

2015 AP[®] COMPARATIVE GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS
FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS

Country Context: We suggest that you spend approximately 40 minutes (20 minutes each) on questions 7 and 8.

7. Party systems in Mexico and Russia affect the political legitimacy of each state.
- (a) Identify Mexico's historically dominant party, and identify the type of party system Mexico currently has.
 - (b) Describe two reforms since 1980 that facilitated Mexico's transition away from a dominant party system.
 - (c) Identify Russia's current dominant party.
 - (d) Describe two reforms since 2000 that allowed Russia to establish a dominant party system.
 - (e) Explain how a dominant party system can promote political legitimacy. Explain how a dominant party system can hinder political legitimacy.

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Question 7

8 points

Part (a): 1 point

One point is earned for correctly identifying the PRI as Mexico's historically dominant party AND for identifying Mexico's current party system as multiparty.

Part (b): 2 points

One point is earned for EACH correct description of a reform that facilitated Mexico's transition away from a dominant party system.

Acceptable descriptions include:

- The establishment of the IFE
- More autonomy and strength for the IFE
- The elimination of el dedazo
- A series of electoral reforms to encourage minority representation
- Privatizing state-owned corporations, decreasing patronage
- Decentralization reform, reducing PRI power at the subnational level
- Zedillo's decision to use primaries for the PRI

Part (c): 1 point

One point is earned for correctly identifying United Russia as Russia's current dominant party.

Note: A response merely stating "Putin's party" does not earn a point.

Part (d): 2 points

One point is earned for EACH correct description of a reform that allowed Russia to establish a dominant party system.

Acceptable descriptions include:

- Increasing the threshold
- Instituting election rule changes that encourage dominant party selection by candidates
- Eliminating gubernatorial elections or appointment of governors
- Creating unequal access to media
- Raising registration requirements for parties
- Allowing only legally registered parties to run for office
- Using selective court decisions to disqualify candidates

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Question 7 (continued)

Part (e): 2 points

One point is earned for a correct explanation of how a dominant party can promote political legitimacy.

Acceptable explanations include:

- Promotes stability
- Brings about policy continuity
- Creates more efficient policymaking, reduces gridlock
- Gains a majority of votes in an election
- Boosts nationalism
- Creates a better investment environment
- Enacts necessary reforms

One point is earned for a correct explanation of how a dominant party can hinder political legitimacy.

Acceptable explanations include:

- Limits competitiveness or voter choice
- Increases chances for authoritarianism
- Undermines checks and balances
- Reduces representativeness or popular voice
- Undermines the opposition
- Encourages corruption

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

A score of dash (—) is earned for a blank.