

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

Section I

Time—45 minutes

60 questions

**Directions:** Each of the questions or incomplete statements below is followed by five suggested answers or completions. Select the one that is best in each case and then fill in the corresponding oval on the answer sheet.

1. To which characteristic of American government does the term "federalism" refer?
  - (A) The system of checks and balances within the national government
  - (B) The power of the Supreme Court to review the constitutionality of laws
  - (C) The Bill of Rights' protection of the rights of the accused
  - (D) The process by which the size of each state's delegation to the House of Representatives is determined
  - (E) The division and sharing of power between the national and state governments
2. The swift adoption of the Bill of Rights in the years following ratification of the Constitution demonstrates the
  - (A) framers' unqualified commitment to individual rights
  - (B) small states' determination to receive equal representation in the legislature
  - (C) Northern states' support for abolitionism
  - (D) states' fears of an overpowerful national government
  - (E) Federalists' concerns that the system of checks and balances would weaken the national government
3. Which of the following is true of court cases in which one private party is suing another?
  - (A) They are tried in civil court
  - (B) The federal court system has exclusive jurisdiction over them
  - (C) They are tried in criminal court
  - (D) The state court system has exclusive jurisdiction over them
  - (E) They are tried before a grand jury
4. The term "budget deficit" refers to the
  - (A) annual increase in federal spending on the military
  - (B) amount of interest on the national debt
  - (C) difference between the initial budget proposals made by the president and Congress
  - (D) period after the fiscal year ends during which the government operates without an official budget
  - (E) amount the government spends in excess of its revenues
5. The legislative successes of the National Rifle Association, antiabortion activists, and other powerful interest groups demonstrate that
  - (A) United States domestic policy has grown more conservative in the 1990s
  - (B) the influence of political action committees has weakened in recent years
  - (C) the power of interest groups depends on the degree of support for their positions in the White House
  - (D) majority opinion on an issue can sometimes be overridden by the intensity of a minority's commitment to activism
  - (E) the most powerful interest groups in the United States are generally those that support uncontroversial positions

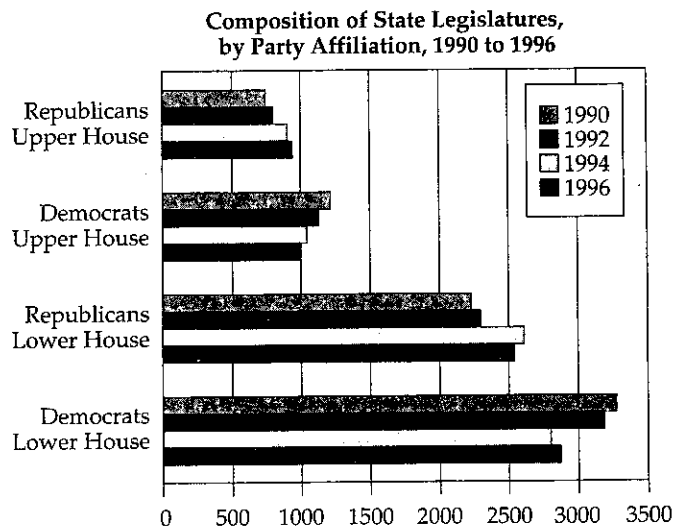
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6. During the second half of the twentieth-century, the Supreme Court's position on free speech was that
- (A) free speech is essential to liberty and therefore may be abridged only under extreme circumstances
  - (B) the government may never limit speech because free speech is protected by the First Amendment
  - (C) state governments may place limits on free speech, but the national government may not because of the First Amendment
  - (D) the government may limit speech that the majority of Americans finds offensive
  - (E) the government may place limits on free speech in print and broadcast media but may not limit the spoken word

7. The national and state governments share all of the following powers EXCEPT the power to
- (A) administer elections
  - (B) impose taxes
  - (C) establish courts
  - (D) borrow money
  - (E) enact laws

8. Which group most frequently benefits from political action committee (PAC) donations?
- (A) Charitable organizations
  - (B) Federal judges
  - (C) Political interest groups
  - (D) Research institutes
  - (E) Incumbents running for reelection

9. The president executes a "pocket veto" by doing which of the following?
- (A) Publicly expressing rejection of a bill
  - (B) Issuing an executive order invalidating a recently passed bill
  - (C) Failing to sign a bill after Congress has adjourned
  - (D) Recalling ambassadors from a peace negotiation
  - (E) Refusing to seat a federal judge whom the Senate has confirmed



10. The graph above supports which of the following conclusions?
- (A) If the trend shown on the chart continues, the Republican party will soon control most state legislatures.
  - (B) In most states, registered Democrats outnumber registered Republicans.
  - (C) Democrats had more seats than Republicans in state legislatures throughout the early 1990s.
  - (D) The number of Republican governors increased between 1990 and 1996.
  - (E) The Democrats and Republicans controlled an equal number of state legislatures in 1996.

