

# AP<sup>®</sup> UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS 2013 SCORING GUIDELINES

## Question 4

**6 points**

**Part (a): 2 points**

One point is earned for a correct explanation of the importance of each of the following in the formation of the policy agenda:

Media

- Affects agenda setting by what it chooses to cover (priming/gatekeeping/watchdog).
- Media framing of issues.

Elections

- Election winners control agenda.
- Initiative process.
- Issues raised during campaigns.

**Part (b): 2 points**

One point is earned for a correct description of the role of each of the following in the enactment of public policy:

Congressional committees: committee actions related to the enactment of public policy (gatekeeper/mark-up legislation/hold hearings).

Executive Orders

- Presidents use executive orders to enact policy.
- Bypass Congress.

**Part (c): 2 points**

One point is earned for a correct explanation of the importance of each of the following in the implementation of public policy:

Bureaucratic discretion: bureaucrats have the ability to shape implementation of public policy.

Issue networks or iron triangles

- Interest group(s)/congressional committee(s) pressure bureaucracy to implement policy that benefits them.
- Bureaucracy can shape policy implementation to benefit interest group(s).

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.



ADDITIONAL ANSWER PAGE FOR QUESTION 4.

Executive orders are orders by the president which have the power of law but do not need to be passed by the Senate or House of Representatives. They do need to be related to or connected to a law previously passed, though. These allow the president a high level of a form of discretionary authority with laws and actions of the federal government.

c) Bureaucratic discretion allows for bureaucrat leaders to enact laws in a way they seem fit.

This gives them a good amount of power, which is called discretionary authority. The bureaucratic leaders can interpret laws passed by Congress with a good amount of ~~too~~ leniency, which changes ~~the~~ implementation of public policy.

Iron triangles are the organization of Congress, interest groups, and the bureaucracy. Each corner of the triangle has power but a balance is kept. The interest groups keep Congress members in ~~power~~ office with campaigning and funding, and the Congress members keep the bureaucracy funded with public policy. The connection between these three groups keep the federal government from implementing certain public policy that would hurt interest groups, give the bureaucracy too much discretionary authority, or stop funding for federal organizations and the bureaucracy.

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4. The public policy process is complex. The formation, enactment, and implementation of public policy involve many government institutions.

(a) Explain the importance of each of the following in the formation of the policy agenda.

- Media
- Elections

(b) Describe the roles of each of the following in the enactment of public policy.

- Congressional committees
- Executive orders

(c) Explain the importance of each of the following in the implementation of public policy.

- Bureaucratic discretion
- Issue networks OR iron triangles

a) The media is important for forming policy agenda because they can focus on specific issues and bring them to the public. Increasing public awareness and support over a specific issue can bring it to the top of the policy agenda. During elections, issue polls are very common and influential. Candidates can get an idea of what voters care about and design their campaign and policy agenda ideas around those issues. Elections bring out what issues are most important to the public and help shape the policy agenda.

b) Congressional committees get together to write bills and try to make them into law. This is a major and beginning step in the lawmaking process and the ~~then~~ enactment of public policy. The president can ~~use~~ issue executive orders that carry the weight and force of law. Executive orders are an inherent power of the president and can be used to enact public policy.

ADDITIONAL ANSWER PAGE FOR QUESTION 4.

c) Executive agencies have ~~as legis~~ discretion in how they want to implement public policy. This gives them a great deal of power in the implementation of public policy. However Congress does have oversight over these agencies to keep check on them. Iron triangles are made up of interest groups, executive agencies, and congressional committees. They work together to design the best legislation possible that suits all three sides.

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- Executive orders

(c) Explain the importance of each of the following in the implementation of public policy.

- Bureaucratic discretion
- Issue networks OR iron triangles

A The media's ability to target a mass audience is key for the formation of the policy agenda. It is the most effective way to inform the people of what is going on and when it is going to happen.

The formation of Elections all tie in to the formation of policy agenda. Knowing when the elections will be and what the candidates want to accomplish in a small window of time is essential for the voter to know.

B Congressional committees will ~~introduce~~ and role is to introduce, defend, or create a new policy that they think will help our nation.

Executive orders deals with foreign affairs and the enforcement of laws. They act on and defend the policy set in place by congress.

ADDITIONAL ANSWER PAGE FOR QUESTION 4.

D C. Bureaucratic discretion is the ~~ability~~ implementation of being aware ~~and~~ and ready for such policies

Issue Networks branch out information, all across the nation to inform people of change ~~of~~ of policy.

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## 2013 SCORING COMMENTARY

### Question 4

#### Overview

This question examined students' knowledge of three components of the public policy process. Part (a) asked students to explain the importance of the media and elections in the formation of the policy agenda. In part (b) students were asked to describe the role of congressional committees and executive orders in the enactment of public policy. Part (c) asked students to explain the importance of bureaucratic discretion and issue networks OR iron triangles in the implementation of public policy.

#### Sample: 4A

##### Score: 6

In part (a), the response earned 2 points. One point was earned for explaining the importance of the media in the formation of the policy agenda by noting that "The media ... changes the way citizens vote and the people they vote for form public policy." One point was also earned for explaining the importance of elections in the formation of the policy agenda as "The people citizens select to represent them form public policy."

In part (b), the response earned 2 points. One point was earned for describing the role of congressional committees in the enactment of public policy as "Committee leaders have the power to kill any bill." One point was also earned for describing the role of executive orders in the enactment of public policy as "orders by the president which have the power of a law but do not need to be passed by the House of Representatives."

In part (c), the response earned 2 points. One point was earned for explaining the importance of bureaucratic discretion in the implementation of public policy by stating that "The bureaucratic leaders can interperate [*sic*] laws passed by Congress with a good amount of leniency which changes implementation of public policy." One point was also earned for explaining the importance of iron triangles in the implementation of public policy as "The connection between these three groups keep the federal government from implementing certain public policy that would hurt interest groups."

#### Sample: 4B

##### Score: 4

In part (a), the response earned 2 points. One point was earned for explaining the importance of the media in the formation of the policy agenda by noting that "Increasing public awareness and support over a specific issue can bring it to the top of the policy agenda." One point was also earned for explaining the importance of elections in the formation of the policy agenda by stating that "Elections bring out what issues are most important to the public and help shape the policy agenda."

In part (b), the response earned 2 points. One point was earned for describing the role of congressional committees in the enactment of public policy by noting that "Congressional committees get together to write bills and try to make them into law." One point was also earned for describing the role of executive orders in the enactment of public policy by stating that "The president can issue executive orders that carry the weight and force of law" and they "are an inherent power of the president and can be used to enact public policy."

In part (c) the response did not earn any points because neither the importance of bureaucratic discretion and issue networks NOR iron triangles in the implementation of public policy is adequately explained.



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**Question 4 (continued)**

**Sample: 4C**

**Score: 1**

In part (a), the response did not earn points because the importance of media and elections in the formation of the policy agenda is not adequately explained.

In part (b), the response earned 1 point. One point was earned for describing the role of congressional committees in the enactment of public policy by noting that “Congressional committees role is to introduce, defend, or create a new policy”.

In part (c), the response did not earn points because neither the importance of bureaucratic discretion and issue networks NOR iron triangles in the implementation of public policy is adequately explained.