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

## Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary Set 2

### Inside:

#### Free-Response Question 3

- ☒ Scoring Guidelines
- ☒ Student Samples
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**Question 3: Comparative Analysis****5 points****(a)** Define the concept of a social cleavage.**1 point****Acceptable definitions include:**

- A social cleavage is an internal division that structures society and may be based on differences such as religion, ethnicity, class, or territory (rural vs. urban; north vs. south).
- A social cleavage is a division among identity-based groups that is relevant to political participation.

**(b)** Describe two different examples of a politically relevant social cleavage, each one within a different AP Comparative Government and Politics course country.**2 points****Acceptable descriptions include the following (max one point per country):****China**

- There are ethnic and regional divisions between the majority Han ethnic group and at least 55 recognized ethnic minorities, such as the Uighurs in the Northwest and the Tibetans in the Southwest.
- There are cleavages between regional areas that have developed at different rates (for example, between the Western and Eastern or rural vs. urban areas).
- There are political–economic cleavages between wealthy Communist elites and the masses or poor.

**Iran**

- Within Islam, there are divisions between the Shi’a majority and those who are Sunni.
- There are religious divisions between the Shi’a Muslim majority and members of other religions, such as Christianity, Judaism, and Zoroastrianism.
- There are ethnic cleavages between the majority Persians and several ethnic minorities, including Azerbaijanis and Kurds.
- Iran has a significant generational cleavage where younger people support secular and democratic change while older groups tend to be more religiously fundamentalist.

**Mexico**

- There are regional cleavages in Mexico, such as between the industrialized North and the agrarian South or between rural and urban areas.
- Ethnic divisions exist among the Amerindian (indigenous) populations, whites, and mestizos.

**Nigeria**

- Ethnic divisions are important among more than 250 ethnic groups (including Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba, and the Igbo).

- There are religious and regional cleavages between the predominantly Muslim North and the primarily Christian South.
- There are economic and territorial (North/South or rural/urban) divisions.

**Russia**

- Cleavages exist between ethnic Russians, who tend to be Russian Orthodox, and other ethno-religious minorities.
- There is a political–economic cleavage between the elite oligarch class and the masses.

**United Kingdom**

- There are ethnic and regional cleavages between nations such as the Scottish, English, Welsh, and Irish.
- There are religious differences between Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland.
- There are class cleavages that often overlap with access to higher education and wealth.
- There are tensions between whites and non-European minorities whose heritage is related to the United Kingdom’s colonial history (for example, those from India and Pakistan).

**Scoring Note:** Responses must go beyond identification by providing specificity or context to earn a point.

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|------------|---|-----------------|
| <b>(c)</b> | Explain how the social cleavages either strengthen or undermine political legitimacy for each of the two AP Comparative Government and Politics course countries described in part (b). | <b>2 points</b> |
|------------|---|-----------------|

**Acceptable explanations where the social cleavage strengthened legitimacy include the following (max one point per country):**

- In Nigeria, ethnic, religious, and regional cleavages prompted government institutions to create election rules encouraging diverse representation, which have strengthened political unity and legitimacy.
- In the United Kingdom, the regional cleavages have motivated referendums to devolve government powers to Scottish and Welsh regional assemblies. This responsiveness to local needs has increased the legitimacy of the state.
- In Russia, the cleavage between Russia and Chechnya has united Russians and fueled nationalistic rhetoric and strengthened legitimacy of the state.
- In Iran, religious cleavages have prompted quotas or reserved seats for minorities in the Majles, which has enhanced political legitimacy.

**Acceptable explanations where the social cleavage undermined legitimacy include the following (max one point per country):**

- In Nigeria, ethnic, religious, and regional cleavages reinforce each other and undermine the legitimacy of the state because wealth and natural resource
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control is unequally distributed between the Muslim North and the largely Christian South.

- In the United Kingdom, greater regional autonomy has strengthened support for further independence, while delegitimizing the British government.
- In China, ethnic cleavages between the Uighur and Han prompt repressive measures by government, which undermine state legitimacy.
- In Russia, class cleavages undermine legitimacy because the average person perceives oligarchs' political and economic power as a result of widespread corruption in government.
- In Mexico, the ethnic cleavages between the indigenous minority groups and the majority undermined legitimacy because the state provided unequal public goods and services to indigenous peoples, which stimulated the Zapatista uprising.

**Scoring Note:** Responses must connect the social cleavage to political legitimacy outcomes clearly to earn a point.

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**Total for question 3**

**5 points**

Important: Completely fill in the circle that corresponds to the question you are answering on this page.

Question 1

Question 2

Question 3

Question 4

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Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

- a) a social cleavage is a <sup>divide</sup> ~~distance~~ between populations, either ~~at~~ geographically, economically, ethnically, or religiously, that have political implications.
- b) There exists ~~a social~~ social cleavage between Northern Mexico & southern Mexico, with the north being urban and industrial & the south being rural & agricultural. In China, ~~an~~ social cleavage exists between the majority ethnic group Han & minority ethnic groups concentrated in eastern China (Uighurs etc)
- c) In Mexico, the government might prioritize policies to boost overall industrial production which could make those in the south with relatively lesser economic importance dissatisfied & view their government less legitimately. In China, the government ~~intentionally~~ suppressed minority ethnic groups to address the cleavage. This might increase legitimacy as this caters to the national pride that the bulk of the country ~~holds~~, which are ethnically Han, holds.

