

POLISH, BA

Polish is the most commonly spoken Slavic language of the European Union and the second largest Slavic language in the world, with over 50 million users across the globe. Poland has a unique and vibrant culture shaped by a millennium of artistic and intellectual innovation and struggles for political, social, and cultural independence. The country survived two world wars and half a century of communist rule to emerge as a regional leader in East Central Europe, the fastest growing economy in the European Union, and home to one of the most dynamic cultural scenes in the world. It is also a key NATO and U.S. ally in Europe. The Polish diaspora is among the world's largest, with major concentrations in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Germany, and France.

The Polish major offers courses in the Polish language, literature, culture, politics, and one of the most intricate, fascinating histories in Europe, providing the knowledge and skills for successful careers in business, politics, diplomacy, arts, translation, international law, environmental science, journalism, national security, tourism, and cultural services.

HOW TO GET IN

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Requirements	Details
How to get in	No application required. All students who meet the requirements listed below are eligible to declare. For information on how to declare, visit Advising & Careers.
Courses required to get in	None
GPA requirements to get in	None
Credits required to get in	None
Other	None

REQUIREMENTS

UNIVERSITY REQUIREMENTS

All undergraduate students must complete both the following Core General Education (Core GenEd) and University Degree and Quality of Work requirements. The requirements below apply to students whose first term at UW-Madison or whose earliest post-high school college attendance at any institution is Summer 2026 or later.

Students whose first term at UW-Madison or whose earliest post-high school college attendance at any institution occurred before Summer 2026 should refer to the archived Guide (<https://guide.wisc.edu/archive/>) for the requirements that apply to them.

CORE GENERAL EDUCATION (CORE GENED) REQUIREMENTS

Civics & Perspectives 3 credits of Civics & Perspectives coursework.

Communication & Literacy 6 credits of Communication & Literacy coursework. This requirement may be partially satisfied by a qualifying placement test score. More information: <https://go.wisc.edu/qualifyingenglishplacement> (<https://go.wisc.edu/qualifyingenglishplacement/>)

Humanities & Arts 6 credits of Humanities & Arts coursework.

Mathematics & Quantitative Reasoning 6 credits of Mathematics & Quantitative Reasoning coursework. This requirement may be partially satisfied by a qualifying placement test score. More information: <https://go.wisc.edu/qualifyingmathplacement> (<https://go.wisc.edu/qualifyingmathplacement/>)

Natural Science & Wellness Complete both:

- 6 credits of Natural Science & Wellness or Natural Science & Wellness + Laboratory coursework.
- one course must be in Natural Science & Wellness + Laboratory coursework.

Social & Behavioral Science 3 credits of Social & Behavioral Science coursework.

Total Credits 30 credits.

For more information see the policy (<https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1095/>).

UNIVERSITY DEGREE AND QUALITY OF WORK REQUIREMENTS

All undergraduate degree recipients must complete the following minimum requirements. Requirements for some programs will exceed these requirements; see program requirements for additional information.

Total Degree 120 degree credits.

Residency Complete 30 credits in residence. A course is considered "in residence" if it is taken when in undergraduate degree-seeking status and:

- is offered by UW-Madison and completed on the UW-Madison campus or at an approved off-site location, or
- is offered by UW-Madison in an online or distance format, or is completed during participation in a UW-Madison study abroad/study away program.

Quality of Work Achieve at least the minimum grade point average specified by the school, college, and/or academic program.

Math Demonstrate minimal mathematics competence by:

- placing above MATH#160;96, or
- successfully completing MATH#160;96, or
- successfully completing a more advanced mathematics course such as MATH#160;112, MATH#160;113, MATH#160;114, MATH#160;141, MATH#160;211, or MATH#160;221.

English Language If required to take the UW-Madison English as a Second Language Assessment Test (MSN-ESLAT), demonstrate minimal English language competence by:

- earning credit for ESL#160;118, or
- achieving a qualifying MSN-ESLAT placement test score.

