In this course, we will consider the competing and chaotic definitions of “nation” and “nationalism” that have existed and evolved from the early nineteenth century until the present day, and the role that music has often played in articulating national identity. Throughout the course, we will immerse ourselves in a variety of case studies, thinking always about the language that people in these different contexts have used to promote their national musical traditions and to imagine their national musical pasts. These cases range widely to include such topics as the adoption of “La Marseillaise” as the French national anthem, Weber’s and Glinka’s efforts to establish German and Russian opera in the early nineteenth century, the collection and publication of folk song, Nazi and Stalinist repression and promotion of music in the service of political ideology, and the performance of national identity at the Eurovision song contest. We will investigate the often unpredictable and surprising effects that have resulted from composers’ and political leaders’ attempts to control or to produce “national music.” Thus, in addition to considering our case studies in their original historical context, we will also trace the ways in which narratives of nationalism have shaped musical practice and performance over time, as in the case of the reception of Richard Wagner in the late twentieth century. In this course, students will be expected to participate actively in discussion, to present one major case study to their colleagues, and to produce a variety of short writing assignments, which will culminate in a proposal for a performance that engages the themes of the course.