

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN EAU CLAIRE

CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

Study Abroad



**USAC POLAND
SPRING 2019**

Program Guide

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CONGRATULATIONS on being accepted to the UW-Eau Claire study abroad program with University Studies Abroad Consortium (USAC) in Kraków, Poland. Living and studying in a foreign culture is both an exciting and a challenging experience. Past participants of study abroad report that the many advantages of international study include:

Building foreign language skills
Gaining new perspectives on a chosen academic field
Increasing understanding of different cultures
Getting to know oneself
Developing different perspectives on U.S. culture
Achieving 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 experience!

This program guide is to be used together with the general Study Abroad Handbook. The handbook has information that is valid for all UW-Eau Claire study abroad programs. This guide will provide you with specific information to assist in your preparation for the Poland study abroad program. It is designed to complement the study abroad orientation and your individual pre-departure preparations.

Please realize that although this guide was written to help you better prepare for your time abroad, and that all of the information available at the time of printing has been used, it is impossible for any single resource to answer all of your questions. Your peer advisor will email additional information throughout the semester. We also strongly encourage you to contact the study abroad staff, your peer advisor and any Thai students on campus with your specific questions. You should also make use of the additional written and web resources listed towards the end of this guide.

What are YOUR goals for this experience? Common goals of student travelers include advancement in future profession, wish to expand personal and academic horizons, need for a change, wish to challenge oneself with immersion in a new culture.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Program

UW-Eau Claire has partnered with USAC to offer students the unique opportunity to study the history, politics, religions, culture, and language of Poland and other Eastern European countries. This exciting program in Poland was brand new in Fall 2018 and the first UWEC students to go on this program will be you!

The Location

Located on the Vistula River, Kraków, is the second largest city in Poland.

Krakow is known as the leading city of academic, cultural, economic and artistic life in Poland. The city has a population of about 760,000 plus about 8 million people within 100km radius of the city square. Kraków is often cited as one of Europe's most beautiful cities. The city has a variety of architecture from Gothic to Renaissance to Baroque, which only adds to the beauty. It is known for the preserved medieval core and the Jewish quarter.

Poland is a Slavic country located in Central-East Europe.

The University

The program is located on Cracow University of Economics (CUE) campus which is only a 10-minute walk from the historical Old Town center. CUE opened in 1925 and is home to more than 21,000 students, 1,500 of them being international students. The campus is situated on a well-manicured, green campus that has more than 15 buildings. Students will have access to the language center, library, sports facilities, cafes and a clinic. Campus is also in the vicinity of the main railway station, bus station and transit hub.

Spring Calendar

Spring Semester 2019*

Depart U.S.	January 7
Arrival	January 8
Orientation	January 9-10
Classes Start	January 11
Final Exams	May 13-15
Semester Ends	May 16
Move out of housing	May 16

***Dates are subject to change. To see a more detailed program dates:**

<https://usac.edu/study-abroad-programs/poland/krakow/calendars>

ACADEMICS

There is additional information on academic topics such as eligibility, registration, class attendance, credits and course load, grades, transcripts, and accessing the UW-Eau Claire library while abroad in your Study Abroad Handbook.

Registration at UW-Eau Claire

Do not register for classes at UW-Eau Claire for the semester you will be abroad. The semester before your program departs, CIE staff will work with the Registration Office to enroll you in the USAC-Poland program under a **temporary course number (INTA 381)** for 12 credits. This temporary registration for 12 credits will appear on your billing statements. You do not need to complete any other registration at UW-Eau Claire. **Once your grade report from USAC arrives, your Poland classes, credits, and grades will be posted on your UW-Eau Claire transcript.** The INTA 381 registration code will remain on your transcript so that the university can

maintain historical records regarding who has studied abroad. However, the INTA credit units will be removed and the INTA course will not be graded.

Registration in 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. Please note that courses may still change due to low enrollment or cancellations in offerings.

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.

Add/Drop Courses On Site

You will have approximately 2 weeks to add/drop/change courses once you arrive on-site in Poland. 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 this is 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 abandon a class without officially withdrawing from it, the grade will be reported as an "F."

Credits and Course Load

All students are expected to enroll in a minimum of 12-18 credits each semester.

USAC recommends students enroll in 12-15 credits.

Dropping below full-time status may result in loss of financial aid and/or insurance coverage and **must be approved in advance by CIE.**
Taking more than 18 credits will require you to pay additional tuition.

