



AP[®] Comparative Government and Politics

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary Set 1

Inside:

Free-Response Question 4

- ✓ Scoring Guidelines
- ✓ Student Samples
- ✓ Scoring Commentary

Question 4: Argument Essay**5 points**

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
Row A Claim/Thesis (0–1 points)	0 points Does not meet the criteria for one point.	1 point Responds to the prompt with a defensible claim or thesis that establishes a line of reasoning.
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes	
	Responses that do not earn this point: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only restate the prompt. Do not make a claim that responds to the prompt. 	Responses that earn this point: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respond to the prompt rather than restating or rephrasing the prompt and establish a line of reasoning. Provide a defensible claim or thesis that establishes a line of reasoning as to whether populism increases or decreases political stability using one or more of the provided course concepts: corruption, sovereignty, cleavages.
	Examples that do not earn this point: Restate the prompt <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>“Populism has had little impact on states since the global financial crisis.”</i> <i>“Populism can be on the left or right of the political spectrum.”</i> Do not respond to the prompt <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>“Populism is a big problem in many of the countries studied in this course.”</i> <i>“The global financial crisis has changed states.”</i> 	Examples that earn this point: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>“Populism has led to changes in public policy since the global financial crisis, increasing political stability through the use of policies that diminish corruption.”</i> <i>“Populist policies support the interests of the common people over the elite. Populism has decreased political stability because it often increases tensions between cleavages such as the rich and the poor.”</i> <i>“Populism increases stability through nationalist claims that prioritize domestic policies over international pressures.”</i> <i>“Populist movements, such as Brexit, and leaders, such as the SNP, encourage independence movements that can destabilize the existing regime.”</i>
	Additional Notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The claim or thesis must consist of one or more sentences that may be located anywhere in the response. A claim or thesis that meets the criteria can be awarded the point whether or not the rest of the response successfully supports that line of reasoning. 	

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria		
Row B Evidence (0–2 points)	0 points Does not meet the criteria for one point.	1 point Provides <u>one</u> piece of specific and relevant evidence from a course country relevant to one of the course concepts in the prompt.	2 points Provides <u>two</u> pieces of specific and relevant evidence from one or more course countries relevant to one or more of the course concepts in the prompt.
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes		
	Responses that do not earn points: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Do not provide any accurate evidence.Provide evidence that is not relevant to the course concepts in the prompt.	Responses that earn 1 or 2 points: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Provide specific and relevant evidence from required course countries, relevant to the course concepts in the prompt.	
	Examples that do not earn points: Provide evidence that is not specific <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>“Populism is bad for China’s economy.”</i> Provide evidence that is not relevant to course concepts in the prompt <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>“Iran has both an SMD and MMD voting system.”</i>	Examples of acceptable specific and relevant evidence (one example is one piece of evidence): <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>“Populist nationalism has been used to justify Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.”</i><i>“Manuel Lopez Obrador, leader of the MORENA party and a self- identified populist, was elected president of Mexico in the 2018 election.”</i><i>“China’s President Xi has often used populist rhetoric about corruption to crack down on opponents in his ‘Flies and Tigers’ campaign.”</i><i>“The UK’s populist referendum on Brexit led to Britain leaving the EU.”</i><i>“Since the referendum on Brexit, there has been increasing support by Scottish voters for independence.”</i>	
	Additional Notes <ul style="list-style-type: none">A response does not need to earn the point in Row A to earn points in Row B.A response does not need to explain the relationship between the evidence and the claim or thesis to earn points in Row B. (That explanation is evaluated in Row C.)		

