The *AP United States Government & Politics Exam* has two parts, each counting for 50% of your score.

* **60 multiple choice** questions in 45 minutes (answer ALL questions, an unanswered questions is a wrong answer.)
* **4 FRQs (Free Response Questions)** in 100 minutes **–** Each weighted to count for 12.5% of your score.

***Here is a guide to writing an effective FRQ:***When prompted, read through all 4 questions first so you can anticipate which questions you may need to spend more time on.

As you begin work on a question, complete the following steps before writing your response:

* **Underline** *key terms* in the question that may require definition
* Each part of the question (a,b,c,d) will require at least one operation with each one counting for “1 point.” **CIRCLE** the **task verbs** and be sure that you understand what you are expected to do. (I have provided a list of operations below)
* In the question booklet, write any outside information you should incorporate into your responses for each part of the question.
* Begin your response

As you write, *I recommend* that you:

* Label and respond to each part of the question. IF you are more comfortable writing in “essay” structure, that is OK, as long as you are able to complete each operation.
* The verbs are connected to tasks – I suggest that you clearly write each task into your response. Example: *Reapportionment is important to the states because . . . . .*
* If possible, provide an ACCURATE example to “drive the point home.” Example: *For example, following the 2010 census, some states such as New York lost congressional seats while others including Texas, Florida and Washington gained seats in the House.*
  + HOWEVER, when providing examples, make sure they are accurate! It’s better to be general and “right” than specific and wrong. Example: *For example, following the 2010 census, some states lost congressional seats while others gained seats in the House.*
* OCCASIONALLY CHECK THE CLOCK. You will likely finish with time to spare but you may run out of time.

**Task verbs**: What does the question ask you to do? Is there more than one operative term in the question?

What does that operative term mean? How much detail is required by the operative terms presented in the question?

* ***Identify*:** provide a specific answer, which does not require causal explanation
* ***Define*:** provide a specific meaning for a word or concept
* ***Describe*:** provide the essential details or characteristics of a particular concept or political phenomenon
* ***Explain*:** demonstrate understanding of how or why a relationship exists by clearly articulating the logical connection or causal pattern between or among various political phenomena
* ***Compare*:** provide an explicit statement which connects two or more concepts