



**Chief Reader Report on Student Responses:
2024 AP[®] Comparative Government and Politics Set 1
Free-Response Questions**

• Number of Students Scored	25,436		
• Number of Readers	99		
• Score Distribution	Exam Score	N	%At
	5	4,081	16.0
	4	6,319	24.8
	3	8,156	32.1
	2	3,849	15.1
	1	3,031	11.9
• Global Mean	3.18		

The following comments on the 2024 free-response questions for AP[®] Comparative Government and Politics were written by the Chief Reader, Eduardo Magalhaes, III, Professor, Simpson College. They give an overview of each free-response question and of how students performed on the question, including typical student errors. General comments regarding the skills and content that students frequently have the most problems with are included. Some suggestions for improving student preparation in these areas are also provided. Teachers are encouraged to attend a College Board workshop to learn strategies for improving student performance in specific areas.

Question 1

Task: Conceptual Analysis

Topic: Describing electoral regulatory organizations

Max Score: 4

Mean Score: 2.21

What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?

The intent of this question was to assess students' understanding of electoral regulatory organizations (also called election commissions). Students were expected to describe a function of an electoral regulatory organization. In addition, students had to describe an election rule that enhances political competition. Students then needed to explain how electoral regulatory organizations contribute to democratization. Finally, students needed to explain why an authoritarian political system would use an electoral regulatory organization.

How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?

Students had a difficult time distinguishing between a function and an overall goal or aspiration of an electoral regulatory organization. Responses describing an election rule in Task B revealed that some students did not have a clear understanding of the concept of political competition. Responses sometimes had difficulty describing a specific rule that would enhance political competition by making it possible for more parties to run; instead, some simply identified a regime with a multiparty system. Students were usually able to describe an aspect of an electoral regulatory organization that would contribute to democratization but had difficulty explaining how they contribute by making clear connections between these concepts. Finally, students were able to explain why an authoritarian political system would use an electoral regulatory organization, commonly citing that they create the illusion of fairness to increase political legitimacy, or that they limited opposition candidates from running to reduce political competition.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Responses described goals of an electoral regulatory organization rather than a specific function. For example, "one function of an electoral regulatory organization is to maintain fairness and efficiency of elections."	<ul style="list-style-type: none">"A function of an electoral regulatory organization is to make sure that all elections rules are being followed when an election is taking place."

- Responses did not make a connection between a function of electoral regulatory organizations and an explanation of their contribution to democratization. For example, “Electoral regulatory organizations contribute to democratization by encouraging competitive elections and also making sure that the elections are fair.”

- “Electoral commissions help increase democratization as they put a set of rules in place that help make elections more free and fair to all citizens. As democracies are more responsive to their citizens than authoritarian regimes, these electoral commissions ensure election results accurately reflect citizens votes.”

Based on your experience at the AP[®] Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?

Teachers should provide multiple opportunities for students to practice describing political structures, such as electoral regulatory organizations, and concepts, such as democratization. Teachers can also assist students by providing opportunities to explore the functions of electoral regulatory organizations in various countries. One strategy is to ask the students to research the electoral regulatory organizations in each of the

AP Comparative Government and Politics course countries and determine the extent to which each is effective. Teachers can also assist students by providing opportunities to practice writing. Have students explain the relationship between two concepts, encouraging them 1) to make connections, rather than describing each concept in isolation, and 2) consider examples from each of the required course countries.

What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?

- The Course and Exam Description provides a section on “Developing the Disciplinary Practices” on pages 138–146. This section provides examples of questions and instructional strategies for incorporating the course skills into classroom instruction.
- Sign into AP Classroom to access AP Daily Videos and questions on the topics and skills addressed in this question. AP teachers can assign students short AP Daily Videos as homework, warm-ups, lectures, reviews, and more. AP teachers can also use the AP Question Bank in AP Classroom to enable students to practice and get feedback on formative topic questions and past AP Exam questions.
- AP Classroom also contains review videos for the 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024 AP Comparative Government and Politics Exam that have helpful information for students and that review key concepts, theories, and skills.
- Resources related specifically to this prompt include:
 - AP Daily Video 1 for Topic 4.2 reviews election rules and the impacts of different legislative electoral systems (i.e., proportional representation).
 - AP Daily Video 2 for Topic 4.2 reviews electoral systems and electoral regulatory organizations for Iran, Mexico, and Nigeria.
 - 2024 AP Exam On-demand videos, accessible through AP Classroom Review includes 2 videos (Practice Sessions 2 and 3) focused on strategies to help students respond to FRQ1 on the AP Comparative Government and Politics Exam.
- Additional resources may be found on the AP Comparative Government and Politics Course page on AP Central at: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-comparative-government-and-politics>

