2. The graph above shows reelection rates for incumbents in the House and Senate. From this information and your knowledge of United States politics, perform the following tasks.
   (a) Identify two patterns displayed in the graph.
   (b) Identify two factors that contribute to incumbency advantage. Explain how each factor contributes to incumbency advantage.
   (c) Discuss one consequence of incumbency advantage for the United States political process.
Question 2 (2001)

6 POINTS TOTAL

Part (a): 1 point (1 point for two identifications of patterns)

Requires two factual statements about patterns that can be drawn from the graph. Each pattern must address a spread of at least four years on the graph.

- Incumbency rates are high in the House
- Incumbency rates are high in the Senate
- House typically has higher Incumbency rates than Senate
- House incumbency rates have increased over time
- Senate incumbency rates have increased over time
- House incumbency has generally been above 80%; Senate has been above 50%
- Rates of incumbency are more stable in the House than in the Senate

Part (b): 4 points (1 point for each identification, 1 point for each explanation)

Some acceptable factors that contribute to incumbency advantage include:

- Sophomore surge
- Franking
- Campaign finance
- Name recognition
- Constituency service
- Pork barrel
- Access to media
- Redistricting
- Experience (must go beyond the single word to be more than restatement of "incumbency")

Explanations:

Must be an explicit statement of how or why the factors contribute to incumbency advantage.

Part (c): 1 point for discussion

Consequences can be positive or negative. Some acceptable consequences include:

- Continuity over time
- Less radical change/more incremental change
- More experienced political leaders
- More established relations with interest groups
- Discourages challengers
- Policy specialization
- Fewer women and minorities
- Lack of responsiveness

Discussion must have an explicit link to the larger political process.

Score of zero (0) for attempted answer that earns no points
Score of dash (-) for blank or off-task answer