



## **AP<sup>®</sup> Government & Politics: U.S. 2000 Scoring Commentary**

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**AP<sup>®</sup> GOVERNMENT & POLITICS: U.S.  
2000 SCORING COMMENTARY**

**Question 1**

**Sample J**

This candidate received all 5 possible points. Part A is awarded 3 points, 1 point each for identifying problems and solutions in the areas of (a) taxation power, (b) creation of an executive, and (c) control of the military. Part B is awarded 2 points for a specific explanation of the decentralization tensions of unfunded mandates with explicit linkage to disability access/ADA.

**Sample K**

This candidate received 1 of 5 points. This is an example of a weak response. Student is awarded 1 point in part A for listing the problem of taxation and identifying the solution. Part B is awarded zero points. The response does not discuss decentralization tensions.

**Sample O**

This candidate received 3 of 5 possible points. Part A is awarded 3 points, one each for clear identifications of problems and solutions in the areas of (a) currency, (b) military, and (c) the judiciary. Part B is awarded zero points. It is a brief discussion of gun control, but there is no mention of decentralization tensions.

**Question 2**

**Sample H**

This candidate received 1 of 7 points. The essay identifies only one characteristic (party) and thus earns no points, but the student does earn 1 point for discussing this characteristic. The essay fails to identify any methods (0 points) and there are no explanations about how interest groups use methods to influence the appointment process (0 points).

**Sample L**

This candidate received all 7 possible points: 1 point for correctly identifying three politically relevant characteristics (party identification, issue/policy alignment, and acceptability) of Supreme Court nominees; and a discussion (a valid observation; 1 point each) for each of the three characteristics for 4 points total for Section A. The essay identifies two accepted methods (lobby the President and campaign contributions to the President) used by interest groups to influence the nomination process (1 point). It also offers an explanation of how interest groups use each method to influence the appointment process (1 point each; 2 points total for explanation.)

**AP<sup>®</sup> GOVERNMENT & POLITICS: U.S.  
2000 SCORING COMMENTARY**

**Question 2 (cont.)**

**Sample S**

This candidate received 4 of 7 points. The essay identifies three characteristics (ideology, gender, and race) in its first sentence (1 point). It offers a discussion of two of the characteristics, one for ideology and one for gender (1 point each; 2 total for discussion). Since the essay uses the same discussion for gender and race, it did not offer a third distinct discussion of the race characteristic and did not earn the third point for discussion. The essay identifies only one method (campaign/electoral support for Senators) (0 points) but does offer an explanation for the accepted method (1 point).

**Question 3**

**Sample G**

This candidate received 3 of 9 possible points: 1 point for correctly identifying Regions 1 and 3 as appropriate for the map-reading exercise; 1 point for the identification of California as an example of the liberalism apparent in Region 1; and an additional point for the explanation of the liberal culture using examples such as the homosexual marriage controversy in Hawaii (1 point). The Republican discussion on Region 3 receives no identification or explanation points. The discussion of farmers is inappropriate, as is the discussion of Governor Bush's election as Texas governor.

**Sample I**

This candidate received 5 of 9 possible points. One point is earned for correctly identifying both regions (Region 1 as the "West Coast," and Region 3 as the "Midwest"). In this essay the student begins with the Republican discussion, which receives no points for Bob Dole as a favorite son. One point for identification is awarded for the mention of the Midwest as being "more conservative." In the Democratic discussion, the student is awarded 1 point for identification of the West Coast as having more urban areas, and 1 point for explaining that these areas are replete with liberal voters. A second point for identification is awarded for identifying minorities as a part of the Democratic voting constituency in Region 1. The student mentions labor as a part of the voting constituency, but fails to explain it as related to any identified group. Although the student mentions three points from the rubric (i.e., urbanization, minorities and labor), she/he can only receive a maximum of 2 identification points. Only one sufficient explanation of the Democratic constituency in Region 1 is provided.

**AP<sup>®</sup> GOVERNMENT & POLITICS: U.S.  
2000 SCORING COMMENTARY**

**Question 3 (cont.)**

**Sample O**

This candidate received all 9 possible points: 1 point for identifying Regions 6 and 3 as the correct areas on the map; Democratic support in the Northeast is identified for both urban and union constituencies (2 points); the student explains urban vote by citing large minority population (1 point) and strong union base by citing AFL-CIO and their ability to activate their workers (1 point); Republican support in Region 3 is identified for both tradition of Republican support and conservative (2 points); and the student explains traditional support by citing historical examples (1 point) and conservative political culture by citing opposition to abortion and homosexual rights (1 point).

**Question 4**

**Sample D**

This candidate received 1 of 6 possible points. Soft money and incumbency are listed as barriers, but soft money is neither identified nor correctly explained as a barrier to Congress' acting to reform campaign finance. Incumbency leads to more donations, which makes re-election more likely; that is enough for 1 point, but not enough to earn a second.

**Sample E**

This candidate received all 6 possible points. This very good essay addresses soft money and incumbency as barriers to Congress' changes in campaign finance laws. Soft money is correctly identified as not going to the candidate, but to a national organization (read "party") for 1 point; neither party is willing to give up the money, so McCain's proposals failed (1 point). Candidates need it, and no one is willing to give it up because it would make winning elections harder (1 point). Incumbency is correctly identified ("the same person who is currently holding the job") for 1 point. Incumbents do not want to give up their financial support (1 point), and this defensive attitude makes it impossible for them to give up the money by changing the laws (1 point).

**Sample Q**

This candidate received 2 of 6 possible points. Soft money is incorrectly identified, and the subsequent discussion is invalidated by that unacceptable identification. The incumbency discussion distinguishes incumbents from challengers and mentions re-election for the former, gaining 1 point for identification. There is 1 explanation point awarded for references to incumbents' having a donation advantage they are unwilling to give up through changes in regulatory statutes.