

**AP<sup>®</sup> UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS  
2014 SCORING GUIDELINES**

**Question 4**

**5 points**

**Part (a): 1 point**

One point is earned for a correct definition of party polarization as increased ideological consistency, divisions along party lines, or both.

**Part (b): 1 point**

One point is earned for identifying a trend in the graph (e.g., party polarization has increased in the House; is higher in the House than in the Senate over time; was up, then down, then up).

**Part (c): 2 points**

One point is earned for each accurate description of a cause of party polarization in Congress. Acceptable causes include:

- Clear issue differences between the parties
- Increasing reliance on ideologically-driven activists
- Ideologically-driven membership
- Gerrymandering
- Media effects on politics (e.g., fragmentation of traditional media; consolidation of media ownership; media focus on ideological extremism)
- Changing norms in Congress (e.g., lower levels of trust or dislike among members; shorter work week)
- Direct primaries – ideological voters in congressional elections
- Changing campaign finance rules
- Rise of single issue interest groups
- Shifts in the party (i.e., Republicans' "Southern Strategy")

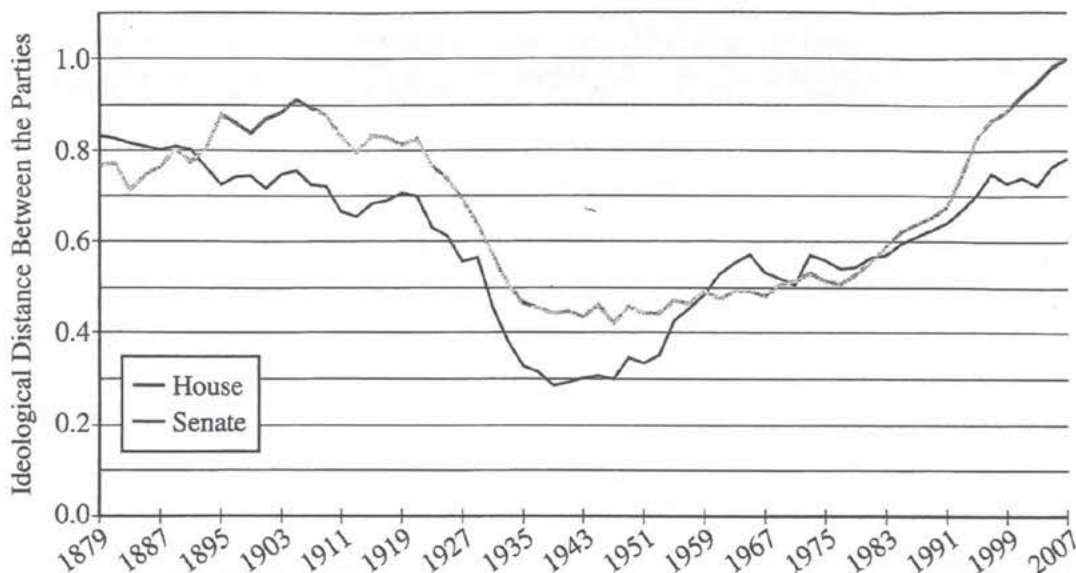
**Part (d): 1 point**

One point is earned for an accurate description of how party polarization affects Congressional policy making. Acceptable effects include:

- Gridlock (e.g., fewer laws passed; confirmation processes become more difficult; filibuster; greater numbers of vacancies in courts and agencies)
- Lack of compromise (e.g., fewer laws passed; confirmation processes become more difficult; filibuster; greater numbers of vacancies in courts and agencies)

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.



4. (a) Define party polarization.  
 (b) Identify a trend shown in the graph above.  
 (c) Describe two causes of party polarization in Congress.  
 (d) Describe one effect of party polarization on congressional policy making.

a) Party Polarization is when the ~~two~~ members of government become more ~~loyal~~ and extreme and loyal to their party, creating a more partisan government.

b) One trend in the graph is that polarization has ~~increasingly~~ increasingly gone up in both the House and the Senate since around 1951.

c) 1. An increase in ~~the~~ gerrymandering, drawing lines in a district to favor the ~~majority~~ majority party of a state, causes party polarization in Congress. This is because constituents of the districts can easily vote a congressman out of office if they are not loyal to the ~~majority~~ majority party.

2. The Civil Rights Movement, with its ~~big~~ most influential time starting in the ~~1950's~~ 1950s, causes party polarization.

4A 2 of 2

Democrats tend to be more in favor of civil rights than Republicans, causing the two parties to polarize so that this very important topic goes their way.  
d) Party Polarization causes legislation to be made less and at a slower rate due to the lack of comprimizing. This causes gridlock.

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.



4. (a) Define party polarization.  
 (b) Identify a trend shown in the graph above.  
 (c) Describe two causes of party polarization in Congress.  
 (d) Describe one effect of party polarization on congressional policy making.

4A) Party polarization refers to the split between political parties in congress. ~~and~~ Domestic polarization has caused gridlock in certain years.

