

# **Instructor's Manual/Test Bank**

*to accompany*

Roskin • Cord • Medeiros • Jones

## **Political Science: An Introduction**

*Twelfth Edition*

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New York Boston San Francisco  
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CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1: POLITICS AND POLITICAL SCIENCE **1**

CHAPTER 2: THEORIES **15**

CHAPTER 3: POLITICAL IDEOLOGIES **29**

CHAPTER 4: STATES **46**

CHAPTER 5: RIGHTS **60**

CHAPTER 6: REGIMES **72**

CHAPTER 7: POLITICAL CULTURE **86**

CHAPTER 8: PUBLIC OPINION **100**

CHAPTER 9: POLITICAL COMMUNICATION **114**

CHAPTER 10: INTEREST GROUPS **128**

CHAPTER 11: PARTIES **142**

CHAPTER 12: ELECTIONS **157**

CHAPTER 13: LEGISLATURES **170**

CHAPTER 14: EXECUTIVES AND BUREAUCRACIES **183**

CHAPTER 15: JUDICIARIES **197**

CHAPTER 16: POLITICAL ECONOMY **212**

CHAPTER 17: POLITICAL VIOLENCE **227**

CHAPTER 18: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS **241**



## CHAPTER 1: POLITICS AND POLITICAL SCIENCE

### Learning Objectives

Students should be able to answer the following questions at the completion of this chapter:

- Why did politics fall out of favor? Is it back now?
- What does it mean to “never get angry at a fact”?
- Why did Aristotle call politics “the master science”?
- What did Machiavelli bring to the study of politics?
- How are legitimacy, sovereignty, and authority different but similar?
- Is the Iraqi government now legitimate? How can you tell?
- Is politics largely biological, psychological, cultural, rational, or irrational?
- How can something as messy as politics be a science?

### Chapter Outline

- I. Changing interest in politics
  - a. General trend toward a disinterest in politics
    - i. In the U.S. and abroad
  - b. Interest in U.S. politics recently revived amidst
    - i. Healthcare reform
    - ii. Bailouts
    - iii. Massive federal deficits
  - c. Why does interest or disinterest matter?
    - i. Those who don’t engage in politics have no control over their futures
      1. Wars
      2. Taxes
      3. Government programs
    - ii. The ignorant are manipulated
  - d. Politics might seem a bit distasteful but they are a part of life that must be understood
- II. The Master Science
  - a. Aristotle
  - b. Decisions of the *polis* have extensive effects on other aspects of society
  - c. Politics is the study of “who gets what” (Lasswell)
  - d. Almost everything is political
    - i. Even the type of economic system adopted is the result of a political decision
  - e. By applying reason we can understand why things happen
    - i. Study of politics in a rational, systematic way
  - f. Influential Disciplines and their Intersection with Political Science
    - i. History
      1. Chief data source for political scientists
      2. Historians and political scientists ask different questions and process information (data) differently
        - a. Historians seek to study one episode in depth

- b. Political scientists look for generalizations across multiple episodes
  - ii. Human Geography
    - 1. Less influential on political science as of late
    - 2. Territorial components of human behavior have political ramifications
      - a. Borders and regions
      - b. Ethnic areas
      - c. Trade flows
      - d. Centralization of power
      - e. Regional political variations
  - iii. Economics
    - 1. A matter of politics or are politics a matter of economics?
    - 2. Many political quarrels are economic
      - a. Distribution of resources
      - b. Basis of democracy
      - c. What promotes economic development?
      - d. Role of government in economy
  - iv. Sociology
    - 1. Overlaps with political science at times
    - 2. Sociology as an empirical basis to political-culture, political-opinion, and electoral studies
  - v. Anthropology
    - 1. Descriptive and interviewing techniques adopted by political scientists
    - 2. Political culture subfield
    - 3. Influence of tribes, clans, families, etc. on politics
  - vi. Psychology
    - 1. Helps political scientists understand
      - a. Which personalities are attracted to politics
      - b. Why and when people obey authority figures
      - c. How people form national, group and voting attachments
      - d. Why leaders make particular decisions
    - 2. Methodology
      - a. Control groups
      - b. Blind testing

