

HISTORY OF POLAND
HIST 234/POL 234
FALL 2017

Instructor: Michał J. Wilczewski
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Office Hours: UH 916, M, T, 11-12 or by appt.
Class Time: T, Th 12:30-1:45, Burnham Hall 305

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Office Hours: UH 1027
T 10:30-11:30, Th 2:30-3:30

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course analyzes Poland's dynamic political, social, and cultural transformations over the course of the country's one-thousand-year history, from the 10th century to the present. We will cover the formation, conversion, and consolidation of the Polish state and understand the ebbs and flows of its geographic expansion. Additionally, the course explores Poland's relationship to Christianity, the evolution (and devolution) of "noble democracy," the effects of various foreign incursions, and the changing meaning of Poland in our globalized world, particularly Poland's place in the debate between the "East" and "West." Topics include the Golden Age of Polish high culture, constitutionalism, the period of tripartite partition, the rise of modern nationalism, the First World War, the interwar Second Republic and the crisis of democracy, the Nazi and Soviet occupations during the Second World War, communism and political dissidence, the Solidarity movement and the collapse of the communist state, the transition to liberal democracy, and modern day Polish politics and society.

The history of the place we call "Poland" and the people we call "Poles" is as dynamic as it is complex. Over the course of its thousand-year history, Poland's borders have changed numerous times, and its population has been made up of various ethnic, linguistic, and religious groups. Thus, we will take as our starting premise that the history of Poland is the history of a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, and multi-religious society. In this sense, we will focus on the various people, cultures, and religions that have shaped Polish history over the past millennium. This course is designed neither to provide fixed answers nor a single historic narrative, but rather to interrogate questions about how historical developments were experienced by people of diverse interests and backgrounds. At the same time, because the class deals with a national history, we will look at issues of how national identity and collective memory are constructed, changed, and mobilized by various groups for various purposes.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Patrice Dabrowski, *Poland: The First Thousand Years*
Isaac Bashevis Singer, *The Slave*
Miron Białoszewski, *A Memoir of the Warsaw Uprising* (2015 edition)

Additional readings will be posted on Blackboard and are marked in the course schedule below. Books are available for purchase in the UIC Bookstore, though they

are all easily available from other vendors. Please complete readings prior to class and come prepared to discuss them. In addition to large class discussions, we will occasionally divide into small groups to analyze some readings more closely. Students are also encouraged to attend various Polish Studies events at UIC over the course of the semester as well as take interest in the current events happening in Poland. Feel free to bring articles that you think are important and interesting to discuss in class.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND METHODS OF EVALUATION: Students will be evaluated on the quality of their performance on the following required assignments:

- Map and Reading Quizzes (10%) see course schedule for quiz dates
- First Paper (4-5 pages) (15%) due **September 28, 2017**
- Midterm Examination (25%) on **October 10, 2017**
- Second Paper (4-5 pages) (15%) due **November 21, 2017**
- Take-Home Final Examination (25%) due **December 15, 2017**
- Attendance and Participation (10%)

GRADES: Students' final grades will be rendered according to the following:

A = 90% – 100%

B = 80% – 89%

C = 70% – 79%

D = 60% – 69%

F = 0% – 59%

ADDITIONAL NOTES:

1. **Plagiarism:** Please make sure you understand the definition of plagiarism. Plagiarism will not be tolerated in this class. If you take words from any source, you must use quotation marks and acknowledge the sources with proper citations. Even when you use your own words, but have borrowed an idea from another source, you must reference it. Presenting someone else's work as your own can result in the disqualification of your work and a failing grade for this class. It can also result in suspension from the University. This is a very serious offense and should be treated that way. If you are ever unsure of whether you are at risk of plagiarizing, please ask. Students are required to produce original work for each assignment for this course. Reusing parts of papers written for this or other courses is considered self-plagiarism and will also result in the disqualification of that assignment.
2. **Blackboard and SafeAssign:** This course will require that students access Blackboard (uic.blackboard.com) to read additional readings and take reading quizzes. Please make sure that you have access to Blackboard from the beginning of the semester. If for some reason you do not, please write to the instructor immediately. All papers must be submitted electronically through SafeAssign via Blackboard before the beginning of the class on the due date **AND** turned in in hard copy in class.

