

History 425: A History of Poland

Professor Kathryn Ciania

Office Hours: Tuesday, 3:30-5:00pm, and by appointment

Office: Mosse Humanities Building 4133

Email: ciancia@wisc.edu

Lectures: Tuesday, Thursday, 11:00am-12:15pm, Mosse Humanities Building 1217



Course description

Should you fight political oppression with words or actions? Who is allowed in the nation and who is kept outside? How and why do ordinary people commit acts of violence? Most important, how do we tell our nation's history, warts and all? While such questions loom large in today's world, they are not new to Poles. In this class, students will explore contemporary global questions by focusing on the lands that have at one point or another been considered part of Poland, as well as the experiences of Polish migrants across the world, including in Wisconsin. Through innovative written assignments and interactive lectures and discussions, we'll discover how Poles have wrestled with critical questions of identity, conflict, and memory over time, from the medieval period to the Second World War and today's post-communist Poland. Our discussions will revolve around a wide range of sources, including maps, travelogues, political tracts, paintings, photographs, movies, letters, and eyewitness accounts. We'll have two "hands on" sessions—at Memorial Library's Special Collections and at the Wisconsin Historical Society—to view their rich collections on Polish and Polish-American history, as well as two special class meetings with guest professors who will chat and answer questions about their experiences in Poland.

Course objectives

By the end of the class students should be able to:

- Explain the significance of key events, historical figures, and stories that have been covered in the course;
- Analyze (in written and verbal form) a range of primary sources, indicating what they can and cannot tell us about Polish history—and about the people who produced them;

- Participate in class discussion, listening carefully to their peers as well as volunteering their own opinions;
- Show that they can recognize, critique, and construct their own narratives of Polish history.

Assignments

- **Discussion participation (30% of total grade):** As indicated on the syllabus, we will dedicate some parts of lecture time to discussing the themes of the lectures and assigned readings.
- a) **Posted responses (around 200 words each) to readings.** You will post your responses on the weekly forum at the Learn@UW site by 6pm the day before each discussion.
- b) **Class participation.** You should be prepared for lively and engaged discussion, including any small group work that we do during lecture time.
- **Short papers (40% of total grade—20% each):** There will be two short written assignments. The questions and guidelines will be distributed separately. See the weekly class schedule for due dates.
- **Final paper (30% of total grade):** You will write a paper that allows us to bring together the class materials as a whole. It will be due on the last day of class.

Course Grading Criteria

I want you all to succeed in this class. In order to do so, it is critical that you know how you will be assessed.

- **DISCUSSION PARTICIPATION:** At the end of this syllabus, you will find the grading criteria for this element of the class. Please take a look and ask Prof. Ciancia if you have any questions.
- **WRITTEN WORK:** I will provide clear grading criteria for each assignment, which will also be explained in class. You are encouraged to see me if you want to chat about grading criteria prior to handing in your assignments.

Course expectations

This course meets as a group for two 75-minute sessions per week and carries the expectation that you will spend an average of three hours outside of class for each class period. As such, you should plan to allot an average of 6 hours per week for reading, writing, preparing for discussions, and other class demands in addition to class time.

Assigned Readings

All readings are marked with a symbol to help you to locate them:

UB/R: For purchase and on reserve in College Library

CR: Course Reader

L@UW: Uploaded document or link provided at our Learn@UW site

The course reader for this class can be purchased from the Letters and Science Copy Center in the Social Science Building (see below for more information) priced at **\$22.40**. Please note that a copy of the course reader will also be available on reserve at College Library.

Located at:

Sewell Hall, Room 6120
1180 Observatory Drive
Madison, WI 53706
262-5396

Email:

copycenter@ls.wisc.edu

The following books are available for purchase/on reserve:

The following optional textbook is available for purchase/on reserve. Please note that the optional textbook reading suggestions are for your own reference and will not be discussed directly in class:

Jerzy Lukowski and Hubert Zawadzki, *A Concise History of Poland* (Second Edition)
(New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006)

Streaming digital films

The two films for the class can be accessed by clicking on the links provided on the Learn@UW website. *The Pianist* has been digitized and is available as a direct link; *Ashes and Diamonds* can be watched via Kanopy.

