



# **AP<sup>®</sup> Comparative Government and Politics**

## **Practice Exam**

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# COMPARATIVE GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

## Section I

Time—45 minutes

55 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 place the letter of your choice in the corresponding box on the student answer sheet.

1. Which of the following can be considered a fundamental feature of parliamentary government?
  - (A) The head of government and the head of state are unified into one position.
  - (B) The head of government is directly elected in a national election.
  - (C) The head of government can be dismissed through a vote of no confidence in the assembly.
  - (D) The head of government can dismiss the head of state through a vote of no confidence.
  - (E) The head of state appoints cabinet members.
2. A unitary system is best defined as one that has
  - (A) checks and balances
  - (B) separation of powers
  - (C) a prime minister or parliament
  - (D) fusion of powers between the executive and legislative branches
  - (E) no constitutional division of powers between the central and regional governments
3. Which of the following best describes women's participation in politics in the developing world?
  - (A) Political participation is prohibited for everyone in these countries, not just women.
  - (B) There is little interest from women in becoming politically involved.
  - (C) Traditional cultural values often preclude women from participating in politics.
  - (D) Women in rural areas participate in politics more often than women in urban areas.
  - (E) Women in developing countries participate in politics more actively than women in the developed world.
4. The timing of elections in Great Britain's system is determined by which of the following?
  - (A) A nonpartisan electoral commission sets the dates of elections.
  - (B) Citizens decide in a referendum when parliamentary elections will be held.
  - (C) Elections are on a fixed cycle set by law.
  - (D) Members of the upper house call elections by majority vote.
  - (E) The prime minister calls elections within a five-year period.
5. Interest groups tend to have a minimal impact on individual legislators in parliamentary systems because
  - (A) interest groups are less common in parliamentary democracies
  - (B) corporatism brings together interest groups and government representatives
  - (C) legislators in parliamentary systems do not represent constituency interests
  - (D) election campaigns are funded by the state and do not require much fund-raising
  - (E) the strength of political parties gives individual legislators less power over policy
6. Which of the following social groups is most likely to engage in protest in China?
  - (A) Middle-class entrepreneurs
  - (B) Urban intellectuals
  - (C) Farmers in rural areas
  - (D) Workers in special economic zones
  - (E) Members of the People's Liberation Army (PLA)

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7. Which of the following is true of federalism in Mexico?
- (A) There has been a strong trend toward increased centralization of policy functions over the last two decades.
  - (B) Since the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) no longer dominates electoral politics, governors have become more willing to exercise their formal powers.
  - (C) Members of the Mexican Senate are appointed by the state legislatures and can be recalled by them at any time.
  - (D) The president has the constitutional authority to dissolve state legislatures for failing to implement national laws.
  - (E) The Chamber of Deputies has often exercised its constitutional authority to impeach state governors.
8. Which of the following statements is most accurate about the middle class in Iran?
- (A) The middle class in Iran consists mainly of clerics and other religious officials.
  - (B) The middle class in Iran is culturally westernized and often hostile to the clergy.
  - (C) The middle class in Iran is very small and found in predominantly rural areas.
  - (D) The middle class in Iran controls the media and is very influential in national decision making.
  - (E) The middle class in Iran is almost non-existent.
9. Which of the following is true of the transitions to democracy in Mexico and Russia?
- (A) International isolation spurred the process in both countries.
  - (B) The military played a pivotal role in the process in both countries.
  - (C) Religious institutions in both countries became discredited by their affiliation with the prior regime.
  - (D) In Mexico old institutions were reformed, while in Russia new institutions were created.
  - (E) In both Mexico and Russia, new legislatures had to be created.
10. Which of the following best describes civil society?
- (A) Bureaucrats implementing their policy objectives
  - (B) Individuals organizing and expressing their interests
  - (C) Individuals making their interests known through voting
  - (D) Legislators meeting in small groups and discussing specific policy objectives
  - (E) The head of state appointing a group of individuals to investigate policy outcomes
11. The common law system, especially as practiced in Great Britain, is based on
- (A) formal legal codes
  - (B) the use of precedents to guide legal decisions
  - (C) the idea that judges should interpret laws in ways that improve public policy
  - (D) a set of guidelines developed by a constitutional council
  - (E) an inquisitorial evaluation of a set of facts that is consistent with written statutes
12. Political parties in Nigeria are best described as being organized around which of the following?
- (A) Religion
  - (B) Ideology
  - (C) Environmental issues
  - (D) Occupation and wealth
  - (E) Personalities and powerful individuals
13. The use of judicial review in the United Kingdom is limited because
- (A) the United Kingdom lacks a written constitution
  - (B) judicial review is seen as violating the principle of parliamentary sovereignty
  - (C) the United Kingdom is a unitary state
  - (D) the United Kingdom lacks a system of checks and balances
  - (E) legal systems in the United Kingdom are structured on common law

