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# AP<sup>®</sup> Comparative Government and Politics

## Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary Set 1

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# AP<sup>®</sup> COMPARATIVE GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

## 2019 SCORING GUIDELINES

### Question 6

**6 points**

**Part (a):**

One point is earned for correctly describing a type of party system.

Acceptable descriptions include:

- In a single-party system, only one party is allowed to exist and hold power.
- In a dominant-party system, one party controls the government, although other parties exist.
- In a two-party or two-plus-party system, only two parties hold power.
- In a multiparty system, three or more parties are electorally competitive and/or hold power.

One point is earned for correctly explaining how that type of party system influences policy making.

Acceptable explanations may include:

- A single-party system
  - produces a closed policy process that only reflects the views of the governing party
  - produces a more efficient decision-making process
  - creates policies intended to keep the party in power
- A dominant-party system
  - produces a closed policy process that only reflects the views of the governing party
  - produces a more efficient decision-making process
  - creates policies intended to keep the party in power
- A two-party system
  - integrates opposing viewpoints into the policy process that can lead to instability or gridlock
  - integrates opposing viewpoints into the policy process that can require negotiation and compromise
  - encourages centrist policies
- A multiparty system
  - integrates multiple viewpoints into the policy process that can lead to instability or gridlock
  - integrates multiple viewpoints into the policy process that require negotiation and compromise
  - gives voice to minority, ethnic, or regionalist parties in the policy process

**Part (b):**

One point is earned for correctly describing a type of party system.

See acceptable descriptions in Part (a).

One point is earned for correctly explaining how that type of party system influences policy making.

See acceptable explanations in Part (a).

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## 2019 SCORING GUIDELINES

### Question 6 (continued)

#### Part (c):

One point is earned for correctly explaining how a party system is influenced by the type of electoral system.

Acceptable explanations include:

- In a proportional representation (PR) system, the percentage of votes roughly translates into the percentage of seats, allowing more parties or smaller parties to gain seats.
- In a PR system, the use of multimember districts allows more parties or smaller parties to gain seats.
- In a single-member district (SMD) system, only one party can win any given seat, preventing smaller, minor, or third parties from winning.
- An SMD system encourages strategic voting, favoring larger parties.

#### Part (d):

One point is earned for correctly explaining how regime change can lead to a change in the type of party system.

Acceptable explanations include:

- Countries that transition from authoritarian to democratic are more likely to hold free and fair elections that permit a change from a single-party to a two-party or multiparty system.
- Countries that transition from democratic to authoritarian are more likely to ban opposition parties or rig elections in favor of the governing party.
- Regime change may level the playing field and permit opposition parties to be electorally competitive.
- Countries change the constitution or the fundamental laws structuring the government in a way that transforms the party system.

A score of zero (0) is earned for an attempted or off-task answer that earns no points.

A score of (—) is earned for a blank.

Conceptual Analysis: We suggest that you spend approximately 30 minutes on question 6.

6A,

6. There are different types of party systems around the world.
- (a) Describe one type of <sup>single dominated</sup> party system. Explain one way that type of party system influences policy making.
  - (b) Describe another type of <sup>multiple</sup> party system. Explain one way that type of party system influences policy making.
  - (c) Explain how a country's party system is influenced by the <sup>proportional vs. first past the post</sup> type of electoral system in the country.
  - (d) Explain how regime change can lead to a change in the type of party system in a country.

a) A single party system is a system in which there is one sole party ~~in charge~~ which is dominant in the country, such as Russia's United Russia or China's CCP. This party system influences policy making by making the passage of legislation much easier, due to a unified policy goal shared by the party resulting in the government easily agreeing on legislation to pass. China's legislative branch, for instance, largely acts as a rubber stamp ~~and~~ of actions taken by chairman Xi Jinping.

b) A multi-party system is characterized by multiple parties competing for power in the government. This usually results in a legislative gridlock due to disagreements between parties.

c) The electoral system in a country will impact the number of parties able to participate effectively in government. While a proportional representation system may allow for minority parties to earn some representation, a first past the post system, like in the UK, results in two parties dominating due to smaller parties <sup>or</sup> ~~or~~ <sup>supporters</sup> being forced into voting for larger ones, lest they throw away their vote.

d) A regime change usually means a change in ideology drastically different to the original regime, meaning the party system can easily change. For instance, an authoritarian takeover usually will

ADDITIONAL ANSWER PAGE FOR QUESTION 6

lead to a single party systems, where other parties are silenced or banned to allow the dominant party to more efficiently change policies. Meanwhile, a transition to democracy would most likely lead to a multiple party system, where different ideas can compete in decisions to determine the will of the people.

