Question 7

7 points

Part (a): 2 points

One point is earned for an accurate description of Russia’s electoral system before the 2007 Duma elections.

Acceptable descriptions include both of the following:

- A split electoral system, with one-half “first past the post” (FPTP) and one-half proportional representation (PR).
- A 5 percent threshold for parties to be included in the PR.

One point is earned for a correct explanation of how the electoral system shaped the pre-2007 Russian party system.

Acceptable explanations include any of the following:

- It allowed multiple parties to develop.
- It allowed for more demographically diverse parties.
- It permitted many independent candidates.
- It encouraged personality-based factions more than parties with ideology.

Note: FPTP, SMD (single-member district), winner-take-all, and plurality are all acceptable.

Part (b): 2 points

One point is earned for an accurate description of a specific change to the Russian electoral system that was designed for the 2007 Duma elections.

Acceptable descriptions include both of the following:

- The system became only PR (FPTP was removed).
- The party threshold was increased from 5 percent to 7 percent.

One point is earned for a correct explanation of the impact of the change on party competition.

Acceptable explanations include any of the following:

- It eliminated (made it very difficult for) all reform parties (Yabloko, “floating parties”).
- It strengthened United Russia and other parties that tended to support Putin’s agenda.
- It decreased the diversity of political viewpoints in the Duma.

Part (c): 1 point

One point is earned for a correct description of Mexico’s current electoral system.

The following is an acceptable description:

- A dual system of FPTP and PR in both chambers (Senate also has at-large PR).
Question 7 (continued)

Part (d): 2 points

One point is earned for a correct description of one electoral reform made in Mexico in the 1990s.

Acceptable descriptions include any of the following:
- Creation of an electoral commission to regulate campaigns and elections (1990).
- All parties receive government funding and have access to the media.
- Increase in the number of Senate seats (from 68 to 128) (1993).
- Presence of foreign electoral observers was legalized (1994).
- A limit was set on how many seats one party can hold in the Chamber of Deputies (60 percent, or 300 of the 500 seats) (1996).
- PR was incorporated in the Senate for 32 of 128 seats (1996).
- A limit was set on party spending for campaigns (campaign finance spending limits).
- A party threshold for participation in PR was set at 2 percent (Senate and Chamber) (1996).
- Priests were legally allowed to cast votes.
- Legislation “recommending” that parties establish a gender quota for candidate lists (1996). (To earn this point the argument must show that the student is not referring to the stricter quota law passed in 2002.)

One point is earned for an accurate explanation of how that reform affected Mexico’s party system.

Acceptable explanations include any of the following:
- An increase in the power of nondominant parties.
- Removal of the prevailing party (PRI) from dominance.
- Created a true multiparty system (PAN, PRD, Green Party gained power).

Notes:
- The 180 PR seats added to the Chamber of Deputies occurred in 1988, NOT in the 1990s.
- The strict quota law mandating a quota for women on the ballot was implemented in 2002.

A score of zero (0) is earned for an attempted answer that merits no points.

A score of dash (—) is earned for a blank or off-task answer.
A) Prior to the 2007 Duma elections, half of the Duma's representatives were elected through the winner-take-all system of single-member districts (SMD). While half was elected through Proportional Representation, in which the threshold for smaller parties to receive representation was approximately 5% of the popular vote. There was no real majority party in the Duma, and many smaller parties were represented. In order to successfully pass legislation, parties had to cooperate and form coalitions.

B) The electoral system for the Duma was changed for the 2007 elections to entirely proportional representation with a 7% threshold. This change cut out many of the smaller, dissenting parties that previously took seats away from Putin's party. These changes allowed not only for a majority party in the Duma, but they also eliminated the need for opposing political parties to have to compromise and create coalitions. Influence of those up still opposing Putin has therefore been sharply curtailed.

C) In Mexico's current electoral system, the president is elected directly by the citizens. The lower house of the legislature is split between SMD and proportional representation. In the upper Senate,
each of the 31 states and the federal district. Each state gets 1 representative, while district seats get 2. Seats are filled by SMP, 1 is filled by whichever party came in 2nd, and 1 is filled by proportional representation.

During the 1990s, a council was created to monitor voting fraud and corruption. The council requested voters’ names. Citizens were also given ID cards used in the voting process. This council helped to eliminate much of the fraud upon which PPUL was relying to win their elections, and in 2000 a president won the election who wasn’t represented a member of PPUL for the first time in over 70 years. Since Vincent Fox and PPUL’s 2000 victory, elections between political parties have become increasingly more competitive.
Prior to the 2007 elections, Russia didn't have a Prime Minister. Prior to the elections as well, the duma was a mixed system. Currently, it is a proportional representation system. The change enabled smaller parties such as Yabloko to gain representation in the Duma. Mexico has a mixed representation system.
This would lead to a more liberal society because more people would effectively control the government and ensure that their needs are met, so they could increase their participation in society and institute other aid-based organizations.