### III. Political Power

- a. The focus on power distinguishes political science from other social sciences
- b. Power is the ability of A to get B to do something contrary to B's will
- c. Aristotle is founding father, but second founding father is Machiavelli who emphasized power in all of his works
- d. Foundations of power... some contending theories
  - i. Biological
  - ii. Psychological
  - iii. Cultural
  - iv. Rational

- v. Irrational
  - vi. Composite
    - 1. Truth in all preceding explanations of power
  - e. Power is not measurable
    - i. It is a connection among people that enables one person to get others to do his/her bidding
  - f. Not the same as politics
    - i. Politics is the combination of goals or policies *and* the power necessary to achieve them.
    - ii. Politics is not just a third for power
    - iii. The struggle for power only takes place so that individuals or groups can enact their preferred policies (at least in democracies)
- IV. Sovereignty, Legitimacy and Authority are all Basic to Political Science
- a. Sovereignty
    - i. National control over the country's territory
    - ii. Make decisions without outside interference
    - iii. Maintained by protecting the state
    - iv. Can sometime be a legal fiction
  - b. Legitimacy
    - i. Legal and psychological right to govern
      - 1. Public attitude toward the leadership
    - ii. Legitimacy and state capacity are closely related
    - iii. Legitimacy achieved by the government
      - 1. Ensuring security
      - 2. Ensuring rule of law
      - 3. Being viewed as legitimate over time... becomes more engrained
      - 4. Governing well
        - a. Provide for basic needs
      - 5. Have a structure that reflects popular influence and opinion
      - 6. Using national symbols
  - c. Authority
    - i. Psychological ability of leaders to get others to obey them
    - ii. Relies on a sense of obligation which is based on the legitimate power of office
    - iii. Authority both comes with the office and must be cultivated
- V. Political Science Subfields
- a. U.S. Politics
  - b. Comparative Politics
  - c. International Relations
  - d. Political Theory
  - e. Public Administration
  - f. Constitutional Law
  - g. Public Policy
- VI. Is Politics a Science?
- a. Original meaning of science: knowledge



- b. Attempt by some political scientists to study politics through the scientific method
- c. Some political science questions cannot be answered like those questions in the natural sciences
  - i. Political science is an empirical discipline that utilizes both quantitative and qualitative data
  - ii. Both allow observation of patterns
- d. An Unbiased Approach to Political Science
  - i. Reasoned approach
  - ii. Balanced approach
  - iii. Evidence to support findings
  - iv. Theoretical basis
- e. What good is political science?
  - i. More than training to become a politician
  - ii. Political Science is training in objective and complex analysis rather than what the practice of politics requires which is fixed, popular, and simplified opinions.
  - iii. Political science can contribute to good government

## Chapter Summary

Americans, and others around the world, have gradually become disinterested in politics. This disinterest has been curbed—at least temporarily—as a result of the recent economic crisis and the massive bailouts issued. Students are urged to continue this positive trend and remain engaged in politics, as politics impact nearly every aspect of their lives because, after all, politics is about “who gets what.” Given the complex relationships between politics and other aspects of everyday life, the study of political science was deemed by Aristotle as the “master science.” Political science is necessarily related to the following disciplines through topic, data, and/or methods of study: history, economics, sociology, psychology and social psychology, anthropology, and human geography.

Ultimately, political science is centered around the concept of power. Power is the ability of A to get B to do something that is contrary to B’s will. Although power is sometimes confused as the ultimate goal, political science treats power as the means to attain goals. In other words, politics is not about achieving power (something measurable and identifiable) but rather being in positions of power in order to accomplish a series of goals and/or policies. In this way, power has less of a negative connotation than commonly thought. The basis of power is complex. Power does not come from one source but rather derives from several including: biology, psychology, culture, rationality, and irrationality.

