |
| Email                    | adrozd@ua.edu          |
| Reference Contact Number |                        |
| Relationship             | Colleague/collaborator |

## Supplemental Questions

Required fields are indicated with an asterisk (\*).

## Supplemental Documents

### Required Documents

| Kind                    | Name  | Conversion Status |
|-------------------------|---|-------------------|
| Resume/Curriculum Vitae | Resume/Curriculum Vitae 11-30-24 14:22:49 (EST) | PDF complete      |
| Cover Letter            | Cover Letter 11-30-24 17:38:30 (EST)            | PDF complete      |
| Teaching Statement      | Teaching Statement 11-30-24 14:23:03 (EST)      | PDF complete      |

### Optional Documents

| Kind      | Name                              | Conversion Status |
|-----------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Other Doc | Other Doc 11-30-24 14:23:25 (EST) | PDF complete      |
| Other 2   | Other 2 11-30-24 14:23:37 (EST)   | PDF complete      |

## Certify

I hereby certify that all entries are true and complete, and I agree and understand that any falsification of information herein, regardless of time of discovery, may cause forfeiture on my part of any employment in the service of the Commonwealth of Virginia. I understand that all information on this application is subject to verification and I consent to criminal history background checks. I also consent to references and former employers and educational institutions listed being contacted regarding this application. I further authorize the Commonwealth to rely upon and use, as it sees fit, any information received from such contacts. Information contained on this application may be disseminated to other agencies, nongovernmental organizations or systems on a need-to-know basis for good cause shown as determined by the agency head or designee.

[X] BY SIGNING BELOW, I certify that I have read and agree with these statements.

Brendan G. Mooney Please enter your legal name to verify your identity.

Submitted on November 30, 2024 at 10:38 PM (UTC) by Brendan Mooney

Mooney

**Brendan G. Mooney**

Havighurst Fellow, Visiting Assistant Professor of Russian  
Department of German, Russian, Asian and Middle Eastern  
Languages and Cultures  
Miami University  
Oxford, OH 45056  
Email: mooneybg@miamioh.edu

**Education:**

- Ph.D. in Comparative Literature, University of South Carolina, 2019. Dissertation title: “Between Holy Russia and a Monkey: Darwin’s Russian Literary and Philosophical Critics” (authors discussed: Leo Tolstoy, Nikolai Strakhov, and Vladimir Solovyov). Advisor: Judith Kalb
- M.A. in Russian, Middlebury Language School, 2018. Thesis title: “Pobeda Klimenta Timiriazeva kak perevodchika Darvina” [“Kliment A. Timiriazev’s Victory as One of Charles Darwin’s Translators”]. Advisor: Vera Proskurina.
- M. A. in Comparative Literature, University of South Carolina, 2015. Thesis Title: “Making the Irrational Rational: Nietzsche and the Problem of Knowledge in Mikhail Bulgakov’s *The Master and Margarita*.” Advisor: Alexander Ogden.
- B.A. in Russian and French, University of South Carolina, 2012.

**Employment:**

- Teaching Fellow, Havighurst Center for East European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies, 2020–Present.
- Visiting Assistant Professor of Russian, Miami University, 2019 – Present.
- Graduate Teaching Assistant in Russian and Comparative Literature, University of South Carolina, 2013–2019.

**Related Teaching Experience:**

- Co-led study abroad program between University of South Carolina and Bashkir State University, Ufa, 2014. Assisted students with academic issues and cultural acclimation.

**Peer-Reviewed Publications:**

- “Dmitry Pisarev: Nihilism, Darwinism, and Man’s Place in Nature” in *Revisiting Russian Radicals*, 133–164 (London: Bloomsbury, 2024).
- “Strakhov on Darwinism: Humans, Progress, and Organicism” in *Reading Darwin in Russia: Literature and Ideas* (New York: Lexington Books, 2023), 101–119. [Reviews: *Choice* (November, 2023); *Russian Review* (April, 2024).
- “What’s in a Word? ‘Evolution,’ ‘Natural Selection,’ and Kliment Timiriazev’s Legacy as a Translator” in *Reading Darwin in Russia: Literature and Ideas* (New

York: Lexington Books, 2023), 13–60. [Reviews: *Choice* (November, 2023); *Russian Review* (April, 2024).

### Edited Volumes

- *Revisiting Russian Radicals*, co-edited with Andrew M. Drozd (London: Bloomsbury, 2024).
- *Reading Darwin in Russia: Literature and Ideas*, co-edited with Andrew M. Drozd and Stephen M. Woodburn (New York: Lexington Books, 2023). [Reviews: *Choice* (November, 2023); *Russian Review* (April, 2024).

### Current Projects:

- Completing research for an article on how Darwin’s first Russian translator Sergei Rachinskii became an anti-Darwinist.
- Revising and annotating my translation of Rachinskii’s unpublished preface to a proposed fourth edition of his translation of Darwin’s *On the Origin of Species*, for Darwin-online.org.uk and the English-language version of Tatevo.ru, 2250 words.
- Revising and annotating my translation of Rachinskii’s 1863 “Flowers and Insects,” a popularization of Darwin’s theory, 16,600 words, for Darwin-online.org.uk and the English-language edition of Tatevo.ru
- Actively working with Daria S. Smirnova on a glossed Russian-language reader of texts related to terrorism and state terror in Russia, including 1860s proclamations, Chekhov’s “Story of an Unknown Man, Boris Savinkov’s *Pale Horse*, and Chukovskaia’s *Sofia Petrovna*. To include pre-reading and discussion questions.
- Beginning research for an article on Afanasii Shchapov’s use of folklore for co-edited volume with Andrew Drozd, on Folklore and the Russian Left
- Resuming research for an article on Afanasii Shchapov’s use of Darwinism and evolutionism in discussions of non-Russian, indigenous populations.
- Beginning co-translation of Boris Savinkov’s *Black Horse* (1923), with Daria S. Smirnova.
- Beginning research on Sof’ia Khvoshchinskaia for volume co-edited with Andrew Drozd, a volume on mother-daughter dynamics in Russian culture.

### Translations:

- Co-translated with Daria S. Smirnova. Alexey Vdovin, “Nikolai Dobroliubov’s Social and Political Theory Revisited,” *Revisiting Russian Radicals*, 29–52 (London: Bloomsbury, 2024). 9500 words.
- Co-translated with Daria S. Smirnova. Kirill Zubkov, “The History of a Plot: Representation of the ‘Folk’ and Russian Radicals of the 1860s,” *Revisiting Russian Radicals*, 165–184 (London: Bloomsbury, 2024). 5800 words.

