AP® Comparative Government and Politics
2005 Scoring Commentary

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Question 1

Overview

This question required students to demonstrate some general knowledge of comparative political economy. In part (a) students were instructed to use data on seven indicators of development to make an argument that either China or Russia was more developed than the other country. Students were asked to make a comparative statement in presenting the data and to link the data to the concept of development. In part (b) students were then asked to explain the level of development in the country they selected, using two of three factors provided: institutional arrangements, international forces, and leadership change.

Sample: 1A
Score: 8

In part (a) the essay identifies Russia as being more developed than China. The student identifies two indicators from the table that support the argument and presents them in a comparative context. These indicators are GDP by sector (1 point) and literacy (1 point). The student makes a linkage between GDP per sector and development by noting the importance of the service sector in more developed economies: "service … is always the last to develop, and since Russia's percent GDP is highest there, it indicates that Russia is more developed than China" (1 point). The student also makes a linkage between literacy and development, noting: "The high literacy rate in Russia indicates the high level of importance given to education, which is a true indicator of development." The linkage is continued in the remainder of the paragraph (1 point).

In part (b) the student identifies international aid as an international force that has contributed to the level of development of the more developed country (Russia) identified in part (a) (1 point). The linkage is made between international aid and development by noting that aid has "eased anti-Western sentiment and made it easier for the government to focus on issues other than money." The student continues by noting: "Russia has opened itself up to the world and as a result has had to give more freedoms to its people" (1 point). The essay identifies leadership change in the movement from Gorbachev to Yeltsin as a second factor and the subsequent concentration of power in the president as a factor in Russia's development (1 point). A linkage is made to development when the student notes that the president "can more easily enforce his reformist policies" (1 point).

Sample: 1B
Score: 4

In part (a) the student identifies China as being more developed than Russia. The student uses two indicators, GDP per capita and GDP per sector, from the table. However, neither supports the argument that China is more developed than Russia; therefore, no points were earned for part (a).

In part (b) students were asked to discuss level of development. Therefore, points could have been earned in part (b) even if the student failed to earn points in part (a). This essay identifies "leadership change" as a factor contributing to China's level of development, but, more accurately, the student identifies an institutional change stating that under Deng Xiaoping "China opened itself to the world. … With this … China can well be classified as an Authoratarian [*sic*] Capitalist state" (1 point). A linkage point to development is made through the statement that if Deng Xiaoping had not opened China to international

Question 1 (continued)

influences, "China's economy would never have been able to compete in today's competitive world markets" (1 point). The student next identifies increased international trade as an international influence that contributes to China's level of development (1 point). The references to China having earned most-favored-nation status and that "China's entry into the WTO has had an even bigger impact into [*sic*] its economic, social, and political development" earned 1 point. If this second factor had been another institutional factor, no points would have been received because students were asked to use two different factors from the list given in the question.

Sample: 1C
Score: 2

In part (a) the student identifies Russia as being more developed than China. The essay identifies two indicators from the table that support this argument and presents them in a comparative context. These indicators are GDP per capita (1 point) and literacy (1 point). The student received credit for the literacy indicator even though it is referred to as education. No attempt at an explanatory linkage to development is attempted; therefore, no points were earned for the second section of part (a).

In part (b) the essay earned no points. No attempt was made to answer this part of the question.

Question 2

Overview

This question assessed students' knowledge and understanding of the executive branch of government from a comparative perspective. In part (a) students were asked to describe the main function of two parts of the executive branch: the head of government and the head of state. Part (b) tested whether students could identify the offices that constitute the head of government in Great Britain and either India <u>or</u> Mexico <u>or</u> Nigeria. Part (c) tested understanding of the role of the head of government in those countries relative to the legislature and the electorate. Students were asked to compare those roles across the two countries.

**Sample: 2A
Score: 7**

In part (a) the student describes the main function of the head of government: a policymaking role, "to pass legislation, treaties, and ensure that the nation is taken care of" (1 point). The student also describes the main function of the head of state: a ceremonial function, "to meet and greet other ambassidors [*sic*] and heads of state" (1 point).

