History

The city of Cracow
The Jagiellonian University
History of the Faculty of Medicine
History of the Faculty of Pharmacy
History of the Faculty of Health Sciences

The city of Cracow

Cracovia, totius Poloniae urbs celeberrima. This Latin maxim describes Kraków as the most famous of Polish cities. For long a city of kings, culture, and science, the first written record of Kraków dates back to 985, by Ibrahim-Ibn-Jakub, a merchant from Cordoba. Kraków was then described as a wealthy forest-encircled city lying at the intersection of important trade routes. Certain facts and dates from the city’s history remain shrouded in mystery until after the year 1000. At the time, Wavel Hill already included a castle and settlement. The granting of Magdeburg Law in 1257 ushered in a new period of urbanization, introducing a new layout with a centrally located market square, which to this day remains a site of historic, cultural, and religious significance.

The reign of King Casimir III the Great, a patron of art and science, marks an important period for the city. In 1364, he established the first Polish institution of higher education, later to become Jagiellonian University. The reign of King Władysław Jagiełło in the 14th century saw Kraków become the capital of the Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania. Towards the end of the 16th century, when Kraków lost its status as capital in favor of Warsaw, despite losing its formal significance, it remained the site of royal coronations and interments.

With its population of 800,000, the city also takes great pride in its many splendid monuments, such as the Renaissance castle on Wawel Hill, dozens of churches and other fine examples of Romanesque, Gothic, Renaissance, and Baroque architecture, Kazimierz district with its unique place in Jewish culture, 13 institutions of higher education, numerous theaters, cinemas, museums, art galleries, clubs, operas, cabarets, and philharmonic hall. Kraków was named a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1978.

In 1995, the Education, Youth, and Culture Council of the Council of the European Union named nine cities as “European Capitals of Culture” for 2000. Kraków was one of the first cities to receive this honor, alongside Avignon, Bergen, Bologna, Brussels, Helsinki, Prague, Reykjavik, and Santiago de Compostella.

Currently Kraków remains at the forefront of academia and tourism. It also continues to gain over greater importance in Europe and across the world as a site for investment and technological development, attracting such companies as Shell, Motorola, IBM, Capgemini, Philip Morris, Google, HCL Technologies, and UBC.

The Jagiellonian University

Jagiellonian University is the oldest institution of higher education in Poland. Established in 1364 by King Casimir III the Great, it is the second oldest university in Central-Eastern Europe, preceded by the University of Prague which was founded in 1348. Called Studium Generale in its early years, it was modeled after the Universities of Bologna and Padua and was initially composed of three faculties: Liberal Arts, Medicine, and Law. After its restoration in 1400, changes to the Academy’s statute made it more resemble the Paris Sorbonne. For over 600 years, many famous Poles and Europeans received their education within the walls of this University. It was here that Nicolaus Copernicus studied and in 1578 Walenty Fontana delivered the first academic lecture based on Copernicus’ heliocentric theory, an inconceivable notion to many scholars at the time. In 1938, Karol Wojtyła began his studies in Polish philology at Jagiellonian University, interrupted by the outbreak of World War II, when occupying forces closed the University. During the War, he actively participated in classes organized by the underground university. Upon taking Holy Orders and returning from his doctoral studies in Rome, he received his post-doctoral degree from Jagiellonian University in 1953, continuing to work at the University until 1954. In 1983, already as Pope, he was honored by University authorities with an Honorary Doctorate.
After Poland regained independence following World War I, new institutions of higher education were established and older institutions were able to recover their Polish identity. With its already famous University, Kraków already possessed adequate intellectual potential to help these new institutions.

Despite numerous challenges, particularly economic, sustained scientific development continued at the University until the outbreak of World War II and Nazi German occupation. On November 6, 1939, in room number 30 at Collegium Novum, the teaching staff was gathered on orders by SS-Sturmbahnführer Bruno Muller, who accused university authorities of illegal activity. On these false changes, all those present were arrested and deported to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. Despite this grievous tragedy and loss of its greatest luminaries of science, on the initiative of Professor Mieczysław Malecki, Jagiellonian University established an underground university in 1942, the Rector of which was Professor Władysław Szafra. After World War II, notwithstanding a shortage of teaching staff, the University resumed its functioning in 1945. However, despite the good will and sincere enthusiasm of all academic teachers and students, these efforts were soon stifled by ever-increasing political interference.