Language	Complete one: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 high school units of a single language other than English, or • one course with the second semester Language designation.
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Major Declaration	Declare and complete the requirements for at least one major.
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COLLEGE OF LETTERS & SCIENCE DEGREE REQUIREMENTS: BACHELOR OF ARTS (BA)

Students pursuing a Bachelor of Arts degree in the College of Letters & Science must complete all of the requirements below. Some courses satisfy more than one L&S degree requirement (visit College of Letters & Science: Requirements (<https://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/letters-science/#requirementstext>) for details).

This major can be paired with either the Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science degree requirements.

BACHELOR OF ARTS DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Communication Complete both:

- Part A: one course with the Communication A designation or eligible UW Placement Score; and
- Part B: one course with the Communication B designation

Quantitative Reasoning	Complete both: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part A: one course with the Quantitative Reasoning A designation or eligible UW Placement Score; and • Part B: one course with the Quantitative Reasoning B designation
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Ethnic Studies	one 3+ credit course with the Ethnic Studies designation
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Language	Complete either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the fourth unit of one language other than English; or • the third unit of one language other than English and the second unit of an additional language.
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L&S Breadth: Humanities	Complete 12 credits with the Humanities or Literature designation, which must include at least 6 credits with the Literature designation.
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L&S Breadth: Social Sciences	Complete 12 credits with the Social Science designation.
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L&S Breadth: Natural Sciences	Complete 12 credits with the Natural Science, Biological Science, or Physical Science designations, which must include both: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one 3+ credit course with the Biological Science designation, and • one 3+ credit course with the Physical Science designation.
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Liberal Arts and Science (LAS) Coursework	at least 108 credits
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Depth of Intermediate/Advanced work	at least 60 credits at the Intermediate or Advanced level
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Major	Declare and complete at least one major.
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Total Credits	at least 120 credits
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UW-Madison Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 credits in residence, overall; and • 30 credits in residence after the 86th credit
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Quality of Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.000 in all coursework at UW-Madison • 2.000 in Intermediate/Advanced level coursework at UW-Madison
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NON-L&S STUDENTS PURSUING AN L&S MAJOR

Non-L&S students who have permission from their School/College to pursue an additional major within L&S only need to fulfill the major requirements. They do not need to complete the L&S Degree Requirements above.

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MAJOR

The Polish major requires study of the Polish language, Polish literature in translation, Polish literature in the original language, as well as culture and area studies, as detailed below:

Code	Title	Credits
Polish Language (complete two courses):		6
SLAVIC 277	Third Year Polish I	
SLAVIC 278	Third Year Polish II	
Polish Literature and Culture (complete both):		
SLAVIC/ LITTRANS 215	Love and Death: Introduction to Polish Literature & Culture	3
SLAVIC/ LITTRANS 361	Living at the End of Times: Contemporary Polish Literature and Culture	3
Additional Course in Polish Language or Literature/Culture (complete one):		3
SLAVIC 331	Fourth Year Polish I	
SLAVIC 332	Fourth Year Polish II	
SLAVIC 231	History and Ethics on Film: Polish Cinema ¹	
SLAVIC/ LITTRANS 259	Adventure in Literature and Film	
Polish Literature and Culture Area Studies from:		6
SLAVIC 231	History and Ethics on Film: Polish Cinema ¹	
SLAVIC 246	Escaping Utopia: Cultures after Communism	
SLAVIC 245	Topics in Slavic Literatures	
SLAVIC/GEOG/ HISTORY/ POLI SCI 254	Eastern Europe: An Interdisciplinary Survey	

