Question 4

5 points

Part (a): 1 point

One point is earned for a correct definition of party polarization as increased ideological consistency, divisions along party lines, or both.

Part (b): 1 point

One point is earned for identifying a trend in the graph (e.g., party polarization has increased in the House; is higher in the House than in the Senate over time; was up, then down, then up).

Part (c): 2 points

One point is earned for each accurate description of a cause of party polarization in Congress. Acceptable causes include:

- Clear issue differences between the parties
- Increasing reliance on ideologically-driven activists
- Ideologically-driven membership
- Gerrymandering
- Media effects on politics (e.g., fragmentation of traditional media; consolidation of media ownership; media focus on ideological extremism)
- Changing norms in Congress (e.g., lower levels of trust or dislike among members; shorter work week)
- Direct primaries – ideological voters in congressional elections
- Changing campaign finance rules
- Rise of single issue interest groups
- Shifts in the party (i.e., Republicans’ “Southern Strategy”)

Part (d): 1 point

One point is earned for an accurate description of how party polarization affects Congressional policy making. Acceptable effects include:

- Gridlock (e.g., fewer laws passed; confirmation processes become more difficult; filibuster; greater numbers of vacancies in courts and agencies)
- Lack of compromise (e.g., fewer laws passed; confirmation processes become more difficult; filibuster; greater numbers of vacancies in courts and agencies)

A score of zero (0) is assigned to an answer that is off task or is attempted but earns no points.

A score of dash (—) is assigned to an answer that is blank.
4. (a) Define party polarization.
    (b) Identify a trend shown in the graph above.
    (c) Describe two causes of party polarization in Congress.
    (d) Describe one effect of party polarization on congressional policy making.

   a) Party Polarization is when the two members of government become more loyal and extreme and loyal to their party, creating a more partisan government.
   b) One trend in the graph is that polarization has increasingly gone up in both the House and the Senate since around 1951.
   c) 1. An increase in gerrymandering, drawing lines in a district to favor the majority party of a state, causes party polarization in Congress. This is because constituents of the districts can easily vote a congressman out of office if they are not loyal to the majority party.
      2. The Civil Rights Movement, with its most influential time starting in the 1950's, causes party polarization.
Democrats tend to be more in favor of Civil Rights than Republicans, causing the two parties to polarize so that this very important topic goes their way. Party Polarization causes legislation to be made less and at a slower rate due to the lack of compromising. This causes gridlock.
4. (a) Define party polarization.
   (b) Identify a trend shown in the graph above.
   (c) Describe two causes of party polarization in Congress.
   (d) Describe one effect of party polarization on congressional policy making.

4A. Party polarization refers to the split between political parties in Congress. Such ideological polarization has caused gridlock in certain years.

4B. A trend shown in the graph is that by 1963 there has been an increase in ideological distance between parties in both the House and the Senate. This causes for a shift in representation.

4C. One cause of party polarization is the election of more members of a certain political party in both the House and the Senate. This causes for a shift in representation. Another reason for party
ADDITIONAL ANSWER PAGE FOR QUESTION 4.

Polarization in congress is public unsatisfaction with the core current political party dominant in congress. This causes the public to change perspective and perhaps seek representation with another political party. Usually happen in periods of realignments.

One effect of party polarization is the development of gridlock or a do nothing era congress. This means that little legislation will be passed because of a difference in ideals.
4. (a) Define party polarization.
(b) Identify a trend shown in the graph above.
(c) Describe two causes of party polarization in Congress.
(d) Describe one effect of party polarization on congressional policy making.

a. Party polarization is when one party such as Democrats
   taking the Senate while the other party takes
   the House of Representatives. They often have different political
   ideals such as one house wants one thing and the other house
   another.

b. The House generally has a higher ideological distance
   between the parties than the Senate.

c. There is a party polarization in Congress when
   there is a big difference in political ideals and that
   one house is controlled by a party and the other
   house is controlled by another party. Another way
   that can cause party polarization is that within
   a house, the party is split down the middle between
   making decisions hard to make.
d. One effect of greater party polarization is that legislation is very hard to pass. Since one party takes the House and the other Party takes the Senate and their ideas collide, legislation is hard for them to agree on since they both want different things.
Question 4

Overview

This question examined students’ knowledge of party polarization. Part (a) asked students to define party polarization. Part (b) asked students to identify a trend in the provided graph. Part (c) asked students to describe two causes of party polarization in Congress. Part (d) asked students to describe one effect of party polarization on congressional policy making.

Sample: 4A
Score: 5

In part (a) the response earned 1 point. One point was earned for defining party polarization as “members of government become more extreme and loyal to their party.”

In part (b) the response earned 1 point. One point was earned for identifying a trend shown in the graph, “[P]olarization has increasingly gone up in the House and the Senate since around 1951.”

In part (c) the response earned 2 points. One point was earned for describing a cause of party polarization in Congress by stating, “An increase in gerrymandering . . . causes party polarization in Congress.” One point was also earned for describing a cause of party polarization in Congress by stating, “The civil rights movement . . . causes party polarization.”

In part (d) the response earned 1 point. One point was earned for describing one effect of party polarization on Congressional policy making by stating, “Party Polarization causes legislation to be made less and at a slower rate due to the lack of comprimizing [sic].”

Sample: 4B
Score: 3

In part (a) the response earned 1 point. One point was earned for defining party polarization as “party polarization refers to the split between the political parties in congress. Drastic polarization has caused gridlock in certain years.”

In part (b) the response earned 1 point. One point was earned for identifying a trend shown in the graph, “[C]irca 1943 there has been a rise in ideological distance between parties.”

In part (d) the response earned 1 point. One point was earned for describing one effect of party polarization on Congressional policy making by stating that “party polarization is the development of grid-lock or a do nothing congress.”

Sample: 4C
Score: 1

In part (d) the response earned 1 point. One point was earned for describing one effect of party polarization on Congressional policy making by stating that “legislation is very hard to pass.”