

Mark Scheme (Results)

June 2011

GCE Government & Politics 6GP03 3C
Processes in The USA

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June 2011

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Question Number	Question
1.	Assess the extent to which incumbents have an advantage over challengers in congressional elections.

Indicative content

Bare percentages suggest that incumbents have a considerable advantage over challengers; HoR incumbent success rate is usually above 90% and Senate above 80. Incumbency in the House is so potent that it is not unusual for congressional districts to be uncontested; Senate elections are almost always fairly keenly contested because of the greater prestige of a Senate seat. Because of gerrymandering, many House representatives are more likely to face a meaningful challenge in their party's primary than the general election.

Reasons for incumbents' success include:

- gerrymandering & 'safe' states
- their track record of 'pork' generation
- name recognition & fund-raising prowess
- perks of office, e.g. free franking

However, there were more competitive House districts in 2010 than for many years, and HoR incumbency was at a 30 year low of 87%.

LEVELS	DESCRIPTORS
<p>Level 3 (11-15 marks)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good to excellent knowledge and understanding of relevant institutions, processes, political concepts, theories or debates. • Good to excellent ability to analyse and explain political information, arguments and explanations. • Good to excellent ability to construct and communicate coherent arguments, making good use of appropriate vocabulary.

<p>Level 2 (6-10 marks)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited to sound knowledge and understanding of relevant institutions, processes, political concepts, theories or debates. • Limited to sound ability to analyse and explain political information, arguments and explanations. • Limited to sound ability to construct and communicate coherent arguments, making some use of appropriate vocabulary.
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<p>Level 1 (0-5 marks)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very poor to weak knowledge and understanding of relevant institutions, processes, political concepts, theories or debates. • Very poor to weak ability to analyse and explain political information, arguments and explanations. • Very poor to weak ability to construct and communicate coherent arguments, making little or no use of appropriate vocabulary.
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Question Number	Question
2.	Explain the different arguments that have been advanced against affirmative action
Indicative content	
<p>Arguments that have been advanced against affirmative action include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in many instances unconstitutional, confirmed by Supreme Court cases such as <i>Bakke</i>, <i>Adarand</i>, <i>Gratz</i> etc • 'unAmerican' and contrary to the ethos of rugged individualism • adverse effects on both the black population, whose successes are undermined and who may be encouraged not to work hard, and the white population, who feel resentful and a sense of victimhood • other minorities have prospered without government intervention • 'No Excuses' argument that black culture is holding blacks back, not inequality of opportunity • economically inefficient, giving benefits to e.g middle class blacks who don't need them • even if once justified, no longer necessary – there are many signs of growing black prosperity 	
LEVELS	DESCRIPTORS
<p>Level 3 (11-15 marks)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good to excellent knowledge and understanding of relevant institutions, processes, political concepts, theories or debates. • Good to excellent ability to analyse and explain political information, arguments and explanations. • Good to excellent ability to construct and communicate coherent arguments, making good use of appropriate vocabulary.
<p>Level 2 (6-10 marks)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited to sound knowledge and understanding of relevant institutions, processes, political concepts, theories or debates. • Limited to sound ability to analyse and explain political information, arguments and explanations. • Limited to sound ability to construct and communicate coherent arguments, making some use of appropriate vocabulary.
<p>Level 1 (0-5 marks)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very poor to weak knowledge and understanding of relevant institutions, processes, political concepts, theories or debates. • Very poor to weak ability to analyse and explain political information, arguments and explanations. • Very poor to weak ability to construct and communicate coherent arguments, making little or no use of appropriate vocabulary.

Question Number	Question
3.	Why do pressure groups seek to influence the Supreme Court and what methods do they use?
Indicative content	
<p>Reasons include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the power of the court; the constitution of the US means whatever the Supreme Court says it means the Supreme Court has an effective veto in a number of controversial areas such as abortion, gun rights etc less wealthy groups can achieve significant change without having to donate to politicians <p>Methods include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> campaign for a presidential candidate who will nominate justices sympathetic to their cause once a candidate has been nominated, publicise writings and earlier decisions, mobilise supporters to contact congressmen and senators, run TV and newspaper ads bring test cases to bring about policy change submit <i>amicus</i> briefs 	
LEVELS	DESCRIPTORS
<p>Level 3 (11-15 marks)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good to excellent knowledge and understanding of relevant institutions, processes, political concepts, theories or debates. Good to excellent ability to analyse and explain political information, arguments and explanations. Good to excellent ability to construct and communicate coherent arguments, making good use of appropriate vocabulary.