In part (b) the student correctly identifies the office that constitutes the head of government in both Great Britain and Nigeria (1 point).

In part (c) the student presents an accurate comparison of the head of government's relationship with the legislatures in Great Britain and Nigeria: degree of separation from the legislature (1 point). The student correctly states the implications of the comparison of that relationship for the head of government: separation from the legislature means the head of government is less accountable to it (1 point). The essay presents a correct factual comparison of the head of government's relationship with the electorate in Great Britain and Nigeria: indirect vs. direct election (1 point). The student correctly identifies the implications of the comparison of that relationship for the head of government: direct election makes the head of government more "closely tied" to the electorate (1 point).

**Sample: 2B
Score: 4**

In part (a) the student describes the main function of the head of government: "to oversee all legislation and provide a leadership role" (1 point). The student's description of the main function of the head of state is vague and therefore earned no points.

In part (b) the student correctly identifies the offices that constitute the head of government in both Great Britain and Mexico (1 point).

In part (c) the student presents an accurate comparison of the head of government's relationship with the legislatures in Great Britain and Mexico in the discussion of whether the legislature plays a role in the selection of the head of government (1 point). The student correctly states the implications of the comparison of that relationship for the head of government: In Mexico "This has made it harder for

Question 2 (continued)

legislation to be passed than it is in Great Britain" (1 point). The student neither presents a factual comparison of the head of government's relationship with the electorate in Great Britain and Mexico nor states the implications of a comparison of that relationship for the head of government. No points were earned in part (c).

**Sample: 2C
Score: 1**

In part (a) the description of the function of the head of government is vague. The student neither addresses the main function of the head of government nor describes the main function of the head of state. The essay earned no points in part (a).

In part (b) the student correctly identifies the office that constitutes the head of government in both Great Britain and India (1 point).

In part (c) the essay does not present a correct factual comparison of the head of government's relationship with the legislature in Great Britain and India, nor does it identify the implications of a comparison of that relationship for the head of government. The student neither presents a factual comparison of the head of government's relationship with the electorate in Great Britain and India nor states the implications of a correct factual comparison of that relationship for the head of government. The essay earned no points for part (c).

Question 3

Overview

The intent of this question was to assess students' knowledge of how France's colonial experience in Algeria contributed to constitutional change in France, as well as how the experience affected contemporary French political parties and public policy.

**Sample: 3A
Score: 6**

In part (a) the student explains that when, after World War II, "Western colonizers began to grant independence to and to respond to the increasing nationalism of colonized nations, France—intensely nationalistic . . . did not relinquish Algeria." This description of the colonial experience earned 1 point. The student goes on to discuss that "Charles de Gaulle saved the nation from Civil War [*sic*] . . . upon the condition that the people accept his new Constitution for the new 5th republic (granting the executive immense power)." This description of constitutional change earned 1 point.

In part (b) the essay identifies the National Front as a current political party (1 point). It goes on to explain that the National Front "traces its xenophobic and intensely nationalistic beliefs to sentiments shared by the French military in Algeria and attitudes toward Algeria held by those who would have kept it a colony." The student describes how colonialism has influenced the National Front (1 point).

In part (c) the ban on headscarves is identified as a government policy (1 point). The student then links this to colonial experience by explaining that the ban on headscarves is a result of the "colonialist attitude of French cultural superiority, nationalism of the colonial era, the post-colonial immigration, and resulting political parties." The essay earned 1 point for this discussion.

**Sample: 3B
Score: 3**

In part (a) the student does not provide a specific description of the French colonial experience but simply refers to it and thus earned no points for this section. The student does describe an appropriate constitutional change that is linked to France's colonial experience in Algeria: "After its colonial experience in Algeria, France adopted a new constitution and entered into the 5th republic. The Power of the President was greatly increased" (1 point).

In part (b) the student correctly names the National Front as a current political party (1 point). The students says that the National Front was "xenophobic" and "was strengthened by the experience in Algeria because the French had more contact with non-French people." This did not earn a second point because the influence on the National Front party is not sufficiently linked to colonial experience in Algeria. The essay needs to describe more specifically how the National Front changed its platform (e.g., adopted an anti-immigrant platform) due to the colonial experience in Algeria (e.g., increase in the number of Algerian immigrants into France).

