

2009 AP[®] UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS
FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS

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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Viewers' Ages and Frequency of Viewing of Network Nightly News: 1974 and 2002 Combined		
1974	Frequently (%)	Rarely (%)
18–29	45	13
30–44	50	12
45–64	68	8
65 and older	71	5
2002	Frequently (%)	Rarely (%)
18–29	19	22
30–44	22	17
45–64	40	11
65 and older	53	8

Source: Martin Wattenberg, 2004. "The Changing Presidential Media Environment." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 34(3):557–572. Originally taken from the 1974 National Election Study and the 2002 Pew Center Media Study.

4. One of the most important ways the news media influence politics is through agenda setting.
- (a) Define policy agenda.
 - (b) Explain how the national news media engage in agenda setting.
 - (c) Explain the primary reason the president tends to have an advantage over Congress in gaining media attention.
 - (d) Consider the table above.
 - Describe the difference in the viewing patterns of older and younger age-groups.
 - Describe the change from 1974 to 2002 in viewing habits that exists for all age categories.
 - (e) Given the information in the table, describe one implication for presidents in their use of the media to promote their political and policy objectives to the American public.

STOP

END OF EXAM

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Question 3

6 points

Part (a): 2 points

One point is earned for each of two descriptions of majority party advantage in the House of Representatives.

The description must include three components:

- Majority party
- Advantage
- Factual statement about the advantage

Acceptable answers may include:

- Holds committee chairs
- Controls Rules Committee
- Sets the agenda
- Controls debate
- Chooses Speaker of the House
- Holds majority on each committee
- Assigns bills to committees

Part (b): 2 points

One point is earned for each of two descriptions of rules differences between the House and Senate. Acceptable answers may include:

	House	Senate
Procedures and rules	More formal	Less formal
Filibuster	No	Yes
Holds	No	Yes
Unanimous consent agreements	No	Yes
Germaneness requirement	Yes	No
Rules Committee	Yes	No

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Question 3 (continued)

Part (c): 2 points

One point is earned for each of two explanations of how a rules difference identified in part (b) affects passage of a bill in one chamber as opposed to the other. Acceptable answers may include:

- Filibuster—even though the House may pass a bill, the Senate can kill the bill with a filibuster.
- Holds—even though the House may pass a bill, the Senate can delay or stop it with a hold.
- Unanimous consent agreements—the Senate can ease passage of a bill with unanimous consent agreements, while the House has no such mechanism.
- Germaneness—the Senate can add unrelated content that members of the House might find objectionable.
- Rules Committee—even though the Senate may pass a bill, the House Rules Committee can hinder passage of that bill in the House.

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

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