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, and **grades will be figured into your UW-Eau Claire GPA.**

Class/Activity Attendance

When studying abroad, you are required to follow the attendance policies of your program abroad. In general, you are expected to attend all regularly scheduled classes and field trips unless illness or other unavoidable circumstances make this impossible. Absences must be approved in advance by the instructor and may result in lower grades.

USAC expects you to attend all of your classes. If you fail to attend class, this will affect your grade in the course. All exams must be taken as scheduled.

The Academic Program

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.

You should plan to be in courses Monday through Friday. You will have plenty of time to explore Poland on weekends. It is not recommended to plan any weekend travel until after you arrive.

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

USAC offers students the opportunity to enroll in an internship. Students do need to have a 3.0 GPA and be at junior standing by the time of the internship. There is also a refundable \$100 fee if participating in an internship. Placements are really geared towards the participant's interest and past placements have included: local schools, teach English within the community, local non-profits, local magazines,

etc. Placement is not guaranteed by USAC but they will do their best to arrange a placement. After you arrive, you will complete the internship application and interview with a potential sponsor site.

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 UW-Eau Claire transcript; **grades are included in your UW-Eau Claire GPA.** Pass/Fail grades are not allowed.

Grade Reports

At the end of the program, USAC prepares a grade report, which is sent to UW-Eau Claire. USAC will also update the grades on your Gateway account for you to review. Courses, credits, and grades are incorporated into your UW-Eau Claire transcript.

Grade reports are not available until two or three months after the end of the semester.

Due to this delay, you will initially receive a grade report with "NR" (not reported) for all courses. The actual courses you took will be reflected on your record once CIE receives your grade report from USAC.

If you are a senior and are studying abroad at USAC Poland for your last semester, please note that the different timelines in grade reporting may require you to delay your graduation.

MONEY MATTERS

Information about how payments are made, when they are due, withdrawal/refund deadlines, financial aid, scholarships, budgeting, and how to bring money abroad is in your Study Abroad Handbook.

Cost Estimate

You can find the most current cost estimate for your program, in easily printable format, on the [CIE Poland Webpage](#). Be sure you are looking at the correct term. Remember that the cost estimate includes what you pay to UW-Eau Claire, what you pay to USAC, and what you pay directly to other vendors.

USAC Payments & Refund Policy

If you have any questions about paying your optional tour fees or other fees directly to USAC, please contact Devina Gyll in the USAC Accounting Office. You can reach her by telephone at 775-682-5898 or e-mail at devina.gyll@usac.edu. You can pay with credit card, check, or money order.

In addition to the UW-Eau Claire 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. You can learn more about the withdrawal deadlines and penalties by referring to your copies of the USAC Program Agreement and Program Fee & Options on your USAC Gateway Account.

Currency Exchange

The currency in Poland is the Polish Zloty (they are not a member of the European Union and do NOT use the Euro). You can find current exchange rates at <http://www.oanda.com/converter/classic>. If you plan to other countries within Europe, you will need to determine which currency they use and exchange either Zloty or US dollars.

Cost of Living in Poland

In general, you will find prices for some food and local transportation in Kraków to be a little more affordable or about the same than they are in the U.S. Electronic equipment and clothing may be more expensive, and products

from the U.S. will be as expensive, if not more so, than they are here at home.

Cash

You will be able to pull cash out of ATM's. It may be nice to have some cash on hand if going to the local markets.

Credit Cards

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

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 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.

USAC Scholarships

USAC offers a variety of scholarships for students. To see more information, visit [USAC's Scholarship website](#). You will have optional scholarship applications applied to your USAC Gateway account when they are open. Students are able to apply for all scholarships they are eligible for and can be awarded more than one scholarship.

USAC also offers an alliance scholarship just for UWEC students on one of their specialty programs. This application will be applied to your BlugoldsAbroad account in **September for spring students** and in March for Summer/Fall/Academic Year students. Your UWEC Study Abroad Coordinator, Jenna, will email you when it is available. The number of awards will vary by term. Amounts will vary between \$200 - \$500.

HEALTH & SAFETY

Additional information on these issues, as well as on CISI insurance, is included in the Health Issues and Safety Abroad sections of your Study Abroad Handbook.

Immunizations

You should review the [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\) website](#) for information on vaccinations. Only the government of a particular country can mandate requirements, and because such requirements often discourage tourism, governments are reluctant to establish them. However, CDC vaccination recommendations should be taken very seriously. Since many of the recommendations depend on the type of travel you anticipate doing, or the length of time you are staying, you need to consult a doctor to determine what's best for your individual situation.

