

## **, Skalny Visiting Professor**

### **IR 241 Polish Foreign Policy after Communism, 1989-2019**

The fall of the communist regime in 1989 allowed Poland to reorient its foreign policy. For the first 25 years after the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the withdrawal of Soviet/Russian combat troops from Poland, policy priorities, including membership in NATO and the EU, were rarely questioned by any Polish government. Since the 2015 elections, however, when the conservative and populist Law and Justice Party (PiS) gained the majority in parliament, the foreign policy of Poland has been undergoing substantial changes. The political and military alliance with the United States is still an undisputed priority, but the role of Poland in the EU has been slowly marginalized, and the PiS government has focused instead on building regional alliances in Central Europe at the cost of strategic bonds with Ukraine. In this course, we will examine the relationship of Poland to the rest of Europe in the 19th and 20th centuries, the transformation of Poland's ties to the United States, Russia, and European countries following the fall of communism, and the role of domestic politics and decision makers in shaping contemporary Polish foreign policy.

A typical class will usually consist of a Power Point presentation, discussion on a given topic and the instructor's sum-up. There is a compulsory reading/viewing list but the students are encouraged to step beyond the compulsory resources. Suggestions on the proposed topics and the reading list will be taken into consideration.

#### **Course requirements and assessment**

The students are obliged to actively take part in the classes and complete all assignments on time.

#### **The course is graded as follows:**

2. Two presentations: 0-20 points

Each student is required to prepare 2 presentations on topics proposed by the instructor. The topics may be modified after consultations with the instructor. The presentation (PowerPoint or other) should last ca 15 minutes.

3. Midterm task: essay outline: 0-10 points

A 500-700 word outline of the final essay, with a preliminary bibliography and a list of sources. Essay topics should be consulted with the instructor. The outlines should be submitted by midterm.

4. Final essay: 0-50 points.

A 4,000 – 5,000-word essay, focused on Polish Foreign Policy in an international perspective. It might be an analysis of Poland's bilateral relations with selected countries or international political bodies (e.g. Polish-German relations after 2004, Polish-EU relations since 2004, Poland vs NATO – challenges and areas of cooperation). Essay topics should be consulted with the instructor. The final essays should be submitted by May 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Course schedule topics discussed and problems analyzed**

1. Introduction – course overview
2. Introduction to Poland's Present and Past – Sovereignty/Independence vs Partitions
3. Poland vs. History of Europe in the 19<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup> Century. How does the European history shape Polish attitudes toward geopolitics/international relations? Defining Polishness after the partitions in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.
4. Poland vs. History of Europe in the 19<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Reviving or constructing Polish national identity in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
5. Communist/Post-communist Legacy. How has the communist/early post-communist political and social legacy determined Polish foreign policies? WW 2 and the communist period 1945 – 1989
6. Communist/Post-communist Legacy. The collapse of communism and its implications 1989 - 2000
7. National vs European Sets of Ideologies. What are the ideological pillars of Poland's foreign policy and how can they be constructed or modified? Piłsudski and Dmowski.
8. Domestic Policy vs Foreign Policy. How do domestic policies determine Polish foreign policy? Is there at present a surge of extreme nationalism/antisemitism in

Poland which may have a serious impact on its foreign policy? Poles, Jews and Poles of Jewish origin. Poland vs Israel.

9. Domestic Policy vs Foreign Policy. Nationalism vs universalism and European values
10. Poland and Its International Security. Avoiding the “twilight zone” and protecting the sovereignty. How do Poles perceive NATO and their military obligations in the Alliance? What was the Polish contribution to NATO (or US) military missions in the Middle East and South Asia?
11. Poland and Its International Security. NATO vs Russia. Is Russia perceived in Poland as an eternal enemy, a political opponent or an international competitor? What is the role of Ukraine in Polish foreign policy? How safe is Poland in a changing international order?
12. Poland as an ally of the United States. How do Poles perceive the military and political alliance with the United States? What might be the political illusions and realities of Poland’s relations with America and how are they analyzed in the context of Poland-Russia/ US-Russia bilateral relations?
13. Poland as a Declared and Perceived “pro-American Member of the European Union”.

19. Regional vs Global Foreign Policy. Does/did Poland have regional or/and global foreign policies? How do they differ from each other?
20. Poland's Economic Prosperity vs Its Foreign Policy. How does Poland's economic situation and its business relations with various EU and non-EU partners translate into viable foreign policy? Do business interests or pure nationalistic ideology (or a combination of both) shape the current Polish foreign policy?
21. Global Ambitions of Polish Foreign Policy Makers. What is the strategy to promote Polish economic interests in Asia (South Asia, Middle East and Far East)? What is Poland's

## READING LIST

**Adam Balcer, Piotr Buras, Grzegorz Gromadzki, Eugeniusz Smolar Polish Views of the EU: the Illusion of Consensus** , Stefan Batory Foundation, Warsaw 2017 (available on-line)

[http://www.batory.org.pl/upload/files/pdf/rap\\_otw\\_eu/Polish%20views%20of%20the%20EU.pdf](http://www.batory.org.pl/upload/files/pdf/rap_otw_eu/Polish%20views%20of%20the%20EU.pdf)

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**: Main Directions**

