**Letter from the Director**

Dear Friends of the REEES Program,

The 2015-16 academic year started with gratifying news for scholars of Russia and Eastern Europe when writer and journalist Svetlana Alexievich, was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature. At UCSD, we have worked to integrate innovative contemporary writers and artists like Alexievich into our undergraduate curriculum by expanding our major and minor to include a broader range of courses and more contemporary topics. Our program, founded decades ago to study the Soviet Union, is currently restructuring its requirements to allow students more flexibility in studying the broader region and languages of Eastern Europe and Eurasia.

This year, UCSD’s Russian club has seen a new surge in activity. Professor Rebecca Wells and Russian language Teaching Assistant Teresa Kuruc have, together with a large group of UCSD undergraduates, held regular film screenings, artistic evenings, and celebrations on campus. Our new undergraduate peer advisor Savannah Hansen has offered guidance to new majors and minors. Many of our recent graduates are pursuing graduate study or embarking on careers in related areas. This spring, we welcomed our new coordinator, Mitzy Martinez (pictured). Mitzy has over 10 years of experience in higher education and has worked at both UCSD and UC Riverside. She enjoys working with students and watching documentaries about the Russian Empire.

Finally, we are pleased to introduce our REEES logo! This comes thanks to the efforts of Cyndi Dillon and Helen Olow, the Management Services Officer (MSO) of the UCSD’s Institute for Arts and Humanities, which will bring together many of UCSD’s area studies and interdisciplinary programs. This new center will support several programs, including REEES, making courses and public events more accessible to students and other members of the UCSD community. I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to the community members who have supported REEES at UCSD through donations and your presence at our events, to our wonderful past program coordinator Sally Hargate and our new coordinator Mitzy Martinez, and to our faculty and students, whose intellectual curiosity fuels our program. Thanks go, in particular, to Teresa Kuruc for her work on this newsletter.

Sincerely,

Amelia Glaser
UCSD will be hosting the colloquium in Spring, 2018. Dr. Hartblay’s work argues for reading Nabokov as an auto-translator. UCSD and UCB Scholars Discuss “Comintern Aesthetics” at UCHRI

Beginning in 1919, the “Third International” was a transnational political endeavor that aimed to spread communism worldwide. This enormous endeavor included art and literature, as well as a political agenda. Professor Amelia Glaser (Literature) and Professor Steven Lee (UC Berkeley) collaboratively convened a conference at UC Berkeley in April 2015 on the aesthetics of the Comintern. The event gathered scholars from the US and beyond, including UCSD’s Professor Luis Martin Cabrera (Literatures in Spanish) to discuss the literary and artistic effects of the Communist International. Glaser and Lee are currently editing a scholarly volume on the topic, and to that end, led a workshop on the topic at the UC Humanities Research Institute in Irvine in January 2016 for a group of graduate students. UCSD’s Teresa Kuruc was among those participating in the weeklong workshop.

Undergraduate Peer Advisor

Savannah Hansen is a fifth year REEES major who fell in love with the Russian language and the REEES program in her very first courses. She hopes to encourage students to enroll in REEES by sharing her enthusiasm for the courses and the professors. In her time as a peer advisor, Savannah has used her knowledge of the REEES program to help fellow students navigate the program’s requirements and answer their questions about majoring in REEES.
The UCSD Russian Club Combines Language Study with Social Events

The students in UCSD’s Russian Club are active in the campus community! This fall, they hosted Russian cuisine and movie nights, and in the winter, they started a new quarterly tradition - Kapustnik - at which they sing Russian songs, recite poems, and perform skits in celebration of their language learning. Also, students, faculty, and other supporters represented the Russian Club as an official team in the Triton 5K in April. The Russian Club hosts a **weekly conversation table on Tuesdays from 4-6pm.** All Russophiles, no matter your language proficiency, are encouraged to attend! For more information, contact Russian language instructor, Rebecca Wells, at prwells@ucsd.edu or Russian language TA, Teresa Kuruc, at tkuruc@ucsd.edu. Or, join our Facebook group “UCSD Russian Party” to find out about event times and locations and to stay in touch. ([https://www.facebook.com/groups/ucsdruussianparty/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/ucsdruussianparty/))

**Chekhov at UCSD**

The UCSD Theater and Dance Department recently produced Chekhov’s final play, *The Cherry Orchard*, at UCSD. MFA candidate in Theater **Mandy Nussbaum** (**MFA Theater and Dance, 2016**) was the production stage manager of the play, which featured UCSD Masters students in Theater and Dance. This outstanding adaptation of Chekhov’s timeless play about property and family showed the relevance of the turn of the century topic to contemporary California. The well-loved story presents themes of cultural futurity in the context of turn of the century Russia and reflects social changes and forces at work around the globe in that period. (Photo by Jim Carmody.)