- Strakhov, Nikolai. “Bad Signs,” (2021) <http://darwin-online.org.uk/content/frameset?pageseq=1&itemID=A2097&viewtype=text>, 5800 words.

### **Conferences Papers, Roundtable Presentations:**

- “How Darwin’s first Russian translator became an anti-Darwinist: Sergei Rachinskii on Science and Religion,” Southern Conference on Slavic Studies, Lexington, KY, February 27—March 1, 2025.
- “How Nikolai Danilevskii Made an Anti-Darwinist of Nikolai Strakhov,” SCSS, Chapel Hill, NC, March 14–17, 2024.
- “Linking Darwinism and Nihilism: Pisarev, Pogodin, and Man’s Place in Nature,” SCSS, Gainesville, FL, March 30–April 1, 2023.
- “From the Science of Morals to the Morals of Science: Explaining the Evolution of Lev Tolstoi’s Anti-Darwinism,” Young Researchers’ Conference, Havighurst Center for Russian and Post-Soviet Studies, March 31–April 3, 2022.
- “Huxley’s Darwinism and Revolutionary Thought in Russia.” ASEES, New Orleans, Fall 2021.
- “Hitching Darwinism to the Troika of Atheism, Materialism, and Secularism: The Russian Case,” SECSOR/AAR, Tallahassee [Zoom], March 2021.
- “Of Bulldogs, Barren Virgins, and Forms Most Beautiful: Kliment Timiriachev’s Legacy as a Darwinist Translator.” Working Group on Darwin’s Reception in Russia. Virtual Summer Research Laboratory. REEEC, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. July 2020.
- Roundtable participant on “Darwin’s Reception in Russia.” ASEES, San Francisco, CA, November 2019.
- “Evolutsiia: The Phylogeny of a Word in Russian.” SCSS, Mobile, AL, March 2019.
- “Vladimir Soloviev: The Incompatibility of Darwinian Evolution with Aesthetics in Late Nineteenth-century Russian Religious Philosophy.” Southeastern Commission for the Study of Religion/The American Academy of Religion (SECSOR/AAR), Greenville, NC, March 2019.
- “Degeneration: The Evolution of a Term.” Cultural Carolina Graduate Student Conference, Columbia, SC, March 2019.
- “Strakhov on Darwinism: Progress, Chance, and Mechanism.” Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies (ASEES), Boston, MA, December 2018.
- “[Kliment A. Timiriachev’s Victory as One of Charles Darwin’s Translators] Pobeda Klimenta Timiriacheva kak perevodchika Darvina.” Middlebury Language School, Russian School’s Graduate Student Symposium, August 2018.
- “Strakhov the Naturalist Cons Then Contrasts Darwin.” SCSS, Charlotte, NC, March 2018.
- “A Translator’s Dilemma: Translating Darwin’s ‘Natural Selection’ into Russian.” Cultural Carolina Graduate Student Conference, Columbia, SC, March 2018.

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- “Tolstoy and Darwinian Biological Determinism.” SCSS, Alexandria, VA, April 2017.
- “Friedrich Nietzsche and Mikhail Bulgakov’s *The Master and Margarita*.” Northeastern MLA, Hartford, CT, March 2016.
- “[The influence of Reason on Subjectivity and the Perception of Reality in the Novel *We*] Vozdeistvie razuma na sub’eknivost’ i vospriatie deistvitel’nosti v romane *My*.” Middlebury Language School, Russian School’s Graduate Student Symposium, August 2015.
- “Impossible Knowledge as Insanity or Hypnosis.” SCSS, Lexington, KY, April 2015.
- “*The Counselor*: Nietzsche and an Unstable World.” Cormac McCarthy Society, Memphis, TN, October 2014.
- “The Artist and the State: Bulgakov, Plato, and Censorship.” SCSS, Atlanta, GA, March 2014.
- “Woland and Afranius: Linked Characters.” SCSS, Greensboro, NC, March 2013.

#### **Conference Panels:**

- Panel Chair, “Ukraine and the World,” SCSS, Chapel Hill, NC, March 14–17, 2024
- Panel Chair, “Slavic Literature in World Context.” SCSS, Mobile, AL, March 2019.
- Panel Discussant, “Twentieth-century Russian Literature.” SCSS, Mobile, AL, March 2019.
- Panel Chair, “Immigration and Minorities.” SCSS, Charlotte, NC, March 2018.

#### **Invited Lectures:**

- “Going against the Grain: Dispelling the Myth of Dostoevsky’s Anti-Darwinism,” Miami University, Oxford, OH, November 2021.

#### **Courses:**

##### **Miami University:**

##### Russian-language courses:

- RUS 101: Beginners Russian (Fall 2019, Fall 2020, online synchronous due to coronavirus, Fall 2021, Fall 2022, with Honors section, Fall 2023, with Honors section, Fall 2024, with Honors section)
- RUS 102: Beginners Russian (Spring 2020, partially online synchronous due to coronavirus, Spring 2021, online synchronous due to coronavirus), Spring 2021, Spring 2022, Spring 2023, with Honors section, Spring 2024, with Honors section, Spring 2025, with Honors section ).
- RUS 201: Intermediate Russian (Fall 2020, online synchronous due to coronavirus, Fall 2021)

- RUS 202: Intermediate Russian (Spring 2021, online synchronous due to coronavirus, Spring 2022, Spring 2024, with Honors section, Spring 2025, with Honors section)
- RUS 301: Advanced Russian (Fall 2023)
- RUS 302: Advanced Russian (Spring 2023, Spring 2024)
- RUS 311: Reading in Russian (Spring 2025)

Russian-culture courses:

- RUS 137: Magic and Power in Russian Folklore (in English)(Spring 2020, partially online synchronous due to coronavirus, with Honors section, Summer 2021, online asynchronous, with Honors section, Summer 2022, online asynchronous, Honors section, Summer 2023, online asynchronous, with Honors section, Summer 2024, online asynchronous, with Honors section, Summer 2025, online asynchronous, with Honors section)
- RUS 254/HST 254/POL 254: Introduction to Russian and Eurasian Studies (Summer 2021, online asynchronous, with POL Honors section, Summer 2022, online asynchronous, with POL Honors section, Summer 2023, online asynchronous, with POL Honors section, Summer 2024, online asynchronous, with POL Honors section, Summer 2025, online asynchronous, with POL Honors section)
- RUS 255/ENG 255: Love and Death in Nineteenth-Century Russian Literature (in English)(Fall 2019, Winter 2021, online synchronous, with RUS Honors section, Spring 2022, online asynchronous, with RUS Honors section, Fall 2024, with RUS Honors section)
- RUS 256/ENG 256: Empire and Utopia in Russian Literature (in English) (Winter 2022, online synchronous, with RUS Honors section, Fall 2022, with RUS Honors section, Winter 2024, online synchronous, with RUS Honors section)
- RUS 257/ENG267: Communism and Catastrophe in Modern Russian Literature (in English) (Spring 2023, with RUS Honors section)
- RUS 477: Independent Study (Fall 2022) (Readings from the Reception of Darwinism in Imperial Russia)