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14. In addition to its basic lawmaking function, the Federation Council of the Russian Federation also has the power to
- (A) approve the president's choice of prime minister
  - (B) undertake votes of confidence in the government
  - (C) ratify treaties and approve troop deployments
  - (D) appoint the chair of the Central Bank
  - (E) declare amnesties and grant pardons
15. Which of the following is true of coalition government?
- (A) It tends to result from a fragmented legislature and can be unstable.
  - (B) It tends to result from a first-past-the-post voting system.
  - (C) It is an ideal of majoritarian democracy.
  - (D) It systematically excludes minority voices from government.
  - (E) It has been a long-standing characteristic of British politics.
16. Which of the following best describes energy policy in a country studied in AP Comparative Government and Politics?
- (A) Despite some environmental problems associated with extraction, China produces enough oil to remain self-sufficient.
  - (B) Constant new oil discoveries in the oceans surrounding the United Kingdom help it remain a major exporter of oil well into the 21st century.
  - (C) Nigerian oil revenues are distributed evenly to all citizens in an effort to reduce inequalities.
  - (D) As a member of OPEC, Russia has a large influence on determining global prices for oil.
  - (E) While Mexico produces 4.8 percent of the world's oil, it exports over 80 percent of it to the United States.
17. Which of the following statements best characterizes the varying geographic distribution of the electoral support received by the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) and the National Action Party (PAN) in Mexico since 2000 ?
- (A) The PRD and the PAN do equally well in the northern, central, and southern regions of Mexico.
  - (B) The PAN receives significantly more support in rural areas than the PRD does.
  - (C) The PRD receives significantly more support along the border with the United States than the PAN does.
  - (D) The PAN and the PRD do equally well in Mexico City.
  - (E) The PAN receives significantly more support in northern Mexico than the PRD does.
18. Democratic consolidation requires which of the following?
- (A) Direct election of the executive
  - (B) A system of judicial review by the courts
  - (C) Separation of powers among the different branches of government
  - (D) That a former colonizer help with political change
  - (E) That both elites and nonelites be committed to democratization in spite of difficulties
19. The electoral system in the United Kingdom tends to
- (A) reflect parliamentary seat allocation as a percentage of votes received by each party
  - (B) result in minority or coalition governments
  - (C) result in a House of Commons that mirrors demographic characteristics of the population
  - (D) hold the combined popular vote for center and national parties at about 15 percent
  - (E) exaggerate the scale of victory of the largest party