Today’s Jagiellonian University combines tradition with the challenges of the modern world. In compliance with the principles of the Bologna Process, over 46,000 students study in 15 faculties on all three levels of study: Bachelor’s, Master’s, and Doctoral. One may choose to study from nearly a hundred majors. The European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) enables students to combine their studies at Jagiellonian University with coursework from other European universities.

Teaching staff includes over 3600 academic instructors, 500 of whom hold the title of Professor. Its young academic staff and doctoral students are yearly awarded more than 10 percent of the prestigious Foundation for Polish Science scholarships. Researchers at Jagiellonian University effectively compete for the grants through European research programs and as many as 6 European Centers of Excellence operate within the University.

In recent years, cooperation between scientists at Jagiellonian University and the business community has greatly increased. As a result, a number of research projects, mainly in the field of natural and exact sciences, have been introduced onto Polish and international markets. Jagiellonian University graduates do an excellent job of competing on both the domestic and foreign labor market.

The University’s legacy makes it not only an important center for scientific research and instruction, but also a center of Polish and European culture. It gathers representatives from all artistic disciplines and continues to inspire both faculty and students alike. The work of those connected with the University continues to influence the world in which we live and remains a part of Europe’s humanistic landscape.

History of the Faculty of Medicine

When King Casimir III the Great in 1364 established the University of Kraków, there were initially three faculties. The Faculty of Medicine included two types of professors: Professor of Medicine, or lector ordinarius in medicines, and presumably a Professor of Astronomy, who would lecture on astrology, which for a long time remained an inextricable part of medicine. All lectures took place in the Royal Castle on Wawel Hill.

King Władysław Jagiełło, using jewels donated by his wife, Queen Jadwiga, financed the restoration of the University in 1400. Stanisław of Skalmierzyce, first Rector of the University, stressed the importance of the Faculty of Medicine already in his inauguration speech. Soon after the restoration process, famous Polish and foreign scholars began to arrive at the University. Jan Kro of Chociebu (Johannes Kro de Kostebus) was one of its first Professors, as well as the first physician to be chosen as Rector of the University, a position he assumed in 1419. Other notable scholars include Jan of Pavia (Johannes de Saccis de Pavia), who introduced the first statute of the Faculty of Medicine in 1433, Marcin Król of Zurawica, and Piotr Gaszowice of Łomierz, who, in addition to medicine, displayed great interest in astronomy and astrology.

At the time, each physician who practiced in Kraków, nationality notwithstanding, was obliged to teach as a lector of medicine, or lector in medicines. Owing to this fact, already in the 15th century, the teaching staff at the Faculty of Medicine numbered nearly 50 members!

One of the greatest personalities of the 16th century was undoubtedly Maciej of Miechów (1457-1524), a historian and physician; he served as Rector of the University for eight terms and is often called the Polish Hippocrates. Other eminent scholars include Wojciech Oczko (1537-1599), author of many meticulous works on baleology and syphilidology; Sebastian Petrvcz of Pilno (1564-1626), a clinician, philanthropist, and renowned expert on Aristotle; and Józef Strus (1510-1568), a critic of Galen and author of Physygmiae artis libri quinque (1555), a treatise on the human pulse, he went on to lecture in Padua.

The 17th and 18th centuries saw a decline in the University, marked mainly by external factors (e.g., the 1655-1660 Swedish invasions), which led to a decrease in the number of students. Those students who decided to stay in Kraków, especially medical students, oftentimes received an incomplete education and had to supplement their studies abroad, mainly in Italy, where they obtained doctoral degrees.
The second half of the 18th century saw the condition of the University improve dramatically when, in 1773, the Commission of National Education entrusted Hugo Kołłątaj with the task of reform, carried out from 1778 to 1780. This reform initiated a new period in the history of the Faculty of Medicine: Professor Andrzej Badurski (1740-1789) worked to establish a clinic ultimately opened in 1780, and Rafał Józef Czerwiakowski (1743-1816) began to teach surgery and, as Professor of Anatomy, was one of the first to perform posthumous examinations in Poland. When Kraków was partitioned as part of the Austrian Empire in 1796, attempts were made at transforming the University into an Austrian institution through the introduction of foreign teachers. Not until 1809, when Kraków was partitioned as part of the Duchy of Warsaw, did the University regain its Polish identity.

