

**2009 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.

1. In *The Federalist* paper number 10, James Madison expressed concern over the possibility that both majority and minority factions would have too much power over government, and he presented ways of minimizing that danger. The United States Constitution established a democratic government but also contained several provisions that limited majority rule. Throughout the next two centuries, the role of majority rule in the United States government and politics continued to change.
 - (a) Identify the part of the national government that was originally most closely tied to citizens and explain how it was tied to citizens.
 - (b) Explain two ways the United States Constitution limited majority rule.
 - (c) Choose two of the following twentieth-century developments and explain how each moved the United States from a less democratic system to a more democratic system.
 - Primary elections
 - The Seventeenth Amendment
 - Expansion of suffrage

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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 1

6 points

Part (a): 2 points

One point is earned for identifying the House of Representatives or Congress. One point is earned for an explanation of how the House or Congress is most closely tied to citizens.

Acceptable explanations are:

- Members of the House are more directly elected than the president and were originally more directly elected than members of the Senate.
- The shorter term length (or frequent elections) ties them to the people.
- Members must live in the state they represent.
- House members represent relatively small districts.

Part (b): 2 points

One point is earned for each of two explanations. Each explanation must show how a constitutional provision or principle limits majority rule.

Any of the following can be used as a reference point in the explanation of how majority rule is limited (this is not an exhaustive list):

Provisions that limit how the majority can have an impact on government	Provisions that limit the power of government
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Electoral college• U.S. senators originally selected by state legislatures• Longer terms of senators• Independent judiciary• Life tenure for U.S. Supreme Court justices• Appointment process• Representative form of government	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bill of Rights• Expressed powers• Specific prohibitions (e.g., <i>ex post facto</i> laws, bills of attainder)• Separation of powers• Checks and balances• Federalism• Bicameralism

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Question 1 (continued)

Part (c): 2 points

One point is earned for each of two explanations. Each explanation must state how the development cited moved the process from a less democratic system to a more democratic system in the twentieth century.

Acceptable explanations must indicate how the United States became more democratic through:

- Primary elections—voters gained more control over the nomination process/control taken away from political parties.
- Seventeenth Amendment—mandated direct election of U.S. senators.
- Expansion of suffrage—led to a more representative set of voters/more eligible voters.

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.