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Congratulations on being accepted to the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire study abroad program with USAC Poland. Living and studying in a new culture is both an exciting and a challenging experience. Past participants of study abroad report that the many advantages of international study include:

- Gaining new perspectives on a chosen academic field
- Increasing understanding of different cultures
- Enhancing personal development
- Developing different perspectives on U.S. culture
- Gaining self-confidence and independence
- Learning skills for the future international job market

It is up to you to determine how you can best benefit from these possible advantages. This is your adventure!

Use this program-specific guide with the more general resources in your BlugoldsAbroad account. While this guide contains the information available at the time of publication, it is impossible for any single resource to answer all of your questions. Your peer advisor will email information throughout the semester, and we encourage you to do your own research, also, using the web resources listed towards the end of this guide, as well as others that you find. Contact the Center for International Education (CIE) staff or your peer advisor with your specific questions.

Questions only you can answer include:

1) What are YOUR goals for this experience? Advancement in a future profession, desire to expand personal and academic horizons, and wish to challenge yourself in a new environment?

2) How can you best prepare to meet your goals within the context of this program? For example, if one of your goals is truly being immersed in Polish culture, yet you are going with a group of UW-Eau Claire & American students, how can you insure that you do not spend too much time with other Americans?

The information in this guide was current at the time of publication, though changes may occur at any time.
ACADEMICS

Additional information on topics such as maintaining program eligibility, registration at UW-Eau Claire, class attendance, course equivalencies, grades, transcripts and service learning is in the Academics section of your Study Abroad Handbook.

Pre-departure Planning
Please see the Poland Academics Page, on our website, for details on how to plan your courses. There are tables on the academics page that detail out how your courses will transfer back to UWEC.

Credits and Course Load

Semester Students:
You will enroll in a minimum of 12 credits and can take a maximum of 18.

Summer Students:
You will enroll in 3-7 credits, with at least one, 3-credit course being taken.

USAC uses the same credit/course load system that you are used to in the states. Courses are contingent on student enrollment and are subject to change.

Keep in mind:
• Summer students: to receive summer financial aid, you must take at least six credits.
• The credits you earn abroad are considered UW-Eau Claire resident credits.
• The classes you take abroad will count towards the total credits needed for graduation.
• Dropping below full-time status may result in loss of financial aid and/or insurance coverage and must be approved in advance by the CIE and USAC.

Registration for USAC Poland
As part of the USAC admissions process, you completed a preliminary course registration. You completed this form indicating your course and tour selections along with two alternative courses in case any courses become unavailable.

If you need to change your courses before you arrive in Poland, you can do so by contacting registration@usac.edu and letting them know which courses you want to change. You can make changes up until USAC’s application deadline. You will receive your final course schedule during the on-site orientation. Your resident director in Poland will make every effort to avoid class conflicts; however, there may be scheduling conflicts and you may need to adjust your class selection. Please be flexible and prepared for course changes.

Dropping/Adding Courses

Semester students:
You will have approximately 2 weeks to add/drop/change courses once you arrive on-site in Poland.

Summer students:
For courses that are only a month long, the add/drop/change deadline is usually 3 days after the class begins.

Written permission is required from both the Resident Director and instructors in order to add/drop/change a course once it has begun.

Withdrawing from USAC Courses
Your Resident Director in Poland will establish a course withdrawal deadline (typically about
two-thirds of the way into the term). If you must drop a course after the drop deadline, but before the withdrawal deadline, a grade of “W” will be reported on your USAC grade report. If you stop attending a class without officially withdrawing from it, the grade will be reported as an “F.”

**Class Attendance**

USAC generally allows students one excused absence. Each tardy is considered one half of an absence. If you fail to attend class, this will affect your grade in the course. All exams must be taken as scheduled.

You will be expected to be in class Monday – Friday. Do not assume that your faculty will be flexible because you want to travel. Your top priority should be attending class and completing all that is asked of you.

Throughout the program, there may be national holidays where you have a day off. Please refer to the Academic calendar on USAC’s site to see a tentative idea.

**Grades**

Courses in the program are graded on the U.S. A-F grading scale. The grades reported on your USAC grade report are the same grades that will appear on your UWEC transcript.

*Note: UWEC students abroad are not allowed to take classes pass/fail. Grades from USAC are figured into your UWEC GPA and posted to your UWEC transcript. No exceptions will be made.*

**USAC Grade Reports & UWEC Transcripts**

*Please see the Academics section of the Study Abroad Handbook for important information if you are graduating, transferring or applying for a competitive major such as Nursing or Education at the end of your term abroad.*

At the end of the program, USAC prepares a grade report, which must be sent to UWEC. If you have any outstanding financial charges, your transcript will be withheld until payment is made.

