

<b>Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research</b>	
<b>National Pedagogical Committee for Law and Political Science</b>	
<b>Branch: Political Science</b>	
<b>Academic Bachelor's degree</b>	
<b>First year common core</b>	<b>Semester: 01</b>
<b>A model lesson in the subject: Introduction to Political Science 1</b>	
<b>English lesson titled: Introduction to Political Science</b>	

## **I. Educational objectives:**

- Enable the student to know the definitions and meaning of political science, and familiarize students with basic political concepts;
- Introduce academic frameworks and schools of thought;
- Define political science and explain its core purpose, and outline the major areas of study within political science;
- Distinguish between the empirical and normative aspects of the discipline;
- Discuss how political science connects with real-world political institutions and behaviors.

## **II. Lecture topics:**

- 1- What is Political Science?
- 2- The Nature of Political Science.
- 3- The Scope of Political Science.

## **III. Lecture content:**

### **1. What is Political Science?**

Political science is a field that's been explored and debated for centuries. If we look back, the word "politics" comes from the Greek word *polis*, meaning city-state. To the ancient Greeks, politics wasn't just about rulers and laws—it was about all aspects of life in the city-state. They didn't really separate the individual from society or distinguish between personal and political life. For them, politics was the study of everything: people, the community, governance, and ethics.

#### **- Traditional Views: The State and Government**

Historically, many thinkers saw political science simply as the study of the state. Scholars like R.G. Gettel and J.W. Garner defined it in terms of the state's development, structure, and purpose. Garner even claimed that political science “begins and ends with the state,” which shows how central that idea was.

Later, some scholars expanded the definition to include not just the state, but also the machinery of government. Paul Janet, for instance, believed political science dealt with the foundations of the state and how governments work. Others, like George Catlin, defined politics as either political activity or the study of those activities—mostly focusing on government functions.

## - **Political Science as More Than Just Structures**

Still, others saw it as broader. For example, according to Bridal, political science should describe and analyze a country's political institutions, their guiding ideas, how they function, and how they affect both the nation and its global relationships.

But there's a growing belief that traditional definitions are too narrow. Focusing just on formal structures like parliaments and courts doesn't fully capture what actually happens in politics. Today, we understand that to really study politics, we also need to look at informal practices, real-world dynamics, and the power struggles behind the scenes.

## - **Modern Approaches: Power and Conflict**

Modern thinkers like Harold Lasswell and Robert Dahl shifted the conversation to power. Lasswell described politics as the study of "who gets what, when, and how." Dahl saw political systems as patterns of human relationships centered on power and authority. In other words, politics is about influence—who holds it, how they use it, and how others respond.

Another view, brought up by Miller, focuses on conflict. In any society, people compete for limited resources, and politics becomes the way we manage that competition. Political science, then, studies how we resolve conflicts—through laws, negotiations, or sometimes power struggles.

Similarly, Peter B. Harris pointed out that modern political science is all about understanding disagreements and how they're resolved.

## - **Power and Society Intertwined**

According to the *Encyclopedia of Social Sciences*, modern political science looks at how power is gained, held, and distributed—not just in actual governments but in theoretical ones too. Politics doesn't exist in a vacuum. It's shaped by economic and social forces, so to understand it, we need to study everything that influences it.

## **Wrapping Up: Traditional vs. Modern Views**

All of these definitions show that political science has evolved. There are two main approaches:

1. **The Traditional Approach**, which focuses on studying formal institutions like the state and government.
2. **The Modern Approach**, which digs deeper into what actually happens in politics—the power plays, social influences, and real human behavior behind the scenes.

In short, political science is the study of political systems, institutions, processes, power, and the forces that shape public life.

## **2. The Nature of Political Science**

Political science falls under the umbrella of social sciences, which makes it different from the physical sciences like physics or chemistry. It deals with human behavior, society, and governance, which are complex and often unpredictable.

## - Is It Really a Science?

This has been debated for a long time. Some argue political science doesn't meet the standards of a "true" science. Here's why:

- **Lack of Agreement:** Political scientists often disagree on basic definitions, terms, and even how to study politics. Unlike physics, there's no one right formula.
- **No Universal Laws:** There are no precise, universally accepted principles in political science like " $E=mc^2$ " in physics. Political theories often lead to debate, not certainty.
- **Unpredictable Subjects:** Politics involves people, and human behavior can't be controlled or predicted like matter in a lab.
- **Limited Testing:** You can't run experiments on entire societies the way scientists do with chemicals or physical objects.
- **Subjectivity:** It's hard to be completely objective when studying politics, since everyone has opinions, biases, and cultural influences.
- **Uncertain Outcomes:** Political actions don't always produce expected results. The same policy might work well in one country and fail in another.