Weekly class schedule

Week 1:

Meeting 1 (01/23): Telling Stories about Poland

Meeting 2 (01/25): Polish Beginnings

Week 2

Meeting 1 (01/30): **Discussion Day**

Today's Readings:

1. Gallus Anonymous, "Polish Chronicle (Selections)," in *Medieval Literature of Poland: An Anthology*, ed. by Michael J. Mikos (New York: Garland, 1992), 3-15. **CR**
2. Barbara O'Driscoll, *From Lech to Lech: Polish History for Young Readers* (London: Unicorn, 1990), 5-27. **CR**
3. Ewa Lipniacka, *Xenophobe's Guide to the Poles* (London: Oval Books, 2013), 1-15, 40-42, 53-55, 58-59. **CR**
4. Optional Textbook: 3-37.

Today's Lecture: The Jagiellonian Dynasty

Meeting 2 (02/01): Cultures and Beliefs in Poland-Lithuania

Week 3

Meeting 1 (02/06): **Discussion Day**

Today's Readings:

1. Nicholas Copernicus, "On the Revolutions," in *Polish Renaissance Literature: An Anthology*, edited by Michael J. Mikos (Columbus: Slavica, 1995), 84-91. **CR**
2. Louis C. Karpinski, "Copernicus, Representative of Polish Science and Learning," *National Mathematics Magazine* 19, no. 7 (1945): 343-348. **CR**
3. Owen Gingerich, "The Copernican Quinquecentennial and Its Predecessors: Historical Insights and National Agendas," *Osiris* 14, (1999): 37-60. **CR**
4. Bogdanowicz et al., "Genetic Identification of Putative Remains of the Famous Astronomer Nicolaus Copernicus," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* 106, no. 30 (2009): 12279-12282. **CR**
5. Internet forum on Polish-German Copernicus debates **L@UW**
6. Optional textbook: 38-82.

Meeting 2 (02/08): NO CLASS

Week 4

Meeting 1 (02/13): The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth

Meeting 2 (02/15): The Partitions

Week 5

Meeting 1 (02/20): **Discussion Day**

Today's Readings:

1. William Coxe, *Travels in Poland and Russia* (Dublin: J. Nichols, for T. Cadell, 1784), 207-250. **CR**
2. "Constitution of the Third of May (Excerpts)" in *Man, State, and Society in East European History*, edited by Stephen Fischer-Galati (New York: Praeger, 1970), 169-172. **CR**
3. Optional textbook: 83-132.

Today's Lecture: The Challenges of the Partitions

Meeting 2 (02/22): By Heroic Deeds: Romantic Rebellions

Week 6

Meeting 1 (02/27): Political and Intellectual Currents in the Russian Empire

Meeting 2 (03/01): **Discussion Day**

Today's Readings:

1. Boleslaw Prus, "Patriotism," in *For Your Freedom and Ours*, edited by Krystyna M. Olszer (New York: Frederick Ungar, 1981), 106-109. **CR**
2. Rosa Luxemburg, "The Polish Question at the International Congress in London" (1896), from Marxists Internet Archive: <https://www.marxists.org/archive/luxemburg/1896/07/polish-question.htm>) **CR**
3. Program of the National-Democratic Party in the Russian Partition (1903), translated by Wojciech Owczarek **CR**
4. The 10th Convention of the Polish Socialist Party: Program/Tactics/Organization (Krakow: *Mysl Socjalistyczna*, 1908) (Translated by Brian Porter-Szucs, 2015) **CR**
5. Optional textbook: 135-216.

