

**SMOKING  
THE  
AP EXAM**



# The AP Government and Politics Exam

***Section I: 55 multiple-choice questions (1 hour and 20 min)***

***Section II: Four free-response questions (1 hour and 40 minutes)***

**Political Scenario:** Explain how it relates to a political institution, behavior, or process

**Quantitative Analysis:** Analyze quantitative data, identify a trend or pattern, draw a conclusion for the visual representation, and explain how it relates to a political institution, behavior, or process

**SCOTUS Comparison:** Compare a non required Supreme Court case with a required Supreme Court case, explaining how information from the required case is relevant to that in the non required one

**Argument Essay:** Develop an argument in the form of an essay, using evidence from one or more required foundational documents

# MULTIPLE CHOICE

TOPIC	# OF QUESTIONS
CONSTITUTIONAL UNDERPINNINGS	14
POLITICAL CULTURE & IDEOLOGY	6
CAMPAIGNS & ELECTIONS	12
EXECUTIVE BRANCH/MEDIA	3
BUREAUCRACY/PUBLIC POLICY	8
LEGISLATIVE BRANCH & SIGS	6
JUDICIAL BRANCH	2
CASE LAW	4

# Wrong	Grade
1	98
2	96
3	95
4	93
5	91
6	89
7	87
8	85
9	84
10	82
11	80
12	78
13	76
14	75
15	73
16	71
17	69
18	67
19	65
20	64
21	62
22	60
23	58
24	56
25	55
26	53
27	51
28	49

29	47
30	45
31	44
32	42
33	40
34	38
35	36
36	35
37	33
38	31
39	29
40	27
41	25
42	24
43	22
44	20
45	18
46	16
47	15
48	13
49	11
50	9
51	7
52	5
53	4
54	2
55	0

## Where to start?

- 👤 **Primary Sources**
- 👤 **Amendments and clauses**
- 👤 **Case Law**
- 👤 **Vocab, vocab, vocab-the more familiar you are, the better**

**Make flash cards!**

## CONSTITUTIONAL ELEMENTS

Article I

Article II

Article III

1<sup>st</sup> Amendment

2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment

4<sup>th</sup> Amendment

5<sup>th</sup> Amendment

6<sup>th</sup> Amendment

8<sup>th</sup> Amendment

10<sup>th</sup> Amendment

14<sup>th</sup> Amendment

15<sup>th</sup> Amendment

17<sup>th</sup> Amendment

19<sup>th</sup> Amendment

22<sup>nd</sup> Amendment

24<sup>th</sup> Amendment

25<sup>th</sup> Amendment

26<sup>th</sup> Amendment

Supremacy Clause

Necessary & Proper Clause (Elastic Clause)

Commerce Clause

Full Faith & Credit Clause

Equal Protection Clause (14<sup>th</sup> Amendment)

Free Exercise Clause

Establishment Clause |

## FEDERALIST #10

### The new Constitution is critical for controlling the effects of faction

- Faction is inevitable due to ideological, social, religious, and economic diversity in American society.
- State governments were incapable of fully-controlling faction
- Direct democracies (small republics) cannot manage factions because the largest faction inevitably dominates
- In a large republic, there is a larger pool of wise and good men to government.
- In a large republic, factions will be more numerous, thus it will be harder for any single one to dominate.

## FEDERALIST #51

### The structure of the new federal government makes liberty possible

- Each branch should be mostly independent
- To maintain independence, no one branch should have too much power over selecting members of the other branches
- Judges are not elected because few people understand the qualities needed in a good judge, so they are appointed, confirmed and serve life terms
- Dividing power helps to check its growth in any one direction, but power cannot be divided absolutely equally
- In a republic, the legislative branch is always more powerful, but it has been limited by being split into two houses.
- In a representative republic, it is important to guard against the oppression of the rulers as well as against the will of the majority.

## FEDERALIST #70

**An energetic and forceful president is essential to good government**

**National defense, sound administration of the law, and the protection of property rights all depend upon the vitality of the Presidency**

**An energetic president best protects liberty when faction, anarchy, and the excessive ambitions of others threaten it**

**One executive (Virginia Plan) is better than two (New Jersey Plan)**

**An energetic executive branch must be characterized by unity, sufficient powers, and a certain degree of secrecy**

**A law once passed should be executed promptly**

**In case of war, when so much depends upon a strong presidency, divisiveness could destroy the national security.**

## **FEDERALIST #78**

### **Established key principles for the federal judiciary**

- **Lifetime tenure for federal judges in order to ensure independence from the other branches**
- **The Supreme Court will not have the power to enforce, leaving it up to the legislative and executive branches**
- **Judicial Review-is an act of the legislative or executive branch permitted by the Constitution?**
- **The Constitution is superior to laws**
- **The Court should be bound by precedent**

## **BRUTUS #1**

### **Established key principles for the federal judiciary**

- **Concerned that the necessary & proper clause combined with the supremacy clause and the federal government's power of taxation will be used to erode the power of the states**
- **The legislative branch will work to increase its power at the expense of the states due to the fallibility of its membership**
- **A larger republic with so many competing factions will inevitably leave some groups unrepresented whereas they would be heard in their own states.**
- **America is too large and diverse-too many competing factions will retard the efficient operation of government**
- **In a society where government is so far removed from the people, it will be difficult to hold these elites accountable**

