

Interest Groups Flashcards

Part of the AP U.S. Government collection

Overview

This resource contains a collection of 25 flashcards that will help students master key Interest Group concepts that may be covered on the AP U.S. Government exam.

These are not actual test questions, nor do they involve much “application” of knowledge. Instead, they focus on the basic factual and conceptual knowledge that students must first internalize if they are to successfully formulate logical responses to multiple-choice or essay questions on the eventual exam.

Brainscape has created this content in partnership with several AP U.S. Government teachers and tutors, as well as ex-executives from test prep publishers such as Kaplan and The Princeton Review. The material is as comprehensive as possible, while still being broken down into small bite-sized chunks that make it easy to study. We have included a variety of question formats to help students’ minds encode the knowledge as deeply as possible.

How to Use This Resource

Teachers and students can use these flashcards in a variety of creative ways. Below are a few common use cases:

1. Post this PDF on your class website, so students can download it on their own, and potentially print their own copy as a study aid (and even *cut out* individual flashcards)
2. Use these questions as inspiration for your own quiz questions
3. Use these flashcards as a “game”, where one student (or group of students) asks another student (or group) a random question, and keeps score of how well the questions are being answered
4. Encourage students to use the digital version of the flashcards (see below)

Online and Mobile Version

All of these flashcards are available to study on the Brainscape website ([brainscape.com](https://www.brainscape.com)) and in our mobile app(s). Brainscape’s “smart flashcards” study system uses our unique “Confidence-Based Repetition” method, which repeats questions in a progressive pattern based on students’ personalized path of mastery. Teachers can track students’ progress and identify students who need more guidance.

Students can study a portion of Brainscape’s premium flashcards for FREE and can gain unlimited access for a small fee. Students can also use Brainscape to create & share their own supplementary flashcards (which is ALWAYS FREE).

If you are interested in a bulk class license for Brainscape’s web & mobile study system, please contact info@brainscape.com, and we can set up some time for a call.

#	Question	Answer
1	Define: linkage institution	A linkage institution is any entity that connects the electorate to their government. The three main linkage institutions are interest groups, political parties, and the mass media.
2	What role do interest groups play in the American political system?	Interest groups represent members of the public who share similar beliefs or attributes before the government. Interest groups can lobby members of Congress and the president, electioneer for candidates, and engage in litigation to support a claim of importance to their members.
3	What do economic interest groups do?	More interest groups are economic interest groups and represent the financial interests of their membership. For instance, the largest interest group, the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) focuses on policies affecting the well being of older Americans, while the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) advocates for policies of concern to janitors, health care workers, and security officers.
4	What type of interest group is the fastest growing of all interest groups?	In the last few years, the number of environmental interest groups has been rapidly increasing. Some of these groups, such as the Sierra Club, advocate for the environment as a whole. Others focus on specific environmental concerns. For instance, Trout Unlimited is dedicated to preserving, protecting, and restoring North America's coldwater fisheries.
5	What types of policies are advocated for by equality interest groups?	Equality interest groups advocate for policies that they believe advance the causes of civil rights and increase opportunities for women and minorities. Examples of equality interest groups include the National Organization for Women (NOW) and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).
6	What types of interest groups represent the interest of the public at large?	Although all interest groups represent members of the public, public interest groups such as Mothers Against Drunk Driving represent the public as a whole.

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7	What role is played by single-issue interest groups?	Single-issue interest groups focus only on one issue. The best known of the single-issue interest groups (and the largest) is the National Rifle Association (NRA), which focuses on issues related to firearms.
8	What single factor is most likely to lead to an interest group becoming powerful?	The most significant factor leading to an interest group's success is finance; an interest group with deep pockets can contribute to candidates, air frequent television and radio advertisements, and spend heavily on lobbyists and attorneys.
9	Why are many interest groups perceived to have a bias towards the wealthy and large corporations?	Since the wealthy and large corporations have access to extra capital, they are able to fund interest groups and lobbyists to advance their causes, and to pressure Congress for preferred tax treatment and the like. Some have contended that limits on electoral contributions have limited the effect that the wealthy can have on electoral politics.
10	What is lobbying?	Lobbying is the most common activity of interest groups and consists of trying to persuade elected officials and bureaucratic officers to support a given policy. Some of the larger interest groups hire lobbyists, many of whom are former members of Congress or the bureaucracy.
11	What does a lobbyist do?	Lobbyists perform many functions, including drafting memoranda for Congress, or the bureaucracy advocating a certain policy position, raising campaign funds, drafting potential legislation, testifying in front of Congress or an executive agency regarding proposed legislation, or advising their clients to orchestrate their membership to contact Congress.
12	What is direct lobbying?	Direct lobbying takes place when lobbyists use personal connections with politicians or bureaucrats to meet and advocate a policy position. Many successful lobbyists are former members of Congress or the bureaucracy and have an extensive contact list in their field of expertise.