Related to power are the often-confused terms of sovereignty, legitimacy, and authority. *Sovereignty* simply refers to a government being able to maintain the territorial integrity of its country and rule over it without outside interference. *Legitimacy*, on the other hand, is derived from a psychological acceptance of institutions and those that occupy those institutions. Legitimacy is built first and foremost by ensuring citizens’ security, but it is also dependent upon rule of law, governing well, and having a governmental structure that reflects and responds to the popular will. Legitimacy becomes more engrained over time. Finally, *authority* is the psychological ability of leaders to get others to obey them. The populace must accept their right to rule and then willingly obey in order for them to have true authority. Obviously, these three concepts are highly related.

Finally, students should understand that the practice of politics and the study of political science are two very different things. The former relies on simplifications of reality in order to generate fixed, popular opinions while the latter is the objective and complex analysis of political phenomena. Political science takes an empirical approach (both quantitative and qualitative) to questions that treat political phenomena as the independent and dependent variable. Political scientists seek to understand the world around them, and while this knowledge can contribute to politics, this is not their ultimate goal.

### Lecture Starters

- What are politics? How are politics and political science different? Or are they different?
- Why should you be engaged in politics? How can you become involved in politics? How can you stay informed on politics?
- Why might people in some countries be more concerned with politics than people in others? For instance, Israel has voter turnout rates between 77% and 90%, while the U.S. voter turnout rates in federal elections range from 36% to 60%. What might contribute to this?
- Start with a discussion of the most important concept in this chapter: power. Ask students to write down a definition of power and then compare power to sovereignty, legitimacy, and authority. Have each student come to the board and write their definition of power. Use these definitions as points of comparison and discussion.
- Ask students that are interested in pursuing a political career to line up on one side of the room while those who would prefer to study political science to line up on the other side. Ask them to explain how the career path they plan on pursuing differs from the other. Allow them to engage in conversation and debate concerning the topic and then use points that come up in your discussion concerning these critical distinctions.

### Discussion Questions

- How are politics important for your everyday life?
- Why should you be informed and even involved in politics?
- What is political science?
- How is power related to political science?
- What are the bases of power?
- Why is political science described by Aristotle as the “master science”?
- What other disciplines is political science related to and how?
- How are the concepts of sovereignty, legitimacy, and authority different? How are they similar? How are they related to power?
- Why is the study of politics described as political *science*?
- What are the subfields of political science and how do they differ in their topics of study? Provide examples of each.
- How are politics and political science different?

### Activities

- Students might have chosen to be apathetic concerning politics and they might also have just simply not been that exposed to politics. Spend some time talking about issues that affect their lives that are very much products of the political system. Ask students to come up with a list of five issues which are important to them, have them share these with the class, and then ask the class how these issues are related to politics.
- Ensuring that students are informed on matters of politics and current events is an important task as well. Expose students to the various news sources, discuss some strengths and weaknesses of sources and mediums, and then ask them to locate an article of importance to them and share with the class. This activity will work best if you can reserve a computer lab, ask students to bring laptops, or even arrange for your school's library staff to do a special presentation on credible news sources.
- Ask students to write their favorite political science class on the board. When finished, have the class organize these classes into the various subfields of political science. This will allow them to visualize the differences that exist between the subfields. Ask students who have two or more political science courses to compare the type of material that is covered in these classes and the methods of inquiry used (case studies, qualitative versus quantitative, or formal modeling) in order to expose them to further differences between the subfields.
- To merge both their understanding of politics and their comprehension of the discipline of political science, organize students into small groups and have them locate a news article which references a topic that would be studied in each of the seven subfields. Provide them with a worksheet to practice citing news sources and provide a brief description of the article and how it applies to a particular subfield.

### Teaching Suggestions

A firm understanding of these fundamental concepts is important for students to proceed successfully in this course, and while some of these things can become routine for those of us who have spent years studying them, they are far from routine or simple for many students. This is particularly true if this course is taught as an introductory political science course. Consequently, ensuring that students understand the basic principles of politics, political science, power, sovereignty, legitimacy, and authority is crucial.

