

2025



AP[®] Comparative Government and Politics

Scoring Guidelines Set 1

Question 1: Conceptual Analysis**4 points**

A Describe sovereignty. **1 point****Examples of acceptable responses may include the following:**

- Independent legal authority over a population in a particular territory
- The right and power of a state to govern itself without outside interference
- A government's power to apply rules within a territory
- The use or exercise of power by a government
- Supreme authority to enforce policies/laws/rules within a country

B Describe a way governments promote economic liberalization. **1 point****Examples of acceptable responses may include the following:**

- Privatizing of natural resources
- Privatizing of state-owned enterprises
- Reducing tariffs
- Joining a free trade agreement
- Creating special economic zones
- Joining an international organization with an economic focus (IMF, World Bank, or WTO)
- Decreasing taxes or subsidies
- Reducing government regulations

C Explain how economic liberalization policies can present challenges to sovereignty. **1 point****Examples of acceptable responses may include the following:**

- Foreign governments or multinational corporations (MNCs) can bring political or economic pressure to bear on countries, which would reduce a country's sovereignty as they have less control over their own economy.
 - A country may lose sovereignty when it has to comply with a supranational organization's trade policies that contradict previous trade policies.
 - Foreign direct investment may lead to new cultural influences that challenge a country's sovereignty by introducing beliefs or values that run counter to the country's traditions.
 - The economic development that results from economic liberalization policies can lead to environmental damage or wealth inequality, causing domestic backlash that challenges a country's sovereignty.
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| D | Explain why a government might adopt economic liberalization policies despite challenges to its sovereignty. | 1 point |
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Examples of acceptable responses may include the following:

- A government might adopt economic liberalization policies despite challenges to its sovereignty because these policies could improve domestic economic conditions, which increases legitimacy.
 - A government might adopt economic globalization policies to respond to domestic demands, thus gaining popular support for the ruling party.
 - Because extending a government's national influence internationally can in turn increase the government's prestige/power, a government might choose to adopt economic liberalization policies.
 - Such policies can lead to economic development, which can have the effect of reducing poverty in a country.
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Question 2: Quantitative Analysis**5 points**

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- A** Using the data in the graph, identify the country with the highest level of perceived corruption in 2015. **1 point**

Acceptable identification:

- Nigeria

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- B** Using the data in the graph, describe a trend in China's score on the Corruption Perceptions Index between 2018 and 2021. **1 point**

Examples of acceptable responses may include the following:

- China's score on the Corruption Perceptions Index increased between 2018 and 2021.
- Perceived corruption in China decreased during these years.
- China's score improved during this time period.
- China's score was relatively stable/showed a slight increase during this time period.

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- C** Describe political legitimacy. **1 point**

Examples of acceptable responses may include the following:

- Political legitimacy refers to the people's belief in whether the government has the right to rule.
 - Governments create or maintain political legitimacy through:
 - elections
 - governmental transparency
 - constitutional provisions
 - economic growth
 - tradition
 - charisma
 - religious heritage/organization
 - reduction of governmental corruption
 - governmental effectiveness
 - institutionalized laws
 - peaceful transfer of power
 - nationalism
 - ideology
 - dominant political party's endorsement
 - political efficacy
 - Political legitimacy can increase the power of the regime.
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- D** Using the data in the in the graph, draw a conclusion that explains the level of perceived corruption in the United Kingdom. **1 point**

Examples of acceptable responses may include the following:

- The UK has low levels of perceived corruption because
 - there are free and fair elections
 - the government has high transparency
 - it is a consolidated democracy
 - it has a long tradition of democratic practices
 - it has strong rule of law

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- E** Explain what the data in the graph imply about the relationship between corruption and legitimacy in China. **1 point**

Examples of acceptable responses may include the following:

- Political legitimacy in China has increased because the government has tried to reduce corruption.
 - In order to maintain legitimacy, the Chinese government has made efforts to reduce the public's perception of corruption.
 - The data in the graph imply that the overall level of corruption in the government has little impact on the political legitimacy of the Chinese government, as it remains in power despite this score.
 - There is little relationship between corruption and political legitimacy in China. This is because China has moderate levels of corruption, yet high levels of political legitimacy, indicating that political legitimacy comes from some other source.
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Question 3: Comparative Analysis**5 points****A** Describe a function of a judicial system.**1 point****Examples of acceptable responses may include the following:**