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11. Which of the following is an accurate statement about the leadership of the two major political parties?
- (A) The national party organization controls all facets of party activity throughout the country.
  - (B) Party leadership is dispersed among numerous officials at the national, state, and local levels.
  - (C) The highest elected official in each national party directs that party's activities and operations all the way down to the state and local levels.
  - (D) All major decisions concerning party activities are made during each party's presidential nomination conventions.
  - (E) Prominent former officeholders, such as ex-presidents, lead their respective political parties.
12. The media play a major role in establishing the public agenda by
- (A) deciding how prominently to cover issue-related news stories
  - (B) refusing to publicize the opinions of any pundit deemed "too political"
  - (C) reviewing the accuracy of candidates' campaign advertisements
  - (D) reporting political news from foreign nations
  - (E) making available the complete text of presidential addresses and press releases
13. All of the following can be considered true about the impact of a higher level of education on voting habits EXCEPT
- (A) voters are more likely to support government-enforced racial and sexual equality
  - (B) voters are more likely to support environmental protection efforts
  - (C) voters are more likely to support public prayer in schools
  - (D) voters are less likely to support restrictions on abortion rights
  - (E) voters are more likely to promote civil liberties
14. In *Gideon v. Wainwright*, the Supreme Court ruled that criminal defendants in state cases have the right
- (A) to representation by an attorney
  - (B) not to incriminate themselves
  - (C) to a speedy trial
  - (D) not to be punished excessively
  - (E) to a jury trial
15. Under which of the following conditions are people most likely to vote?
- (A) When they believe that none of the contested races is close
  - (B) When media coverage of the election is intense
  - (C) When the voter is unfamiliar with the candidates
  - (D) When the voter is unaffiliated with a political party
  - (E) During a midterm election
- Questions 16–17 refer to the following amendment to the Constitution.
- Amendment X
- The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited to the states, are reserved to the states respectively, or to the people.
16. The Tenth Amendment most often comes into conflict with which section of the Constitution?
- (A) The "full faith and credit" clause
  - (B) The "necessary and proper" clause
  - (C) The provisions for the impeachment of a president
  - (D) The clause prohibiting states from coining money and entering into treaties
  - (E) The provisions for constitutional amendment
17. People who interpret the Tenth Amendment as greatly restricting the powers of the national government are often referred to as
- (A) Federalists
  - (B) isolationists
  - (C) laissez-faire capitalists
  - (D) loose constructionists
  - (E) states' righters
18. Which committee in the House of Representatives determines the procedure by which bills are debated and amended?
- (A) Ways and Means
  - (B) Judiciary
  - (C) Ethics
  - (D) Rules
  - (E) Government Reform

