

## 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. Make certain to number each of your answers as the question is numbered below.

1. In *The Federalist* paper number 10, James Madison expressed concern over the possibility that both majority and minority factions would have too much power over government, and he presented ways of minimizing that danger. The United States Constitution established a democratic government but also contained several provisions that limited majority rule. Throughout the next two centuries, the role of majority rule in the United States government and politics continued to change.
  - (a) Identify the part of the national government that was originally most closely tied to citizens and explain how it was tied to citizens.
  - (b) Explain two ways the United States Constitution limited majority rule.
  - (c) Choose two of the following twentieth-century developments and explain how each moved the United States from a less democratic system to a more democratic system.
    - Primary elections
    - The Seventeenth Amendment
    - Expansion of suffrage

A) House of Representatives (Senate was elected by state legislatures, while HoR elected by people) - 2 year term, smaller constituencies

B) Electoral college - electors can override popular vote  
 Senate - All senators have equal amount of power  
 Bill of Rights - individual rights not subject to majority opinion  
 Justices - not elected

C) Primary elections - ~~the~~ nominee chosen by party convention leaders to chosen by rank and file average citizens  
 17<sup>th</sup> Amendment - Senators elected by people instead of state  
 Expansion of suffrage

\* Amendments  
 19<sup>th</sup> - Women  
 24<sup>th</sup> - Poll tax  
 26<sup>th</sup> - voting age

2004 AP<sup>®</sup> UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS  
FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

SECTION II

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- 
1. Presidents are generally thought to have advantages over Congress in conducting foreign policy because of the formal and informal powers of the presidency.
- (a) Identify two formal constitutional powers of the President in making foreign policy.  
*Chief Diplomat, Treaties, Ambassadors, Recognize countries, commander in chief*
  - (b) Identify two formal constitutional powers of Congress in making foreign policy.  
*Ratify treaties, Declare war, Regulate foreign trade, confirm ambassadors*
  - (c) Identify two informal powers of the President that contribute to the President's advantage over Congress in conducting foreign policy. *Executive Agreement, Bully Pulpit, world leader, Access to more info than Congress*
  - (d) Explain how each of the informal powers identified in (c) contributes to the President's advantage over Congress in conducting foreign policy.
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2. Different interest groups will choose different techniques to achieve their objectives based on their resources, characteristics, and goals.

- (a) Describe each of the following techniques and explain why an interest group would choose each technique.
  - Litigation
  - Campaign contributions
  - Grassroots lobbying/ mass mobilization
- (b) Select one of the following groups and identify the primary technique it uses from the list in part (a). Explain why the group you selected would employ that technique over the other two techniques.
  - American Medical Association (AMA)
  - Sierra Club
  - National Rifle Association (NRA)
  - National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)

**2005 AP<sup>®</sup> UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS  
FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS**

**UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS**

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- 
1. The judicial branch is designed to be more independent of public opinion than are the legislature or the executive. Yet, the United States Supreme Court rarely deviates too far for too long from prevalent public opinion.
- (a) Describe two ways in which the United States Supreme Court is insulated from public opinion.
- (b) Explain how two factors work to keep the United States Supreme Court from deviating too far from public opinion.
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2. The power of the federal government relative to the power of the states has increased since the ratification of the Constitution.

- (a) Describe two of the following provisions of the Constitution and explain how each has been used over time to expand federal power.

- The power to tax and spend - *More tax = Bigger Budget = Able to do more*
- The "necessary and proper" or "elastic" clause - *Vague, more power to Congress, broad interpretation*
- The commerce clause - *Civil Rights Act of 1964*