The University entered into a period of prosperity when Kraków gained political independence in 1813-1846. The university owes its renown to such academics as Józef Brodowicz (1790-1885), Professor of Internal Diseases; Ludwik Bierkowski (1801-1866), Professor of Surgery; and Józef Major (1808-1899) and Fryderyk Skobel (1826-1907), Professors of theoretical sciences. The 19th century saw a period of further prosperity at the Faculty of Medicine and University, owing to such outstanding scholars and physicians as Józef Dietl (1804-1878); Edward Korczyński (1844-1905); Walery Joworski (1849-1924), in internal diseases; Jan Mikulicz Radecki (1850-1905); and Ludwik Rydygier (1850-1920) and Alfred Obański (1843-1889), in surgery.

The beginnings of stomatology date back to the 18th century. Already in 1779, Professor Rafał Czerwiakowski included dentistry as part of his university lectures for barbers-surgeons. From 1889, the completion of medical studies also required participation in dentistry lectures. Similar to ophthalmology, orthopedics, or laryngology, dentistry was at first considered a part of surgery, long remaining within this field. Formed at Jagiellonian University in 1902, Poland's first Chair of Dentistry continued the process of establishing dentistry as a separate discipline. This Chair was headed by Professor Wincenty Lepkowski (1866-1935). During World War II, medical studies were secretly organized and run by Professor Stanisław Mączkiwa. In 1950, all Faculties of Medicine in Poland were separated from their universities and transformed into independent institutions, called "academies of medicine".

Notable events during the functioning of the Nicolaus Copernicus Academy of Medicine (i.e., present-day Jagiellonian University Medical College) included the formation of new clinics (e.g., 3rd Clinic of Internal Diseases, 3rd Clinic of Surgery) as well as the Department of Dentistry at the Faculty of Medicine. Established in 1948, the Department of Dentistry grew to include four chairs in preventive dentistry, prosthodontics, dental surgery, and orthodontics. Each newly established department was located in old tenements or post-hospital buildings, as practical no new buildings were being built. Since 1950, the Faculty of Medicine at the Academy of Medicine educated a great number of students, filling deficits in the post-war health service and improving the health of the general population. All of its Chairs and Clinics made great strides in teaching and research, oftentimes gaining worldwide recognition.

In 1965, the Institute of Pediatrics, a technological and architectural wonder at the time, was built in Prokocim District. This facility was built thanks to support from the Polish-American community and American government. Located far outside of the old town, it was built in an area which was also to include a future campus and medical center. In the 1970s and 1980s, three student dormitories and a modern Medical Library were built in its immediate vicinity.

In September 2000, an Institute of Stomatology was formed. Located on ul. Montelupich (Montelupich Street), it is equipped to 21st century standards and is the site of research and educational activities.

In the interest of ensuring the highest quality of teaching, a Conference Center was put into use in 2006. This facility is meant to accommodate student needs and also serves as a venue for conferences and conventions.

History of the Faculty of Pharmacy

The first Chairs of Pharmacy in Poland were formed as a direct result of the disbudding of the Jesuit order in 1773. At the time, this order had complete control over the entire Polish education system. The fact that the Commission of National Education was able to take over Jesuit possessions made education reform all the more possible. The end result was a three-stage secular educational system with elementary schools at the base and two universities (or Main Schools, as they were called) - the Crown School of Kraków and the Lithuanian School of Vilnius - at the top.

Andrzej Badurski was the major initiator of reform in the teaching of pharmacy. Andrzej Szafer also helped in implementing these reforms. In 1783, the Chair of Pharmacy and Medical Matter was established at the Crown School of Kraków. Its first Chair was Jan Szastar (1746-1793), a Kraków pharmacist and Doctor of Medicine.

In 1804, pharmacy training was shortened to one year in all schools of the Austrian monarchy, including the Crown School of Kraków. After the Republic of Kraków was established in 1815, a two-year pharmacy course was introduced into the Kraków School.

From 1859, the education of pharmacists took place at two faculties, namely at the Faculty of Medicine, and Philosophy. In 1809, Józef Sawiczewski was appointed Head of the Chair of Pharmacy and Medical Matter. After his death in 1825, this function was entrusted to Florian Sawiczewski, the most outstanding Pharmacy Professor of the time. In 1851, he was named Rector of Jagiellonian University.

