

How to write an AP Government essay

(1) Read the question more than once

(2) Do not include a conclusion or introduction; include a thesis ONLY if it helps you to organize your thoughts.

(3) Pay attention to/circle the verbs:

a. *identify*: list and provide an example (2 sentences max)

- Identify the clause of the 14th amendment that is used to extend Civil Rights

b. *describe*: detail in two sentences

- Describe the power of the President in each of the following roles; Chief Legislator, Chief Administrator

c. *discuss*: cite, clarify and connect back to the prompt (3 to 5 sentences)

- Discuss two reasons why the framers created a Bicameral Legislature

d. *explain*: talk about cause and effect (2 sentences minimum)

- Explain how each of the following has been used to expand the power of the federal Government over the Power of the states; Commerce Clause, Mandates

e. *analyze*: discuss + explain; pay attention to both sides but favor one side.

- Compare the positions of the Federalists and Anti Federalists regarding the power of the National Government

f. *justify*: give evidence in support of (whether you agree or not)

- Choose one of the forms of participation, justify its use in changing civil rights policy

g. *list*: cite examples of with no further explanation... if it asks you to list three Supreme Court decisions that reference the 14th amendment, you would, in one sentence with a colon and commas... say Roe v. Wade, Gitlow vs. New York and Brown v. Board of Ed.

(4) ANSWER THE PROMPT. This may sound dumb but ANSWER THE PROMPT; The question will include parts, noted with letters. Assume the letters are steps. ANSWER THEM IN ORDER, concisely and comprehensively.

(5) Be as clear as possible. This includes using small, almost superscript like notations where you note the part of the question you are handling. So if the question lists parts (a) (b) and (c) you should, in your margin or the indent before you start the paragraph that answers part (a) write (A)... If part (a) asks you to describe two features unique to the United States Senate, a good essay would probably say something like: (A) Two features that are unique to the United States Senate are: (1) its deference to minority leaders and (2) its tradition of unlimited debate. (1) The Senate, like the House, has minority and majority leaders assigned to each committee; but in the Senate, these minority leaders have a greater say in the committee's behavior. (2) Additionally, in the Senate, unlike in the House, there has been a long-standing tradition of allowing Senators to filibuster, deliberate, etc. with few if any rules to limit the practice/debate. Note that in the above example, the (A) obviously paralleled the prompt directly but the writer also took the initiative by adding a tiny 1 and 2 (superscript would be even better) to break down the two parts of the question. Readers of AP Gov essays, who have 2 minutes per essay to read thru these things, LOVE that kind of thing.

**2012 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.

1. Members of Congress are charged with three primary duties—writing laws, overseeing the implementation of laws, and serving the needs of their constituents.
 - (a) Describe the role of each of the following in lawmaking.
 - Senate filibuster
 - House Rules Committee
 - Conference committee
 - (b) Describe one method by which Congress exercises oversight of the federal bureaucracy.
 - (c) Explain how casework affects members' attention to legislation.

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

1A1

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 - (b) Describe one method by which Congress exercises oversight of the federal bureaucracy.
 - (c) Explain how casework affects members' attention to legislation.

A Senate filibuster occurs when a member of the senate talks indefinitely at the senate floor. This results in the senate being unable to vote on legislation and halts any other activities the senate can make, such as voting on bills. This can be over turned by a cloture, which needs at least 60 members to be in favor of. It ends the discussion on the topic that the senator is ~~of~~ filibustering on. The senate may also try to by pass ~~cloture~~ filibuster by moving on to other legislation and not carrying about the filibuster.

The House Rules Committee ~~is~~ is a ~~commit~~ committee in the house that decides who will have control of the floor and

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sets the agenda for the house. Since the House has so many members it needs formal rules on debates. One such rule is only allowing an hour to speak on a bill. This committee will influence what the agenda ~~of~~ of the house will be, so it can effectively allow the topic of the party in ~~the~~ control to be prevalent.

A conference committee is a joint committee that is used by both ~~the~~ the Senate and House to discuss differences in a bill that both Houses of Congress have passed. This deals with specific differences in a bill; the purpose of such committees is to get rid of these differences. This ensures that both the Senate and House have say on a bill.

One method Congress uses to oversee the federal bureaucracy is the ability to ~~approve~~ give bureaucracies funding. This can stop the growth of a bureaucracy if Congress doesn't like what the bureaucracy is doing ~~and~~ and decides to give less funding to the bureaucracy. On the other hand it can give more funding to a bureaucracy that it thinks is doing well. This can effectively give Congress the ability to tell bureaucracies what to do.

Casework is often tedious and requires a lot of time and energy. Since Congress

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Question 1 is reprinted for your convenience.

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- Senate filibuster
- House Rules Committee
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(b) Describe one method by which Congress exercises oversight of the federal bureaucracy.

(c) Explain how casework affects members' attention to legislation.

does not have all time in the world, it must be more general in its legislation. Casework puts a lot of strain on what a Congress's members they ~~then~~ might not have time to properly point out details in legislation.

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UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

SECTION II

Time—1 hour and 40 minutes

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- Conference committee

(b) Describe one method by which Congress exercises oversight of the federal bureaucracy.

(c) Explain how casework affects members' attention to legislation.

1a) During a Senate debate on a piece of legislation, those opposed to the bill will filibuster in order to delay its passing or ultimately kill it. Unless there is a 60 member majority to pass a cloture, the filibuster will not end and the bill dies. This makes lawmaking a slow process.

The House Rules committee controls the rules of debate on the floor of the House of Representatives. Depending on the circumstances, certain rules will facilitate or hinder the process of lawmaking.

Conference committees are temporary committees designed to agree on the amendments to a bill that differ from the House and Senate. These committees ensure that both houses of Congress see their appropriate changes to a particular bill when it passes through Congress.

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ADDITIONAL ANSWER PAGE FOR QUESTION 1.

(b) Congress exercises oversight of bureaucracy as it controls its spending. In this manner, Congress has the necessary control over the federal bureaucracy to have influence on the productivity, projects, and ultimately the existence of a bureaucracy.

(c) Casework causes members to favor certain pieces of legislation based on the ideologies of their constituents rather than the effects of the legislation as a whole. In this manner, they may favor a piece of legislation to receive public approval rather than for the effects of the bill itself.