3. **Late Papers:** Late papers drop one letter grade per day after the deadline. An A becomes a B, then a C, and so on. If you cannot complete the assignment on time and need an extension, please contact the instructor or TA ahead of the due date.
4. **Quizzes:** Four quizzes will be administered in this class. The first is an in-class map quiz that serves to familiarize students with the geography of the historic Polish lands. The other three will be reading quizzes that students will complete through Blackboard. Blackboard quizzes will consist of a combination of short answers, multiple choice, and true and false questions, and should be completed before the start of class on the date listed in the course schedule below. Reading quizzes will be released 72 hours before the start of class and will be timed 20 minutes each. After 20 minutes, the quiz will close. Students will only have one opportunity to take the quiz, so please make sure you've read and taken careful notes on the readings before choosing to begin the quiz. Online quizzes cannot be made up.
5. **Cell Phones:** Please come to class on time with cell phones set to silent and stored away. Please refrain from texting or reading text messages during class. Such behavior is extremely disruptive for both you and those around you. Students who are active on their phones **will** be called out in class. Continued use of your phone will result in being counted as absent for the day.
6. **Use of Technology:** The use of computers to take notes during lecture is **ONLY** permitted if students have the self-discipline to stay off websites and messaging applications. Again, this is distracting to those around you. Please do not abuse this privilege. Students who are found surfing the internet during class will not be able to use their laptops in the future. Students who wish to record lectures must receive permission to do so from the instructor first. This refers only to audio recordings; video recordings are not allowed.
7. **Common Courtesy:** Students are expected to respect, though certainly not always agree with, others' ideas, interpretations, and comments. Healthy and respectful debate is expected and encouraged. Students are also expected to respect the diversity of their classmates. Everyone is encouraged to help create and sustain a healthy, safe, and productive learning environment. Students who regularly come in late, leave to take phone calls, chat with their neighbors during lecture, and are otherwise disrespectful will have their participation grade severely diminished.
8. **Attendance and Participation:** Regular attendance and thoughtful participation are crucial if students want to perform well in this class. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class meeting. Students are allowed a maximum of **TWO** unexcused absences before their grade is negatively affected. An absence will only be excused if proper documentation is provided. Please communicate with the instructor ahead of time, if you know you will be absent. Students are responsible for any work and announcements that they may miss during their absence.
9. **E-mailing the Instructor and TA:** Please make sure that your e-mails to both the instructor and TA are written carefully and completely with a greeting, message,

and signature that identifies yourself. You should use this as an opportunity to building your professional communication skills.

10. **Office Hours:** Both the instructor and TA are available to meet with students during office hours. Please feel free to stop by. If you cannot attend the scheduled office hours, students can also ask to make an appointment to meet. Office hours are an excellent time to discuss paper drafts, your performance in the class, or to clarify any additional questions you may have. Students who want to go over drafts of their papers must meet with the instructor or TA in person; paper drafts will not be reviewed over e-mail.
11. **Students with Disabilities:** The University of Illinois at Chicago is committed to maintaining a barrier-free environment so that students with disabilities can fully access programs, courses, services, and activities at UIC. Students with disabilities who require accommodations for access to and/or participation in this course are welcome, but must be registered with the Disability Resource Center (DRC). You may contact DRC at 312-413-2183 (v) or 773-649-4535 (VP/Relay) and consult the following: <http://drc.uic.edu/guide-to-accommodations>.
12. **Polish Film Club:** Students are encouraged to attend meetings of the Polish Film Club which meets every other Friday in Grant Hall 308, from 1:00: to 3:00 starting September 15, 2017.