It is also important to explain the relationship between political science and other disciplines. This might seem fairly obvious, but for the many students who have never been exposed to these other disciplines, it is not. Therefore, it will likely be necessary for you to spend extensive time explaining what these other disciplines are and what topics they tackle before students can truly understand their connection with politics. It is for these reasons that I would recommend setting aside sufficient time and encouraging students to ask questions in relation to this particular chapter.

**True/False Questions**

1. A key indicator of interest in politics, voter turnout, has been as low as 50% in U.S. presidential elections.

**True**

Page Reference: 3

Bloom's Level: Knowledge

2. Aristotle is considered the founder of the discipline of political science.

**True**

Page Reference: 4

Bloom's Level: Knowledge

3. Anthropology has contributed to the knowledge acquired by political scientists by demonstrating that political views vary among social classes, regions, religions, genders, and age groups.

**False**

Page Reference: 6

Bloom's Level: Application

4. Economists and some political scientists argue that human beings make irrational decisions but sometimes rationally pursue their self-interest.

**False**

Page Reference: 6

Bloom's Level: Knowledge

5. A state is sovereign if the people residing there believe the government's rule is rightful and that people should therefore obey the government.

**False**

Page Reference: 8

Bloom's Level: Knowledge

6. Psychologists who conducted the Milgram study concluded that individuals are naturally conformist and the majority of them will follow orders without question; these findings help political scientists understand group behavior.

**True**

Page Reference: 10

Bloom's Level: Comprehension

7. Cultural theorists believe that economic and political development heavily influence culture.

**False**

Page Reference: 11

Bloom's Level: Knowledge

8. Political power is a product of biological, psychological, cultural, rational, *and* irrational factors.

**True**

Page Reference: 12

Bloom's Level: Comprehension

9. Power and politics are synonymous.

**False**

Page Reference: 13

Bloom's Level: Knowledge

10. Political scientists utilize both quantitative and qualitative data.

**True**

Page Reference: 14-15

Bloom's Level: Knowledge

11. There is often a disconnect between political science and governmental decisions and policies.

**True**

Page Reference: 18

Bloom's Level: Comprehension

### **Multiple-Choice Questions**

1. To indicate the comprehensive nature of the discipline, Aristotle called political science

- a. **the master science.**
- b. a social science.
- c. the ultimate humanities' discipline.
- d. the ultimate science.
- e. the contextual social science.

Page Reference: 4

Bloom's Level: Knowledge

Political Science: An Introduction, Chapter One

2. Famous political scientist Harold Lasswell argued that politics determines
- what economic system is adopted.
  - what regime type is chosen.
  - who gets what.**
  - how power is defined.
  - how the *polis* functions.

Page Reference: 4

Bloom's Level: Knowledge

3. Which of the following disciplines is *not* related to the political science discipline?
- psychology
  - anthropology
  - biology**
  - human geography
  - economics

Page Reference: 5

Bloom's Level: Comprehension

4. Which discipline is one of the main sources of data for political scientists?
- history**
  - sociology
  - psychology
  - social psychology
  - human geography

Page Reference: 5

Bloom's Level: Knowledge

5. Which of the following disciplines have political scientists neglected in recent decades but is still extremely relevant, since it focuses on the effect of borders, regions, ethnic areas, trade flows and the centralization of power?
- sociology
  - history
  - geography
  - human geography**
  - social psychology

Page Reference: 6

Bloom's Level: Knowledge

6. References to “red” and “blue” states in U.S. presidential elections demonstrate the relevance of what discipline?

- a. political science
- b. American politics
- c. human geography**
- d. political geography
- e. social psychology

Page Reference: 6

Bloom’s Level: Comprehension

7. Seymour Martin Lipset demonstrated the close connection between democracy and wealth. As a(n) \_\_\_\_\_, he demonstrated the relationship of his discipline and political science.