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
Row C Reasoning	0 points Does not meet the criteria for one point.	1 point Explains how or why the evidence supports the claim or thesis.
(0–1 points)	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes	
	<p>Responses that do not earn this point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include evidence but offer no reasoning to connect the evidence to the claim or thesis. • Restate the prompt without explaining how the evidence supports the claim or thesis. <p>Examples of responses that do not earn this point: Include evidence but offer no reasoning to connect the evidence to the claim or thesis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Populism in the UK has made clear that the majority of Scottish voters want to remain in the EU.”</i> <p>Restate the prompt without explaining how the evidence supports the claim or thesis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“The global financial crisis has affected countries around the world. Populist leaders, campaigning on issues that focus on ‘the people,’ have gained in popularity since this time.”</i> 	<p>Responses that earn this point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain the relationship between the evidence provided and the claim or thesis. <p>Examples of reasoning that explain how evidence supports the claim or thesis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Populist policies that reduce corruption generally increase stability and support for the government because citizens feel protected.”</i> • <i>“Brexit may have increased British sovereignty, but it has decreased political stability by encouraging independence movements.”</i> • <i>“In Russia, populism has led to an increase in nationalism and patriotism and suppressed existing cleavages, thus increasing stability.”</i> • <i>“Populist attacks on the elite and established institutions like those under Obrador often destabilize the regime by encouraging citizens to take the law into their own hands.”</i>
	<p>Additional Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To earn this point, the response must have a defensible claim or thesis (earned the point in Row A). • The explanation of the relationship between one piece of evidence and the claim or thesis is sufficient to earn this point. 	

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
Row D Responds to Alternate Perspectives (0–1 points)	0 points Does not meet the criteria for one point.	1 point Responds to an opposing or alternate perspective using refutation, concession, or rebuttal.
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes	
	Responses that do not earn this point: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restate the opposite of the claim or thesis. May identify or describe an alternate perspective but do not refute, concede, or rebut that perspective. 	Responses that earn this point: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must describe an alternate perspective AND refute, concede, or rebut that perspective.
	Examples of responses that do not earn the point: Restate the opposite of the claim or thesis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>“Many observers think populism is unimportant.”</i> Describe an alternate perspective but do not refute, concede, or rebut that perspective <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>“Only countries with somewhat competitive elections are shaped by populism.”</i> 	Examples of acceptable responses to an alternate perspective may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>“Many people argue that populism decreases political stability because it aggravates ethnic and economic cleavages, but populist policies that reduce corruption and encourage patriotism more often lead to greater stability by increasing trust in the government.”</i> <i>“Some say that populism has increased stability through nationalist claims that support domestic policies over international policies. However, populism has decreased stability because nationalist policies such as imposing tariffs result in economic decline.”</i>
	Additional Notes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To earn this point, the response must have a defensible claim or thesis (earned the point in Row A). Responses that demonstrate an incorrect understanding of the alternate perspective do not earn this point. 	

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.

Populism increases political stability because it decreases government corruption and allows for a government's sovereignty to increase because of a higher approval rating from citizens. ~~The~~ Populism is valuing the opinions and needs of normal people over the opinion of the elites. In Mexico, there was a camarilla of loyal followers in the government during PRI's rule and this caused for major corruption in the government as well as not listening to the people's needs because they valued the loyalty of wealthy supporters and followers. This created a decrease in sovereignty and political legitimacy, a direct threat to political stability, because they used power in unfair ways that was shaped around the benefit of certain people, not the general public. In Nigeria there was corruption within the government as well which Obasanjo addressed by firing many government officials because he wanted to limit this corruption to allow ~~more~~ for more political stability. By reducing corruption, this increased the ~~sovereignty~~ sovereignty of Nigeria and has aided cleavage issues between the Yoruba and Igbo people as well as Christian and Muslim divides although social cleavages are still a pressing issue. By taking on more democratic principles, social cleavages were managed ~~and were~~ better

Page 6

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Question 1

Question 2

Question 3

Question 4



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because populism was in place which allowed the government to try to provide solutions and policy for these cleavages as Nigeria consists of so much diversity. This use of populism not only increases the political legitimacy of the Nigerian government but the political stability as well as more people feel they are being heard they approve of the government in place more. ~~Both~~ ~~But~~ Mexico during PRI rule displays the way that political stability decreases without the use of populism and valuing the people, while Nigeria displays how the use of populism can increase political stability and address pressing issues like social ~~can~~ cleavages. Although some may argue that populism decreases political stability because it values a diverse group of voices rather than the elites ~~and~~ who play a large role in government and its sovereignty, this is incorrect because as ~~per~~ more people are listened to in society and filtered into policy - making the more stable a government is and the more legitimacy it possesses.

