

2018

AP<sup>®</sup>

 CollegeBoard

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# AP United States Government and Politics

## Scoring Guidelines

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

## 2018 SCORING GUIDELINES

### Question 1

**5 points**

**Part (a): 2 points**

Two points are earned for identifying two activities that political parties do to win elections.

- Advertise
- Fundraise
- Nominate candidates
- Organize rallies
- Hold conventions
- Mobilize voters/Get out the vote (GOTV)
- Generate a platform of issues
- Conduct public opinion polling
- Recruit candidates

**Part (b): 1 point**

One point is earned for describing a way that third parties can affect elections.

- Take votes away from one of the major party candidates (spoiler effect)
- Bring new issues to the forefront/set the agenda
- Give voters another option
- Shift attention away from the major party candidates

**Part (c): 1 point**

One point is earned for an explanation of how single-member districts make it difficult for third parties to win elections.

In winner-take-all, or plurality systems, third-party candidates in single-member districts have a difficult time getting enough votes to win.

**Part (d): 1 point**

One point is earned for explaining how electoral competition is affected by gerrymandering.

- Drawing district lines to favor/protect one group/incumbent, making the district less competitive electorally
- Drawing district lines to spread opposition party voters across districts, making the district more competitive electorally
- Drawing district lines to allow a party with fewer votes statewide to win a majority of seats

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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**Question 2**

**5 points**

**Part (a): 2 points**

Two points are earned for identifying two characteristics of a reliable scientific public opinion poll.

- Random sample
- Representative sample
- Large sample size/low margin of error
- Question wording (unbiased and/or unambiguous wording)
- Survey format (question type, open- versus close-ended questions, sequencing)

**Part (b): 2 points**

Two points are earned for a description of two ways polling results are used by politicians.

- Collecting information on how to conduct their campaign
- Collecting information to shape policy
- Promoting themselves to the public (platform formation)
- Conducting opposition research
- Collecting information to inform votes on bills
- Gaining support from donors

**Part (c): 1 point**

One point is earned for an explanation of how frequent release of public opinion polls impacts media coverage of political campaigns.

- Amount/type of campaign media coverage changes because of changing polling numbers.
- Frequent polling contributes to horse race journalism.
- Polling shapes what campaign-related stories the media will cover.
- Results in a lack of policy coverage.

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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## Question 3

### 5 Points

#### Part (a): 1 point

One point is earned for describing the constitutional principle of checks and balances.

One branch of government exercises power in order to prevent another branch from becoming too powerful.

#### Part (b): 2 points

One point is earned for describing the veto in the legislative process.

The veto allows the president to refuse to approve a bill passed by Congress.

One point is earned for describing the role of the State of the Union in the legislative process.

The State of the Union is given by the president to Congress to outline the president's legislative agenda/agenda setting, or to influence legislation.

#### Part (c): 1 point

One point is earned for using the data in the chart to describe a relationship between the number of presidential vetoes and the number of congressional overrides.

- Veto overrides are rare compared to presidential vetoes.
- Generally the more presidential vetoes, the more veto overrides.

#### Part (d): 1 point

One point is earned for explaining how Congress can reduce the likelihood of a presidential veto.

- Withdraw the legislation.
- Make concessions to the president.
- Negotiate with the president.
- Rally the public to influence the president.

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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### Question 4

**5 points**

**Part (a): 1 point**

One point is earned for an explanation of how interest groups reduce the influence of public opinion on policy.

Interest groups use tactics (lobbying, providing information, campaign contributions) to affect policy change by institutions or individuals, regardless of public opinion on the policy.

**Part (b): 2 points**

One point is earned for an explanation of how a newly elected president increases the likelihood of policy change.

- Presidents claim an electoral mandate that allows them to pressure Congress into adopting their agenda.
- Presidents have more political capital during their honeymoon period, which allows them to set the legislative agenda.
- New presidents can issue executive orders or make appointments that may influence public policy.
- The new president's party is more likely to have gained seats in Congress during the presidential election, which makes it easier to pass legislation.

One point is earned for an explanation of how a national crisis increases the likelihood of policy change.

- Focuses the attention of policy makers, which can lead to policy change.
- Unifies and mobilizes the public, which can lead to policy change.

**Part (c): 2 points**

One point is earned for a description of the role of the courts in the policy process.

Court decisions can create, block, or guide public policy (judicial review, overturn, precedent).

One point is earned for a description of the role of the media in the policy process.

- The media can set the policy agenda.
- They can choose which issues to cover and how to frame them.
- They inform the public on public policy issues.

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.