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UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

SECTION II

Time—1 hour and 40 minutes

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 - (c) Explain how casework affects members' attention to legislation.

The role of a senate filibuster in law making is to kill the bill. Sometimes bills are killed by just the threat of a filibuster. A filibuster is where the senate "talks a bill to death", a member of the Senate may simply stand up and talk for hours, it doesn't even have to pertain to the bill at all. They can even read the phone book if they wish, and the only way to end a filibuster is by a ~~majority~~ 60 vote majority in congress called cloture. Most of the time a filibuster is successful in ending a bill.

The House Rules Committee plays a role in lawmaking by checking each bill to make sure it doesn't violate any rules in the constitution, if it does it is sent back and if it passes then the committee passes it on to the next committee.

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ADDITIONAL ANSWER PAGE FOR QUESTION 1.

The role of the conference committee in lawmaking is to iron out all the rough spots. The conference committee makes sure both the house and the senate are on the same page and it irons out all the differences making the bill go more smoothly.

One method by which congress exercises oversight of the federal bureaucracy is the veto power. The president has the power to veto a bill being passed by the house and senate if he doesn't like it. Once vetoed it can be overturned but most of the time it is not.

casework affects members' attention to legislation by involving people who the legislation actually pertains to. People will pay more attention and care more about the legislation being passed if it will affect them so they will in turn work harder to get the bill passed or killed.

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Question 1

points

Part (a): point

Describe the **role** of each of the following in lawmaking (3 points total, 1 point per role):

- Senate filibuster allows a senator on the floor to:
 - Prevent/delay action on a particular bill.
 - Prevent/delay other business from being conducted.
- Rules Committee schedules or manages the flow of legislation on the floor to:
 - Make it easier or more difficult for a bill to pass.
 - Make the process more efficient/orderly/manageable.
- Conference Committee reconciles differences in House and Senate versions of a bill.

Must describe the role in lawmaking explicitly.

Part (b): point

Describe one **method** by which Congress exercises oversight of the federal bureaucracy (1 point):

- Budgetary process (power of the purse)
- Committee hearings
- Confirmation or rejection of political appointments to the bureaucracy
- Investigations
- New legislation
- Legislative veto

Must describe the context in which Congress uses the method to oversee the bureaucracy.

Part (c): point

Explain **how** casework affects members' attention to legislation (1 point):

- Diverts time, resources, and staff, thus reducing members' ability to focus on legislation.
- Develops awareness of problems, thus focusing more time and resources on related legislation.

A score of zero (0) is assigned to an answer that is completely off task or is on task but earns no points.

A score of dash (—) is assigned to an answer that is blank.

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2012 SCORING COMMENTARY

Question 1

Overview

This question examined students' knowledge of five components of the lawmaking process. Part (a) asked students to describe the role in lawmaking of the Senate filibuster, the House Rules Committee, and conference committees. In part (b) students were asked to describe a method by which Congress exercises oversight of the federal bureaucracy. Finally, in part (c) students were asked to explain how casework affects attention to legislation by members of Congress.

Sample: 1A

Score: 1

In part (a) the response earned 3 points. One point was earned for describing the Senate filibuster as the process of speaking indefinitely on the Senate floor, resulting in "the Senate being unable to vote on legislation and halt[ing] any other activities." (The response essentially gives both options noted in the scoring guidelines for the role of the filibuster.) One point was also earned for discussing the role of the House Rules Committee as "set[ting] the agenda for the House" and stating that it enables the party in control to prevail. The response earned another point for stating that a conference committee discusses "differences in a bill that both Houses of Congress have passed" and "deals with specific differences" with the purpose of "get[ting] rid of those differences."

In part (b) the response earned 1 point by identifying the budgetary process ("funding") as a method Congress uses to oversee the bureaucracy and describing how Congress can decrease or increase funding depending on perspectives of performance.

In part (c) the response earned 1 point by stating that Congress "does not have all the time in the world" and that members "might not have time to properly [sic] point out details in legislation."

Sample: 1B

Score: 2

The response earned 2 points in part (a). It earned 1 point for the role of the Senate filibuster by noting that "those opposed to the bill" seek "to delay its passing or ultimately kill it." The response observes that "[t]his makes lawmaking a slow process." Also, 1 point was earned for the role of the House Rules Committee by stating that "certain rules will facilitate or hinder the process of lawmaking." This is an excellent rephrasing of the point in the scoring guidelines relating to making it easier or more difficult to pass the bill. The response did not earn a point related to conference committees. It includes the correct information that conference committees are "temporary" and involve the House and Senate; however, it states imprecisely that such committees are "designed to agree on the amendments to a bill." Additionally, the response makes the confusing statement that conference committees "ensure that both houses of Congress see their appropriate changes to a particular bill." The imprecise language and the unclear meaning of "their appropriate changes" indicate that the student does not know the role of a conference committee.

In part (b) the response earned 1 point by identifying the budgetary process as a method of congressional oversight, describing how this enables Congress to influence the operations or even existence of executive departments and agencies.

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Question 1 (continued)

In part (c) the response did not earn a point because casework is presented as a mechanism for learning “the ideologies of their constituents,” which will guide the legislative votes of members of Congress. This is an argument that casework is related to the content of constituency opinion rather than the member developing an awareness of a new problem.

Sample: 1C

Score:

In part (a) the response earned 1 point for describing the role of the Senate filibuster as preventing passage of a bill. The response is enriched by noting that “the threat of a filibuster” is often sufficient. The response was not penalized for the incorrect statement that cloture is invoked by a 60-vote majority in Congress because cloture provisions were not part of the question. The response did not earn a point for the House Rules Committee because it incorrectly describes the committee’s role as checking the constitutionality of each bill. The response also did not earn a point for conference committee because it is unclear regarding the place of such committees in the lawmaking process. The response implies that the conference committee’s work is done early in the process so that consideration in the separate chambers goes more smoothly, rather than making it clear that the conference committee reconciles differences between bills already passed by the two chambers.

In part (b) the response did not earn a point for congressional oversight because it discusses the presidential veto and possible override by Congress. This is an element of lawmaking under separation of powers rather than congressional oversight of departments and agencies.