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19. The government often finds it difficult to make substantive changes to entitlement programs for which of the following reasons?
- (A) Most such programs were established by constitutional amendment.
  - (B) These programs are extremely popular among their numerous beneficiaries.
  - (C) Such programs are vital to national defense.
  - (D) Most such programs primarily benefit the wealthy, a powerful political bloc.
  - (E) These programs' budgets are determined by nonelected bureaucrats, not by Congress.
20. The relative stability of American public policy is achieved largely through
- (A) cooperation between the two major political parties
  - (B) judicial activism
  - (C) the Constitutional fragmentation of power
  - (D) affirmative action programs
  - (E) the delegation of unique reserved powers to each house of Congress
21. Uncertainty over the limits to presidential power is caused primarily by the fact that
- (A) the constitutional definition of those powers is broad and unspecific
  - (B) most people agree that the Constitution places too many limits on presidential power
  - (C) the Supreme Court consistently refuses to rule on cases concerning presidential powers
  - (D) constitutional amendments have greatly increased presidential powers
  - (E) some states cede more power to their governors than the national government cedes to the president
22. The responsibilities of the secretary of state are most likely to overlap with those of
- (A) the secretary of the interior
  - (B) the secretary of the treasury
  - (C) the speaker of the house
  - (D) the president's chief of staff
  - (E) the chief national security advisor to the president
23. In the past decade many states have moved forward the date of their presidential primary elections in an effort to
- (A) minimize the cost of running the election
  - (B) convince the national government to move forward the date of the general election
  - (C) restrict the number of entrants in the presidential race
  - (D) focus greater national attention on their state primary races
  - (E) increase the significance of their election results
24. Incumbent members of the House of Representatives win reelection more often than incumbent senators for all of the following reasons EXCEPT
- (A) representatives' constituents more often belong largely to the representative's party
  - (B) senators have more political power than representatives, and Senate races are accordingly contested more aggressively
  - (C) representatives may use federal funds to publicize their achievements via direct mail to constituents
  - (D) representatives more often run uncontested
  - (E) the fact that Senate races are held statewide generates more media coverage and thus more public awareness
25. A member of the president's cabinet is said to have "gone native" when that cabinet member
- (A) resigns to take a position as a consultant to lobbying groups
  - (B) cedes control of his or her department to lifelong bureaucrats within the department
  - (C) places his or her department's priorities above the president's
  - (D) accepts bribes or expensive favors from businesses regulated by his or her department
  - (E) suggests merging his or her department into another executive department

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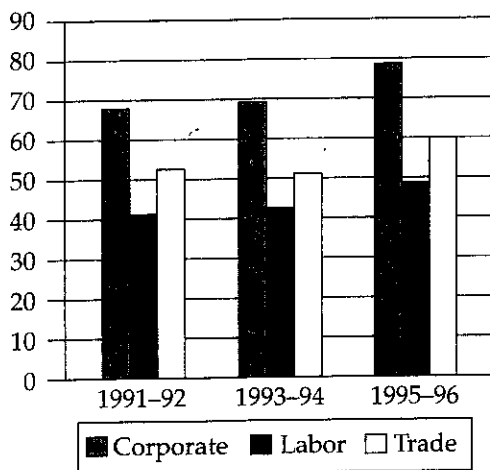
26. Congress would be required to use the "elastic clause" of the Constitution to

- (A) change citizenship requirements
- (B) impose workplace safety standards
- (C) increase tax rates
- (D) authorize the treasury to print money
- (E) declare war

27. Which of the following is true of the Supreme Court?

- (A) Every case appealed to the Supreme Court is ruled upon by the Court.
- (B) The Court helps set the public agenda by deciding which appeals to hear.
- (C) The Court hears all cases when two or more justices agree that the case has merit.
- (D) In deciding cases, the chief justice's vote counts as two votes.
- (E) The Court does not rule on cases in which five justices refuse to sign a single opinion.

**PAC Contributions to Candidates, in millions of dollars, by PAC Type**



28. Which of the following conclusions is supported by the graph?

- (A) Corporations have more political influence than do labor unions.
- (B) Trade PACs are the fastest growing sector of political activism in the United States.
- (C) Corporate PACs are more likely to donate to Republican candidates than to Democratic candidates.
- (D) In recent elections, PACs have contributed more than \$150 million to different candidates.
- (E) American workers had more disposable income in 1995-1996 than they had in 1993-1994.

29. Which of the following statements best describes the central constitutional issue concerning the death penalty?

- (A) The death penalty violates the prohibition of double jeopardy.
- (B) Different states use different means of executing convicts in capital cases.
- (C) The death penalty arguably constitutes cruel and unusual punishment.
- (D) Federal law and state law differ in their definitions of what constitutes a capital crime.
- (E) Capital trials fail to meet the standard set by the "speedy and public trial" clause.

