

2025



AP[®] United States Government and Politics

Free-Response Questions Set 1

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS
SECTION II
TIME – 1 HOUR AND 40 MINUTES

Directions:

Section II has 4 questions and lasts 1 hour and 40 minutes.

Respond to all parts of all 4 questions. In your response, use substantive examples where appropriate.

You may pace yourself as you answer the questions in this section, or you may use these optional timing recommendations:

It is suggested that you spend about 20 minutes each on questions 1, 2, and 3 and about 40 minutes on question 4.

You may use scratch paper for notes and planning, but credit will only be given for responses entered in this application. Text you enter as an annotation will **not** be included as part of your answer. You can go back and forth between questions in this section until time expires. The clock will turn red when 5 minutes remain—**the proctor will not give you any time updates or warnings.**

Note: This exam was originally administered digitally. It is presented here in a format optimized for teacher and student use in the classroom.

In the summer of 2021, the House of Representatives passed a bill on election reform with overwhelming support from Democrats and no Republican votes. When the same legislation was discussed in the Senate later on in the year, the Democrats had a majority to pass the bill but could not obtain enough Republican votes to end the debate. As long as debate continued, there could be no final vote on the legislation. As a result, the bill did not become law, despite having the minimum number of supporters to win a floor vote if one were to be held.

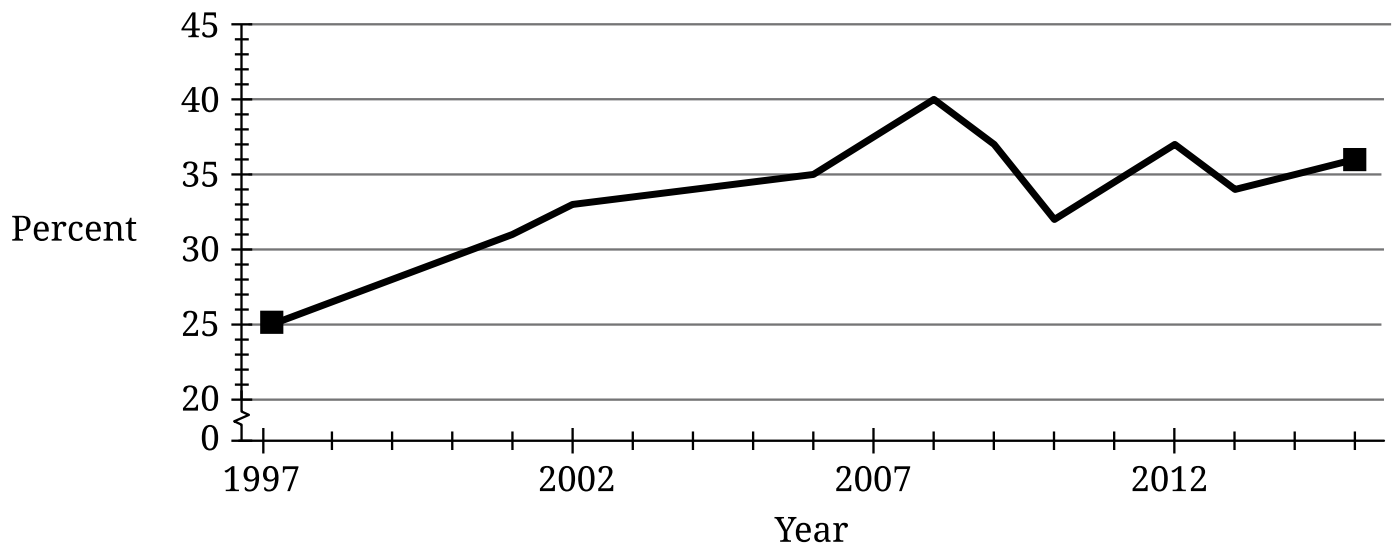
Disappointed by the outcome, some of the bill's supporters suggested that the problem was not the legislation but the rules of the Senate. Groups pressured the Senate leadership to consider revising the rules to make it easier for the chamber to pass legislation, similar to the rules currently in place in the House of Representatives.

Opinions on changing the Senate rules varied. Some Republican and Democratic senators supported the rule change. Others in both parties opposed it, voicing concerns about the long-term consequences of changing the rules. One senator noted that because any party could be in the minority in the future, any changes to the rules should still ensure that all senators continue to have input.

1. Respond to parts A, B, and C.

- A.** Describe the Senate procedure at the center of the controversy in the scenario.
- B.** Explain how the procedure described in part A makes passing legislation more difficult in the Senate compared with the House of Representatives.
- C.** Explain how the senators' actions in addressing the election reform bill illustrate the concept of partisanship.

Percentage of Americans Who Believed Climate Change Would Pose a Serious Threat in Their Lifetime, 1997 to 2015



Source: Gallup, October 2021

2. Respond to parts A, B, C, and D.

- A.** Identify the percentage of Americans in 2010 who believed that climate change would pose a serious threat in their lifetime, according to the data in the line graph.
- B.** Describe a trend in the data shown in the line graph.
- C.** Draw a conclusion about how a trend in the line graph could be used by an interest group to influence policymaking.
- D.** Explain how the overall trend shown in the line graph could be a result of political socialization.

This question requires you to compare a Supreme Court case you studied in class with one you have not studied in class. A summary of the Supreme Court case you did not study in class is presented and provides all of the information you need to know about this case to answer the prompts.

Wickard v. Filburn (1942)

The Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938 was a law passed by Congress during the Great Depression. The purpose of the federal law was to regulate the production of wheat to stabilize the economy and the nation's food supply. The law limited the amount of wheat that farmers could grow on their farms. Roscoe Filburn, a farmer in Ohio, grew more wheat than the amount allowed under the Agricultural Adjustment Act. When Filburn was penalized under the law, he sued.

Filburn argued that the excess wheat grown on his farm was for personal use and therefore did not fall under the wheat limit established by the law. Filburn also argued that the law was unconstitutional because Congress did not have the authority to regulate how much wheat a farmer could grow for personal consumption or use.

A unanimous Supreme Court held that the power of Congress granted by Article I of the Constitution includes the authority to regulate activities in a single state when they have even an indirect effect on the economy of other states. That meant that the Agricultural Adjustment Act applied to Filburn's wheat sold at market and his wheat grown for personal use.

3. Respond to parts A, B, and C.

- A.** Identify the constitutional clause that is common to both *United States v. Lopez* (1995) and *Wickard v. Filburn* (1942).
- B.** Explain how the facts in *United States v. Lopez* and *Wickard v. Filburn* led to different holdings.
- C.** Explain how the holding in *Wickard v. Filburn* reflects the concept of federalism.

4. Social media has changed the way many Americans communicate about politics.

Develop an argument as to whether the use of social media has helped or hindered participatory democracy.

Use at least one piece of evidence from one of the following foundational documents:

- First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States
- *Federalist* No. 10
- “Letter from a Birmingham Jail”

In your response, you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a defensible claim or thesis that establishes a line of reasoning.
- Support your claim with at least TWO pieces of specific and relevant evidence.
 - One piece of evidence must come from one of the foundational documents listed.
 - A second piece of evidence can come from any other foundational document not used as your first piece of evidence or it may be from your knowledge of course concepts.
- Use reasoning to explain why your evidence supports your claim or thesis.
- Respond to an opposing or alternate perspective using rebuttal or refutation.

STOP
END OF EXAM