*If you are asked to complete a transcript release form by USAC, have the transcript sent to the Center for International Education (see Contacts page for full address). UWEC cannot post grades that were first sent to a student.*

USAC will also update your grades on your Gateway account for you to review. Courses, credits, and grades are incorporated into your UWEC transcript.

**Summer:** Grade reports are not available until a few weeks after the summer program ends.

**Semester:** Grade reports are not available until a few months after the program ends.

For all terms: Due to this delay, you will initially receive a grade report with “NR” (not reported) for all courses. This will be changed once your grade report arrives.

**Polish Academic System**

USAC courses are taught at Cracow University of Economics (CUE) by local and visiting faculty. Professors will provide a syllabus at the beginning of the semester and coursework will generally follow a typical U.S. structure with a combination of exams, projects, essays, and/or homework. Your classmates will be other USAC or international students. Local students are already fluent in Polish and typically their
English is not proficient enough to join you in courses taught in English. There will still be plenty of chances for you to interact with local students.

Even though the program is based on the U.S. system, you will be in an international learning environment so some things will be different than your usual expectations. For example, some professors may not hold office hours, but instead you need to arrange individual meetings with them. Local faculty will also have an accent when teaching in English and this could be an adjustment for you.

Course structure and expectations may not be as clearly stated as they are in the U.S., so more responsibility falls on the student to check in about assignments and due dates. If you have any questions or concerns when in Poland, do not be afraid to reach out to your Resident Director for more advice.

Internships
At this time, the Poland location does not offer internships.

Service Learning
There may be opportunities to get involved in the local community. The USAC staff will notify you should anything come up but if you are looking for something specific, you should seek at the staff to inquire.

MONEY MATTERS
UWEC information about making payments, when they are due, withdrawal and refund deadlines, financial aid, general scholarships, budgeting and ways to bring money abroad is in the Money Matters section of your Study Abroad Handbook.

Cost Estimate
You can find the most current Cost Estimate for your program, in easily printable format, on the Poland Brochure page. Be sure you are looking at the correct term. The cost estimate includes what you pay to UWEC, what you pay to USAC, and what you pay directly to other vendors.

USAC Payments & Refund Policy
For questions about paying your USAC fees, please contact the USAC accounting person listed in your Gateway account. You can pay with credit card, check, or money order.

In addition to the UWEC refund policy outlined in the "Money Matters" section of the Study Abroad Handbook, USAC has its own financial policies related to payment, cancellations, and changes. Information about the withdrawal deadlines and penalties are in the USAC Program Agreement and USAC Financial Agreement in your Gateway account.

Housing Costs
Please see the housing section of this guide for housing payment information.

Currency Exchange
The currency of Poland is the Polish Zloty (zł). One Zloty has 100 groszy (gr). There are coins in the form of 1gr, 2gr, 5gr, 10gr, 20gr, 50gr, 1zy, 2zl, 5zl. There are zlotych notes (bills) in 10, 20, 50, 100 and 200. The notes are all different colors so it is easier to tell which one you are grabbing.

You can find current exchange rates at http://www.oanda.com/currency/converter/.

Cost of Living
For an idea of what everyday costs you may encounter, check out this website:
Scholarships
USAC Scholarships: USAC offers a variety of scholarships. For information, visit USAC's Scholarship website. You will see optional scholarship applications on your USAC Gateway account when they open. You can apply for all scholarships you are eligible for and can be awarded more than one scholarship.

Scholarships for UWEC students on USAC Programs: USAC also offers an Affiliate Scholarship just for UWEC students on a USAC program. You will be considered for this scholarship when you complete the UWEC Study Abroad Foundation Scholarship application. The number of awards varies by term. Amounts vary between $200 - $500.

Money on Arrival
A general recommendation is to travel with the equivalent of $100-$200 dollars in your host country currency when you arrive. Obtaining Polish zloties may not be easy while in the US, so you should find an ATM shortly after arriving to withdraw some zloties.

Credit Cards and ATMs
Visa and MasterCard are the most commonly accepted credit cards abroad. In Poland you can use a card almost everywhere. Most credit cards do charge a fee or percentage for the currency exchange rate. Notify your credit card company prior to departure of where you will be travelling.