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20. Which of the following pairs of countries are considered rentier states?
- (A) China and Russia
  - (B) China and Mexico
  - (C) Iran and Mexico
  - (D) Iran and Nigeria
  - (E) Nigeria and Russia
21. Nigeria's democratization process is best described as a
- (A) rejection of patrimonial rule
  - (B) smooth transition from colonial rule to self-rule
  - (C) successful effort to dismantle the prebendal system
  - (D) process imposed by the country's former colonial rulers
  - (E) process interrupted by frequent military intervention
22. One of the reasons that the effects of ethnic conflict in China have been limited is
- (A) Tibet has been the only problematic area under Chinese military and political control
  - (B) the relatively small population and geographic isolation of China's ethnic minorities
  - (C) most Chinese are Buddhist and therefore pacifists not given to revolt and rebellion
  - (D) the militant elements were driven out of China in the 1940s with the Nationalist Kuomintang
  - (E) most Chinese are happy to have a strong and centralized state that projects power
23. In Iran, the head of the judiciary is
- (A) appointed by the Supreme Leader
  - (B) appointed by the Guardian Council
  - (C) appointed by the president and confirmed by the Guardian Council
  - (D) chosen by a two-thirds majority of the Islamic Consultative Assembly (Majles)
  - (E) chosen by majority vote in the Assembly of Religious Experts
24. The concentration of Nigeria's small number of industries in a few major cities can be best explained by
- (A) industrial policies pursued to achieve a limited impact on the environment
  - (B) easy access to the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Guinea from these cities
  - (C) ethnic politics, whereby political decisions override entrepreneurial preferences
  - (D) stipulations by international financiers who want easy access to these sites
  - (E) conscious decisions by the government to promote equitable growth across the country
25. Based on your knowledge of politics in Great Britain and Russia, which of the following conclusions is most accurate?
- (A) Elections in Russia are less volatile than are elections in Great Britain.
  - (B) The percentage of people who identify with a party in Great Britain exceeds the percentage of party identifiers in Russia.
  - (C) Trust in governmental institutions is lower in Great Britain than in Russia.
  - (D) The system of proportional representation has produced more coalition governments in Great Britain than in Russia.
  - (E) Whereas political parties are important in Great Britain, they are irrelevant in the Russian political system.

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26. Which of the following statements is NOT an argument for European Union (EU) enlargement?
- (A) A larger EU will have more weight in trade negotiations with the rest of the world.
  - (B) Cheaper labor in new EU states will attract businesses from the developed West.
  - (C) The EU will help promote political stability in new member states.
  - (D) A larger EU provides new and diverse markets for all EU members.
  - (E) New member states will help contribute to a larger EU military to fight common problems.
27. Iran and China share which of the following institutional arrangements?
- (A) Federal division of power, which give the localities formal and entrenched powers over the central government
  - (B) A single-party rule
  - (C) Competitive elections involving multiple parties
  - (D) A president who serves for life unless removed by a popularly elected assembly
  - (E) A national assembly with only limited powers to oversee the executive and enact laws
28. Although Russia is no longer a communist state, one feature it shares with communist China is
- (A) continued opposition to the growth of capitalism
  - (B) an unwillingness to become involved with international organizations like the World Trade Organization
  - (C) government restrictions on the development of civil society
  - (D) a lack of political parties
  - (E) a majority of the economy is devoted to heavy industry
29. One of the primary functions of Russia's Constitutional Court is to
- (A) oversee the impeachment process
  - (B) validate the results of elections
  - (C) amend the Constitution
  - (D) exercise judicial review
  - (E) approve appointments to the Duma Judiciary Committee

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VOTING AND LEGISLATIVE SEAT ALLOCATION