**University of South Carolina:**

Russian-language courses:

- RUSS 121: Elementary Russian (Fall 2015, Fall 2017)
- RUSS 122: Basic Proficiency in Russian (Spring 2015, Spring 2018, Summer 2018)
- RUSS 201: Intermediate Russian I (Summer 2016, Summer 2017) (online asynchronous course)
- RUSS 202: Intermediate Russian II (Spring 2016, Summer 2017) (Spring 2016, face-to-face; Summer 2017, online synchronous)
- RUSS 319L: Twentieth-Century Russian Literature in Russian (Fall 2017) (Russian conversation section for advanced language students)



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- RUSS 320L: Nineteenth-Century Russian Literature in Russian (Fall 2016, Fall 2018) (Russian conversation section for advanced language students)

Comparative-literature courses:

- CPLT 150: Values and Ethics in Literature (Spring 2017, Summer 2018, Summer 2019) (online asynchronous course) (Carolina Core general education course)
- CPLT 270/ENGL 270: Introduction to World Literature (Spring 2019)

**Grants and Awards:**

- Cornerstone Book Publication Award, Miami University, Spring 2024, \$500.
- Honors Faculty of the Year (College of Arts and Science, Humanities), Miami University, 2023–2024.
- Student Recognition of Teaching Excellence Award, Miami University, Fall 2020.
- Graduate Teaching Assistant Teaching Resource Development Grant, University of South Carolina, 2019, \$750, with Daria S. Smirnova.

**Professional Service:**

- Summer orientation for first-year students, Havighurst Center for East European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies table, May–June, 2024.
- Organizer, Havighurst Center for East European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies' Works-in-Progress Series, Spring 2024.
- Member, Student Paper Award Committee, Southern Conference on Slavic Studies, 2024.
- Member, Executive Council, Southern Conference on Slavic Studies, 2022–2025
- Fulbright Campus Review Panelist for Students of Russian, Fall 2021
- Manuscript reviewer for *Slavic and East European Journal*, Fall 2020, Fall 2021.
- Foreign Language Day, Miami University, Spring 2020.

**Professional Development:**

- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Training, Miami University, March 2023

**Languages:**

- Near-native fluency in Russian.
- Advanced reading in French.



COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCE  
*German, Russian, Asian and Middle Eastern  
Languages and Cultures*

135 Irvin Hall, 400 E. Spring Street  
Oxford, OH 45056-1859  
P: 513.529.2581 | F: 513.529.2296  
MiamiOH.edu/gramelac

30 November 2024

Dear Search Committee,

I am writing to apply for the position of Assistant Teaching Professor of Russian. Since receiving a PhD in Comparative Literature from the University of South Carolina in 2019 (advisor: Judith Kalb), I have worked as a Visiting Assistant Professor of Russian at Miami University. Since 2020, I have also been a Teaching Fellow at the Havighurst Center for East European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies.

I have taught a variety of Russian culture courses in English, including nineteenth-century Russian literature; twentieth-century Russian literature; contemporary Russian literature; folklore (our Russian Program's most popular course); and an introduction to Russian studies course, which I taught as "History through Fiction, 1855–1991." I approach all my culture courses from an inclusive historical perspective, so I include, in addition to 'classic' works, marginal texts such as Elena Gan's "Society's Judgment" and Aleksei Pisemsky's *A Bitter Fate* as well as contemporary reviews and philosophical works. As for Russian-language courses, I have taught first-, second-, and third-year Russian, and I will teach our third-year Reading in Russian course in the spring. I have begun reworking the materials I use in my language courses to introduce my students to Russophone cultures outside of Russia. In 2014 I co-led a three-week study abroad trip to Ufa, where I helped students acclimate and deal with the challenges of daily life in Russia. In 2020 I received a Miami Student Recognition of Teaching Excellence Award for creating "positive, engaging, and creative learning opportunities," and for the 2023–2024 academic year, I received Miami's Honors Faculty of the Year award for the Humanities. I receive strong evaluations from my students. For example, for the spring 2024 semester, I received an average score of 3.72/4 (RUS 102), 3.7/4 (RUS 202), and 3.5/4 (RUS 302).

My teaching is built on a "growth" approach that prioritizes active engagement and learning by giving low-stakes opportunities (such as drafts and quizzes) for students to learn from their mistakes. In addition to building rapport, such feedback is crucial to empowering students from a wide range of backgrounds, in a field traditionally dominated by a homogenous group of learners. In my language courses, I take a communicative and task-based approach. In my culture courses, I am switching to a blended approach and have begun assigning prerecorded lectures for students to watch before coming to class so as to more fully flip the classroom and facilitate seminar-style discussions.

I am actively co-developing (with Daria S. Smirnova) a glossed Russian-language reader of texts related to terrorism and state terror in Russia and the Soviet Union, including 1860s proclamations, Chekhov's "Story of an Unknown Man," Boris Savinkov's *Pale Horse*, and Lydia Chukovskaia's *Sofia Petrovna*. This reader will include pre-reading and discussion questions. I will test some of these materials in the spring when I teach Reading in Russian.

My research concerns the history of evolutionary biology in Imperial and Soviet Russia (1860–1965). I focus on the role of culture in the transmission and reception of scientific ideas,

drawing on the pioneering work of figures such as Thomas Kuhn, Peter Bowler, and Michael Ruse. I have published three chapters on the subject. Two were published in *Reading Darwin in Russia: Literature and Ideas* (Lexington Press, 2023) (I was also a co-editor) following double-blind peer review. One chapter examines the significance of misunderstanding in the reception of scientific ideas that are translated across language and culture. In particular, it explains how the often-overlooked conservative journalist Nikolai Strakhov initially accepted Darwin's theory because it seemed to substantiate his own philosophical views. However, later he set in motion an onslaught of anti-Darwinist criticism in Russia. The second article unpacks the linguistic history of the terms "selection" and "evolution" in Russian, how they were translated into Russian, and the role of the botanist Kliment Timiriazev's work as a translator and popularizer in solidifying his own terms, which are still used today. The volume as a whole and my chapters in particular were reviewed favorably in *Russian Review* (April 2024).