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Important: Completely fill in the circle that corresponds to the question you are answering on this page.

Question 1

Question 2

Question 3

Question 4



Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

- a) A social cleavage is a difference between people that can create conflict within ~~the~~ <sup>political</sup> governments. Social cleavages <sup>are</sup> ~~often~~ <sup>often</sup> ethnically, religiously, or regionally based and present themselves as challenges in the government.
- b) In the United Kingdom, there's an ethnic/regional cleavage between the majority nation of Britain and the nation of Scotland. Scotland often feels underrepresented in the UK's ~~the~~ government and has <sup>recently</sup> tried to secede ~~from~~ from the United Kingdom. In Nigeria, there is a massive social cleavage between the Hausa-Fulani muslim population in the north and the christian ~~Northern~~ Yoruba in the south.
- c) The social cleavage between the Scottish and the British in the United Kingdom has undermined political legitimacy in the UK, as <sup>much of</sup> Scotland feels under-represented in the parliament and does not believe in the United Kingdom's right to rule. However, the social cleavage in Nigeria between the muslim & christian populations has strengthened political legitimacy in Nigeria, as Nigeria has successfully held <sup>peaceful</sup> government changes between the two groups and the opposing group accepted the

Page 5

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Important: Completely fill in the circle that corresponds to the question you are answering on this page.

Question 1

Question 2

Question 3

Question 4

Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

A) A social cleavage is anything that can divide a population ideologically or demographically, such as religion, class, and ethnicity.

B) In Russia, gender is a politically relevant cleavage because women are disproportionately the targets of violence, and the government is upholding a patriarchal culture. In China, ethnicity is a politically relevant social cleavage because since the Han Chinese are the most dominant and numerous ethnic group, other groups such as the Tibetans and Uyghurs are suppressed, and in the case of the Uyghurs, sent to prison camps.

C) In Russia, legitimacy is undermined by the gender cleavage because Russian women do not believe that the government supports them. In China, legitimacy is also undermined by the ethnicity cleavage because ethnic minorities are being suppressed by their own government and therefore do not believe that the government supports them.

Use a pen with black or dark blue ink only. Do NOT write your name. Do NOT write outside the box.

### **Question 3**

#### **Comparative Analysis**

**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 the concept of a social cleavage and their ability to define, describe, and explain the impact of social cleavages in countries studied in the AP Comparative Government and Politics course. The skills tested were definitive, descriptive, and explanatory. Students first were expected to define social cleavage. They then had to demonstrate their understanding of social cleavages by describing two examples of social cleavages in two course countries. Finally, students needed to demonstrate their understanding of the relationship between social cleavages and political legitimacy by explaining how social cleavages in those two countries have impacted the political legitimacy of the state.

#### **Sample: 3A**

**Score: 5**

- (a) The response earned 1 point for describing social cleavage as a “divide between populations, either geographically, economically, ethnically, or religiously, that have political implications.”
- (b) The response earned 2 points for describing two different examples of politically relevant social cleavages in course countries. The response earned 1 point for describing the “social cleavage between northern Mexico & southern Mexico with the north being urban and industrial & the south being rural and agricultural.” The second point was earned by describing a “social cleavage exists between the majority ethnic group Han & the minority ethnic groups concentrated in eastern China (Uighurs etc).”
- (c) The response earned 2 points for explaining how cleavages undermine political legitimacy. The first point was earned for explaining that prioritization of policies benefitting industrialized regions in Mexico leads the South to feel “dissatisfied & view their government less legitimately.” The second point was earned by connecting ethnic cleavages to government suppression of minorities that strengthens political legitimacy because it caters “to the national pride ... that the bulk of the country, which are ethnically Han, holds.”

#### **Sample: 3B**

**Score: 4**

- (a) The response earned 1 point for defining a social cleavage as a “difference between people ... often ethnically, religiously, or regionally based.”
- (b) The response earned 2 points for describing two different examples of politically relevant social cleavages in course countries. The response earned 1 point for describing “an ethnic/regional cleavage between the majority nation of Britain and the nation of Scotland.” The



### Question 3 (continued)

response earned the second point for describing the cleavage between the “Muslim population in the north and the Christian Yoruba in the south” of Nigeria.

(c) The response earned 1 point for explaining that political legitimacy in the United Kingdom is undermined because “much of Scotland feels under-represented in the parliament and does not believe in the United Kingdom’s right to rule.” The response did not earn the second point because it does not explain how the social cleavage identified for Nigeria prompted institutional rule changes that facilitated more representative government that strengthened the legitimacy of the Nigerian state.

#### **Sample: 3C**

#### **Score: 3**

(a) The response earned 1 point for defining a social cleavage as dividing “a population ideologically or demographically such as religion, class, and ethnicity.”

(b) The response did not earn a point for describing a politically relevant cleavage in Russia, such as that between the elite, oligarch class and the average masses. The response did earn 1 point for describing ethnic cleavages in China that divide the Han, “the most dominant ... ethnic group and other groups such as the Tibetans and Uyghurs.”

(c) The response did not earn a point for explaining how decreased political legitimacy in Russia results from cleavages, such as socioeconomic, ethnic, or religious divisions. The response earned 1 point for explaining that political legitimacy in China is undermined “because ethnic minorities are being suppressed by their own government.”