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Conceptual Analysis: We suggest that you spend approximately 30 minutes on question 6.

6B1

6. There are different types of party systems around the world.
- Describe one type of party system. Explain one way that type of party system influences policy making.
  - Describe another type of party system. Explain one way that type of party system influences policy making.
  - Explain how a country's party system is influenced by the type of electoral system in the country.
  - Explain how regime change can lead to a change in the type of party system in a country.

a) multiparty system. this party can make policy making more difficult in that multiple positions and opinions are being heard and accounted for so when one party does not agree it can make passing legislation or what ever is happening very difficult

b) one party dominance. One party dominance means one party has control so their policies have an easier time passing, although a proportion of citizens may not ~~know~~ agree or are even being accounted for, since there is only one party in charge it is their decision.

c) a country's party system can ~~appear~~ be influenced by the electoral system by whether or not the people can vote ~~in~~ and if they can, who they vote for. If a government has a one party system the party is going to be able to control what the voters see. ~~the~~ If the country votes proportionally or by area then their opinions are more likely to be represented

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6B2

In the national ~~scale~~ scale like in Britain where the people vote for their representative to parliament but in Russia where it is one-party dominant the people have less representation and awareness to vote differently.

d) a regime change can lead to a change in the party system because the government is changing overan. When the government is transitioning from one regime to another, new customs may be put in place such as ~~representation~~ or proportional representation where areas will be able to vote for a representative who will share their beliefs and controls. Or, a regime change can change the party system making it less democratic which could mean a one-party dominance system where not all <sup>citizens are</sup> ~~and~~ represented and able to participate ~~in the government~~ so what they want or need can be acknowledged.

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Conceptual Analysis: We suggest that you spend approximately 30 minutes on question 6.

6C

6. There are different types of party systems around the world.
- (a) Describe one type of party system. Explain one way that type of party system influences policy making.
  - (b) Describe another type of party system. Explain one way that type of party system influences policy making.
  - (c) Explain how a country's party system is influenced by the type of electoral system in the country.
  - (d) Explain how regime change can lead to a change in the type of party system in a country.

a) 1 type of party system is the two party system. This leads to a lot of division in ideology in policy making, making it harder to pass laws.

b) Another type of party system is the multiparty system. This can lead to parties forming alliances when making policies.

c) Proportional Representation leads to multiparty systems, while single-member districts lead to two party systems.

d) A regime could change the electoral system of a country, leading to a new party system.

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## 2019 SCORING COMMENTARY

### Question 6

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

#### Overview

The intent of this question was to assess students' understanding of party systems and electoral systems, as well as the relationships of those two types of systems with policy making and regime change. The skills tested were descriptive and explanatory. Students had six specific tasks: to describe two different types of party systems, to explain the effect of each of those party system types on policy making, to explain how an electoral system influences a party system, and to explain how regime change influences party systems.

#### Sample: 6A

**Score: 6**

In part (a) the response earned 1 point for describing that a “single party system is a system in which there is one sole party which is dominant in the country.” Additional acceptable responses include descriptions of a dominant-party system, a two-party system, or a multiparty system.

In part (a) the response earned 1 point for explaining that a single-party system makes “the passage of legislation much easier, due to a unified policy goal shared by the party resulting in the government easily agreeing on legislation to pass.” Additional acceptable responses include that policies are created to keep the party in power and that policies only reflect the views of the governing party.

In part (b) the response earned 1 point for describing that “[a] multiparty system is characterized by multiple parties competing for power in the government.” Additional acceptable responses could describe a dominant-party system, a single-party system, or a two-party system.

In part (b) the response earned 1 point for explaining that a multiparty system “usually results in legislative gridlock due to disagreements between parties.” Additional acceptable responses include that multiparty systems integrate multiple viewpoints in the policy process, which requires negotiation and compromise, and they give voice to minority, ethnic, or regionalist parties in the policy process.

