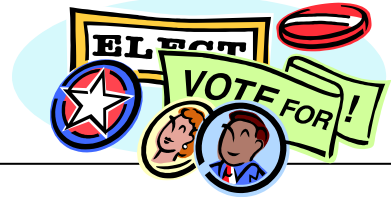


What is Politics?



Many people imagine that studying politics is just studying government. Government is important, but Politics is much more than this. Politics is a diverse, sprawling and dynamic discipline, which is not defined by a particular method or approach, but by a concern with themes of human community, power, conflict and change.

Politics is the operation of power in society:

- physical power
- economic power
- legal power
- power over opinion

Power is used to pursue the interests of human beings. These interests are often aggregated into factional alliances. Political Studies, often also called Political Science, is the academic discipline that tries to establish how this happens.

The study of politics is one of the oldest academic disciplines. In ancient Greece political philosophers studied the uses of power. They also concerned themselves with creating a good society and balancing the pursuit of power with justice and order. **They started the study of the four great sub-disciplines of Political Studies:**

- domestic politics and policy studies (Herodotus)
- political philosophy (Plato)
- comparative politics (Aristotle)
- international politics (Thucydides)