

Polish-Jewish Studies at the University of Michigan

The Power

The Copernicus Program in Polish Studies (CPPS) and the Jean & Samuel Frankel Center for Judaic Studies at the University of Michigan are uniquely situated to illuminate the rich and complex history of Polish-Jewish life in Poland. In 2014, CPPS signed an official affiliation with POLIN, the Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw, facilitating collaboration on research exchanges for faculty, and pedagogic activities for a diverse group of UM students. CPPS and the Frankel Center organize several events each year including lectures, conferences, and films.

In addition to Polish, Yiddish, and Hebrew language classes, UM's departments offer a variety of courses on a broad range of Polish-Jewish topics, including several Holocaust related courses. Many of the faculty involved in Holocaust education at UM also teach and conduct research on Polish-Jewish topics. UM is the only university in the country with two faculty representatives on the academic committee of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Through these resources, our graduates become leaders, making important contributions to scholarship and public service.

The affiliation with POLIN provides a special opportunity for UM's diverse student population to explore the rich history of Polish Jews in a deep and meaningful way. POLIN is deliberately not a Holocaust museum, but rather a museum of the history of Jewish life in Poland. The museum exhibition is divided into seven chronological segments; the Holocaust comprises one of those segments. The museum's location, in the heart of the former Warsaw Ghetto and framed against the Monument to the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising which dominates the museum's courtyard, keeps the Holocaust in the background at every stage of the exhibition.



POLIN, the Museum of the History of Polish Jews

The Impact

Traveling to another country, like Poland, expands students' global perspectives, sense of history and moves beyond scholarship, to community-building. Studies show that cultural immersion helps undergraduates obtain a greater awareness of global affairs, including political, educational, societal, and economic issues. The number of students participating in global experiences across the campus is steadily growing. To increase and support the growing interest of our students in Polish-Jewish Studies, it is critical to have the resources to provide them with life-changing study abroad experiences.

Global Course Connection in Polish-Jewish Studies (GCC)

During the fall or winter term, students from all backgrounds can enroll in a Polish-Jewish Studies course with a study abroad component in Poland, including POLIN, immediately following the end of term. Students thus have the opportunity to engage in a deep exploration of Polish-Jewish history, society and culture through first-hand, on-site experiences related to what they studied in the classroom.

Summer Internships at the POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews

Internships are particularly valuable learning experiences since they provide unique opportunities to practice language and cultural skills while gaining precious work experience interacting with people in a variety of settings. Gifts for an internship scholarship fund would make it possible for students to intern at POLIN. Funding would provide stipends for students on these unpaid summer internships who would not be able to participate otherwise.



Students on a tour of Kazimierz, the Jewish district of Krakow

Thank You for Your Consideration

The opportunities described here are just a subset of the numerous ways in which you could make a difference in the lives of University of Michigan students by broadening their understanding of Jewish Polish history and culture. We would be glad to provide additional information regarding any of

these opportunities or others that you may want to explore. We invite you to partner with UM in ensuring that the next generation of leaders and best will have the resources, experiences and opportunities that will allow them to shape the future for decades to come.

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