

## American Parties and Pressure Groups

Midterm Exam Review Question – Hershey: Chs. 1-8; Brewer & Stonecash, Chs. 1-4

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**DIRECTIONS**

- *Two* of these seven review questions will appear on your exam. Your essay may address *either one*.
- To receive full credit, your exam essay should be written in well-organized paragraphs composed of complete sentences expressed in standard English.
  - Begin your essay with an introductory paragraph (*simply rewrite the essay question in your own words*). **This paragraph should list all the major points that your essay will address.**
  - Continue with a body of paragraphs (*one paragraph for each of the major points raised in the essay question*).
  - End with a concluding paragraph (*summarizing all of the major points covered*).
- You may *not* use any notes or dictionaries to assist you in your essay writing. However, I *will* be happy to answer any questions you may have about spelling, punctuation, grammar, and syntax.
- You will *not* need to bring a "blue book" -- a test booklet will be provided. I prefer that you write your essay in *pencil* so that you can more neatly make changes while writing or correct any errors that you discover with proof reading.

**STUDY HINTS**

- **INSTEAD OF TRYING TO MEMORIZE A COMPLETE ESSAY FOR ANY OF THE SEVEN TOPICS, MEMORIZE AN OUTLINE.** Locate the section of the chapter outline that addresses each of the seven topics and construct an outline for each. Review your textbook readings and class notes to expand the detail in each essay's outline.
- The minimum number of essay outlines you should prepare is six. If you prepare for less than six, you run the risk of not having prepared for at least one of the two essay topics that will appear on the exam.
- Make sure that each outline addresses each point raised in its respective essay question. Each of the seven essay questions raises four to six major points.
- The first thing to do during the exam is to choose one of the two essay topics. The second thing to do is to write down as complete an outline as possible -- making sure that it addresses every major point raised. **IT IS A BIG MISTAKE TO BEGIN TO WRITE YOUR ESSAY WITHOUT FIRST WRITING A GOOD OUTLINE.**

**GRADING**

- The essay you write is worth a total of 50 points. A maximum of 40 points will be awarded for *content*. **IT IS MORE IMPORTANT TO ADDRESS EVERY POINT RAISED IN THE ESSAY TOPIC YOU SELECT THAN IT IS TO COVER FEWER POINTS IN GREATER DETAIL.**
- A maximum of 10 points will be awarded for *presentation*. **MAKE SURE TO BUDGET ADEQUATE TIME TO THOROUGHLY PROOF READ YOUR ESSAY BEFORE TURNING IT IN.** Significant points will be subtracted for obvious errors such as subject-verb disagreement, confusion of plurals and possessives, and misspelling of commonly used words. **DON'T FORGET TO INCLUDE AN INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPH AND A CONCLUDING PARAGRAPH.**

## ESSAY QUESTIONS

- (Hershey 1)** Discuss **the development of political parties in the United States** by describing each of the following eras:
  - The founding of American parties.
  - The emergence of a national two-party system.
  - The Golden Age of the parties.
  - The progressive reforms and beyond.
- (Hershey 2)** Discuss **the underlying causes of the two-party system in the United States** by addressing the following points:
  - Identify and explain which type of election system produces two-party systems. What political theorist first understood this? Name two nations that are examples.
  - Identify and explain (don't just list) which type of election system produces multi-party systems. Name two nations that are examples.
  - Explain how both the direct primary and open parties have hindered the success of third or minor parties in the U.S.
- (Hershey 3 & 4)** Discuss **the rise and fall of political party machines in U.S. politics.**
  - In your essay, give at least one example of an urban and a suburban machine and name the boss of each. Where else in the U.S. are political machines commonly found?
  - Explain how patronage and preferments support political machines.
  - Identify and explain (don't just list) at least six factors that have contributed to the decay of political machines.
- (Hershey 5)** Discuss **material, solidary, and purposive incentives for political activity in the U.S.** by addressing the following points:
  - In three separate paragraphs, define and give examples of each type of incentive for political activity.
  - How has the relative importance of the three types of incentives changed in recent decades? What accounts for this change?
- (Hershey 6)** Discuss **the party-in-the-electorate topology of elections** by explaining and giving at least two examples of each the following:
  - Maintaining elections
  - Reinstating elections
  - Deviating elections
  - Realigning elections
  - Dealigning elections
- (Hershey 7; Brewer & Stonecash 1 & 2)** Discuss **party systems in the U.S.** by addressing the following points:
  - Define political-party realignment. When was the last re-aligning election? How many years have most political-party systems lasted?
  - Which two of the six political-party systems were best characterized as de-aligning rather than re-aligning eras? What is the defining characteristic of de-aligning issues? Name two examples from each of the two de-aligning eras.
  - Besides Brewer and Stonecash, name the major author associated with each of the following perspectives: 1) there is a *culture war* in America and this polarization has overwhelmed *class divisions*; 2) the contemporary American public is not polarized by cultural issues; and 3) class and culture both split the contemporary American public.
- (Brewer & Stonecash 3 & 4)** Discuss **the battle over taxes in the U.S.** by addressing the following points:
  - How do the two political parties differ over the root causes of inequalities in income and wealth in the U.S.?
  - How do they justify their opposing positions on the following tax issues: 1) the income-tax rate on the rich; 2) the income-tax rate on capital-gains income; and 3) the estate tax on inherited income?
  - Describe how class, party, & ideology all shape perceptions of opportunity in the U.S.