

**THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO**  
**Department of Political Science**

Political Science 41501  
Foundations of Realism  
Winter 2014  
Instructor: John Mearsheimer

**Course Description:** The aim of this course is to explore some of the core concepts and theoretical ideas that underpin realist thinking. Given the richness of the realist tradition and the limits of the quarter system, many important issues cannot be addressed in any detail in this seminar.

**Course Requirements:** Every student is expected to do all the reading, attend every seminar, and participate in the discussion. The grade will be based on classroom participation (25%), and one 15-page paper (75%) due at the end of the course.

I will provide students with a list of paper topics from which they can choose one. The paper will be due in my office (Pick 416A) no later than 5:00 pm on Wednesday of exam week – March 19. Papers received after that time will be dropped one letter grade for each day past the due date. The paper must be no longer than 15 pages of text, double-spaced, have at least 1-inch margins on all four sides, and have a standard-sized font.

**Readings and Books:** The following books – all of which are in paper – have been ordered through the Seminary Coop Bookstore.

Alexander Downes, *Targeting Civilians in War* (Cornell)  
Robert Jackson, *Sovereignty: The Evolution of an Idea* (Polity)  
Stephen Krasner, *Organized Hypocrisy* (Princeton)  
Jack Snyder, *Myths of Empire* (Cornell)  
John Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (Norton)  
Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political* (Chicago)  
Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (McGraw Hill)  
Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars* (Basic Books)

All articles, unpublished papers, and book chapters with \*\* next to them are on Chalk.

**Course Outline:**

**1. January 8 (Wednesday): Organizational Meeting**

**2. January 15 (Wednesday): Structural Realism**

-- Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, read entire book.

**3. January 22 (Wednesday): Defensive Realism**

-- Charles Glaser, *Rational Theory of International Politics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010), chapter 3. \*\*

-- Robert Jervis, "Cooperation under the Security Dilemma," *World Politics*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (January 1978), pp. 167-214. \*\*

-- Sean M. Lynn-Jones, "Offense-Defense Theory and Its Critics," *Security Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 4 (Summer 1995), pp. 660-91. \*\*

**4. January 29 (Wednesday): Offensive Realism**

-- Mearsheimer, *Tragedy*, read entire book

### **5. February 5 (Wednesday): The Rational Actor Assumption**

-- Snyder, *Myths of Empire*, read entire book.

-- John Mearsheimer, "Reckless States and Realism," *International Relations*, Vol. 23, No. 2 (June 2009), pp. 241-256. \*\*

### **6. February 12 (Wednesday): Sovereignty**

-- Jackson, *Sovereignty*, read entire book.

-- Krasner, *Organized Hypocrisy*, read entire book.

### **7. February 19 (Wednesday): Signaling Intentions and Fostering Trust**

-- Andrew Kydd, "Sheep in Sheep's Clothing: Why Security Seekers Do Not Fight Each Other," *Security Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (Fall 1997), pp. 114-55. \*\*

-- Sebastian Rosato, "Bringing Pessimism Back In: Intentions in International Politics" unpublished manuscript, February 2014 \*\*

-- Jack Snyder and Erica D. Borghard, "The Cost of Empty Threats: A Penny, Not a Pound," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 105, No. 3 (August 2011), pp. 437-56. \*\*

-- Seth Weinberger, "Institutional Signaling and the Origins of the Cold War," *Security Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 4 (Summer 2003), pp. 80-115. \*\*

### **8. February 26 (Wednesday): Human Nature Realism**

-- Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (NY: Knopf, 1973), chapters 1-3. \*\*

-- Schmitt, *Concept of the Political*, read entire book.

-- William Scheuerman, *Carl Schmitt: The End of Law* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999), chapter 9. \*\*

### **9. March 5 (Wednesday): Just War Theory #1**

-- Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*, read entire book

### **10. March 12 (Wednesday): Just War Theory #2**

-- Clausewitz, *On War*, book one, chapter one. \*\*

-- Downes, *Targeting Civilians in War*, read entire book