

**2007 AP® UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS  
FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS**

**UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS**

**SECTION II**

**Time—1 hour and 40 minutes**

**Directions:** You have 100 minutes to answer all four of the following questions. Unless the directions indicate otherwise, respond to all parts of all four questions. It is suggested that you take a few minutes to plan and outline each answer. Spend approximately one-fourth of your time (25 minutes) on each question. In your response, use substantive examples where appropriate. Make certain to number each of your answers as the question is numbered below.

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1. A significant feature of the electoral college is that most states have a winner-take-all system.
  - (a) Describe the winner-take-all feature of the electoral college.
  - (b) Explain one way in which the winner-take-all feature of the electoral college affects how presidential candidates from the two major political parties run their campaigns.
  - (c) Explain one way in which the winner-take-all feature of the electoral college hinders third-party candidates.
  - (d) Explain two reasons why the electoral college has not been abolished.

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2. The First Amendment includes two clauses relating to the freedom of religion.
  - (a) Select one of the following cases and identify the First Amendment clause upon which the United States Supreme Court based its decision.
    - *Engel v. Vitale* (school prayer)
    - *Lemon v. Kurtzman* (state funding for private religious schools)
  - (b) Describe the Supreme Court’s decision in the case that you selected in (a).
  - (c) Select one of the following cases and identify the First Amendment clause upon which the Supreme Court based its decision.
    - *Reynolds v. United States* (polygamy)
    - *Oregon v. Smith* (drug use in religious ceremonies)
  - (d) Describe the Supreme Court’s decision in the case that you selected in (c).
  - (e) Many of these decisions have caused controversy in the United States. Describe two ways in which other political institutions might limit the impact of Supreme Court decisions.

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## **Question 1**

**5 points**

### **Part (a): 1 point**

One point is earned for a description of the winner-take-all feature of the electoral college. A correct description is: the candidate who gets the most votes (or a majority, a plurality, more than any other candidate) wins all of a state's electoral votes.

### **Part (b): 1 point**

One point is earned for an explanation of how the winner-take-all feature of the electoral college affects how presidential candidates from the two major parties run their campaigns. The explanation must include a specific campaign management or campaign strategy, and it must clearly be tied to the winner-take-all feature at the state level.

Acceptable explanations include:

- Resource allocation or focus on competitive states, swing states, and large states where candidates spend their time or money or buy media.
- Issues (an issue may swing a bloc of voters in a state).
- Choice of Vice-President (regional balance).

### **Part (c): 1 point**

One point is earned for an explanation of how or why the winner-take-all system hinders third parties at the state level.

Acceptable explanations include:

- Third-party candidates may get a lot of popular votes but no electoral votes unless they carry a state.
- The difficulty of winning electoral votes hampers the ability to raise funds and gain other campaign resources.

### **Part (d): 2 points**

One point is earned for each correct explanation of why the electoral college has not been abolished. The explanation must be tied to the national perspective.

Acceptable explanations include:

- Helps to ensure that a majority of electoral votes are earned by one candidate.
- History/tradition.
- Would require constitutional amendment.
- No clear consensus on an alternative.
- Collectively benefits small states.
- Racial minorities (and interest groups) in some states like the electoral college because it protects their votes.

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**Question 1 (continued)**

- Collectively benefits large states.
- Competitive states like it.
- Favors two-party system.

A score of zero (0) is earned for an attempted answer that receives no points.

A score of dash (—) is earned for a blank or off-task answer.