- The AP Comparative Government and Politics Online Teaching Community (OTC) is another great resource, which includes materials and resources posted not only by the College Board, but also by other teachers. The OTC Discussion Board is the place to ask questions, share resources, and exchange teaching ideas at: <https://apcommunity.collegeboard.org/group/apgopo-comp>

Question 2

Task: Quantitative Analysis

Topic: Protection of Civil Liberties

Max Score: 5

Mean Score: 3.15

What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?

The intent of this question was to assess students' ability to interpret, describe, and draw conclusions from quantitative data presented in a graph. In addition, the question was designed to assess students' ability to draw connections between civil liberties and political transparency. Students were presented with a table on civil liberties in four countries between 2006–2021. Students were expected to accurately identify the lowest civil liberties score on the graph and to describe a trend in Nigeria's civil liberties score. Students were then tasked with describing civil liberties. The next two prompts required students to synthesize their analysis of the data in the graph with their knowledge of course content. First, they were asked to draw a conclusion about Mexico's civil liberties score. Then, students were asked to explain what the relationship between civil liberties and governmental transparency in China.

How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skill(s) required on this question?

Nearly all responses identified the lowest score in the table (China) and accurately described the trend of Nigeria's score on the graph. Many students accurately described the concept of civil liberties, although some confused the concept of civil liberties with the concept of civil rights. While most students accurately described a trend related to the protection of civil liberties in Mexico, many were not able to draw a conclusion based on the data provided in the table. Finally, some students successfully explained the relationship between civil liberties and governmental transparency in China, but many responses identified the correlation between the two concepts without explaining the relationship.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Responses described civil liberties as personal freedoms, or did not describe them with enough specificity. For example, "Civil liberties are the rights that the citizens of a country have."	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• "Civil liberties are individual and collective freedoms protected from government interference."
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Responses identified a trend rather than drawing a conclusion based on the data. For example, "Mexico has decreased their protection of civil liberties."	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• "Civil liberties declined in Mexico because the government has failed to protect journalists from cartel violence, leading to a decrease in freedom of the press."

- Responses identified the correlation between low civil liberties score and transparency rather than the explanation between the two. For example, “Chinese civil liberties scores are low and the government is not transparent.”

- “The low civil liberties score shows that restrictions on the media and speech in China makes it difficult for citizens to know what the government is doing.”

Based on your experience at the AP[®] Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer teachers to help them improve student performance on the exam?

Students performed well in interpreting the data presented in the chart, so instructors should continue to expose their students to a variety of charts throughout the review. Teachers could work to help students analyze and interpret “patterns” in the data, as some students struggled to characterize a trend in the data.

Teachers can help prepare students for this question in several ways. First, students could use a sorting activity to practice making the distinction between civil liberties and civil rights; some students misidentified voting, for example, as a civil liberty. Second, students can search databases for country specific examples illustrating the relationship between government and the protection of civil liberties and report them to the class. Making these connections can help students better understand that civil liberties not only protect people from government interference, but also must also be actively defended by governments. Finally, teachers can have students write explanations about how a civil liberties score relates to a specific concept such as transparency or legitimacy. During the debriefing of the writing exercise, teachers can also emphasize that an explanation of a relationship requires more development than simply noting a statistical correlation.

What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?

- The Course and Exam Description provides a section on “Developing the Disciplinary Practices” on pages 138–146. This section provides examples of questions and instructional strategies for incorporating the course skills into classroom instruction.
- Sign into AP Classroom to access AP Daily Videos and questions on the topics and skills addressed in this question. AP teachers can assign students short AP Daily Videos as homework, warm-ups, lectures, reviews, and more. AP teachers can also use the AP Question Bank in AP Classroom to enable students to practice and get feedback on formative topic questions and past AP Exam questions.
- AP Classroom also contains review videos for the 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024 AP Comparative Government and Politics Exam that have helpful information for students and that review key concepts, theories, and skills.
- Resources related specifically to this prompt include:
 - Topic 3.7 focuses on Civil Rights and Civil Liberties. See AP Classroom for AP Daily Videos and Topic Questions specific to these concepts.
 - AP Exam On-demand videos are accessible through AP Classroom Review. See Practice Session 4 (2024 and 2023) for helpful strategies to prepare students to respond to FRQ2 on the AP Comparative Government and Politics Exam.
- Additional resources may be found on the AP Comparative Government and Politics Course page on AP Central at: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-comparative-government-and-politics>
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other teachers. The OTC Discussion Board is the place to ask questions, share resources, and exchange teaching ideas at: <https://apcommunity.collegeboard.org/group/apgopo-comp>