<p>Level 2 (6-10 marks)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited to sound knowledge and understanding of relevant institutions, processes, political concepts, theories or debates. Limited to sound ability to analyse and explain political information, arguments and explanations. Limited to sound ability to construct and communicate coherent arguments, making some use of appropriate vocabulary.
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Question Number	Question
4.	Which groups of voters support the Republican Party and why?

Indicative content

Voters typically support the Republican Party because of a mixture of 'push' (from the Democrats) and 'pull' (to the Republicans) factors. Groups include:

- men – stereotypically divide from women on two clusters of issues: the use of violence, e.g. men are more in favour of gun rights and military solutions abroad; and surrounding the role of government, they favour less activist governments; both views are reflected in Republican values.
- rural voters – attracted by Republican identification with loose environmental protection and support for gun rights
- white voters – Southern voters and working-class white voters in particular alienated by the Democratic Party's identification with minority causes
- elderly voters – recently have turned away from the Democratic Party, apparently in reaction to President Obama, possibly because of scepticism over the health care reforms and budget deficit solutions (see for example <http://www.politico.com/news/stories/1110/44802.html>)
- business/wealthy voters – attracted by Republican tradition of low tax and business-friendly deregulation
- religious voters – attracted by Republican association with the values of the Christian Right

LEVELS	DESCRIPTORS
Level 3 (11-15 marks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good to excellent knowledge and understanding of relevant institutions, processes, political concepts, theories or debates. • Good to excellent ability to analyse and explain political information, arguments and explanations. • Good to excellent ability to construct and communicate coherent arguments, making good use of appropriate vocabulary.

Level 2 (6-10 marks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited to sound knowledge and understanding of relevant institutions, processes, political concepts, theories or debates. • Limited to sound ability to analyse and explain political information, arguments and explanations. • Limited to sound ability to construct and communicate coherent arguments, making some use of appropriate vocabulary.
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<p><i>Level 1</i> (0-5 marks)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Very poor to weak knowledge and understanding of relevant institutions, processes, political concepts, theories or debates.• Very poor to weak ability to analyse and explain political information, arguments and explanations.• Very poor to weak ability to construct and communicate coherent arguments, making little or no use of appropriate vocabulary.
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Question Number	Question
5.	What are civil rights and how far have they been achieved in the USA?
Indicative content	
<p>Historically, civil rights in the US are associated with the Civil Rights Movement, which culminated in a series of measures, principally the Civil Rights Act, the Voting Rights Act and the Fair Housing Act. These ended segregation, and discrimination in areas such as housing, and guaranteed a universal franchise.</p> <p>Consistent with this history, civil rights can be narrowly defined as the right to be free from discrimination on grounds of race, gender, sexual orientation etc., and the ability to play a full part in civil and political life.</p> <p>More broadly, civil rights can also be seen as all the basic freedoms of the citizens of a state, i.e. the rights often referred to as civil liberties.</p> <p>Both are derived from a variety of sources: the constitution (particularly the Bill of Rights and the 13th, 14th and 15th amendments), federal and state legislation, and Supreme Court decisions. Supreme Court decisions have extended rights to include, for example, abortion and homosexuality.</p> <p>Evidence that civil rights have not yet been achieved, or are at least not secure, could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • measures passed in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of 2001 • lack of a constitutional amendment guaranteeing female equality • only some states permit homosexual marriage • persistent evidence of discrimination against minorities by employers and law enforcement agencies • lack of minority representation in the Senate • lack of status for 12M illegal immigrants 	
LEVELS	DESCRIPTORS
Level 3 (11-15 marks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good to excellent knowledge and understanding of relevant institutions, processes, political concepts, theories or debates. • Good to excellent ability to analyse and explain political information, arguments and explanations. • Good to excellent ability to construct and communicate coherent arguments, making good use of appropriate vocabulary.

