

PHILOS 941: Seminar in Ethics and Political Philosophy

The Ethics of Nationhood

Instructor: Eric Wilkinson
Email: wilkinse@uwm.edu
Lectures: Thursdays, 17:30-20:10
Office Hours: By Appointment

Course Description:

Despite the centrality of “nations” and “nationalism” to modern political discourse, these concepts remain contested. The ongoing debate in applied metaphysics aims to determine what nations are, how they are formed, and how they relate to other social identities and types of community. There are also related ethical questions having to do with liberal nationalism, national self-determination, and multicultural accommodation. Liberal nationalists argue that it is possible to cultivate positive, ethical national identities that can be grounds for collective action, whereas cosmopolitans respond that the more moral approach is to reduce the importance of nations and nationalism in our politics. Likewise, the question of when a given national community has a moral right to self-determination is contested—especially given the challenge of delineating the membership of a particular nation. Additionally, nations are usually internally culturally diverse. This diversity raises the question of how the disparate cultural components of a larger national community should relate to each other. In this seminar, we will begin with the contemporary debates in social ontology over what nations and nationalism are before proceeding to discuss these ethical issues related to national identities.

Assessment & Grading:

| <i>Assignment:</i> | <i>Due Date:</i> | <i>Weight:</i> | <i>Description:</i> |
|--------------------|---------------------------|----------------|---|
| Participation | Ongoing | 10% | Attendance and participation are necessary. |
| Presentation | Sign-Up Sheet | 20% | A 30-minute presentation during a day of class. |
| Short Paper | October 31 st | 20% | A 2,000-word argumentative paper. |
| Paper Proposal | November 21 st | 10% | A one-page proposal outlining the final paper. |
| Final Paper | December 15 th | 40% | An 8,000-word argumentative paper. |

Communication Policy: Before emailing, please consult the syllabus for an answer to your query. When emailing, use your university email address and allow at least 48 hours to receive a response.

Academic Integrity: The University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee values academic integrity. Thus, students should understand the consequences of cheating, plagiarism, and other academic offences.

Disability Accommodations: Those who require disability accommodations must register with the Accessibility Resource Center (ARC). ARC will assist students in determining their needs and will help to communicate the accommodations registered students require to the course instructor.

Course Schedule
September 5th – December 12th, 2024

| Date: | Lecture Topic: | Required Readings: | Supplemental Readings: |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| September 5 th | Introduction | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Syllabus | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Readings |
| September 12 th | What are Nations? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What is a Nation?</i> (Ernest Renan) • “Ethno-Symbolism” (Anthony D. Smith) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Contemporary Debates in Nationalism</i> (Umut Ozkirmili) • “Marxism and the National Question” (Joseph Stalin) |
| September 19 th | The Ontology of Nations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Nations and Nationalism</i> (Ernest Gellner) • <i>Imagined Communities</i> (Benedict Anderson) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Theories of Nationalism</i> (Umut Ozkirmili) • <i>The Construction of Nations</i> (Adrian Hastings) |
| September 26 th | Nationalism and the State | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Nationalism and the State</i> (John Breuilly) • <i>The Invention of Tradition</i> (Eric Hobsbawm) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ethnicity and Nationalism</i> (Paul Brass) • <i>The Wretched of the Earth</i> (Franz Fanon) |
| October 3 rd | Liberal Nationalism | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Liberal Nationalism</i> (Yael Tamir) • <i>Why Nationalism?</i> (Yael Tamir) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>On Nationality</i> (David Miller) • <i>The Limits of Nationalism</i> (Chaim Gans) |
| October 10 th | Liberal Nationalism & Cosmopolitanism | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Nationalism For and (Mainly) Against” (Judith Lichtenberg) • “Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism” (Martha Nussbaum) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Internationalism and the Second Coming” (Tom Narin) • “Cosmopolitanism and Nationalism” (Criag Calhoun) |
| October 17 th | Civic Nationalism and Patriotism | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Blood and Belonging</i> (Michael Ignatieff) • “Nationalism, Exclusion, and Violence” (John Etherington) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Misunderstanding Nationalism” (Will Kymlicka) • <i>The Idea of Nationalism</i> (Hans Kohn) |
| October 24 th | National Self-Determination | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “On National Self-Determination” (Margaret Moore) • “Toward a Theory of Secession” (Allen Buchanan) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “In Defense of Self-Determination” (D. Philpott) • “Liberal Nationalism and Secession” (Kai Naielsen) |
| October 31 st | When Succession Is Justified | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Democratic Session from a Multinational State” (Alan Patten) • “Self-Government and Secession” (Simon Caney) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “In Defense of the Consent Theory of Political Obligation and Authority” (H. Beran) • “Minority Cultures and the Cosmopolitan Option” (J. Waldron) |

| | | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|--|--|
| November 7 th | Critiques of Separatism | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Secession and Self</i> (Gregory Millard) • “The Paradoxes of National Self-Determination” (Brian Slattery) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “New Treason of the Intellectuals” (Pierre Trudeau) • <i>The Partition Principle</i> (Trevor McAlpine) |
| November 14 th | Diversity Internal to the Nation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Reconciling the Solitudes</i> (Charles Taylor) • <i>Politics in the Vernacular</i> (Will Kymlicka) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Who Are We?</i> (Samuel Huntington) • <i>Multicultural Citizenship</i> (Will Kymlicka) |
| November 21 st | Fall Recess – No Lecture | • No Readings | |
| November 28 th | Fall Recess – No Lecture | • No Readings | |
| December 5 th | Multicultural Nationhood | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “A Multicultural Nationalism” (Tariq Modood) • “Multiculturalism and Nationalism” (Clayton Chin) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Majoritarian Interculturalism and Multicultural Nationalism” (Tariq Modood) • “The Possibility of Multicultural Nationhood” (Eric Wilkinson) |
| December 12 th | Additional Topics | • Readings to be Determined | |

Attendance Policy:

As this is a seminar, attendance and active participation is required. While students are encouraged to attend every session, each student is permitted to be absent from two (2) classes during the term without penalty (but not when they are scheduled to present). These are intended for emergencies.

Readings Policy:

The above schedule outlines the intended readings for the semester. The instructor may adjust the readings for later weeks in accordance with the interests of students enrolled in the seminar. If any changes are made to the readings, they will be made in consultation with the students in the course.