

2020–2021 Distance Learning A.P. U.S. History Syllabus

Course Description

Advanced Placement United States history (APUSH) is a college-level course taught in high school. As such it presents students with several distinct advantages as well as some unique challenges when compared to typical high school honors courses. One advantage of APUSH is that students can receive college credit if they earn a qualifying score on the APUSH exam. This can save them time and money in college. Enrollment in A.P. classes can also give students an edge in admissions when applying to college. Most importantly, by exposing students to college-level rigor in a high school setting, A.P. can prepare students for much greater success in their university coursework.

However, that same level of rigor makes A.P. courses significantly harder than honors courses and even most freshman courses in college. The main reason why A.P. classes are so challenging is that the A.P. exam must be rigorous enough to convince colleges that students who pass an A.P. exam deserve college credit even though they are still in high school. A.P. classes are also difficult because students are younger than they will be in college. Additionally, less time is available for study and review as A.P. exams are taken before the end of a school year.

As a result, only bright, motivated, and disciplined students are likely to succeed in this course and on the APUSH exam. Even though good attendance and completing homework are essential to success, they are not enough. Students will have to demonstrate their mastery of essential skills and content on college-level exams and essays. This will require a level of hard work and study that may be new to students. Some students may struggle at first as they adjust to the work load, expectations, and pace. Students involved in extracurricular activities, taking multiple A.P. classes, and/or have a job need to make sure they have enough time and discipline to manage all of their commitments successfully. See the College Board's A.P. U.S. History Course and Exam Description for more details about the course.

The AP US History Exam

The A.P. U.S. History exam, administered Thursday May 6, 2021, is 3 hours and 15 minutes long. There are four components to the exam: stimuli-based multiple choice (40%), short answer questions (20%), a document-based essay question (25%) and a long essay question (15%). The exam is graded on a five-point scale. Generally, most public universities award credit or placement to students who earn a 3 or higher while many private colleges require a score of 4 or higher. See the College Board's [AP credit policy page](#) for more details.

All students enrolled in this class second semester are expected to take the A.P. U.S. History exam. Each A.P. exam will cost approximately \$95. Even though A.P. exam scores will not factor into students' class grades, doing well on an A.P. Exam has several clear benefits: providing students an edge in college admissions, saving students and parents money on college tuition, accelerating students' path toward college graduation.

Academic Objectives

- Students will understand and analyze major historical developments in U.S. history.
- Students will critically interpret primary and secondary source materials.
- Students will write persuasive analytical arguments supported with specific evidence.
- Students will cultivate the disciplinary practices and reasoning skills of a historian.
- Students will be well prepared for and take the A.P. United States History exam.
- Students will acquire the knowledge and skills to successfully participate in our democracy.

Student Behavior

A.P. students are expected to be self-motivated and take the initiative for their learning. A major portion of the class will be spent helping students cultivate the historical thinking and writing skills that are at the core of the A.P. U.S. History exam. This will limit the class time available for traditional lecture and other means of direct content instruction, especially in a distance learning model with fewer minutes of face-to-face time each week. Therefore, it is critical that students read and keep up with all assigned work in this class. Because every effort will be made to keep the amount of work at a reasonable level, for an A.P. class, students should strive to do their best on every assignment and read with the intention of learning rather than simply “getting it done” if they want to maximize their chances of success.

In a distance learning class, students are expected to follow basic norms. When class begins, students must mute their microphones. If they have questions, they may use the raise hand emoji or the meeting chat feature. During live instruction and when working in small groups, students should have their video camera on, if possible. Student cameras must remain on during tests (no exceptions). At all times, students need to remain engaged and participate appropriately. Additional video meeting norms and expectations are posted on School Wires.

Punctuality and good attendance are required to succeed in any course, especially in a distance learning situation. Any students who leave class early or disappear during class will be marked truant. Absent students (excused and unexcused, but not truant) will be allowed the same number of days to make up any work missed while absent.

Cheating is an affront to the teacher and fellow students and violates school and district policy. Cheating is quite simply defined as taking credit for work that is not one’s own, even if accidental. Any student caught cheating will be given a zero and may be subject to a parent and/or administrative conference. A second instance of cheating will result in an administrative conference and possible suspension from the class. A third offense may result in expulsion from the class with a W/F placed on the student’s transcript in accordance with the published Ayala High School academic honor policy which will apply to ALL students in this class, regardless of their home school, as Ayala is the home school of the instructor of record, Mr. Ellington.

Grading

Student grades are calculated on a weighted basis as listed below with a majority of a student's grade based on test, essay and quiz performance. As such, it is vital that students consistently exert maximal effort to master the skills and content needed to succeed in A.P. U.S. History. Overall grades are calculated to a tenth of percent and those ending in a .5 through .9 will be rounded up to the next whole number. Overall grades are not curved and not based on a student's A.P. score on the May exam. The Chino Valley Unified School District and many colleges apply an extra grade point for A.P. courses to reward students for challenging themselves with college level coursework while in high school.