Another chapter was recently published with Bloomsbury, also after double-blind peer review. The piece analyzes how Dmitrii Pisarev modified Darwin's theory in popularizing *On the Origin of Species* and made it fit the radicals' anti-religious program and views on humanity's place in nature. As I show, Darwinism came to Russia at an opportune moment and became part of the radicals' worldview when nihilism, with its individualistic orientation, was in full swing, before giving way to the collectivist outlook of populism. The chapter was published in *Revisiting Russian Radicals* (co-edited with Andrew Drozd). I also co-translated two essays for the volume. I received Miami's Cornerstone Book Publication Grant to support my work on this volume.

I am currently completing archival research for an article on the changing attitude towards Darwinism held by Sergei Rachinskii, a botanist and Darwin's first Russian translator. Drawing on Rachinskii's unpublished essays and correspondence with conservative Konstantin Pobedonostsev, I will show that although a growing religiosity accounts for his initial criticism of Darwin's theory on the subject to humans, it was Pobedonostsev, his close friend, who was responsible for changing Rachinskii's mind and ultimately convincing him to reject Darwinism. Furthermore, it appears that Pobedonostsev, relying on his personal relationship with Rachinskii, was able to effect what the post-1865 censorship apparatus could not: he convinced Rachinskii not to publish a fourth edition of his translation of the *Origin*. Thus, Rachinskii's treatment of Darwin, in part, reflected the broader trend of the weakening autocratic state in the throes of modernization and the necessity of resorting to extralegal solutions.

After completing my work on Rachinskii, I will research Afanasii Shchapov's use of folklore for another co-edited volume and his use of evolutionism and Darwinism in discussions of Russia's colonization of indigenous populations, for an article. I am also beginning to co-translate (with Daria S. Smirnova) Boris Savinkov's 1923 novella *Black Horse*.

I am also working with a group of colleagues from other institutions to translate the most important scientific and cultural Russian responses to Darwinism into English. Three such translations, including mine of Nikolai Strakhov's 1862 essay "Bad Signs," have already been published on [www.Darwin-online.org.uk](http://www.Darwin-online.org.uk). I plan to use these translations in a course on the subject, which would have a broad appeal for students of history, philosophy, and biology. These materials can also form the foundation for courses in the medical and environmental humanities, as some works deal with eugenics and the majority of them make direct links between science and culture or society.

I have sought out opportunities to work with and advise students. These have ranged from editing application letters and project and grant proposals to supervising a student's

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translations of various articles published in the Soviet newspaper *Pravda (Truth)*. I look forward to working with students in the future on their own projects. I would gladly advise Honors theses.

I have worked with my Russian colleague at Miami to find ways to improve retention in our Russian-language courses. As a first step, we contracted Alma Languages to offer extracurricular language practice with native speakers based in Kyiv to help boost our students' interest in and contact with Russian. I have also helped with our recruitment efforts by participating in our Foreign Language Day, where I introduced local high school students to Russian history, language, and culture. This summer I assisted with advertising our REEES offerings and the Havighurst Center at Miami's orientation sessions for first-year students; this helped increase enrollment for our beginning Russian class.

I happily help colleagues across campus and in the profession, whether it is with translation requests or feedback on manuscripts. In 2021 I evaluated students' applications and language ability for Fulbright and gave a public lecture on Dostoevsky, Darwinism, and nihilism for the Havighurst Center's senior seminar. In 2023 I organized workshops for the Havighurst Centers's works-in-progress series. Outside Miami, I have served as a manuscript reviewer for *Slavic and East European Journal*, and in addition to serving as a member of the Southern Conference on Slavic Studies' Executive Committee (2022–2025), this spring I served on its Student Paper Award Committee.

With this letter, I am sending my curriculum vitae, teaching portfolio, and a list of reference names. I would be delighted to speak with you via Zoom or telephone at your convenience. If there are any questions or you would like to see any additional materials, I can be reached at 803-270-9769 or emailed at [mooneybg@MiamiOH.edu](mailto:mooneybg@MiamiOH.edu). Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Brendan Mooney, Visiting Assistant Professor of Russian  
Teaching Fellow, Havighurst Center for East European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies, Miami  
University

# ENG/RUS256 A,RUS256H A

Russian 256 (CRN: 80441)/Russian 256 Honors (CRN: 80449)/English 256 (CRN:80442)

Empire and Utopia in Russian Literature

Fall 2022, MW 1:15–2:35 (IRV 034)

Dr. Brendan Mooney (mooneybg@miamiOH.edu; office hours: MW 2:45–4:15 or by appointment)

SignUpGenius (to make an appointment to meet via Zoom during office hours):

## Student Learning Outcomes

This course provides a general chronological and thematic introduction to the major trends in Russian literature from the 1870s-1940s. By writing two short papers, students will prepare themselves for the longer paper they will submit at the course's conclusion. This is a Global Miami course.

| Required Texts   |   | ISBN              |
|------------------|---|-------------------|
| Leo Tolstoy      | <i>Anna Karenina</i>  | 978-0198800538    |
| Andrei Bely      | <i>Petersburg</i>   | 978-1906548438    |
| Yevgeny Zamyatin | <i>We</i>   | 978-0-14-018585-0 |
| Mikhail Bulgakov | <i>The Master and Margarita</i>                                       | 978-0-679-76080-1 |
| Michael Harvey   | <i>Nuts and Bolts of College Writing, 3rd edition.</i> 978-1624668593 |                   |

These novels are available for purchase at the Bookstore (Shriver). If students decide to purchase the required works elsewhere, they are responsible for finding translations and editions matching the works available in the Bookstore. Texts not listed above can be found on Canvas, as noted in the syllabus.

## Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, students should be able to

1. Identify significant authors, cultural figures, and events in the development of late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century Russian literature.
2. Understand key connections between cultural and political life in Russia during this period.
3. Improve critical reading skills and creative engagement with literary texts.
4. Analyze and discuss literary texts and historical documents coherently and knowledgeably in oral and written form.