In part (c) the response did not earn a point because casework is presented as a mechanism for identifying people with an interest in a bill. This argument is closely related to the incorrect interpretation of casework as being related to the constituency opinion and does not address casework as diverting resources from lawmaking or developing awareness of new problems.

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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.

1. There are several different approaches to representation within a democratic political system.
 - (a) Define direct democracy.
 - (b) Define republican form of government.
 - (c) Describe one reason the framers of the United States Constitution chose a republican form of government over a direct democracy.
 - (d) Describe each of the models of congressional representation.
 - Trustee model (attitudinal view)
 - Delegate model (representational view)
 - (e) Explain why a member of Congress might sometimes act as a trustee (attitudinal view) rather than a delegate (representational view).

2. Political parties play important roles in United States elections and government institutions. Over the past several decades, the influence of political parties in elections has declined while their strength in Congress has increased.
 - (a) Describe two important functions of political parties in United States elections.
 - (b) Describe one important role political parties play within Congress to promote the party's public policy agenda.
 - (c) Explain how each of the following factors has weakened the influence of political parties over the political process.
 - Direct primaries
 - Candidate-centered campaigns
 - (d) Explain how party polarization has strengthened party influence in Congress.

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.

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 - (d) Describe each of the models of congressional representation.
 - Trustee model (attitudinal view)
 - Delegate model (representational view)
 - (e) Explain why a member of Congress might sometimes act as a trustee (attitudinal view) rather than a delegate (representational view).

a) Direct democracy is a form of government, such as that of Ancient Greece, in which the citizens vote directly on key issues and for their leaders. Rather than elect representatives, citizens represent themselves and meet together to discuss and vote on issues.

b) A republican form of government is one in which citizens elect leaders to represent them in the government and to cast votes on important issues to represent the interests of their constituents.

c) The framers chose a republican form of government over a direct democracy because they feared putting important political matters directly in the hands of the people. They feared this would result in conflict and destruction of the original values of the Constitution, particularly because the new government was still

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fairly weak ~~at~~ at the time.

d) The trustee model of Congressional representation is one in which the Congress person makes ~~decisions~~ political decisions influenced by their own personal views and ideologies. The delegate model is one in which the Congress person ~~a~~ votes and makes political decisions based ^{solely} on what he or she believes their constituents would want.

e) A member of Congress might act more as a trustee than a delegate if the issue at hand falls under his or her area of expertise. For example, a Congress person with a business background may base a vote concerning business regulation on his or her own prior knowledge and experience with the matter ~~is~~ rather than on what their constituents support.

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SECTION II

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- I. There are several different approaches to representation within a democratic political system.
- Define direct democracy.
 - Define republican form of government.
 - Describe one reason the framers of the United States Constitution chose a republican form of government over a direct democracy.
 - Describe each of the models of congressional representation.
 - Trustee model (attitudinal view)
 - Delegate model (representational view)
 - Explain why a member of Congress might sometimes act as a trustee (attitudinal view) rather than a delegate (representational view).

A direct democracy is when an individual goes and casts a vote for a candidate directly. In this circumstance, no member of the electorate or other official represents this vote, but rather the individual's vote comes straight from the citizen. For example, the House of Representatives and the Senate in the United States ~~are~~^{are} directly elected by the people, a form of representative democracy.

On the other hand, a republican form of government is a representative form of government. This means that people are elected to represent the views and votes of the greater population. An example of this occurs every 4 years or presidential term when regular citizens cast their votes but it becomes the electorate's duty to carry out these viewpoints. The electorate then votes based on

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the people's opinion they are ultimately representing. The framers of the United States chose to implement a republican form of government over a direct democracy because of their "inherent distrust" of the people. The framers believed that if a direct democracy were to exist, people would vote selfishly, not considering the needs of others. Additionally, a direct democracy does not represent the population accurately since only a few members are voting. In a republican form of government, more people are being accurately represented.

There are two models of congressional representation; the trustee and delegate model. A trustee model is when a member of Congress votes on his or her personal opinion or viewpoint. This model does not take into account the needs of the constituents or district the congressman is representing. On the other hand, in the delegate model, a congress person acts according to the people he or she is representing. In this circumstance no personal opinion is involved or associated with the congress person's decisions and actions.

In some situations a member of Congress might act as a trustee rather than

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1B 3.03

1. There are several different approaches to representation within a democratic political system.
 - (a) Define direct democracy.
 - (b) Define republican form of government.
 - (c) Describe one reason the framers of the United States Constitution chose a republican form of government over a direct democracy.
 - (d) Describe each of the models of congressional representation.
 - Trustee model (attitudinal view)
 - Delegate model (representational view)
 - (e) Explain why a member of Congress might sometimes act as a trustee (attitudinal view) rather than a delegate (representational view).

a delegate when the circumstance directly relates or affects the congress member personally. Other times, a congress member can determine that his opinion is more accurate or more effective than the opinion of the people.

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SECTION II

Time—1 hour and 40 minutes

It's all about content. Content is King

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.

1. There are several different approaches to representation within a democratic political system.

- Define direct democracy. *people vote*
- Define republican form of government. *electoral officials*
- Describe one reason the framers of the United States Constitution chose a republican form of government over a direct democracy. *more organized*
- Describe each of the models of congressional representation.
 - Trustee model (attitudinal view) ~~that~~ *acts as someone you can trust who will vote the way constituents want*
 - Delegate model (representational view) ~~that~~ *will vote based on his/her party*
- Explain why a member of Congress might sometimes act as a trustee (attitudinal view) rather than a delegate (representational view). *to gain support*

In a direct democracy the people vote directly for whoever is being voted for. There is no middle man. In a republican form of government elected officials do the voting. These elected officials are voted into office by the people. ~~that~~ One of the reasons the framers of the United States Constitution chose a republican form of government over a direct democracy it is more orderly and organized. Instead of having a whole bunch of people vote, there are certain people who do the voting so that they can keep things simple and easy.

A trustee model of congressional representation or an attitudinal view is the representation in which the person votes the way the constituents want them to vote. This is different from a delegate model or representational view in which the person will ~~to~~ vote based on his or her party affiliation. A member of Congress might sometimes act as a trustee rather than a delegate to gain more support from his or her constituents or they may disagree with the view of their political party on the

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Question 1

points

Part (a): 1 point

One point is earned for a correct definition of direct democracy:

- Rule by the people +

{	Individual participation on legislation or policy
	OR
	Making decisions without delegating authority to elected representatives

Part (b): 1 point

One point is earned for defining a republican form of government:

Authority is delegated to elected representatives to make decision on behalf of citizens.

