

Institutions and Development

Bridwell Institute Advanced Reading Group Syllabus
Spring 2025

Attendance is required. Your attendance and active participation are required. We will have 10 on-campus meetings. Students will be expected to attend all 10 on-campus meetings **plus one event during the semester for a total of eleven attendances**. Please note that this is a simple return to pre-COVID-19 rules for the reading group. Absences can be made up for by attending other Bridwell Institute events, some of which are listed below. **This will be enforced.** Failure to make all eleven attendances will result in no dispersal of stipend. Note that our schedule does not match up precisely with those of the other reading groups. **Note also that podcast episodes listed on the syllabus are required and are not optional unless stated otherwise.**

Meeting Times. Our on-campus meetings will be held on **Thursday** from 6:15pm-8pm in the new Bridwell Institute offices.

Dinner. After each session, we will bring in food to continue our conversation informally. You should expect this to last until about 8pm. This is considered an integral part of the program and you are expected to participate.

Stipend. Upon successful completion of the program, you will receive a \$1,000 stipend about a month after the program ends. (Thanks to the McLane Company, Inc. and the Armentrout Foundation for their generous support for this program.) There is much paperwork involved in order to process the payment. Taxes will not be withheld, but the payment will be reported to the IRS and you may be liable for paying taxes on that income. Please see Teffa Padilla (Crow 278) to make sure all the required paperwork is in order (epadilla@mail.smu.edu). You can't get paid otherwise.

General Advice

Read Ahead. There are about 50+ pages of material assigned each week, and the material is not always easy. Please budget enough time in your schedule to do the readings ahead of time.

Come Prepared. You should have 3 or 4 specific questions or comments prepared in advance for each session – hopefully related directly to the texts. Your active participation is expected and planning ahead is the best way to make sure you are contributing to the group discussion.

Be Critical. Don't agree unthinkingly with the readings or each other. Reasonable people disagree, so be reasonable.

Be Humble. The writers we read did not know everything and neither do you. Be willing to listen to the writers and each other, and be willing to say, "I don't know."

PRIMARY READINGS

Paul Collier. 2007. *The Bottom Billion Why the Poorest Countries Are Failing and What Can Be Done About It*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Oded Galor. 2022. *The Journey of Humanity: The Origins of Wealth and Inequality*. New York: Dutton.

Mark Koyama and Jared Rubin. 2022. *How the World Became Rich: The Historical Origins of Economic Growth*. Cambridge: Polity.

Douglass North, John Joseph Wallis, and Barry Weingast. 2009. *Violence and Social Orders: A Conceptual Framework for Interpreting Recorded Human History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

1/30/25 Week 1. Introduction and What are Institutions?

1. Koyama and Rubin 2022, ch. 1 & 3, p. 1-18 & 37-65.

2. Galor 2022, ch. 8, p. 143-161.

3. Lant Pritchett. 2022. "National Development Delivers: And How! And How?" *Economic Modelling* 107: 105717.

4. REQUIRED Podcast Episode: "How the World Became Rich,"

<https://macromusings.libsyn.com/mark-koyama-on-how-the-world-became-rich-the-historical-origins-of-economic-growth>

2/6/25 Week 2. Negative Freedom

1. Ian Carter. 2021. "Positive and Negative Liberty." In the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*,

<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/liberty-positive-negative/>

2. James Gwartney and Robert Lawson. 2003. "The Concept and Measurement of Economic Freedom." *European Journal of Political Economy* 19, no. 3: 405-430.

3. Ian Vasquez, Fred McMahon, Ryan Murphy, and Guillermina Sutter Schneider. 2023. *The Human Freedom Index*. Washington, DC: Cato Institute, p. 3-34, <https://www.cato.org/sites/cato.org/files/2024-12/2024-human-freedom-index.pdf>

4. REQUIRED Podcast Episode: "A Decade of Tracking Human Freedom Across the Globe,"

<https://www.cato.org/multimedia/cato-daily-podcast/human-freedom-index-2024-decade-tracking-human-freedom-across-globe>

2/13/25 Week 3. Democracy

1. Amartya Sen. 1999. *Development as Freedom*. New York: Random House, p. 146-159.
2. Garrett Jones. 2021. *10% Less Democracy*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, p. 9-26.
3. Daron Acemoglu, Suresh Naidu, Pascual Restrepo, and James A. Robinson. 2019. "Democracy Does Cause Growth." *Journal of Political Economy* 127, no. 1: 47-100. **[This is the most important recent paper showing this result. You do not need to read it in its entirety of understand all of it, but you should give it a solid look over.]**
4. James Buchanan. 1979. "Politics without Romance: A Sketch of Positive Public Choice Theory and Its Normative Implications." In *The Collected Works of James M. Buchanan, Volume 1: The Logical Foundations of Constitutional Liberty*. Indianapolis: Liberty Fund: 45-59.
5. REQUIRED Podcast Episode: "Michael Munger on Choosing in Groups," <https://www.econtalk.org/michael-munger-on-choosing-in-groups/>