- Judicial systems:
 - interpret the laws of a country
 - assess constitutionality of laws
 - resolve disputes in a country
 - apply the law
 - maintain checks and balances between branches of government
 - can protect the rights and liberties of citizens in a country
 - help countries establish rule of law or maintain rule by law

B Describe a limit on the power of the judicial system in two different AP Comparative Government and Politics course countries.**2 points****Examples of acceptable responses may include the following:****China**

- In China, the judiciary is under the control of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP)/General Secretary/president.
- In China, the judiciary enforces rule by law, or the laws made by the national government, and does not have any additional decision-making power.
- In China, the government has a process for removing judges for misconduct.
- In China, the judges serve fixed terms.

Iran

- In Iran, the Chief Justice is appointed by the Supreme Leader and the Supreme Court lacks judicial independence because of this constraint.
- In Iran, judges must be clerics who adhere to Islamic Sharia law.
- In Iran, the judiciary lacks the power of judicial review.
- In Iran the government has a process for removing judges for misconduct.
- In Iran, the judges serve fixed terms.

Mexico

- In Mexico, judges on the Supreme Court rely on appointment by the executive branch and confirmation by the legislative branch.
- In Mexico, Supreme Court justices will be elected by popular vote.
- In Mexico, Supreme Court justices can only serve for a fixed term.
- In Mexico, legislative changes to the constitution cannot be overturned by the judicial branch.
- In Mexico, the government has a process for removing judges for misconduct.

Scoring Notes: Reform of the Mexican judiciary goes into effect on June 1, 2025.

Responses that reference 15-year terms for Mexican Supreme Court justices should be given credit. Responses that reference an upcoming change (12-year terms) for Mexican Supreme Court justices should be given credit.

Nigeria

- In Nigeria, judges on the Supreme Court rely on appointment by the executive branch and confirmation by the legislative branch.
- In Nigeria, Islamic Sharia courts have been established in the northern part of the country.
- In Nigeria, the government has a process for removing judges for misconduct.
- In Nigeria, judges have age and/or term limits.

Russia

- In Russia, judges are nominated by the President and approved by the Federation Council.
- In Russia, the dominant party constrains the judiciary from using the power of judicial review against other governing branches.
- In Russia, the judiciary enforces rule by law.
- In Russia, the government has a process for removing judges for misconduct.
- In Russia, judges serve fixed terms.

United Kingdom

- In the United Kingdom, the Supreme Court lacks the power of judicial review, which limits its power.
- In the United Kingdom, the judiciary must abide by common law to enforce the rule of law.
- In the United Kingdom, the government has a process for removing judges for misconduct.
- In the United Kingdom, judges have age limits.

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| C | Explain why each of the two AP Comparative Government and Politics course countries described in (B) would limit the power of their judicial systems. | 2 points |
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Examples of acceptable responses may include the following:

China

- In China, the government constrains its judicial system to ensure that the CCP retains power.
- In China, the government limits the power of the judiciary in order to concentrate power in the executive branch.
- In China, the power of the judiciary is controlled so that the executive can use it to control dissent and/or target the opposition

Iran

- In Iran, the power of the judicial system has been limited in order to ensure that the legal system is based on religious law.
- In Iran, the executive constrains the judicial system to consolidate power in the executive.
- In Iran, the government constrains the judiciary to control dissent.

Mexico

- In Mexico, the power of the judiciary is limited so that one branch of government does not become more powerful than any other.
 - In Mexico, the power of the judiciary is limited to ensure that there are proper checks and balances in the national government.
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Nigeria

- In Nigeria, the power of the judiciary is limited by the constitution in order to ensure that there are proper checks and balances in the national government.
- In Nigeria, the power of the judiciary is limited to ensure that one branch of government does not become more powerful than any other.

Russia

- In Russia, the executive constrains the judicial branch to consolidate its power.
- In Russia, the power of the judiciary is controlled so that the executive can use it to control dissent and/or target the opposition.
- In Russia, the judicial branch has not been able to practice judicial review in order to ensure that the other branches of government remain powerful.

