

AP[®]

 CollegeBoard

2020 Exam Sample Questions

AP[®] U.S. GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

Sample Question 1 (Argument Essay)

(Adapted from: 2019 AP® U.S. Government and Politics Question 4)

Allotted time: 25 minutes (plus 5 minutes to submit)

The United States Constitution establishes a federal system of government. Under federalism, policymaking is shared between national and state governments. Over time, the powers of the national government have increased relative to those of the state governments.

Take a position about whether the expanded powers of the national government benefits or hinders policymaking.

Use at least one piece of evidence from one of the following foundational documents:

- *Brutus* 1
- *The Federalist* 10

In your response you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a defensible claim or thesis that establishes a line of reasoning.
- Support your claim with at least TWO pieces of specific and relevant evidence.
 - One piece of evidence must come from one of the foundational documents listed above.
 - A second piece of evidence can come from any other foundational document not used as your first piece of evidence, or it may come from your knowledge of course concepts.
- Use reasoning to explain why EACH piece of evidence supports your claim or thesis.

Sample Question 2 (Concept Application)

(Adapted from: 2019 AP U.S. Government and Politics FRQ 1)

Allotted time: 15 minutes (plus 5 minutes to submit)

Since 2008, the Alliance Defending Freedom, a conservative Christian interest group, has promoted an annual event known as Pulpit Freedom Sunday. On this occasion, pastors are encouraged to challenge a provision of the tax law known as the Johnson Amendment, which prohibits political activity by certain nonprofit organizations, including religious organizations. While the Johnson Amendment does not restrict religious leaders from speaking out regarding social issues, it does prohibit them from contributing money to political campaigns or speaking out in favor or against candidates running for political office.

On Pulpit Freedom Sunday, as an act of civil disobedience, pastors and religious leaders preach openly about the moral qualifications of candidates seeking office.

After reading the scenario, please respond to (a), (b), and (c) below.

- (a) Referencing the scenario, describe an action Congress could take to address the concerns of the interest group, and explain how partisan divisions could prevent this congressional action.
- (b) Referencing the scenario, explain how a restriction imposed by the Johnson Amendment relates to the legal questions addressed in the Supreme Court's case of *Citizens United v. Federal Elections Commission* (2010).
- (c) Describe a liberty found in the Bill of Rights that the interest group referenced in this scenario feels is threatened. Explain how this group might use the judicial branch to try and influence a change in this policy.

Note for sample question: *Citizens United* and the topic of interest groups would not be assessed on the 2020 Exam, because material in Units 4-5 of the course are excluded from this year's exam. This sample is intended to demonstrate examples of the structure and task types in Question 2 of this year's exam.