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Since 2019, I have had the honor and privilege to oversee the Polish program at the University of Wisconsin-Madison: the oldest and one of the most dynamic Polish studies programs in North America. During this time, we have upgraded our curriculum, introduced new courses, and developed outreach strategies to serve better the needs of our students and the Madison community. Despite the difficulties posed by the COVID pandemic, our enrollments in the past two years have been consistently growing. Each year, we welcome students from all walks of life who seek to learn about Poland’s history, language, and cultural heritage.

We would not have been able to accomplish that without the generous support of our community. Your donations and involvement in our events and initiatives help enrich our program. For more information on contributing and to hear testimonials from our outstanding students, please visit go.wisc.edu/polish today.

Łukasz Wodzyński
Assistant Professor of Polish
Dept. of German, Nordic, and Slavic+
SCREENING POLAND SINCE 1991

The Madison Polish Film Festival continues, despite challenges.

30 Years and Counting
Communism felt like yesterday, and George H. W. Bush resided in the White House when Ewa Miernowska, then a Ph.D. student in French literature, first decided to host a festival to showcase Poland’s vibrant film scene. Since then, the festival has grown into a staple event on campus, now in its 30s.

One-Woman Show
Since its inception, Dr. Miernowska has remained the main driver behind each year’s festival. Her tireless work brought hundreds of hours’ worth of cinematic material to campus, helping build a sizable Polish film collection. Her efforts were awarded in 2021 when she received special recognition at the annual Polish Film Festival in America.

The Tradition Continues
After close to 30 years in charge, Dr. Miernowska handed the festival’s programming over to her successors. Just like other events, the festival has felt the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. When the campus shut down in early September 2020, the screenings necessarily moved online. On November 13 and 20, 2022, the festival continued its tradition of promoting Polish film, culture, and language to the Madison and Wisconsin community. See more on gns.wisc.edu/madison-polish-film-festival.

Ready to support initiatives like the Polish Film Festival? Go to gns.wisc.edu/donate or scan the QR code to the right to start giving now.
The Lapinski Scholarship, generously endowed from the will of Mrs. Leona Lapinski Leute, helps to support students pursuing Polish language and culture courses. This year’s winners are Victoria Chowaniak and Julia Paciorek. Gratulacje!

Victoria Chowaniak is a first-generation student and Polish American from Illinois majoring in Biology. She attended the Tadeusz Kościuszko Polish School and now sits on the Polish Student Association board. Victoria values community and connection to her culture. She enjoys hiking, traveling, and sharing Polish culture with her friends.

Julia Paciorek is a dual national (Poland, United States) and triple major in Computer Science, Data Science, and Polish from Houston. She is a member of several Polish organizations and is a Polish folk artist who specializes in the Kashubian/Kraków style. She enjoys spending time with her dog and playing The Witcher series video games.

The Lapinski fund provides financial support for UW–Madison students studying the Polish language, literature, and culture. Our students have also benefited from the support of the Zawacki and Gąsiorowska funds. We express our thanks to our donors and remain grateful for their generosity and continuous support.

Ready to make a difference in students’ lives? Go to www.gns.wisc.edu/donate or scan the QR code below to start giving now.
"Growing up in Poland, I was taught the history of Poland as the history of Poles. Then I discovered that reality was much more complex" — these thoughts inspired UW Polish Lecturer Dr. Krzysztof Borowski to develop a new course on Poland’s and Central Europe’s diverse heritage, which combined his love for cultures—and maps.

Instead of traveling to Poland or the region, students in the course took a virtual journey there as they collaborated on digital projects exploring the area’s rich cultural heritage. Instead of writing final papers, they created a virtual guide titled Mapping Multiculturalism in Central Europe using mapping software.

From Berlin to Białystok, from Vienna to Wolin, students’ projects trace cultural diversity through text, imagery, and videos. According to its description, the project tells the story of how multiple cultures, languages, and religions co-existed and evolved in the Central European region.

The digital guide's first edition includes such locales as Berlin, Białystok, Gdańsk, Gniezno, Kashubia, Łódź, Poznań, Silesia, Vienna, Wilamowice, and Wolin. To read our blog post about the project and start interacting with the project, go to go.wisc.edu/polish.

Support our innovative teaching of Polish language and culture. Go to www.gns.wisc.edu/donate or scan the QR code to the right to start giving now.
The introduction of martial law on December 13, 1981 in Poland remains a focal point in Polish historical memory. To explore its significance and impact, our Polish Studies faculty organized a panel, The Anniversary of Martial Law in Poland.

