
AP[®] Comparative Government and Politics

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary Set 1

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AP[®] COMPARATIVE GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

2019 SCORING GUIDELINES

Question 3

3 points

One point is earned for correctly defining civil society.

An acceptable definition includes:

- Civil society is the formal and informal organizations that are not part of the state apparatus but operate in public.
- Civil society is composed of organizations that are voluntary and autonomous self-governing groups created to advance their own causes.

One point is earned for correctly explaining one way in which civil society can strengthen democracy.

Acceptable explanations may include:

- By providing citizens the opportunity to express views
- By providing an opportunity to participate in government processes such as policy making
- By holding a state accountable by monitoring government actions

One point is earned for a correct explanation of why democracies restrict civil society.

Acceptable explanations may include:

- To limit violence to maintain democratic practices or public safety
- To prevent discrimination, hate speech, and the abuse of minority groups
- To prevent the violation of others' civil rights
- To limit concentration of power in the elite
- To protect national security
- To protect free or fair elections

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.

3. Define civil society. Explain one way in which civil society can strengthen democracy. Explain why democracies restrict civil society.

3A

Civil society is organizations outside of the state that help define or better peoples ideas and beliefs for the country. Civil society can strengthen the democracy by giving people of the state the ability to influence the governments. Also it allows groups to express their beliefs and ideas in a way free from state control, allowing for the people to have an influence on the government. Some democracies ~~restrict~~ restrict civil society because some groups or organizations can become violent or ~~se~~ can spread ideas that can damage democracy and cause revolution.

3. Define civil society. Explain one way in which civil society can strengthen democracy. Explain why democracies restrict civil society.

3 B

Civil society is the interaction between citizens and the government through the use of interest groups. Civil society strengthens democracy because it gives people more say in lawmaking and other political processes. Democracies might restrict civil society because the groups may hold unpopular beliefs or carry out violence to try to achieve their goals.

3. Define civil society. Explain one way in which civil society can strengthen democracy. Explain why democracies restrict civil society.

Civil society is how civilians interact within a country. Interact~~s~~ in terms of politics and socio-economical issues i.e. voter turnout or protesting / petitioning. Civil society can strengthen a democracy due to it increasing a democracy's legitimacy. If more people are active with the political and socio-econom background of a government (that aren't in the government itself) it helps promote the fact that people are able to have a say with what happens within the gov't. Democracies restrict civil society at times ~~as~~ in situations that impede upon national security i.e. ~~to~~ they wouldn't allow citizens to vote on an affair dealing with war.

AP[®] COMPARATIVE GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

2019 SCORING COMMENTARY

Question 3

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 civil society, its effects on democracy, and why democracies restrict civil society. The skills tested were descriptive and explanatory. Students had three specific tasks: to define civil society, to explain how civil society strengthens democracy, and to explain why democracies would restrict civil society.

Sample: 3A

Score: 3

The response earned 1 point for correctly defining civil society as “organizations outside of the state that help define or better peoples ideas and beliefs.” The response correctly defines civil society as organizations that are voluntarily created to advance their own causes. An additional acceptable definition is the formal and informal organizations that are not part of the state apparatus but operate in public.

The response earned 1 point for explaining how civil society strengthens democracy by “giving people of the state the ability to influence the governments. Also it allows groups to express their beliefs.” The response correctly explains that civil society provides citizens the opportunity to express their views. Additional acceptable explanations include providing an opportunity to participate in government processes and holding a state accountable by monitoring government actions.

The response earned 1 point for explaining that democracies restrict civil society because “some groups or organizations can become violent or can spread ideas that can damage democracy.” The response correctly explains that democracies limit civil society to prevent violence. Additional acceptable explanations include preventing discrimination or hate speech, preventing the violation of civil rights, limiting the concentration of power among the elite, protecting national security, and protecting free and fair elections.

Sample: 3B

Score: 2

The response did not earn a point for defining civil society as “the interaction between citizens and the government through the use of interest groups” because the response does not indicate that the interest groups are outside of government control. An additional acceptable definition would identify the formal and informal organizations that are not part of the state apparatus but operate in public.

The response earned 1 point for explaining how a civil society strengthens democracy because “it gives people more say in lawmaking and other political processes.” The response correctly explains that civil society provides citizens the opportunity to express their views. Additional acceptable explanations include providing an opportunity to participate in government processes and holding a state accountable by monitoring government actions.

The response earned 1 point for explaining why democracies restrict civil society because groups “may hold unpopular beliefs or carry out violence to try to achieve their goals.” The response correctly explains that democracies limit civil society to prevent violence. Additional acceptable explanations include preventing discrimination or hate speech, preventing the violation of civil rights, limiting the concentration of power among the elite, protecting national security, and protecting free and fair elections.

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Question 3 (continued)

Sample: 3C

Score: 1

The response did not earn a point for defining civil society as “how civilians interact within a country.” This definition does not indicate that civil society consists of organizations or groups outside of government. An additional acceptable definition would identify the autonomous self-governing groups created to advance their own causes.

The response did not earn a point for explaining how civil society strengthens democracy because the explanation “it helps promote the fact that people are able to have a say with what happens within the gov’t.” does not address the organization or group component of civil society. Additional acceptable explanations include providing an opportunity to participate in government processes and holding a state accountable by monitoring government actions.

The response earned 1 point for explaining how democracies restrict civil society “in situations that impede upon national security.” Additional acceptable explanations include limiting violence, preventing discrimination or hate speech, preventing the violation of civil rights, limiting the concentration of power among the elites, and protecting free and fair elections.