<p><i>Level 2</i> (6-10 marks)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited to sound knowledge and understanding of relevant institutions, processes, political concepts, theories or debates. • Limited to sound ability to analyse and explain political information, arguments and explanations. • Limited to sound ability to construct and communicate coherent arguments, making some use of appropriate vocabulary.
<p><i>Level 1</i> (0-5 marks)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very poor to weak knowledge and understanding of relevant institutions, processes, political concepts, theories or debates. • Very poor to weak ability to analyse and explain political information, arguments and explanations. • Very poor to weak ability to construct and communicate coherent arguments, making little or no use of appropriate vocabulary.

Question Number	Question
6	'Pressure groups in the USA promote democracy and widen opportunity.' Discuss
Indicative content	
<p>Arguments that pressure groups do promote democracy and widen opportunity include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pressure group activity is the exercise of the right to petition the government enshrined in the first amendment • pressure groups enable the multitude of different ethnic, geographical etc groups in the USA to be represented • the multiplicity of interests and the fragmentation of the state ensures that no one group can achieve disproportionate influence • lobbyists and pressure groups can provide information and expertise to government • regulation controls both campaign finance and the activities of lobbyists <p>Arguments that pressure groups undermine democracy and opportunity include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the constant need to fund-raise makes elected officials highly dependent on wealthy donors • wealthy groups are able to influence elections through their own campaigns, and this ability has been enhanced by <i>Citizens United</i> • the influence of lobbyists is only available to a few • iron triangles enable minority interests to effectively control public policy in a given area. • corporate interests are usually better organised and better financed than groups representing the interests of e.g. consumers 	
A01	Knowledge and understanding
Level 3 (9-12 marks)	Good to excellent knowledge and understanding of relevant institutions, processes, political concepts, theories or debates
Level 2 (5-8 marks)	Limited to sound knowledge and understanding of relevant institutions, processes, political concepts, theories or debates
Level 1 (0-4 marks)	Very poor to weak knowledge and understanding of relevant institutions, processes, political concepts, theories or debates
A02	Intellectual skills
Level 3 (9-12 marks)	Good to excellent ability to analyse and evaluate political information, arguments and explanations
Level 2 (5-8 marks)	Limited to sound ability to analyse and evaluate political information, arguments and explanations

Level 1 (0-4 marks)	Very poor to weak ability to analyse and evaluate political information, arguments and explanations
A02	Synoptic skills
Level 3 (9-12 marks)	Good to excellent ability to identify competing viewpoints or perspectives, and clear insight into how they affect the interpretation of political events or issues and shape conclusions
Level 2 (5-8 marks)	Limited to sound ability to identify competing viewpoints or perspectives, and a reliable awareness of how they affect the interpretation of political events or issues and shape conclusions
Level 1 (0-4 marks)	Very poor to weak ability to identify competing viewpoints or perspectives, and a little awareness of how they affect the interpretation of political events or issues and shape conclusions
A03	Communication and coherence
Level 3 (7-9 marks)	Good to excellent ability to construct and communicate coherent arguments, making good use of appropriate vocabulary
Level 2 (4-6 marks)	Limited to sound ability to construct and communicate coherent arguments, making some use of appropriate vocabulary
Level 1 (0-3 marks)	Very poor to weak ability to construct and communicate coherent arguments, making little or no use of appropriate vocabulary

Question Number	Question
7.	Does public participation in the presidential nomination process advance or hinder democracy?
Indicative content	
<p>Widespread public participation in the presidential nomination process has only been the norm since the 1970s, following the recommendations of the McGovern-Fraser commission for the Democratic Party, which the Republican Party effectively adopted as well. These led to the use of primaries by most states, and caucuses in a minority. Arguments that public participation does advance democracy include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • widespread use of primaries replaced a largely covert process controlled by party leaders, with relatively little public involvement • a wider range of candidates are able to take part, including those not part of the Washington establishment <p>Arguments that it does not advance democracy include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • turnout in primaries and especially caucuses is often very low • primary voters and caucus participants are unrepresentative of the population • the early states especially Iowa and New Hampshire have disproportionate influence • campaigns have become very expensive and the evidence of recent elections is that most serious candidates reject the 'matching funds' system and self-fund • the selection process has become inordinately long, creating the danger of public disengagement • the media has significant influence in shaping voters' perception of candidates • 'open' primaries can be exploited to subvert democracy 	
A01	Knowledge and understanding
Level 3 (9-12 marks)	Good to excellent knowledge and understanding of relevant institutions, processes, political concepts, theories or debates
Level 2 (5-8 marks)	Limited to sound knowledge and understanding of relevant institutions, processes, political concepts, theories or debates
Level 1 (0-4 marks)	Very poor to weak knowledge and understanding of relevant institutions, processes, political concepts, theories or debates
A02	Intellectual skills
Level 3 (9-12 marks)	Good to excellent ability to analyse and evaluate political information, arguments and explanations
Level 2	Limited to sound ability to analyse and evaluate political information,

