**Module 1**

AUGUSTE COMTE is the father of sociology as he propounded the scientific study of society.

All societies evolve from simple to complex through natural processes. As a sociologists the social scientists tries to study this society and human behavior as objectively as possible with limited personal preference or prejudices.

SOCIETY: is a group of people who share a common culture, occupy a particular territorial area and feel themselves a united and distinct entity. Society is thus a web of relationships. Humans live in a society as we are all bound through certain norms, values, customs and practices. Thus society is a structure which is abstract in nature but never independent in its existence. Individuals do not freely float in a society but are part of collective bodies like family, tribe, caste, class, clan, nation etc which are called SOCIAL GROUPS/SYSTEM.

SOCIAL STRUCTURE: term means that society is structured or arranged made up of human actions. It refers to patterns of interaction between individual groups. A social system thus refers to a collection of continuously interacting person who share common interest, culture, values and norms within a society. It basically says how a society is subdivided into STRUCTURES with different purpose and function that allows the social group to interact. An example of such structure is SOCIAL STRATIFICATION. Social Structure are of Micro-level and Macro-level, the study of any specified community, or a village will be considered as the micro level, whereas the study of social structures of any society as a whole (eg: Indian society) will be considered as macro level study.

SOCIAL SYSTEM: an organization of individuals into groups or structures that have different functions, characteristics, origins or status. A social system breaks a large population down into family groups, race, religion, gender, wealth, social cases etc. these demographic distinctions can be used by the society itself for its interaction.

SOCIAL ORGANISATION: these are formation of stable structure of relations inside a group, which provides a basis for order and patterns to relations in the human society. These relationship establish functional arrangement of mutual obligations in society.

SOCIAL INSTITUTION: Social institutions are established or standardized patterns of rule-governed behavior. They include the family, education, religion, and economic and political institutions. FAMILY: A socially defined set of relationships between at least two people related by birth, marriage, adoption, or, in some definitions, long-standing ties of intimacy. EDUCATION: A formal process in which knowledge, skills, and values are systematically transmitted from one individual or group to another. RELIGION: A unified system of beliefs and practices pertaining to the supernatural and to norms about the right way to live that is shared by a group of believers. Sociologists treat religion as a social rather than supernatural phenomenon. ECONOMIC INSTITUTION: Sociologists understand the economy as the set of arrangements by which a society produces, distributes, and consumes goods, services, and other resources. POLITICAL INSTITUTION: Institutions that pertain to the governance of a society, its formal distribution of authority, its use of force, and its relationships to other societies and political units. The state, an important political institution in modern societies, is the apparatus of governance over a particular territory.

CULTURAL SOCIAL STRATIFICATION: refers to the existence of structured inequalities between groups in society, in terms of their access to material or symbolic rewards. Thus stratification can most simply be defined as structural inequalities between different groupings of people. Society can be seen as consisting of ‘strata’ in a hierarchy, with the more favored of the top and the less privileged near the bottom. Inequality of power and advantage is central for sociology, because of the crucial place of stratification in the organization of society.

* CASTE: In a caste stratification system an individual’s position totally depends on the status attributes as described by birth rather than on any which are achieved during the course of one’s life. This is not to say that in a class society there is no systematic constraint on achievement imposed by status attributes such as race gender.
* CLASS: In the Marxist theory social classes are defined by what relation they have to the means of production. Questions can be asked as to whether groups are owners of means of production such as land or factories? Weber uses the term Life-chances, which refers to the rewards and advantage afforded by market capacity. Inequality, Weber argued might be based on economic relations. It could also be based on prestige or a political power.

SEX & GENDER

SEX refers to a person’s biological status and is typically categorized as male, female, or intersex (i.e., atypical combinations of features that usually distinguish male from female). There are a number of indicators of biological sex, including sex chromosomes, gonads, internal reproductive organs, and external genitalia.

GENDER refers to the attitudes, feelings, and behaviors that a given culture associates with a person’s biological sex. Behavior that is compatible with cultural expectations is referred to as gender-normative; behaviors that are viewed as incompatible with these expectations constitute gender non-conformity.

GENDER IDENTITY refers to “one’s sense of oneself as male, female, or transgender”. When one’s gender identity and biological sex are not congruent, the individual may identify as transsexual or as another transgender category.

GENDER EXPRESSION refers to the “…way in which a person acts to communicate gender within a given culture; for example, in terms of clothing, communication patterns and interests. A person’s gender expression may or may not be consistent with socially prescribed gender roles, and may or may not reflect his or her gender identity”.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION refers to the sex of those to whom one is sexually and romantically attracted. Categories of sexual orientation typically have included attraction to members of one’s own sex (gay men or lesbians), attraction to members of the other sex (heterosexuals), and attraction to members of both sexes (bisexuals). While these categories continue to be widely used, research has suggested that sexual orientation does not always appear in such definable categories and instead occurs on a continuum. In addition, some research indicates that sexual orientation is fluid for some people; this may be especially true for women.

COMING OUT refers to the process in which one acknowledges and accepts one’s own sexual orientation. It also encompasses the process in which one discloses one’s sexual orientation to others. The term closeted refers to a state of secrecy or cautious privacy regarding one’s sexual orientation.

STATE AND CIVIL SOCIETY

"Political Science begins and ends with the state." State is the central focus of Political Science. It plays an important role in the society. It is the most powerful and universal social organisation.  It seems that with the creation of society consisting of man was the need of state felt. State links individuals to groups and organisations, and establishes balance and reconciliation between individuals and groups. It provides security to individuals and safeguards their rights. In ancient times, Greeks used the word, 'state' in the sense of polis or city-state. Ancient Romans used the wordcivitas for 'state'.

The city-states in ancient Greece and Rome were small, simple, and limited. In the first part of the sixteenth century, Machiavellie, an eminent statesman of Italy, was the first to use the word La Stato. In his view, state is a 'power system'. Towards the end of the sixteenth century, the French philosopher bodin called state a 'republic'. He said that the state possessed sovereign power. In the seventeenth century, the British philosopher Hobbes argued that the state had unlimited power. According to Aristotle, "The state is a union of families and villages and having for its ends a perfect and self-sufficing life by which we mean a happy and honourable life. Jean Bodin said, "A state is an association of families and their possession governed by supreme power and by reason."According to Gamer, "The state is a community of persons, more or less numerous, permanently occupying a definite portion of territory, independent (or nearly so) of external control and possessing an organised government to which the great body of inhabitants render habitual obedience."

We define civil society as the mélange of autonomous groups and associations that serve as a buffer between citizen and state, which practice civility and accept the state as the appropriate domain for political contestation. Less important in the popular view, though more fully theorized, is the growth of

civil society in transitions from authoritarianism to democratization. It is a mistake to equate civil society with NGOs. Properly understood, civil society is a broader concept, encompassing all the organizations and associations that exist outside of the state (including political parties) and the market. It includes the gamut of organizations that political scientists traditionally label interest groups---not just advocacy NGOs but also labor unions, professional associations (such as those of doctors and lawyers), chambers of commerce, ethnic associations, and others. It also incorporates the many other associations that exist for purposes other than advancing specific social or political agendas, such as religious organizations, student groups, cultural organizations (from choral societies to bird-watching clubs), sports clubs, and informal community groups. Nongovernmental organizations do play important, growing roles in developed and developing countries. They shape policy by exerting pressure on governments and by furnishing technical expertise to policy makers. They foster citizen participation and civic education.