## Grading

The student's overall course grade will be determined as follows:

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| 2 Short papers (proposal and 2 drafts for each):   | 40% |
| 2 peer reviews:                                    | 10% |
| Long paper (proposal, presentation, and 2 drafts): | 22% |
| In-class participation:                            | 28% |

## Honors Students Grading

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| 2 short papers (proposal and 2 drafts for each):        | 40% |
| 2 peer reviews:   | 10% |
| Long paper (proposal, brief presentation and 2 drafts): | 29% |
| In-class participation:                                 | 21% |

## Reading:

This course requires a substantial amount of reading (approximately 30–40 pages/day). Some class meetings have more reading assigned than others. Students are advised to consult the syllabus in advance and budget their time accordingly. All texts may be read in either English or Russian, but class discussions will be conducted only in English. **If students are unprepared for class, making discussions impossible, I reserve the right to take half of the points from “In-class participation” for reading quizzes.**

## Short Papers

All students are expected to write 2 short papers (1200–1500 words each). Students are required to write proposals, laying out their topic and an outline of their argument. Papers may address a short passage from the text, discuss general themes of a text, or compare texts. Papers must include a bibliography. All papers must be typed and submitted on Canvas. No late papers will be accepted without an appropriate medical excuse (as determined by the instructor).

## Long paper:

All students are expected to write a long paper (2000–2500 words; for Honors students the long paper is 3000–3500 words). Students are required to write proposals, laying out their topic and an outline of their argument. Papers may address a short passage from the text, discuss general themes of a text, or compare texts. Papers must include a bibliography. All papers must be typed and submitted on Canvas. No late papers will be accepted without an appropriate medical excuse (as determined by the instructor).

### Grading Scale:

|                 |                |
|-----------------|----------------|
| A+ 98 and above | C+ 77.0 – 79.9 |
| A 93.0 – 97.9   | C 73.0 – 76.9  |
| A- 90.0 – 92.9  | C- 70.0 – 72.9 |
| B+ 87.0 – 89.9  | D+ 67.0 – 69.9 |
| B 83.0 – 86.9   | D 63.0 – 66.9  |
| B- 80.0 – 82.9  | D- 60.0 – 62.9 |

### Attendance Policy:

Class attendance is mandatory. Anyone missing classes without a valid excuse (major and documented personal illness, major religious holidays, documented severe emotional crisis) will be penalized by a lowered grade. One percentage point will be deducted from the final grade average for each session missed without a valid documented reason. Absence, for whatever reason, is never an excuse for failing to turn in assigned work. After 2 unexcused absences you will be dropped from the course.

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If you are eligible to receive accommodations, please schedule an office hours appointment at the beginning of the semester to discuss accommodation plans.

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### Academic Support

Rinella Learning Center | <https://miamioh.edu/student-life/rinella-learning-center/index.html> (Links to an external site.) | Shriver Center 306 | 513-529-8741 | [rlc@MiamiOH.edu](mailto:rlc@MiamiOH.edu)

### Academic Integrity:

Please keep in mind that all written and online assignments submitted for this class should be your own work. Do not have roommates, friends, family members or tutors write or proofread your papers. Please do not download texts from the internet in order to present them as your own work. Academic integrity is crucial to the successful completion of your study. Failure to abide

by these rules of academic integrity may result in a failing grade for the course. It is your responsibility to know and follow these guidelines stated on the following sites:

University's Integrity website (<http://www.miamioh.edu/integrity/> (Links to an external site.))

Chapter 5 of the Student Handbook ([www.miamioh.edu/handbook](http://www.miamioh.edu/handbook) (Links to an external site.)).

#### Week 1

8/22 M Introductions

8/24 W Alexander Ostrovsky, [\*The Storm\*](#) (Canvas)

#### Week 2

8/29 M Leo Tolstoy, *Anna Karenina*, 1.1–2.11 (Part 1, chapter 1 through Part 2, chapter 11)

8/31 W *Anna Karenina*, 2.12–2.29

#### Week 3

9/05 M **Labor Day; no class**

9/07 W *Anna Karenina*, 2.30–3.32.

#### Week 4

9/12 M *Anna Karenina*, 4.1–4.23 (356–438)

9/14 W *Anna Karenina*, 5.1–5.9 (439–471)

#### Week 5

9/19 M *Anna Karenina*, 5.10–6.14 (471–602);

9/21 W *Anna Karenina*, 6.15.–6.23 (603–641)

#### Week 6

9/26 M *Anna Karenina*, 6.24–7.31 (641–771)

9/28 W *Anna Karenina*, 8.1–8.19 (773–822)

#### Week 7

10/03 M Anton Chekhov, [\*The Cherry Orchard\*](#) (Canvas).

10/05 W Michael Harvey, *The Nuts and Bolts of College Writing*, Chapters 1–8 (1–88). **Paper 1 proposal due by 11:59 PM on Canvas.**

10/07 F

#### Week 8



10/10 M Andrei Bely, *Petersburg*, Prologue, Chapter 1, (11–74)

10/11 T **Draft 1 of Paper 1 due by 11:59 PM on Canvas**

10/12 W **Peer review of Draft 1.** *Petersburg*, begin Chapter 2 (75–115)

Week 9

10/17 M *Petersburg*, Chapters 2–3 and the beginning of Chapter 4 (115–229)

10/19 W *Petersburg*, finish Chapter 4 (230–270)

Week 10

10/24 M *Petersburg*, Chapter 4 (189–270). **Final draft of Paper 1 due by 11:59 PM on Canvas**

10/26 W *Petersburg*, Chapter 5 (271–322)

Week 11

10/31 M *Petersburg*, Chapters 6 and 7 (323–520).

11/02 W *Petersburg*, Epilogue (520–564).

Week 12

11/07 M Yevgeny Zamyatin, *We*, Records 1–18 (3–103)

11/09 W *We*, Records 19–25 (104–142).

Week 13

11/14 M *We*, Records 25–40 (142–225). **Paper 2 proposal due by 5:00 PM.**

11/16 W *The Master and Margarita*, Chapters 1–3 (3–37)

11/20 Su **Draft 1 of Paper 2 is due by 5:00 PM.**

Week 14

11/21 M *The Master and Margarita*, Chapters 4–15 (38–142). **Peer review of Paper 2.**

11/23 W **Thanksgiving Break; no class**

Week 15

11/28 M *The Master and Margarita*, Chapters 16–27 (143–293).

11/30 W *The Master and Margarita*, Chapters 28–32 and Epilogue (294–335). **Final draft of Paper 2 is due by 5:00 PM.**

12/02 F **Final Paper proposal due by 5:00 PM.**

12/05 T **Draft 1 of Final Paper is due by 5:00 PM on Canvas.**

12/06 W **Peer review of Final Paper is due by 5:00 PM on Canvas.**

**12/09 F Final Paper is due by 5:00 PM on Canvas.**

## Russian 301

**RUS 302**, Spring, 2022, Miami University. 3 credit hours.

MW 10:05-11:25, HRN 109. CRN: 10408

### Advanced Russian

Dr. Brendan Mooney, IRV 135, MW 2:45–4:15, or by appointment, [mooneybg@miamioh.edu](mailto:mooneybg@miamioh.edu)

### Student Learning Outcomes

This course helps students expand the ability to speak, listen, write, and read in Russian while also introducing topics from classical and popular culture. On-line, video, and audio materials will be used alongside textbook exercises.

