Dear Colleagues and Students,

I am excited to start my role as Acting Director of our Center this semester while David Cooper is on leave in the Czech Republic. For those of you I have not yet had the pleasure of meeting I look forward to becoming acquainted with you this semester. Here is my bio that details more about my background.

Let me now tell you what REEEC has in store for you this semester—and be sure to have your calendars handy, these are not-to-miss events!

For our Directions Lecture Series, where leading scholars of our area studies present on their state-of-the-art research, we invited Peter Holquist, Associate Professor of History at the University of Pennsylvania. His talk on February 5th will explore the genealogy of the concept of ‘crimes against humanity’ from 1815-1945. This semester’s Distinguished Lecture will be delivered on April 2 by journalist, David Satter, who was expelled from Russia a year ago.

The Noontime Scholars Lecture Series that features local talent will consist of four lectures this semester. Chronologically the first talk, on February 17th, is by Associate Professor of Theatre, Valleri Robinson, on her Fulbright-funded work with the Kolyada Theatre in Ekaterinburg. On March 10, Mohammad Babadoost, Professor of Crop Sciences will present. Our graduate student presenter this Spring is History Ph.D. candidate Veneta Ivanova, who on April 7th will share with us findings of her fascinating dissertation, entitled “Communism with an Occult Face: Culture, Science and Spirituality in Late Socialist Bulgaria”.

Our last presenter in this series, on April 21st, will be Linguistics Professor Emeritus, Hans Hoch. Keeping with the tradition, these talks are scheduled for the lunch hour and are held in Room 101, ISB.

We are also co-sponsoring a number of promising talks and conferences that you will find of great interest. Chronologically the first one is the EU Centers of Excellence Directors Lecture by Rebecca Friedman on January 30. The title of her presentation is “Time at Home: Material Realities and Russian Longing at the Fin de Siècle.” Another talk put on by the EU Center is John Feffer’s presentation “Backlash in East-Central Europe: What Happened to the Promise of 1989?” Finally, we are co-sponsoring two conferences: the Annual Turkish Studies Symposium on April 3rd, and the Third Annual Translation Conference on April 10, featuring Distinguished Professor of Cognitive Science and Comparative Literature at Indiana University, Douglas Hofstadter.

Finally, let me remind you of an important and rapidly approaching deadline: FLAS applications this year are due on February 6th.

Let me reiterate what a great honor it is to serve as Acting Director and how much I am looking forward to seeing as many of you as possible.

I wish you a productive 2015.

Best Wishes,

Zsuzsa Gille