

AP[®] UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS 2016 SCORING GUIDELINES

Question 1

6 points

Part (a): 1 point

One point is earned for a description of an important function of political parties as a linkage institution in elections. Correct descriptions may include:

- Nominating/running/recruiting candidates for elected office
- Providing voter cues/information about policy choices, etc.
- Fundraising
- Providing distinct political choices to voters

Part (b): 2 points

One point is earned for each of two descriptions of the media's influence on the electoral process in each of the following roles:

- Gatekeeping/Agenda setting: media determines which issues are perceived as relevant to voters
- Scorekeeping/Horse race journalism: who's winning rather than focusing on policy issues relevant to the voters

Part (c): 2 points

One point is earned for describing each of two strategies that interest groups use to influence the electoral process. Correct descriptions may include:

- Giving money
- Forming PACs
- Endorsing candidates
- Grassroots canvassing
- Get out the vote (GOTV)
- Independent expenditures (ads)
- Issue advocacy
- Polling
- Lobbying (must be linked to electoral process)

Part (d): 1 point

One point is earned for an explanation of how interest groups may limit representative democracy. Correct explanations may include:

- Overrepresenting elites and their interests
- Favoring narrow interests over broad interests
- Providing biased information/distorting facts
- Hyperpluralism contributing to gridlock

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

SECTION II

Time—1 hour and 40 minutes

1A - (1 of 2)

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. Linkage institutions—such as political parties, the media, and interest groups—connect citizens to the government and play significant roles in the electoral process.

- (a) Describe one important function of political parties as a linkage institution in elections. mm
- (b) Describe the influence of the media on the electoral process in each of the following roles.
- Gatekeeping/agenda setting
 - Scorekeeping/horse race journalism
- (c) Describe two strategies interest groups use to influence the electoral process.
- (d) Explain how, according to critics, interest groups may limit representative democracy.

One important function that political parties provide as a linkage institution is that they provide candidates for citizens to vote for and ultimately elect into office. The goal of political parties is to elect candidates into government and use elections as a way to communicate who citizens want to represent them.

Media's gatekeeping/agenda setting role influences the electoral process because this role allows the media to emphasize certain issues and hide others. This selective role may favor a candidate if the media is talking about one of his/her positions on an issue positively.

Media's scorekeeping role influences the electoral process because this role communicates to the people

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polls and the standings in an election. The reporting of such results can make a candidate seem more popular and favorable and influence citizens to vote for a candidate ahead in the polls.

Two strategies that interest groups use to influence the electoral process include sharing information through media/protests and by supporting/subsidizing a particular candidate. Interest groups may use media and rallies to disperse information about issues relevant to candidates and may hurt/help such candidates depending on their position and the purpose of the interest group's message. Interest groups may also fund a candidate's campaign to show support and help influence his election result by showing such financial support.

Interest groups have been criticized to limit a representative democracy because since their goal is to influence public policy according to the group's interest, policy may be adjusted due to their wants instead of due to the popular's wants. Elected representatives may be influenced to satisfy interest groups because of certain incentives, such as money and votes, instead of satisfying the popular opinion.

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

SECTION II

Time—1 hour and 40 minutes

1B (1 of 2)

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. Linkage institutions—such as political parties, the media, and interest groups—connect citizens to the government and play significant roles in the electoral process.

- (a) Describe one important function of political parties as a linkage institution in elections.
- (b) Describe the influence of the media on the electoral process in each of the following roles.
 - Gatekeeping/agenda setting
 - Scorekeeping/horse race journalism
- (c) Describe two strategies interest groups use to influence the electoral process.
- (d) Explain how, according to critics, interest groups may limit representative democracy.

A) One important function of political parties as linkage institutions is that they basically have the set ideology of the person running for election. The people know and understand the party, so when someone is running a candidate in that specific party, people will be able to relate and connect to them because they are familiar with the parties ideology.

B) The media is able to influence the electoral process in different ways. They can target candidates and make them seem like bad people. The media tends to keep track of who is winning in the election. They announce who is in first, who is in last, who is better, and who is the worst. They could change the agenda by posting advertisements on issues that they want people to see. By doing this, it could shape the way candidates act and say. The media could pick who wins the elections. They are the entrance to winning. If the media likes you, then you have a better chance in winning.

C) 2 strategies that interest groups use to influence the electoral process are PAC's and voting promises in exchange for policy in their

favor. Interest groups use PAC's and Super PAC's as a way to collect funds for a specific candidate or party. The funds that they donate are given to the candidates. When and if the candidate wins, the interest groups expect them to do a favor for them by voting their way. Interest groups promise to vote for the candidates and in return, they expect them to help them by voting and making policy specifically designed to help the interest group thrive.

D) Interest groups may limit representative democracy because interest groups are specific with what they are fighting for. They are not as open minded, so it limits the variety of representation.