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS:

This course outline is tentative and subject to change during the semester. Students are responsible for all changes announced in class.

Week 1 – Reading:	Gallus Anonymous, “Polish Chronicle (Selections),” Wincenty Kadłubek, “Polish Chronicles (Selections),” and Godziszław Bosko, “The Chronicle of Great Poland (Selections),” in <i>Medieval Literature of Poland: An Anthology</i> , edited by Michael J. Mikoś, 3-25 (BLACKBOARD); Dabrowski, 5-24.
August 29	The History of Poland: A Biography of Nowhere?
August 31	For God or Country?: The Christianization and Expansion of Medieval Poland; Map Quiz Practice Guide Distributed.
Week 2 – Reading:	Dabrowski, 24-87; Begin reading <i>The Slave</i> .
September 5	Tatar Incursions, German Colonization, and the Teutonic Conquest
September 7	The Union with Lithuania and the Beginnings of the Jagiellonian Dynasty; MAP QUIZ.

- Week 3 – Reading:** Antony Polonsky, *The Jews in Poland and Russia, 1350-1881*, Chapter 2, 40-67, (BLACKBOARD); Dabrowski, 87-140; Continue reading *The Slave*.
- September 12**
September 14 The Golden Age of Poland and the Protestant Reformation
The Diversity of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the Role of Jews in Early Modern Poland; **COMPLETE READING QUIZ #1 ON BLACKBOARD BEFORE CLASS.**
- Week 4 – Reading:** Nathan Hanover, *Abyss of Despair: The Famous 17th Century Chronicle Depicting Jewish Life in Russia and Poland during the Chmielnicki Massacres of 1648-1649*, 27-49, (BLACKBOARD); Dabrowski, 192-227, Finish reading *The Slave*.
- September 19** Menaces on All Sides: The Cossack, Swedish, and Ottoman Threats
September 21 **Discussion of *The Abyss of Despair* and Isaac Bashevis Singer’s *The Slave*. Paper #1 Prompts Distributed.**
- Week 5 – Reading:** Dabrowski, 143-192, 228-261
- September 26** A Nobleman’s Paradise: The Republican Monarchy in 17th Century Poland
September 28 The Anatomy of Decay: The End of the Monarchy and the Fall of the Polish-Lithuanian State; **PAPER #1 DUE ON SAFEASSIGN AND IN CLASS.**
- Week 6 – Reading:** “The Constitution of May 3, 1791,” (BLACKBOARD); Dabrowski, 261-291; Begin studying for midterm.
- October 3** Erasure: The Partitions of Poland, 1772-1795
October 5 **Midterm Exam Review**
- Week 7 – Reading:** **STUDY FOR MIDTERM;** Dabrowski, 291-302 (after midterm).
- October 10** **MIDTERM EXAMINATION**
October 12 Poland Under Three Empires: Imagining Poland in the Long Nineteenth Century, 1795-1918
- Week 8 – Reading:** Adam Mickiewicz, “Invocation,”; Adam Asnyk, “Oh, Void Complaints,” (BLACKBOARD); Dabrowski, 301-362