United Kingdom

- In the United Kingdom, the government limits the power of its judicial system in order to ensure that it does not become more powerful than any other part of the government.
 - In the United Kingdom, the government limits the power of its judicial branch in order to reflect the principle of parliamentary sovereignty.
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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 government protections of civil liberties increase or decrease stability in a state using one or more of the provided course concepts: democratization, transparency, and rule of law.
	Examples that do not earn this point: Restate the prompt <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>“Government protections of civil liberties can both increase and decrease stability in a state.”</i> <i>“Some people argue that government protections affect stability.”</i> Do not respond to the prompt <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>“The U.S. Supreme Court is protecting civil liberties.”</i> <i>“Some governments don’t do enough to protect civil liberties.”</i> 	Examples that earn this point: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>“As the state goes through the process of democratization, it offers protections of civil liberties to citizens. Citizens can use these civil liberties to organize and/or protest which makes their voices heard thus increasing the stability of the state.”</i> <i>“States going through democratization are often seeking to increase protections of civil liberties. However, this can create instability as these governments may be uncomfortable with how much new power its citizens have.”</i> <i>“States that have strong protections of civil liberties are more stable because the government allows for more transparency. This enhances support for the state and increases stability.”</i> <i>“Government protections of civil liberties increase stability in a state because they show the state’s commitment to rule of law.”</i> <i>“States that offer strong protection of civil liberties to citizens can end up becoming less stable over time. If they adhere to rule of law, they will allow more citizen dissent or protest in the government, which could lead to instability.”</i> <i>“States with governments that operate using rule of law protect civil liberties of individuals, even political opponents of the ruling government. This makes those opponents more likely to use legal methods of opposition, rather than violent means, which increases stability.”</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">“Authoritarian states often do protect civil liberties.” Provide evidence that is not relevant to course concepts in the prompt <ul style="list-style-type: none">“Natural disasters can disrupt state stability.”	Examples of acceptable specific and relevant evidence (one example is one piece of evidence): <ul style="list-style-type: none">“China, Russia and Iran have more restrictions on civil liberties. They have less tolerance for opposing viewpoints, making democratization in these countries unlikely.”“In Mexico and Nigeria, the governments are democratizing, by giving more freedoms to their citizens.”“China, Russia and Iran are authoritarian states, with fewer protections of civil liberties, which makes government actions less transparent.”“In China, Russia and Iran, the media is state-owned, and the actions of government are not transparent.”“In the United Kingdom, a major function of the Supreme Court is to use the rule of law to ensure the protections of civil liberties.”“In China, Russia and Iran, protestors and journalists are arrested/tried without due process, violating rule of law.”	
	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	
	Responses that do not earn this point: <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. Examples that do not earn points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Authoritarian governments ignore rule of law.”</i> • <i>“States experiencing democratization may choose to continue to limit civil liberties.”</i> 	Responses that earn this point: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain the relationship between the evidence provided and the claim or thesis. Examples of reasoning that explain how evidence supports the claim or thesis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Governments limit civil liberties in order to control the ability of opposing groups to organize, because it increases the stability of the state.”</i> • <i>“Governments that protect civil liberties decrease stability because if enough people express anger toward the government, it can lead to a revolution/coup/revolt of the government.”</i> • <i>“Governments allow a free press and citizen access to information because this helps citizens understand how the government is responding to issues, thus improving stability.”</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). • 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>“Government protections increase/decrease stability.”</i> Describe an alternate perspective but do not refute, concede, or rebut that perspective <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>“Protecting civil liberties does not really impact stability.”</i> 	Examples of acceptable responses to an alternate perspective may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>“Some might argue that restricting civil liberties increases stability because opponents can be put in jail where they will not pose a threat to the regime. However, citizens may protest unjust arrests, increasing instability.”</i> <i>“Some political scientists claim that restricting civil liberties does not increase stability because citizens will revolt against government restrictions. However, if citizens are afraid of violence or arrest if they protest, they will stay home and not challenge the regime, increasing stability.”</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. 		