Due to an increasing amount of measles and mumps appearing in Europe, students are encouraged to talk to their medical doctor to see if they have been vaccinated or if they should be vaccinated.

UW-Eau Claire's Student Health Services offers immunizations (IG, tetanus, Hepatitis B, etc.) and health education on international travel. Contact Student Health Services at (715) 836-5360.

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.

In the past, CISI has been able to identify English speaking doctors and therapists in Poland. If you need to see a doctor or therapist while abroad, please contact your study abroad coordinator, Jenna, kroschjm@uwec.edu and she will work with CISI to help identify English speaking therapists for when you're abroad. If you arrive to Kraków and then decide you'd like to see a doctor or therapist, you can contact either Jenna in the CIE or the USAC resident director and they will help to locate one.

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.

Food & Water Quality

According to the CDC, food and water standards, in Poland, are similar to those in the U.S. If you plan to visit any rural areas that receive their water from wells, you may want to take extra pre-cautions.

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.

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.

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

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. If you are using a landline phone, 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.

The U.S. State Department also provides a list of [911 numbers abroad](#). Please note that in some countries there are different numbers for fire, police, and ambulance. Plan ahead and research numbers before you go.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

Passport

General passport information is found in your Study Abroad Handbook.

Visa

A visa is official permission to temporarily reside in another country and is granted by the government of that country. The CIE will post basic information about the current visa options for U.S. citizens for study in Poland to the Learning Content section of your online BlugoldsAbroad account during the semester prior to departure. USAC will also post very helpful information on your USAC Gateway account. You cannot apply for your visa until 90 days from the program start.

It is your responsibility to keep up-to-date about student visa requirements for Poland,

and if required, to apply for and receive a visa from the 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.

PACKING TIPS

In addition to the general packing information in your Study Abroad Handbook, you should know the following about Chiang Mai.

Climate

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 will be Kraków's warmest and wettest month, with averages around 65-70 degrees. From mid-September – October Poland has a mild fall.

What to Pack

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 a winter month, 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.

Appliances

The standard electric current in Poland is 220 volts. If you plan to bring a hair dryer, razor, etc., with you from the U.S., **you will need to buy a voltage converter and plug adapter and bring it with you.** The other option, of course, is to buy the necessary appliances after you arrive.

ARRIVING IN POLAND

Travel Arrangements

It is your responsibility to make and pay for travel arrangements to Poland. Airline tickets are not included in your USAC program fees. An optional group flight is available for this program by 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. If you arrive before or at the same time as the group flight, it may be possible to join the group transportation, depending on availability.

You may wish to purchase travel or trip cancellation insurance when you purchase your ticket. Discuss your options with your travel agent and be sure you know exactly what the policy covers. (For example, most policies specifically exclude travel disruption due to acts of war.)

USAC Group Flight

Benefits to booking with the optional group flight:

- Flexible tickets that are refundable and changeable for a fee
- 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 for a reasonable amount.

- Flexible payment plan (pay a deposit to hold your seat, then pay the balance 2 weeks prior to departure)
- 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 post a Flight Guide to your 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 separate accommodations, should not expect to have much or any assistance upon arrival, and should be prepared to deal with any issues on your own.

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.

Level of 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 semester. If any questions or concerns arise, over anything, you are strongly encouraged to 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.

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. By completing that form, USAC will be in contact with you regarding services they can/cannot provide.

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

Tours and Field Studies

During orientation, USAC will provide a city tour for all students. This will give you the opportunity to familiarize yourself with Kraków.

USAC also provides all students with organized field trips to teach you about the local culture. These are included in your program fees. Some places you may go include Auschwitz, Wieliczka Salt Mine, Zakopane and Tatra Mountains, etc.

For semester students, USAC will arrange an OPTIONAL tour/field study to Vienna and Budapest. For summer students, an optional tour to Warsaw is available. There is a supplemental fee for this field study that students are responsible for.

Volunteering in Kraków

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).

Getting Involved

There are numerous clubs on campus that USAC students are invited to partake in.

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.

HOUSING

USAC 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. The apartments are fully furnished double rooms with heat, small refrigerator, and high-speed Internet. You will have a bathroom within your apartment. You will have access to a shared kitchen (electric cooktop and sink) and laundry room (will have to pay to use). The apartments are located 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.

You will have a heating unit and some units may have air conditioning. You should use your heat and AC (if applicable) 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/AC 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.

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.