Part (c): 1 point

One point is earned for a description of one reason the framers chose a republican form of government. Reasons include:

- Fear of mob rule (tyranny of the majority)
- Size of country
- Elitism – inadequate education/uninformed public
- Did not trust people
- To counter the influence of factions
- Preexistence of states
- Reinforcement of federalism

Part (d): 1 point:

One point is earned for each description of the models of congressional representation.

- An acceptable description of the **trustee model** (attitudinal view):
 - Decisions made by elected official using their own personal views **or** decisions made by the elected official based on the public good and **not** on the basis of constituents' views.
- An acceptable description of the **delegate model** (representational view):
 - Decisions made by the elected official mirror the constituents' views, represent constituents' views, or do what voters tell them to do.

Part (e): 1 point

One point is earned for an acceptable explanation of why a member of Congress might sometimes act as a trustee (attitudinal view) rather than a delegate (representational view).

- Information access
- Reliance on expertise
- Divided constituency
- Salience of issue
- Vote his or her conscience (explaining why)
- Difficulty determining what voters want

Note: Must close loop to show contrast that the representative is voting regardless of what the constituents want.

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2013 SCORING COMMENTARY

Question 1

Overview

This question examined students' knowledge of political representation. Part (a) asked students to define direct democracy. Part (b) asked students to define republican form of government. Part (c) asked students to describe why the framers chose a republican form of government over a direct democracy. Part (d) asked students to describe the trustee model (attitudinal view) of congressional representation and the delegate model (representational view) of congressional representation. Part (e) asked students to explain why a member of Congress might sometimes act as a trustee rather than a delegate.

Sample: 1A

Score:

In part (a) the response earned 1 point. One point was earned for defining direct democracy as "citizens vote directly on key issues ... rather than elect representatives."

In part (b) the response earned 1 point. One point was earned for defining republican form of government as "one in which citizens elect leaders to represent them in government."

In part (c) the response earned 1 point by describing one reason why the framers of the U.S. Constitution chose a republican form of government over a direct democracy. The response states "they feared putting important political matters directly in the hands of the people. They feared this would result in conflict and destruction".

In part (d) the response earned 2 points. One point was earned for describing a trustee as when "the Congress person makes political decisions influenced by their own personal views." A second point was earned by describing a delegate as when "the Congress person votes and makes political decisions based on what ... their constituents would want."

In part (e) the response earned 1 point by explaining why a member of Congress might sometimes act as a trustee rather than a delegate. The response states that the trustee model is often used "if the issue at hand falls under his or her area of expertise." The response explains this argument by providing an appropriate example.

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Question 1 (continued)

Sample: 1B

Score:

In part (a) the response did not earn a point because direct democracy is incorrectly defined as “a vote for a candidate.”

In part (b) the response earned 1 point. One point was earned for defining republican form of government as “people are elected to represent the views ... of the greater population.”

In part (c) the response earned 1 point by describing one reason why the framers of the U.S. Constitution chose a republican form of government over a direct democracy. The response states “their ‘inherent distrust’ of the people” caused the framers to believe “that if a direct democracy were to exist, people would vote selfishly, not considering the needs of others.”

In part (d) the response earned 2 points. One point was earned for describing a trustee as when “a member of Congress votes on his or her personnel [*sic*] opinion or viewpoint.” A second point was earned by describing a delegate as when “a Congress person acts according to the people he or she is representing.”

In part (e) the response did not earn a point because no clear explanation is given about why a member of Congress might sometimes act as a trustee rather than a delegate. No point was given if the response explains some variation of personal gain.

Sample: 1C

Score:

In part (a) the response earned 1 point. One point was earned for defining direct democracy as “people vote directly for whatever is being voted for. There is no middle man.”

In part (b) the response earned 1 point. One point was earned for defining republican form of government as “elected officials are voted into office by the people.”

In part (c) the response did not earn a point because there is no clear description of why the framers of the U.S. Constitution chose a republican form of government over a direct democracy. No clear distinction is made between what might be expected in a direct democracy and a republican form of government.

In part (d) the response did not earn any points. The response did not accurately describe either the trustee model or the delegate model of congressional representation.

In part (e) the response did not earn a point for explaining why a member of Congress might sometimes act as a trustee rather than a delegate. The response inaccurately uses a partisan argument to explain the trustee model.

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

2. Voter turnout is influenced by constitutional provisions, voting laws, and demographics.

(a) Identify the effect of one of the following amendments on the electorate.

- Fifteenth Amendment
- Nineteenth Amendment
- Twenty-sixth Amendment

(b) Explain how each of the following factors may affect voter turnout.

- Motor voter laws
- Photo identification laws

(c) Select one of the following demographic features and describe its relationship to the likelihood of a person voting in an election.

- Education
- Age

(d) Explain why voter turnout is different in each of the following.

- Presidential versus midterm elections
 - Primary versus general elections
-

3. Congress and the president both have a role in making foreign policy. Despite recent expansions in presidential power, there are still limits on presidential decision making in foreign policy.

(a) Describe two enumerated powers Congress has in making foreign policy.

(b) Describe two expressed powers the president has in making foreign policy.

(c) Explain how executive agreements expand the president's ability to implement foreign policy.

(d) Explain how one of the following can limit the president's ability to implement foreign policy.

- Elections
- Presidential approval ratings

2. Voter turnout is influenced by constitutional provisions, voting laws, and demographics.

(a) Identify the effect of one of the following amendments on the electorate.

- Fifteenth Amendment African Americans
- Nineteenth Amendment women suffrage
- Twenty-sixth Amendment

(b) Explain how each of the following factors may affect voter turnout.

- Motor voter laws register at license, republicans against it ^{more young people are voting}
- Photo identification laws

(c) Select one of the following demographic features and describe its relationship to the likelihood of a person voting in an election.

- Education
- Age

(d) Explain why voter turnout is different in each of the following.

- Presidential versus midterm elections
- Primary versus general elections

a) The fifteenth amendment effected the electorate.

