

2009 AP[®] UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS
FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS

2. In the United States political system, there are several linkage institutions that can connect citizens to government. Elections constitute one such institution. Because of low voter turnout, elections represent an imperfect method of linking citizens to their government. Even when there is low voter turnout, however, other linkage institutions can connect citizens to government.
- (a) Describe how each of the following is related to the likelihood of voting.
- Age
 - Education
- (b) Identify one current government electoral requirement that decreases voter turnout. Explain how it decreases voter turnout.
- (c) Identify one linkage institution other than elections and explain two ways it connects citizens to government.
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3. In the United States Congress, the majority party exerts a substantial influence over lawmaking. However, even when one party has a numerical majority in each chamber of the United States Congress, there is no guarantee that legislation supported by that majority party will be passed by both chambers. Rules of each chamber independently influence the likelihood that legislation will pass in that chamber; legislation passed by one chamber is not always passed by the other.
- (a) Describe two advantages the majority party in the United States House of Representatives has in lawmaking, above and beyond the numerical advantage that that majority party enjoys in floor voting.
- (b) Describe two differences between House and Senate rules that may make it likely that legislation may pass in one chamber but not in the other.
- (c) Explain how the differences identified in (b) can lead to the passage of a bill in one chamber but not in the other.

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Question 2

7 points

Part (a): 2 points

One point is earned for describing any aspect of the relationship between age and the likelihood of voting. Acceptable descriptions for *age* include:

- Older people are more likely to vote.
- Turnout is lowest for young people.
- The likelihood of voting declines in the oldest populations.

One point is earned for describing the relationship between education and the likelihood of voting. The only acceptable descriptions for *education* are:

- People with more education are more likely to vote.
- People with less education are less likely to vote.

Part (b): 2 points

One point is earned for identifying an electoral requirement that decreases voter turnout. Acceptable examples are:

- Citizenship
- Age
- Disfranchisement of certain groups (felons, the mentally incompetent)
- Residency
- Registration
- Limited opportunities to vote (midweek, limited hours, single day)
- Need to show identification
- Generally have to vote in person
- Closed primaries
- Process of obtaining absentee ballots

One point is earned for explaining how or why the requirement cited decreases the likelihood of voting. Acceptable explanations include:

- The requirement makes a person ineligible to vote.
- The requirement puts up obstacles or makes it harder to vote.

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Question 2 (continued)

Part (c): 3 points

One point is earned for identifying one of the following linkage institutions:

- Media
- Interest groups (PACs)
- Political parties

One point is earned for each of two explanations. The student must explain how the media, interest groups, or political parties connect citizens to the government. (Note: the student must earn the point for identifying an institution in order to receive a point for explaining how that institution connects citizens to the government.)

	Media	Interest Groups/ PACs	Parties
"Ways" that connect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convey the views of the people to government • Convey information about the government to the people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Express group members' preferences to policymakers • Convey policy information to group members • Raise and spend money to advocate for the interests of the group with policymakers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather information about voters for use by candidates and policymakers • Provide information to voters about candidates running for office • Connect voters to elected officials/candidates through campaign activities
"Ways" in which connections are made	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviewing citizens • Reporting on government activities • Presenting poll results • Interviewing public officials • Covering protests and/or opposition • Providing an outlet for citizen opinion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter-writing campaigns • Campaign activities • Lobbying • Grassroots movement • Litigation • Media campaigns • Disseminating information about government affairs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campaigns • Mailings • Voter mobilization • Recruiting candidates • Recruiting activists • Endorsing party platforms • Funding candidates • Aggregating interests • Articulating interests • Mobilizing interests

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Question 2 (continued)

Simply identifying and/or describing items in the second row of the table is not sufficient to earn a point.

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

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