
AP[®] Comparative Government and Politics

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary Set 2

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Free Response Question 1

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AP[®] COMPARATIVE GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

2019 SCORING GUIDELINES

Question 1

3 points

One point is earned for correctly defining the concept of regime change.

Acceptable definitions may include:

- A regime change is when there is a complete transformation of the political system, such as a transition from authoritarianism to democracy.
- A regime change is a change to the constitution or a change to the fundamental laws structuring the government in a way that transforms the political system.

One point is earned for correctly identifying a country studied in the AP Comparative Government and Politics course that has experienced a regime change since 1990.

Acceptable identifications include:

- Mexico
- Nigeria
- Russia

One point is earned for a correct explanation of how a regime change is different from a change in government.

Acceptable explanations may include:

Regime change involves the transformation of the type of political system, whereas governmental change involves the replacement of individual leaders or political parties.

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

A score of (—) is earned for a blank.

COMPARATIVE GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

Section II

Time—1 hour and 40 minutes

Directions: You have 1 hour and 40 minutes to answer five short-answer concept questions, one conceptual analysis question, and two country context questions. Unless the directions indicate otherwise, respond to all parts of all eight questions. It is suggested that you take a few minutes to plan and outline each answer. We suggest that you spend approximately 30 minutes total on questions 1 through 5, 30 minutes on question 6, and 40 minutes total on questions 7 and 8. These suggested times do not reflect the weight of the questions as part of your AP exam score. In your responses, use substantive examples where appropriate.

Short-Answer Concepts: We suggest that you spend approximately 30 minutes total on questions 1 through 5.

1. Define the concept of regime change. Identify a country studied in the AP Comparative Government and Politics course that has experienced a regime change since 1990. Explain how a change in regime is different from a change in government.

A regime change is when the way in which a government is run changes (the system of government). For example, a regime change would be a transition from authoritarian to democratic presidential rule. Since 1990, Nigeria has experienced a regime change from a parliamentary system (under British colonization) to a series of military dictatorships, to, finally, a presidential system after the adoption of the constitution. This differs from a change in government because the system itself is changing, not just the person or party in power. A change in government would be a liberal president elected after a conservative president.

COMPARATIVE GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

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Short-Answer Concepts: We suggest that you spend approximately 30 minutes total on questions 1 through 5.

1. Define the concept of regime change. Identify a country studied in the AP Comparative Government and Politics course that has experienced a regime change since 1990. Explain how a change in regime is different from a change in government.

A regime change is when the type of government within a state changes. For example, there was a regime change in Russia after Cold war with the disbandment of the Soviet Union.

A change in regime is changing the political institutions while a change in government is changing the leader or ruler of a state.

COMPARATIVE GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

Section II

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Short-Answer Concepts: We suggest that you spend approximately 30 minutes total on questions 1 through 5.

1. Define the concept of regime change. Identify a country studied in the AP Comparative Government and Politics course that has experienced a regime change since 1990. Explain how a change in regime is different from a change in government.

A regime change is a change in the way a political system interacts with its population, markets, and the world. Nigeria has experienced a regime change by switching from a military dictatorship to a democratically elected presidency. A regime change is different to a change in government because a change in government is only a change in the people in charge of the state, while a regime administration. A regime change does not require a change in government.

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2019 SCORING COMMENTARY

Question 1

Note: Student samples are quoted verbatim and may contain spelling and grammatical errors.

Overview

The intent of this question was to assess students' understanding of regime change and the difference between regime change and a change in government. The skills tested were descriptive and explanatory. Students had three specific tasks: to define the concept of regime change, to identify a country studied within the AP Comparative Government and Politics course that has experienced a regime change since 1990, and to explain how a change in regime is different from a change in government.

Sample: 1A

Score: 3

The response earned 1 point for correctly defining the concept of regime change as “when the way in which a government is run changes (the system of government). For example, a regime change would be a transition from authoritarian to democratic presidential rule.” Additional acceptable responses include that a regime change is a complete transformation of the political system, a change to the constitution, or a change to the fundamental laws structuring the government in a way that transforms the political system.

The response earned 1 point for correctly identifying Nigeria as a country that has experienced a regime change since 1990. Additional acceptable responses include Mexico and Russia.

The response earned 1 point for correctly explaining that a change in regime is different from a change in government “because the system itself is changing, not just the person or party in power.”

Sample: 1B

Score: 2

The response did not earn a point for defining the concept of regime change. The definition of regime change as “when the type of government within a state changes” does not specify that regime change is a complete transformation of the political system.

The response earned 1 point for correctly identifying Russia as a country that has experienced a regime change since 1990. Additional acceptable responses include Mexico and Nigeria.

The response earned 1 point for correctly explaining how a change in regime is different from a change in government because a “change in regime is changing the political institutions while a change in government is changing the leader or ruler of a state.”

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Question 1 (continued)

Sample: 1C

Score: 1

The response did not earn a point for defining the concept of regime change. The definition of regime change as “a change in the way a political system interacts with its population, markets, and the world” does not make clear that the system itself is completely transformed.

The response earned 1 point for correctly identifying Nigeria as a country that has experienced a regime change since 1990. Additional acceptable responses include Mexico and Russia.

The response did not earn a point for explaining how a change in regime is different from a change in government. The statement that “regime change is different to a change in government because a change in government is only a change in administration” does not adequately explain that a regime change is a more sweeping, systemic change.