



AP[®] United States Government and Politics 2009 Scoring Guidelines

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AP[®] UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

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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.

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Question 2

7 points

Part (a): 2 points

One point is earned for describing any aspect of the relationship between age and the likelihood of voting. Acceptable descriptions for *age* include:

- Older people are more likely to vote.
- Turnout is lowest for young people.
- The likelihood of voting declines in the oldest populations.

One point is earned for describing the relationship between education and the likelihood of voting. The only acceptable descriptions for *education* are:

- People with more education are more likely to vote.
- People with less education are less likely to vote.

Part (b): 2 points

One point is earned for identifying an electoral requirement that decreases voter turnout. Acceptable examples are:

- Citizenship
- Age
- Disfranchisement of certain groups (felons, the mentally incompetent)
- Residency
- Registration
- Limited opportunities to vote (midweek, limited hours, single day)
- Need to show identification
- Generally have to vote in person
- Closed primaries
- Process of obtaining absentee ballots

One point is earned for explaining how or why the requirement cited decreases the likelihood of voting. Acceptable explanations include:

- The requirement makes a person ineligible to vote.
- The requirement puts up obstacles or makes it harder to vote.

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Question 2 (continued)

Part (c): 3 points

One point is earned for identifying one of the following linkage institutions:

- Media
- Interest groups (PACs)
- Political parties

One point is earned for each of two explanations. The student must explain how the media, interest groups, or political parties connect citizens to the government. (Note: the student must earn the point for identifying an institution in order to receive a point for explaining how that institution connects citizens to the government.)

	Media	Interest Groups/ PACs	Parties
"Ways" that connect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convey the views of the people to government • Convey information about the government to the people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Express group members' preferences to policymakers • Convey policy information to group members • Raise and spend money to advocate for the interests of the group with policymakers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather information about voters for use by candidates and policymakers • Provide information to voters about candidates running for office • Connect voters to elected officials/candidates through campaign activities
"Ways" in which connections are made	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviewing citizens • Reporting on government activities • Presenting poll results • Interviewing public officials • Covering protests and/or opposition • Providing an outlet for citizen opinion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter-writing campaigns • Campaign activities • Lobbying • Grassroots movement • Litigation • Media campaigns • Disseminating information about government affairs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campaigns • Mailings • Voter mobilization • Recruiting candidates • Recruiting activists • Endorsing party platforms • Funding candidates • Aggregating interests • Articulating interests • Mobilizing interests

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Question 2 (continued)

Simply identifying and/or describing items in the second row of the table is not sufficient to earn a point.

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.

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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.

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Question 4

6 points

Part (a): 1 point

One point is earned for a correct definition of policy agenda. A correct definition must include each of the following:

- A policy agenda is a set of issues, problems, or subjects
- that gets the attention of/is viewed as important by
- people involved in policymaking (e.g., government officials, government decision-makers).

Part (b): 1 point

One point is earned for a correct explanation of how the national news media engage in agenda setting. A correct explanation must include each of the following:

- Raise awareness, provide information, draw attention, demonstrate the importance or consequences of the problem, or get the public's attention.
- Get the attention of government/policymakers.

Part (c): 1 point

One point is earned for an explanation of the primary reason the president has an advantage over Congress in gaining media attention. A correct response must include the following:

- An explanation that the president is one person, while Congress is composed of many members.
- An explanation of how that fact gives the president an advantage over Congress in gaining media attention.

Possible explanations might include:

- The president speaks with a single voice, while Congress has many voices.
- The president represents the nation; members of Congress represent states/districts.
- The president is the national leader/leader of the country.
- The president is more powerful than any single member of Congress.
- The president has constitutional powers that Congress does not have.

Part (d): 2 points

One point is earned for each of two responses: one explaining the difference in viewing patterns of older and younger age-groups, and one explaining the change in viewing habits from 1974 to 2002 for all age-groups:

- Young people view less TV news than older people./Older people view more TV news than younger people.
- People in all age categories viewed less TV news in 2002 than they did in 1974.

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Question 4 (continued)

Part (e): 1 point

One point is earned for describing one implication for presidents in their use of the media to promote their objectives to the public. The answer must state at least one of the following:

- Presidents must rely on alternative media to gain the attention of the public.
- Presidents purposely target older viewers through the use of nightly news programs.
- The nightly news is not as effective in promoting the president's agenda as it used to be.

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.