

**AP<sup>®</sup> UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS  
2011 SCORING GUIDELINES**

**Question 3**

**5 points**

**Part (a): 2 points**

One point is earned for a correct definition of open primary: a primary election in which any voter can cast a ballot in any party's primary.

One point is earned for a correct definition of caucus: a meeting or gathering of members of a political party where members deliberate and choose from the list of those seeking the presidential nomination.

**Part (b): 1 point**

One point is earned for an acceptable consequence for a winner-take-all primary, which can include the following:

- Shortens the timeframe for candidates wrapping up the nomination.
- Affects strategic decisions (e.g., allocation of funds, time).
- Advantages those with more prominence or better name recognition early in the process.

**Part (c): 1 point**

One point is earned for an acceptable explanation of how superdelegates increase the power of party leaders, which can include the following:

- Party leaders are now assured a role in the nomination process, regardless of which candidate they support.
- Party leaders can cast the deciding vote in close nomination contests.
- Superdelegates are unpledged and therefore can change their minds on candidates as the process unfolds.

**Part (d): 1 point**

One point is earned for an acceptable explanation for why campaign strategies often differ between primary and general elections, which can include the following:

- The electorate in the primary election is different from the electorate in the general election.
- A candidate's opponents in the primary are fellow partisans, whereas opponents in the general election are from other parties.
- There are differences in financing, media coverage and current events leading up to the general election.

A score of zero (0) is assigned to an answer that is attempted but earns no points.

A score of dash (—) is assigned to an answer that is blank or off task.

An open primary is a secret ballot open to all registered voters that is used to assign delegates to party conventions. The results of the voting determine ~~where~~ which nominee the delegates will support.

A caucus ~~is~~ was open discussion and debate among registered party members to assign delegates to party conventions. Members will typically discuss their choices ~~and~~ ~~then~~ of which nominee to support until the group reaches a general consensus.

One consequence of winner-take-all primaries is that they cause some candidates to avoid campaigning in certain areas. Candidates reason that they should spend their time and money in areas that they are competitive ~~in~~ ~~in~~ rather than in areas where they cannot compete and thus will not win any delegates.

Superdelegates increase the influence of party leaders because they are high-ranking members of the ~~the~~ Democratic party that are not chosen by the public and can vote for whichever nominee they like best. Their use takes part of the nomination process away from the typical party member and puts it into the hands of the party's elite.

A candidate's strategy to win the nomination

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

3 A

2012

often differs from his/her strategy to win the general election because of ~~the~~ the different voters involved. To win the nomination, candidates focus on members of their own party who typically have a similar ideology. In the general election, candidates must appeal to a wider range of voters who have much more varied ideologies.

3 B

1011

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

An open primary is a primary that is open to any member of any party to vote in. Essentially, voters <sup>can</sup> simply show up and vote for whichever delegates they feel are the best fit. In a caucus, voters show up and are put into separate groups. These groups are separately asked who they would like to vote for and the candidate that wins the majority of that group wins the votes of the entire group. The Republican Party rules permit winner-take-all primaries. One consequence of this rule is that lesser known candidates won't have as much of a chance. Only the <sup>very</sup> well known candidates really stand a chance.

A candidate's strategy to win the nomination is often different from their strategy developed to win the general election. This happens because less is required from the candidate in his/her nomination. A candidate doesn't need as much of a political agenda when they are running for nomination as they do when they run for election. Also, elections ~~get~~ <sup>receive</sup> much more publicity than nominations do, so the risk of verbal slips and the role of the media as scorekeeper are of more importance in elections. Essentially, the strategy a candidate uses to win a nomination is recognition ~~and~~ and their past actions in politics while the strategy used to win an election is their political agenda.