### Required Texts

#### For all students:

*Russian from Intermediate to Advanced*. Olga Kagan et al. ISBN: 0415712270

These texts may be purchased at the Bookstore. If students decide to purchase the required texts elsewhere, they are responsible for finding an edition that matches the text in the Bookstore.

### Grading

|                                   |     |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| In-class participation (1%/class) | 28% |
| Homework (1%/week)                | 14% |
| Alma participation (1%/week)      | 12% |
| Tests (6%/test)                   | 24% |
| Quizzes (2.5%/quiz)               | 10% |
| Final Exam                        | 12% |

### Percentages and their Letter-Grade Equivalents:

|                 |                |
|-----------------|----------------|
| A+ 98 and above | C+ 77.0 - 79.9 |
| A 93.0 - 97.9   | C 73.0 - 76.9  |
| A- 90.0 - 92.9  | C- 70.0 - 72.9 |
| B+ 87.0 - 89.9  | D+ 67.0 - 69.9 |
| B 83.0 - 86.9   | D 63.0 - 66.9  |
| B- 80.0 - 82.9  | D- 60.0 - 62.9 |

### Additional Resources:

**Canvas**, <https://miamioh.edu/academics/elearning/access-canvas/index.html> Links to an [external site](#).. Your complete syllabus (including instructor contact info, office hours, test dates, etc.) and other materials for the course—handouts, review, extra practice—are posted on Canvas. *Please note that it is your responsibility to have a printed or electronic copy of the syllabus with you and check what your daily assignments and homework are!*

## Russian 301

**Russian: From Intermediate to Advanced website** [russian\\_RLWS Russian: From Intermediate to Advanced \(ucla.edu\)](https://www.russian-rlws.com/)

**Amazing Russian**, <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCymAc4YKWYjDqNnLoK7m-2A> [Links to an external site.](#) Ms. Olga Jarrell's (Utah Valley University) YouTube channel.

**Russian Grammar**, <https://www.youtube.com/user/russiagrammar> [Links to an external site.](#) Dr. Curt Ford's YouTube channel (Former instructor at the University of South Carolina). These videos are tutorials on grammar and pronunciation.

### **Attendance Policy:**

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Students should not come to campus when ill (with COVID or any other transmissible illness including but not limited to monkeypox and the flu) or under orders from the Butler County General Health District to isolate because of a diagnosis or quarantine because of close contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19. Students are nevertheless ultimately responsible for material covered in class, regardless of whether the student is absent or present.

### **Technology in the Classroom:**

Students may not use personal technology devices in the classroom without the permission of the instructor. Such devices include mobile email devices, smartphones, mobile phones, iPods, iPads, iWatches, laptops and any other similar technologies. These items may be brought to class, but they may be taken out and used by students only with the instructor's specific direction to do so and for purposes of achieving the learning objectives of the course. Notes may be taken using paper and pen/pencil, and student may type (word-process) notes outside of class time if they wish to do so. All mobile phones must be turned off during class. Students using technology for purposes not related to the course will have their participation grade lowered. Exceptions will be made in the case of students who need personal technology devices in order to learn course content due to documented disabilities (e.g.: visual or auditory disabilities).

### **ADA Compliant:**

Students with disabilities are encouraged to request reasonable accommodations. Student Disability Services (SDS) registration should be completed prior to the provision of

## Russian 301

accommodations. Please visit the [SDS website](http://miamioh.edu/student-life/sds/) [Links to an external site.](http://miamioh.edu/student-life/sds/)(<http://miamioh.edu/student-life/sds/> [Links to an external site.](http://miamioh.edu/student-life/sds/)) for more information. You can contact SDS at 513-529-1541 or [sds@miamioh.edu](mailto:sds@miamioh.edu).

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**Academic Support**

Rinella Learning Center | <https://miamioh.edu/student-life/rinella-learning-center/index.html> [Links to an external site.](https://miamioh.edu/student-life/rinella-learning-center/index.html) | Shriver Center 306 | 513-529-8741 | [rlc@miamioh.edu](mailto:rlc@miamioh.edu)

**Interactive Language Resource Center**

The Interactive Language Resource Center, located in Irvin Hall 60, welcomes all students at Miami University and is the technical hub of the foreign language departments. Students enrolled in language courses use the ILRC to supplement and enhance their foreign language courses with language specific computer assisted language learning (CALL) software, access internet and network applications, use various language learning specific software, and use the center as a convenient and quiet study space. Information and hours can be found at <https://miamioh.edu/ilrc> [Links to an external site.](https://miamioh.edu/ilrc) or by emailing [ilrc@miamioh.edu](mailto:ilrc@miamioh.edu).

**Academic Integrity:**

Please keep in mind that all written and online assignments submitted for this class should be your **own work**. Do not have roommates, friends, family members or tutors do your homework. Please do not download texts from the internet in order to present them as your own work. This includes using any translation engines such as Google Translate. Academic integrity is crucial to the successful completion of your study. It is your responsibility to know and follow these guidelines stated on the following sites:

University's Integrity website (<http://www.miamioh.edu/integrity/> [Links to an external site.](http://www.miamioh.edu/integrity/))

Chapter 5 of the *Student Handbook* ([www.miamioh.edu/handbook](http://www.miamioh.edu/handbook) [Links to an external site.](http://www.miamioh.edu/handbook)).

**Tutoring:**

Any student who earns a **75% or lower on a test** should plan to meet with me at least once during office hours to go over the material.

### Расписание

Перед первым занятием: Прочитайте 4-3, 4-7, 4-13.