Debit cards are usually the best option for withdrawing money while abroad. Be sure you know the 4-digit pin for your card and ask your bank what the withdrawal fees are. You may also want to know your daily limit. Your bank may charge transaction fees for each foreign transaction, so you should try to limit the frequency of your ATM withdrawals. Your bank may have global partners that allow you to withdraw for fewer fees, so take note if any banks are partners with your bank. ATMs are plentiful in Poland so you should not have a problem accessing one.

Traveler’s Checks
Traveler’s checks are increasingly rare and difficult to use so it is not recommended. They generally must be cashed at a major bank, although in some countries, post offices also offer this service. You must have your passport with you. Most banks charge a fee for cashing the checks; it can vary widely. Before cashing a check, **ASK** what the fee is.

Make sure you record your check numbers and keep the numbers separate from the checks, in case you need to get them replaced.

Tipping in Poland
Tipping is based on the satisfaction of the customer. If you find the service to be good, you can tip 10%-15%. You should try to use cash when tipping. If you tip on your credit card, the server may never see those tips as the owner may keep them. If you have anything delivered to you, it is common to round up the bill.

Health & Safety
General information on these issues, as well as information on CISI insurance, is included in the Health & Insurance and Safety Abroad sections of your Study Abroad Handbook.
The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has vaccination suggestions, how to stay healthy when abroad, and health information specific to Poland. You can review the CDC site for Poland.

Due to an increasing measles and mumps cases in Europe, we strongly encourage all students to check their vaccine history to see if they have had the MMR vaccine.

Insect Bites
Insect borne diseases, particularly mosquito, are present worldwide. See the CDC recommendations on avoiding bug bites for detailed information.

Medical/Mental Health Availability in Kraków, Poland
Adequate medical care is available in Poland. There is a medical center on campus (actually located in the same building as a residence hall) that can provide modern medicines, vitamins, and ordinary health care products, although they might not have the same brands that are available in the U.S. Younger doctors usually speak English. If you visit the medical center, you will need to pay upfront and submit an insurance reimbursement.

If you have a common cold, you can go to the pharmacy and describe your symptoms to the pharmacist. There is a big pharmacy, called Super-Pharm, that has English speaking staff. If they aren’t able to assist you, they will advise you to go see a doctor. There is also a hospital about a 10-minute walk from campus.

In addition, the university also provides psychological help to any student.

As a student with USAC, your Resident Director is there to assist you in obtaining medical/mental health assistance. They will go over where the nearest hospital is and how to access the local medical facilities.

Counseling Resources: If you would like to see a therapist while abroad, we can work with CISI to identify English speaking therapists in Poland. Start this process before you go, or afterwards, by contacting your UWEC study abroad coordinator.

Civil Health Insurance in Poland
As part of your program fees to USAC you receive health insurance. Your USAC health insurance cards will be handed out at the on-site orientation. This insurance is in addition to the CISI insurance that you have through the UW system policy. You are not able to opt out of either one, both are required as they have different levels of coverage.

CISI Insurance in Poland
If you have an accident or become ill while studying in Poland, you may have to pay the price of the medical service up front. You will then file a claim through CISI, the insurance provided through the UW System for partial or full reimbursement in accordance with plan coverages.

Services for Students with Disabilities
If you will need any disability accommodations when abroad, it is important to complete your USAC Disability and Health Accommodation Request Form on your USAC Gateway account. While USAC cannot guarantee services, they will do their best to accommodate your needs. When you complete that form,
USAC will be in contact with you regarding services they can/cannot provide.

It is also important to look at the level of accessibility in general. To find more information on the topic, please see the “Laws and Special Circumstances” tab on the U.S. State Department Country page.

**Safety in Poland**

Information on crime, road safety, drug penalties, and terrorist activity in Poland can be found in the State Department Consular Information Sheet. Safety in-and-around Kraków will be discussed during orientation in Poland.

Just as you need to do in any U.S. city, you will need to take safety precautions while walking and traveling around Poland. Using your common sense at all times will aid you well. Avoid unlighted areas at night when you are walking around the city, and do not walk or take buses alone at night – especially women. Don't take any unnecessary risks!

The greatest risk you face in Poland is that of transportation-related injury, particularly as a result of motor vehicles. Be sure to look both ways when crossing the road and be mindful of motorcycles that may weave around in traffic and not adhere to the stop signals.

There will be many markets in Poland and throughout Europe and this is a place where theft is most common. It is very important to be aware of your surroundings and keep your personal belongings very close to you.

