



AP[®] United States Government & Politics 2002 Scoring Guidelines

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**AP[®] UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS
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Question 1

6 points total

Part A: 2 points possible (1 point per description)

Part B: 4 points possible (1 point for each of 2 identifications, 1 point for each of 2 explanations)

Part A (problems posed for Presidents):

Simple, declarative statements acceptable for description

- greater policy conflict likely/ideological conflict
- narrows the field of potential candidates
- offices go unfilled
- tougher committee scrutiny
- harder to get congressional/Senate/legislature approval/confirmation/ratification of appointments (House not acceptable)
- more frequent character attacks on nominees

Senatorial courtesy does not apply

Part B (ways Presidents overcome problems)

One point for identification; second point for explanation only available after adequate identification.

Explanation must answer *how* Presidents' efforts work to overcome problems.

Reference to approval/ratification/confirmation must include reference to Senate/Congress. Reference to congress or legislature is acceptable; House is NOT)

- generate public support (including use of media)
- compromise on choices (ideological compromise)
- building coalitions in Congress
- making deals (e.g., veto as threat)
- building coalitions with interest groups
- making interim recess appointments
- more intense background screening of nominees (looking for “bulletproof” candidates)
- selecting more minority nominees (i.e., “diversification”)
- increased reliance on White House staff (when forced to appoint officials not in line with President’s position)

Score of zero (0) for attempted answer that earns no points

Score of dash (—) for blank or off-task answer

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Question 2

5 points total

Part A: 1 point possible (1 point for description)

Part B: 2 points possible (1 point for identification of each of two factors)

Part C: 2 points possible (1 point for each of two explanations)

Part A: 1 point

Description must make reference to movement over depicted period

- Elderly proportion of spending has gone up *or*
- Children proportion of spending has gone down *or*
- Proportions have moved in opposite directions

Part B: 2 points total – 1 point per factor (Factors must be politically relevant):

- Rising elderly population
- Shrinking birth rates
- Increased life expectancy
- Voting numbers/rates
- More effective elderly interest groups (e.g., AARP)
- Public awareness of issues for the elderly (no double dipping)
- Children cannot vote and/or generally are not politically organized

No points for mentioning benefit programs in isolation (e.g., “social security has gone up”)

Part C: 2 points total; 1 point per explanation

- Requires linkage to political factor showing how the factor affected changing distribution.
Example: Rising elderly population → increasing number of elderly receiving benefits who exert pressure or fund interest groups
- Must make political connection to factor identified in Part B
- Must go beyond merely stating that there are large numbers of beneficiaries; must link to political factors (pressure, votes, \$)
Example: Declining number of child beneficiaries okay for ID, but explanation must go beyond restating identification (e.g., voters exert less pressure to fund care for children)

Score of zero (0) for attempted answer that earns no points

Score of dash (—) for blank or off-task answer

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Question 3

6 points total

Part A: 1 point for identification of feature; 2 points for explanation of feature as an obstacle

Part B: 1 point for identification of feature; 2 points for explanation of feature as an opportunity

- 1-point explanation is a simple statement that indicates understanding that the identified feature is an obstacle/opportunity.
- 2-point explanation states “*how*” the identified feature is an obstacle/opportunity, and is clearly linked to the feature identified.

Notes:

- May identify and explain the same or different feature in parts A and B.
- Identification specifically mentions a valid, relevant feature of a listed political institution.

Part A: “Obstacles” may include:

Federalism:

- Enabled states to prevent minority group members from voting
- two-tier court system; state courts hostile, regional bias
- State control over voter registration and elections
- State control over legislation (e.g., Jim Crow laws can be discussed, but must be placed in context of federalism for full credit)

United States political party system:

- Taking minority votes for granted
- Closed membership (e.g., “white” primary)
- Less opportunity for representation of minority views
- Lack of choice of candidates (only two)
- Bias against third or minority parties
- Lack of party discipline in enforcing adherence to policies favorable to minority groups

United States’ electoral system:

- Winner take all/ plurality vote
- At-large vs. single-member districts
- Redistricting; racial gerrymandering
- Runoff elections

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Question 3 (cont'd.)

Part B: “Opportunities” may include:

Federalism:

- Appeal to the federal government (e.g., judicial review)
- Civil liberties under federal constitution that provide protection at the state level (incorporation of the Bill of Rights)
- Geographic concentration allows for greater influence

United States political party system:

- Become a valued constituency in one of the major parties
- Proportional representation of delegates to the Democratic Party convention
- Recruitment of minorities as party workers
- Ideological slant of primary voters
- Open membership

United States electoral system:

- Voting blocs; being the margin of difference in a given election
- Single-member districts
- Greater number of seats
- Voting system
- Minority redistricting, gerrymandering

Score of zero (0) for attempted answer that earns no points

Score of dash (—) for blank or off-task answer

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Question 4

8 points total

Part A: 4 points possible

Part B: 4 points possible

Part A: 4 points possible:

- 1 point for **each** of 2 factors identified
- 1 point for **each** of 2 factors explained (explanation must address the “how”)

Contributing factors:

- larger electorate (increasing voter base – drop in voting age, minorities enfranchised, population increase)
- less party mobilization
- more mobile population
- demographic changes; as minority groups/young people increase proportionally in the population, voting turnout declines
- de-alignment (less party identification)
- rising cynicism – people don’t vote because, e.g., they don’t see a difference between candidates/ declining trust in government
- apathy (“too busy” comes under apathy)
- loss of efficacy (sense that vote doesn’t matter)
[cynicism, efficacy, apathy not counted separately unless made clearly distinct in explanation – higher threshold]

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Question 4 (cont'd.)

Part B: 4 points possible

- 1 point for **each** of 2 reasons identified
- 1 point for **each** of 2 reasons explained (explanation must address the “why”)

Reasons for difference between presidential and midterm elections:

- media interest greater in presidential elections
- greater information available about presidential candidates and issues
- national party conventions as infomercials
- mobilization (organized turnout drives)
- more money spent on presidential elections / less money spent on midterm elections
- higher visibility of the presidential office
- incumbency advantage in congressional races/ large number of uncontested congressional seats
- perception of greater importance of presidential elections

No explanation points earned without acceptable identification.

Score of zero (0) for attempted answer that earns no points

Score of dash (—) for blank or off-task answer