30. The Supreme Court has used the Fourteenth Amendment to apply portions of the Bill of Rights to state law by citing the amendment's

- (A) prohibition on unreasonable search and seizures
- (B) due process clause
- (C) guarantee of privacy rights
- (D) abolition of slavery
- (E) "reserved powers" provision

31. The framers of the Constitution sought to insulate the Senate from public opinion by

- (A) restricting Senate membership to those who previously served in the House of Representatives
- (B) delegating the responsibility for electing senators to the state legislatures
- (C) requiring all spending bills to originate in the House of Representatives
- (D) empowering the Senate to provide advice and consent to the executive branch
- (E) assigning exactly two senators to each state's congressional delegation

32. Under the Articles of Confederation, the national government had the power to

- (A) negotiate treaties
- (B) collect taxes
- (C) establish a federal judiciary
- (D) enforce its laws
- (E) regulate interstate commerce

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33. Congress has attempted to protect independent regulatory agencies from political influence by requiring that each agency
- (A) be led by a group of commissioners representing both major political parties
  - (B) plan policy cooperatively with the appropriate congressional committees
  - (C) reapply for funding at the end of each fiscal year
  - (D) submit all planned policy changes to the president for approval
  - (E) seek the advice and cooperation of the industries they regulate
34. Which of the following most accurately states the impact of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 on school desegregation in the south?
- (A) Because it included no enforcement provisions, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 had no appreciable effect on school desegregation.
  - (B) By overturning the "separate but equal" principle, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 ended segregation in public schools.
  - (C) The Civil Rights Act of 1964 hastened school desegregation by cutting off federal funds to discriminatory school systems.
  - (D) The Civil Rights Act of 1964 sent federal troops to every segregated public school in the south to force school desegregation.
  - (E) The Civil Rights Act of 1964 required all southern public schools to mirror the racial demographics of their home states.
35. The rules governing the electoral college make it especially important for presidential candidates to
- (A) win as many states as possible, regardless of the size of the states
  - (B) spend most of their time campaigning in the south
  - (C) campaign most aggressively among those who will be chosen as electors
  - (D) concentrate their campaign efforts on "battleground" states
  - (E) concentrate on the states in which they are farthest behind, to reduce the margin of their eventual losses in those states
36. The opinions of congressional committees often fail to accurately mirror public opinion because
- (A) the membership of committees often overrepresents constituencies with the greatest stake in the committee's business
  - (B) most committees are too small to include representatives of all popular opinions
  - (C) the minority party controls nearly half of all committees
  - (D) committee members often lose track of their constituents' priorities because of their frequent contact with special-interest lobbyists
  - (E) committee members rely primarily on their legislative aides to develop their positions on committee business
37. The absence of a political party solely dedicated to labor and working class issues in the United States
- (A) proves U.S. politicians are not concerned about serving working-class constituencies
  - (B) is the result of government restrictions placed on the political activities of labor unions
  - (C) reflects the difficulty of unifying a party around a single issue in a "winner-take-all" format
  - (D) demonstrates that, in the United States, most political issues regarding workers have been decided in the workers' favor
  - (E) illustrates that race, not class, is the primary political division in the United States
38. In the majority of cases, federal programs are implemented by
- (A) private businesses working as subcontractors to the government
  - (B) state and local governments, by means of federal funding
  - (C) Congress, through the local offices of its elected representatives
  - (D) the federal courts, by means of criminal prosecutions
  - (E) federal agencies, through their many local offices in cities and towns

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39. Which of the following is an accurate statement about the federal court system?
- (A) The creation of new federal courts requires a constitutional amendment.
  - (B) The creation of new federal courts requires the unanimous consent of all 50 states.
  - (C) The Supreme Court has the sole power to create new federal courts.
  - (D) Congress has the power to create new federal courts.
  - (E) The number of federal courts is fixed by the Constitution and cannot be changed.
40. Both the War Powers Act of 1974 and the Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974 represent efforts by Congress to limit the powers of the
- (A) Joint Chiefs of Staff
  - (B) House Ways and Means Committee
  - (C) Central Intelligence Agency
  - (D) secretary of defense
  - (E) president
41. An open primary is a primary election in which
- (A) voters registered as "independents" may not vote
  - (B) candidates do not specify the office for which they are running
  - (C) voters may register at their polling place on election day
  - (D) candidates need not announce their candidacy until the day of the primary
  - (E) voters may vote in the election of a party other than the one to which they are registered
42. Which of the following describes an unintended result of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1974?
- (A) Limits were placed on the amount of money individuals could donate to a federal election campaign.
  - (B) Federal funding became available to presidential candidates who agree to abide by spending limits.
  - (C) Candidates drastically decreased the amount of money spent on television advertising.
  - (D) Thousands of political action committees were created to raise funds for candidates.
  - (E) The number of third-party campaigns for the presidency decreased dramatically.
43. Politicians and political reporters are natural adversaries; the adversarial nature of their relationship, however, is tempered by the fact that
- (A) younger politicians who are more comfortable with the media are gradually displacing older politicians
  - (B) government regulations on interaction between the two groups are very strict
  - (C) each group is dependent on the other to perform its job effectively
  - (D) very few media outlets will cover a story that is embarrassing to a political leader
  - (E) most government activity is classified and therefore inaccessible to the media
44. All of the following contribute to lower voting rates among Americans in the 18-to-25 age bracket EXCEPT
- (A) college attendance in a state other than one's home state
  - (B) frequent relocation of one's primary residence
  - (C) the remoteness of most political issues to the daily lives of young people
  - (D) the fact that the minimum voting age in some states is 21
  - (E) military service
45. Which of the following defines the salience of a political issue?
- (A) The amount of coverage the issue receives in the major news media
  - (B) The degree to which public opinion on the issue is likely to shift quickly
  - (C) The number of people affected by the issue
  - (D) The degree to which the issue can be addressed through government action
  - (E) The importance of the issue to a particular individual or group
46. When the Democratic Party pursues liberal social policies, it is most likely to alienate which of its traditional bases?
- (A) People holding advanced academic degrees
  - (B) Northeastern city dwellers
  - (C) Southerners
  - (D) Jewish Americans
  - (E) Urban African Americans