Categories: Assessments (60%), Practice (20%), Assignments (20%)

Grading Scale: A (90%–100%), B (80–89), C (70–79%), D (60–69%), F (0–59%)

Assessments are tests designed to measure student mastery of the material. Two types of summative assessments will be primarily used in the course: end of unit exams and timed writes. The former will likely consist of stimuli-based multiple-choice questions and a short answer question or two. The latter will be a document-based essay question or long essay question. Taken together, the question types on these assessments mirror the questions that students will face on the AP exam in May. Unit exams will be given every 2–5 weeks while timed writes will take place every 4–8 weeks, beginning in October. Each assessment may cover any of the material students have been exposed to (textbook, primary source readings, discussions, video, etc.) in the current unit of study and the preceding units. Students who are absent, but not truant, may make-up an exam in accordance with district policies, but those students may face different (and possibly harder) questions. Students who perform below standard on a summative assessment may be required to remediate. Reading quizzes may also be given to assess how well students have read and reviewed a chapter.

Practice consists of completing formative practice questions on LaunchPad, AP Classroom, and possibly other online sites. Online practice questions are designed to help students and the teacher identify areas of strength and need and performance on these questions will inform classroom instruction and remediation. Therefore, it is essential that students complete all assigned online practice to the best of their ability.

Assignments include all the other work that students do in and outside of class including homework, textbook questions, and participation that are not assessments or practice. Some smaller assignments may be graded on a completion basis while others will receive a traditional score, depending on the activity. Late work will not be accepted, except in accordance with attendance policies or in extreme conditions.

Extra Credit: Students may occasionally be offered extra credit opportunities. Any extra credit will be limited, equally available to all students, and is not meant to replace the assigned work.

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AP US History Curriculum Framework Overview

AP Historical Thinking Skills

1. Developments and Processes
2. Sources and Situation
3. Claims and Evidence in Sources
4. Contextualization
5. Making Connections (3 C's)
6. Argumentation

Reasoning Processes [3 C's]

1. Causation
2. Continuity and Change
3. Comparison

Course Themes [PASSAGES]

- Politics and Power
- America and National Identity
- Society and Culture
- Settlement and Migration
- America in the World
- Geography and the Environment
- Exchange, Work, and Technology
- Social Structures

Each theme has 1–4 learning objectives correlated to the concept outline.

The Concept Outline

Unit	Date Range	Topic Range	Exam Weighting
1	1491–1607	Year before Columbus's voyage to Jamestown	4–6%
2	1607–1754	Jamestown to the start of French and Indian War	6–8%
3	1754–1800	French and Indian War to Jefferson's election	10–17%
4	1800–1848	Jefferson's election to the Seneca Falls Declaration	10–17%
5	1844–1877	Mexican War to end of Reconstruction	10–17%
6	1865–1898	End of Civil War to start of Spanish-American War	10–17%
7	1890–1945	Closing of the frontier to the end of World War II	10–17%
8	1945–1980	End of World War II to Reagan's election	10–17%
9	1980–2020	Reagan's election to present (at least 9/11 attacks)	4–6%

- 2–3 key concepts with several supporting concepts and historical details per historical period
- Teachers should illustrate the historical concepts with examples of their own choosing
- Students must know any historical examples or terms explicitly mentioned in the framework

The Exam (3 hours and 15 minutes)

Section and Question Type	Amount	Minutes	Weight
Stimulus Based Multiple Choice	55 questions	55	40%
Short Answer 1. Two Interpretations (Per. 3–8) 2. Image Stimulus (Per. 3–8) 3. Non-stimulus (Per. 1–5) or 4. Non-stimulus (Per. 6–9)	3 questions (of 4)	40	20%
Document Based Question 1 (Per. 3–8)	1 question	60 (suggested)	25%
Long Essay Question 2. LEQ (Per. 1–3) or 3. LEQ (Per. 4–6) or 4. LEQ (Per. 7–9)	1 question (of 3)	40 (suggested)	15%

AP US History Syllabus Overview

The following summary is meant to highlight some of the key points about the course. Please read the entire syllabus and sign at the bottom of this page.

- A.P. U.S. history is as hard as or harder than a college freshman class.
- Students will learn much more in an A.P. class than any regular class.
- Most students do not earn an A in an A.P. course. However, A.P. students are given an extra grade point for GPA calculation per district policy.
- Students who take A.P. classes usually do much better in college.
- A.P. U.S. history students will read an entire college textbook by mid-April.
- 90% of the second semester grade will be established by the 12th week.
- Students who are motivated, disciplined, and take the initiative will do well.
- ALL STUDENTS are expected to take the \$95 A.P. Exam on May 6, 2021.
- AP exam scores will not be factored into semester grades.
- The instructor may make changes to the syllabus as necessary.
- Any students caught cheating will face the full consequences of the Ayala High School honor code, regardless of which high school is their home school.

I have read and will abide by the provisions of the entire A.P. U.S. History syllabus.

(student name)

(period)

(student signature)

(parent signature)