**The San Diego Russian School Offers Volunteer Positions for UCSD Students**

Since 1998, the San Diego Russian School (SDRS - [www.sdrussianschool.com](http://www.sdrussianschool.com)) has welcomed K-12 kids from all over San Diego County for Sunday classes in Russian grammar, literature, history, and arts. The progress it has made in 2015, in partnership with REEES, has allowed the school to serve more students in new ways. This spring, the school added two electives that helped emphasize problem solving - math and programming, both taught in Russian. The school’s subjects complement math education in day school, and build self-confidence and readiness to meet future challenges in high school, college, and professional work. In addition to regular classes, SDRS has started a speaker series called “Insight into Professions.” Several times a year, professionals from the Russian-speaking community give presentations about their work and hobbies. This year students have listened to lectures about architecture, filmmaking, and teaching. In March 2015, SDRS students held a real-time Skype teleconferencing session with Russian students living in Kostroma. Though SDRS students and students in Russia have different school systems and different after-school activities, they found a lot in common, especially favorite books (the *Harry Potter* series is the crowd favorite among both groups of students).

This year UCSD Russian language undergraduate **Alicia Rorabaugh**, through the UCSD Academic Internship Program, worked with the students to better understand the college application process. Alicia gave a talk on how to prepare for college and on the alternatives to 4-year college education. Alicia also worked on a related project with **Scripps Institute scientist Elena Yulaeva**, “Global Forest Link”. Sponsored by the World Resources Institute, the project aimed at connecting Russian and U.S. high school students through discussion of environmental problems in their communities. Students collected photos from neighborhood forests, compared them with satellite images, and analyzed their findings during real-time Skype meetings. Says Yulaeva, “We are very happy with the growth of SDRS and are looking forward to new collaborations with REEES.”

**Timothy Snyder Lectures on Black Earth: The Holocaust as History and Warning**

Award winning historian **Timothy Snyder** (Hossum Professor of History, Yale) visited UCSD on March 2 and discussed his most recent acclaimed publication, *Black Earth: The Holocaust as History and Warning*, which is a rethinking of how and why the Holocaust took place in Eastern Europe. Snyder is the author of five books on European history, including *Bloodlands: Europe between Hitler and Stalin*. The talk sponsored jointly by History, European Studies, Jewish Studies, and the Holocaust Living History Workshop, drew a large crowd of UCSD faculty, students, and community members.

http://reees.ucsd.edu
Faculty Research and Publication Highlights

Professor Jesse Driscoll (Political Science) has just published *Warlords and Coalition Politics in Post-Soviet States* (Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics). Professor Robert Edelman (History) is a leader of the Global History of Sport in the Cold War Project, a Cold War International History Project sponsored by the Wilson Center and National Endowment for the Humanities. The cross-disciplinary collaboration involves over 70 scholars from multiple disciplines and countries. It will culminate in presentations that are available through the Digital Archive of the Cold War International History Project, as well as in two scholarly volumes. Professor Amelia Glaser (Literature) published an edited volume, *Stories of Khmelnytsky: Competing Legacies of a Ukrainian Cossack* (Stanford University Press, 2015). Professor Martha Lampland (Sociology) is publishing *The Value of Labor: The Science of Commodification in Hungary, 1920-1956* (University of Chicago Press, forthcoming in Summer of 2016). Professor Natalia Roudakova (Communication) has a book forthcoming with Cambridge UP. This study of post-Soviet journalism is provisionally titled *Losing Pravda: Journalism and the Crisis of Truth-Seeking in Russia*. Professor Emeritus Peter Gourevitch (School of Global Policy and Strategy) has given talks on his family history at various venues on campus. The talks “Fleeing Hitler and Stalin to America: Illuminating History with Family Stories” explores the trajectory of his family, with four Menshevik grandparent, starting in Tsarist Russia, through the revolution, to Berlin in 1923, then to Paris in 1933, and then to the US in 1940. Not all family members made it that far, as some were killed in the Stalin years and others by the Nazis. His talks draw upon stories he heard as a child, documents he found in various sources, and his work as a social scientist and historian, weaving together a narrative of interpretation about how political engagement created for his grandparents both danger and awareness of the threat to their lives and those around them.

**2015-2016 COURSE LIST**

**FALL 2015**

COMM 163 – Concepts of Freedom

JUDA 111 – Love and Desire in Hebrew Literature

LTRU 1A, 2A, 104A – First-Year through Advanced Russian Language

LTRU 199 – Independent Study in Russian Literature

**WINTER 2016**

LTRU 1B, 2B, 104B – First-Year through Advanced Russian Language

COMM 104E – Comparative Media Systems: Europe

HIEU 178 – Colloquium on Postwar USSR 1945-1991

LTRU 123 – Dostoevsky

**SPRING 2016**

LTRU 1C and 2C – First and Second-Year Russian Language

LTRU 123 - Nabokov

HIEU 156 – Late Imperial and Soviet Russia

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