## But Still, It's Scientific in Some Ways

Despite these challenges, political science is still systematic. It's not random or purely speculative. Political scientists:

- Collect and analyze data (like voting patterns or public opinion).
- Use methods like surveys and case studies.
- Form hypotheses and test them against real-world events.
- Make generalizations about political behavior and systems (e.g., free press and independent judiciary are vital for democracy).

So, while it might not be a "pure" science like physics, political science does follow a logical, research-based approach—making it a **social science**.

## - Is Politics an Art?

Absolutely. Politics also involves the **art of applying knowledge** to real situations. You can study theories all day, but applying them effectively in real governance is an art. As Robert Dahl said, political science is both a science and an art—it's scientific when you're researching and analyzing, and it becomes an art when that knowledge is put into practice.

## - Politics or Political Science?

While the terms are sometimes used interchangeably, there is a difference. "Politics" often refers to the actual political process—elections, campaigns, debates, and so on. It can also carry negative connotations like manipulation or corruption.

"Political science," on the other hand, refers to the systematic, academic study of these political activities. It's the field where scholars explore how political systems work, develop theories, and analyze political behavior. So, when we're talking about the subject as an area of study, "political science" is the more accurate term.

### 3. The Scope of Political Science

The scope of political science refers to what the subject actually covers. While there's no universal agreement on this, a 1948 conference organized by UNESCO helped define some major areas:

#### a) Political Theory

Political scientists have long been concerned with big ideas—like justice, liberty, and the ideal form of government. From Plato's *Republic* to the social contract theories of Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau, political theory helps us understand how political systems should work.

#### b) Political Institutions

This includes the study of governments, constitutions, parliaments, and legal systems. Whether a country has a presidential, parliamentary, or authoritarian system, political science examines how these structures function and evolve.

#### c) Political Parties and Pressure Groups

Political science also looks at how political parties operate, how they shape policies, and how they represent the people. It also studies pressure groups and NGOs, which may not run the government but still have a major influence on political decisions.

#### d) International Relations

No country exists in isolation. Political science includes the study of foreign policy, international organizations like the UN, and global issues like war, trade, and diplomacy—especially in today's interconnected world.

#### e) Government and Civil Society

Modern political science examines how governments interact with civil society—citizens, advocacy groups, and other non-state actors. Civil society plays a key role in shaping policies, holding governments accountable, and fostering public engagement.

#### f) Power, Influence, and Political Behavior

Political science studies how power is gained, maintained, and challenged. It also analyzes how citizens behave politically—how they vote, protest, or engage in civic life. These studies can be both **normative** (focused on ideals) and **empirical** (based on facts and data).

#### g) A Broader Perspective

Thinkers like Morgenthau and Leacock stressed that political science shouldn't just focus on static institutions but also on how society changes. Economic, cultural, and psychological factors all affect politics. Today's political scientists take an interdisciplinary approach to better understand how these forces interact.

#### h) The “Master Science”

Aristotle called politics the “master science” because it sets the stage for every other aspect of life. Everyone is affected by political decisions—whether they like it or not. That’s why studying politics helps us better understand the world around us.

### i) Systems and Environments

Political systems don’t exist in a bubble. They respond to and are shaped by their environments—economic conditions, social movements, historical contexts, etc. Political science studies how these systems function and evolve in response to external pressures.

- **Final Thoughts**

Political science is a **systematic, interdisciplinary, rich and dynamic** field that studies political ideas, institutions, processes, behavior, and the structures of power and governance (the ways in which societies are organized and governed). Its **nature** as both a science and an art reflects its complexity, combining empirical research with normative analysis. Political science provides valuable insights into the forces that shape our world. Its **scope** extends from classical political theory to modern governance, global politics, and the intricate relationships between government and society.

## IV. Self-assessment:

1. **Encourages Active Reflection:** Self-assessments prompt students to reflect on their English language skills—such as reading comprehension, writing clarity, and vocabulary use—within the context of Political Science topics.
2. **Identifies Strengths and Weaknesses:** By answering structured questions or using rating scales, students can pinpoint which English skills support their understanding of Political Science and which need improvement.
3. **Promotes Independent Learning:** Self-assessments foster responsibility for one’s progress, motivating students to seek resources or strategies to enhance their academic English.
4. **Integrates Language with Subject Content:** Evaluating English usage within course-specific contexts (e.g., understanding political theories or writing analytical essays) ensures language development is relevant and practical.
5. **Supports Goal Setting and Progress Tracking:** Regular self-assessments help students set personal language goals aligned with their academic needs and monitor improvements over the course.

