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 16. 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 in paper – are available at the Seminary Coop.

Antonio Damasio, *Descartes’ Error* (Penguin)
Nuno Monteiro, *Theory of Unipolar Politics* (Cambridge)
Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political* (Chicago)
Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (McGraw Hill)

All articles, unpublished papers, and book chapters with ** next to them are on Chalk.

Course Outline:

1. January 6 (Wednesday): Organizational Meeting

2. January 13 (Wednesday): The Underlying Logic of Realism
   -- Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Parts I and II.

3. January 20 (Wednesday): The Essence of Politics
   -- Clausewitz, *On War*, “Two Notes by the Author,” Books One and Eight.
4. January 27 (Wednesday): Structural Realism


5. February 3 (Wednesday): Sovereignty and Anarchy


6. February 10 (Wednesday): The Rational Actor Assumption


-- John Mearsheimer, ”Reckless States and Realism,” *International Relations*, Vol. 23, No. 2 (June
2009), pp. 241-56. **


7. February 17 (Wednesday): Signaling Intentions and Fostering Trust


8. February 24 (Wednesday): Power and Polarity

-- Mearsheimer, Tragedy, chapters 3-4.

-- Monteiro, Theory of Unipolar Politics, entire book.

-- Waltz, Theory, chapter 8.

9. March 2 (Wednesday): Strategies

-- Mearsheimer, Tragedy, chapters 5 and 8.


10. March 9 (Wednesday): Human Nature and Realism