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 Deposit

You will pay a housing deposit, on-site, in USD cash or with a credit card (Mastercard or VISA). 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.

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.

Arriving Early

If you decide to arrive early, you cannot move into your housing until the official move-in date. You will be responsible for any fees for finding a hotel/hostel if you arrive early. USAC cannot store your luggage either.

What's Provided for your Room

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.

Laundry

There is laundry available onsite. You will need to pay to use it and it is around 7-10 zlotys (which includes a detergent capsule).

FOOD

Meals

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. 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 *wieczera*, around 8-9pm.

Typical Foods in Kraków

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.

COMMUNICATION

Information on accessing/forwarding your UW-Eau Claire email address, which you need to check while abroad, is in your Study Abroad Handbook.

Cellphones

If you want to bring your cell phone with you, you should talk to your provider to see what your options are. You can look into an international plan but it may be easier to obtain a Polish SIM card when you arrive. To be able to use your phone with a Polish SIM card, you may need to have your phone unlocked by your provider BEFORE you go abroad.

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.

Computers and Internet

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.

Snail Mail/Mailing Address

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.

You are strongly encouraged to NOT ship personal items in packages. However, if you choose to have any personal items or gifts shipped, you must label the box "Used personal items—No commercial value" so you will not be taxed as if you are importing goods to be sold for a profit in Poland.

CULTURE NOTES

History

The history of Poland is still relatively fresh on people's minds. Nearly all Polish families were affected, in some way, by World War II. After the war, Poland was under the Soviet rule until they gained independence in 1989. During the transitional years, there were hardships faced by Poland but there has also been a lot of progression for the standard of living and many Poles find their living standards to be very well.

Family

Family is everything and family obligations will always come first. Even extended family play a large role. Poles rely very heavily on their close friends and family to help with day-to-day life and with making important decisions in life. As times change, family is still very important to many people. It isn't uncommon to find both parents work and often times the woman has the lead role.

Religion

Poland is overwhelmingly Roman Catholic so holidays such as Easter, All Saints Day and Christmas are very important. If you are there over these times, you will have a unique chance to see some authentic Polish culture.

Marzanna

Marzanna is a Polish name for a Slavic goddess that related to the end of winter and spring coming. The Pagan religion was eradicated from Poland in the 11th century but this one tradition still hangs on. If you find yourself in Poland on the first day of spring, you may see many large Marzanna dolls (straw, canvas and decorated with ribbons) being set on fire and then drown in the river. This is to symbolize that winter is ending and it encourages nature to revive. This tradition is still very popular in

parts of Poland even though no one really believes it helps spring come earlier.

Kanapki

Don't be surprised if you order a sandwich and it only has one slice of bread. Kanapka is a Polish word for most snacks that have a slice of bread as the base. The Poles love their open sandwich. This tradition comes from the Medieval days when a piece of bread acted as the plate. At the end of a meal, the bread would be thrown away or tossed to a dog.

Direct Verbal Communication

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

Before or after the program, you may want to take advantage of being in Poland and travel around a bit. **You should not plan any weekend travel until you receive your schedule, as trips and activities are frequently planned on the weekend.** You will

receive a more formal itinerary of your semester once you are in Poland.

Travel Outside of Kraków

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.

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 NAMES & ADDRESSES: POLAND

GENERAL UW-EAU CLAIRE & CISI CONTACT INFORMATION IS IN YOUR STUDY ABROAD HANDBOOK.

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Polish Consulate in the U.S.

1530 North Lake Shore Drive
Chicago, IL 60610
Tele: 312-337-8166
Emergency tele (only for urgent consular
services after hours): 312-735-7772
Email: Chicago.kg.sekretariat@msz.gov.pl

US Consulate in Kraków, Poland

Ulica Stolarska 9
31-043 Kraków, Poland
Tele: +48 (12) 424-5129
Emergency After Hours: +48 (60) 148-3348
krakowACS@state.gov

We suggest you leave a copy of this with your family/emergency contact at home.

WEB RESOURCES FOR POLAND

City
Lonely Planet: https://www.lonelyplanet.com/poland/malopolska/krakow
Visit Kraków: http://www.krakow.pl/english/
Kraków: 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/
Learn to Speak Polish: https://www.staypoland.com/poland/polish-language/
Country
Poland's Official Travel Website: https://www.poland.travel/en
Trip Savvy: https://www.tripsavvy.com/poland-4138903
Nomadic Matt Travel Blog: https://www.nomadicmatt.com/travel-guides/poland-travel-guide/krakow/



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