(5-8 marks)	arguments and explanations
Level 1 (0-4 marks)	Very poor to weak ability to analyse and evaluate political information, arguments and explanations
A02	Synoptic skills
Level 3 (9-12 marks)	Good to excellent ability to identify competing viewpoints or perspectives, and clear insight into how they affect the interpretation of political events or issues and shape conclusions
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Question Number	Question
8.	'The theory of "party decline" is increasingly out of date.' Discuss
Indicative content	
<p>In the 70s it was claimed that parties had ceased to carry out many of their main functions, and in particular their lack of ideological identity mean that they were unable to put together coherent programmes for government.</p> <p>Evidence that party decline theories are increasingly out of date includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increased polarisation of the parties: since the 70s, the GOP has largely become a conservative party and the Democratic Party a liberal party • increased party control of Congress, evident in the recent leadership of the House, both GOP & Democratic, and united opposition of the GOP to President Obama • despite the demise of soft money, party money and campaigns have become increasingly significant in congressional elections • congressional elections since 1994 have been increasingly 'nationalised' and fought on the record of the incumbent president, e.g. 2010 • attempts at greater control of the presidential selection process through the use of 'super-delegates' • partisanship has been reinforced by growth of partisan media <p>Evidence that party renewal has not been completed include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • both major parties are still fairly broad coalitions, e.g. the gulf between 'Blue Dog' Democrats and liberal elements of the Democratic Party was evident in the battle over health care • party control of congress is still weaker than in a parliamentary system and in any conflict of loyalty between party and district, congressmen will almost always 'vote the district' to maximise their own re-electability • parties do not fight elections as a united body, & despite the nationalisation of congressional elections since 1994, in most congressional campaign ads candidates will not mention their party's name • the 2008 Democratic primary showed that the attempt by the party leaderships to reassert control over the presidential selection process through 'super-delegates' was unsuccessful • Fox and MSNBC are watched by a small minority of the population • pressure groups retain a significant role in representation and voter mobilisation 	
A01	Knowledge and understanding
Level 3 (9-12 marks)	Good to excellent knowledge and understanding of relevant institutions, processes, political concepts, theories or debates
Level 2 (5-8 marks)	Limited to sound knowledge and understanding of relevant institutions, processes, political concepts, theories or debates
Level 1	Very poor to weak knowledge and understanding of relevant

(0-4 marks)	institutions, processes, political concepts, theories or debates
A02	Intellectual skills
Level 3 (9-12 marks)	Good to excellent ability to analyse and evaluate political information, arguments and explanations
Level 2 (5-8 marks)	Limited to sound ability to analyse and evaluate political information, arguments and explanations
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SUMMARY A2 MARKING GRIDS

These grids should be used in conjunction with the fuller Level descriptors.

PART A - SHORT QUESTIONS (15 marks)

Level 3	Excellent	15
	Very good	13-14
	Good	11-12
Level 2	Sound	10
	Basic	8-9
	Limited	6-7
Level 1	Weak	4-5
	Poor	2-3
	Very poor	0-1

PART B – ESSAY QUESTIONS (45 marks)

A01 / A02 / Synopticity	
Level 3 (Good to excellent)	9-12
Level 2 (Limited to sound)	5-8
Level 1 (Very poor to weak)	0-4

A03	
Level 3 (good to excellent)	7-9
Level 2 (Limited to sound)	4-6
Level 1 (Very poor to weak)	0-3

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Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