- |         |   |
|---------|---|
| Пн 28.8 | «Семья и семейные отношения». Познакомиться, силлабус, новые слова. «На знакомую тему» (4-1–4-5, 4-7-4-9, 4-13–4-17). Д/З: выпишите 4-10 (сочинение) и посмотрите 4-6, 4-18 |
| Ср 30.8 | Обсудить 4-6, 4-18. «Лексика» (4-20–4-28). Д/З: напишите 20 предложений (новые глаголы). Выпишите 4-19. Послушайте 4-29, 4-36 и 4-37 и прочитайте 4-32 и 4-37.              |
| Пн 4.9  | Занятий нет: День труда   |
| Ср 6.9  | «Цифры и факты»(4-29–4-40) . Д/З: посмотрите 4-40. Подготовьтесь к контрольной по словам.   |
| Пн 11.9 | <b>Контрольная работа по словам.</b> Обсудить 4-40. «Грамматика» (4-42–4-45). Посмотрите 4-51.  |
| Ср 13.9 | «Грамматика» (4-46–4-50) и «Проблемная ситуация» (4-51–4-53). Д/З: напишите 20 предложений. Прочитайте 4.55 и 4-61. Посмотрите 4.63.  |
| Пн 18.9 | Обсудить 4.64. «Мнения и аргументы» (4-54–4-66). Д/З: выпишите 4-67 (сочинение) и подготовьтесь к контрольной.  |
| Ср 20.9 | <b>Контрольная работа по главе.</b> Д/З: Прочитайте 6-3, 6-8, 6-10, 6-13  |
| Пн 25.9 | «О чем мечтает молодёжь...» (6-1–6-17), новые слова. Д/З: Посмотрите 6-5, 6-9 и 6-15  |
| Ср 27.9 | Обсудить 6-5, 6-9 и 6-15. «Лексика» (6-19–6-24). Д/З: Прочитайте 6-25, 6-29, 6-33, 6-40, 6-43. Напишите 20 предложений.   |
| Пн 2.10 | «Цифры и факты» (6-25). Д/З: Посмотрите 6-31–6-32. Подготовьтесь к контрольной по словам.   |
| Ср 4.10 | <b>Контрольная работа по словам.</b> Обсудить 6-31–6-32. «Грамматика» (6-48–6-50).  |
| Пн 9.10 | «Грамматика» (6-51–6-56). Д/З: напишите 20 предложений (новые глаголы). Послушайте 6-57, прочитайте 6-58, 6-59 и 6-67 и посмотрите 6-65.                                    |

## Russian 301

- Ср 11.10 «Проблемная ситуация» (6-57–6-58) и «Мнения и аргументы» (6-59–6-75). Выпишите 6-76 (сочинение). Подготовьтесь к контрольной по главе.
- Пн 16.10 **Контрольная работа по главе.** Д/З: Прочитайте 7-1, 7-2, 7-9, 7-13
- Ср 18.10 «Задумайтесь о вашем здоровье» (7-1–7-13), новые слова . Д/З: Посмотрите 7-7, выпишите 7-14 (сочинение) и прочитайте 7-19.
- Пн 23.10 Обсудить 7-7. «Лексика» (7-16–7-28). Д/З: прочитайте 7-29, 7-31, 7-37–7-38
- Ср 25.10 «Цифры и факты» (7-29–7-39) и «Грамматика» (7-40–7-47). Д/З: посмотрите 7-35 и прочитайте 7-49–7-50 и послушайте 7-51. Подготовьте к контрольной по словам.
- Пн 30.10 **Контрольная работа по словам.** Обсудить 7-35. «Проблемная ситуация» (7-49–7-52). Д/З: Прочитайте 7-54, 7-58 и 7-64 и посмотрите 7-62.
- Ср 1.11 «Мнения и аргументы» (7-53–7-55). Выпишите 7-70 (сочинение).
- Пн 6.11 **Контрольная работа по главе.** Д/З: прочитайте 8-1–8-2, 8-6, 8-9, 8-14.
- Ср 8.11 «Политика и мы» (8-1–8-15). Д/З: посмотрите 8-10 и 8-13 и выпишите 8-11 (сочинение).
- Пн 13.11 Обсудить 8-10 и 8-13. «Лексика» (8-17–8-26). Д/З: Напишите 20 предложений. Прочитайте 8-27, 8-32, 8-35.
- Ср 15.11 «Цифры и факты» (8-27–8-37). Д/З: Посмотрите 8-33. Подготовьте к контрольной по словам. Посмотрите 8-37. Прочитайте 8-42.
- Пн 20.11 **Контрольная работа по словам.** Обсудить 8-37. «Грамматика» (8-38–8-43). Д/З: прочитайте 8-44, 8-49 и 8-55 и посмотрите 8-48 8-54. Напишите 20 предложений.
- Ср 22.11 «Мнения и аргументы» (8-44–8-62). Д/З: выпишите 8-62 (сочинение) и подготовьтесь к контрольной.
- Пн 27.11 **Контрольная работа по главе.**
- Ср 29.11 Подготовка к финальному экзамену.
- Пн 4.12 Подготовка к финальному экзамену.
- Ср 6.12 Подготовка к финальному экзамену.

**Финальный экзамен: 12-ого декабря 10:15–12:15**

## Teaching Philosophy

Having taught at two universities whose student bodies differ in terms of ethnic diversity, socioeconomic background, and academic achievement, I believe there are three interconnected strategies that explain my success as a teacher. The first is giving opportunities for students to learn from their mistakes and thereby develop the skills they need to succeed. In both my literature and language classes, I strive to call on everyone—without exception—over the course of a class period, as this has been shown to help with students’ sense of confidence and welcome, with identifying and rapidly rooting out any misunderstandings about the content, and with challenging students to hone their ideas. My students then continue to hone their skills in their assignments and assessments. For example, in my literature classes I require my students to turn in ungraded drafts of their essays (several short 4–5 pages essays and a longer 7–9-page final paper). As I read their essays, I use a rubric to measure their use of clear language, logic, and evidence while also writing a detailed report for them about the content and mechanics of their essays. I strive to discern patterns in their grammatical and logical errors, so that students come away with tangible rules to follow that will improve their future writing and thinking (The large majority of my students benefit from this approach, but this is particularly helpful for those for whom English is a second language). In my language classes, quizzes and short compositions serve as low-stakes opportunities. In taking a so-called “growth” approach, I can help all my students improve their skills despite a sometimes uneven distribution of abilities at the start of a course.

The second strategy I use is staying aware of student needs. This comes in two forms. The first is direct: I give an anonymous midterm evaluation in all my classes to better respond to my students’ individual needs and learn how to better help them meet the course’s expectations. One such evaluation convinced me to give my second-year Russian-language students short weekly compositions (50–75 words) in addition to the longer (200 word) compositions they write each chapter. This small change produced noticeable results: many students said that the assignment helped them crystallize and retain each week’s grammar in a way their regular homework could not. More broadly, I read pedagogical works such as *Inclusive Teaching* and *The Art of Teaching Russian* so as to keep up with the latest advances in pedagogy and improve the effectiveness of my teaching. *Inclusive Teaching* persuaded me to begin pre-recording my lectures for culture courses so that students who miss a class have access to them and to free up more time for discussion.