The fifteenth amendment gave African Americans the right to vote. This effected the electorate because now, because African American men could now vote it effected the outcome of the President. African Americans are more likely democratic so when they vote they are more likely to vote for the democratic candidate and because that effects who will be president.

1b) Motor voter laws affect voter turnout. The motor

voter law allowed people to become a registered voter at the place they got their license. This increased voter turnout because it was an easier way to register. It also increased the number of liberal people voting, republicans were against

this law because most younger people are democratic and more younger people were registering because they were getting their licenses.

2b) Photo identification laws affected voter turnout. Photo identification laws required you to show some sort of photo I.D. at the time of voting. This decreased voter turnout because people either didn't want to find their ID, but it also limited fraud, or voting twice.

c) Education affects the likelihood of someone voting in an election and their ideology. The higher amount of education you have the more likely you are to vote because you are more informed.

1d) Presidential elections have a higher voter turnout than midterm elections. This is because people are more informed with presidential elections than midterm elections because they are more broadcasted through media. Another reason people don't vote as much in midterm elections is because the election time and days is usually during a weekday when people are working.

2d) In primary elections voter turnout is lower than general. In a primary election you are voting for

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.

Question 2 is reprinted for your convenience.

2A 3 & 3

2. Voter turnout is influenced by constitutional provisions, voting laws, and demographics.

(a) Identify the effect of one of the following amendments on the electorate.

- Fifteenth Amendment
- Nineteenth Amendment
- Twenty-sixth Amendment

(b) Explain how each of the following factors may affect voter turnout.

- Motor voter laws
- Photo identification laws

(c) Select one of the following demographic features and describe its relationship to the likelihood of a person voting in an election.

- Education
- Age

(d) Explain why voter turnout is different in each of the following.

- Presidential versus midterm elections
- Primary versus general elections

a candidate which less people care about. In a general election you are voting for the president which more people care about, because it affects their lifestyles more & less people go to primaries also because they are at specific times and days and general elections take place multiple days. ~~many~~ Usually people with higher political efficacy go to primaries because they think they will have a high influence.

2B 1 of 3

2. Voter turnout is influenced by constitutional provisions, voting laws, and demographics.

(a) Identify the effect of one of the following amendments on the electorate.

- Fifteenth Amendment
- Nineteenth Amendment
- Twenty-sixth Amendment

- race / prevents reading test

(b) Explain how each of the following factors may affect voter turnout.

- Motor voter laws
- Photo identification laws

(c) Select one of the following demographic features and describe its relationship to the likelihood of a person voting in an election.

Education
Age

(d) Explain why voter turnout is different in each of the following.

- Presidential versus midterm elections
- Primary versus general elections

A. ~~The 26th Amendment~~ The 26th amendment is the amendment where a person can not be limited to vote based on their race, or ethnicity. This gave more rights to vote for African Americans. For example, some African Americans were denied the right to vote, but after this amendment was passed it forced for people to let African Americans to vote.

B.1. Motor voter law, which was that when you got a new ~~vehic~~ automobile ~~you~~ a person was required to register to vote. This ~~democratic~~ law did not increase voter turnout however, and it was more irritating to people.

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purchasing a vehicle.

B2. Photo identification laws decreased voter turnout because it forced people to bring ID to elections, however some did not want to put in the effort to get a photo ID just for voting, thus decreased the amount of voters. For example, say a person wanted to vote but forget to renew his ID, he would lose interest in voting because he would have to go home first.

C. Education affects the likelihood of a person voting in an election. If a person is well educated, they tend to vote more often. If a person has a high school degree or lower, they are more likely to vote less because they are less informed and inactive citizens.

D1. There is much more voter turnout for presidential elections ~~because~~ than in midterm elections because the media sets the agenda of only caring about the president, and not worrying about congressmen. For example, the media would rather display the presidential election

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.

Question 2 is reprinted for your convenience.

2 B 3+3

2. Voter turnout is influenced by constitutional provisions, voting laws, and demographics.

(a) Identify the effect of one of the following amendments on the electorate.

- Fifteenth Amendment
- Nineteenth Amendment
- Twenty-sixth Amendment

(b) Explain how each of the following factors may affect voter turnout.

- Motor voter laws
- Photo identification laws

(c) Select one of the following demographic features and describe its relationship to the likelihood of a person voting in an election.

- Education
- Age

(d) Explain why voter turnout is different in each of the following.

- Presidential versus midterm elections
- Primary versus general elections

candidates than local congressmen in the midterm, where ~~the~~ president will not be elected.

D2. There is more voter turnout in general elections ~~than~~ than primary elections because primary elections are to select candidates for the general election, and people want to vote in the general election more, and skip the nomination of candidates.

For example, instead of going to the primary election, he went to the general election to see who won primaries.

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GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.

2. Voter turnout is influenced by constitutional provisions, voting laws, and demographics.

(a) Identify the effect of one of the following amendments on the electorate.

- Fifteenth Amendment
- Nineteenth Amendment
- Twenty-sixth Amendment

(b) Explain how each of the following factors may affect voter turnout.

- Motor voter laws
- Photo identification laws

(c) Select one of the following demographic features and describe its relationship to the likelihood of a person voting in an election.

- Education
- Age

(d) Explain why voter turnout is different in each of the following.

- Presidential versus midterm elections
- Primary versus general elections

a) At the start of our country, the only people who were allowed to vote were white males who owned land. Fortunately, we have come a long way, considering who is allowed to vote. Being female, the Nineteenth Amendment is one that I am very thankful for. The Fifteenth Amendment is one that I am very thankful for. This Amendment made voting possible for women. I think ^{that} the women's right to vote is very beneficial to this country because we work, have children, buy homes, and of course, are citizens of the country, so our vote is just as important. Of course, women are more likely to vote against things like laws of violence for instance increasing military spending or making a gun easier to attain, which can be different from what a man would vote for. Women ~~will also vote~~ are also interested in laws having to do with education and the safety of children.

2C 2#3

ADDITIONAL ANSWER PAGE FOR QUESTION 2.

~~the law~~ b) The law that states that you must have a drivers license narrows the people who are able to vote, but only by a small percentage because most Americans who are able to have a drivers license (who are of age and have not committed crimes to have it revoked) do have drivers licenses. However, having photo identification laws expand the ability to vote because everyone should have some form of identification (most times, it is a drivers license). But then, we need to take into consideration ~~the~~ people who don't have photo I.D., like homeless people. But, these laws are in place so that ~~only~~ only the people who are legal citizens can vote if they are of age and passes all other requirements.

