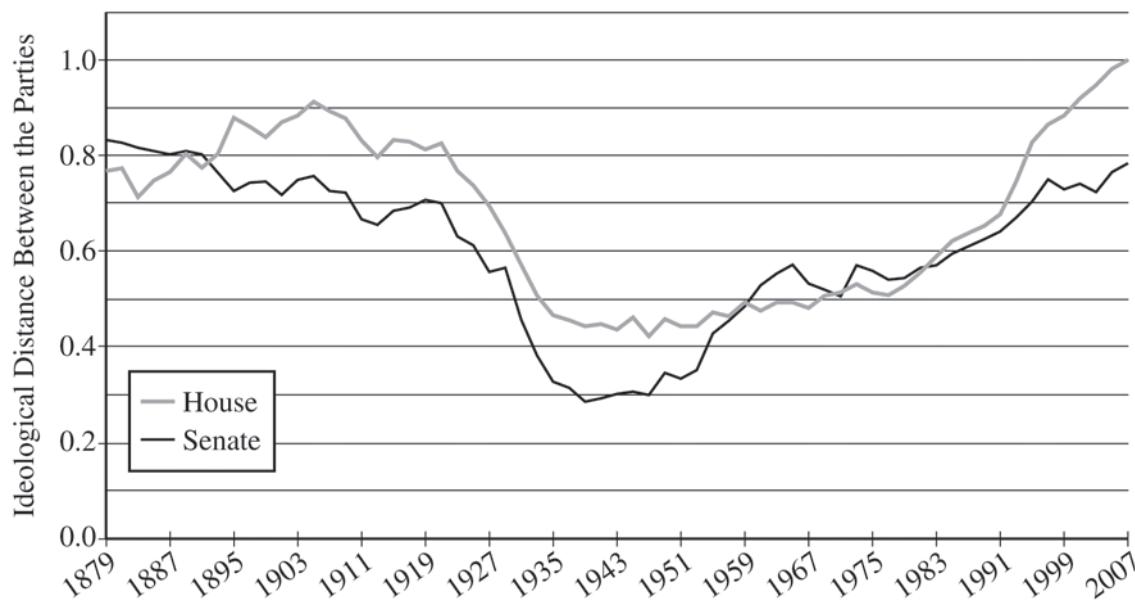


**2014 AP® UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS  
FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS**

PARTY POLARIZATION, 1879–2007



4. (a) Define party polarization.
- (b) Identify a trend shown in the graph above.
- (c) Describe two causes of party polarization in Congress.
- (d) Describe one effect of party polarization on congressional policy making.

**STOP**

**END OF EXAM**

# **AP® UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS 2014 SCORING GUIDELINES**

## **Question 4**

**5 points**

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

One point is earned for a correct definition of party polarization as increased ideological consistency, divisions along party lines, or both.

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

One point is earned for identifying a trend in the graph (e.g., party polarization has increased in the House; is higher in the House than in the Senate over time; was up, then down, then up).

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

One point is earned for each accurate description of a cause of party polarization in Congress.

Acceptable causes include:

- Clear issue differences between the parties
- Increasing reliance on ideologically-driven activists
- Ideologically-driven membership
- Gerrymandering
- Media effects on politics (e.g., fragmentation of traditional media; consolidation of media ownership; media focus on ideological extremism)
- Changing norms in Congress (e.g., lower levels of trust or dislike among members; shorter work week)
- Direct primaries – ideological voters in congressional elections
- Changing campaign finance rules
- Rise of single issue interest groups
- Shifts in the party (i.e., Republicans' "Southern Strategy")

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

One point is earned for an accurate description of how party polarization affects Congressional policy making. Acceptable effects include:

- Gridlock (e.g., fewer laws passed; confirmation processes become more difficult; filibuster; greater numbers of vacancies in courts and agencies)
- Lack of compromise (e.g., fewer laws passed; confirmation processes become more difficult; filibuster; greater numbers of vacancies in courts and agencies)

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.