- a. economist
- b. sociologist**
- c. macro economist
- d. political economist
- e. historian

Page Reference: 6

Bloom’s Level: Knowledge

8. Political scientists have adopted many aspects of \_\_\_\_\_ research methods while utilizing the exact opposite research methods of \_\_\_\_\_.

- a. anthropologists’; historians**
- b. historians’; economists
- c. economists’; historians
- d. anthropologists’; economists
- e. economists’; anthropologists

Page Reference: 6-7

Bloom’s Level: Application

9. Which discipline has contributed to political scientists’ understanding of what types of people are attracted to politics, as well as why and when people obey authority figures?

- a. biology
- b. sociology
- c. economics
- d. anthropology
- e. psychology**

Page Reference: 7

Bloom’s Level: Comprehension

10. The constant focus in political science on \_\_\_\_\_ differentiates it from other related disciplines.

- a. political parties
- b. interest groups
- c. distribution of resources
- d. power**
- e. regimes

Page Reference: 7

Bloom's Level: Comprehension

11. Actor A's ability to get Actor B to do what Actor A wants, contrary to what B wants is defined as

- a. power.**
- b. politics.
- c. force.
- d. violence.
- e. power politics.

Page Reference: 7

Bloom's Level: Knowledge

12. A government is considered \_\_\_\_\_ if there is a popular feeling that the government's rule is rightful and that it should therefore be obeyed.

- a. legitimate**
- b. sovereign
- c. popular
- d. powerful
- e. authoritative

Page Reference: 8

Bloom's Level: Knowledge

13. A state is \_\_\_\_\_ when the national government rules without outside interference and has the last word on domestic laws.

- a. legitimate
- b. authoritative
- c. sovereign**
- d. powerful
- e. democratic

Page Reference: 8

Bloom's Level: Knowledge



14. Political leaders have \_\_\_\_\_ when they are respected by their people and are able to exercise their power without interference from the population.

- a. sovereignty
- b. legitimacy
- c. power
- d. authority**
- e. force

Page Reference: 8-9

Bloom's Level: Knowledge

15. \_\_\_\_\_ theories of political power argue that people make decisions that most efficiently allow them to achieve their goals and interests.

- a. Socio-economic
- b. Rational**
- c. Biological
- d. Cultural
- e. Psychological

Page Reference: 11

Bloom's Level: Application

16. \_\_\_\_\_ theories argue that political power is based on leaders' abilities to manipulate symbols, myths, and stereotypes for their own good.

- a. Irrational**
- b. Biological
- c. Psycho-social
- d. Cultural
- e. Psychological

Page Reference: 12

Bloom's Level: Application

17. Politics and power

- a. are the same thing.
- b. are the exact opposite.
- c. are related in that power is an enabling device for politics.**
- d. are related in that politics is an enabling device for power.
- e. are related in that politics is a prime ingredient in power.

Page Reference: 13

Bloom's Level: Comprehension

18. Which subfield of political science studies politics among countries, including conflict and diplomacy?

- a. Comparative Politics
- b. International Relations**
- c. American Politics
- d. Public Administration
- e. Public Policy

Page Reference: 13

Bloom's Level: Knowledge

19. Which subfield of political science examines the politics within other countries and tries to establish generalizations and theories about regime type, stability, and policy?

- a. Comparative Politics**
- b. International Relations
- c. International Politics
- d. Public Policy
- e. Political Theory

Page Reference: 13

Bloom's Level: Knowledge

20. Which of the following is a source of quantitative data?

- a. public opinion**
- b. the presidential decision-making process
- c. informal Congressional negotiations
- d. justification for voting a particular way
- e. Supreme Court reasoning

Page Reference: 15

Bloom's Level: Application

21. A theory is necessary for good political science research because it provides

- a. an explanation for why something happens.**
- b. a prediction of when something will happen.
- c. an explanation of what happened.
- d. a description of an event.
- e. the policy implications which follow.