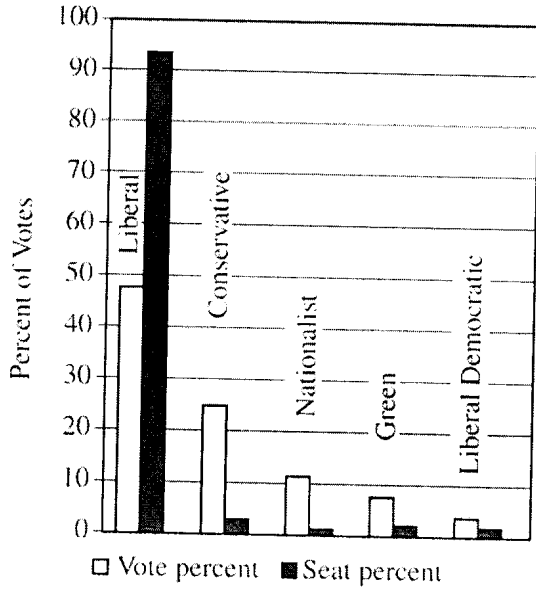


Figure A

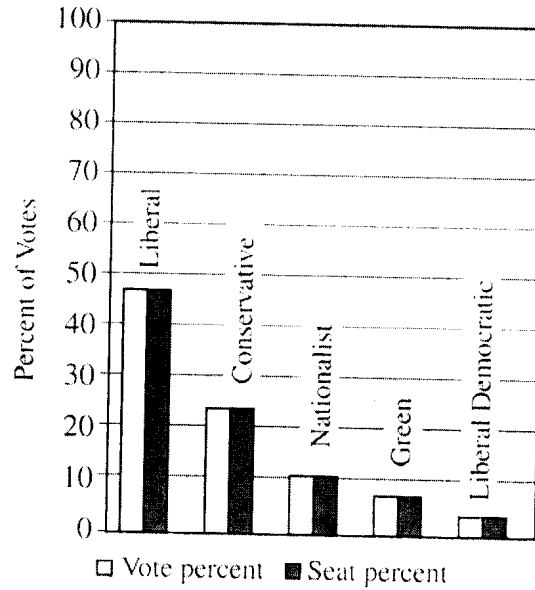


Figure B

30. Which of the following statements best represents the outcomes of the two elections illustrated above?
- (A) Figure A represents a proportional representation system, while Figure B shows a first-past-the-post outcome.
  - (B) Figure A and Figure B show Liberals surreptitiously getting more seats even when they had fewer votes.
  - (C) Figure A shows the outcome in a first-past-the-post electoral system, while Figure B shows the outcome in a proportional representation system.
  - (D) In a liberal democracy, liberals are unlikely to win as many votes as shown in the figures.
  - (E) Figures A and B show that right-wing conservatives and left-wing radicals have been left out of the elections.

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31. Which of the following is true of the current Mexican Constitution?
- (A) It outlines a unitary system in which the executive branch predominates.
  - (B) It provides for broad involvement of the Roman Catholic Church in the policy-making process.
  - (C) It eliminates quotas for the number of female officials in the national legislature and judiciary.
  - (D) It establishes several autonomous areas in which indigenous groups govern themselves and are immune from national laws.
  - (E) It declares that all subsoil rights are the property of the nation and limits foreigners' rights to exploit natural resources.
32. Which of the following do Nigeria and China have in common?
- (A) Both countries have vibrant and free media.
  - (B) Despite ethnic and religious diversity, neither country has experienced violence.
  - (C) A majority in both countries are Muslim.
  - (D) A majority in both countries are Christian.
  - (E) The dominance of a single political party.
33. Which of the following is a potential problem associated with using gross national product (GNP) when doing research in comparative politics?
- (A) It only counts the market value of all final goods and services produced within a country.
  - (B) As an aggregating measure, it tells us nothing about the economic or human condition of the people living in an economy.
  - (C) There is no uniform measurement of GNP across different countries.
  - (D) Fewer countries report GNP than gross domestic product (GDP) on a regular and timely basis.
  - (E) It includes the value of goods produced outside the country.
34. Which of the following have veto power over legislation passed by the Islamic Consultative Assembly (Majles) ?
- (A) The Assembly of Religious Experts and the Expediency Council
  - (B) The Assembly of Religious Experts and the Guardian Council
  - (C) The Guardian Council and the Supreme Leader
  - (D) The Guardian Council and the president
  - (E) The president and the Supreme Leader
35. The apparently smooth succession in China of General Party Secretary from Jiang Zemin to Hu Jintao in 2002 was unusual in which of the following ways?
- (A) It represented the success of a so-called silent coup by the People's Liberation Army.
  - (B) It represented the continuing significance of charismatic authority to boost legitimacy.
  - (C) It represented an unexpected shift back to greater ideological correctness and away from technocratic expertise.
  - (D) It represented increased predictability and an orderly transition process, following rules on term limits and retirement age.
  - (E) It represented the first direct election of the national party leader.
36. Which of the following groups would most likely support Mexico's Democratic Revolutionary Party (PRD) ?
- (A) Business owners
  - (B) Urban workers
  - (C) Large landowners
  - (D) Individuals who support a bigger role in politics for the Catholic Church
  - (E) Individuals who support greater privatization of state-owned enterprises
37. Iran and Nigeria differ in which of the following ways?
- (A) Iran's legal system is based on common law, but Nigeria's is based on Shari'ah law.
  - (B) Iran is a unitary state, but Nigeria is a federal state.
  - (C) Nigeria relies on the exportation of oil to bolster its economy, but Iran does not.
  - (D) Nigeria has regular elections, but Iran does not.
  - (E) Nigeria allows women access to formal education, but Iran does not.

