

SUBJECT: POLITICAL SCIENCE I

COURSE: BA LLB SEMESTER I

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MODULE: MODULE I, Political Science: Nature and Scope and it's relation to Law

1. Introduction

Politics exists everywhere. It is all-pervading and as old as human beings. Politics prevails in every sphere of human life. Whether one likes or not virtually no one is completely beyond the reach of some kind of political system.

Political science is a social science and like other social science it revolves around man and his social (Political) environment. Being one of the oldest social sciences its nature and scope of the study have undergone several changes over the centuries.

Political Science first began with the Greeks. The term 'Politics' is derived from the Greek word '**Polis**' which means 'city-states' and each city in those days was an independent state, a principality in its own right. E.g. Athens, Sparta, Corinth etc.

Aristotle is regarded as a "**father of Political science**" on account of his far reaching and permanent contribution to the field of politics. He called politics the Master Science because politics determines the environment within which every person will organize his life. No one can escape from the parameters set by politics. In his famous book *Politics* Aristotle wrote, "Man is by nature a Political Animal and he who is by nature or by accident is without state is either above humanity or below it." Politics is the control room of all human activities.

Definitions of Political Science:

The word politics has different interpretations. Definitions of politics vary according to the variety of activities that have been considered political from time to time.

Early Definitions or Traditional View of Politics:

- According to the traditional political scientist from the early part of 20th century such as J W Garner, Henry Sidgwick, R G Gettel and others Politics deals mainly with study of state and government or related institutions.
- **R G Gettel** defined politics as the study of the state in the past, present and future, of political organization and political function, of political institutions and political theories.
- According to **Laski** "the study of politics concerns itself with the life of man in relation to organized states."
- According to **Garner**, "Political science begins and ends with state."
- According to **Leacock**, "Political science deals with government."

Thus from above definitions it is clear that the traditional view of politics was narrow, static and limited and included only the study of state and government, its structure and organisation etc.

Modern View of Political Science:

In the beginning of the 20th century there developed a new way of looking at political science. This new approach is known as **behavioural approach**. The main thrust of the new view is the treatment of politics **as an activity and a process**.

In this context, new definitions emerged.

- **Harold Laswell:** “Politics is the study of influence and the influential or the study of the shaping and sharing of power”
- **David Easton:** “Politics is the authoritative allocation of values.”
- **Catlin:** “Political Science is the study of the act of human and social control.”
- **Andrew Heywood:** “Politics can be defined as an activity through which people make, preserve and amend the general rules under which they live.”

Modern political scientists consider politics as a process centering around power and influence. They are concerned with not just the state and the government, but also the study and evaluation of political activities, political power, processes and non-governmental institutions.