Page 7

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Question 1

Question 2

Question 3

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Populism ^{decreases} ~~increases~~ political stability because it ~~creates~~ ^{increases} ~~decreases~~ ^{increases} corruption, resulting in citizen unrest.

In Russia, the privatization of industries including oil was meant to allow everyone to compete and purchase ~~parts of industries~~ ^{and all the same equal control over common industries.} stocks, but instead resulted in the rise of oligarchs, ^{in one} wealthy people who have now the total control of a ~~the~~ majority of Russia industry. Their wealth has given them power to influence the government. Now they can bribe the government, resulting in increased government corruption because the government is reliant on their money. This corruption undermines Russian stability because they ~~are~~ ^{too dependent on oligarch wealth,} the government is ~~not~~ too dependent on oligarch wealth, and the people have less faith in the government's ability to serve them. This has resulted in protest movements against ~~the~~ ^{the} Russian government and president, and citizens have started supporting ^{opposition} ~~candidate~~ ^{candidate} Alexei Navalny who is against Putin. This protest is decreasing the stability of Putin's government, demonstrating how corruption resulting from populism causes unrest that could threaten the stability of the current Russian government.

In Mexico, Mexico ~~signed~~ ^{signed} NAFTA to encourage ^{international} trade but hurt rural Mexican farmers' agriculture workers. ~~This~~ ^{This} resulted in the ~~Zapatista~~ ^{Zapatista} uprising, where ^{some} indigenous Mexican rural citizens protested the NAFTA agreement.

Page 5

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Question 2

Question 3

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

While some may argue that population would increase stability through equal treatment of citizens, this does not always ensure ~~stable~~ positive economic conditions, resulting in decreased stability as a result of citizen unrest with their living situation.

While some may argue population would increase stability because people would feel represented in government, the government may not represent all people, resulting in unrest in minority groups, therefore undermining political stability.

Population increases stability because it provides more representation of minority groups, thus reducing cleavages.

~~Population increases~~

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Cleavages cause instability in a state due to consistent disagreements between ~~the~~ groups of people. In Nigeria there is a large religious cleavage between the Islamic ~~South and Christian north~~ north and Christian south, and this has led to Nigeria having the highest fragile states score out of the 6 AP comparative government countries. Tensions are high between the north and south largely in part of the economic divide between them. In Nigeria state owned oil is sold in the south and held by government officials, not making it's way to many Nigerian citizens, especially those in the ~~the~~ north. Since populism is characterized by putting the ~~needs of the~~ needs of the people over those of the elites, institutionalization of populism could see the money be distributed more equitably between all of Nigeria, lowering cleavage tensions and thus increasing stability. ~~the~~

In order to see the money from oil be distributed evenly, Nigeria needs to limit corruption. This can be done through strengthening the independence of the judiciary branch through instituting term limits ~~in the judiciary~~ ~~has done, and~~ in the judiciary in a similar fashion to Mexico. This can be accomplished through ~~referendas~~ referendas, giving the common people the vote as populism

Page 5

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Question 1

Question 2

Question 3

Question 4

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is intended to. If corruption can be limited through referenda ~~and~~ regarding judicial term limits and the subsequent independent judiciary limiting executive and legislative powers, populism can be ~~more~~ achieved. This will result in less tension between ethnic and religious cleavages as it will allow resources to be spread more equitably. Some will say that an equitable distribution of social services and resources will not help cool tensions in Nigeria, but it's been shown in the U.K. that when the needs of all are met, cleavages have significantly less tension. This can be seen by the many ~~peace~~ formal diplomatic relations between the nations within the U.K.

Page 6

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Question 4

Argument Essay

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

Overview

The intent of this question was to assess student’s understanding of the political ideology of populism and its impact on political stability, while using one or more of the course concepts: corruption, sovereignty, or cleavages. Students were expected to articulate a defensible claim/thesis with two pieces of relevant evidence from a course country; use reasoning to explain why the evidence provided supports the thesis; and respond to an alternative perspective using refutation, concession, or rebuttal. Students were expected to write an argumentative essay, demonstrating each of the skills mentioned above. Specifically, students needed to demonstrate their understanding of populism and its impact on political stability using the course concepts to establish the link between the two. Students needed to further demonstrate their knowledge of the course countries by providing appropriate evidence from the countries that reflect course concepts the students used in their thesis. Students also needed to be able to demonstrate their understanding of how the evidence they described was linked to the relationship between populism and political stability. Finally, students needed to demonstrate their understanding of alternative explanations by describing an alternative thesis and then either refuting that thesis, rebutting it, or conceding it.