~~e) It is a fact that younger voters will vote very different than elderly voters. People from the age of 18-21 are~~ Younger voters are more liberal than older voters, voting against military spending and ~~lower~~ ~~taxes~~.

c) It is a fact that younger voters will vote very different than elderly voters. Young voters are more liberal, voting against military spending and ~~for~~ ~~more~~ interested in ~~education~~ higher education laws. But, ~~the~~ younger voters are also less likely to vote than 50-60 year olds with ~~degrees, and in particular~~ very high education because they are more likely to be very ~~more~~ involved in politics.

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.

2 c 3 of 3

Question 2 is reprinted for your convenience.

2. Voter turnout is influenced by constitutional provisions, voting laws, and demographics.

(a) Identify the effect of one of the following amendments on the electorate.

- Fifteenth Amendment
- Nineteenth Amendment
- Twenty-sixth Amendment

(b) Explain how each of the following factors may affect voter turnout.

- Motor voter laws
- Photo identification laws

(c) Select one of the following demographic features and describe its relationship to the likelihood of a person voting in an election.

- Education
- Age

(d) Explain why voter turnout is different in each of the following.

- Presidential versus midterm elections
- Primary versus general elections

d) Most people participate in Presidential elections because ~~the media~~ is the most covered by the media. Citizens see more on their local news ~~about~~ or on commercials about the president than they do their own governor or representatives! Also, general elections are more campaigned throughout the state, with billboards and signs or stakes. So people see these signs ~~every~~ everyday and are more likely to vote.

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Question 2

points

Part (a): - point

One point is earned for an accurate identification of how one of the following amendments affected the electorate:

- The Fifteenth Amendment gave African Americans the right to vote.
- The Nineteenth Amendment gave women the right to vote.
- The Twenty-Sixth Amendment gave citizens age 18 and over the right to vote.

Part (b): point

One point is earned for each explanation of factors that affect voter turnout:

- Motor voter laws add more registered voters to the rolls, potentially changing voter turnout.
- Photo identification laws create a potential barrier for those without accepted forms of ID, changing voter turnout.

Part (c): point

One point is earned for an accurate description of how one of the following affects the likelihood of a person voting in an election:

- Education
 - Education is positively correlated with voter turnout: The higher the education level of a person, the more likely he or she is to vote.
- Age
 - Age is positively correlated with voter turnout: The older a person is, the more likely he or she is to vote.

Part (d). points

One point is earned for each accurate explanation of why voter turnout differs in the following:

- Presidential vs. midterm elections
 - Media coverage is greater in presidential elections.
 - Increased interest in and importance of national and presidential campaigns.
- Primary vs. general elections
 - Partisans and activists are more likely to vote in primaries.
 - Only party members may vote in closed primaries.
 - Many primary elections are noncompetitive.
 - Independents are less likely to participate in primary elections.
 - General elections simplify choices.
 - Media coverage is greater in general elections.
 - Increased interest in and importance of general elections.

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.

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2014 SCORING COMMENTARY

Question 2

Overview

This question examined the students' knowledge of how voter turnout is influenced by constitutional provisions, voting laws, and demographics. Part (a) asked students to identify one of three amendments and its effect on the electorate. In part (b), the students were asked to explain how motor voter laws and photo identification laws affected voter turnout. In part (c), the students were asked to describe the relationship between age or education and its effect on voter turnout. Part (d) required students to explain the difference between voting turnouts in both presidential vs. midterm elections and primary vs. general elections.

Sample: 2A

Score:

In part (a) the response earned 1 point for correctly identifying that the "fifteenth amendment gave African Americans the right to vote."

In part (b) the response earned 2 points. One point was earned for correctly explaining that motor voter laws "allowed people to become a registered voter at the place they got their license [*sic*]. This increased voter turnout because it was an easier way to register." A second point was earned for correctly explaining that photo identification laws "required you to show some sort photo I.D. at the time of voting. This decreased voter turnout because people either didn't want to find their ID, but it also limited fraud, or voting twice."

In part (c) the response earned 1 point for correctly describing that "[t]he higher amount of education you have the more likely you are to vote because you are more informed."

In part (d) the response earned 2 points. One point was earned for correctly explaining the difference between presidential and midterm elections: "Presidential elections have a higher voter turn out then [*sic*] midterm elections. This is because people are more informed with presidential elections then [*sic*] midterm elections because they are more broadcasted through media." A second point was earned for correctly explaining the difference between primary and general elections: "In primary elections voter turnout is lower then [*sic*] general. In a primary election you are voting for a candidate which less people care about. In a general election you are voting for the president which more people care about, because it effects [*sic*] their lifestyles more."

Sample: 2B

Score:

In part (a) the response did not earn a point for identifying the effect of the amendment on the electorate. It incorrectly identifies the Twenty-sixth amendment.

In part (b) the response earned 1 point. It did not earn a point for correctly explaining the effect motor voter laws had on the electorate. The response states that the registration process occurred when purchasing a new automobile. The response earned 1 point for correctly explaining the effect photo identification laws have on voter turnout: "Photo identification laws decreased voter turnout because it forced people to bring ID to elections, however some did not want to put in the effort to get a photo ID just for voting, thus decreased the amount of voters."

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2014 SCORING COMMENTARY**

Question 2 (continued)

In part (c) the response earned 1 point for correctly describing the relationship between education and voter turnout: "If a person is well educated, they tend to vote more often. If a person has a high school degree or lower, they are more likely to vote less."

In part (d) the response earned 2 points. One point was earned for correctly explaining why voter turnout is different between presidential and midterm elections: "There is much more voter turnout for presidential elections than in midterm elections because the media sets the agenda of only caring about the president, and not worrying about congressmen." A second point was earned for correctly explaining why voter turnout is different between primary and general elections: "There is more voter turnout in general elections than primary elections because primary elections are to select candidates for the general election, and people want to vote in the general election more and skip the nomination of candidates."

Sample: 2C

Score:

In part (a) the response did not earn a point for identifying the effect an amendment has on the electorate. The response incorrectly identifies the Fifteenth Amendment as making "voting possible for women."