Question 3 (continued)

In part (c) the student identifies the ban on headscarves as a current government policy (1 point). The essay did not earn an additional point in this section because there is no demonstrated link between the policy and colonial experience.

Sample: 3C
Score: 1

In part (a) the student does not describe the Algerian colonial experience or French constitutional change and thus earned no points. The "loss of Algeria by the French during the 1950's" did not earn a point because it is not a specific example of France's colonial experience in Algeria.

In part (b) the student names "Gaulists" [*sic*] as a current political party (1 point). The student did not earn a point for how colonial experience influenced the party because there is no link made between colonial experience and the party.

In part (c) the student neither identifies an appropriate government policy nor demonstrates a link between a policy and France's colonial experience. The essay earned no points for part (c).

Question 4

Overview

This question evaluated students' ability to differentiate between political and socioeconomic indicators and to explain how such factors affect female representation in national politics in either India or Mexico or Nigeria. It also assessed students' knowledge of how the features of a country's political system can affect female political representation.

Sample: 4A
Score: 5

Part (a) earned 1 point. The student makes an accurate statement regarding the level of female representation in Nigeria and provides direct data from the table about both the percentage of women ministers (22.6 percent) and the percentage of females in the lower house of parliament (3.4 percent).

In part (b) the essay accurately identifies two socioeconomic indicators from the table that contribute to the low level of female representation in Nigeria. The student identifies the literacy rate as a socioeconomic indicator (1 point) and explains how the low literacy rate affects female representation in the government: "it shows little chance for a woman to be involved in politics" (1 point). The essay earned 1 point for identifying the fertility rate as a socioeconomic indicator and 1 point for explaining that "the stay-at-home housewife traditions . . . along with the high rate of fertility" limit women's opportunities to "thrive in politics."

In part (c) the student's argument that "It is not apealing [*sic*] to the people of Nigeria to vote" uneducated people into public office did not earn the point because it does not adequately explain a feature of the political system that affects female representation in national politics in Nigeria.

Sample: 4B
Score: 3

In part (a) the student lists India's female literacy rate (45.4 percent), female percentage of the labor force (32 percent), and number of women in its lower legislative house (9 percent). The statistic for the lower house is correctly cited, and the student states that the figure is low. However, because listing the lower house figure along with literacy rate and labor force statistics does not clearly differentiate between political and socioeconomic indicators, the student earned no points for part (a).

In part (b) the student correctly identifies women's participation in the labor force as a socioeconomic indicator (1 point). The description does not explain how labor force involvement affects representation of women in government, so no linkage point was earned for this indicator. The student correctly identifies the literacy rate as a second socioeconomic indicator (1 point) and explains how it affects representation by stating: "many of the women may not be aware of their role (or possible role) in government" (1 point).

In part (c) the student notes, "One feature of India's political system that affects female representation in government is nothing." Although a brief statement follows that refers to "the caste system and the number of women who work at home raising children," no point was earned for part (c).

Question 4 (continued)

Sample: 4C
Score: 2

In part (a) the student makes an accurate general statement regarding the level of female representation in Mexico. The student states that the level of representation is "mediocre" but "on the rise." No statistics are provided, but the student earned credit because the description is accurate and centers on the political indicators (1 point).

In part (b) the student correctly identifies literacy as a socioeconomic indicator (1 point). However, the student does not provide an explanation for how or why literacy affects the "mediocre" level of representation in the Mexican government, so no point was earned for the linkage between the indicator and representation. Although female influence in the lower house of parliament is discussed in part (b), this is not a socioeconomic indicator, and the student does not make a linkage. The student earned no points for the second indicator or linkage.

In part (c) the student argues that "a large lower house of the legislature" "benefits female involvement." However, the explanation earned no points because the student provides no clear evidence for how large numbers in the legislature increase the likelihood for females to be elected to office.