

AP[®] COMPARATIVE GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

2011 SCORING GUIDELINES

Question 7

7 points

Part (a): 1 point is earned for a description of federalism in Nigeria. An acceptable description includes **both** of the following:

- A conceptual reference to shared or divided power between central or national government and state/local/regional/subnational governments with sovereign, protected or reserved powers
- Specific reference to Nigeria, including the following:
 - Ethnic or religious divisions
 - Asymmetric or weak states
 - Increased number of states to decentralize power and increase legitimacy

Part (b): 2 points

One point is earned for an explanation of one way Nigeria's federal structure accommodates different religious groups. Acceptable explanations include the following:

- Choice of Shari'a law in some states
- Guaranteed freedom of religion

Note: Responses that state "presidency switching" or "religious state creation" do not earn a point.

One point is earned for an explanation of one way Nigeria's federal structure accommodates different ethnic groups. Acceptable explanations include the following:

- State creation
- Federal Character, which guarantees representation of ethnicity since states are ethno-political divisions

Note: Federal Character applies to the cabinet. Responses that state "administration, officials or government" earn credit. Responses that state "legislature" **do not** earn credit.

Part (c): 1 point is earned for an identification of the type of electoral system used in Nigeria. Acceptable identifications include the following:

- First-past-the-post (FPTP)
- Single-member districts (SMD) or single-member-plurality districts (SMPD)
- Winner-take-all
- Plurality

Note: A response of "majority or majoritarian" earns no points unless it specifically refers to presidential elections; a response of "proportional representation" or any mixed system **does not** earn a point.

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Question 7 (continued)

Part (d): 2 points

One point is earned for each explanation of ways in which the Nigerian electoral system accommodates different ethnic groups. Acceptable explanations include the following:

- Broad electoral support for presidential candidates through minimum thresholds across states and/or regions
- Broad electoral support for presidential candidates through presidential majority electoral system
- Broad party support across states, regions or both
- Requirement of three senators from each state
- Demarcation of voting districts to allow for ethnic representation in lower house

Note: Responses that state “presidency switching” and Federal Character **do not** earn a point.

Part (e): 1 point is earned for an explanation of why Nigeria’s federal structure has been unable to resolve tensions in the Niger River delta. Acceptable explanations include the following:

- Oil wealth and resources are centralized, not federal; lack of local control.
- Corruption at the central and local level (police and security) is beyond control of the federal system.

a) Nigeria is divided into many sovereign subnational states that can manage their own regional policy. However, the states are very dependent on the central government for funding and resources, so their actual autonomy is limited because the federal government could choose to deprive non-compliant states of funds.

b) The federal system accommodates religious differences through the presence of state judicial branches. States in predominantly Islamic regions can choose to have a Sharia court that people have the option of using instead of the standard civil and criminal courts. This allows Muslim regions to accommodate their citizens whereas mainly Christian regions would see no need for a sharia court.

The federal system also accommodates different ~~religious~~ ethnic groups by giving small ethnic groups a smaller level of government in which to have their interests represented. For instance, a very small tribe of a minor ethnic group may be so small as to have no hope of being represented by the few federal representatives their state is permitted, but they may be able to get representation in the state government and thus have some say in public policy on at least some level of government.

c) Nigeria uses a first-past-the-post, or single-member district (plurality) system.

d) One way in which the electoral system accommodates ethnic group differences is by requiring a ^{presidential candidate} ~~president~~ ^{to win} ~~to have received~~ ^{receive} at least 25% of the popular vote in two thirds of the states. This ensures that a president does not come into office by gaining an overwhelming majority in about half the country.

d) (continued) Therefore, ~~the~~ a president-elect must have won with at least some support in regions outside ~~his or her~~ ~~main~~ those in which his or her ~~the~~ ethnic group dominates. Another accommodation for ethnic differences is in the large number of ~~states~~ subnational states and their further division into districts such that multiple representatives in the lower house of Congress can be elected from single-member districts within the states. The division of the country into such small units ensures that most significantly sizable ethnic groups have some representation in Congress.

e) The Niger River delta area has such a ^{dense} mix of ethnicities and religions that the region cannot be divided into separate states effectively. Thus, ~~the~~ ~~different~~ ethnic groups compete for power there is much tension between ethnic groups that cannot be resolved by dividing them into separate states. Different groups are constantly competing for power so they can give benefits to their tribes and ethnic groups while repressing others.

(a) In Nigeria, the central government shares power with local entities. ~~Nigeria~~ Nigeria consists of many states. The states are drawn through ethnic territories, splitting up ethnicities.

(b) In Nigeria, Muslims tend to inhabit the north and Christians, the south. A federal govt. structure allows these religious groups to be better represented locally, because the central government is unable to fully represent either religion. In the northern states, the regional government is more focused on Sharia law, while regional government in the south protects the rights of the Christians. For ethnic groups, the central government is simply unable to accommodate the needs of every group. These divisions of power allow for more ethnic autonomy and allow ^{different} ethnic groups to have political power & representation.

(c) In Nigeria, the president is directly elected. The upper house of the legislature has equal representation from each state & the lower house representation is based on state population. It is a presidential system modeled after the US system.

(d) This electoral system allows ~~all~~ every state to be represented in government. Each state has different ethnic groups, so all the ethnic

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

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groups can be represented, because most ethnic groups are a minority in the country, but can make up the majority in the state.

(e) The Niger river delta is where Nigeria's oil reserves are located. This region is exploited by IOCs and large foreign corporations. State governments are simply not organized and powerful to take on these major forces. Also, ~~the~~ ^{Nigeria's} government as a whole benefits from oil revenue and a lot of corruption exists, especially within the patron-client system, to continue the exploitation of oil reserves and continue profiting off of the oil that is causing many within the Niger River Delta to suffer.