****Assignment #1 due in class****

Today's Lecture: Germans and Poles

Week 7

Meeting 1 (03/06): Class Visit to Special Collections at Memorial Library (Travelogues and Maps)

Meeting 2 (03/08): A Different Approach to Nationalism: The Habsburg Empire

Week 8

Meeting 1 (03/13): Poles and Migration

Meeting 2 (03/15): Class Visit to the Wisconsin Historical Society Archives

Week 9

Meeting 1 (03/20): ****Discussion Day****

Today's Readings:

1. William I. Thomas and Florian Znaniecki, *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America: Volume 1* (New York: Dover Publications, 1958), 303-315, 394-450. **CR**
2. Henryk Sienkiewicz, *Portrait of America: Letters of Henryk Sienkiewicz* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959), 267-291. **CR**
3. Documents on Polish-Americans in Milwaukee (Historical Society) **L@UW**

Meeting 2 (03/22): World War One and the New Polish State

****SPRING BREAK****

Week 10

Meeting 1 (04/03): The Challenges of Democracy

Meeting 2 (04/05): **Discussion Day**

Special Guest: Geneviève Zubrzycki, Professor of Sociology, University of Michigan

Today's Readings:

1. "The Constitution of March, 17th 1921," and Aleksander Skrzynski, "American and Polish Democracy," in *For Your Freedom and Ours*, 196-205. **CR**
2. The Coup of May 1926 and the Sanacja Regime (documents compiled and translated by Brian Porter-Szucs) **CR**
3. Shimon Redlich, *Together and Apart in Brzezany: Poles, Jews, and Ukrainians, 1919- 1945* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002), 34-77. **CR**
4. Optional Textbook: 217-254.

Extra Event Today:

Geneviève Zubrzycki, "Politics of Memory' in Contemporary Poland"
4pm at CREECA, 206 Ingraham Hall, 1155 Observatory Drive

Week 11

Meeting 1 (04/10): World War Two and the Holocaust

Meeting 2 (04/12): **Discussion Day**

Special Guest: David Ost, Professor of Political Science, Hobart and William Smith Colleges

Today's Readings:

1. Jan Blonski, "The Poor Pole Looks at the Ghetto," in "*My Brother's Keeper?': Recent Polish debates on the Holocaust*," edited by Antony Polonsky (London and New York: Routledge, 1990), 34-52 **CR**
2. Movie: *The Pianist* (Roman Polanski, 2002) **L@UW**
3. Optional textbook: 254-280.

****Assignment #2 due in class****

Extra Event Today:

David Ost lecture, title: TBA
4pm at CREECA, 206 Ingraham Hall, 1155 Observatory Drive

Week 12

Meeting 1 (04/17): Establishing Communist Poland

Meeting 2 (04/19): **Discussion Day***Today's Readings:*

1. Teresa Toranska, *Them: Stalin's Polish Puppets* (New York: Harper and Row, 1987), 7-12, 15-29. **CR**
2. Czeslaw Milosz, *The Captive Mind* (New York: Knopf, 1953), 3-53. **CR**
3. Movie: *Ashes and Diamonds* (Andrzej Wajda, 1958) **L@UW**
4. Optional textbook: 281-295

Week 13**Meeting 1 (04/24): Challenging Communism****Meeting 2 (04/26): **Discussion Day*****Today's Readings:*

1. Shana Penn, *Solidarity's Secret: The Women Who Defeated Communism in Poland* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006), 179-206. **CR**
2. "Marek Nowakowski," "Adam Michnik," and "Tomasz Jastrun," in *The Walls Behind the Iron Curtain: East European Prison Literature, 1945-1990*, edited by Harold B. Segel (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2012), 241-257. **CR**
3. Optional textbook: 295-318.

*Today's Lecture: The Collapse of Communism***Week 14****Meeting 1 (05/01): The Transition to Democracy and Poland Today****Meeting 2 (05/03): **Discussion Day*****Today's Readings:*

1. Law and Justice Party Documents and Speeches (translated and annotated by Brian Porter-Szucs) **CR**
2. Ireneusz Doman Domanski, "In Defense of Democracy." (January 18, 2016) (translated and annotated by Brian Porter-Szucs) **CR**
3. Remarks by President Obama at the 25th anniversary of Freedom Day (November 2014) **CR and L@UW**
4. Remarks by President Trump to the People of Poland (July 2017) **CR and L@UW**
5. Optional textbook: 319-340.