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38. Mexican political culture differs from Nigerian political culture in which of the following ways?
- (A) Mexicans have historically supported military intervention in politics, while Nigerians have violently protested military rule.
  - (B) Mexicans have a strong sense of national identity, while Nigerians identify more strongly with their individual ethnic group.
  - (C) Mexicans strongly approve of authoritarian leadership, while Nigerians approve of democratic leadership.
  - (D) In Mexico gender equality is an important political norm, while in Nigeria women are seen as politically inferior.
  - (E) In Nigeria individual liberty is valued over the community's welfare, while in Mexico limits on individual liberty are widely supported.
39. Which of the following is an accurate statement about the Chinese Communist Party and public policy issues?
- (A) The Chinese Communist Party responded quickly to the SARS epidemic by passing out free medicine to citizens.
  - (B) The Chinese Communist Party encourages couples to have several children, to counter the effects of an aging population.
  - (C) The Chinese Communist Party has largely ignored environmental problems and instead has focused on economic growth.
  - (D) China requires all 18-year-olds to complete two years of service in the military.
  - (E) All leadership positions within the Chinese Communist Party are decided by open and transparent elections.
40. Which of the following is the best indicator of a successful transition to democracy?
- (A) One political party dominates all institutions of government.
  - (B) Several political parties merge to form one centrist party.
  - (C) Chief executives dominate the political process.
  - (D) Judges defer to elected officials when interpreting the constitution.
  - (E) Political actors accept electoral competition, citizen participation, and rule of law.
41. In Iran, the concept of jurist guardianship states that
- (A) the Supreme Court has the power to overturn legislative decisions
  - (B) the Supreme Court has the power to overturn clerical teachings
  - (C) the legislature has the power to overturn presidential decisions
  - (D) senior clerics have authority over the entire community
  - (E) citizens have the right to remove judges through recall elections
42. Which of the following best describes Mexico's National Action Party (PAN) prior to its presidential election victory in 2000 ?
- (A) It shunned electoral politics, viewing political campaigning as a bourgeois enterprise.
  - (B) It was victorious in several mayoral elections in Mexico City.
  - (C) It won several gubernatorial elections in the northern part of the country.
  - (D) It sought a national electoral alliance with the Party of Democratic Revolution (PRD).
  - (E) It focused its efforts on causing gridlock in the Chamber of Deputies.
43. Which of the following identifies two basic elements of all modern representative democracies?
- (A) Free and fair elections and widespread suffrage
  - (B) A written constitution and separation of powers
  - (C) Free speech and private ownership of all industry
  - (D) Proportional representation and a judiciary with the power of constitutional review
  - (E) Representative government and separation of executive and legislative powers
44. Russia's president may serve
- (A) indefinitely
  - (B) one four-year term only
  - (C) one six-year term only
  - (D) two successive four-year terms
  - (E) two successive six-year terms