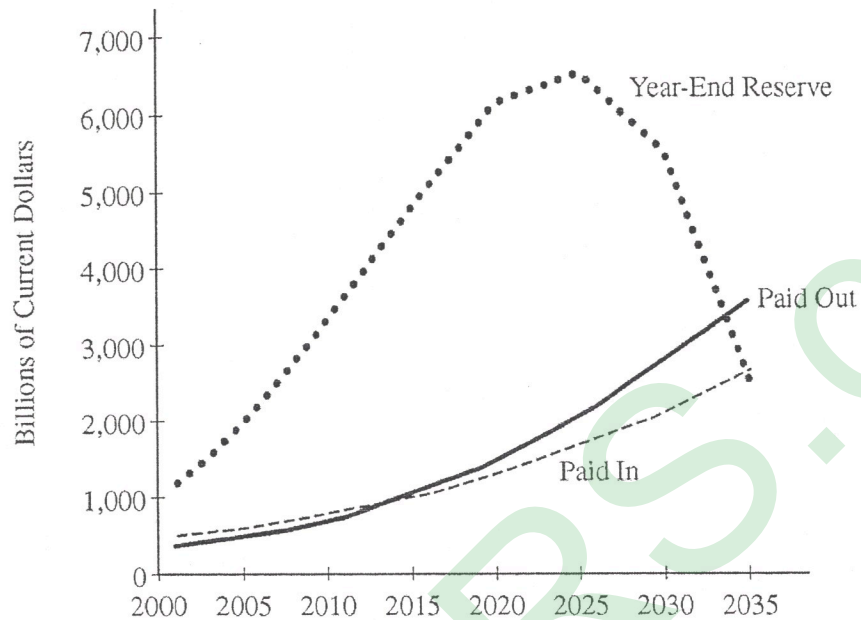
- (b) Explain how one of the following has increased the power of the federal government relative to the power of state governments.

- Americans with Disabilities Act - *Mandated states to accommodate handicapped*
- Civil Rights Act of 1964 - *Bans discrimination in public places*
- Clean Air Act - *Federal pollution standards on states*



**2006 AP® UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS**  
**FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS**

SOCIAL SECURITY RECEIPTS, SPENDING, AND RESERVE ESTIMATES, 2001–2035



Source: 2001 OASDI Trustees Report

2. In recent decades, entitlement programs have constituted a substantial portion of the United States federal budget. Social Security is the largest entitlement program in the United States. From the information in the chart above and your knowledge of United States government and politics, perform the following tasks.
- Define entitlement program.
  - What is the primary source of revenue for the Social Security program?
  - Identify one threat to the future of the Social Security program should the trends depicted in the chart above continue.
  - Describe one demographic trend that threatens the future of the Social Security program AND explain how it is responsible for the threat that you identified in (c).
  - Explain how any one of the trends in the chart above would change if the age of eligibility for Social Security were raised.



**2007 AP® UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS  
FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS**

3. Conflicts between Congress and the President over war powers have their origin in the United States Constitution. In 1973 Congress passed the War Powers Resolution in an attempt to clarify the balance of powers between the two branches of government.
- (a) Describe the primary constitutional conflict between Congress and the President over the decision to go to war.
  - (b) Describe two provisions of the War Powers Resolution that were designed to limit the President's power over war making.
  - (c) The War Powers Resolution has received mixed reviews, but Congress has other powers over war making. Other than the constitutional power that you described in (a), identify and explain two other formal powers Congress has over war making.
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4. The framers of the United States Constitution created a federal system.
- (a) Define federalism.
  - (b) Select two of the following and explain how each has been used to increase the power of the federal government relative to the states.
    - Categorical grants
    - Federal mandates
    - Selective incorporation
  - (c) Select two of the following and explain how each has been used to increase the power of the states relative to the federal government.
    - Welfare Reform Act of 1996
    - Block grants
    - Tenth Amendment

**STOP**

**END OF EXAM**

**2008 AP® UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS  
FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS**

**UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS**

**SECTION II**

**Time—1 hour and 40 minutes**

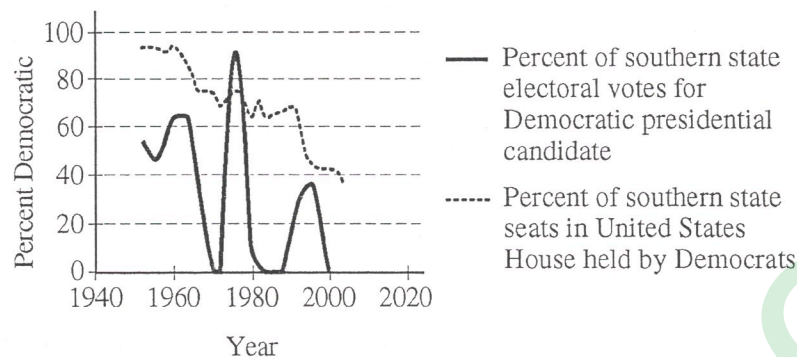
**Directions:** You have 100 minutes to answer all four of the following questions. Unless the directions indicate otherwise, respond to all parts of all four questions. It is suggested that you take a few minutes to plan and outline each answer. Spend approximately one-fourth of your time (25 minutes) on each question. In your response, use substantive examples where appropriate. Make certain to number each of your answers as the question is numbered below.

1. Congressional reapportionment and redistricting are conducted every ten years. When redistricting is conducted, politicians often engage in gerrymandering.
  - (a) Define congressional reapportionment and explain one reason why it is important to states.
  - (b) Define congressional redistricting.
  - (c) Explain two goals of politicians when they gerrymander during redistricting.
  - (d) Describe two limits that the United States Supreme Court has placed on congressional redistricting.

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2. A number of factors enable presidents to exert influence over Congress in the area of domestic policy. However, presidents are also limited in their influence over domestic policymaking in Congress.
  - (a) The Constitution grants the president certain enumerated powers. Describe two of these formal powers that enable the president to exert influence over domestic policy.
  - (b) Choose two of the following. Define each term and explain how each limits the president's ability to influence domestic policymaking in Congress.
    - mandatory spending
    - party polarization
    - lame-duck period

2010 AP® UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS  
FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS

SOUTHERN STATE PARTISANSHIP IN UNITED STATES  
HOUSE AND PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS



Source: Web site of the clerk of the House of Representatives ([http://clerk.house.gov/art\\_history/house\\_history/index.html](http://clerk.house.gov/art_history/house_history/index.html)) and the National Archives (<http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/electoral-college/historical.html>). States counted in this graphic are the eleven southern states of the former Confederacy (Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia).

3. Over the last several decades, the composition of the Democratic and Republican parties has changed in important ways. A major partisan shift has occurred in the South, but other demographic changes have also been identified. Changes in party composition are reflected at different rates in presidential elections than in congressional elections.
- (a) Identify one specific trend evident in the figure above.
- (b) Choose two of the following and use each to explain why southern voters from 1948 to 2000 were electing Democratic candidates to Congress more frequently than choosing Democratic candidates for the presidency.
- Incumbency advantage
  - Gerrymandering
  - Differences between state and national parties
- (c) Several other changes in party composition have emerged in the past few decades. Select three of the following groups and for each explain how parties have changed in composition with respect to that group.
- Catholics
  - Labor union members
  - Women
  - Social conservatives



**2011 AP<sup>®</sup> UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS  
FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS**

**UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS**

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1. The United States Supreme Court receives many appeals, but it hears and rules on a small percentage of cases each year. Numerous factors influence the actions of the Court, both in deciding to hear a case and in the decisions it hands down.
  - a. Define judicial review.
  - b. Explain how judicial review empowers the Supreme Court within the system of checks and balances.
  - c. Describe the process through which the Court grants a writ of certiorari.
  - d. Explain how each of the following influences decisions made by individual justices when deciding cases heard by the Court.
    - Stare decisis
    - Judicial activism

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2. Public opinion polls are a way to link the public with elected officials. Members of Congress often use polls to understand the views of their constituents, but they must also pay attention to other political considerations.
  - a. Identify two characteristics of a valid, scientific, public opinion poll.
  - b. Explain why each of the following enhances the influence of public opinion on the voting decisions of members of Congress.
    - Strong public opinion as expressed in polling results
    - Competitive re-elections
  - c. Explain why each of the following limits the influence of public opinion on the voting decisions of members of Congress.
    - Legislators' voting records
    - Party leadership

**2011 AP<sup>®</sup> UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS  
FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS**