SLAVIC 285	Slavic Culture in Context: An Honors Course
SLAVIC 299	Directed Study
SLAVIC 307	Study Abroad in Poland
SLAVIC 308	Study Abroad in Polish Culture and Area Studies
SLAVIC/ LITTRANS 357	Intermediate Special Topics in Slavic Languages and Literatures
SLAVIC/ LITTRANS 467	Advanced Special Topics in Slavic Languages and Literatures
SLAVIC 470	History of Polish Literature until 1863
HISTORY 270	Eastern Europe since 1900
LITTRANS 207	Slavic Science Fiction through Literature and Film
LITTRANS 229	Representation of the Jew in Eastern European Cultures
LITTRANS 247	Topics in Slavic Literatures in Translation
LITTRANS/ SLAVIC 357	Intermediate Special Topics in Slavic Languages and Literatures
LITTRANS/ SLAVIC 467	Advanced Special Topics in Slavic Languages and Literatures
POLI SCI 340	The European Union: Politics and Political Economy

Total Credits **21**

RESIDENCE AND QUALITY OF WORK

- 2.000 GPA in all major courses
- 2.000 GPA on at least 15 credits of upper-level work in the major, in residence
- 15 credits in the major taken on the UW-Madison campus

Upper-Level Courses in the Major:

Code	Title	Credits
SLAVIC 277	Third Year Polish I	3
SLAVIC 278	Third Year Polish II	3
SLAVIC 307	Study Abroad in Poland	1-4
SLAVIC 308	Study Abroad in Polish Culture and Area Studies	1-4
SLAVIC 331	Fourth Year Polish I	3
SLAVIC 332	Fourth Year Polish II	3
SLAVIC/ LITTRANS 357	Intermediate Special Topics in Slavic Languages and Literatures	3
SLAVIC/ LITTRANS 361	Living at the End of Times: Contemporary Polish Literature and Culture	3
SLAVIC/ LITTRANS 467	Advanced Special Topics in Slavic Languages and Literatures	3
POLI SCI 340	The European Union: Politics and Political Economy	3-4

HONORS IN THE MAJOR

To earn Honors in the Major, students must satisfy both the requirements for the major (above) and the following additional requirements:

- Earn a 3.300 University GPA
- Earn a 3.300 GPA for all SLAVIC courses and all courses counting in the major
- Complete a two-semester Senior Honors Thesis in SLAVIC 681 and SLAVIC 682, for a total of 6 credits
- 9 credits from the following list:

Code	Title	Credits
SLAVIC 277	Third Year Polish I	3
SLAVIC 278	Third Year Polish II	3
SLAVIC 331	Fourth Year Polish I	3
SLAVIC 332	Fourth Year Polish II	3
SLAVIC/ LITTRANS 361	Living at the End of Times: Contemporary Polish Literature and Culture	3
SLAVIC/ LITTRANS 357	Intermediate Special Topics in Slavic Languages and Literatures	3
SLAVIC/ LITTRANS 467	Advanced Special Topics in Slavic Languages and Literatures	3

FOOTNOTES

¹ SLAVIC 231 may only count within one requirement for the major.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

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1. (Polish language proficiency) Develop speaking, listening, writing, and reading skills and integrate these skills to communicate in Polish in a variety of social situations.
2. Develop and apply writing skills and oral communication skills appropriate to liberal arts education in the context of Slavic studies.
3. Develop and apply critical thinking skills inherent in the liberal arts tradition in the context of Slavic studies.
4. Analyze and interpret works of literature in themselves and in the context of specific historical and cultural conditions.
5. Demonstrate insight into Polish culture and civilization and apply this knowledge across disciplines such as history, political science, the arts, geography, business, economics, sociology, the sciences, gender studies, philosophy, law, folklore.

FOUR-YEAR PLAN

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This Four-Year Plan is only one way a student may complete an L&S degree with this major. Many factors can affect student degree planning, including placement scores, credit for transferred courses, credits earned by examination, and individual scholarly interests. In addition, many students have commitments (e.g., athletics, honors, research, student organizations, study abroad, work and volunteer experiences) that necessitate they adjust their plans accordingly. Informed students engage

in their own unique Wisconsin Experience by consulting their academic advisors, Guide, DARS, and Course Search & Enroll for assistance making and adjusting their plan.

First Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
SLAVIC 111	4 SLAVIC 112	4
Communication A	3 GERMAN 267	3-4
Quantitative Reasoning A	3-4 Social Science Breadth	4
Social Science Breadth	4 Biological Science Breadth	3
14		14

Second Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
SLAVIC 207	4 SLAVIC 208	4
GNS/FOLKLORE 200 (Comm B)	3 SLAVIC/GEOG/HISTORY/POLI SCI 254	4
Physical Science Breadth	3 INTER-LS 210	1
Quantitative Reasoning B	3 Social Science Breadth	4
Elective	3 Elective	3
16		16

Third Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
SLAVIC 277	3 SLAVIC 278	3
SLAVIC/LITTRANS 215	3 SLAVIC/LITTRANS 361	3
Science Breadth	3 Polish Area Studies Course	3
Electives	6 Science Breadth Elective	3
15		15

Fourth Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
SLAVIC 331	3 SLAVIC 332	3
Polish Area Studies course	3 Polish Area Studies course	3
Electives	9 Electives	9
15		15

Total Credits 120

ADVISING AND CAREERS

ADVISING AND CAREERS DECLARE OR CANCEL THIS MAJOR

Please follow the process described on the German, Nordic, and Slavic+ website (https://gns.wisc.edu/undergraduate_majors/).

Any student with previous experience with the Polish language is required to take a placement test. These tests may admit a student to a more advanced course, but give no credit toward graduation. However, retroactive credits can be granted in recognition of previous language study. L&S Retro Credit Policy (<https://kb.wisc.edu/lis/page.php?id=23736>). The Placement Advisor for Polish is Krzysztof Borowski. Please contact the undergraduate advisor to request placement.

For other undergraduate concerns, please contact the undergraduate advisor.

For advising on careers related to languages, talk with the Language Directions Specialist (<https://languages.wisc.edu/language-careers-guide/>) in the Language Institute.

STUDY ABROAD

Learning in Letters & Science emphasizes discovery, growth, understanding different perspectives, and challenging yourself, which makes studying abroad an excellent fit for many L&S students: studyabroad.wisc.edu (<https://studyabroad.wisc.edu/>)

As a university with global influence, we have more than 300 study abroad programs (<https://studyabroad.wisc.edu/programs/>) in over 80 countries. These vary in length, academic focus, teaching format, language requirements, cost, and level of independence. There are many programs to complement every major (<https://studyabroad.wisc.edu/academics/major-advising-pages-maps/#L&S>) and any year of college (including the final semester)—and all meet UW–Madison’s high academic standards. Students admitted into Letters & Science can even choose a short program in the summer before they start college or their whole first year: studyabroad.wisc.edu/launch (<http://studyabroad.wisc.edu/launch/>). Talk with your academic advisor about how studying abroad might fit with your academic plan.

SUCCESSWORKS

SuccessWorks (<https://successworks.wisc.edu/>) at the College of Letters & Science helps you turn the academic skills learned in your classes into a fulfilling life, guiding you every step of the way to securing jobs, internships, or admission to graduate school.

Through one-on-one career advising, events, and resources, you can explore career options, build valuable internship and research experience, and connect with supportive alumni and employers who open doors of opportunity.

- What you can do with your major (<https://successworks.wisc.edu/what-you-can-do-with-your-major/>) (Major Skills & Outcomes Sheets)
- Make a career advising appointment (<https://successworks.wisc.edu/make-an-appointment/>)
- Learn about internships and internship funding (<https://successworks.wisc.edu/finding-a-job-or-internship/>)
- Try “Jobs, Internships, & How to Get Them,” (<https://successworks.wisc.edu/canvas/>) an interactive guide in Canvas for enrolled UW–Madison students