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45. When the Labour Party came to power in the 1997 general election in the United Kingdom, it promised to reform the House of Lords. Which of the following best represents their publicly stated position?
- (A) The Labour Party wanted to curb power, because members of the House of Lords did not agree with the House of Commons on legislative issues.
  - (B) The Labour Party wanted to remove the right of hereditary peers to make the chamber more representative and democratic.
  - (C) The Labour Party's reform goal was the result of a public consultation showing that British citizens wanted fewer hereditary peers.
  - (D) The Labour Party wanted to put an end to scandals by the British royal family and other aristocrats.
  - (E) The Labour Party was concerned about the wasteful expenditures incurred by the members of the upper House.
46. One difference between the parliamentary and presidential forms of government is that the presidential form
- (A) ensures there will be no periods of divided government
  - (B) sets no fixed term of office for the executive
  - (C) makes the executive subject to a possible vote of no confidence by the legislature
  - (D) creates a stronger sense of party discipline
  - (E) makes the executive electorally independent of other branches of government
47. Which of the following best characterizes the Iranian Revolution?
- (A) A prolonged uprising based on guerrilla warfare in the countryside
  - (B) A bloodless coup d'état that installed a repressive military regime
  - (C) A strategy of terrorist attacks in Tehran and other urban centers
  - (D) A short, relatively nonviolent upheaval supported by the middle class
  - (E) A war of national independence against a colonial power
48. Which of the following trends does modernization theory predict?
- (A) Increasing differentiation between male and female gender roles
  - (B) Increasing polarization among class-based political parties
  - (C) Decreasing levels of political participation
  - (D) Declining intensity and political relevance of religious beliefs
  - (E) Decreasing levels of political efficacy
49. A policy used by the governments of China and Nigeria to lessen ethnic tensions is to
- (A) devolve considerable power to local units of government
  - (B) require that the cabinet contain members from every ethnic group in the country
  - (C) allow representation of local interests in the upper house of the national legislature
  - (D) allow national government exemptions and quotas for ethnic minorities
  - (E) promote special treatment of ethnic minorities in schools
50. Which of the following has been the most contentious issue between Mexico and the United States in recent years?
- (A) Arms control
  - (B) Global warming
  - (C) Immigration policies
  - (D) Unfair trade practices
  - (E) International terrorism
51. Both Mexico and Russia have recently experienced similar types of domestic institutional problems with
- (A) weak judicial systems lacking independence
  - (B) accusations of rigged local elections
  - (C) hard-liners competing for control of the parliament
  - (D) calls for unitary government
  - (E) the arrest of prominent oil company executives

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52. Which of the following best describes global trends in domestic politics?
- (A) There are more democracies than a decade ago.
  - (B) More countries are choosing to return to monarchy.
  - (C) There are more communist regimes since the late 1990s.
  - (D) More and more states are turning to autarky.
  - (E) Authoritarian regimes have been eliminated.
53. Which of the following pairs of countries have federal systems?
- (A) China and Russia
  - (B) Great Britain and Nigeria
  - (C) Great Britain and Russia
  - (D) Iran and Mexico
  - (E) Mexico and Nigeria
54. Which of the following factors is correlated most closely with an individual's willingness to participate in politics in a democracy?
- (A) Age
  - (B) Gender
  - (C) Personal economic situation
  - (D) Whether the individual's parents participated in politics
  - (E) Education level
55. Which of the following is NOT a political party operating in the United Kingdom?
- (A) Labour Party
  - (B) Conservative Party
  - (C) Progressive Royalists Party
  - (D) Scottish National Party
  - (E) Plaid Cymru

**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.**

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