## **LETTER FROM A BIRMINGHAM JAIL (MLK)**

- **How can anyone who is an American be an outsider in their own country?**
- **Injustice in one area (Birmingham) is linked to injustice on a national scale**
- **Systemic racism (Inequality under the law) leaves no alternative but direct action (Instability)**
- **Alongside the more obvious threats of death, bodily harm, or imprisonment, African Americans suffer from more complex issues like financial uncertainty and a sense of inferiority (Equal Protection Clause)**
- **The protests might be breaking laws, but the laws are invalid**
- **A law is unjust if a group has no say in creating the law they are accused of breaking**
- **A law is also immoral if it violates natural laws (Locke)**
- **Protesters are willing to be punished in order to show deference to the law (Rule of Law)**
- **Time without human action will not result in change**

# MULTIPLE CHOICE

**BEFORE** reading the answers, definite the following:

**#KEDOLO**

- **Key Words**-what are they?
- **Do** I know the answer already/what am I going to be looking for?”
- **Logic**: Eliminate the answers that don't sound anything like what you're looking for.
- **Choose the BEST answer from the remainder**

**1. Which of the following best describes the practice of “ticket splitting?”**

**(A) A presidential nominee selects a running mate who can appeal to voter groups whose support of the nominee is weak.**

**(B) A voter chooses the presidential nominee of one major party, but chooses congressional nominees of another major party.**

**(C) A mayor orders the local police force to hand out fewer parking violations in the weeks leading up to a general election.**

**(D) A delegate to a national party convention supports the front runner, but remains uncommitted to the party platform.**

# MULTIPLE CHOICE

The term "pork barrel" refers to legislation specifically designed to

- (A) encourage a balanced federal budget
- (B) ensure the careful inspection of farm goods and other foodstuffs
- (C) distribute excess produce to the poor
- (D) provide funding for local projects that are intended to benefit constituents

# FRQs

## BREAKING DOWN AN FRQ QUESTION

**Identify:** provide a specific answer, which does not require causal explanation

**Define:** provide a specific meaning for a word or concept

**Describe:** provide the essential details or characteristics of a particular concept or political phenomenon

**Explain:** demonstrate understanding of how or why a relationship exists by clearly articulating the logical connection or causal pattern between or among various political phenomena

**Compare:** provide an explicit statement which connects two or more concepts

## **WRITING YOUR RESPONSE**

**Write in separate paragraphs, BUT DO NOT LABEL A, B, C, D...**

**Why?**

**Evaluators are fishing for the information from the prompt throughout your response.**

**It is possible to address element A in your element C paragraph and still get points for it ONLY IF YOU DO NOT LABEL THEM.**

Political scientists argue interest groups both hinder and promote democracy. Present an argument analyzing the impact interest groups have on democracy.



Articulate a defensible claim or thesis that responds to the prompt and establishes a line of reasoning.

➤ Support your claim with at least TWO pieces of accurate and relevant information.

- At least ONE piece of evidence must be from the list below

- *Federalist 10*

- *Brutus 1*

- *Constitution*

- The second piece of evidence must be from a different source on the list above OR from your own knowledge.

➤ Use reasoning to explain why your evidence supports your claim/thesis.

➤ Respond to an opposing or alternative perspective using refutation, concession, or rebuttal.

Gridlock has become the norm in times of divided government. Present an argument analyzing whether or not gridlock resulting from divided government is healthy or unhealthy for our system of government.



Articulate a defensible claim or thesis that responds to the prompt and establishes a line of reasoning.

➤ Support your claim with at least TWO pieces of accurate and relevant information.

- At least ONE piece of evidence must be from the list below

- *Federalist 51*

- *Federalist 70*

- *Constitution*

- The second piece of evidence must be from a different source on the list above OR from your own knowledge.

➤ Use reasoning to explain why your evidence supports your claim/thesis.

➤ Respond to an opposing or alternative perspective using refutation, concession, or rebuttal.

Political change is a slow and difficult process which involves many actors. Present an argument analyzing whether or not citizen participation really makes a difference in impacting political change.



Articulate a defensible claim or thesis that responds to the prompt and establishes a line of reasoning.

➤ Support your claim with at least TWO pieces of accurate and relevant information.

- At least ONE piece of evidence must be from the list below

- *Letter From a Birmingham Jail*

- *Declaration of Independence*

- *Constitution*

- The second piece of evidence must be from a different source on the list above OR from your own knowledge.

➤ Use reasoning to explain why your evidence supports your claim/thesis.

➤ Respond to an opposing or alternative perspective using refutation, concession, or rebuttal.

In the wake of the Watergate affair, Congress attempted to ferret out corruption in political campaigns by restricting financial contributions to candidates. Among other things, the law set limits on the amount of money an individual and the candidate him/herself could contribute to a single campaign... The Federal Election Commission was created to enforce the statute....The Court found that governmental restriction of independent expenditures in campaigns, the limitation on expenditures by candidates themselves from their own personal or family resources, and the limitation on total campaign expenditures were unconstitutional. Since these practices do not necessarily enhance the potential for corruption that individual contributions to candidates do, the Court found that restricting them did not serve a government interest. <https://www.oyez.org/cases/1975/75-436>

- a) Identify the constitutional amendment that is common to both *Buckley v. Valeo* (1976) and *Citizens United v. FEC* (2010)
- b) Based on the constitutional amendment identified in part A, explain why the facts of *Buckley* led to a similar holding as in *Citizens United v. FEC*.
- c) Describe an action that an interest group might take to challenge the ruling in *Citizens United v. FEC*.