What do you like or not like about the definitions of politics advanced in the Democracy section of the Lesson Notes? What, if anything, do these definitions leave out that you consider politically important?

The definitions of politics in the lesson notes are very vague in my eyes. That is my main dislike with the definitions of Harold Lasswell and David Easton. However, I do understand that they relate politics to economics and value. In your definition, Professor Wolf, I like that you have gone into detail about how you feel that “binding social choices” define politics. I like that your definition includes the process because I feel that politics as a whole is a never-ending process of decisions.

I understand that the definition of politics is very open-ended debate, which is why I can agree with all three of the definitions as well. Lasswell’s definition of “who gets what, when and how,” leaves out the process and the “why” question. Politics are based on opinions and preferences, which is why a lot of things get done in the ways they do. The “why” is very important because it differentiates politicians in many ways.

As for Easton’s definition, “the authoritative allocation of values,” I find it unclear and unnerving. I understand his definition, but I am not quite sure why I don’t fully agree with it or why I feel like something is left out. The biggest reason that I can think of is that it does not feel all-inclusive.

I am not sure if there is an all-inclusive definition of politics, but I will hopefully continue to grasp knowledge of it and make my own definition.