Question 3

Task: Comparative Analysis

Topic: Economic Liberalization

Max Score: 5

Mean Score: 2.24

What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?

The intent of this question was to assess students' understanding of the concept of economic liberalization and the role of economic liberalization in the required course countries. This included assessing their ability to define economic liberalization, describe policies implemented as part of economic liberalization programs in two course countries, and explain the relationship between economic liberalization policies and the emergence of social movements in the same two course countries. The skills tested were descriptive and explanatory.

How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?

Many students were able to correctly describe economic liberalization as the privatization of the economy and reduction of state intervention in the market. However, many students could not correctly describe economic liberalization policies implemented in specific course countries. The final task required students explain the impact of the economic liberalization policies on the rise of social movements in the same two countries discussed in task B. Many students successfully discussed the impact of economic liberalization policies on the rise of social movements in the countries; however, many others could identify a social movement but were not able to explain how economic liberalization has led to its development.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Responses did not clearly describe an economic liberalization policy. For example, “The policy for economic liberalization is the UK Brexit which saw the UK leave the European union which previously tied the British pound to the Euro.”	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• “China’s Special Economic Zones allowed the country to cultivate foreign investment and foster industry.”
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Responses inaccurately described economic liberalization because they conflated nationalization with economic liberalization. For example, “Nationalization policies mean less governmental control of industries.”	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Economic liberalization policies include privatizing national industries.”

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responses did not fully explain how economic liberalization was related to the emergence of social movements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “In Mexico, the signing of NAFTA led to the influx of foreign goods and capital. Southern Mexico is disproportionately targeted. The loss of employment among the ethnic and socioeconomic cleavages, which existed for centuries, gave rise to the Zapatista Movement.”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responses did not specify the social movements in their explanation of how economic liberalization led to the emergence of social movements. For example, “In the UK, Thatcher helped create Thatcherism, a movement in favor of her policies. The opposing social movement to her was by Tony Blair who help more liberal views and opposed such privatization.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “In Nigeria ... foreign direct investment in the South, led to the pollution of the Niger River Delta. This issue was then protested by the Nigerian Social movement of MOSOP.”

Based on your experience at the AP® Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?

Teachers should provide multiple opportunities for students to practice writing about economic liberalization policies in each of the course countries. In particular, teachers should focus on the distinction between privatization and nationalization. One strategy would be to create a comparison chart and have students compare economic liberalization and nationalization by providing generic examples of each. Then have students provide country-specific examples of an economic policy from each course country, indicating whether it is an example of economic liberalization or nationalization. Teachers should also provide multiple opportunities for students to practice writing about social movements. They might create a flowchart of key social movements in the course countries, and have students identify the cause of each social movement. This helps students understand that not all social movements are caused by economic issues.

What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?

- The Course and Exam Description provides a section on “Developing the Disciplinary Practices” on pages 138–146. This section provides examples of questions and instructional strategies for incorporating the course skills into classroom instruction.
- Sign into AP Classroom to access AP Daily Videos and questions on the topics and skills addressed in this question. AP teachers can assign students short AP Daily Videos as homework, warm-ups, lectures, reviews, and more. AP teachers can also use the AP Question Bank in AP Classroom to enable students to practice and get feedback on formative topic questions and past AP Exam questions.
- AP Classroom also contains review videos for the 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024 AP Comparative Government and Politics Exam that have helpful information for students and that review key concepts, theories, and skills.

- Resources related specifically to this prompt include:
 - Economic liberalization is discussed in Topic 5.4. The AP Daily Video 5.4 describes examples of economic liberalization from course countries.
 - See Topic 4.5 for a discussion of social movements and their impact in course countries.
 - AP Exam On-demand videos are accessible through AP Classroom Review. See Practice Session 5 and 6 (2024 and 2023) for helpful strategies to prepare students to respond to FRQ3 on the AP Comparative Government and Politics Exam.
- Additional resources may be found on the AP Comparative Government and Politics Course page on AP Central at: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-comparative-government-and-politics>
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Question 4

Task: Argument

Topic: Political party systems and political legitimacy

Max Score: 5

Mean Score: 2.84

What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?