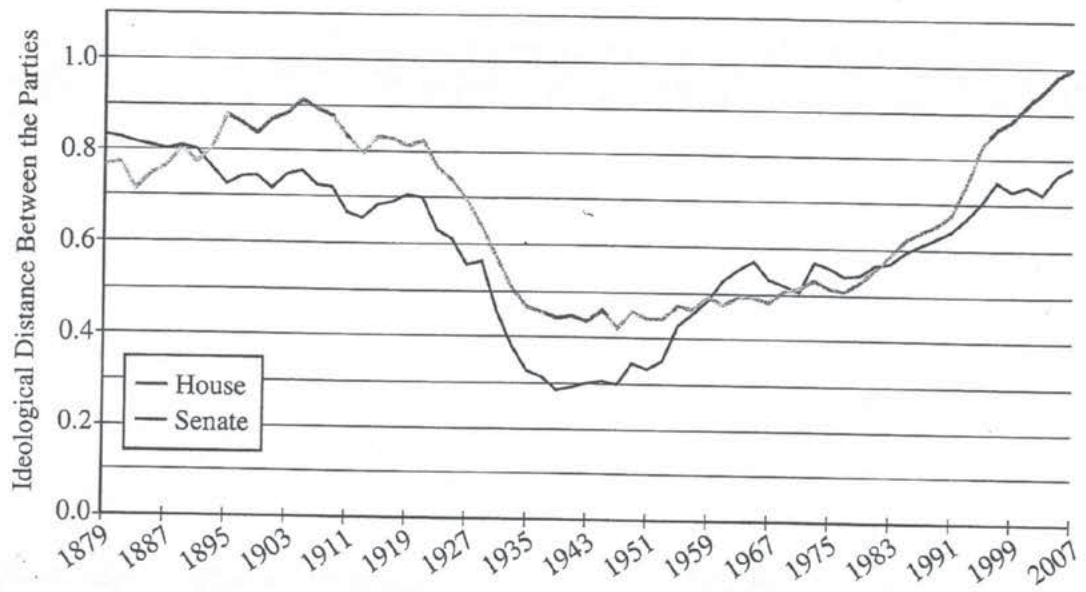
4B) A trend shown in the graph is that circa 1943 there has been a rise in ideological distance between parties in both parts of congress.

4C) One cause of party polarization is the election of more members of a certain political party in both the house and the senate. This causes for a shift in representation. Another reason for party

polarization in congress is public un-satisfaction with the ~~core~~ current political party dominant in congress. This causes the public to change perspective and perhaps seek representation with another political party. Usually happen in periods of realignments.

(4D) one effect of party polarization is the development of grid-lock or a do nothing ~~ere~~ congress. This means that little legislation will be passed because of a difference in ideals.

PARTY POLARIZATION, 1879-2007 4C 1 of 2



4. (a) Define party polarization.
- (b) Identify a trend shown in the graph above.
- (c) Describe two causes of party polarization in Congress.
- (d) Describe one effect of party polarization on congressional policy making.

a. Party polarization is when one party such as Democrats taking the Senate while the other party takes the House of Representative. They often have different ideals such as one house wants one thing and the other house another.

b. The House generally has a higher ideological distance between the parties than the Senate.

c. There is a party polarization in Congress when there is a big difference in political ideals and that one house is controlled by a party and the other house is controlled by another party. Another way that can cause party polarization is that within a house, the party is split down the middle between making decisions hard to make between the two parties.

Unauthorized copying or reuse of any part of this page is illegal.

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.

## ADDITIONAL ANSWER PAGE FOR QUESTION 4.

d. One effect of ~~party~~ party polarization is that legislation is very hard to pass. Since one party takes the House and the other party takes the Senate and their ideas collide, legislation is hard for them to agree on since they both want different things.

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.

# AP<sup>®</sup> UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS 2014 SCORING COMMENTARY

## Question 4

### Overview

This question examined students' knowledge of party polarization. Part (a) asked students to define party polarization. Part (b) asked students to identify a trend in the provided graph. Part (c) asked students to describe two causes of party polarization in Congress. Part (d) asked students to describe one effect of party polarization on congressional policy making.

### Sample: 4A

#### Score: 5

In part (a) the response earned 1 point. One point was earned for defining party polarization as “members of government become more extreme and loyal to their party.”

In part (b) the response earned 1 point. One point was earned for identifying a trend shown in the graph, “[P]olarization has increasingly gone up in the House and the Senate since around 1951.”

In part (c) the response earned 2 points. One point was earned for describing a cause of party polarization in Congress by stating, “An increase in gerrymandering . . . causes party polarization in Congress.” One point was also earned for describing a cause of party polarization in Congress by stating, “The civil rights movement . . . causes party polarization.”

In part (d) the response earned 1 point. One point was earned for describing one effect of party polarization on Congressional policy making by stating, “Party Polarization causes legislation to be made less and at a slower rate due to the lack of comprimizing [*sic*].”

### Sample: 4B

#### Score: 3

In part (a) the response earned 1 point. One point was earned for defining party polarization as “party polarization refers to the split between the political parties in congress. Drastic polarization has caused gridlock in certain years.”

In part (b) the response earned 1 point. One point was earned for identifying a trend shown in the graph, “[C]irca 1943 there has been a rise in ideological distance between parties.”

In part (d) the response earned 1 point. One point was earned for describing one effect of party polarization on Congressional policy making by stating that “party polarization is the development of grid-lock or a do nothing congress.”

### Sample: 4C

#### Score: 1

In part (d) the response earned 1 point. One point was earned for describing one effect of party polarization on Congressional policy making by stating that “legislation is very hard to pass.”