

AP[®] Human Geography

About the Advanced Placement Program[®] (AP[®])

The Advanced Placement Program[®] has enabled millions of students to take college-level courses and earn college credit, advanced placement, or both, while still in high school. AP Exams are given each year in May. Students who earn a qualifying score on an AP Exam are typically eligible, in college, to receive credit, placement into advanced courses, or both. Every aspect of AP course and exam development is the result of collaboration between AP teachers and college faculty. They work together to develop AP courses and exams, set scoring standards, and score the exams. College faculty review every AP teacher's course syllabus.

AP Human Geography Course Overview

AP Human Geography introduces students to the systematic study of patterns and processes that have shaped human understanding, use, and alteration of Earth's surface. Students employ spatial concepts and landscape analysis to examine socioeconomic organization and its environmental consequences. They also learn about the methods and tools geographers use in their research and applications. The curriculum reflects the goals of the National Geography Standards (2012). The course is equivalent to an introductory college-level course in human geography.

RECOMMENDED PREREQUISITES

There are no prerequisites for AP Human Geography. Students should be able to read college-level texts and write grammatically correct, complete sentences.

AP Human Geography Course Content

The course content is organized into seven commonly taught units, which have been arranged in the following suggested, logical sequence:

- **Unit 1:** Thinking Geographically
- **Unit 2:** Population and Migration Patterns and Processes
- **Unit 3:** Cultural Patterns and Processes
- **Unit 4:** Political Patterns and Processes
- **Unit 5:** Agriculture and Rural Land-Use Patterns and Processes
- **Unit 6:** Cities and Urban Land-Use Patterns and Processes
- **Unit 7:** Industrial and Economic Development Patterns and Processes

Each unit is broken down into teachable segments called topics.

In addition, the following big ideas serve as the foundation of the course, enabling students to create meaningful connections among concepts and develop deeper conceptual understanding:

- **Big Idea 1:** Patterns and Spatial Organization
- **Big Idea 2:** Impacts and Interactions
- **Big Idea 3:** Spatial Process and Societal Change

Course Skills

The following skill categories describe what skills students should develop during the course:

- Concepts and Processes
 - ◆ Analyze geographic theories, approaches, concepts, processes, or models in theoretical and applied contexts.
- Spatial Relationships
 - ◆ Analyze geographic patterns, relationships, and outcomes in applied contexts.
- Data Analysis
 - ◆ Analyze and interpret quantitative geographic data represented in maps, tables, charts, graphs, satellite images, and infographics.
- Source Analysis
 - ◆ Analyze and interpret qualitative geographic information represented in maps, images (e.g., satellite, photographs, cartoons), and landscapes.
- Scale Analysis
 - ◆ Analyze geographic theories, approaches, concepts, processes, and models across geographic scales to explain spatial relationships.

AP Human Geography Exam Structure

AP HUMAN GEOGRAPHY EXAM: 2 HOURS, 15 MINUTES

Assessment Overview

The AP Human Geography Exam assesses student understanding of the skills and learning objectives outlined in the course framework. The exam is 2 hours and 15 minutes long and includes 60 multiple-choice questions and 3 free-response questions.

Format of Assessment

Section I: Multiple-choice | 60 Questions | 60 Minutes |
50% of Exam Score

- The multiple-choice questions will include both individual and set-based questions.
- Approximately 30–40% of the multiple-choice questions will reference stimulus material, including maps, tables, charts, graphs, images, infographics, and/or landscapes, roughly evenly divided between quantitative and qualitative sources.

Section II: Free-response | 3 Questions | 75 minutes
50% of Exam Score

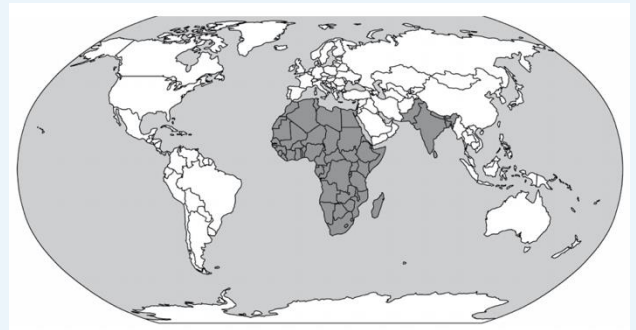
- Each free-response question presents students with an authentic geographic situation or scenario and assesses the ability to describe, explain, and apply geographic concepts, processes, or models.
- At least two of the three questions assess the ability to analyze across geographic scales to explain spatial relationships.
- Question 1 does not include any stimuli.
- Question 2 includes one stimulus (data, image, or map).
- Question 3 includes two stimuli (data, images, and/or maps).

Exam Components

Sample Multiple-Choice Question

The Berlin Conference of 1884–1885 and the partition of India in 1947 changed borders in Africa and South Asia and are reflected in the current world map. Which of the following best describes the type of political border resulting from these events?

- (A) Relic boundaries
- (B) Antecedent boundaries
- (C) Consequent boundaries
- (D) Superimposed boundaries
- (E) Subsequent boundaries



Sample Free-Response Question

In most countries, the concept of the state as a political unit is subject to the tensions between centrifugal and centripetal forces. Governments are often challenged by the devolutionary factors that challenge state sovereignty.

- (A) Define the concept of the multinational state.
- (B) Explain how ethnicity can be a factor that leads to the devolution of a state.
- (C) Explain how communication technology plays an important role in the goals of devolutionary groups and democracy movements.
- (D) Explain the limitations of communication technology in furthering the goals of devolutionary groups and democracy movements.
- (E) Describe ONE centripetal force that governments use to promote the state as a nation.
- (F) Explain how uneven development within a state can act as a centrifugal force.
- (G) For a multinational state facing the realities of devolution, explain why a government would choose to create an autonomous region or choose to maintain a unitary state.