

**Political Science:** the study of how societies go about the conflict-ridden business of making and administering the rules their members must live by (ostensibly) in the interests of social harmony

### APPROACHES TO POLITICAL SCIENCE

Approach	Strengths	Weaknesses
<p><b>Institutionalism</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>focuses on the structural components of the political system (e.g. legislature, cabinet, parties, interest groups, courts)</li> </ul>	<p>Provides a detailed knowledge of how political organizations work</p>	<p>Descriptive rather than analytic. It provides no insight into the political process within each organization.</p>
<p><b>Behaviouralism</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>focuses on individual and group political behaviour (e.g. political culture and socialization, public opinion, and voting)</li> </ul>	<p>Explores and explains mass political behaviour. This information is of practical use for political strategists on how to become more appealing to people.</p>	<p>Tells us nothing about the decision-makers (e.g. politicians) and their role once elected to office.</p>
<p><b>Public Choice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>applies economic principles of <i>rationality</i> and <i>utility maximization</i> to political decision-making</li> </ul>	<p>Theory and methods apply to both individuals and institutions</p>	<p>Much too limited view of human motivations. Decisions tend to favour market-oriented policies. Humans are not only motivated by self-interest (also emotional, altruistic, and value-laden).</p>
<p><b>Political Economy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>focuses on the link between politics and socio-economic realities</li> </ul>	<p>Theory of politics as a product of social circumstances is rigorous and consistent, as it applies to both individuals and groups</p>	<p>Assumption that politics conditioned by economic disparities. It is really about the social and economic elite trying to acquire and maintain power.</p>

## Matching

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| ___ Institutionalism  | a. | sometimes called the 'economics of politics'   |
| ___ Behaviouralism    | b. | focuses on political structure such as legislatures, cabinets, parties, interest groups and courts |
| ___ Public Choice     | c. | links politics to the to underlying socio-economic realities                                       |
| ___ Political Economy | d. | focuses on individual and collective political actions   |