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

3 C

10/2

a) open primary:

- Registered voters vote for a candidate within their own party

caucuses:

- State political convention is held to choose a candidate for each party.

b) If a Republican candidate gets a percentage, but not the majority, of the vote in one state, the winner-take-all ~~primary~~ primary would mean that the state does not endorse that candidate at all, and no electoral votes would be granted to that candidate. The candidate with the majority of the vote in that state would win the state and be so much the closer to being the ~~nominee~~ nominee of the Republican party.

c) Superdelegates are backed by the entirety of the Democratic party. A candidate that loses to a superdelegate would not attempt to run ~~as~~ as an independent candidate because that defeats the purpose of superdelegates.

The use of these increases the influence of party leaders because they choose the superdelegates.

d) Strategy changes between primaries and the general election because the opponent changes

3C

2012

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

quite a bit between the two. The strategy to win the nomination is based on a fight between members of the same party, with similar ideas and platforms. In the general election, both main candidates know they have a chance to win and fight harder, as well as fighting differently against a candidate that is usually ~~very~~ very different in terms of ideologies.

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## 2011 SCORING COMMENTARY

### Question 3

#### Overview

The intent of this question was to assess students' knowledge of the presidential primary process, including issues related to delegate selection procedures, differences between the two major parties, and strategic shifts between the primary and general election processes. Students were asked to (a) provide definitions of both open primaries and caucuses; (b) describe a consequence of winner-take-all primaries in the Republican Party; (c) explain why the use of superdelegates increases the influence of Democratic Party leaders in the nomination process; and (d) explain why a candidate's strategy differs when he or she is running for the nomination as opposed to running in the general election.

#### Sample: 3A

##### Score: 5

In part (a) the response earned 1 point for defining an open primary as "a secret ballot open to all registered voters that is used to assign delegates to party conventions." The response also earned 1 point for defining a caucus as an "open discussion and debate among registered party members to assign delegates to party conventions."

In part (b) the response earned 1 point for explaining a consequence of winner-take-all presidential primaries. Candidates adjust their strategies, deciding "that they should spend their time and money in areas that they are competitive in rather than in areas where they cannot compete and thus will not win any delegates."

In part (c) the response earned 1 point for explaining that superdelegates increase the power of party leaders in the nomination process "because they are high-ranking members of the Democratic party that are not chosen by the public and can vote for whichever nominee they like best."

In part (d) the response earned 1 point for explaining that campaign strategies differ between the nomination and general election campaigns "because of the different voters involved."

#### Sample: 3B

##### Score: 3

In part (a) the response earned 1 point for defining an open primary as "open to any member of any party to vote in. Essentially, voters can simply show up and vote for whichever delegates they feel are the best fit." The response also earned 1 point for establishing that a caucus is a meeting where participants "show up and are put into separate groups," and that the group makes decisions by voting.

In part (b) the response discusses the difficulties less well known candidates have in the primary process but does not go on to discuss how the shortened time frame caused by winner-take-all rules works to further that disadvantage. Thus no point was earned.

The response does not address part (c) and therefore earned no point.

In part (d) the response earned 1 point for explaining why campaign strategies differ between the nomination and general election campaigns by saying that differences in media coverage cause candidates to be more careful with what they say during a general election campaign.

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**Question 3 (continued)**

**Sample: 3C**

**Score: 1**

In part (a) the response incorrectly defines open primary as when “voters vote for a candidate within their own party,” therefore earning no point. The response also incorrectly defines a caucus as a “[s]tate political convention,” earning no point.

In part (b) the response discusses electoral votes rather than the primary process and therefore did not earn a point.

In part (c) the response states that the party leaders “choose the superdelegates,” implying that party leaders and superdelegates are separate, and therefore earned no point.

In part (d) the response earned 1 point for explaining why a candidate’s strategy to win the nomination is often different from the strategy developed to win the general election: “The strategy to win the nomination is based on a fight between members of the same party, with similar ideas and platforms. In the general election, both main candidates know they have a chance to win and fight harder, as well as fighting differently against a candidate that is usually very different in terms of ideologies.”