In part (b) the response earned 0 points. It did not earn a point for explaining how motor voter laws affect voter turnout. The response provides an incorrect definition of motor voter laws. The response did not earn a point for explaining how photo identification laws affect voter turnout because it does not indicate how photo identification laws affect voter turnout.

In part (c) the response earned 1 point for correctly describing the relationship between age and voter turnout as "younger voters are also less likely to vote than 50–60 year olds."

In part (d) the response earned 0 points. It did not earn a point for explaining why voter turnout is different in presidential and midterm elections. It appears the comparison is being made between presidential and general elections instead of presidential and midterm elections. The response did not earn a point for explaining why voter turnout is different in primary and general elections. It appears the comparison is being made between presidential and general elections instead of primary and general elections.

**2015 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.

1. American politics has often been called an “invitation to struggle.” Although in recent years the president has been thought to have an advantage in policy making, there are still constraints on the power of the president.
 - (a) Describe a power of the president in each of the following roles.
 - Chief legislator
 - Chief bureaucrat or chief administrator
 - (b) Explain how each of the following limits the president’s influence in policy making.
 - Civil service employees
 - The Supreme Court
 - (c) Describe the influence of divided government on the policy-making process.
-

2. The framers of the Constitution devised a federal system of government that affected the relationship between the national and state governments.
 - (a) Compare state sovereignty under the Articles of Confederation and under the Constitution.
 - (b) Explain how each of the following has been used to expand the power of the federal government over the states.
 - Commerce clause
 - Mandates
 - (c) Explain how each of the following has played a role in the devolution of power from the national government to the states.
 - Block grants
 - Supreme Court decisions
-

2. The framers of the Constitution devised a federal system of government that affected the relationship between the national and state governments.
- Compare state sovereignty under the Articles of Confederation and under the Constitution.
 - Explain how each of the following has been used to expand the power of the federal government over the states.
 - Commerce clause
 - Mandates
 - Explain how each of the following has played a role in the devolution of power from the national government to the states.
 - Block grants
 - Supreme Court decisions

Under the Articles of Confederation the states held most of the power in the government. The states had power to ~~create~~ ^{create} money, regulate trade between states and foreign countries, tax the ~~people~~ people, and there had to be an agreement of all states before a new piece was added to the Articles. Under the Constitution however, more power was given to the federal government. The federal government can now impose taxes, it regulates foreign trade, and it creates the money. The states however still have some power like ~~decisions~~ decisions on gay marriage, ~~and~~ and marijuana.

The power of the federal government was expanded by the Commerce clause because it gave the federal government to regulate money and foreign trade. As I said above this was originally granted to the States by the Articles of Confederation, but this caused major problems when someone went from state to state. It also created ~~disputes~~ disputes between states about foreign trade deals. When the Founding Fathers created the Constitution they decided to make the ~~the~~ country more ~~united~~ united by giving the power to the federal government. Mandates have also expanded the federal power because it gave the power to go over the states when creating a piece of

ADDITIONAL ANSWER PAGE FOR QUESTION 2

legislation or decree ~~the president can create~~ An example of this is the Handicapped and Disability Act forcing all states to require wheelchair ramps and elevators to make all public building ~~is~~ able to be used by handicapped persons.

As there is expanded power in the federal government there is also devolution back to the states, one example of this is block grants. Block grants are grants of money given to the states from the national government without specific requirements on how the states use it. This gives the states some independence and power ~~to do as they please~~ to do as they please. Supreme Court decisions have also played a role in the devolution of power. The Supreme Court has the power of Judicial Review to follow the Constitution and outlaw anything that goes against it. The tenth amendment of the United States gives power to the states on everything not clearly given to the federal government. The Supreme Court upholds that ~~amendment~~ amendment and prevents ~~to~~ too much power being given to the national government.

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.

2. The framers of the Constitution devised a federal system of government that affected the relationship between the national and state governments.
- Compare state sovereignty under the Articles of Confederation and under the Constitution.
 - Explain how each of the following has been used to expand the power of the federal government over the states.
 - Commerce clause
 - Mandates
 - Explain how each of the following has played a role in the devolution of power from the national government to the states.
 - Block grants
 - Supreme Court decisions

Under the Articles of Confederation, states were given the supreme power in government over a weak federal government. This was done because the Founders feared a strong central government after their bad experience with the strong federal government of Britain. However, the Founders soon realized the Articles wouldn't work and they wrote the Constitution. Under the Constitution, ~~power~~ some powers were taken away from the states and given to a national government, creating weaker state governments and a stronger federal government.

The Commerce clause was one way the federal government was granted more power than the states. The commerce clause of the Constitution gives the federal government control over interstate commerce. The Supreme Court defined "commerce" very broadly, giving the federal government more power than the states.

Mandates are another way the power of the government has been expanding. When the federal government issues a mandate, they make it mandatory for the state governments to carry out the order under threat of cutting funding. In this way, the federal government has direct control over the state governments.

However, there are also ways that states have been given power over the federal government in a process called devolution. Block grants

ADDITIONAL ANSWER PAGE FOR QUESTION 2

are grants given by the federal government to state governments for the state governments to use at their discretion. Unlike categorical grants or mandates, there are no "strings attached" to these grants that the state must use the money for. This gives states greater power over the national government.

The Supreme Court has also played a role in the devolution of power back to state governments. ~~By ruling that the definition of marriage is broad and encompasses many aspects, they gave the federal government~~ The Supreme Court ruled in favor of the allowing states to not recognize same-sex marriages in a state where it is illegal even if the marriage occurred in a state or country where it was legal. The ~~state~~ federal government would have had the states recognize it because the federal government requires states to recognize other ~~things~~ official matters from other states, such as a driving licenses. By allowing the states to retain their right to marriage laws, the Supreme Court gave power back to the states. In this way, the Supreme Court serves as a check to the federal government through its rulings, ensuring that the federal government doesn't violate the Constitution by taking a power reserved to the states.