**NOTE:** Both men and women should be aware of their safety at all times. In the past, men have been just as susceptible as women to potential risks. As U.S. Americans, you may stick out as "foreigners." The best advice is to be aware of your surroundings, listen to your instincts, and use your common sense.

**Pick-Pocketing:** Pick-pocketing is common on public transportation and at popular tourist sites throughout Poland. To reduce the risk, do not have your phone or other valuables out in public spaces. An iPhone is a target for pick-pocketers. If you carry a purse, make sure it is across the body and has zippers. Keep your wallet in a front pocket, not a back pocket. Only carry small amounts of cash on you to minimize loss. Using a money belt under your clothing is another way to prevent valuables from being stolen.

**Smoking:** Smoking can be common in Kraków but the country does not allow smoking in public places. If you are caught smoking at a bus or train station, you could be fined up to 500 zlotys. Restaurants will not allow smoking unless they have a designated room for it.

**Local Laws to Know:** There are a few local Polish laws that you should be aware of

1. It is illegal to take photos of the Polish military buildings or other national security objects
2. Penalties are very severe (long jail sentences, heavy fines) if you possess, use, or traffic illegal drugs
3. Local police can request identification at any time to establish your identity and submit you to further questioning

**Emergency Contacts**

General emergency procedures are described in the Study Abroad Handbook, and the USAC staff is available if difficulties arise. You will receive an emergency contact card with USAC
staff information at the Orientation 2; be sure to keep it in your wallet at all times. The information is also on the Contact Names & Addresses page of this guide.

**911 Equivalent in Poland**

If you are in an emergency situation in Poland, you will need to know how to reach the local police, fire, or ambulance services. The local equivalent to the 911 emergency line in Poland is 999 for ambulance; 998 for fire and 997 for police. If you are using a cell phone dial 112 for all the above services and you will be directed to the service you need. We suggest you save these numbers in your cell phone in case you need to use them quickly.

**Marijuana and other Illegal Drugs**

The possession and use of marijuana is illegal. Even carrying it on your person can be considered drug trafficking. Penalties for possession, use, or trafficking in illegal drugs in Poland are severe, and convicted offenders can expect long jail sentences and heavy fines. U.S. citizenship offers no protection if you break a Polish law. There is NOTHING the CIE, USAC, or the U.S. government can do if you are found in violation of Polish laws.

In addition to legal penalties, you are putting yourself at risk of robbery or assault, or you may get a much more dangerous combination of drugs than you thought you were buying.

**REQUIRED DOCUMENTS**

Passport information is included in the Travel Resources section of your Study Abroad Handbook.

If you are not a U.S. citizen, please contact the CIE for more information about the following topics.

**Visa**

A visa is official permission to temporarily reside in another country and is granted by the government of that country.

Although the CIE and USAC will provide information, it is your responsibility to keep up-to-date about student visa requirements for Poland, and to apply for and receive a visa from a Polish consulate or embassy in a timely manner. Please read the “Visa” section of your Study Abroad Handbook for more information about what you should do to keep up-to-date on visa requirements.

At time of posting (summer 2019), summer students didn’t need a visa to enter Poland. This is subject to change.

**Visas for Travel to Other Countries**

If you plan to travel outside your host country while abroad, you should verify visa requirements for each country you will visit by contacting the nearest consulate for that country, or your travel agency. Most Western European nations do not require U.S. citizens to have a visa for tourist travel of less than three months.

**PACKING TIPS**

There is general packing information in the Travel Resources section of your Study Abroad Handbook, and you will get a suggested packing list for Poland at Orientation 2 and USAC will post a packing list to your Gateway account. In addition, you should know the following:
Weather
You’ll find the seasons of Poland to be very similar to those in Wisconsin, however the temps may not get as cold in the winter or as hot in the summer. Winter is from November – mid-March and averages around 28-30 degrees Fahrenheit. Kraków does receive snow and is often blanketed in the winter months. Spring is from about late March – May. Summer goes from June – August with July being Kraków’s warmest and wettest month, with averages around 65-70 degrees. From mid-September – October Poland has a mild fall.

Clothing
Your peer advisor will give a suggested packing list at your second group meeting later in the semester prior to departure.

If you are going to be abroad during the winter months, you will want to make sure you pack accordingly. You will have heat in your accommodations but you may find buildings to be drafty and cooler.

Students abroad over the summer months will not have air conditioning in their accommodations. While it doesn’t get overly hot, you may want to pack accordingly.

