

AP[®] COMPARATIVE GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

2016 SCORING GUIDELINES

Question 7

7 points

Part (a): 1 point

One point is earned for a correct description of one similarity in the way that legislators are chosen in Iran and Mexico.

An acceptable description may include:

Legislators are elected by voters.

Part (b): 2 points

One point is earned for a correct description of one formal constraint on the way that legislators are chosen in Iran that does not exist in Mexico.

An acceptable description may include:

- Candidates have to be vetted by the Guardian Council in Iran.
- Candidates must be Muslims, with the exception of the represented religious minorities.

One point is earned for a correct explanation of how the formal constraint affects the level of democracy.

Acceptable explanations must connect to the reduced level of democracy and may include:

- Restricts voter choice
- Restricts access to the ballot
- Restricts participation
- Limits competition

Part (c): 1 point

One point is earned for a correct description of one power common to the legislatures of Iran and Mexico.

Acceptable descriptions may include:

- Both make laws
- Both approve budgets
- Both can impeach the president
- Both can oversee the executive branch
- Both confirm presidential appointments
- Both approve treaties

**AP[®] COMPARATIVE GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS
2016 SCORING GUIDELINES**

Question 7 (continued)

Part (d): 2 points

One point is earned for a correct description of one formal constraint on the power of the legislature in Iran that does not exist in Mexico.

An acceptable description may include:

- Legislation must be approved by the Guardian Council.
- Laws and policies must conform to the principles of Islam, Jurist Guardianship, or Sharia law.
- Power over the supreme leader is limited.

One point is earned for a correct explanation of how the constraint affects the level of democracy.

Acceptable explanations must connect to the reduced level of democracy and may include:

- Reduces power of people's representatives
- Weakens checks and balances or separation of powers
- Gives unelected officials veto power
- Undermines legislative independence

Part (e): 1 point

One point is earned for a correct explanation of why an independent legislature strengthens democracy.

Acceptable explanations may include:

- Creates checks and balances
- Increases the voice of the people
- Prevents concentration of power
- Increases political efficacy
- Better represents interests

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

A score of dash (—) is earned for a blank.

Country Context: We suggest that you spend approximately 40 minutes (20 minutes each) on questions 7 and 8.

- 7. A country's level of democracy is influenced by the independence of its legislature.
 - (a) Describe one similarity in the way that legislators are selected in Iran and Mexico.
 - (b) Describe one formal constraint on the way that legislators are selected in Iran that does not exist in Mexico. Explain how this formal constraint affects the level of democracy in Iran.
 - (c) Describe one power that the legislatures of Iran and Mexico share.
 - (d) Describe one formal constraint on the power of the legislature in Iran that does not exist in Mexico. Explain how this formal constraint affects the level of democracy in Iran.
 - (e) Explain how having an independent legislature strengthens democracy.

a) One similarity in the way that legislators are selected in Iran and Mexico is that there is direct election ~~for~~ by the people. For all of the Majlis in Iran, and some of the lower House in Mexico, the people directly elect those who will represent them.

b) One formal constraint on the way legislators are selected in Iran, but not in Mexico, is that ² before they may run for office, people in Iran must be approved by the Guardian Council. ³ This formal constraint reduces democracy in Iran. The Guardian Council is able to limit the people that Iranians can vote for, and ~~also~~ has candidates on the basis of their ideology, which removes power from the people to truly select those who reflect their opinions. Thus, the constraint on the legislature limits the levels of democracy in Iran, since it takes power from the people, and gives it to a small group of "elites".

c) One power that the legislatures of Iran and Mexico share is the ability to put forth legislation. Both legislatures can submit laws that they have passed as representatives of the people.

ADDITIONAL ANSWER PAGE FOR QUESTION 7

d) One formal constraint on the power of the legislature of Iran that doesn't exist in Mexico is that the legislation put forth and passed by the Majlis in Iran must be approved by the non-elected guardian council as "in the spirit of Islam". This formal restraint limits the levels of democracy in Iran, because it takes power away from the elected officials and gives it to non-elected officials. By forcing legislation to be approved, it gives a chance for the will of the people to be circumvented or ignored. This ~~is~~ certainly limits the true democracy of Iran.

e) Having an independent legislature strengthens democracy because it enables the will of the people to be done. When the legislature is independent, as in Mexico, they do what the citizens desire, because that is who elected them and that is who they answer to. When the legislature isn't independent, as in Iran, the will of the people is limited or ignored. There is less ability to truly voice opinion, and there is no guarantee that the legislation passed reflects the desires of the electorate or the demands of the superior. The independence of the legislature is essential to the strength of a democracy, as it ensures the true will of the people is accomplished.

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.