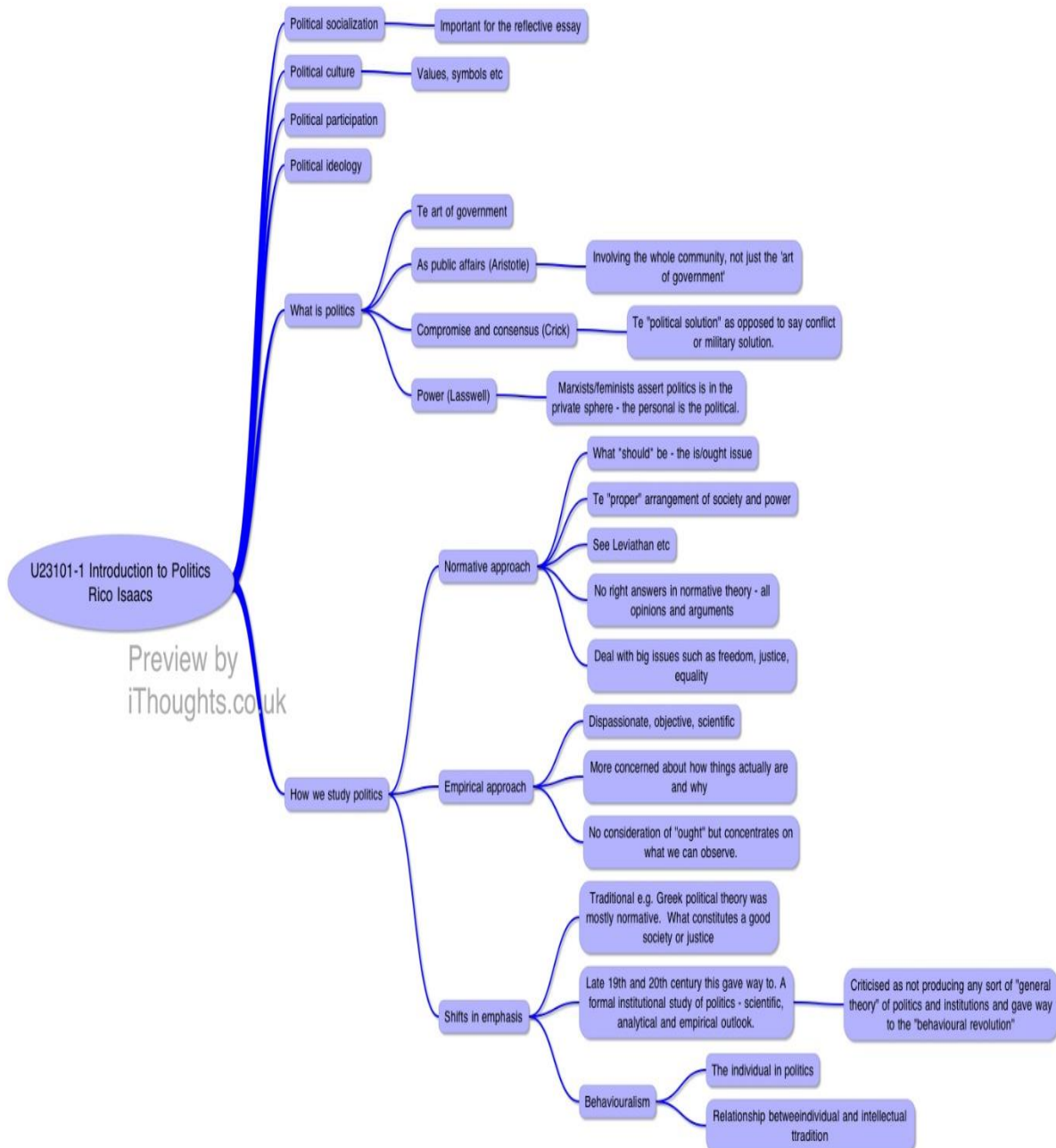
## V. Additional Resources and Enrichments:

- **References list:**

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2. Roskin, Michael G., Robert L. Cord, James A. Medeiros, and Walter S. Jones. 2019. *Political Science: An Introduction*. 14th ed. New York: Pearson.
3. Shively, W. Phillips. 2022. *Power & Choice: An Introduction to Political Science*. 16th ed. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

4. Hague, Rod, Martin Harrop, and John McCormick. 2019. *Comparative Government and Politics: An Introduction*. 11th ed. London: Red Globe Press.
5. Easton, David. 1965. *A Framework for Political Analysis*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

• **Comprehensive Mind Map:**



**Source:** [www.ithoughts.co.uk](http://www.ithoughts.co.uk)