

**2018 AP<sup>®</sup> UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS  
FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS**

**UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS**

**SECTION II**

**Time—1 hour and 40 minutes**

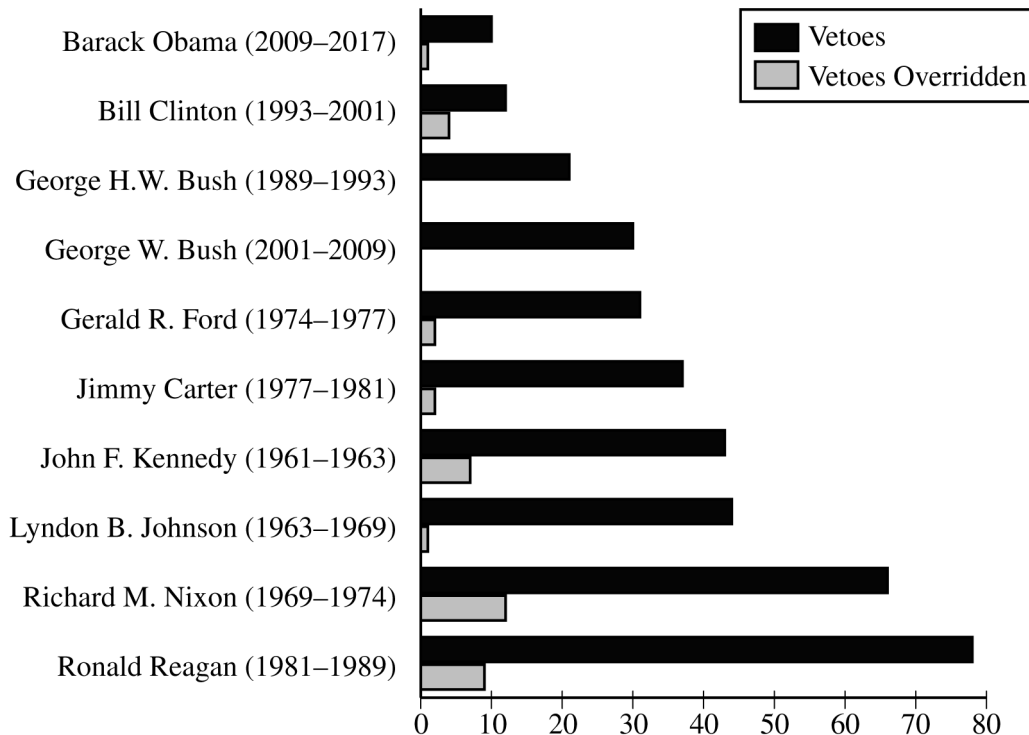
**Directions:** You have 1 hour and 40 minutes to answer all four of the following questions. Unless the directions indicate otherwise, respond to all parts of all four questions. It is suggested that you take a few minutes to plan and outline each answer. Spend approximately one-fourth of your time (25 minutes) on each question. In your response, use substantive examples where appropriate.

1. Political parties seek to win elections to control government.
  - (a) Identify two activities that political parties do to win elections.
  - (b) Describe one way third parties can affect elections.
  - (c) Explain how single-member districts make it difficult for third parties to win elections.
  - (d) Explain how electoral competition is affected by gerrymandering.

---
2. Public opinion polls are commonly used by politicians and the media.
  - (a) Identify two characteristics of a reliable scientific public opinion poll.
  - (b) Describe two ways polling results are used by politicians.
  - (c) Explain how frequent public opinion polls impact media coverage of political campaigns.

---

**2018 AP<sup>®</sup> UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS  
FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS**



Source: United States House of Representatives

3. The United States Constitution gave Congress and the president specific legislative powers. As a result, the interactions between the two are dynamic and complex.
- (a) Describe the constitutional principle of checks and balances.
  - (b) Describe EACH of the following presidential powers in the legislative process:
    - Veto
    - State of the Union address
  - (c) Using the data in the chart, describe the relationship between the number of presidential vetoes and the number of congressional overrides.
  - (d) Explain how Congress can reduce the likelihood of a presidential veto.

**AP<sup>®</sup> UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS  
2018 SCORING GUIDELINES**

**Question 2**

**5 points**

**Part (a): 2 points**

Two points are earned for identifying two characteristics of a reliable scientific public opinion poll.

- Random sample
- Representative sample
- Large sample size/low margin of error
- Question wording (unbiased and/or unambiguous wording)
- Survey format (question type, open- versus close-ended questions, sequencing)

**Part (b): 2 points**

Two points are earned for a description of two ways polling results are used by politicians.

- Collecting information on how to conduct their campaign
- Collecting information to shape policy
- Promoting themselves to the public (platform formation)
- Conducting opposition research
- Collecting information to inform votes on bills
- Gaining support from donors

**Part (c): 1 point**

One point is earned for an explanation of how frequent release of public opinion polls impacts media coverage of political campaigns.

- Amount/type of campaign media coverage changes because of changing polling numbers.
- Frequent polling contributes to horse race journalism.
- Polling shapes what campaign-related stories the media will cover.
- Results in a lack of policy coverage.

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.