

**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.

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3. The judicial branch is often assumed to be insulated from politics. However, politics affects many aspects of the judiciary.
- (a) Describe two political factors that affect presidents' decisions to appoint members of the federal judiciary.
  - (b) Identify two political factors that affect the confirmation process of a president's nominees and explain how each factor complicates a confirmation.
  - (c) Explain how one legislative power serves as a check on court decisions.
  - (d) Explain how one executive power serves as a check on court decisions.
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# AP UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS UNIT 6 SCORING GUIDELINES

## Question 3 (2012)

### 8 POINTS POSSIBLE

#### Part (a): 2 points

One point is earned for each of two descriptions of political factors that affect presidential appointment decisions.

Acceptable descriptions include:

- campaign promises
- gender
- geographic diversity
- home-state senator (if lower courts)
- ideology
- interest group input
- issue positions
- party
- potential for confirmation success
- professional background, experience, education
- race
- religion
- scandal

#### Part (b): 4 points

One point is earned for each of two identifications of political factors that affect the confirmation process for presidential nominees. One point is earned for each of two explanations for **how** the political factor complicates the confirmation of judicial appointees.

Acceptable factors include:

- advice and consent
- campaign promises
- filibuster
- gender
- geographic diversity
- holds
- home-state senator (if lower courts)
- ideology
- interest group input
- issue positions
- the media (televising Judiciary Committee hearings)
- party
- professional background, experience, education
- race
- religion
- safe/weak nominee
- scandal
- senatorial courtesy

#### Part (c): 1 point

One point is earned for correctly explaining **how** a legislative power serves as a check on court decisions.

Acceptable legislative powers include:

- amendments
- confirmation
- congressional funding
- impeachment
- jurisdiction stripping
- legislation

#### Part (d): 1 point

One point is earned for correctly explaining **how** an executive power serves as a check on court decisions.

Acceptable executive powers include:

- power of appointment
- executive enforcement

A score of zero (0) is assigned to an answer that is attempted but earns no points.

A score of dash (—) is assigned to an answer that is blank or off task.