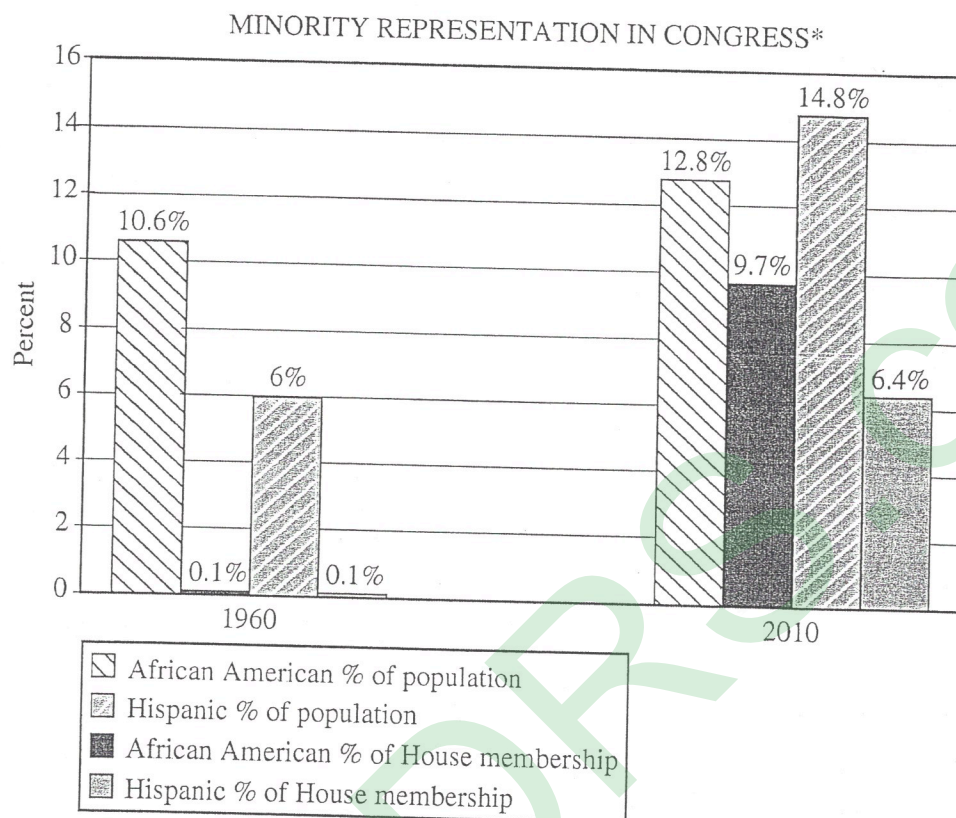
3. Nominees for the presidency of the two major parties are chosen by delegates at national conventions. How these delegates are chosen varies across states and between the political parties.
- Define each of the following methods used by states to choose delegates to party conventions.
    - Open primary
    - Caucus
  - Republican Party rules permit winner-take-all primaries. Describe one consequence of this rule for the Republican nomination process.
  - The Democratic Party has used superdelegates in the presidential nominating process since 1984. Explain why the use of superdelegates increases the influence of party leaders in the Democratic nomination process.
  - Explain why a candidate's strategy to win the nomination is often different from the strategy developed to win the general election.
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4. The Constitution of the United States creates a government of separate institutions that share power rather than a government that delegates power exclusively to a single branch. Frequently, this means that presidents and Congress struggle with each other.
- For each of the presidential powers below, explain one way that congressional decision making is affected by that power.
    - Veto power
    - Power to issue executive orders
    - Power as commander in chief
  - For each of the congressional powers below, explain one way that presidential decision making is affected by that power.
    - Legislative oversight power
    - Senate advice and consent power
    - Budgetary power

**STOP**

**END OF EXAM**

2012 AP® UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS  
FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS



\*Figure does not include all minority groups in Congress.

2. (a) Using the chart above, compare minority representation in 1960 and 2010.
- (b) Explain how each of the following assisted in the removal of barriers to minority voting.
- Voting Rights Act of 1965
  - Twenty-fourth Amendment
- (c) Identify one barrier that currently impedes minority representation in Congress. Explain why the barrier you identified inhibits minority representation in Congress.