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47. Under Chief Justice Earl Warren, the Supreme Court
- greatly expanded the rights of criminal defendants
  - greatly limited the power of the federal government over the states
  - established the principle of judicial review
  - refused to enforce the Sherman Antitrust Act
  - weakened the constitutional division between church and state
48. The Supreme Court case *Regents of University of California v. Bakke* concerned which of the following issues?
- The rights of students to protest on a publicly funded campus
  - In-class prayer at a publicly funded school
  - The rights of students to carry concealed weapons on campus
  - Accommodations for disabled students at publicly funded schools
  - The use of racial quotas in public university admissions
49. The principles of freedom—"we hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal"—stated in the Declaration of Independence were influenced by the beliefs of political philosopher
- Thomas Hobbes
  - Niccolo Machiavelli
  - Jonathan Edwards
  - John Locke
  - John Calvin
50. In "Federalist No. 10," James Madison argues that a federal system of government reduces the danger of political factions by
- creating insurmountable obstacles to the founding of factions
  - making it difficult for one faction to gain the power necessary to govern
  - requiring equal representation of all factions within the government
  - restricting factional political activity to the state level only
  - allowing federal agencies to strictly regulate the activities of factions
51. Under which of the following circumstances does a president usually experience a reduction in political power?
- The president is in the final two years of his or her second term
  - The number and severity of international crises is increasing
  - Different parties control Congress and the White House
  - The economy is strong and the president's approval ratings are high
- I only
  - I and II only
  - I and III only
  - II and III only
  - II, III, and IV only
52. House members are more concerned about their committee assignments than are senators because
- House members may serve on only one committee at a time
  - Senate committees have relatively little power to alter legislation
  - bills in the Senate must pass through all committees before reaching the floor
  - senators may change their committee assignments whenever they wish
  - the rules make it extremely difficult for representatives to influence legislation on the House floor
53. Which of the following is true of most third parties in U.S. history?
- They arose and succeeded during times of prosperity
  - They were created to protest wars
  - At some point they won a majority of seats in Congress
  - They flourished during periods of widespread dissatisfaction
  - They arose in response to increased government regulation