Page Reference: 17

Bloom's Level: Comprehension

**Short Answer/Essay Questions**

1. Why did Aristotle call political science the “master discipline”? In your answer, discuss the relationship between political science and other academic disciplines.

Page Reference: 4-7

Bloom’s Level: Synthesis

2. Which academic discipline do you think political science is most closely related to? Why? And has this always been true? Provide examples to support your answer.

Page Reference: 4-7

Bloom’s Level: Evaluation

3. What is power? What is political power? Why is power so central to understanding politics and studying political science? What are the different sources of power and how does this inform the study of political science?

Page Reference: 7-11

Bloom’s Level: Analysis

4. How is the study of politics considered a science? Specifically, what makes it a science and is this a valid categorization? What are some potential arguments against considering the study of politics a science?

Page Reference: 14-18

Bloom’s Level: Analysis

5. What is the difference among sovereignty, legitimacy, and authority? How are these concepts related? Are these three concepts related to power as well? How are each of these three essential for successful and stable government? Provide examples in your answer.

Page Reference: 8-9

Bloom’s Level: Analysis

## CHAPTER 2: THEORIES

### Learning Objectives

Students should be able to answer the following questions at the completion of this chapter:

- Who founded political science?
- What did Machiavelli, Confucius, Kautilya, and Ibn Khaldun have in common?
- How did Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau differ?
- What is the crux of Marx's theory?
- What is "positivism," and how does it underlie much of social science?
- What is Easton's theory of the political system?
- How does modernization theory borrow from Marx?
- What is rational-choice theory?
- Why must your paper have a "provable thesis"?

### Chapter Outline

- I. Theories: Why Bother?
  - a. Need an organizing principle to understand data and facts
  - b. Assumptions about the way the world works helps us narrow our focus to the things that matter
  - c. Society up model versus the government down model
    - i. Or is reality a combination of both?
    - ii. Both are theories about the way the world works
    - iii. And in this case, even the organization of this book takes on one of these assumptions and therefore is based in theory
    - iv. The lesson? Theory cannot be avoided.
- II. Classic Theories
  - a. Plato
    - i. *Republic* describe the ideal polis
    - ii. Ideal system a bit like modern fascism or communism
  - b. Aristotle
    - i. First empirical political science
      1. Gathered data
      2. Based his great work *Politics* on this
    - ii. Political science as the "master science"
    - iii. He and Plato both tried to understand the reasons for Athens' decline and prevent this
      1. Search for a good, stable political system still drives political science
    - iv. His work was descriptive and normative
  - c. Machiavelli
    - i. Introduces a focus on power
    - ii. *The Prince* focuses on attaining and retaining political power
    - iii. Realist

1. Rationally pursue goals
2. Exercise power to pursue goals
- d. More classic theories
  - i. The “contractualists”
    1. Each (Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau) analyzed why political systems should exist at all
    2. Hobbes
      - a. State of nature
      - b. Self-interest leads peoples to rationally join together to form civil society
      - c. So society is based on rational self-interest
    3. Locke
      - a. State of nature not as bad as Hobbes claims and people live in equality and tolerance
      - b. However, no way to secure property
        - i. So contractually form civil society to secure life, liberty and property
        - ii. U.S. obviously influenced by Locke
    4. Rousseau
      - a. State of nature good and people live as noble savages
      - b. Society corrupts humans but that society can be improved to lead to human freedom and justice
        - i. Just society is a voluntary community that adheres to the general will
      - c. Society makes people
        - i. Roots of totalitarianism?
  - ii. Marxist theories
    1. Economics
    2. Focus on profit
    3. Social class
      - a. Bourgeoisie
      - b. Proletariat
    4. History
      - a. Class conflict drives history
      - b. Differential growth in economic basis and the class superstructure
    5. Failures of Marx
      - a. Didn’t take into account the fact that capitalism is a system of constant change
      - b. Didn’t take into account that capitalism comes in many forms: it is not just one system
  - iii. Institutional Theories
    1. Focus on the formal structures of government

