

2018

**AP**<sup>®</sup>  CollegeBoard

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# **AP United States Government and Politics**

## **Free-Response Questions**

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FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS**

**UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS  
SECTION II**

**Time—1 hour and 40 minutes**

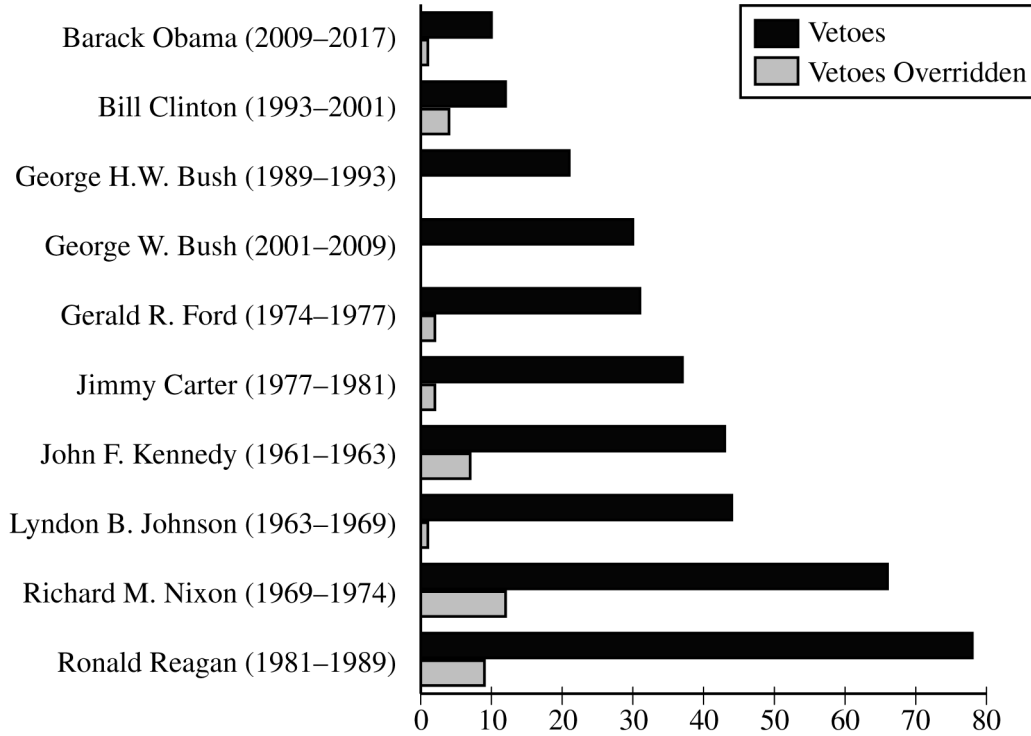
**Directions:** You have 1 hour and 40 minutes to answer all four of the following questions. Unless the directions indicate otherwise, respond to all parts of all four questions. It is suggested that you take a few minutes to plan and outline each answer. Spend approximately one-fourth of your time (25 minutes) on each question. In your response, use substantive examples where appropriate.

1. Political parties seek to win elections to control government.
  - (a) Identify two activities that political parties do to win elections.
  - (b) Describe one way third parties can affect elections.
  - (c) Explain how single-member districts make it difficult for third parties to win elections.
  - (d) Explain how electoral competition is affected by gerrymandering.

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2. Public opinion polls are commonly used by politicians and the media.
  - (a) Identify two characteristics of a reliable scientific public opinion poll.
  - (b) Describe two ways polling results are used by politicians.
  - (c) Explain how frequent public opinion polls impact media coverage of political campaigns.

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Source: United States House of Representatives

3. The United States Constitution gave Congress and the president specific legislative powers. As a result, the interactions between the two are dynamic and complex.
- Describe the constitutional principle of checks and balances.
  - Describe EACH of the following presidential powers in the legislative process:
    - Veto
    - State of the Union address
  - Using the data in the chart, describe the relationship between the number of presidential vetoes and the number of congressional overrides.
  - Explain how Congress can reduce the likelihood of a presidential veto.

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4. In a democracy, what the majority wants should influence public policy. The opinion of the majority is sometimes, but not always, reflected in policy change.
- (a) Explain how interest groups reduce the influence of public opinion on policy.
  - (b) Explain how EACH of the following increases the likelihood of policy change.
    - Newly elected president
    - National crisis
  - (c) Describe the role of EACH of the following institutions in the policy process.
    - The courts
    - The media

**STOP**  
**END OF EXAM**