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2C 1/2

2. The framers of the Constitution devised a federal system of government that affected the relationship between the national and state governments.
- (a) Compare state sovereignty under the Articles of Confederation and under the Constitution.
 - (b) Explain how each of the following has been used to expand the power of the federal government over the states.
 - Commerce clause
 - Mandates
 - (c) Explain how each of the following has played a role in the devolution of power from the national government to the states.
 - Block grants
 - Supreme Court decisions

a. • with Art. of Conf. it was much more of states as their own countries,
much less unified

• with Const., brought them together

b. • commerce clause lets fed. govt. get involved with state issues
• mandates let fed. govt have authority over states

c.

ADDITIONAL ANSWER PAGE FOR QUESTION 2

2. a. State sovereignty under the Articles of Confederation was much different than under the Constitution. Under the Articles of Confederation, the states were much more individualistic with a weak central government. States were much more concerned with what was going inside themselves rather than inside their country as a whole. Under the Constitution, a stronger central government was established which unified the states.

b. The commerce clause has been used to expand the power of federal government over the states because as soon as trade becomes interstate, the federal government can step in and makes laws over it that the states must follow according to the Supremacy clause. Mandates also allow increased federal power because a mandate sets up an expectation that the state must meet to gain funding from the federal government. The one thing all states need is money so they do what is asked.

c. Block grants have played a role in devolution of power from the national government to the states because they allow states to do whatever they want with the ~~money~~ money given. Supreme Court decisions have also helped because

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Question 2

points

Part (a): point

One point is earned for an accurate comparison of state sovereignty under the Articles of Confederation and state sovereignty under the Constitution.

Correct comparisons will state that states were sovereign under the Articles of Confederation, but under the Constitution they have shared power/limited power.

Part (b): point

One point is earned for each of two accurate explanations of how each of the following has been used to expand the power of the federal government over the states:

- Commerce clause
 - Federal government/Congress controls interstate commerce (transportation, civil rights, etc.), and the states cannot control; it is an exclusive federal authority.
 - Federal government/U.S. Supreme Court increases the power of the federal government through decisions (such as *Gibbons*, *Heart of Atlanta*, etc.), and the states cannot; it is an exclusive federal authority.
- Mandates — the federal government directs the states to implement policies (such as the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), school integration, busing, etc.), thus reducing state discretion and increasing federal discretion

Part (c): point

One point is earned for an accurate explanation of how each of the following has played a role in the devolution of power from the national government to the states:

- Block grants — broad federal funding that allows states to have more discretion in how funding is spent, thus states have greater flexibility in policy implementation.
- Supreme Court decisions
 - Struck down encroachments of national government attempts to take states' power, thereby protecting states' powers.
 - Through the use of judicial review, state power is protected.

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.

AP[®] UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS 2015 SCORING COMMENTARY

Question 2

Overview

This question examined the students' knowledge of how state sovereignty changed from the Articles of Confederation to the U.S. Constitution, how federal power expanded under the Constitution, and how power has devolved from the national government to the states. Part (a) asked students to compare state sovereignty under the Articles of Confederation and under the Constitution. Part (b) asked students to explain how the Commerce Clause and mandates have been used to expand the power of the federal government over the states. Part (c) required students to explain how block grants and Supreme Court decisions have played a role in the devolution of power from the national government to the states.

Sample: 2A

Score:

In part (a) the response earned 1 point for correctly making the comparison, "Under the Articles of Confederation the states held most of the power in the government. ... Under the Constitution however, more power was given to the federal government."

In part (b) the response earned 2 points. One point was earned for correctly explaining that "[t]he power of the federal government was expanded by the Commerce clause because it gave the federal government to [sic] regulate money and foreign trade. ... When the Founding Fathers created the Constitution they decide to make the country more united by giving the power to the Federal government." A second point was earned for correctly explaining that "[m]andates have also expanded the federal power because it gave the power to go over the states when creating a piece of legislation or decree. An example of this is ... forcing all states to require wheelchair ramps."

In part (c) the response earned 2 points. One point was earned for correctly explaining that "[b]lock grants are grants of money given to the states from the national government without specific requirements on how the states use it. This gives the states some independence and power to do as they please." A second point was earned for correctly explaining that "Supreme Court decisions have also played a role in the devolution of power. The Supreme Court has the power of Judicial Review to follow the Constitution and outlaw anything that goes against it. The tenth amendment ... gives power to the states on everything not clearly given to the federal government. The Supreme Court upholds that amendment and prevents too much power being given to the national government."

Sample: 2B

Score:

In part (a) the response earned 1 point for correctly making the comparison that "[u]nder the Articles of Confederation, states were give the supreme power in government over a weak federal government. ... Under the Constitution, some powers were taken away from the states and given to a national government, creating weaker state governments and a stronger federal government."

In part (b) the response earned 1 point. One point was earned for correctly explaining, "[t]he commerce clause of the Constitution gives the federal government control over interstate commerce." The response also states, "[t]he Supreme Court defined 'commerce' very broadly, giving the federal government more power than the states." A second point was not earned for explaining how mandates expanded the power of the federal government over the states because the response describes a categorical grant when attempting to explain mandates.

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2015 SCORING COMMENTARY**

Question 2 (continued)

In part (c) the response earned 1 point. It did not earn a point for explaining how block grants have played a role in the devolution of power from the national government to the states. The response did not earn a point because it incorrectly states that block grants come with “no ‘strings attached.’” One point was earned for correctly explaining that “[t]he Supreme Court ruled in favor of allowing states to not recognize same-sex marriages in a state where it is illegal. . . . By allowing the states to retain their right to marriage laws, the Supreme Court gave power back to the states.”

Sample: 2C

Score:

In part (a) the response earned 1 point for correctly making the comparison that “[u]nder the Articles of Confederation, the states were much more individualistic with a weak central government. . . . Under the Constitution, a stronger central government was established which unified the states.”

In part (b) the response earned 1 point. One point was earned for correctly explaining that “[t]he commerce clause has been used to expand the power of federal government over the states because as soon as trade becomes interstate, the federal government can step in and make laws over it that states must follow.” A second point was not earned for explaining how mandates expanded the power of the federal government over the states because the response describes a categorical grant when attempting to explain mandates.

In part (c) the response earned no points. It did not earn a point for explaining how block grants have played a role in the devolution of power from the national government to the states. The response does not show any constraint on state spending, but rather states, “they allow states to do whatever they want with the money given.” A second point was not earned for explaining how Supreme Court decisions have played a role in the devolution of power from the national government to the states. The response only repeats the stem, thus it was incomplete.