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# AP<sup>®</sup> Comparative Government and Politics

## Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary Set 1

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# **AP<sup>®</sup> COMPARATIVE GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS**

## **2019 SCORING GUIDELINES**

### **Question 5**

#### **3 points**

One point is earned for EACH correct explanation of a reason why an authoritarian state would allow citizens to criticize the government.

Acceptable explanations may include:

- To maintain legitimacy
- To prevent unrest
- To maintain the government's grip on power
- To build a favorable reputation in the international community
- To improve or shape policy

One point is earned for correctly describing a policy adopted by a specific country to restrict criticism of the government.

Acceptable descriptions may include:

- Restricting or monitoring Internet access
- Detaining or arresting dissenters
- Controlling or censoring media
- Passing laws that prevent or reduce criticism

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.

- ↑ legitimacy                      ↑ reduces rebelliousness
5. Explain two reasons why an authoritarian state would allow citizens to criticize the government. Describe a specific policy adopted by Russia, China, or Iran to restrict criticism of the government. 5A

Allowing citizens to criticize the government <sup>increases</sup> the government's legitimacy. Because the government is providing ~~it~~ citizens with an outlet to voice their opinions, they feel more inclined to believe the government has the right to rule. It can also reduce <sup>the chance of</sup> rebellions forming. By providing <sup>frustrated citizens</sup> citizens with an outlet to voice their opinions, they may feel less inclined to rebel against the regime in effort to gain civil liberties. Although this doesn't work out this way.

China in an effort to restrict criticism of the government has censored the ~~press~~ media to provide only information ~~of~~ that they approve of. This censorship particularly increased after Tiananmen Square when citizens began protesting for civil liberties. Censorship was so powerful that <sup>most</sup> ordinary citizens have no idea Tiananmen Square even occurred.

5. Explain two reasons why an authoritarian state would allow citizens to criticize the government. Describe a specific policy adopted by Russia, China, or Iran to restrict criticism of the government.

5 B

An authoritarian state would allow citizens to criticize the government because the ~~gov~~ government would be able to see what they were doing wrong and maybe adjust certain changes; an authoritarian state may want the people's direct feedback. Another reason why an authoritarian state would allow citizens to criticize the government would be so they can directly punish people and get them to stop. Authoritarian states want total control, therefore they can show their dominance and assertion of power by severely punishing one who criticizes the government teaching a lesson to the rest of the people as why they may not want ~~to~~ to criticize the ~~gov~~ government even though it is ~~allowed~~. A specific policy of China that restricts criticism of the government would be China's direct control of the mass media within China. China's government controls all of the media therefore, they are allowed to denote what people say about the government overall restricting any criticism.

5. Explain two reasons why an authoritarian state would allow citizens to criticize the government. Describe a specific policy adopted by Russia, China, or Iran to restrict criticism of the government.

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An authoritarian state might allow citizens to criticize the government to prevent uprisings or protests. They might also allow it to appear like there more democratic and that they are giving citizens freedom. China heavily censors their media to only allow citizens to see and know what there okay with them seeing and knowing.

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## 2019 SCORING COMMENTARY

### Question 5

**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 criticism of the government in authoritarian regimes. The skills tested were explanatory and descriptive. Students had three specific tasks: to explain two reasons why authoritarian states allow citizens to criticize the government and to describe a specific policy adopted by Russia, China, or Iran to restrict criticism of the government.

#### Sample: 5A

**Score: 3**

The response earned 1 point for explaining that authoritarian regimes allow citizen criticism: "Because the government is providing citizens with an outlet to voice their opinions, they feel more inclined to believe the government has the right to rule," thus maintaining legitimacy. Additional acceptable explanations include to prevent unrest, to maintain the government's grip on power, to build a favorable reputation in the international community, and to improve or shape policy.

The response earned 1 point for explaining that authoritarian regimes allow criticism of government by citizens to "reduce the chance of rebellions forming. By providing frustrated citizens with an outlet to voice their opinions, they may feel less inclined to rebel against the regime."

The response earned 1 point for describing China's efforts to restrict criticism of the government by censoring media "to provide only information that they approve of." Additional acceptable explanations include restricting or monitoring internet access, detaining or arresting dissenters, and passing laws that prevent or reduce criticism.

#### Sample: 5B

**Score: 2**

The response did not earn a point for explaining, "the government would be able to see what they were doing wrong and maybe adjust certain changes" as a reason why authoritarian regimes allow criticism from citizens. The response is vague. An acceptable response would be that authoritarian governments may seek to improve ineffective policy to maintain power.

The response earned 1 point for explaining that by allowing citizen criticism authoritarian governments can "show their dominance and assertion of power by severely punishing one who criticizes the government teaching a lesson to the rest of the people." Additional acceptable explanations include to maintain legitimacy, to prevent unrest, to build a favorable reputation in the international community, and to improve or shape policy.

The response earned 1 point for describing China's efforts to restrict criticism of government by controlling media through "direct control of the mass media." Additional acceptable explanations include restricting or monitoring internet access, detaining or arresting dissenters, and passing laws that prevent or reduce criticism.

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## **2019 SCORING COMMENTARY**

### **Question 5 (continued)**

**Sample: 5C**

**Score: 1**

The response earned 1 point for correctly explaining that authoritarian regimes may allow criticism of government by citizens “to prevent uprising or protests.” Additional acceptable explanations include to maintain legitimacy, to maintain the government’s grip on power, to build a favorable reputation in the international community, and to improve or shape policy.

The response did not earn a point for explaining that authoritarian regimes allow criticism “to appear like there more democratic and that they are giving citizens freedom.” While the response describes a possible outcome of allowing criticism, it does not adequately explain the reason why authoritarian governments would be motivated to appear more democratic or free. An acceptable response would be that authoritarian governments allow criticism to give the appearance of greater democratic freedoms, which enhances government legitimacy.

The response did not earn a point for describing efforts in China to restrict criticism of government. The description is inadequate because “China heavily censors media to only allow citizens to see and know what there okay with” is not linked back to a specific policy of restricting criticism. An acceptable response would be that the Chinese government restricts criticism by censoring information provided by media that could encourage citizens to criticize the government.