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 - (c) Describe one power that the legislatures of Iran and Mexico share.
 - (d) Describe one formal constraint on the power of the legislature in Iran that does not exist in Mexico. Explain how this formal constraint affects the level of democracy in Iran.
 - (e) Explain how having an independent legislature strengthens democracy.

a). In Iran and Mexico both legislatures are popularly elected by the people. They are both done in direct open elections.

b). One formal constraint on the way that legislators are selected in Iran that does not exist in Mexico is that they must be devout Muslims and approved by the Guardian Council. This affects the level of democracy in Iran because it allows the conservative regime to block anyone from running for office who is too extreme or a reformer. They can do this all under the guise that they weren't Muslim enough. This limits the amount by which the people of Iran can express their views and how much reform they want.

c). Both the Legislatures of Iran and Mexico can both ^{propose and} pass legislation such as bills.

d). The Iranian legislature, the Majles, has to have all its legislation reviewed by the Guardian Council to ensure that it upholds the spirit of Islam. This affects the level of democracy in Iran because if the ^{Assembly} Council does not

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GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.

agree with the legislature they can block it. Only the Guardian ~~Council~~ Council is chosen 50% by the Ayatollah and the other 50% by the Judges, ~~and~~ which are also selected by the Ayatollah. So if the Ayatollah doesn't like something the Majlis are doing they can independently block it. This affects the level of democracy because the people choose the Majlis to do what they want, but then the Ayatollah can control what they do, regardless of the people's will.

e), Having an independent legislature strengthens democracy because it increases the separation of power. This allows the legislature, who are elected by the people, to more freely carry out the will of the people without interference from other parts of the government.

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.

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 - (d) Describe one formal constraint on the power of the legislature in Iran that does not exist in Mexico. Explain how this formal constraint affects the level of democracy in Iran.
 - (e) Explain how having an independent legislature strengthens democracy.

a. A similar way that the legislature is run in Iran and Mexico is, on both independent and can be dissolved by the president.

b. The legislature is made up of clerics unlike in Mexico. The legislature in Iran bases everything off of Islam but Mexico is completely separated from the church.

c. The both have checks on the president of the state.

d. Iran's legislature is only one house as for Mexico its two houses. This is a constraint because only having one house anything passes through.

e. Having an independent legislature means the authority they have isn't just a rubber stamp. The maximum authority can be put to use.

AP[®] COMPARATIVE GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

2016 SCORING COMMENTARY

Question 7

Overview

The intent of this question was for students to examine the legislatures in Iran and Mexico and consider how their legislatures are similar, formal constraints on Iran’s legislature, how these constraints affect the level of democracy in Iran, and how independent legislatures can strengthen democracy. The skills tested were conceptual, descriptive, and explanatory. Students had seven specific tasks: to describe a similarity in the way legislators are selected in Iran and Mexico, to describe one formal constraint on the way that legislators are selected in Iran that does not exist in Mexico, to explain how this formal constraint of selecting Iran’s legislators affects the level of democracy in Iran, to describe one power that the legislatures of Iran and Mexico share, to describe one formal constraint on the power of the legislatures in Iran that does not exist in Mexico, to explain how this formal constraint of the power of Iran’s legislature affects the level of democracy in Iran, and to explain how an independent legislature strengthens democracy.

Sample: 7A

Score: 7

In part (a) the response earned 1 point for correctly describing a similarity in the way legislators are selected in Iran and Mexico by stating that both governments feature a “direct election by the people.” In part (b) the response earned 1 point for describing one formal constraint on the way that legislators are selected in Iran that does not exist in Mexico as “before they may run for office, people in Iran must be approved by the Guardian Council.” The response earned 1 other point in part (b) for correctly explaining how this formal constraint affects the level of democracy in Iran by stating, “This formal constraint reduces democracy in Iran. The Guardian Council is able to limit the people that Iranians can vote for.” In part (c) the response earned 1 point for describing one power that the legislatures of Iran and Mexico share as “the ability to put forth legislation.” In part (d) the response earned 1 point for describing one formal constraint on the power of the legislatures in Iran that does not exist in Mexico as “the legislation put forth and passed by the Majles in Iran must be approved by the non-elected guardian council.” The response earned 1 other point in part (d) for correctly explaining how this formal constraint affects the level of democracy in Iran by stating, “This formal constraint limits the levels of democracy in Iran, because it takes power away from the elected officials and gives it to non-elected officials.” In part (e) the response earned 1 point for explaining how an independent legislature strengthens democracy by stating that “an independent legislature strengthens democracy because it enables the will of the people to be done.”

Sample: 7B

Score: 4

In part (a) the response earned 1 point for correctly describing a similarity in the way legislators are selected in Iran and Mexico by stating that “both legislatures are popularly elected by the people.” In part (b) the response does not correctly describe one formal constraint on the way that legislators are selected in Iran that does not exist in Mexico. In part (c) the response earned 1 point for describing one power that the legislatures of Iran and Mexico share by stating that they “can both process and pass legislation such as bills.” In part (d) the response earned 1 point for correctly describing one formal constraint on the power of the legislature of Iran that does not exist in Mexico by stating, “The Iranian legislature, the Majles, has to have all its legislation reviewed by the Guardian Council.” The response did not earn another point in part (d) because it does not correctly explain how this formal constraint affects the level of democracy in Iran. In part (e) the response earned 1 point for explaining how an independent legislature strengthens democracy by stating that “an independent legislature strengthens democracy because it increases the separation of power.”

**AP[®] COMPARATIVE GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS
2016 SCORING COMMENTARY**

Question 7 (continued)

Sample: 7C

Score: 1

In part (a) the response does not correctly describe a similarity in the way legislators are selected in Iran and Mexico. In part (b) the response does not correctly describe one formal constraint on the way that legislators are selected in Iran that does not exist in Mexico. In part (c) the response earned 1 point for describing one power that the legislatures of Iran and Mexico share by stating that “both have checks on the president of the state.” In part (d) the response does not correctly describe one formal constraint on the power of the legislature of Iran that does not exist in Mexico. In part (e) the response does not correctly explain how an independent legislature strengthens democracy.