AP® United States Government and Politics
2005 Free-Response Questions

The College Board: Connecting Students to College Success

The College Board is a not-for-profit membership association whose mission is to connect students to college success and opportunity. Founded in 1900, the association is composed of more than 4,700 schools, colleges, universities, and other educational organizations. Each year, the College Board serves over three and a half million students and their parents, 23,000 high schools, and 3,500 colleges through major programs and services in college admissions, guidance, assessment, financial aid, enrollment, and teaching and learning. Among its best-known programs are the SAT®, the PSAT/NMSQT®, and the Advanced Placement Program® (AP®). The College Board is committed to the principles of excellence and equity, and that commitment is embodied in all of its programs, services, activities, and concerns.
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.

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
- The “necessary and proper” or “elastic” clause
- The commerce clause

(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
- Civil Rights Act of 1964
- Clean Air Act
3. Initially, the United States Constitution did little to protect citizens from actions of the states. In the twentieth century, the Supreme Court interpreted the Constitution to protect the rights of citizens from state governments in a process referred to as incorporation.

(a) Define selective incorporation.

(b) For two of the following, explain how each has been incorporated. Each of your explanations must be based on a specific and relevant Supreme Court decision.

- Rights of criminal defendants
- First Amendment
- Privacy rights

4. The United States Congress has debated a variety of campaign finance reforms over the last decade. The proposals debated have included the following:

- Eliminating soft money
- Limiting independent expenditures
- Raising limits on individual contributions

(a) Select one of the listed proposals and do all of the following:

- Define the proposal.
- Describe an argument that proponents make in favor of the proposal.
- Describe an argument that opponents make against the proposal.

(b) Select a different listed proposal and do all of the following:

- Define the proposal.
- Describe an argument that proponents make in favor of the proposal.
- Describe an argument that opponents make against the proposal.