### III. Non-Western Political Theorists

- a. China, India, and North Africa produced notable political thinkers before Europe
  - b. Confucius
    - i. China
    - ii. 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C.
    - iii. Parallels to Plato's ideal republic
  - c. Kautilya
    - i. India
    - ii. 4<sup>th</sup> century B.C.
    - iii. Parallels to Machiavelli and Hobbes
  - d. Ibn Khaldun
    - i. North Africa
    - ii. Parallels to Marx
- IV. Contemporary Theories
- a. Behavioralism
    - i. Positivism: application of natural science methodology to the study of society
    - ii. Many critiques
      - 1. Not value-free
      - 2. Neglect possibility of change
      - 3. Works best in established democratic systems
      - 4. Focus on relatively minor topics and steer clear of big questions
    - iii. Buildup of critiques generates postbehavioral movement
      - 1. Synthesis of traditional and behavior approaches
  - b. Systems theory
    - i. David Easton
    - ii. Simplifies reality by looking at complex entities as systems (roots in biology)
      - 1. Inputs and outputs
    - iii. Systems theory not as applicable in some situations
      - 1. Main problem: black box conversion process
        - a. Inner workings of government are important and have an influence on the outputs
        - b. Domestic politics matter
        - c. Also, pressures from various parts of government matter: "withinputs" as Easton himself adds
        - d. Modified systems model (Figure 2.4)
  - c. Modernization theory
    - i. Rooted in Hegel
    - ii. All facets of society (economic, cultural, and political) work together and changes in one are reflected in the other
    - iii. Importance of industrialization
    - iv. Example: Lipset's observation that economic development locks in democracy
      - 1. Industrialization creates large middle class
      - 2. Middle class pressure for democratic reforms and is the basis of democracy
    - v. Uneven modernization creates instability and conflict

- d. Rational-choice theory
  - i. Political behavior can be predicted by knowing the interests of the actors involved
    - 1. This is possible because actors behave rationally and therefore predictably
    - 2. Minimize costs and maximize benefits
- e. New Institutionalism
  - i. Government structures take on lives of their own and shape the peoples' attitudes and behavior
  - ii. People, legislators, etc. behave in accordance with what actions are beneficial under the rules
  - iii. Most recent political science model but likely not the last

## Chapter Summary

All good political science research is grounded in theory. In order to understand the very complex world around us, we must use simplifications of reality—theories—in order to understand the causal relationships at work. In fact, most of us implicitly use theory to understand the world around us, no matter if we are asking questions pertaining to politics or how to organize our daily schedules. This chapter details the various theories that have been most influential in the formation of the discipline of political science and the subsequent study of political science.

Political science has its roots in Plato and then his student Aristotle. Their exploration of the role of the *polis* and how to maintain adequate and stable regimes still occupy scholars today. Power is also still a primary concern of political scientists and was first introduced in the works of Machiavelli whose primary concern was the acquisition and maintenance of political power.

Additional classical political science theories are broken down into the following categories: the “contractualists” like Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau; Marxism; and Institutionalism. The contractualists examined the formation of society out of a state of nature—albeit very different states of nature among the three—and the role of society and government which followed. Marx focused on the role of economics and its effect on class conflict as the dominant force driving history and change. And institutional theories focused on the formal structures of government and their effect on political outcomes. It should be noted that while we call these the classic political theories, these are merely the classic Western political theories. Similar observations from China, India, and the Middle East were made centuries prior to the works of the previously discussed Western theories.

Contemporary political theories include behavioralism, systems theory, modernization theory, rational-choice theory, and New Institutionalism. Behavioralism was the application of the scientific method to the study of politics and after heavy criticism led to the development of postbehavioralism. Systems theory, as introduced by David Easton—at least to the study of politics—focuses on the inputs and outputs and treats states as black boxes. Subsequent modifications have introduced the effect of interest pressure, “withinputs,” and domestic politics. Modernization theory understands the world as a complex system in which one aspect is easily affected by another (political, economic, and social) and argues that when incomplete or uneven modernization occurs, instability and/or conflict ensues. Rational-choice theory treats individuals as rational benefit-maximizing actors; as a result, once interests are

defined, decisions and actions are easily understood. Finally, New Institutionalism is an extension of classic institutional theory and focuses on the impact of institutions on individual actors' decisions and the resulting outcomes. Theoretical frameworks and models of political science are constantly evolving. While New Institutionalism is the most recent to be adopted, it will certainly not be the last.

