

2017

AP®

 CollegeBoard

AP United States Government and Politics Scoring Guidelines

AP® UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS 2017 SCORING GUIDELINES

Question 1

5 points

Part (a): 1 point

One point is earned for a description of a constitutional provision that seeks to insulate the Supreme Court from public opinion.

- Justices serve for life.
- Justices are appointed/not elected.
- Justices' salaries cannot be reduced.

Part (b): 1 point

One point is earned for identifying a power exercised by the Supreme Court that acts as a check on another branch of the federal government.

- Judicial review
- Power to declare governmental actions unconstitutional
- Power to overrule/uphold laws passed by Congress or actions taken by the president or bureaucracy

Part (c): 2 points

One point is earned for an explanation of how Congress can limit the Supreme Court's independence.

- Proposing constitutional amendments or passing legislation
- Impeaching justices
- Setting the operating budget of the Supreme Court
- Increasing or decreasing the number of justices
- Changing the appellate jurisdiction of the Supreme Court

One point is earned for an explanation of how the president can limit the Supreme Court's independence.

- Refusing to enforce judicial decisions
- Proposing legislation or issuing executive orders to limit the effect of Supreme Court decisions
- Making public statements/exerting pressure

Part (d): 1 point

One point is earned for explaining how the Supreme Court protects its political independence.

- Secret deliberations
- No public recordings
- Control of its docket
- Limited public statements/media appearances

A score of zero (0) is assigned to an answer that is off-task or is attempted but earns no points.

A score of dash (—) is assigned to an answer that is blank.

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Question 2

5 points

Part (a): 1 point

One point is earned for identifying the primary goal of interest groups.

- Influencing public policy/government actions

Part (b): 2 points

One point is earned for a description of the following strategy used by interest groups.

- Lobbying
 - Persuading decision makers to adopt their preferences
 - Providing information to lawmakers
 - Writing legislation/consulting
 - Offering expertise

One point is earned for a description of the following strategy used by interest groups.

- Amicus Curiae
 - Providing legal arguments to support interest group positions on court cases
 - Joining with other interest groups before courts to support common goals

Part (c): 2 points

One point is earned for an explanation of how the following hinders the success of interest groups in obtaining their primary goal.

- Separation of powers
 - Complicates efforts/ability to influence policy
 - Each branch requires interest groups to use different strategies
 - Multiple access points

One point is earned for an explanation of how the following hinders the success of interest groups in obtaining their primary goal.

- Bureaucratic discretion
 - The bureaucracy may not follow the intentions of interest groups.
 - The bureaucracy may not implement the law in the way interest groups desire.
 - The bureaucracy may not write rules that interest groups prefer.

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A score of dash (—) is assigned to an answer that is blank.

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Question 3

5 Points

Part (a): 1 point

One point is earned for identifying a change in federal spending between 1970 and 2023 (projected) based on the chart.

- Increase in mandatory spending
- Decrease in discretionary spending
- Increase in spending on net interest

Part (b): 1 point

One point is earned for describing the difference between entitlement programs and discretionary programs.

- Congress is required to fund entitlement programs whereas spending on discretionary programs may change from year to year.

Part (c): 1 point

One point is earned for describing a demographic trend that has contributed to changes in entitlement spending.

- Aging population increases spending on entitlement programs.
- Rising poverty rates increase spending on entitlement programs.

Part (d): 1 point

One point is earned for explaining why changes in entitlement spending make balancing the federal budget difficult.

- Reducing discretionary spending requires prioritizing.
- Cutting programs with popular support/differing party positions is challenging.
- Increasing revenue/taxes is difficult.

Part (e): 1 point

One point is earned for explaining how deficit spending affects the projected trend in net interest.

- Borrowing money increases the debt, which increases spending on net interest.

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A score of dash (—) is assigned to an answer that is blank.

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Question 4

5 points

Part (a): 2 points

One point is earned for a description of the Supremacy clause.

- The Supremacy clause establishes that federal laws/United States Constitution take precedence over state laws/state constitutions.

One point is earned for a description of the Tenth Amendment.

- The Tenth Amendment establishes that powers not delegated to the federal government are reserved to the states.

Part (b): 1 point

One point is earned for an explanation of how *United States v. Lopez* affected the balance of power between the federal and state governments.

- The Court's decision in *Lopez* struck down a federal law creating gun-free school zones, which limited the power of the federal government in relation to the states.
- The Court's decision in *Lopez* adopted a more narrow interpretation of Congress's use of the Commerce Clause, which limited the power of the federal government in relation to the states.

One point is earned for an explanation of how *Obergefell v. Hodges* affected the balance of power between the federal and state governments.

- The Court's decision in *Obergefell* declared that state laws prohibiting recognition of same-sex marriage violate the United States Constitution, which limited the power of state governments.

Part (c): 2 points

One point is earned for each of two descriptions of an advantage of federalism for the creation of public policy in the United States.

- States can make policy specific to their individual needs.
- States serve as laboratories of democracy/policy innovators.
- The federal government can establish uniform policy, if and when necessary.
- Multiple access points increase the likelihood of success in policymaking.
- States can make policy in the absence of national consensus.
- The federal government is able to distribute necessary resources.

A score of zero (0) is assigned to an answer that is off-task or is attempted but earns no points.

A score of dash (—) is assigned to an answer that is blank.