2/20/27 Week 4. State Capacity

1. Francis Fukuyama. 2014. *Political Order and Political Decay*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, p. 52-80.
2. Robin Grier. 2023. "How Mexico Built a State." *Works in Progress*, <https://worksinprogress.co/issue/how-mexico-built-a-state/>
3. Colin O'Reilly and Ryan Murphy. 2022. "An Index Measuring State Capacity, 1789-2018." *Economica* 89, no. 355: 713-745.
4. Tyler Cowen. 2020. "What Libertarianism Has Become and Will Become: State Capacity Libertarianism." *Marginal Revolution*, <https://marginalrevolution.com/marginalrevolution/2020/01/what-libertarianism-has-become-and-will-become-state-capacity-libertarianism.html>
5. REQUIRED Podcast Episode: "Arnold Kling on Reforming Government and Expertise," <https://www.econtalk.org/arnold-kling-on-reforming-government-and-expertise/>

2/27/25 Week 5. Open Access Orders

1. Douglass North, John Joseph Wallis, and Barry Weingast. 2009. *Violence and Social Orders*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 1-75.
2. Ryan H. Murphy. 2023. "Measuring Open Access Orders." *Journal of Institutional Economics* 19, no. 5: 618-634.
3. REQUIRED Podcast Episode: "Barry Weingast on Violence, Power, and a Theory of Nearly Everything," <https://www.econtalk.org/weingast-on-violence-power-and-a-theory-of-nearly-everything/>

2/28/25 OPTIONAL Public Event with John Mackey, former CEO of Whole Foods, details TBA

3/1/25 OPTIONAL Reading Group Summit with John Mackey, details TBA

NO MEETING ON 3/6/25

3/13/25 Week 6. Social Capital and Culture

1. Koyama and Rubin 2022, ch. 4, p. 66-87
2. Galor 2022, ch. 9, p. 163-177.
3. Robert Putnam. 2000. *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York, Touchstone, p. 15-28, 336-349.
4. REQUIRED Podcast Episode: “Claudia Williamson – Does Culture Effect Economic Progress?,”
<https://thecurioustask.podbean.com/e/ep-157-claudia-williamson-does-culture-effect-economic-progress/>

NO MEETING ON 3/20/25

3/27/25 Week 7. Social Cohesion

1. Galor 2022, ch. 12, p. 215-232
2. Alex Nowrasteh and Benjamin Powell. 2021. *Wretched Refuse? The Political Economy of Immigration and Institutions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 30-42, 189-222.
3. Alberto Alesina, Arnaud Devleeschauwer, William Easterly, Sergio Kurlat, and Romain Wacziarg. 2003. “Fractionalization.” *Journal of Economic Growth* 8: 155-194.
4. REQUIRED Podcast Episode: “Alberto Alesina on Immigration and Redistribution,”
<https://www.econtalk.org/alberto-alesina-on-immigration-and-redistribution/>

4/3/25 Week 8. Geography

1. Koyama and Rubin 2022, ch. 2, p. 19-36.
2. Galor 2022, ch. 10, p. 179-199.
3. Jeffrey Sachs. 2005. *The End of Poverty: Economic Possibilities for Our Time*. New York: Penguin, p. 188-209.
4. REQUIRED Podcast Episode: “Jeffrey Sachs on the Millennium Villages Project,”
<https://www.econtalk.org/jeffrey-sachs-on-the-millennium-villages-project/>

4/10/25 NO MEETING BUT OPTIONAL EVENT:

Texas Economic Forum, “Can We Do Anything About High Housing Prices?” 6pm Reception, 7pm Panel. Crum Auditorium.

NO MEETING 4/17/25

4/24/25 Week 9. Persistence

1. Koyama and Rubin 2022, ch. 6, p. 104-125.
2. Hans-Joachim Voth. 2021. "Persistence – Myth and Mystery." *Handbook of Historical Economics*, Alberto Bisin and Giovanni Federico, eds. Academic Press, p. 243-267.
3. Paul Mahoney. 2001. "The Common Law and Economic Growth: Hayek Might Be Right." *Journal of Legal Studies* 30, no. 2: 503-525.
4. REQUIRED Podcast Episode: "Melissa Dell on the Significance of Persistence,"
<https://conversationswithtyler.com/episodes/melissa-dell/>

5/1/25 Week 10. Traps and Sequencing

1. Collier 2007, ch. 1-6, p. 3-75.
2. Fareed Zakaria. 2003. *The Future of Freedom: Illiberal Democracy at Home and Abroad*. New York: Norton, p. 59-87.
3. REQUIRED Podcast Episode: "Lant Pritchett on Poverty, Growth, and Experiments,"
<https://www.econtalk.org/lant-pritchett-on-poverty-growth-and-experiments/>