

**2006 AP<sup>®</sup> UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS**  
**FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS**

**UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS**

**SECTION II**

**Time—1 hour and 40 minutes**

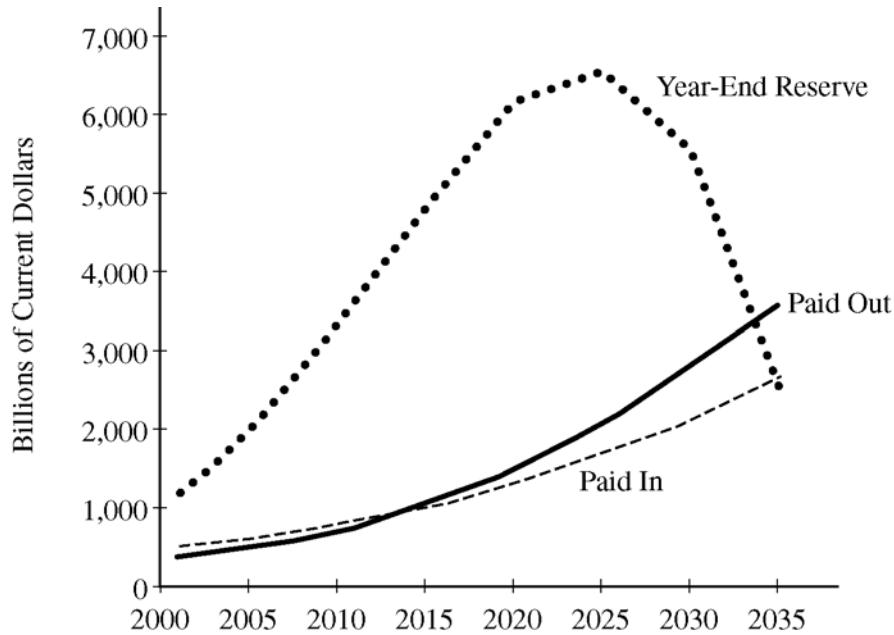
**Directions:** You have 100 minutes to answer all four of the following questions. Unless the directions indicate otherwise, respond to all parts of all four questions. It is suggested that you take a few minutes to plan and outline each answer. Spend approximately one-fourth of your time (25 minutes) 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. While interest groups and political parties each play a significant role in the United States political system, they differ in their fundamental goals.
  - (a) Identify the fundamental goal of interest groups in the political process.
  - (b) Identify the fundamental goal of major political parties in the political process.
  - (c) Describe two different ways by which interest groups support the fundamental goal of political parties in the political process.
  - (d) For one of the forms of support you described in (c), explain two different ways in which that form of support helps interest groups to achieve their fundamental goal in the political process.

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SOCIAL SECURITY RECEIPTS, SPENDING, AND RESERVE ESTIMATES, 2001–2035



Source: 2001 OASDI Trustees Report

2. In recent decades, entitlement programs have constituted a substantial portion of the United States federal budget. Social Security is the largest entitlement program in the United States. From the information in the chart above and your knowledge of United States government and politics, perform the following tasks.
- Define entitlement program.
  - What is the primary source of revenue for the Social Security program?
  - Identify one threat to the future of the Social Security program should the trends depicted in the chart above continue.
  - Describe one demographic trend that threatens the future of the Social Security program AND explain how it is responsible for the threat that you identified in (c).
  - Explain how any one of the trends in the chart above would change if the age of eligibility for Social Security were raised.

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**Question 1**

**6 points**

**Part (a): 1 point**

The response must identify a fundamental goal of interest groups in the political process. Acceptable responses may include:

- Influence public policy.
- Influence Congress/government.
- Change laws.
- Responses can list tactics as long as they specifically connect them to the fundamental goal of influencing public policy.
- No point is earned if the response lists a series of goals, even if one goal is “influence policy” (unless it is specifically listed as the fundamental goal).

**Part (b): 1 point**

The response must identify a fundamental goal of political parties in the political process. Acceptable responses may include:

- Elect people to office.
- Gain control of government. (Responses can earn a point for saying “influence policy” as long as they connect it to winning control of government/electing people to office.)

**Part (c): 2 points**

One point is earned for each of two descriptions. The response must describe activities that support the electoral goals of parties; for example, the response “lobbying” does not earn a point.

Acceptable descriptions may include:

- Monetary contributions/political action committee (PAC) donations. (If these two are clearly differentiated, then the response earns both points.)
- Organization/mobilization of people.
- Media campaigns.
- Information.
- Independent committees/527s.
- Independent expenditures.
- Endorsement/recruitment of candidates.

**Part (d): 2 points**

One point is earned for each of two explanations.

Acceptable explanations may include:

- Access/influence policymakers.
- Have like-minded people/policy advocates in office.
- Legislation that helps interest groups.

Note: Responses cannot earn points in (d) if they do not earn points in (c).

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**Question 1 (continued)**

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

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