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13	When members of the public are urged to contact their congressmen, this is referred to as _____.	<p>grassroots lobbying</p> <p>Grassroots lobbying can take the form of calls, emails, faxes, letters, or petitions. Politicians often use grassroots lobbying to help decide which position to take on a given issue. The tactic is also helpful in making politicians aware of issues of concern to their constituents.</p>
14	_____ takes place when different interest groups cooperate in approaching politicians.	<p>Coalition lobbying</p> <p>Coalition lobbying often occurs when a policy affects numerous groups; for instance, both the Human Rights Campaign and the Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund may cooperate on policies affecting same-sex parents.</p>
15	In an effort to reduce the influence of lobbyists, what act required paid lobbyists to register with the federal government?	<p>The Federal Regulation of Lobbying Act, passed in 1946, requires that all lobbyists who directly communicate with members of Congress on proposed legislation register with the clerk of the House and the Senate.</p> <p>Among other things, lobbyists are required to disclose how much they receive to advocate for a position and their employer.</p>
16	What restrictions are placed on former members of Congress and the executive branch by the Honest Leadership and Open Government Act of 2005?	<p>With the goal of limiting lobbyists' influence among their former colleagues, the Honest Leadership and Open Government Act lengthened the already existing "cooling off" period for former members of Congress and the executive branch. Depending on the office held, congressional and executive branch officials are barred from acting as lobbyists for as long as two years after they leave office.</p> <p>The act also established a number of other rules, such as limits on congressional gifts, in an attempt to limit lobbyists' influence.</p>
17	Define: electioneering	<p>Electioneering is the endorsement and advocacy of a political candidate. Interest groups often engage in electioneering through political action committees.</p>

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18	What are political action committees (PACs)?	Political Action Committees (PACs) are an interest group's electioneering arm. PACs contribute to a party's general campaign fund and/or contribute to a specific candidate's fund if they believe that the party or candidate will advance their group's interests.
19	What is hard money?	Hard money refers to funds contributed directly to a candidate's campaign. The Federal Election Commission limits the amount of hard money contributions individuals and political action committees may contribute to an individual candidate.
20	Define: soft money	Soft money is money contributed by individuals, corporations, and political action committees that is not directed toward a given candidate, but is instead given to a political party. Soft money contributions allow a party to circumvent the Federal Election Commission's spending limits and are legal as long as they do not coordinate with a specific candidate.
21	What are 527 Groups?	Named for the section of the tax code from which they operate, 527 Groups are interest groups that do not "expressly advocate" for a given candidate. "Expressly advocate" refers to calls to action to vote for, or against a candidate (as established in <i>Buckley v. Valeo</i>). These groups are allowed to generally discuss candidates, have no limits on the amount of funds they can raise or spend, and are not regulated by federal or state governments.
22	How do interest groups use litigation to change or advance policies?	Interest groups may file amicus briefs, explaining to judges the effects of their decision on their membership, or bringing to the Court's attention matters not addressed by the parties in the litigation. Interest groups may use lawsuits to target groups violating laws they support, or sue the government to compel it to enforce certain laws. As an example, <i>Brown v. Board of Education</i> (1954) was funded by the NAACP to end the doctrine of separate but equal.

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23	What are think tanks?	Think tanks are public interest organizations that conduct research on matters of public policy, and then disseminate their findings to the public in books, articles, and conferences.
24	When pundits decry the growing influence of "K Street," to what are they referring?	"K Street" is the street in Washington D.C. where some 7,000 Washington-based organizations are located. Many of these organizations are lobbying firms, and when pundits decry "K Street," they are usually referring to these firms' growing influence in the government.
25	Many interest groups such as unions face the "free-rider" problem? What is the free-rider problem?	The free-rider problem takes place when people do not join unions or other interest groups, because they can benefit from those groups' activities without doing so. The larger the organization, the more likely there is to be free-riders. For instance, workers for company A become free-riders when they choose not to join company A's workers union, but may still benefit from the higher wages negotiated by the union with management.