Finally, I make a point of establishing rapport with my students. An important part of this process is cultivating a respect for diverse backgrounds and viewpoints. In my literature and culture classes, I include readings by writers that display a variety of backgrounds and perspectives and discuss their historical place in society and what they have to offer that traditional writers lack. In my language classes, we often discuss racism and sexism in contemporary Russia. Dealing openly and objectively with the harsh reality of the present and past hits home with students and encourages their participation. On an individual level, I talk with my students about and remember their interests. When students miss a class, I check in with them by email. Such communication makes students feel at ease about asking questions and taking the risk of making mistakes, something that is especially important in student-centered classes. In confirmation of my approach, I recently received an anonymous note from a student, relating to Miami’s March for Thanks, saying: “Despite the difficulty of learning Russian, Dr. Mooney makes the process feel rewarding and manageable. He sees his students not just as



students, but as people who have busy schedules and stressed minds who sometimes just need someone to tell them that it will all be okay.” Together, these three techniques ensure that I maximize the effectiveness of teaching.

In addition to all language courses, I have taught and would enjoy teaching such traditional courses as “Love, Adultery, and Prostitution in 19<sup>th</sup> Century Russian Literature,” “Revolution, Crime, and Romance in 20<sup>th</sup> Century Russian Literature,” “Russian Literature Since the Death of Stalin”, and “Russian Myths and Legends.” I would love the chance to teach more specialized courses covering the major works of Chekhov, Tolstoy, or Dostoevsky. I am interested in creating courses on the reception of Darwinism and the history of evolutionary biology in the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union (in English), the history of terrorism and state terror in Imperial and Soviet Russia (in English or Russian), and on Russian drama (in English or Russian).



COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCE  
*German, Russian, Asian and Middle Eastern  
Languages and Cultures*

170 Irvin Hall, 400 E. Spring Street  
Oxford, OH 45056-1859  
P: 513.529.2526 | F: 513.529.8391  
MiamiOH.edu/gramelac

15 October 2024

Dear Colleagues:

I strongly recommend Brendan Mooney for the Assistant Teaching Professor of Russian position at William and Mary. I hired Dr. Mooney and have been impressed by his teaching, scholarship, and collegiality. Dr. Mooney is currently a Fellow with the Havighurst Center for East European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies at Miami University. He is enthusiastic, flexible, and works well with colleagues in our multi-language department.

My letter will focus on his excellent work at Miami, including Dr. Mooney's commitment to teaching small classes and giving students individual attention. As a liberal arts graduate myself, I believe he would be a wonderful addition to William and Mary.

Dr. Mooney is an exceptional instructor (he received two awards for teaching excellence at Miami; his Spring 2024 evaluations are at 3.5 or above on a 4.0 scale). His 19<sup>th</sup>-century literature survey course is successful with students beyond our major. The syllabus delves into Pushkin, Gogol', Dostoevskii, Turgenev, Tolstoi, as well as the works of Chernyshevskii and Herzen (often ignored yet essential to the fraught relationship between literature and revolution). Dr. Mooney has taught our two survey courses in twentieth-century Russian literature and the major's Introduction to Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies class, garnering very high evaluations. His syllabi for all these courses include voices too long ignored in our field.

I visited his Beginners' Russian (101) course and was impressed by the lesson on the accusative case, a tricky concept that Dr. Mooney explained with his own well-organized handout. He used Russian for most in-class activities, including introducing new grammar. It was evident that the students were used to a class conducted mainly in Russian. There was a supportive rapport between students and the instructor; his retention rate between Fall and Spring courses is very high.

Watching his second-year class, I was again impressed by Dr. Mooney's lesson, which connected nominative, genitive, and prepositional cases with dates, months, and years. His self-designed handout first explored then reinforced case usage before turning to complex moments and grammatical exceptions. Most of the class was conducted in Russian. Students were not only engaged but often volunteered, a good sign indeed. As in his Russian 101 course, Dr. Mooney corrects student errors in a way that is inoffensive yet helpful. (He deals well with the increased fragility students have after the pandemic.) In Spring 2025 he will teach our advanced reading course.

When covid began Dr. Mooney was the faculty member who adapted best to teaching online (he taught all classes synchronously). During this semester he taught for the first time our most popular course, Russian Folklore. Dr. Mooney's syllabus was a balanced approach to the subject,

Mooney/Sutcliffe Letter of Support 2

supplementing the magical tales in Afanas'ev's collection with theory by Vladimir Propp and Bruno Bettelheim as well as Frank Miller's influential study of Soviet 'fakelore'.

A specialist in Darwin's reception in Russian culture, Dr. Mooney has extensive training in the natural sciences and is well-placed to teach a course appealing to majors in this area. (My colleague in Biology was planning to team-teach with Dr. Mooney before the pandemic.)

Dr. Mooney has a strong record of service with students, working on Miami's Fulbright committee and writing letters for Boren, Gilman, and other national grants. He has also taken students to Ufa, an experience that will aid him in running a study abroad program in the Caucasus or Central Asia. Recently he supervised an independent student project focusing on articles from *Pravda*. In the profession, he served on the executive committee for the Southern Conference on Slavic Studies.

He has two chapters published in a double-blind peer-reviewed volume Dr. Mooney co-edited with Andrew Drozd. One chapter, focusing on Nikolai Strakhov, shows that this critic connected to Dostoevskii was also deeply conflicted over the social implications of Darwinism. Dr. Mooney also has a chapter on renowned scientist Kliment Timiriazev, exploring how translations of evolutionary theory popularized *The Origin of Species*. The volume was praised in a review in *Russian Review* as well as *Choice*. Dr. Mooney has a chapter (Bloomsbury, forthcoming) on Dmitrii Pisarev, examining the 19<sup>th</sup>-century critic's overlooked, intriguing, and complex relationship with Darwin. As part of an ambitious, interdisciplinary project with colleagues in the US and UK, Dr. Mooney is translating key texts connected to the Russian reception of Darwinism.

Having presented at the major national conferences in Russian literature (ASEEES and AATSEEL), Dr. Mooney has also read papers (in Russian and English) at regional MLA conferences and other venues. He participated in the Working Group on Darwin's Reception in Russia at the Virtual Summer Research Laboratory (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign). He has reviewed for *Slavic and East European Journal*.

I have benefitted from Dr. Mooney's collegiality and generosity, including his insightful comments on my own work. If our program could hire Dr. Mooney permanently, I would do so without hesitation. Please contact me should there be any questions: [sutclibm@miamioh.edu](mailto:sutclibm@miamioh.edu), 513-529-1822.



Benjamin Sutcliffe, Professor of Russian  
Department of German, Russian, Asian, Middle Eastern Languages and Culture  
Havighurst Faculty Associate, Miami University