In general, you will find that Polish students dress nicer than US students when going to class. You won’t see students wearing sweatpants or loungewear to class. Nice jeans, sweaters, nice tops, etc. are more common. Because you will deal with a range of temperatures, bring clothes that you can wear or take off in layers.

Converters & Adapters
If you plan to bring a hair dryer, razor or other appliance from the US, you will need to buy both a voltage converter and a plug adapter. Another option is to buy the appliances after you arrive. It isn’t recommended that you bring these items as past students have commented on how they have over heated or stopped working and were ruined. Many students usually purchase a cheap product once they arrive in the country.

If you plan to bring your laptop abroad, check the power cord to see acceptable voltage inputs and outputs. If it includes 220 volts, you will only need to use a plug adapter, not a voltage converter.

If you have several US appliances you plan to use abroad, consider bringing a power strip, also. You will still need to have a voltage converter in order to plug it into the wall.

The outlets also require a different shape of plug, so you will still need to bring a plug adaptor. If you plan to travel, you will want to make sure you have adaptors that will work in each country as they aren’t all the same.

Do Not Bring
Do not bring expensive cell phones, jewelry, or other luxury items that can be lost or stolen. If you do decide to bring items that are expensive to replace, you may want to consider personal property insurance for your time in Poland.

GETTING TO POLAND
There is information on student-oriented travel agencies, instructions for booking a flight, and other travel information in the Travel Resources section of your Study Abroad Handbook.
USAC will also post a detailed “Flight Guide,” around 5-6 months before the
program begins, to your USAC Gateway account.

Travel Arrangements
It is your responsibility to make travel arrangements to Poland. Airline tickets are not included in your USAC program fees.

An optional group flight is available for this program through a travel agency recommended by USAC. If you choose not to book the group flight, you will need to book your own flight and arrive prior to the mandatory orientation. There is a $200 fee for students who miss orientation! See the USAC Flight Guide for details on both options.

In both cases, pay attention to the group flight dates as they may not directly align with the program calendar. Sometimes there is an optional field trip before or after the program, and the group flight may include this fieldtrip.

If the group return flight leaves after the program end date, and you do not request a change to leave when the program ends, you will be responsible for finding your own housing until the departure date.

USAC Group Flight
Benefits to booking with the optional group flight:

- Flexible tickets that are refundable and changeable for a fee.
- Flexible payment plan (pay a deposit to hold your seat, then pay the balance 2 weeks prior to departure)
- Select the group return date or select your own date for the same price
- Frosch Student Travel can help book connecting flights to merge with the group flight departure cities.

- Airport pick-up in Poland (there is no USAC staff to chaperone the flight, but group flight participants will be met at the airport by USAC staff, unless you arrive late).

USAC will be in contact with you and information will be on your USAC Gateway account on how to sign up for the group flight.

Early Arrivals
USAC strongly discourages students from arriving early. If you decide to arrive early, you will need to find and pay for your own accommodations. You should not expect to have any assistance upon arrival and should be prepared to deal with any issues on your own.

Airport Pick-Up Service
Please fill out the Flight Form in your Gateway account after you have booked your flight.

Depending on several variables: if you are on the group flight, if there is an optional field trip prior to the beginning of the program, etc., you may be met at the airport in Kraków. If you arriving after the group flight, you will get detailed instructions on how to get to your initial accommodations in the USAC Arrival Guide, that will be posted to your Gateway account about one month prior to departure.

Late Arrivals-Expected and Unexpected
If you don’t arrive as scheduled, for any reason, you will be responsible for arranging and paying for your transfer from the airport. Again, watch for detailed instructions in the USAC Arrival Guide.
**Important reminder:** Write down your apartment address on a piece of paper, in case you need to give it to a cab driver on arrival.

**Leaving Your Host City**
Return airport transportation isn’t included in your program fees and you will need to find your own way to the airport on your last day. USAC is not required to bring you to the airport.

**SETTLING IN**

**Orientation**
You will have a two-day orientation program upon arrival in Kraków. The orientation will introduce you to the university and its services, as well as to Kraków in general. You will learn how to use public transportation, purchase a cell phone (if you want), learn where to eat and how to exchange money, and learn about safety issues to be aware of, etc. You will also finalize course registration at orientation. There is a $200 penalty for not attending the entire orientation.