### Lecture Starters

- What is a theory? Have students write their answer down (without reference to the book or their notes) and then call on a few in turn to discuss and debate.
- Ask students to consider a theory as being akin to a pair of glasses with colored lenses. Explain that every student in the room could be looking at the same painting or desk but the color of their particular glasses will change the way that painting or desk looks. Take this opportunity to explain that theories shape how we see reality and are important because if the wrong theoretical lens is applied, all of our conclusions that follow will likely be wrong as well.
- Have students identify a political science topic that they are interested in. Ask them to develop a theory concerning that topic. In particular, instruct them to pay attention to cause and effect and explain *why* they think this cause leads to the particular effect or outcome of interest. Ask students to volunteer their examples and then encourage them to focus on the *why*, or the theory. A series of examples should go a long way to helping them understand a complex phenomenon.

### Discussion Questions

- What are the origins of political science? Particularly, who are the most prominent individuals responsible for the founding of political science as a means of inquiry?
- Who are the notable political thinkers mentioned in this chapter? How did each one of them influence the study of politics? Are their influences still visible today?
- What concept did Machiavelli introduce that is still essential to political science?
- What is the relationship between positivism and political science?
- What is a theory?
- What are the classic theories of political science?
- Were the classic political theorists the first to make these observations or were there some theorists that preceded them? If so, who were these theorists, where were they from, and what did they discuss?
- What are the modern theories of political science?
- Which theory do you find most convincing? Why?

### Activities

- Reading original texts is an invaluable experience for students. Organize students into groups and assign each group an original text to read, summarize in writing, and then have each group teach the class about their particular text. Emphasize that students pay attention to particularly notable passages and share these with the class. At a minimum, expose students to the writings of Machiavelli, Confucius, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, and Marx.



- After students have shared their text with the rest of the class, have them compare these texts. Ask them what distinguishes their political thinker from others, to point out similarities, and then to relate their text to contemporary politics.
- A good question and a strong thesis statement is the basis of any empirical work. Have students identify a topic within political science they are interested in. First, applying lessons from Chapter 1, ask them to identify which subfield of political science this topic would fit within. Then have them formulate the topic into a question that reflects cause and effect, and then transform that into a hypothesis and then a thesis statement (for an example, see text page 30). Ask students to establish a theory and then finally to brainstorm about how they might go about testing their hypothesis. This will serve to review aspects of Chapter 1, reinforce main points from Chapter 2, and prepare students to think about methodology, which will likely come up in future class discussions (and possibly in relation to behavioralism, depending on your preference).

### **Teaching Suggestions**

For whatever reason, students nearly always struggle with the concept of a theory. While it is easy to memorize the tenants of these theories, it is harder to understand their function within the discipline of political science. Reinforcing the difference in theories and reality and asking students to constantly evaluate the role of theories in general or of a particular theory can help alleviate this confusion. I would recommend constantly reinforcing the lessons of this chapter throughout the class. Ask questions like “What would a Marxist say about this?” or “What claims might a neoinstitutionalist make?” to do so. While doing so, emphasize that while the theories themselves are important, understanding the purpose that theories serve in general is more important.

### **True/False Questions**

1. Theories provide a framework for interpreting facts.

**True**

Page Reference: 21

Bloom’s Level: Comprehension

2. Theories can influence the type of information scholars study because theories make assumptions about what information is relevant and what is irrelevant.

**True**

Page Reference: 21

Bloom’s Level: Comprehension

3. Classic political theories were first developed in Europe.

**False**

Page Reference: 24

Bloom’s Level: Knowledge