

Econ 829: The Economics of Institutions

Fall 2023: Professor John V.C. Nye (jnye@gmu.edu)

The required books are Gary Miller's *Managerial Dilemmas* and Olson's *The Rise and Decline of Nations*. The rest of the material comes from journal articles. This list is just a basic starting point and *papers will be added as deemed necessary*. **Students are fully responsible for any additional readings assigned in class.**

Grades will be based on a required paper due by 5 pm on Thursday, December 7, 2023 as well as a class presentation on Thursday, November 30, 2023. Both a hard copy left in my mailbox or mailed to my Carow Hall office, and an emailed file in Word Format are required. It should not exceed 20 double-spaced pages (normal margins, 12 point, Times Roman font). **Topics *must be pre-approved* and should normally have an empirical component, usually an econometric test or a well-specified case study.**

My office hours in Carow 5A are from Wed 1:30 to 3 pm or by appt. via email.

Reading List

Introduction to The New Institutional Economics: Coase and Transactions Costs

Coase, "The Nature of the Firm" *Economica*

Williamson, O. 2000. "The New Institutional Economics: Taking Stock, Looking Ahead," JEL.

Transactions Costs and the Theory of the Firm

Alchian, A. and Demsetz, H. "Production, Information Costs, and Economic Organization," AER 1972

Grossman and Hart, 1986, "The Costs and Benefits of Ownership" JPE.

Joskow, P. 1987 "Contract Duration and Relationship Specific Investments" AER

Klein, Crawford, and Alchian, 1978 "Vertical Integration, Appropriable Rents and the Competitive Contracting Process," JLE

Tadelis and Williamson, 2012. "Transaction Cost Economics"
https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2020176

Williamson, O. "Credible commitments: Using Hostages to Support Exchange"
1983 AER.

Crocker and Masten, "Regulation and Administered Contracts Revisited: Lessons
from Transaction-Cost Economics for Public Utility Regulation" *Journal of Regulatory
Economics*, 1996.

Masten, Scott. "Modern Evidence on the Firm" AER 2002.

Organization and Hierarchy I

Miller, *Managerial Dilemmas*, Chapters 1-4

Organization and Hierarchy II

Miller, *Managerial Dilemmas*, Chapters 5-7

Organization and Hierarchy III

Miller, *Managerial Dilemmas*, Chapters 8-11

Institutions and Political Economy

North, 1991 "Institutions" JEP

North, 1994 "Economic Performance Through Time" AER

North and Weingast, 1989 "Constitutions and Commitment" JEH.

Demsetz, 1967 "Towards a Theory of Property Rights," AER

Interest Groups and Domestic Politics

Tullock, Gordon (1967). "The Welfare Costs of Tariffs, Monopolies, and Theft".
Western Economic Journal (now Economic Inquiry) 5: 224–32.

Krueger, Anne (1974). "The Political Economy of the Rent-Seeking Society".
American Economic Review **64**: 291–303.

Olson, Mancur. *The Rise and Decline of Nations*.

The Organization of the State

Olson, and McGuire 1996. "The Economics of Autocracy and Majority Rule" JEL
Acemoglu and Robinson, 2008 "Persistence of Elites, Power and Institutions",
AER.

Nye, 1997 "Thinking About the State" in Drobak and Nye, eds. *Frontiers of the
NIE*.

Mokyr and Nye, 2007. "Distributional Coalitions, the Industrial Revolution, and
the Origins of Economic Growth in Britain", *Southern Economic Journal*

North, Wallis, Weingast, 2006. "A Conceptual Framework for Interpreting
Recorded Human History," NBER Working Paper 12795

Do Economists Care About Institutions?

Rodrik, Subramanian and Trebbi, "Institutions Rule: The Primacy of Institutions
Over Geography and Integration in Economic Development"

Acemoglu, Johnson, and Robinson, 2001 "The Colonial Origins of Comparative
Development" AER

Alesina, et al 2012 "Ethnic Inequality". JPE 2016

Glaeser, et al. 2004. "Do Institutions Cause Growth?" JEG.

Culture, Social Capital and Institutions

Greif, "Cultural Beliefs and the Organization of Society," 1994, JPE.

Greif, Iygun, and Sasson 2013 "Social Organization, Risk-Sharing Institutions and Industrialization" forthcoming, AER Papers and Proceedings.

Dell, Melissa, Nathan Lane, and Pablo Querubin. "The Historical State, Local Collective Action, and Economic Development in Vietnam." *Econometrica* 86, no. 6 (2018): 2083-2121.

Fisman, R and E. Miguel (2007). "Corruption, Norms, and Legal Enforcement: Evidence from Diplomatic Parking Tickets," *Journal of Political Economy*, 115(6), p1020-1048.

Jones and Nye, 2011, "Human Capital in the Creation of Social Capital: Evidence from Parking Tickets." Working paper.

Glaeser, E.L., D. Laibson and B. Sacerdote (2002). "An Economic Approach to Social Capital," *Economic Journal*, 112(November), F437-F458.

Putterman, L., J. Tyran and K. Kamei (2010). "Public Goods and Voting on Formal Sanction Schemes: An Experiment," Working paper, Brown University.

Louis Putterman and David N. Weil (2010) "Post-1500 Population Flows and The Long-Run Determinants of Economic Growth and Inequality," *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, Volume 125, Issue 4, 1 November 2010, Pages 1627–1682, <https://doi.org/10.1162/qjec.2010.125.4.1627>