**On-Site Support**
USAC provides a resident director and staff to assist students with the transition to Poland. They will also be coordinating various excursions and activities throughout the term. If any questions or concerns arise, reach out to the onsite staff! It could be anything from how to say something in Polish to needing to go to the doctor. The USAC staff is there to assist you so please use them as a resource.

**Local Transportation**
There isn’t a subway in Kraków but there are many tramlines and buses to use. You can buy tickets at newsstands or from ticket machines. Be aware of pickpockets when using the trams or buses.

Taxis are also plentiful and relatively inexpensive. Be sure to watch the meter to make sure it is being used properly. Do not expect your driver to speak English so it can be useful to have your address written down to show them. Many taxis wait at taxi stands around the city but you can also hail one if it drives by.

Uber is not common in Kraków and the CIE encourages you to use licensed taxis.

There is also a central train and bus station that offers transport around Poland and throughout Europe.

**Getting Involved**
There are numerous clubs on campus that USAC students are invited to partake in. Summer students may not have as many options due to students being on summer break.

In addition, the USAC staff may arrange unofficial field trips or visits to local happenings. You may also get to participate in holiday meals or festivals that occur in the city.

You will also have access to the university gym on campus.

**Volunteer**
There are opportunities for students to volunteer in the local community. More information about volunteering will be provided at orientation on-site in Poland. If you would like for your volunteer experiences to count towards service learning, you will need to arrange that with the UW-Eau Claire Center for Service Learning (srvlearn@uwec.edu).
Volunteering is a wonderful way to get involved in the local community and make meaningful relationships.

Volunteer projects will be available based on current need in the community. Hosting a volunteer requires time on the part of the organization to plan projects for and supervise that volunteer, so please take your commitment seriously. Otherwise, community partners may not be willing to host volunteers in the future. Also, volunteering requires you to take initiative. The more you are willing to invest in the experience the more rewarding it will be!

**HOUSING**

**USAC:** See the USAC Housing Guide in your Gateway account for additional general information on housing, how to apply for housing, as well as cancellation policies.

**Arranging Housing**

Immediately after being admitted to the Poland program, you will want to complete your housing questionnaire on your Gateway account. **If you don’t do this in a timely manner, housing cannot be guaranteed.** Housing is on a first come, first served basis. If your housing questionnaire isn’t released right away, be sure to keep an eye on your Gateway account so you don’t miss it.

If you do your questionnaire in a timely manner, USAC will arrange for you to live in apartments with other USAC students. The apartments are within walking distance to campus and close to several shops, restaurants, pharmacies, grocery stores, etc. There are also nearby tram and bus stops.

You will be given your housing assignment when you arrive.

While every effort will be made to accommodate your preferences, it depends on availability and is not guaranteed.

Remember, when assessing the quality of the facilities available to you in Kraków, you need to use Polish, not U.S., standards. Although USAC does its best to make sure all apartments are up to Polish standards, they may not have the same comforts as your U.S. housing.

**What’s Provided?**

You will have a double apartment with en-suite toilet and shower. A bed, desk, chair, lamp, refrigerator, wardrobe, electric kettle is provided. Linens, blanket and two towels are provided. You may wish to bring additional towels with you or purchase once on site.

You will have a heating unit but no air condition. You should use your heat sparingly as it uses a lot of electricity. **Excessive use of electricity will be charged to you in addition to the housing fee.** It is very important to turn off your heater when not in your housing. You are also encouraged to dress appropriately for the seasons, even indoors. When it is cold, you should wear sweaters, socks, warm pajamas, etc. You may want to bring with your warm slippers or house shoes as most floors are tiled or marble.

**Meals & Snacks**

You will be responsible for your meals. Meals are very affordable and there are a number of restaurants and shops near the campus catering to the student population. There is also a grocery store, named Tesco, nearby where
you can stock up on food and housewares to make your own meals in the shared kitchen in your apartment building. You’ll also see other stores such as Aldi, Netto, Carrefour and Biedronka, which all offer groceries.

There are some meals available in the cafeteria for around 20 zlotys.

If you are desperate for Western fast food, there are places such as KFC, Pizza Hut, McDonald’s, etc., but don’t be surprised if the prices are higher.

If you participate in the optional field trips, most meals are included.

The Polish eat around 4 meals a day. The first is sniadanie (breakfast) which usually happens between 6-8am. Around 11am-1pm, they eat a light meal, also known as “second breakfast.” The main meal of the day, called obiad, is served in the late afternoon (4-6pm). Then there is a light supper, also called wieczerza, around 8-9pm.

