

# AP<sup>®</sup> UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

## 2015 SCORING GUIDELINES

### Question 1

#### 5 points

#### Part (a): 2 points

One point is earned for an accurate description of a power of the president in each of the following roles:

- Chief legislator: agenda-setting; veto; message power/State of the Union address; going public/bully pulpit
- Chief bureaucrat: appointments (e.g., vetting); executive orders; manage/oversee the bureaucracy; use White House staff to control bureaucrats (e.g., Office of Management and Budget); prioritize agency activities

#### Part (b): 2 points

One point is earned for each of the following accurate explanations of limits on the president's influence on policymaking:

- Civil service employees: bureaucratic discretion; agency view; civil service protection; interest group capture of agencies; expertise
- The Supreme Court: declares presidential actions unconstitutional

#### Part (c): 1 point

One point is earned for an accurate description of the influence of divided government on the policymaking process. Descriptions must demonstrate an understanding of the political concept of divided government and then describe the influence it has on policymaking. Description may include:

- Control of Congress by one party and control of the presidency by the other party makes it more difficult to enact legislation.
- Control of the two chambers of Congress by opposing political parties makes it more difficult to pass legislation.

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

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

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

1-A 1/2

SECTION II

Time—1 hour and 40 minutes

**Directions:** You have 100 minutes to answer all four of the following questions. Unless the directions indicate otherwise, respond to all parts of all four questions. It is suggested that you take a few minutes to plan and outline each answer. Spend approximately one-fourth of your time (25 minutes) on each question. In your response, use substantive examples where appropriate.

1. American politics has often been called an “invitation to struggle.” Although in recent years the president has been thought to have an advantage in policy making, there are still constraints on the power of the president.

(a) Describe a power of the president in each of the following roles.

- Chief legislator *State of the Union - Sets National Agenda*
- Chief bureaucrat or chief administrator *Oversees the Federal bureaucracy*

(b) Explain how each of the following limits the president’s influence in policy making.

- Civil service employees *President cannot endorse hiring/promotion based on anything other than merit*
- The Supreme Court *Declared the line-item veto unconstitutional*

(c) Describe the influence of divided government on the policy-making process.

*Policy is slow and deliberate*

10:00

Although constitutionally intended to be ~~separated~~ from set apart from the legislative branch, the president is often a part of the legislative process. The title of Chief Legislator may not technically be accurate, as the president does not vote in Congress, he ~~has~~ or she ~~has~~ sets the national agenda. Through the State of the Union Address and other such opportunities, the president ~~describes~~ evaluates national priorities and sets legislative goals for allies in Congress to work towards. The president also has veto power over legislation, which can be ~~not~~ wielded as a threat in order to keep Congress in line— even though Congress can override a presidential veto with a supermajority. Chief bureaucrat or administrator, meanwhile, accurately describes the job of the president to oversee the federal bureaucracy. The president appoints the heads of departments, in high-ranking cases under the consent of the Senate. The various departments, bureaus, administrations, etc. ultimately report

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## ADDITIONAL ANSWER PAGE FOR QUESTION 1

to ~~the~~ the president, and he or she is responsible for their implementation of the law.

The president, however, does not have free reign over hiring and promoting within the Civil Service: legislation such as the Hatch Act require that federal employees must be hired and promoted on the basis of merit. Thus, the president cannot ~~select~~ fill ~~the~~ spots with partisan supporters, reducing his ability to make the bureaucracy respond to his or her wishes. The Supreme <sup>or her</sup> Court also has reduced the president's policy-making influence via its decisions. In one ruling, for example, it declared the line-item veto unconstitutional. The line-item veto had been used by presidents to reject parts of bills passed by congress, rather than entire bills. This had allowed presidents to be more particular of their policy demands of Congress, and the Supreme Court had diminished that influence.

Divided government, which describes the situation where one party controls the white house while the other controls all or part of congress, has served to reduce the ~~efficiency~~ efficiency of policy making. Policy created under a divided government thus comes slowly and deliberately, as the white house and congress clash over opposing views.

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UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

SECTION II

Time—1 hour and 40 minutes

Directions: You have 100 minutes to answer all four of the following questions. Unless the directions indicate otherwise, respond to all parts of all four questions. It is suggested that you take a few minutes to plan and outline each answer. Spend approximately one-fourth of your time (25 minutes) on each question. In your response, use substantive examples where appropriate.

1. American politics has often been called an "invitation to struggle." Although in recent years the president has been thought to have an advantage in policy making, there are still constraints on the power of the president.

(a) Describe a power of the president in each of the following roles.

- Chief legislator
- Chief bureaucrat or chief administrator

(b) Explain how each of the following limits the president's influence in policy making.

- Civil service employees
- The Supreme Court

(c) Describe the influence of divided government on the policy-making process.

A) As a chief legislator, the president has the power to veto a bill passed by Congress. The veto power of the president lets him/her deny a bill that he/she does not agree with. Therefore, one of the powers of a chief legislator is to veto a bill. As chief bureaucrat or administrator, the president has the power to appoint judges for the Supreme Court.