In part (c) the response earned 1 point for explaining that, in a first-past-the-post system, “a first past the post system, like in the UK, results in two parties dominating due to smaller party supporters being forced into voting for larger ones less they throw away their vote.” An additional acceptable response is that in a proportional representation system, more parties are able to gain seats because the percentage of votes roughly translates into the percentage of seats.

In part (d) the response earned 1 point for explaining that “an authoritarian takeover usually will lead to a single party systems, where other parties are silenced or banned” and “a transition to democracy would most likely lead to a multiple party system, where different ideas can compete in elections to determine the will of the people.” An additional acceptable response is that transitions from democracies to authoritarian regimes can lead to the banning of opposition parties and a single-party system.

#### Sample: 6B

**Score: 3**

In part (a) the response did not earn a point for a description. The response “Multiparty system” is the correct identifier, but it does not offer a description of that system. An acceptable response could describe a dominant-party system, a two-party system, or a multiparty system.

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## 2019 SCORING COMMENTARY

### Question 6 (continued)

In part (a) the response earned 1 point for explaining that multiparty systems “can make policy making more difficult in that multiple positions and opinions are being heard and accounted for so when one party does not agree it can make passing legislation or what ever is happening very difficult.” Additional acceptable responses include that the integration of multiple voices into the policy process requires compromise and negotiation and that multiparty systems give voice to minority, ethnic, or regionalist parties in the process.

In part (b) the response earned 1 point for describing a dominant-party system as one in which “one party has control” and “there is only one party in charge.” Additional acceptable responses could describe a single-party system, a two-party system, or a multiparty system.

In part (b) the response earned 1 point for explaining that, in a dominant-party system, “policies have an easier time passing ... since there is only one party in charge it is their decision.” Additional acceptable responses include that policies only reflect the views of the governing party and that policies are designed to keep the governing party in power.

In part (c) the response did not earn a point for the explanation “if the country votes proportionately or by area then their opinions as more likely to be represented in the national scale.” This does not address how an electoral system influences a party system. An acceptable response is that in a proportional representation system, more parties are able to gain seats because the percentage of votes roughly translates into the percentage of seats.

In part (d) the response did not earn a point for the explanation “a regime chang can change the party system making it less democratic which could mean a one-party dominance system where not all citizens are represented and able to participate.” This does not address the effects on party systems clearly enough. An acceptable response is that transitions from democracies to authoritarian regimes can lead to the banning of opposition parties and a single-party system.

#### **Sample: 6C**

#### **Score: 1**

In part (a) the response did not earn a point for a description. The response “two party system” is the correct identifier, but it does not offer a description of that system. An acceptable response would be a description of a dominant-party system, a two-party system, or a multiparty system.

In part (a) the response earned 1 point for explaining that a two-party system “leads to a lot of division in ideology in policy making, making it harder to pass laws.” Additional acceptable responses include that the integration of multiple voices into the policy process requires compromise and negotiation and that two-party systems encourage centrist parties.

In part (b) the response did not earn a point for a description. The response “multiparty system” is the correct identifier, but the response does not offer a description of that system. Acceptable responses include that the integration of multiple voices into the policy process requires compromise and negotiation and that multiparty systems give voice to minority, ethnic, or regionalist parties in the process.

In part (b) the response did not earn a point for the explanation that a multiparty system “can lead to parties Forming alliances when making policies” because this does not describe how a party system influences policy making. An acceptable response is that policies only reflect the views of the governing party or policies are designed to keep the governing party in power.

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**Question 6 (continued)**

In part (c) the response did not earn the point. The explanation that proportional representation systems “leads to multiparty systems, while single-member districts lead to two party systems” does not address how an electoral system influences a party system. An acceptable response is that in a proportional representation system, more parties are able to gain seats because the percentage of votes roughly translates into the percentage of seats.

In part (d) the response did not earn the point. The explanation that “[a] regime could change the electoral system of a country, leading to a new party system” is too vague and does not explain how a regime change influences a party system. An acceptable response is that transitions from democracies to authoritarian regimes can lead to the banning of opposition parties and a single-party system.