Polish Food: Polish meals are hearty. Potatoes, eggs, dark bread, dumplings, and a cream of some sort are all staple ingredients for Polish food. You’ll find they use a lot of sausage, pork, sauerkraut, beets, sour cream, kohlrabi, and mushrooms.

Most Polish meals start with a soup. These can range from a broth to a thick and hearty soup. The most popular is a beet soup called borscht.

Paczki (Polish donuts) are one of the most popular and favorite pastries. They are deep-fried dough filled with jam, pudding or other sweet fillings and then covered with powder sugar or orange peels.

The Polish also love their desserts, especially cakes. If you come across something called babka, that is a pound cake.

Being that many Polish meals involve hearty foods, you may find most meals involve some form of gluten. If you have an allergy, you will want to make sure you know how to describe your allergy to waiters. The Polish celiac society also has some tips for you to consider.

Laundry
Laundry is available onsite for an additional cost (~7-10 zlotys).

Internet Access
You will have access to the internet in your accommodations either through an Ethernet or Wi-Fi.

Housing Keys
There is a 24-hour reception desk with English speaking staff and you are required to return your keys to them every time you leave your dorm.

Housing Costs
Semester students: housing costs are NOT included in your USAC program fees. You will pay the residence hall administration every month through a money transfer payment. The USAC staff will show you how to do this during orientation in Poland.

Summer students: housing costs are included in the summer program fee.

Housing Deposit
Semester & summer students: You will pay a housing deposit, equal to one month’s rent, onsite, in PLN, upon move-in. This deposit will be
partially refunded on your day of departure. If needed, all or a portion of your deposit may be helping to cover any outstanding utility charges, damages, key replacements, extra cleaning, etc. USAC staff will cover this upon arrival.

**Housing Rules**
You will receive all of the housing rules once you arrive in Poland but a few to note are:
- Friends and family cannot stay overnight. There are hotels that the USAC staff can recommend.
- You are strictly prohibited from smoking in the residence halls.
- Drinking and parties in housing, as well as arriving home drunk, are prohibited and considered very rude. Landlords have the right to evict you for noise or other problems.

**COMMUNICATION**
*Information on accessing/forwarding your UW-Eau Claire email address and on computer app-based phone services (SKYPE, What’s App, Facetime, etc) is in the Contacts & Communication section of your Study Abroad Handbook.*

**Time Difference**
Poland is 7 or 8 hours ahead of Eau Claire, depending upon when Daylight Saving Time begins and ends in each country. To see the current time in Poland visit: [https://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/poland/krakow](https://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/poland/krakow)

**Email/Internet Access**
All university buildings and facilities have Wi-Fi. There are free computer labs on campus that you can use. If you decide to bring your own personal laptop, you are encouraged to look into personal property insurance in the event your laptop is stolen.

You will have access to the internet in your accommodations either through an Ethernet or Wi-Fi.

**Cell Phone Information**
At orientation, in Poland, they will talk about cell phone options. Some students have opted to get a pay-as-you-go phone once they arrive. Others have decided to only use their phones when connected to Wi-Fi. These are all options you will need to consider.

**Calling from the U.S.**
*From the U.S. to Poland.* First dial 011, the international dialing code from the US. Next, dial 48 the country code for Poland, and then the rest of the number to reach a specific city and location. Note that if there is a "0" listed before the main number, drop it when dialing internationally.

**Snail Mail**
Snail mail between the U.S. and Poland generally takes 7-10 days (or more!). When you need to receive or send something in a hurry, you can use express mail (DHL).

Packages that are sent through airmail take approximately the same amount of time as letters to arrive. Be advised, however, that the package will probably be opened, and its contents examined by customs.

**Polish Communication Style**
Poles are known for speaking matter-of-factly and are usually comfortable being very direct. They are quick to correct and will deliver criticism. To outsiders, this can appear to be very blunt and rude. However, this is the norm
in Poland and people expect you to be commanding when you speak. But that isn’t to say that they can’t lighten up and be gentle when having conversations too. Just don’t be surprised if you are given very direct responses.

Also – don’t be surprised at how loud Poles talk, especially if it’s about a topic they really are passionate about.

**Passing Strangers on the Street**
Poles don’t smile at people when they pass them on the street. They will look at you weird if you do that. While it may seem cold, this is just what they do.

**TRAVEL WHILE ABROAD**
See additional information in the Travel Resources section of your Study Abroad Handbook.

**Tours and Field Studies**
USAC organizes field trips each semester and summer to familiarize students with Poland. These trips generally take place on weekends and are included in the program fees. The exact dates and sites may change at the discretion of the Resident Director. To see what tours may be offered when you are abroad, go to USAC’s site.