- October 17** "Poland has not yet perished!": Polish Romantics and the Insurrectionary Tradition, 1797-1863
- October 19** "Oh, Void Complaints!": Realism, Organic Work, Triloyalism, and the *Kulturkampf*
- Week 9 – Reading:** Jan Słomka, *From Serfdom to Self-Government: Memoirs of a Village Mayor*, 1-17, 162-73; Adam Walaszek, "Wychodźcy, Emigrants or Poles: Fears and Hopes about Emigration in Poland, 1870-1939," 1-17; Robert Blobaum, "Warsaw's Forgotten War," *Remembrance and Solidarity: Studies in 20th Century European History*, 2 (2014): 185-207 (BLACKBOARD); Dabrowski, 362-383; Continue reading *A Memoir of the Warsaw Uprising*.
- October 24** Fin de Siècle: The Birth of Modern Mass Politics, Industrial Development, and the Movement of People; **COMPLETE READING QUIZ #2 ON BLACKBOARD BEFORE CLASS.**
- October 26** "Not Our War?": The Revolution of 1905, the First World War, and the Resurrection of Poland
- Week 10 – Reading:** Julian Tuwim, "To the Common Man,"; Shimon Redlich, *Together and Apart in Brzeżany*, 34-70, (BLACKBOARD); Dabrowski, 383-415, Continue reading *A Memoir of the Warsaw Uprising*.
- October 31** The Unification of Poland: The Legacy of Empire and the Problems of the Second Republic
- November 2** Baptism by Fire: The Second World War and the Fourth Partition of Poland
- Week 11 – Reading:** Tadeusz Borowski, *This Way for the Gas Ladies and Gentlemen*, 29-49, 82-97; Omer Bartov, "The Voice of Your Brother's Blood: Reconstructing Genocide on the Local Level," in *Jewish Histories of the Holocaust* edited by Norman J.W. Goda, 105-134; Antoni Słonimski, "Elegy for the Little Jewish Towns,"; Henryka Lazowert, "The Little Smuggler," (BLACKBOARD); Dabrowski 415-422; Continue reading *A Memoir of the Warsaw Uprising*.
- November 7** The Holocaust; **COMPLETE READING QUIZ #3 ON BLACKBOARD BEFORE CLASS.**
- November 9** **Film:** *Image Before My Eyes: A History of Jewish Life in Poland Before the Holocaust*

- Week 12 – Reading:** Dabrowski, 423-433; Czesław Miłosz, “You Who Wronged,”; Finish reading *A Memoir of the Warsaw Uprising*.
- November 14** **Discussion of Miron Białoszewski’s *A Memoir of the Warsaw Uprising*; Paper #2 Prompts Distributed.**
- November 16** Rebuilding Poland: The End of World War II and the Polish Embrace of Communism
- Week 13 – Reading:** Magda Romańska, “How I Survived Socialism: A Self-Help Guide for Worried Americans,” *Cosmopolitan Review* 4, 1 (2012), (BLACKBOARD); Dabrowski, 433-444.
- November 21** The Polish Road to Socialism: Reform, Consumption, and the Economics of Shortage; **PAPER #2 DUE ON SAFEASSIGN AND IN CLASS.**
- November 23** **HAPPY THANKSGIVING! NO CLASS!**
- Week 14 – Reading:** Jan Błoński, “The Poor Poles Look at the Ghetto,” including Czesław Miłosz, “A Campo di Fiori,” “A Poor Christian Looks at the Ghetto,” and “Dedication,” in *My Brother’s Keeper: Recent Debates on the Holocaust*, edited by Antony Polonsky, 34-52; “K.O.R.’s Appeal to Society,” “The Gdańsk Agreement,” “Solidarity’s Program,” “Jaruzelski Declares Martial Law,” and “Pope John Paul II Speaks on Victory Square in Warsaw,” in Gale Stokes, *From Stalinism to Pluralism*, 194-215,” (BLACKBOARD); Dabrowski, 444-449.
- November 28** Toward a New Openness?: Remembering and Debating the Holocaust in Communist Poland; **Discussion of Jan Błoński and Czesław Miłosz readings.**
- November 30** Revolution: Solidarity and the Collapse of the People’s Republic of Poland
- Week 15 – Reading:** James Traub, “The Party that Wants to Make Poland Great Again,” *New York Times*, November 2, 2016, (BLACKBOARD); Dabrowski, 450-457.
- December 5** Democracy and its Discontents: The Third Polish Republic, 1989-2017
- December 7** A Return to Diversity?: Current Political, Social, and Cultural Developments in Poland; **Take-Home Final Exam Questions Distributed.**

Take-home final exam due Friday, December 15, 2017 at 10:00 a.m on SafeAssign.