B) Over the years, the president's power has increased making it more and more important to limit his/her power. Both Civil service employees and The Supreme Court help limit the president's power. Civil service employees do this by protecting the people from actions the president might take that harm the people. Also, they influence policy making by encouraging the president to not sign bills that help the people. In addition, The Supreme Court limits the president's influence in policy making by declaring if an executive action is against the constitution or not. As a result, any executive action can not be enforced if The Supreme

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## ADDITIONAL ANSWER PAGE FOR QUESTION 1

Court declares it unconstitutional.

c) The influence of divided government on the policy-making process is very critical because in a divided government, ~~the state~~ ~~the~~ The White House is controlled by one party while Congress is controlled by the other. Congress can also be ~~controlled~~ ~~by~~ controlled by both ~~parties~~ parties because the democratic party can control the senate while the ~~the~~ republicans can control the House. As a result, a disagreement of any sort can cause a bill to go ~~back~~ ~~in~~ ~~forth~~ through Congress due to one or both parties ~~the~~ disagreeing on a part of a bill. Divided government makes the policy-making process harder.

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112  
1C

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

SECTION II

Time—1 hour and 40 minutes

**Directions:** You have 100 minutes to answer all four of the following questions. Unless the directions indicate otherwise, respond to all parts of all four questions. It is suggested that you take a few minutes to plan and outline each answer. Spend approximately one-fourth of your time (25 minutes) on each question. In your response, use substantive examples where appropriate.

1. American politics has often been called an “invitation to struggle.” Although in recent years the president has been thought to have an advantage in policy making, there are still constraints on the power of the president.

(a) Describe a power of the president in each of the following roles.

- Chief legislator
- Chief bureaucrat or chief administrator

(b) Explain how each of the following limits the president’s influence in policy making.

- Civil service employees
- The Supreme Court

(c) Describe the influence of divided government on the policy-making process.

a) Chief legislator - allows the president to introduce bills and policies

Chief admin - lets the president have (almost) final say on whether policies pass or not

b) In regards to civil service employees, I'm not entirely sure... perhaps they can protest decisions the president has made on a law that specifically affects them? As for the Supreme Court, the justices have the power of judicial review on their side - they can decide if something passed a law is unconstitutional or not. So not everything the president passes may stay final.

c) If people of different political beliefs get together to work on a bill or law or something of that nature, then it's an almost given fact that nothing will get done in the end. Thus the reason that most bills die

1C 2/2

ADDITIONAL ANSWER PAGE FOR QUESTION 1

or get pigeonholed (or filibustered), and thus our government today.  
That is all.

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## 2015 SCORING COMMENTARY

### Question 1

#### Overview

This question examined the students' knowledge of the president's roles in public policy making as chief legislator and chief bureaucrat and the constraints on those roles exercised by the civil service and the Supreme Court, as well as the influence of divided government on the policy-making process. In part (a) students were asked to describe a power of the president as chief legislator and the power of the president as chief bureaucrat. In part (b) students were asked to explain how civil service employees could constrain the president and how the Supreme Court could constrain the president in the area of public policy making. In part (c) students were asked to describe the influence of divided government on the policy-making process.

#### Sample: 1A

##### Score: 5

In part (a) the response earned 2 points. One point was earned for correctly describing the president's power as chief legislator by stating that the State of the Union Address "sets legislative goals for allies in Congress to work towards." A second point was earned for correctly describing the president's power as chief bureaucrat by stating that "[t]he president appoints the heads of departments."

In part (b) the response earned 2 points. One point was earned for correctly explaining how civil service employees limit the president's policy-making influence since "federal employees must be hired and promoted on the basis of merit. Thus, the president cannot fill spots with partisan supporters." The second point was earned for correctly explaining the Supreme Court's ability to limit the president's policy-making influence by declaring a law unconstitutional and citing an example: "it declared the line-item veto unconstitutional."

In part (c) the response earned 1 point for correctly describing divided government and its influence on the policy-making process as "where one party controls the white house while the other controls all or part of congress, [which] has served to reduce the efficiency of policy making."

#### Sample: 1B

##### Score: 3

In part (a) the response earned 1 point. One point was earned for correctly describing the president's power as chief legislator "to veto a bill."

In part (a) the response did not earn a point for describing the president's power as chief bureaucrat. The response incorrectly describes the president's power as chief bureaucrat as "the president has the power to appoint judges for the Supreme Court."

In part (b) the response earned 1 point. One point was earned for correctly explaining the Supreme Court's ability to limit the president's influence in policy making by "declaring if an executive action is against the constitution [*sic*] or not."

In part (b) the response did not earn a point for explaining how civil service employees limit the president's influence in policy making. The response incorrectly explains the role of the civil service as "protecting the people from the actions the president might take."

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## 2015 SCORING COMMENTARY

### Question 1 (continued)

In part (c) the response earned 1 point for correctly describing divided government and its influence on the policy-making process by stating that the “White House is controlled by one party while Congress is controlled by other” which “makes the policy-making process harder.”

**Sample: 1C**

**Score: 1**

In part (a) the response did not earn a point for describing the president’s power as chief legislator. The response incorrectly describes the president’s power as chief legislator as “allows the president to introduce bills and policies.”

In part (a) the response did not earn a point for describing the president’s power as chief bureaucrat. The response incorrectly describes the president’s power as chief bureaucrat as “lets the president have (almost) final say on whether policies pass or not.”

In part (b) the response earned 1 point for correctly explaining the Supreme Court’s ability to limit the president’s influence in policy making by deciding “if a law is unconstitutional or not.”

In part (b) the response did not earn a point for explaining how civil service employees can limit the president’s influence on policy making. The response incorrectly explains the civil service ability to limit the president’s policy making as “perhaps they can protest decisions.”

In part (c) the response did not earn a point for describing divided government and its influence on the policy-making process. The response does not provide a correct description of divided government.