**Optional Excursions**
USAC also plans optional tours and field studies at an additional cost. You can select these options on the Course & Tour Registration Form you filled out as part of your USAC application. You will pay any of these additional fees directly to USAC. These excursions are an affordable way to explore more of Poland and surrounding countries.

**Travel Outside of Poland**
The program schedule is very busy, and required activities are often planned for evenings or weekends. If you wish to do extended travel (more than a weekend or two) outside of Kraków, you will need to plan this either before or after the program or during a longer break.

**Train Travel**
The new train station in Kraków was opened in 2014 and is where you can take bus, tram or train transportation around Kraków or other cities/countries. The trains travel to many well-known cities throughout Europe so this can be an affordable alternative to flying everywhere.

**Travel in Ukraine**
Ukraine is a country that borders Poland and may be a place you wish to travel to. The whole country of Ukraine, at the time of publishing, was under a travel advisory level 2, which means Americans should exercise increased caution. The U.S. State Department does go on to say that U.S. citizens should NOT travel to Crimea, Donetsk and Luhansk due to the ongoing Russian conflict. We strongly encourage you to review the U.S. State Department’s information regarding Ukraine and make informed decisions before you travel. Any travel to Ukraine would be on your own personal time (not required of the program) and the CIE is not liable should anything happen to you.
## CONTACT INFORMATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>USAC Poland</strong></th>
<th><strong>Polish Consulate in U.S.</strong></th>
<th><strong>UW-Eau Claire</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Resident Director: Agniezska Nowak  
International Programs Office  
Ul. Rakowicka 27 31-510 Kraków, Poland  
Tel within Poland: 12-293-54-56  
Outside Poland: 011-48-12-293-54-56  
Email: nowaka@uek.krakow.pl | 1530 North Lake Shore Drive  
Chicago, IL 60610  
Teleg: 312-337-8166  
Emergency tele (only for urgent consular services after hours): 312-735-7772  
Email: Chicago.kg.sekretariat@msz.gov.pl | **After Hours Emergency**  
(715)577-9045 |
| **USAC Central Office (US)**  
Belen Firueroa-Cazares  
University of Nevada, Reno  
1664 North Virginia St.  
Reno, NV 89557  
1-866-404-8722 or  
1-775-682-9440  
Belen.figueroa@usac.edu | Ulica Stolarska 9  
31-043 Kraków, Poland  
Tele: +48 (12) 424-5129  
Emergency After Hours: +48 (60) 148-3348  
krakowACS@state.gov | Remember that in most cases, local contacts are best in local emergency situations. |
| **Polish Consulate in U.S.** | **U.S. Consulate in Poland** | If you have an after-hours emergency that can be helped on the U.S. side, please call University Police at the number above. Calls can be made to this number 24 hours a day. |
| **U.S. Consulate in Poland** | **U.S. Consulate in Poland** | You may get an answering machine; however, an officer is alerted as soon as you have left your message. Be sure to give the officer the phone number you can be reached at, as well as what type of assistance you require. |

Remember that in most cases, local contacts are best in local emergency situations.

If you have an after-hours emergency that can be helped on the U.S. side, please call University Police at the number above. Calls can be made to this number 24 hours a day.

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# Web Information: Poland

## City
Lonely Planet: [https://www.lonelyplanet.com/poland/malopolska/krakow](https://www.lonelyplanet.com/poland/malopolska/krakow)


Kraków: [http://www.krakow-info.com](http://www.krakow-info.com)

## Culture
10 things to Know as a Newbie in Poland: [https://polonization.pl/10-things-to-know-as-a-newbie-in-poland/](https://polonization.pl/10-things-to-know-as-a-newbie-in-poland/)

Learn to Speak Polish: [https://www.staypoland.com/poland/polish-language/](https://www.staypoland.com/poland/polish-language/)

## Country
Poland’s Official Travel Website: [https://www.poland.travel/en](https://www.poland.travel/en)

Trip Savvy: [https://www.tripsavvy.com/poland-4138903](https://www.tripsavvy.com/poland-4138903)

When past participants of the Poland program were asked to sum up their experience, here is what they said:

The courses can sometime be challenging due to professor’s expectations but talk to them and express your concerns.

I have family that lives in Poland and I was able to connect with them and learn more about my Polish heritage!

Poland is amazing!