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UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

SECTION II

Time—1 hour and 40 minutes

1C (1 of 1)

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. Linkage institutions—such as political parties, the media, and interest groups—connect citizens to the government and play significant roles in the electoral process.

- (a) Describe one important function of political parties as a linkage institution in elections.
- (b) Describe the influence of the media on the electoral process in each of the following roles.
 - Gatekeeping/agenda setting
 - Scorekeeping/horse race journalism
- (c) Describe two strategies interest groups use to influence the electoral process.
- (d) Explain how, according to critics, interest groups may limit representative democracy.

One important function of political parties as a linkage institution is to make sure that their candidate gets voted for by making the candidate look good.

Media will mainly choose one political party and tell all the good things about it and all the bad things about the other.

They will also try to predict the winner.

Interest groups will pay money and rally.

With interest groups, representative gov. will only represent the interest groups because not many of the other people vote.

AP[®] UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS 2016 SCORING COMMENTARY

Question 1

Overview

This question examined the significant role played by linkage institutions in the electoral process. Part (a) asked students to describe one important function of political parties as a linkage institution in elections. Part (b) asked students to describe the influence of media on the electoral process in each of the following roles: gatekeeping/agenda setting and scorekeeping/horse race journalism. Part (c) asked students to describe two strategies that interest groups use to influence the electoral process. Part (d) asked students to explain how, according to critics, interest groups may limit representative democracy.

Sample: 1A

Score: 6

In part (a) the response earned 1 point for describing one important function of political parties as a linkage institution in elections by stating, “One important function that political parties provide as a linkage institution is that they provide candidates.”

In part (b) the response earned 1 point for describing the influence of the media on the electoral process in the role of gatekeeping/agenda setting by stating, “Media’s gatekeeping/agenda setting role influences the electoral process because this role allows the media to emphasize certain issues and hide others.”

In part (b) the response earned 1 point for describing the influence of the media on the electoral process in the role of scorekeeping/horse race journalism by stating, “Media’s scorekeeping role influences the electoral process because this role communicates to the people polls and the standings in an election.”

In part (c) the response earned 1 point for describing a strategy interest groups use to influence the electoral process by stating that “strategies that interest groups use to influence the electoral process include sharing information through media/protests.”

In part (c) the response earned 1 point for describing a strategy interest groups use to influence the electoral process by stating that “strategies that interest groups use to influence the electoral process include ... supporting/subsidizing a particular candidate.”

In part (d) the response earned 1 point for explaining how, according to critics, interest groups may limit representative democracy by stating, “Elected representatives may be influenced to satisfy interest groups because of certain incentives, such as money and votes, instead of satisfying the popular opinion.”

Sample: 1B

Score: 3

In part (a) the response earned 1 point for describing one important function of political parties as a linkage institution in elections by stating, “One important function of political parties as linkage institutions is that they basically have the set ideology of the person running for election.”

In part (b) the response did not earn a point for describing the influence of the media on the electoral process in the role of gatekeeping/agenda setting. “The media ... could change the agenda by posting advertisements on issues that they want people to see” is an insufficient description of gatekeeping.

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2016 SCORING COMMENTARY

Question 1 (continued)

In part (b) the response did not earn a point for describing the influence of the media on the electoral process in the role of scorekeeping/horse race journalism. “The media could pick who wins the election” is an insufficient description of scorekeeping.

In part (c) the response earned 2 points for describing two strategies interest groups use to influence the electoral process by stating that “2 strategies that interest groups use to influence the electoral process are PAC’s [*sic*] and voting promises.”

In part (d) the response did not earn a point for explaining how, according to critics, interest groups may limit representative democracy. “Interest groups may limit representative democracy because interest groups are specific with what they are fighting for. They are not as open minded, so it limits the variety [*sic*] of representation” is an insufficient criticism of interest groups’ limitation on representative democracy.

Sample: 1C

Score: 1

In part (a) the response earned 1 point for describing one important function of political parties as a linkage institution in elections by stating that “political parties ... make sure that their candidate gets voted for by making the candidate look good.”

In part (b) the response did not earn a point for describing the influence of the media on the electoral process in the role of gatekeeping/agenda setting. “Media will mainly choose one political party” is an insufficient description of gatekeeping.

In part (b) the response did not earn a point for describing the influence of the media on the electoral process in the role of scorekeeping/horse race journalism. “Media ... will also try to predict the winner” is an insufficient description of scorekeeping.

In part (c) the response did not earn a point for describing a strategy interest groups use to influence the electoral process. “Interest groups will pay money” is not connected to the electoral process.

In part (c) the response did not earn a point for describing a strategy interest groups use to influence the electoral process. “Interest groups will ... rally” is not connected to the electoral process.

In part (d) the response did not earn a point for explaining how, according to critics, interest groups may limit representative democracy. “With interest groups, representative gov. will only represent the interest groups because not many of the other people vote” is an insufficient criticism of interest groups’ limitation on representative democracy.