Before the Russian there was little to no electoral system in Russia. The Zar simply appointed his cabinet and there was no such thing as an opposing party. This helped to shape a Russian party system because as people became increasingly unsupportive of the U.S.S.R., they increased their political voice.

For the 2007 Duma elections, for the first time opposing political parties were allowed to run for office, which greatly impacted Russian society. Society as a whole began to regain national pride and because of the increase in political competition, people began to feel that their voice was heard and mattered.

In Mexico, people vote their officials into office. Now it a President and Vice President and recently, like Russia, other political parties have arisen and gained support.

The reform to Mexico's electoral system in the 1990s included the inclusion of other political parties, which effectively ended the previously single-party dominance in the Mexican political arena.
government. It has increased the support of guaranteed
decisions of the voters and increased the number
at people represented in the government. Resentment became
pride as the individual begins to feel her strength
of self hear voice.
Question 7

Overview

The overall intent of this question was for students to examine past and current electoral systems in Russia and Mexico, focusing on changes to the electoral system and impacts on the Russian and Mexican party systems. The question asked students to (a) describe Russia’s electoral system before the 2007 Duma elections and explain how the electoral system shaped the pre-2007 Russian party system; (b) describe a specific change to the Russian electoral system that was designed for the 2007 Duma elections and explain its impact on party competition; (c) describe Mexico’s current electoral system; and (d) describe one electoral reform made in Mexico in the 1990s and explain how that reform affected Mexico’s party system.

Sample: 7A
Score: 7

In part (a) the response earned 1 point for describing Russia’s electoral system before the 2007 Duma elections as one where “half of the Duma’s representatives were elected through the winner-take-all system of Single member districts (SMD) while half was elected through Proportional Representation, in which the threshold for smaller parties to receive representation was 5% of the popular vote.” The response earned a second point in part (a) for explaining how the electoral system shaped the pre-2007 Russian party system: “There was no real majority party in the Duma, and many smaller parties were represented.”

In part (b) the response earned 1 point for describing a specific change to the Russian electoral system that was designed for the 2007 Duma elections: “The electoral system for the Duma was changed for the 2007 elections to entirely proportional representation with a 7% threshold.” The response earned a second point in part (b) for explaining how “[t]his change cut out many of the smaller, dissenting parties that previously took seats away from Putin’s party.”

In part (c) the response earned 1 point for describing Mexico’s current electoral system: “The lower house of the legislature is split between SMD and proportional representation. In the Senate, . . . 2 seats are filled by SMD, 1 is filled by whichever party came in 2nd, and 1 is filled by proportional representation.”

In part (d) the response earned 1 point for describing how “a council was created to monitor voting fraud and corruption” as one electoral reform made in Mexico in the 1990s. The response earned a second point for explaining how, “[s]ince Vicente Fox and PAN’s 2000 victory, elections between political parties have become increasingly more competitive.”

Sample: 7B
Score: 3

In part (a) the response earned 1 point for describing that “prior to the [2007] elections, . . . the [D]uma was a mixed system.” The response did not earn a second point, as no explanation is given concerning how the electoral system shaped the pre-2007 Russian party system.

In part (b) the response earned 1 point for noting that currently the Duma “is a proportional representation system.” The response did not earn a second point because the change did not increase, but rather lessened, representation of the smaller parties.
Question 7 (continued)

In part (c) the response earned 1 point for describing Mexico’s current electoral system as “a mixed representation system.”

There is no response to part (d), and thus neither point for part (d) was earned.

Sample: 7C  
Score: 1

In part (a) the response did not earn a point because it does not describe Russia’s electoral system before the 2007 Duma elections. Likewise, the response did not earn a second point because the statement “as people became increasingly unsupportive of the U.S.S.R. they increased their political voice” does not explain how the electoral system shaped the pre-2007 Russian party system.

In part (b) the response did not earn the first point because it does not describe a specific change to the Russian electoral system. The response also did not earn the second point because the statement “[s]ociety as a whole began to regain national pride because of the increase in political competition” does not accurately explain an impact on party competition.

In part (c) the response did not earn a point because it does not describe Mexico’s current electoral system.

In part (d) the response did not earn a point for describing one electoral reform made in Mexico in the 1990s because no reform is discussed. The response did earn 1 point for explaining how reforms affected Mexico’s party system, as “the inclusion of other political parties . . . affectively [sic] ended the previously single party dominance in the Mexican government [sic].”