Final Assignment due in class

APPENDIX A: Class Policies and Further Resources

Office Hours

My office hours are posted at the top of the syllabus. Please come by! These hours are set-aside specifically for students, and I would be happy to discuss any aspect of the class with you. If you are unable to make these times, please send me an email so that we can set up a mutually convenient appointment time.

Class Etiquette

There is no laptop use in class and you must make sure that all devices with a screen are switched off or put on silent for the duration of the lecture. Come and speak with me if you are concerned about this policy.

We will begin lectures on time, so please make sure that you arrive a few minutes early. Persistent tardiness (as well as going AWOL!) leads to a lower participation grade.

If there are any assigned readings for lecture, please bring them with you to class.

Papers and Assignments

Papers should be turned in on time to avoid a grade penalty. If there is a problem, it is important that you speak to Professor Ciancia in plenty of time prior to the deadline. Late papers will be penalized by a grade per day.

All assignments should be submitted by the deadline marked on the syllabus in **BOTH hard and electronic copy**. The electronic copy should be uploaded as a Word document onto the course's Learn@UW site. These two documents must be identical. Unless otherwise agreed, email submissions will not be accepted.

You should clearly post the word limit. All assignments should stick to the word limit to avoid a grade penalty.

Historians use the Chicago Manual of Style, which can be found online at www.chicagomanualofstyle.org.

Academic Honesty

There is information about what constitutes plagiarism here (http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/QPA_plagiarism.html), but please come and speak with Professor Ciancia during office hours if you have questions or concerns.

Disabilities

Disability guidelines for course accommodations may be found at the UW McBurney Disability Resource Center site: <http://www.mcburney.wisc.edu/> Please come and see Professor Ciancia if you would like to talk further about disability issues.

Religious Observance Policy

Students must notify Professor Ciancia within the first two weeks of class of the specific days or dates on which they request relief.

Writing Resources and Guidelines

The **University's Writing Center** is a wonderful resource that allows you to work with a consultant to improve your written work. Take a look at their website (<http://www.writing.wisc.edu/index.html>) for more information.

The **History Lab** is a resource center where experts (PhD students) will assist you with your history papers. No matter your stage in the writing process, History Lab staff will help you sharpen your skills and become a more successful writer. In addition to helping you with the specifics of writing in the discipline of history, the experts at the lab will also provide assistance in terms of your writing style (including for non-native speakers of English).

Email protocol

If you have questions for Professor Cincia, you should first read the information on this syllabus carefully to see if the answer you're looking for is included. If you still cannot find an answer, you may ask the question in an email. Please be courteous and professional and allow 24 hours for an email response.

APPENDIX B: Participation Grading Scale

- A:** You participate enthusiastically and regularly in classroom discussions and small group-work, listening to your peers and articulating your own ideas as clearly as possible. Your comments, both in class and on the online forum, demonstrate that you have done the reading carefully, considered your own approach, and/or articulated how it fits with the general themes of the class
- B:** Your contributions show that you have done the reading, but they show a less thoughtful response than that of a student achieving an "A" grade. You have thought about how the reading fits into wider themes that we have been discussing, but on a more superficial level. You participate in classroom discussions, small group-work, and the online forum, listening to your peers and articulating your own ideas, although not with the regularity or depth of a student achieving an "A."
- C:** Your comments in class and on the online forum do not show that you have done the reading in any depth and/or are poorly or vaguely articulated. You include your own thoughts, but do not raise relevant questions or link the materials to the themes of the class. You contribute only rarely to class discussions and/or make comments that do not demonstrate that you have completed the readings or are engaged fully with your classmates.
- D:** Your comments in class are very irregular, you show no evidence that you have completed and understood the reading, and you regularly skip posting on the online forum.
- F:** You do not attend lectures or discussions regularly.