The panel took place on April 21, 2022, at the Pyle Center, attracting an audience of faculty, students, and community members. Panel participants included Prof. Łukasz Wodzyński (Slavic), Dr. Krzysztof Borowski (Slavic, both UW), Prof. Brian Porter-Szűcs (History, University of Michigan), and UW historian Kathryn Ciancia, who moderated the discussion. The UW Center for Russia, East Europe, and Central Asia (CREECA) sponsored the event.

First, Prof. Porter-Szűcs analyzed post-1989 statistical data about life in communist Poland to challenge mainstream martial law narratives. Next, Prof. Wodzyński discussed Polish literature of and about martial law to draw parallels between reality and fiction. Finally, Dr. Borowski continued this theme as he examined Netflix's TV series "1983" in light of the historical events of 1981 and contemporary political life in Poland. The discussion following the panel invited intriguing questions from the audience.

Support the planning and organization of more events like this one. Go to www.gns.wisc.edu/donate or scan the QR code to the left to start giving now.
OUR COURSES

The Politics of Laughter: Polish comedy culture

SLAVIC 244 / LITTRANS 244

Multiculturalism in Central Europe

SLAVIC 361 / LITTRANS 361

LIVING AT THE END OF TIMES: CONTEMPORARY POLISH LITERATURE AND CULTURE

POLISH CINEMA

Explore history and culture through language

Learn Polish
The UW-Madison Polish Studies program offers a full suite of Polish language, literature, and culture courses. Each semester dozens of students take advantage of our courses as a doorway into getting to know Poland and its culture better.

### Polish Language
- First Semester Polish
- Second Semester Polish
- Third Semester Polish
- Fourth Semester Polish
- Introduction to Intensive Polish
- 4th/5th/6th Semester Intensive Polish
- Third Year Polish
- Fourth Year Polish

### Polish Literature and Culture
- Contemporary Polish Literature & Culture
- Escaping Utopia: Cultures After Communism
- History and Ethics on Film: Polish Cinema
- Multicultural Central Europe
- Polish American Migration Experience
- Polish Literature in Translation
- Politics and Comedy in Poland
- War and Culture: The Polish Experience

Help support our Polish language, literature, and culture courses. Go to [www.gns.wisc.edu/donate](http://www.gns.wisc.edu/donate) or scan the QR code to start giving now.
The Polish Student Association is a student organization dedicated to expanding cultural awareness of Poland. Members participate in biweekly general meetings to explore and discuss history, geography, traditions, pop culture, and current events relating to Poland and its people. Most importantly, no Polish heritage or language skills are required to be a member and everyone is welcome to join.

Support the PSA and other initiatives by donating today. Go to www.gns.wisc.edu/donate or scan the QR code to the right to start giving now.

The first semester in college can often feel lonely. Whether you enjoy pierogi, trivia, or retreats, the Polish Student Association (PSA) has got you covered. With a long list of activities and initiatives, joining the PSA is the thing to do to enhance the UW-Madison college experience.

Victoria Chowaniak, a first-generation student from Chicago, cannot speak highly enough of it. "I joined the PSA and am now on the board as the secretary. I look forward to going to PSA every time. I have been able to meet so many amazing people and build so many relationships," she declares.

In the past, the PSA has organized spring break retreats, game nights, sports games, trips to Chicago and Milwaukee, and socials. The PSA also organizes the Madison Polish Film Festival each year. Above all, members have a good time together while learning about and maintaining their interest in all things Polish: language, culture, or food.
Łukasz Wodzyński, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Polish

Intrigued by the concept of adventure, post-communism, and Polish modernism, Prof. Wodzyński is currently completing his book manuscript on re-enchantment in Polish and Russian early 20th-century novels. At UW, he teaches courses on Polish literature and film as well as post-communism.

Ewa Miernowska, Ph.D.
Senior Lecturer

A longstanding Polish language lecturer in the department, Dr. Miernowska (aka Pani Ewa) has educated scores of UW students, passing them on her love for Polish culture, film, and literature. Pani Ewa’s flagship initiative is the Madison Polish Film Festival, now in its third decade of running.

Krzysztof Borowski, Ph.D.
Lecturer in Polish Studies

Fascinated by contemporary Poland, Dr. Borowski’s work explores emerging trends in politics, language, and culture. His teaching staples are students’ digital projects. At UW, he teaches courses on Polish political comedy, the multicultural heritage of Central Europe, and the Polish American experience.