



AP[®] United States Government and Politics 2006 Scoring Guidelines

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**AP[®] UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS
2006 SCORING GUIDELINES**

Question 1

6 points

Part (a): 1 point

The response must identify a fundamental goal of interest groups in the political process. Acceptable responses may include:

- Influence public policy.
- Influence Congress/government.
- Change laws.
- Responses can list tactics as long as they specifically connect them to the fundamental goal of influencing public policy.
- No point is earned if the response lists a series of goals, even if one goal is “influence policy” (unless it is specifically listed as the fundamental goal).

Part (b): 1 point

The response must identify a fundamental goal of political parties in the political process. Acceptable responses may include:

- Elect people to office.
- Gain control of government. (Responses can earn a point for saying “influence policy” as long as they connect it to winning control of government/electing people to office.)

Part (c): 2 points

One point is earned for each of two descriptions. The response must describe activities that support the electoral goals of parties; for example, the response “lobbying” does not earn a point.

Acceptable descriptions may include:

- Monetary contributions/political action committee (PAC) donations. (If these two are clearly differentiated, then the response earns both points.)
- Organization/mobilization of people.
- Media campaigns.
- Information.
- Independent committees/527s.
- Independent expenditures.
- Endorsement/recruitment of candidates.

Part (d): 2 points

One point is earned for each of two explanations.

Acceptable explanations may include:

- Access/influence policymakers.
- Have like-minded people/policy advocates in office.
- Legislation that helps interest groups.

Note: Responses cannot earn points in (d) if they do not earn points in (c).

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Question 1 (continued)

A score of zero (0) is earned for an attempted answer that earns no points.

A score of dash (—) is earned for a blank or off-task answer.

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Question 2

6 points

Part (a): 1 point

One point is earned for a definition: Entitlement programs are government-sponsored programs providing mandated/guaranteed/required benefits to those who meet eligibility requirements/qualifications.

Part (b): 1 point

One point is earned for identifying the primary source of revenue for Social Security. Acceptable responses may include:

- Payroll taxes.
- Wages from existing wage earners.
- Tax based on earned income.
- Targeted/earmarked taxes.

Note: The response must indicate that the tax is related to work/jobs in order to receive the point.

Part (c): 1 point

One point is earned for identifying a threat to the future of Social Security based on the trends indicated in the chart. Acceptable responses may include:

- Run out of money.
- Outputs exceed inputs.
- Declining reserve.

Part (d): 2 points

One point is earned for describing one demographic trend that threatens the future of Social Security. One point is earned for explaining how the demographic trend is responsible for the threat identified in (c).

Acceptable descriptions may include:

- More older people/"baby boom" generation.
- People living longer/greater life expectancy.
- Declining birth rates.

Acceptable explanations may include:

- The number of workers who fund Social Security is decreasing, but the number of people eligible for Social Security is increasing.
- The number of working people cannot support the large population who will soon reach the age of eligibility to receive Social Security.
- The ratio of workers to retirees is becoming more unequal. With fewer workers, less money is being paid in, and with more retirees, more money is being paid out.

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2006 SCORING GUIDELINES**

Question 2 (continued)

Notes:

- Response cannot get the explanation point without a valid description of the demographic trend.
- The explanation must address the number of younger people in comparison to the number of older people in order to earn the point.

Part (e): 1 point

One point is earned for explaining how, if people were to work longer, less money would be paid out/more money would be paid in/the reserve would not decline as rapidly or as much.

A score of zero (0) is earned for an attempted answer that earns no points.

A score of dash (—) is earned for a blank or off-task answer.

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Question 3

6 points

Part (a): 2 points

One point is earned for explaining each of two reasons why Congress gives federal agencies policy-making discretion in executing federal laws.

- Congress lacks expertise/agencies have expertise.
- Congress does not want to be blamed for bad policy.
- Time-consuming.
- Easier to come to agreement.
- More efficient.

Part (b): 2 points

One point is earned for correctly identifying the policy area identified with the agency. One point is earned for providing an example. The response must include a correct, specific example of how the agency exercises policy-making discretion in order to earn the point.

Agency

Policy Area

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	→	Clean air and water
Federal Communications Commission (FCC)	→	TV, radio, satellite, telephone, etc.
Federal Reserve Board	→	Monetary policy

Part (c): 2 points

One point is earned for each of two descriptions of ways Congress ensures that agencies follow legislative intent.

Acceptable descriptions may include:

- Oversight.
- Budget/appropriations.
- Hearings.
- Investigations.
- Government Accountability Office (GAO).
- Change law.
- Legislative veto.
- Casework.
- Sunset laws/reauthorization/dissolve agencies/create new agencies.

Note: If one of the above is only mentioned as an example of oversight, the response gets only 1 point.

A score of zero (0) is earned for an attempted answer that earns no points.

A score of dash (—) is earned for a blank or off-task answer.

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Question 4

6 points

Part (a): 2 points

One point is earned for each of two reasons discussed.

Acceptable reasons for discussion may include:

- Compromise at Constitutional Convention (representation of large vs. small population states).
- Compromise among competing interests/protect minority interests.
- Slow the process.
- Different types of representation/federalism.
- An intrabranched check/prevent majority tyranny.

Part (b): 2 points

One point is earned for a correct identification of a power unique to the House of Representatives, and 1 point is earned for a correct explanation that is linked to the character of the House of Representatives.

Acceptable identifications may include:

- Initiate revenue bills.
- Choose the President when the electoral college is deadlocked.
- Impeachment.

Acceptable explanations may include:

- Closer to the people.
- More representative of and responsive to the public/direct election to two-year terms.

Part (c): 2 points

One point is earned for a correct identification of a power unique to the Senate, and 1 point is earned for a correct explanation that is linked to the character of the Senate.

Acceptable identifications may include:

- Treaty ratification.
- Confirmation of judicial and executive appointments.
- Try impeachments/conviction/removal from office.

Acceptable explanations may include:

- More mature/“august” body.
- More insulated from public opinion/indirectly elected (originally).
- Longer and/or staggered terms.
- Reflects state interests.

Note: The unique power must be one that is included in the Constitution (e.g., “filibuster” does not get credit because it is a Senate rule, not a constitutional power).

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Question 4 (continued)

A score of zero (0) is earned for an attempted answer that earns no points.

A score of dash (—) is earned for a blank or off-task answer.