

**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.

The fundamental goal of an interest group is their particular interest; whatever they stand for whether it be abortion, gun control or the environment. They want their views to be heard and would like to see their interests protected or implemented by the federal government.

The fundamental goal of the major political parties is to get their people elected with the particular set of beliefs that the party wants to see implemented. The best way for the party to have its interests protected and its views heard is by electing people to office who will hopefully carry out the political party's agenda.

If the ~~goals~~ goals and interests of an interest group coincide with those of a particular candidate running for office, then it is likely that the interest group will contribute to that candidate in some meaningful way. One way that the interest group can help the political candidate get elected is through direct contributions, most ~~likely~~ likely in the form of money. Political campaigns are

expensive these days, especially air time on television and radio. Another way the interest group could help the political party achieve its goal is to make indirect contributions. An example would be ~~making~~ advertising a particular issue and associating it with that candidate like ~~the~~ the candidate's stance on abortion or gun control. Perhaps the interest group could also donate personnel to the political party. In the case of direct contributions made by the interest group, those contributions not only help the political parties achieve their fundamental goal but they also help the interest groups achieve their goal of have their views heard and interests protected.

In the case of money donated to the campaign, that money allows the candidate to continue his quest for election, ~~the~~ ultimately hoping to land himself ~~the~~ a political office but it also helps to promote the views of the interest group more through things like the media.

~~There~~ There is really a symbiotic relationship ~~in~~ in American politics

Write in the box the number of the question you are answering on this page as it is designated in the examination.

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The fundamental goal of interest groups with regards to the political process is to protect civil liberties / rights and to lobby successfully for liberties / rights which have not been officially established.

The fundamental goal of major political parties is to control the presidency, House/Senate majority, and the Supreme Court. One way by which interest groups support the political parties is by associating themselves with one of the parties. This way supporters of the interest group support the party and perhaps puts the party into power. Another way interest groups support the fundamental goal of political parties is by giving them money which can be used by the parties for campaigning. By associating with one political party an interest group not only shares it's supporters but generally supporters of the affiliated party will be turned on to the interest group and join it / it's campaign. Also, by associating with a political party an interest group can have that party realize its goal as / when that party comes into ~~power~~ power.

The fundamental goal of an interest group in the political process is to advance its own agenda and special interest. The fundamental goal of a political party in the political process is also to promote the party's agendas, but by attempting to gain different government positions, instead of just making "friends" in high places, like the interest groups prefer. Interest groups support the fundamental goal of political parties in the following ways: ~~bring~~ bring attention to their own personal interest, and discrediting those who oppose their views. Interest groups work very similar to political parties in the sense that they both try to advance their own political agendas. Interest groups do it through protest, court cases, and "friends" in high places. Political parties, on the other hand, do want to advance themselves as well, but prefer to do it through gaining the actual political seat themselves, instead of just befriending one in authority. These two groups also work similarly through the tactic of discrediting their opponent. Interest groups attack anyone available who oppose their ideas or plans. They often will discredit this person or try to turn others against them. ~~Political~~ Political parties work in a similar

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Write in the box the number of the question you are answering on this page as it is designated in the examination.

1C2

fashion in the fact that a large part of their strategy is to discredit the opposing party. They will often use prior voting records or past mistakes or mishaps to decrease the support of the opponent.

By bringing an interest group's agenda to the "front lines," it can benefit the group in many ways. It will help bring awareness to more people of their proposal or problem and in return gain more followers and members. By gaining more followers, the interest group now becomes a louder voice in the political world, and therefore has a greater chance of passing legislation in its favor. An example of this would be the NAACP.

What started as a small group, has now become a roaring train, in which many political advances are being made each year.

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2006 SCORING COMMENTARY

Question 1

Overview

This question was intended to test student knowledge and understanding of two similar but distinct linkage organizations in the United States political system. Specifically, the question asked students to distinguish between the fundamental goal of political parties and the fundamental goal of interest groups and to articulate the ways in which these two entities sometimes interact.

Sample: 1A

Score: 5

In part (a) the response earned 1 point for correctly identifying the fundamental goal of interest groups as seeking to have their “interests . . . implemented by the federal government.”

In part (b) the response earned 1 point for correctly identifying the fundamental goal of political parties as seeking to “get their people elected.”

In part (c) the response earned 1 point for describing monetary contributions as one way interest groups help political parties achieve the goal of getting their candidates elected. The response earned the second point for describing how interest groups endorse a party’s candidates and help the party achieve its fundamental goal, stating that interest groups engage in “advertising a particular issue and associating it with that [party’s] candidate.”

In part (d) the response earned 1 point for explaining how financial contributions to political parties also help the interest groups achieve their goal of influencing government since the contributions help to ensure that the interest groups “have their views heard and interests protected.”

Sample: 1B

Score: 3

In part (a) the response incorrectly identifies the fundamental goal of interest groups and therefore did not earn a point.

In part (b) the response earned 1 point for correctly identifying the fundamental goal of political parties as seeking “to control the presidency, House/Senate majority, and the Supreme Court.”

In part (c) the response earned 1 point for describing endorsements (“associating”) as one way that interest groups support political parties. The response earned the second point for describing how interest groups support political parties by giving them money.

In part (d) the response does not explain how political parties can help interest groups achieve their fundamental goal and therefore earned no point.

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Question 1 (continued)

Sample: 1C

Score: 1

In part (a) the response does not correctly identify the fundamental goal of interest groups and therefore did not earn a point.

In part (b) the response earned 1 point for correctly identifying that the fundamental goal of political parties is to change the policy-making process “by attempting to gain different government positions.”

In part (c) the response does not describe how interest groups support the fundamental goal of political parties and therefore did not earn any points.

Since part (c) did not earn any points, no points could be earned in part (d). Although the response mentions the idea of “passing legislation,” the question required that the response link the explanation to forms of support described in part (c).