



## AP<sup>®</sup> United States Government & Politics 2001 Scoring Commentary

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**Question 1**

<b>Sample</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
<b>G</b>	<b>8</b>	<p>The initial paragraph identifies two methods of formal amendment of the Constitution: a proposal approved by 2/3 of both houses of Congress, with ratification by either 3/4 of the state legislatures or by conventions in 3/4 of the states (<b>2 points</b>). The student shows a clear understanding of the proposal/ratification process, federalism and the concept of supermajority.</p> <p>The description of informal methods correctly discusses application of the elastic clause and provides an example of interstate commerce (<b>2 points</b>). Judicial interpretation described as a second method, with court decisions “nationalizing the Bill of Rights through the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment” as an example (<b>2 points</b>).</p> <p>The student explains the preference for informal methods as requiring “less work” than formal methods due to the need to gain more support (the difficulty of achieving a supermajority) in the formal process (<b>2 points</b>).</p>
<b>S</b>	<b>6</b>	<p>The first paragraph of this essay contains no creditable response. In the second paragraph the student accurately identifies two methods for the proposal and ratification of formal amendments to the Constitution. (<b>2 points</b>)</p> <p>The discussion of informal methods describes judicial review with the example of <i>Brown v. Board of Education</i> as an example. (<b>2 points</b>) Discussion of the second informal method is murky, but the student correctly identifies use of the “necessary and proper” clause by Congress to informally change the Constitution. No example is given for this method. (<b>1 point</b>)</p> <p>Finally, the student addresses the popularity of informal methods mentioning that it is preferred because, “it is very difficult to get an amendment passed formally.” The lack of an explanation of how or why the informal method is more popular limits the explanation to a single point (<b>1 point</b>).</p>
<b>T</b>	<b>3</b>	<p>The student discusses formal methods without sufficient reference to specific requirements for amendment. (<b>0 points</b>) The student describes one informal method of amendment, judicial interpretation, and provides the example of the Nixon tapes. (<b>2 points</b>) In the last section of the essay, the student mentions that the informal process is “much easier” and that the formal process “could take months and years,” earning a single point for a basic explanation (<b>1 point</b>).</p>

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**Question 2**

<b>Sample</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
<b>U</b>	<b>6</b>	The student received credit in part (a) for identifying two patterns from the graph ( <b>1 point</b> ). The student identifies constituency service and financial backing as factors and provides explanations for both ( <b>4 points</b> ). In part (c), the student discusses how incumbency advantage discourages challengers and limits the infusion of new ideas into the system ( <b>1 point</b> ).
<b>T</b>	<b>4</b>	In part (a) the student identifies two patterns ( <b>1 point</b> ). In part (b) the student identifies factors of name recognition and PAC contributions ( <b>2 points</b> ). The student’s explanation of name recognition is sufficient for one point. No credit is earned, however, for the explanation of PAC contributions, because it deals with why PAC’s contribute to incumbents rather than explaining why PAC money is an advantage of incumbency ( <b>1 point</b> ). In part (c) the discussion does not develop a consequence of incumbency advantage to the political process ( <b>0 points</b> ).
<b>S</b>	<b>2</b>	In part (a) the student identifies two patterns in the third paragraph: “House gradually increasing since 1948” and “Senate rates not steady” ( <b>1 point</b> ). For part (b) the student received only one point for identifying money as an incumbent advantage ( <b>1 point</b> ). The student earns no points in part (c) because there is no valid discussion of a consequence for the U.S. political process ( <b>0 points</b> ).

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Question 3

Sample	Score	Commentary
K	6	This essay identifies the proper provisions of the Fourteenth Amendment (“equal protection” for <i>Brown</i> and “due process” for <i>Gideon</i> ) (2 points). The student explains a significant holding for <i>Brown</i> overturned <i>Plessy v. Ferguson</i> and “the concept of ‘separate but equal’” and continues to explain the decision’s significance in context of the “ensuing tumult — political and physical — that occurred in states such as Alabama” and to the career of “Governor George Wallace” following <i>Brown</i> (2 points). The student explains a significant holding for <i>Gideon</i> (“provided indigent defendants with the right to counsel”) and further explains the significance of the decision (2 points).
I	3	The student identifies the “due process” provision for <i>Miranda</i> but not the “equal protection” provision for <i>Brown</i> (1 point). The holdings for <i>Brown</i> (“segregation of schools was made illegal”) and for <i>Miranda</i> (“a list of <i>Miranda</i> rights were to be read”) are stated, but further explanation is not creditable (2 points). “The right to equal opportunity” is too generic to receive credit for <i>Brown</i> ’s and “over-ruling <i>Plessy v. Ferguson</i> separate but equal clause” is a restatement of the holding. The attempt to state <i>Miranda</i> ’s significance is an example of a generic response and a restatement of the holding.
E	1	The essay identifies only one holding ( <i>Brown</i> and school desegregation) (1 point). No provisions are mentioned. “Segregation was pretty much abolished” is too generic an explanation to be significant. The <i>Dred Scott</i> discussion is off task and the <i>Mapp</i> decision is factually incorrect.

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**Question 4**

<b>Sample</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
<b>T</b>	<b>6</b>	<p>The candidate correctly defines divided government (although this is not required), and then explains that “Fundamental ideology clashes between Republicans and Democrats cause the most problems and as compromise often cannot be reached, a policy may die”(1 point). The example of the Reagan Administration’s failure to enact the Reganomics program earns an additional point. (1 point)</p> <p>The candidate sufficiently explains the effect of weak party discipline with the statement that “more and more often, members of a party are so moderate that they may vote with the opposition, thereby ruining the presidential majority in Congress...and with the decline of strong party leaders in a Congress, congressmen are increasingly voting on specific issues and not simply voting along party lines.” (1 point) The “death tax” example is credited. (1 point)</p> <p>The candidate provides an acceptable explanation for interest groups and PAC’s with the discussion of competing interests and the resulting “mixed signals” that lead to “muddled or non-existent” public policy (1 point). The example of the conflict over snowmobiles earns the example point (1 point).</p>
<b>J</b>	<b>3</b>	<p>The explanation of the effect of divided government is weak, but it is clarified in the student’s discussion of the example (2 points).</p> <p>The student is credited with one point for an explanation of how weak party discipline makes it difficult for the federal government to enact public policy, but no specific example is given (1 point).</p> <p>The explanation regarding interest groups and PACs does not go beyond a simple argument that money influences votes. This response does not address the question of how the growing number of interest groups and political action committees makes it difficult for the federal government to enact public policy (0 points).</p>
<b>S</b>	<b>1</b>	<p>The student provides a clear explanation of how divided government makes it difficult for the federal government to enact public policy, but does not provide a specific example (1 point).</p>