

Multiple-Choice Questions

- All of the following explain the proliferation of interest groups EXCEPT:
 - America is diverse, with countless immigrants, races, and religions
 - because of its federal system, there are multiple points of access to government
 - political authority is shared by several branches of government, each of which might be targeted by interest groups
 - interest groups often run candidates for office to give their supporters a voice in government
 - Americans have a weaker sense of political efficacy relative to other countries.
- Throughout American history, which of the following conditions has led to an increase in interest groups' activity?
 - A strong economy with low inflation
 - The rise of professional societies, such as the American Medical Association (AMA)
 - Government policies that create new groups, such as veterans
 - Leaders who are willing to make personal sacrifices
 - I and II
 - I, II, and III
 - II, III, and IV
 - I, II, and IV
 - III and IV
- "Free riders" occur when interest groups fight for benefits to the public as a whole, such as consumer protection. How can interest groups prevent the free-rider problem?
 - By ensuring that the benefits they seek will help only their members
 - By providing people an incentive to join the interest group, such as a subscription to a magazine
 - By limiting membership to a few carefully screened members
 - By lobbying members of Congress only in the district where the interest group operates
 - There is no practical way for interest groups to prevent the "free-rider" problem
- Environmentalists, women, and union members have worked over the years to advance their interests. What is the best description of these causes?
 - They are social movements that have spawned several related interest groups.
 - They are PACs, which give money to political campaigns.
 - They are social movements because all of them have liberal goals.
 - They are interest groups because they lobby Congress for favorable legislation.
 - They are social movements because they do not take strong positions and tend to support moderate policies.
- Why are lobbyists useful to members of Congress in considering legislation?
 - Because most lobbyists are lawyers and can draft bills using technical legal language.
 - Because lobbyists have bigger research staffs than members of Congress.
 - Because lobbyists are policy generalists who have knowledge about a broad range of topics.
 - Because members of Congress must listen to lobbyists in order to get electoral support.
 - Because members of Congress are policy generalists and lobbyists are policy specialists with expert knowledge in their area.
- An interest group would use grassroots lobbying on all of the following issues EXCEPT:
 - abortion
 - Medicare
 - Social Security
 - complex tax legislation affecting a few people
 - affirmative action
- Which of the following is a concern about the influence of lobbyists on government?
 - Many lobbyists are former federal officials who gave up their positions in government to work for interest groups.
 - Many lobbyists are attorneys who have undue influence because of their legal expertise.
 - Many lobbyists also work as congressional staff members.
 - Many members of Congress are former lobbyists who still have strong connections with interest groups.
 - Because lobbyists do not have to register with the government, it is difficult to control their activities.
- Which of the following is a restriction on the interaction between members of Congress and interest groups?
 - Members of interest groups may not provide members of Congress with information regarding pending legislation.
 - Members of Congress may not accept gifts of any value from registered lobbyists.
 - Retired members of Congress may not work as lobbyists for interest groups.
 - Members of Congress must retain records of all email, text, and phone messages from lobbyists.
 - Interest groups may not run ads on behalf of members of Congress.
- Which of the following best describes an earmark?
 - An entire piece of legislation that is written to provide benefits to a small group of people
 - A provision in a law that provides a direct benefit to a client without being reviewed on the merits by all members of Congress
 - A provision in a law that is wasteful and expensive
 - A provision in a law that provides a subsidy to farmers or ranchers
 - A piece of legislation containing several unrelated provisions that benefit a few states

10. All of the following statements about political action committees are true EXCEPT:

- (A) they are formed by groups of like-minded people
- (B) they must have at least 50 individual members
- (C) they can give an unlimited amount of money to political parties
- (D) PAC donations to individual candidates are limited to \$5,000
- (E) labor PACs give most of their money to Democrats

11. Of all of the activities that are employed by interest groups, the most significant one is:

- (A) running candidates for office
- (B) organizing protests
- (C) providing information
- (D) offering campaign contributions
- (E) grassroots mobilization

12. An organization that raises money and then contributes it to candidates is called a:

- (A) political action committee
- (B) fundraising committee
- (C) issue finance organization
- (D) citizen action fund
- (E) special-interest commission

13. Which of the following amounts is reflective of the most common PAC donation?

- (A) Approximately \$50
- (B) Approximately \$300
- (C) Approximately \$1000
- (D) Approximately \$5000
- (E) Over \$10,000

14. The phenomenon of people leaving government to take jobs in the economic sector that they regulated is called:

- (A) the revolving door
- (B) the glass ceiling
- (C) the golden parachute
- (D) the silver lining
- (E) the slippery slope

15. Protection for the activities of interest groups can be found in:

- (A) the original text of the Constitution
- (B) the First Amendment
- (C) the Fifth Amendment
- (D) the Declaration of Independence
- (E) Washington's Farewell Address

Free-Response Questions

1. Interest groups attempt to influence the policymaking process in a number of ways and through multiple access points. Tactics used by interest groups include:

- i. *litigation*
- ii. *donating money through PACs*
- iii. *grassroots lobbying/public pressure*

(a) Pick one technique from the list above and explain how interest groups use this technique to advance their cause, giving a specific example.

(b) Pick another technique from the list above and explain how interest groups use this technique to advance their cause, giving a specific example.

2. Political parties and special-interest groups are both features of the American political landscape. Both attempt to influence public policy in a variety of ways.

(a) Describe the primary difference between political parties and special-interest groups.

(b) Describe two ways in which special-interest groups attempt to influence policymaking in Congress.

(c) Explain two reasons why a citizen would prefer to work through a special-interest group to obtain his or her policy goals rather than through a political party.