

**UNIT 6 AP® UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS
FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS**

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

SECTION II

Time – 25 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 plan and outline each answer. Spend approximately one-fourth of your time (25 minutes) on each question. In your response, use substantive examples where appropriate. Make certain to number each of your answers as the question is numbered below.

3. Is Congress effective in exercising legislative oversight of the federal bureaucracy? Support your answer by doing ONE of the following:

- Explain two specific methods Congress uses to exercise effective oversight of the federal bureaucracy.

OR

- Give two specific explanations for the failure of Congress to exercise effective oversight of the federal bureaucracy.
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QUESTION 3 (1999)

5 TOTAL POINTS

1 point for taking explicit position: "Yes, Congress is effective," or "No, Congress is not effective," in providing oversight of the bureaucracy.

If the writer takes the affirmative (Congress exercises effective oversight):

2 points (maximum) for a complete explanation of first specific method Congress uses to exercise effective oversight.

Award 1 point for a statement showing general understanding of method of oversight.

Award 2 points for a specific explanation showing HOW/WHY the method is effective.

- Methods of effective oversight *may* include
- Budget control
- Reauthorization/Jurisdiction of agencies
- Setting guidelines for new agencies
- Hearings, committee investigations
- Power to organize/reorganize agency
- "Sunset" legislation
- Congressional support agencies - GAO, CBO
- Iron triangles as a source of information
- Casework as a source of information
- Influence over selection of leadership
- Program evaluation

2 points (maximum) for a complete explanation of a second specific method Congress uses to exercise effective oversight. Use the guidelines above for the first method in awarding one or two points for the explanation of the method.

If the writer takes the negative (Congress fails to exercise effective oversight):

2 points (maximum) for a complete explanation of the first reason for this failure.

Award 1 point for a statement showing general understanding of why failure occurs.

Award 2 points for a specific explanation of how/why the oversight method is not effective.

- Reasons for the failure may include
- No electoral payoff/Political ramifications
- Oversight is labor intensive/hard work
- Lack of technical expertise
- Logrolling
- Lack of budget control
- Enabling legislation is vague
- Interest groups/PACs encourage members to overlook effective administration
- Failure to "use" available powers or ineffective use of them
- Iron triangles/cozy relationship with agencies
- Bureaucratic pathologies (for example, Congress creates opportunities for casework through red tape; firing administrators is difficult)

2 points (maximum) for complete explanation of the second reason congressional oversight fails. Use the guidelines above for the first reason in awarding one or two points for the explanation of the reason.

Notes:

- A general discussion of checks and balances is not acceptable and does not receive credit.
- If the thesis contradicts the discussion or reasons or explanation, score for the answer that gives the student the most points.