

DRAFT

GEOG 445/545: Culture, Ethnicity, and Nationalism Spring 2015

Lecture: MW 10:00-11:20 16 Pacific
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Office hours: 12:00-1:00 pm Mondays or by appointment

About the Class

Modern nationalism has been called “the most powerful political force in the world” (Walt 2011). Consider the following: Why were the League of Nations and United Nations so named? How did the word *citizen* become synonymous with *national*? Why does Stephen Colbert refer to his audience as “Nation”? And why do American politicians (and their speechwriters) feel the need to include that word with ubiquitous regularity in their speeches?

The aim of this course is to broadly explore the power of nationalism as a political force but also to understand how cultural and ethnic practices and conceptions have been fundamentally shaped by the rise of modern nationalism. Powerful in their own right, culture and ethnicity are often co-opted in problematic ways by national aspirations and our objective this quarter is to understand why. With this in mind, we will emphasize the role of all three in political conflict, including but not limited to international war, civil war, and (so-called) ethnic cleansing.

As course instructor, my goals are to provide you with an understanding of the key concepts and theoretical frameworks that form a foundation of cultural, ethnic, and nationalism studies. It is critical we explore these concepts to try to make sense of the world around us and how these forces impact our perceptions, interactions, and ultimately ourselves. During the first two-thirds of the course, we will define and characterize culture, ethnicity, and nationalism, as well as examine case studies that add nuance to our understanding of each. We will study these themes in tandem with geographic concepts—including scale, landscape, space, and place—as well as various social constructs such as state, race, gender, identity, and performativity. Our examination will conclude in the last few weeks we will explore our complex, multicultural, inter-ethnic, and international world order more fully to better identify the continuing pull of nationalism in an increasingly globalized world. It should be a lot of fun!

You will leave this course with a broad understanding of:

- Culture, ethnicity, and nationalism, the role of these forces in shaping how we see others and the world, and how these terms are often misinterpreted in popular culture and the media;
- What contributions geographers have made to debates on these subjects;
- And how to think critically, spatially (i.e., with a geographic perspective), and practically (e.g., policy implications).
- How ethnicity and nation are used to categorize, justify and perpetrate violence.

Course readings

Please contact me if you have a problem accessing the reading materials. *Weekly readings are subject to change by the course instructor.*

- Academic articles and book excerpts will be posted on the course Blackboard site.

- A daily/weekly news source (e.g. *Economist*, *New York Times*, *BBC*, *Washington Post*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Guardian*, *Sydney Morning Herald*, *Boston Globe*, *Le Monde*, *El Pais*, *Der Spiegel*, *Globe & Mail*, *New Zealand Herald*)

We will spend some time each week discussing student responses and relating current events to course themes.

Assessment & Grading

Midterm exam	20%
Final exam	30%
Reading responses (x5)	30%
Attendance and participation	20%

Midterm exam

The midterm will consist of an in-class written exam. The exam will include defining terms and short answer questions. Students are asked to bring a blue/green book to class on the day of the midterm.

Final exam

The final exam will be handed out in week 9. Students are expected to turn in their final exam not later than 5:00 pm on the date of the scheduled final exam **DATE**.

Weekly assignment

Each Wednesday (weeks 2-8 only, minus the week of the midterm) students will submit a 500-word "brief" on a news item/current event as reported in an established news source. The response should relate the event to broader topics covered in lecture during that week and, in particular, should reference course readings. Responses should touch on each of the following:

- (1) What is the article referencing and why is it significant? Three sentences at most.
- (2) How is the subject matter related to this course? Think critically here; almost everything will be related in some way to our course themes.
- (3) In relation to the course topic, what does this news story fail to address?
- (4) Why is the "where" important? Does the context indicate this event/trend/decision could only have happened in a particular place (and time)?
- (5) Lastly, prepare 2-3 critical discussion questions to help steer the conversation towards that week's themes.

The lowest score of the six weekly responses will be dropped.

Course Policies

Please be respectful of your classmates and the instructor. I expect students to be in class on time, to engage with the lecture and especially the discussion. This is an upper-division undergraduate/graduate split course and thus has high standards for completion of readings and coursework, but especially participation.

