

Pol 101

Politics was learnt from a Greek word "polis" which means city-state

Different scholars gave the definition of politics

David Easton -defined politics as the authoritative allocation of value...

Harold Lasswell - another scholar in his own word defined politics as the study of "who gets what,when and how" in a society within a political system

Aristotle (father of politics)defined politics as the plausible and reason for maintaining order,peace and ensuring order In a complex society.

Is political science? Science can be defined as the systematized body of knowledge with high level of validity.

Political science is a science because it adopts some of the scientific principles to analyze political phenomena

Scientific methods

- observation

- hypothesis

- experiment

These are the principles science and political science make use of

Political science is not a science it's not an applied natural sciences,like maths , chemistry,physics .

#### POL 101 COURSE OUTLINE

- NATURE AND MEANING OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
- THE SCIENTIFIC STUDY OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
- APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
- POLITICAL CULTURE AND POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION
- SOCIETY, STATE, NATION
- CONSTITUTION AND CONSTITUTIONALISM
- THEORIES OF OBEDIENCE
- POLITICAL DIVISION OF LABOUR

[11/19, 6:21 PM] Unknown: Political science is a discipline in the social sciences which studies governments, institutions, politics, ideas and political behaviour.

#### WHAT IS POLITICAL SCIENCE

- Political science is a fluid concept.
- There is no universally accepted definition.
- Political science encapsulates two concepts (politics and science) that require careful clarification before attempting a definition.

What is politics?

- The word politics is derived from the Greek word "POLIS".
- Meaning "CITY-STATE"
- To the Greeks, the polis was the most meaningful community above the family level. It was argued that any community larger than the family contains element of politics (Idahosa and Idisi 2005:3 in Ikelegbe ed.).
- Ekpekurede and Umokoro (2010) there are many definitions of politics. The following are some of these definitions:
  - Aristotle viewed politics as a master science. Aristotle considered the state as the highest and most inclusive association fashioned by man where he can fully develop. Thus, politics deal with the state of the state. The criticism of Aristotle definition is that, the definition neglected an aspect of politics which is concerned with the interaction of state.
  - Max Weber defined politics as striving to share power or striving to influence the distribution of power either among states or groups or classes within a state. This is an improvement over Aristotle's definition as it takes into consideration relations among states.
  - Otto Von Bismarck defined politics as the art of the possible. This definition view politics as having to do with maneuvering one's way into power and manipulating people.

[11/19, 6:21 PM] Unknown: Science is defined as the systematic observation of nature, events and conditions in order to discover facts about them and formulate laws and principles based on the facts.

#### CANNONS OF SCIENCE

- Observation
- Replication
- Experimentation
- Objectivity
- Systematization
- Quantification
- Precision Ekpekurede and Umokoro (2010)

- Political science is essentially a study of human behaviour through observation, data gathering and analysis. Using the cannons of science political scientist seek patterns in the reasons and outcomes for political events so that generalisation and theories can be made.

Working definition of Political Science

- Political science can be defined as a systematic body of knowledge that deals with acquisition of state power and utilization of power.

[11/19, 6:21 PM] Unknown: Approaches to the study of politics

Approach means different ways from which the study of social and political phenomena may be examined.

- Political scientists have adopted several approaches to the study of politics.
- Approaches provide the political scientist with the conceptual framework in understanding political life.
- In the study of politics we have two major approaches.
- These are the traditional and behavioural approaches.

Traditional approach to the study of politics

- Traditional approach involves the prescription and justification of political ideals or values, the historical description of governmental institutions and laws and observations of actions and activities. There are four approaches under the traditional approach.

- The historical approach
- Philosophical approach
- Legal and institutional approach and
- Primitive empirical approach.

The historical approach

- Historical approach relies mainly on facts from the past to explain the present and probable political development with political institutions and process.

- Traditional students of politics were concerned with the study of discovery and description of past political event.
- The studies were narrative and descriptive.

Philosophical approach

- This involved a preoccupation with ethical prescriptive and normative questions reflecting a concern with what ought or must be brought about rather than what is.

- This approach was largely dominated by efforts of early student of politics/philosophers such as Plato, Aristotle etc.

- The activities of the philosophers was directed at and dominated by the normative approach that is the search and analysis of the ideals, what should be or ought to be.

Legal and institutional approach

- This approach focus on constitutional and legal framework and developments as well as issues as the rule of law, law making, interpretation, administration and enforcement of the laws and their implication.

- The developments and application of laws and constitutions were narrated and described.

- Institutional approach focus on formal institution of government which provide the subject matter of comparison in terms of their powers, functions, roles and mutual relations.

- Institutional approach involves a relatively detailed description of analysis followed by an attempt to clarify which details are similar of different.

Primitive empiricism

- Some aspect of the traditional studies was based on empirical subjects, observation, classification, comparison and explanation.

Characteristics and weakness of the traditional approach

- Normative
- Describes the characteristics of structures
- Deals with formal properties
- Ignores the behaviour of actors
- Parochial in nature
- Conservatives and static

[11/19, 6:21 PM] Unknown: Behavioural approach

The weakness of the traditional approach was compound by several developments.

- First, there were the radical changes in the 20th century political system.
- Second, there were the radical developments of the emerging post colonial

states.

- Third, there were the developments of new frontiers of science and behavioural.
- Behaviouralism was developed by American political scientist as an alternative to the traditional approaches
- Behavioural approach is regarded as the movement in political science, which was founded on the belief that political phenomena could be better studied by scientific method of observation, quantitative analysis and verification.

Characteristics/ main features of the behavioural approach

- The objectives is to make the study of political science scientific,
- The focus is on observable behaviour.
- The use of quantitative method is encouraged.
- Research was aimed at providing solutions.
- Adopting of multi-disciplinary approach.
- Behavioural employed statistical techniques.

Criticism of the behavioural approach

- Political behaviour cannot be quantifiable
- Overt political behaviour tells only part of the story.
- There has been discrimination in borrowing of concept and techniques
- Anti behaviouralist argue that political issues involve moral and ethical issues.