

2016 AP[®] COMPARATIVE GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS
FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS

Country Context: We suggest that you spend approximately 40 minutes (20 minutes each) on questions 7 and 8.

7. A country's level of democracy is influenced by the independence of its legislature.
- (a) Describe one similarity in the way that legislators are selected in Iran and Mexico.
 - (b) Describe one formal constraint on the way that legislators are selected in Iran that does not exist in Mexico. Explain how this formal constraint affects the level of democracy in Iran.
 - (c) Describe one power that the legislatures of Iran and Mexico share.
 - (d) Describe one formal constraint on the power of the legislature in Iran that does not exist in Mexico. Explain how this formal constraint affects the level of democracy in Iran.
 - (e) Explain how having an independent legislature strengthens democracy.

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Question 7

7 points

Part (a): 1 point

One point is earned for a correct description of one similarity in the way that legislators are chosen in Iran and Mexico.

An acceptable description may include:

Legislators are elected by voters.

Part (b): 2 points

One point is earned for a correct description of one formal constraint on the way that legislators are chosen in Iran that does not exist in Mexico.

An acceptable description may include:

- Candidates have to be vetted by the Guardian Council in Iran.
- Candidates must be Muslims, with the exception of the represented religious minorities.

One point is earned for a correct explanation of how the formal constraint affects the level of democracy.

Acceptable explanations must connect to the reduced level of democracy and may include:

- Restricts voter choice
- Restricts access to the ballot
- Restricts participation
- Limits competition

Part (c): 1 point

One point is earned for a correct description of one power common to the legislatures of Iran and Mexico.

Acceptable descriptions may include:

- Both make laws
- Both approve budgets
- Both can impeach the president
- Both can oversee the executive branch
- Both confirm presidential appointments
- Both approve treaties

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Question 7 (continued)

Part (d): 2 points

One point is earned for a correct description of one formal constraint on the power of the legislature in Iran that does not exist in Mexico.

An acceptable description may include:

- Legislation must be approved by the Guardian Council.
- Laws and policies must conform to the principles of Islam, Jurist Guardianship, or Sharia law.
- Power over the supreme leader is limited.

One point is earned for a correct explanation of how the constraint affects the level of democracy.

Acceptable explanations must connect to the reduced level of democracy and may include:

- Reduces power of people's representatives
- Weakens checks and balances or separation of powers
- Gives unelected officials veto power
- Undermines legislative independence

Part (e): 1 point

One point is earned for a correct explanation of why an independent legislature strengthens democracy.

Acceptable explanations may include:

- Creates checks and balances
- Increases the voice of the people
- Prevents concentration of power
- Increases political efficacy
- Better represents interests

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

A score of dash (—) is earned for a blank.