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# AP<sup>®</sup> United States Government and Politics

## Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary Set 1

### **Inside:**

#### **Free-Response Question 2**

- Scoring Guidelines**
- Student Samples**
- Scoring Commentary**

**Question 2: Quantitative Analysis****4 points**

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- A.** Using the bar graph, identify the president who faced the fewest number of investigative hearing days in a single year when the House was controlled by the opposing party. **1 point**

**Acceptable identifications include:**

- Clinton faced the fewest number of investigative hearing days.

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- B.** Describe the relationship between investigative hearing days and party control of the House and the presidency as shown in the bar graph. **1 point**

**Acceptable descriptions include:**

- When the opposing party controls the House, there are usually more hearings investigating the executive branch.
- When the same party controls the House, there are usually fewer hearings investigating the executive branch.

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- C.** Draw a conclusion about how the difference in congressional hearing days between 1970 and 1980 and between 1990 and 2000 may have affected presidential power during those periods. **1 point**

**Acceptable conclusions include:**

- Between 1970 and 1980, there were more congressional hearing days in the House than between 1990 and 2000, which might have led to a decline in presidential power.

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- D.** Explain whether the data in the bar graph for the years in which the president's party controls the House reflect Madison's ideas in *The Federalist* 51. **1 point**

**Acceptable explanations include:**

- *The Federalist* 51 assumes that there will be checks and balances but does not take into consideration the role of political parties. Madison states that the legislative branch would serve as a check on the executive. But if one party controls both the House and the presidency, the interest of the House leadership in the welfare of the political party might be stronger than holding a president of their own party accountable. This would lead to fewer investigations of the executive branch, which would be contrary to the idea of checks in *Federalist* 51.

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**Total for question 2 4 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



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

- A) Clinton was the president who was faced with the least amount of investigative hearing days in a single year when the House of representatives was controlled by the opposing party.
- B) The graph suggests a pattern that there tends to be less Congressional hearing days in a year when the house of representatives and the president hold the same party identification. This is likely due to the fact that there would be more disagreement between the branches of government, such as with law, where the president could veto law.
- C) The Congressional hearing days between 1970 and 1980 likely hindered the president's power more than from 1990 to 2000. In 1970-1980, the president was faced with more hearing days with the opposing party, and therefore more disagreement. The president's power was most likely checked by members of the house more often during this period than in 1990-2000, ~~at~~ by an overturn of a veto or passing legislation, which could deplete the power and will of the president.
- D) The lack of Congressional hearings during ~~president's~~ years where the president and house hold the same party goes against the ideas of Madison in Federalist 51. Madison argues that all branches of government will be independent of each other while still holding checks over the others. However the graph shows that there is less conflict between

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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.

the house and president during times where they share a party, and are instead working together to build up the ideas and encourage ~~the~~ legislation based on their party. This does not align with the separation of powers and branch checks expressed by Madison, and could lead to a more powerful executive and legislative branch.

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

● **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.

2A). The president who faced the fewest number of investigative hearing days in a single year when the House was controlled by the opposing party was Bill Clinton.

2B). The trend is there are more investigative hearing days when the House is the opposite party from the president.

2C). The relationship between investigative hearing days ~~between 1970-1980 and 1990-2000~~ between 1970-1980 and 1990-2000 was there were much more investigations between 1970-1980 than in the years 1990-2000.

2D). The data in the graph does reflect Madison's ideas because presidents who had both democratic and republican houses had much fewer investigations when they were the same parties. This represents Madison's ideas in *The Federalist*s.

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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. Clinton faced the fewest number of investigative hearing days in a single year when the House was controlled by the opposing party.
- B. Over the years the opposing and same party both decreased. The opposing party has majority of Congressional Hearing Days.
- C. The difference in congressional hearing days may have affected presidential power by the dramatic decrease of the opposing party which ~~later~~ later led to a ~~decrease~~ decrease of hearing days for the same party.
- D. Yes, the data in bar graph for the years reflect Madison's idea in The Federalist 51 by the president's party controlling the House.

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## Question 2

**Note:** Student samples are quoted verbatim and may contain spelling and grammatical errors.

### Overview

The Quantitative Analysis question called on students to read and interpret data related to Congressional investigative hearings of the executive branch. Students were expected to describe relationships through analysis of data related to these hearings. Also, students were asked to draw a conclusion about a trend presented in the data. Students were expected to identify changes in the data over time and explain their potential effect on presidential power. Finally, this question challenged students to analyze aspects of the data to show how partisanship and hearings reflect the constitutional concept of checks and balances found in the foundational document of *Federalist* 51.

### Sample: 2A

#### Score: 4

The response earned 1 point in part A for correctly identifying Clinton.

The response earned 1 point in part B because the statement “there tends to be less Congressional hearing days in a year when the house ... and the president hold the same party identification” describes a relationship between party control of the House and president and investigative hearing days.

The response earned 1 point in part C because it states, “The Congressional hearing days between 1970 and 1980 likely hindered the presidents power more than from 1990 to 2000,” which correctly connects the increased number of hearing days with a decrease in presidential power.

The response earned 1 point in part D for stating, “during times where they share a party, and are instead working together to build up the ideals ... based on their party. This does not align with the separation of powers and branch checks expressed by Madison,” which accurately explains that the data in the graph contrasts with Madison’s ideas in *Federalist* 51.

### Sample: 2B

#### Score: 2

The response earned 1 point in part A for correctly identifying Bill Clinton.

The response earned 1 point in part B by correctly stating, “The trend is there are more investigative hearing days when the House is the opposite party from the president,” which accurately describes a relationship between party control and investigative hearing days.

The response did not earn a point in part C because the statement “there were much more investigations between 1970–1980 than in the years 1990–2000” restates the data, but it does not indicate how the difference in Congressional hearing days affected presidential power.

The response did not earn a point in part D because “presidents who had both democratic and

## Question 2 (continued)

republican houses had much fewer investigations” does not accurately represent “Madison’s ideas in The Federalist 51,” nor is it an explanation.

### **Sample: 2C**

#### **Score: 1**

The response earned 1 point in part A for correctly identifying Clinton.

The response did not earn a point in part B because this statement, “Over the years the opposing and Same party both decreased,” does not describe a relationship between party control of the House and the presidency and the number of hearing days.

The response did not earn a point in part C because the statement “dramatic decrease of the opposing party which later led to a decrease ... for the same party” does not show how the difference may have affected presidential power.

The response did not earn a point in part D because it does not contain an explanation.