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54. Failed felony prosecutions at the state level are sometimes retried at the federal level
- (A) on appeal by state prosecutors
  - (B) under the "double jeopardy" provision of the Constitution
  - (C) because new evidence has voided the state-level verdict
  - (D) as a result of a gubernatorial veto
  - (E) as civil liberties violations
55. Which of the following is true of Congress's power of oversight?
- (A) Congressional oversight activities most often take place at the committee and subcommittee levels.
  - (B) State challenges to congressional oversight have severely weakened Congress's oversight powers.
  - (C) Congressional oversight is primarily directed at the judicial branch.
  - (D) Constituent input does not influence congressional oversight.
  - (E) Congressional oversight primarily concerns Congress's power to discipline its own members.
56. Which of the following statements about voting patterns is NOT true?
- (A) Non-whites are more likely to vote Democratic than are whites.
  - (B) Women are more likely to vote Democratic than are men.
  - (C) Low-income Americans are more likely to vote Democratic than are upper-income Americans.
  - (D) Fundamentalists are more likely to vote Democratic than are non-religious Americans.
  - (E) Homosexuals are more likely to vote Democratic than are heterosexuals.
57. Considered as a single group, the Small Business Administration, the Small Business committees in the House and Senate, and small business advocacy groups are an example of
- (A) an iron triangle
  - (B) a conference committee
  - (C) a regulatory agency
  - (D) dual Federalism
  - (E) a third party
58. Which of the following is true of federal judges?
- (A) They serve four-year terms that coincide with the presidential term.
  - (B) They are appointed for life and can only be removed by impeachment.
  - (C) They are elected by Congress and serve ten-year terms.
  - (D) They are appointed for life and cannot be removed from office.
  - (E) They are appointed by the Supreme Court to life terms.
59. Filibusters are less likely to occur in the House of Representatives than in the Senate because
- (A) Senate decorum forbids one senator from attempting to stop another's speech
  - (B) the House meets for substantially fewer hours per day than does the Senate
  - (C) Senate sessions, unlike House sessions, are open to the public
  - (D) debate in the House is in most instances strictly regulated by the rules
  - (E) all speeches in the House are delivered by the House Speaker
60. Which of the following is true of congressional redistricting?
- (A) The responsibility for redrawing congressional districts belongs to congressional committees.
  - (B) It is a noncontroversial process because it has few political ramifications.
  - (C) It occurs every 10 years to reflect changes in population according to the census.
  - (D) The Supreme Court has ruled that legislators may not consider racial demographics when redrawing districts.
  - (E) When redrawing districts, the chief concern of legislators is to maintain the integrity of neighborhoods.

## STOP

### END OF SECTION I

IF YOU FINISH BEFORE TIME IS CALLED, YOU MAY CHECK YOUR WORK ON THIS SECTION.  
DO NOT GO ON TO SECTION II UNTIL YOU ARE TOLD TO DO SO.

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

SECTION II

Time—100 minutes

**Directions:** You have 100 minutes to answer all four of the following questions. Unless the directions indicate otherwise, respond to all parts of all four questions. It is suggested that you take a few minutes to outline each answer. Spend approximately one-fourth of your time (25 minutes) on each question. Illustrate your essay with substantive examples where appropriate. Make certain to number each of your answers as the question is numbered below.

1. Since the 1960s, Congress has addressed the problem of gender bias on numerous occasions.
  - (a) Choose one of the laws listed below. Describe how it has attempted to address the problem of gender bias in American society.
    - the Equal Pay Act of 1963
    - the Civil Rights Act of 1964
  - (b) Describe this law and evaluate its effectiveness.
  - (c) Choose one of the legislative actions listed below. Describe how it has attempted to address the problem of gender bias in American society.
    - Title IX of the Higher Education Act of 1973
    - the Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution
  - (d) Describe this action and evaluate its effectiveness.
  
2. Traditionally, presidential candidates have relied on strong support from their national party organization.
  - (a) Describe how national party organizations have historically aided their candidates.
  - (b) Describe how this dynamic has changed in recent presidential elections.
  - (c) Discuss THREE factors that have helped bring about this change.

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3. The media have a large influence on American politics.

- (a) Describe why the media are so important and why they have such influence.
- (b) Identify and describe THREE examples of media coverage that have influenced American politics in the past twenty years.
- (c) Explain the argument that in politics, the media tend to overemphasize stories that are easy to tell at the expense of those that are more complicated.

“The prosecution of [impeachments] will seldom fail to agitate the passions of the whole community, and to divide it into parties more or less friendly or inimical to the accused. In many cases it will connect itself with pre-existing factions, and will enlist all their animosities, partialities, influence, and interest on one side or the other, and in such cases there will always be the greatest danger that the decision will be regulated more by the comparative strength of parties, than by the real demonstrations of innocence or guilt.”

—Alexander Hamilton, *Federalist 65*

4. The House of Representatives has twice impeached sitting presidents, both of whom avoided removal from office by the Senate.

- (a) Define impeachment and removal, and describe the process of impeachment and removal as listed in the Constitution.
- (b) Assess the accuracy of Hamilton’s observations as applied to both cases of presidential impeachment.
- (c) Identify one strength and one weaknesses of checks and balances in dealing with Hamilton’s concerns.

END OF EXAMINATION