- A) Nigeria is broken up into 39 states. There are local, regional, and national ~~elections~~ ^{governments} to represent the ~~majority~~ ^{multiple} ethnicities. The local and regional government rarely agree or cooperate on any ~~main~~ matter with each other.
- B) ~~There is a law in Nigeria that~~ ~~states~~ Because there are different levels of government, ~~region~~ both Christianity and Islam, the two dominant religions, can be represented. There is also a law that says a President will be chosen from the South for one term and from the North for the next term. Also there is both a House of Representative and Senate. One is half proportional ~~and~~ ^{and} represent $\frac{1}{2}$ single member districts ~~to~~ in order to represent as many ethnicities fairly.

C) Nigeria uses both Proportional Representation and Single-member district, winner-takes-all. President is directly elected single member district.

D) Proportional representation allows several ethnicities to be represented in Parliament because it allows for the development of the multi-party system.

E) There has been so much violence, turmoil, and almost zero cooperation that Nigeria's government is so unstable.

The instability and violence never ~~guarantees~~ free and does not support fair elections.

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2011 SCORING COMMENTARY

Question 7

Overview

The intent of this question was for students to demonstrate their understanding of federalism and electoral systems and to apply these concepts to the issue of resolving ethnic and religious tensions in Nigeria. Students first had to describe federalism in Nigeria. They also needed to explain one way Nigeria's federal structure accommodates different religious groups, as well as one way the federal structure accommodates different ethnic groups in the country. Students were asked to identify what type of electoral system is used in Nigeria and explain two ways that Nigeria's electoral system accommodates different ethnic groups. Finally, students were asked to explain why Nigeria's federal structure has failed to resolve tensions in the Niger River delta. The question tested students' conceptual knowledge, analytical skills and knowledge of an array of issues related to contemporary Nigerian politics.

Sample: 7A

Score: 6

In part (a) the response earned 1 point for the conceptual reference to being “divided into many sovereign subnational states” and also referencing “the central government.” The Nigeria-specific description appears with a discussion of “actual autonomy” being limited and the states being “very dependent,” combined with the description in part (b).

In part (b) the earned 1 point for the explanation that “state judicial branches” in “predominantly Islamic regions can choose to have a Sharia court that people have the option of using instead of the standard civil ... courts ... [which] allows Muslim regions to accommodate their citizens whereas mainly Christian regions would see no need.” The response also earned 1 point for discussion of state creation with the statement “giving small ethnic groups a smaller level of government in which to have their interests represented” followed by description and specifying of “representation in the state government.”

In part (c) 1 point was earned for correctly identifying “a first-past-the-post, or single-member district (plurality) system.”

In part (d) the response earned 1 point for referencing the requirement of “a presidential candidate to receive at least 25% of the popular vote in two thirds of the states” and tying it to needing “some support in regions outside those in which his or her ethnic group dominates.” The response also earned 1 point for the explaining district demarcation by saying the “further division” of states “into districts such that multiple representatives in the lower house ... elected from single-member districts within the states ... ensures that most significantly sizable ethnic groups have some representation.”

The response earned no points in part (e) because it does not clarify any federal references or central control of oil or resources.

Sample: 7B

Score: 4

In part (a) the response earned 1 point for distinguishing “many states” from “the central government” that “shares power with local entities.” The specific example of Nigeria unfolds through parts (a) and (b) with reference to states being “drawn through ethnic territories.”

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Question 7 (continued)

In part (b) the response earned 1 point for explaining how religious groups are “represented locally,” with regional governments in northern states “more focused on Sharia law, while regional government in the south protects the rights of the Christians.” The response also earned 1 point for explaining state creation through the reference in parts (a) and (b) to states “drawn through ethnic territories, splitting up ethnicities,” noting that “divisions of power allow for more ethnic autonomy and allow different ethnic groups to have political power & representation.”

In part (c) the response earned no points because it does not clearly state an electoral system but only mentions “a presidential system modeled after the US” and vague references about the legislatures and presidents being “directly elected,” having “equal representation,” or being “based on state population.”

In part (d) the response earned no points because it only vaguely mentions that the electoral system “allows every state to be represented” and that “[e]ach state has different ethnic groups,” without clarifying specific electoral system rules.

In part (e) the response earned 1 point for explaining the lack of local resource control, noting that the “region is exploited” and “[s]tate governments are ... not ... powerful [enough] to take on” other forces, referencing both “foriegn [*sic*] corporations” and “Nigeria’s government as a whole” benefiting from the oil revenue and generating corruption. The “exploitation of oil reserves and ... profiting off of the oil ... causing many within the Niger River Delta to suffer” implies lack of local control and power at the level of corrupt links between corporations and Nigeria’s government.

Sample: 7C

Score: 2

In part (a) the response earned 1 point for conceptually distinguishing between “local, regional, and national governments,” adequately describing Nigeria’s structures with reference to Nigeria being “broken up into 39 states” (actually 36), and noting that the various levels “represent the multiple ethnicities.”

In part (b) the response earned no points. The statement that “Christianity and Islam ... can be represented” is inadequate in explaining how federal structures accommodate religious groups. The reference to a “law” with regard to presidency switching is wrong, the response does not specify religious (or ethnic) groups, and presidency switching is not a federal structure. The statement about having proportional representation and single-member districts in the legislature “to represent as many ethnicities fairly” does not refer to a federal structure and is not specific enough.

In part (c) the response earned 1 point for identifying the presidency as “directly elected single member district.” The statement about “both Proportional Representation and single-member district, winner-takes-all” inaccurately suggests an incorrect mixed system and thus earned no points.

The response earned no points in parts (d) or (e) because it provides an inadequate and incorrect discussion of the proportional representation system and lacks adequate explanation.