Sample: 4A

Score: 6

Claim/Thesis Score: 1

Evidence Score: 2

Reasoning Score: 1

Alternative Perspectives Score: 1

(A) The response earned 1 point for a thesis that establishes a clear line of reasoning by stating, “Populism increases political stability because it decreases government corruption and allows for a governments sovereignty to increase.”

(B) The response earned 2 points for supporting the thesis with two pieces of evidence from one or more of the course countries that is related to the topic and course concepts. It earned 1 point for addressing the corruption of the PRI which led to “a direct threat to political stability ... [which] was shaped around the benefit of certain people, not the general public.” The response earned 1 point for describing President Obasanjo’s efforts to address political corruption by firing corrupt government officials as diminishing “cleavage issues between the Yoruba and Igbo people as well as Christian and Muslim.”

(C) The response earned 1 point for using reasoning to explain the relationship between the evidence provided and the claim or thesis by stating “during the PRI rule ... political stability decreases without the use of populism and valuing the people.”

Question 4 (continued)

(D) The response earned 1 point for describing an alternate perspective and refuting, conceding, or rebutting that perspective by stating, “some may argue that populism decreases political stability because it values a diverse group of voices rather than the elites ... this is incorrect because as more people are listened to in society and filtered into policy ... the more stable a government is.”

Sample: 4B

Score: 4

Claim/Thesis Score: 1

Evidence Score: 1

Reasoning Score: 1

Alternative Perspectives Score: 1

(A) The response earned 1 point for a thesis that establishes a clear line of reasoning by stating, “Populism decreases political stability because it increases corruption.”

(B) The response earned 1 point for supporting the thesis with one piece of evidence from one or more of the course countries related to the topic and course concepts. It earned 1 point for addressing that the “privatization of industries including oil” in Russia was to benefit everyone but instead resulted in the “rise of oligarchs.” The response did not earn a point for its reference to the Zapatista movement in Mexico because it did not connect that movement to populism.

(C) The response earned 1 point for using reasoning to explain the relationship between the evidence provided and the claim or thesis by stating that “increased government corruption” has resulted in “the people have less faith in the government’s ability to serve them. This has resulted in protest movements.”

(D) The response earned 1 point for describing an alternate perspective and refuting, conceding, or rebutting that perspective by stating, “While some may argue populism would increase stability through equal treatment of citizens, this does not always ensure positive economic conditions, resulting in decreased stability ... the government may still not represent all people, having unrest in minority groups therefore undermining political stability.”

Sample: 4C

Score: 3

Claim/Thesis Score: 1

Evidence Score: 1

Reasoning Score: 1

Alternative Perspectives Score: 0

(A) The response earned 1 point for a thesis that establishes a clear line of reasoning by stating, “Populism will increase the stability of the state through decreasing the amount of corruption and providing equitable social programs to both sides of cleavages.”

Question 4 (continued)

(B) The response earned 1 point for supporting the prompt with one piece of evidence from one or more of the course countries related to the topic and course concepts. The response earned the point by stating, “In Nigeria state owned oil is sold in the south and held by government officials, not making it’s way to many Nigerians citizens, especially those in the north.” The response did not earn the point for its reference to Nigeria’s “independence of the judiciary” because this is not connected to populism.

C) The response earned 1 point for using reasoning to explain the relationship between the evidence provided and the claim or thesis by stating, “Since populism is characterized by putting the needs of the people over those of the elites, institutionalization of populism could see the money be distributed more equitably between all of Nigeria, lowering cleavage tensions and thus increasing stability.”

(D) The response did not earn a point for describing an alternate perspective and refuting, conceding, or rebutting that perspective. The response did not describe why the alternative perspective of populism decreasing political stability worked in the UK but would not work in Nigeria.