Technology:

If you have plans to use a computer or tablet for note-taking or to access the digital readings during the class period please do so in a way that is not distracting to others. This is a discussion class, and I expect students to be active participants. Students found to be using their computers for non-class purposes will be asked to leave the class session. No exceptions.

Please plan to have your cell phone on 'silent' for the duration of the class. If you are unable to comply with this and must send a text-message or take a phone-call, please exit the class to do so and return when your call/text is complete. This is non-negotiable; if I see you texting I will ask you to leave.

Academic Honesty

Violations of academic integrity, such as cheating or plagiarism, will not be tolerated. Suspected violations will be reported to the Director of Student Judicial Affairs. If that office finds the student to be guilty of a violation, it may result in a failing grade.

Accessible Education Services

Please contact me early in the course so that we can make arrangements if you have special learning needs. There are a range of accommodations possible and you may find useful information through the Accessible Education Center on campus.

Academic Support:

Visit the Teaching Learning Center for assistance with speed reading, test taking, critical thinking, time management, and more. Head to PLC 72 or visit their website at <http://tlc.uoregon.edu/>.

Course schedule

Week 1: March 30 & April 2. Placing culture, ethnicity, and nationalism within human geography; place, space, location, scale, landscape, identity, the global citizen

Readings: Crang's (1998) *Cultural Geography* (chapters 1 and 10)

Week 2: April 6/8. Culture and concepts in cultural geography

Readings: Sewell's "The Concept(s) of Culture"; Hoelscher's (2003) "Making Place, Making Race: Performances of Whiteness in the Jim Crow South"; Garber's (2013) "Should the U.S. Have a Secretary of Culture?"

Week 3: April 13/15. Orientalism and the Other

Readings: Said's (1978) *Orientalism* (excerpts); Clayton's (2004) "Imperial Geographies"

Week 4: April 20/22. Ethnicity, identity, and performativity

Readings: Nagel's (1994) "Constructing Ethnicity: Creating and Recreating Ethnic Identity and Culture"; Sullivan's (2012) "I want to be all I can Irish': the role of performance and performativity in the construction of ethnicity"

Week 5: April 27/29. Nationality and the Nation

Readings: Anderson's (1991) *Imagined Communities* (excerpts); Mikesell's (1983) "The Myth of the Nation State"; Walt's (2011) "Nationalism Rules"

Week 6: May 4/6. Ethnic Conflict and the Body

Readings: Levinson's (1994) "Ethnic Conflict"; Wood's (2001) "Geographic Aspects of Genocide: A Comparison of Bosnia and Rwanda"
Tyner (2009) *War, Violence, and Population: Making the Body Count* (excerpts)

Week 7: May 11/13. Conflict and the Body II: Territorial (Ethnic?) Cleansing

Mann (2005) *The Dark Side of Democracy: Explaining Ethnic Cleansing* (excerpts)
Toal (2011) *Bosnia Remade*
Kalyvas (2008) "Ethnic Defection in Civil War"

Midterm exam on Monday, May 11.

Week 8: May 18/20.

Case Studies

Readings (select 2): Csepeli & Simon's (2004) "The Construction of Roma Identity in Eastern and Central Europe: Perception and Self-Identification"; Forest, B. (1995) West Hollywood as symbol: the significance of place in the construction of gay identity; Hyndman and De Alwis' (2004) "Bodies, Shrines, and Roads: violence, (im)mobility and displacement in Sri Lanka"; Medina's (1997) "Defining difference, forging unity: The co-construction of race, ethnicity and nation in Belize"; Lin's (2002) "Transnationalism and the Geography of (Sub)Ethnicity in Hong Kong"; Nagel's (1995) "American Indian Ethnic Renewal: Politics and the Resurgence of Identity"

Take-home final distributed week 9.

Week 9: May 25/27. Globalization, Multiculturalism, Transnationalism

Readings: Baubock's (2008) "Ties Across Borders: The Growing Salience of Transnationalism and Diaspora Politics"

Week 10: June 1/3. Wrapping up: Culture, Ethnicity, and Nationality

Readings: Student-selected pieces from *Cultural Geography*, *Social & Cultural Geography*, *Political Geography*, *Geopolitics*, *Progress in Human Geography*, *Urban Geography*, and *The Annals of the Association of American Geographers*.

Final exam due Wednesday, June 10 no later than 5:00 p.m.