The intent of this question was to assess student understanding of political party systems and their impact on political legitimacy, while using one or more of the course concepts: stability, representation, or transfer of power. Students were expected to write an argumentative essay using each of the following skills: articulating a defensible claim/thesis; supporting their claim with two pieces of relevant evidence from a course country; using reasoning to explain why the evidence provided supported the thesis; and using refutation, concession, or rebuttal to respond to an alternative perspective. Specifically, students needed to demonstrate their understanding of multi-party, one-party, and dominant-party systems and their impact on political legitimacy, using the course concept(s) to establish the connection between the party systems and the concepts. Students needed to further demonstrate their knowledge of the course countries by providing appropriate evidence from the countries that reflect the concept(s) they 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 party systems and political legitimacy. Finally, students needed to demonstrate their understanding of alternate explanations by describing an alternate thesis, then justifying their concession, rebuttal, or refutation.

How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skill(s) required on this question?

The different tasks within this question required students to demonstrate several critical thinking skills, applying substantive knowledge about party systems while using argumentation. This type of question required students to integrate their knowledge of course content about party systems with their skills of providing a defensible thesis, specific and relevant evidence and reasoning, and to develop a response to an alternate perspective. Most responses provided a defensible thesis. While almost all responses provided evidence, some evidence was often not relevant or not accurately connected to the required course concepts. Many responses that demonstrated a correct understanding of political legitimacy were also able to use reasoning to connect evidence to the thesis, and successfully articulate an alternate perspective. Some students attempted the alternate perspective; however, while these responses often described an opposing point of view, many did not provide a substantive rebuttal, refutation, or concession.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Responses where evidence does not relate to the course concept.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Nigeria’s multi-party system allows each citizen to choose which of several different political parties best represent them.”

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responses were not able to use reasoning to explain why the evidence supports the claim or thesis, using one or more of the provided course concepts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Increased representativeness encourages public confidence that government works for the people, strengthening popular belief in the government’s right to rule, or political legitimacy.”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responses that did not provide an alternative perspective to the thesis. For example, “Some might say single party systems are better as they simplify things and provide people with the answers.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Although some may argue that one-party or dominant systems have an easier transfer of power between leaders since power is being exchanged to the same party it is simply not true. There is almost always a peaceful transition of power between leaders of differing parties in multiparty systems.”

Based on your experience at the AP® Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer teachers to help them improve student performance on the exam?

Teachers could help students regularly define and explain key vocabulary terms, concepts, and principles, and then provide various contemporary examples of said vocabulary, concepts, and principles in the six course countries.

Teachers could help students identify relevant evidence, and practice using reasoning to connect that evidence to a thesis statement.

Teachers could outline how to develop an alternative or opposing line of thought, and how to write a rebuttal, refutation, or concession of that line of reasoning.

Teachers could review released scoring guides with students, so students can see valid examples of high, medium, and low answers. Students could also practice assessing released prompts to see what appropriate responses may look like.

What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?

- The Course and Exam Description provides a section on “Developing the Disciplinary Practices” on pages 138–146. This section provides examples of questions and instructional strategies for incorporating the course skills into classroom instruction.
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- AP Classroom also contains review videos for the 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024 AP Comparative Government and Politics Exam that have helpful information for students and that review key concepts, theories, and skills.

- Resources related specifically to this prompt include:
 - Topics 4.3 and 4.4 focus on the role of political party systems in government. See AP Daily Videos 1 and 2 (4.3) for descriptions of the party systems and membership in course countries.
 - AP Daily: Live Review (Practice Sessions 7 and 8) are available through AP Classroom. These videos offer students advice and strategies to develop strong responses to FRQ4 on the AP Comparative Government and Politics Exam.
- Additional resources may be found on the AP Comparative Government and Politics Course page on AP Central at: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-comparative-government-and-politics>
- The AP Comparative Government and Politics Online Teaching Community (OTC) is another great resource, which includes materials and resources posted not only by the College Board, but also by other teachers. The OTC Discussion Board is the place to ask questions, share resources, and exchange teaching ideas at: <https://apcommunity.collegeboard.org/group/apgopo-comp>