

---

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

## Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary Set 1

### **Inside:**

#### **Free-Response Question 1**

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

**Question 1: Concept Application****3 points**

- 
- A.** Describe the power that the EPA used in the scenario to change how it implemented environmental laws under different administrations. **1 point**

**Acceptable descriptions include:**

- The EPA has the power to interpret legislation.
- The EPA used its discretion to make decisions about environmental policies.
- The EPA has rule-making authority to interpret and implement environmental laws.

- 
- B.** Explain how the power described in part A could be affected by the president. **1 point**

**Acceptable explanations include:**

- The president could limit the bureaucracy's power by ordering it to implement environmental laws consistent with the president's agenda.
- The president could pressure Congress to give the EPA discretionary authority which could help the president's agenda.
- The president could replace the head of the EPA which could affect how its power is used.
- The president could issue an executive order that gives the bureaucracy specific guidance on how to interpret a new law.

- 
- C.** Explain how Congress could attempt to influence the actions of the bureaucratic agency in the scenario. **1 point**

**Acceptable explanations include:**

- Congress could pass a law requiring the EPA to take a specific action.
- By using their powers of oversight and investigation, Congressional committees can ensure that the EPA is implementing legislation.
- Congress could adjust the EPA's funding, which would affect the agency's ability to pursue its goals.

---

**Total for question 1 3 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) The power that the EPA used in the scenario to change how it implemented environmental laws under different administrations was the EPA's ability to interpret existing environmental laws in different ways.

B) The power described in part A could be affected by the president through executive orders. The president has powers over the bureaucracy, which grants him the ability to either propose laws, ~~or~~ create executive orders which could work to specify exactly how the EPA should interpret the laws.

C) Congress could attempt to influence the actions of the bureaucratic agency, the EPA, by voting on and passing legislation that would affect how the Environmental Protection Agency interprets the existing legislation. If Congress votes on a bill limiting the EPA's impact, then the EPA will be forced to change in Congress' power.

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.

A. The EPA implemented environmental laws under different administrations by first interpreting those laws. After interpreting the environmental laws they were able to enforce them by being able to impose regulations. The EPA enforced legislation through this procedure. B. This power could be affected by the president because this bureaucratic agency is able to implement policies without congress. The president is the leader of the executive branch and the unity of this branch is disturbed. The EPA has the power to impose and implement policies to the point where businesses get harmed. They could use this power and extend it towards the president causing him to be affected. With having agencies like the EPA have this much power the president's unity is affected which is needed for a strong presidency overall. C. The bureaucratic agency has hurt businesses by imposing regulations or caused more free enterprise and limited government. Congress could attempt to influence these actions by passing a bill that limits bureaucratic agencies from implementing many policies. Congress would introduce the bill and make sure it prohibits anyone from getting impacted by the EPA. Preventing the EPA from implementing policies that can hurt businesses. Mark-ups can be done to the bill to further place detail on the limitations for bureaucratic agency. By making the bill towards bureaucratic agencies in general, it should pass and be enforced because it doesn't express in targeting anyone specifically.

Page 2

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.

A) As a bureaucracy the EPA has the power to enforce laws. The EPA is allowed to interpret laws how they see fit to help regulate the environment.

B) The power to regulate and enforce laws by the EPA can be affected by the president if the president vetos any law that the EPA wants to enforce.

C) Congress can attempt to influence the actions of the bureaucratic agency by holding a hearing and voting.

## Question 1

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

### Overview

The Concept Application question expected responses to apply course concepts in response to a provided real-world scenario. The focus of the scenario are shifts in environmental policy over a series of presidential administrations. This scenario addresses several topics in the course and exam description from Unit 2. Ultimately, this question expected responses to demonstrate an understanding of the various stages of the policymaking process and the different participants in that process.

In part A responses were expected to demonstrate the power of the bureaucracy in implementing environmental laws. The intent of part A was for responses to describe the EPA's use of interpretive, discretionary, and rule-making powers when implementing environmental policy.

In part B responses were expected to show comprehension about the interaction between the EPA's bureaucratic role and the presidency. Responses were expected to demonstrate an understanding that presidents have powers that can shape the actions of bureaucratic agencies, in the context of the scenario.

In part C responses were expected to offer a clear explanation of how Congress could try to influence the bureaucratic agency's actions. Parts B and C both ask for responses to demonstrate an understanding of methods used to keep the bureaucracy accountable in a policymaking context.

### Sample: 1A

#### Score: 3

The response earned 1 point in part A. The response correctly describes the power that the EPA used in the scenario to change how it implemented environmental laws under different administrations: "the EPA's ability to interpret existing Environmental Laws in differen[t] ways."

The response earned 1 point in part B. The response correctly explained how the power described in part A could be affected by the president: the president's power to "create executive orders which could work to specify exactly how the EPA should interpret the Laws."

The response earned 1 point in part C. The response stated that Congress can "Influence [t]he actions ... passing Legislation that would affect how the Environmental Protection Agency Interprets the Existing Legislation." This is a correct explanation of how Congress could attempt to influence the actions of the bureaucratic agency in the scenario.

### Sample: 1B

#### Score: 2

The response earned 1 point in part A. The response correctly describes the EPA's bureaucratic authority by "interpreting those laws." For reference, the response also described imposing regulations, but only needed one descriptor to earn the point.

### **Question 1 (continued)**

The response earned 0 points in part B. The response fails to explain the use of a presidential power in relation to the bureaucracy. The response does not explain how the president can affect the power of the EPA to interpret legislation or impose regulations.

The response earned 1 point in part C. The response explains how Congress could attempt to influence the actions of the bureaucratic agency in the scenario. The response states, “Congress could attempt to influence these actions by passing a bill that limits bureaucratic agencies from implementing many policies.”

#### **Sample: 1C**

#### **Score: 1**

The response earned 1 point in part A by correctly describing a power that the EPA used in the scenario to change how it implemented environmental laws under different administrations: “The EPA is allowed to interpret laws how they see fit to help regulate the environment.”

The response earned 0 points in part B because the action described for the president of “vetos any law that the EPA wants to enforce” is not a correct explanation of how the power described in part A could be affected by the president.

The response earned 0 points in part C. While the response “holding a hearing and voting” indicates an action Congress could take, it does not explain how those actions would influence the bureaucratic agency in the scenario.