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.

Question 2

5 points

Part (a): 1 point

One point is earned for identifying a correct trend. Answers may include:
- Decreasing percentage of non-Hispanic whites/white population
- Increasing percentage of Hispanic population
- Increasing percentage of Asian American population
- Stable percentage of African American population

Part (b): 1 point

One point is earned for an explanation of how the trend correctly identified in part (a) is likely to affect the electoral success of either the Democratic Party or the Republican Party. Explanations may include:
- Democratic Party may experience greater electoral success due to the increasing percentage of minority voters.
- Republican Party may experience a decrease in electoral success due to the decreasing non-Hispanic white population.
- Republican Party could gain Hispanic voters based on socially conservative issues.

Part (c): 1 point

One point is earned for a correct explanation of how demographic changes are likely to affect the way in which parties operate in Congress. Explanations may include that parties can:
- Introduce/sponsor legislation that is more focused on minority interests;
- Appoint minorities to leadership positions (committees, etc.);
- Be more responsive to lobbyists who represent minority interests;
- Influence committee priorities that are more focused on minority interests.

Part (d): 2 points

One point is earned for each of two descriptions of specific actions that presidents can take to respond to demographic changes. Descriptions may include that presidents can:
- Issue executive orders/agreements to respond to minority policy views/interests;
- Appoint diverse individuals to federal government positions;
- Set the agenda to support/oppose minority interests (e.g., State of the Union);
- Go public/advocate for/against minority interests (bully pulpit);
- Sign or veto legislation regarding minority interests;
- Select VP nominee to reflect demographic changes.

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.

Question 3

6 points

Part (a): 1 point

One point is earned for the correct identification of the primary role of Congress in the policy process:
>   Congress makes, writes, and passes legislation/policy.

Part (b): 1 point

One point is earned for the correct explanation of how divided party control of Congress makes the policy process difficult:
>   Legislation is more difficult to pass when one party controls the House and the other controls the Senate.

Part (c): 1 point

One point is earned for the correct identification of the bureaucracy's primary role in the policy process:
>   Implementation of policy

Part (d): 1 point

One point is earned for a correct explanation of how one of the following increases the power of the bureaucracy in the policy process:
- Rule-making: Bureaucrats write the specific regulations that determine the implementation of public policy, which enhances bureaucratic power.
- Bureaucratic discretion: Individual bureaucrats/agencies have to make choices about how to implement existing laws, which enhances bureaucratic power

Part (e): 2 points

One point is earned for each of two correct explanations of how Congress can limit the power of bureaucracy through:
- Oversight hearings: monitor through hearings; investigations; accounting
- Power of the purse: increase/decrease budgets; shift spending; punish/reward agencies; kill a program

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.

Question 4

5 points

Part (a): 2 points

One point is earned for each of two explanations of how each of the following constitutional features protected against the concentration of power in the national government:

- <u>Checks and balances:</u> By allowing each branch some power over the other branches the Constitution limits the possibility of one branch getting too powerful.
- <u>Federalism:</u> By dividing power between the national/federal and state governments, the Constitution ensured that the national government would not be too powerful.

Part (b): 1 point

One point is earned for an explanation of how one of the following features of the Constitution limited the people's ability to influence the national government:

- <u>Electoral College</u>: feature that reduces the influence of the popular vote for the president, thereby limiting the people's direct influence on the national government.
- <u>Selection of senators before the Seventeenth Amendment:</u> The selection of senators prior to the Seventeenth amendment limited the direct influence of the people because state legislatures selected senators rather than the people choosing senators through a popular election.

Part (c): 1 point

One point is earned for a description of a Constitutional amendment that increases suffrage

- Fifteenth Amendment (African American male suffrage)
- Nineteenth Amendment (women's suffrage)
- Twenty-third Amendment (D.C. resident suffrage)
- Twenty-fourth Amendment (eliminated the poll tax)
- Twenty-sixth Amendment (suffrage for citizens age 18 and older)

An amendment number is not needed to earn credit, but a description of how the amendment increased suffrage is needed to earn credit.

Part (d): 1 point

One point is earned for a description of the effect of one of the following laws on citizen participation in elections:

- Voting Rights Act (VRA): eliminated barriers to voting; increased, but did not grant minority participation.
- National Voting Rights Act (Motor Voter): allows individuals to register to vote when getting driver's license or at other government agencies, making it easier to register.

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.