In 1833, the Chair of Pharmacy was integrated with the Chair of General and Applied Chemistry, later a part of the Faculty of Philosophy, which substantially changed how the teaching of pharmacy was organized. In the period from 1857 to 1920, pharmacy students had their classes conducted by such renowned professors as Edward Janczewski, Józef Lazarski, Emil Czymaniski, Karol Olszewski, Zygmunt Wróblewski, Marian Smoluchowski, Rafał Czerwiakowski, Józef Kostafinski, and Władysław Szańczenko.

Amidst nationwide discussion, the teaching of pharmacy was completely reformed after Poland regained independence in 1918. Pharmaceutical departments were transformed into independent faculties of Pharmacy with four year teaching periods. The first such Faculty of Pharmacy at Jagiellonian University was Professor Karol Dzikowski, followed by Professor Tadeusz Estreicher, who took up the post in 1926.
On the eve of World War II, the Kraków Department of Pharmacy had five separate units: Applied Pharmacy, Pharmaceutical Botany, Pharmaceutical Chemistry, Zoology for Pharmacy, and the Garden of Medical Plants, a part of the Jagiellonian University Botanical Garden.

In 1947, the Department of Pharmacy, operating within the Faculty of Philosophy, was transformed into a separate Faculty of Pharmacy. Professor Marek Gatty-Kostyal was appointed as its first dean.

The Kraków Faculty of Pharmacy entered a new era on January 1, 1950, when, along with the Faculty of Medicine, it was separated from Jagiellonian University and transformed into the Academy of Medicine.

Another milestone in the history of the Kraków Faculty of Pharmacy was the formation of the Department of Medical Analytic.

This Department, with a separate 5-year teaching program, began to function during the 1977/1978 academic year.

The year in which the Faculties of Pharmacy and Medicine were rejoined with Jagiellonian University was of special importance to the Faculty of Pharmacy. Among others, it was the first time the newly-built seat of the Department of Pharmacy on ul. Medykówka (Medyczna Street) was put to use. A modern didactic base and expanding set of research equipment allowed to extend its range of international academic and didactic cooperation as well as actively participate in the activities of the European Association of Faculties of Pharmacy (EAFP), of which the Faculty is a member since 2000. One of the consequences of this change was a considerable increase in the number of elective courses offered.

International programs carried out at the Faculty also allow for a constant perfecting of the process of education. In 2006, by decision of the Minister of Science and Higher Education, the Faculty of Pharmacy was classified as a category - A institution.

### History of the Faculty of Health Sciences

The Faculty of Health Sciences continues a rich tradition of scholarship in nursing. The School of Nursing in Kraków was founded in 1911 and by 1925 was transformed into the University School for Nurses and Hygienists. Its functioning was interrupted by the outbreak of World War II. After the War, the School continued to educate nurses at a vocational, secondary-school level. Education at a graduate level was launched in 1975 with the founding of the Faculty of Nursing at the Academy of Medicine. In 1993, the Faculty was rejoined with Jagiellonian University and in 1998 was the first in Poland to introduce two-stage studies in nursing.

A resolution by the Senate of Jagiellonian University, passed on February 26, 1997, transformed the Faculty of Nursing into the Institute of Public Health. This transformation was made official on October 1, 1997. Precisely one decade later it assumed its current title as the Faculty of Health Sciences.

The Faculty continues a tradition of midwifery training, initiated in Kraków in 1780 at the College of Physics, or Collegium Physicum, of the Crown School of Kraków.

In 1895, midwifery training was excluded from the school and taken over by the Imperial-Royal School of Midwives, later transformed into the National School of Midwives after Poland regained independence. In 2005, the first students were enrolled in the one-stage midwifery training program at the then Institute of Public Health. That same year, the name of the Institute of Nursing was changed to the Institute of Nursing and Midwifery.

In 1991, the School of Public Health was established. It functioned as an interfaculty unit of the Academy of Medicine and Jagiellonian University. This unit, being the first of its kind to offer public health education in Poland, was established with support from the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare and in consultation with the French Ministry of Health.

The staff of the School began an intensive and wide-ranged campaign aimed at training personnel in modern managerial skills meant to satisfy the needs of Poland’s changing health care system. In 1997, the name of the School was changed to the Institute of Public Health. Today the Institute offers courses in public health, an international master’s degree program (EuroPublicHealth), and postgraduate studies for persons performing managerial functions at healthcare institutions and carrying out other tasks in healthcare programs.