BLOGS

Logical Reasoning Questions for CLAT UG 2026- PART V

Ruchika Mohapatra · 06 Aug 2025

PASSAGE

In democratic societies, public officials are expected to act not merely as administrators of state power but as ethical stewards of public trust. However, the realities of political life often place elected leaders in morally ambiguous situations. Policies that may be expedient or popular in the short term can conflict with long-term ethical responsibilities, such as ensuring equity, transparency, or environmental sustainability.

For instance, deferring necessary but unpopular reforms to preserve electoral prospects can erode institutional integrity. Similarly, allocating public resources in ways that favor politically influential constituencies while legal may violate the principle of impartiality. These tensions are further complicated by the growing role of media and public opinion, which can incentivize performative governance over substantive outcomes.

Some scholars argue that ethical governance requires more than legal compliance; it demands a commitment to principles that may, at times, conflict with political self-interest. Others maintain that in representative systems, responsiveness to public will, even if ethically imperfect, is itself a democratic virtue. Navigating these competing imperatives involves continual judgment, and perhaps, a willingness to sacrifice popularity for the sake of public good.

1. What is the central ethical tension described in the passage?

A. Whether media should regulate political speech
B. Whether legal compliance is more important than moral duty in governance
C. Whether government budgets should favor urban or rural areas
D. Whether all public officials should be elected rather than appointed

Correct Answer: B
Explanation: The passage highlights the conflict between merely following the law and upholding higher ethical standards, especially when they diverge from political incentives.

2. Which of the following best describes the criticism of deferring unpopular reforms for political gain?

A. It is a violation of free speech

B. It leads to increased corruption

C. It undermines long-term institutional integrity

D. It encourages foreign interference in politics

Correct Answer: C

Explanation: Delaying necessary reforms to avoid political backlash may protect short-term interests but erodes institutional strength over time.

3. Based on the passage, which action would most likely be considered ethically problematic even if legal?

A. Legislating stricter campaign finance laws

B. Favoring influential voter blocs in policy allocation

C. Consulting experts before passing a policy

D. Resigning from office to join a private company

Correct Answer: B

Explanation: The passage critiques legal but ethically questionable decisions, like favoring politically powerful groups at the expense of impartial governance.

4. What assumption underlies the scholar's claim that "ethical governance demands more than legal compliance"?

A. Laws always reflect the will of the people

B. Legal standards are sufficient for moral behavior

C. Not all legal actions are ethically sound

D. Public officials are incapable of ethical judgment

Correct Answer: C

Explanation: The scholar assumes that the law does not always guarantee ethical conduct, and higher moral reasoning is sometimes necessary.

5. If a leader implements a policy that is unpopular but ensures long-term sustainability, what governance principle does this action reflect?

A. Responsiveness to populist demands

B. Ethical stewardship over political convenience

C. Legal formalism

D. Partisan loyalty

Correct Answer: B

Explanation: Making ethically sound but unpopular decisions reflects a commitment to long-term public interest over short-term approval.

6. Which of the following criticisms would most likely be made by those who emphasize responsiveness to public will over ethical idealism?

A. Ethical standards are universal and must guide all decisions

B. Elected leaders should never prioritize popularity

C. Democratic legitimacy arises from acting in accordance with public preferences

D. Ethical principles are irrelevant in modern politics

Correct Answer: C

Explanation: This perspective values democratic responsiveness, even if it leads to ethically imperfect decisions.

7. Suppose a government uses climate funds to subsidize fossil fuel industries in a swing constituency. Which of the following is true based on the passage?

A. The decision is illegal and must be reversed

B. The decision may be legal but ethically questionable due to favoritism

C. The decision reflects sound economic planning

D. The decision aligns with climate ethics and equity

Correct Answer: B

Explanation: The passage emphasizes that legality does not always equate to ethical soundness, particularly in resource allocation.

8. What does the passage imply about the role of public opinion in shaping governance outcomes?

A. Public opinion is always ethically superior to expert judgment

B. Public opinion distorts democratic processes and should be ignored

C. Media-driven public opinion can incentivize symbolic gestures over substantive reforms

D. Politicians who follow public opinion always act ethically

Correct Answer: C

Explanation: The passage critiques how performative governance, driven by media narratives and public sentiment, can detract from ethical policymaking.

9. Which of the following most accurately captures the author's likely view on sacrificing popularity for public good?

A. It is politically unwise and should be avoided

B. It is only acceptable in non-democratic regimes

C. It reflects the ethical obligation of public service

D. It is a betrayal of representative democracy

Correct Answer: C

Explanation: The author suggests that ethical public service may require prioritizing long-term good over short-term popularity.

10. What broader philosophical debate does the passage indirectly reflect?

A. The balance between state sovereignty and international law

B. The conflict between utilitarianism and deontology in political ethics

C. The tension between judicial activism and judicial restraint

D. The debate over economic protectionism versus free trade

Correct Answer: B

Explanation: The ethical tension between pursuing the greatest good (utilitarianism) and adhering to principled duties (deontology) underpins the governance dilemma described.