



AP UNITED STATES HISTORY EXAM FACTS

General Information (from the College Board's website):

Course Overview, SOURCE: http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/ap/sub_ushist.html?ushist

The AP program in United States History is designed to provide students with the analytical skills and enduring understandings necessary to deal critically with the problems and materials in United States history. The program prepares students for intermediate and advanced college courses by making demands upon them equivalent to those made by full-year introductory college courses. Students should learn to assess historical materials—their relevance to a given interpretive problem, their reliability, and their importance—and to weigh the evidence and interpretations presented in historical scholarship.

For a complete overview of the AP U.S. History Exam, visit:

http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/ap/history_us/exam.html?ushist

The official College Board website for this AP course, as well as our course outline and other helpful review tools, are available via our class website. The direct address is:

<http://www.broachweb.com/classes/AP>

(This website is also available at www.bishopkenny.org via the Faculty & Staff page)

Format of the Exam: **Exam begins promptly at 8 AM on May 9th**

Section 1:	Multiple Choice Examination	50% of score
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Usually 80 multiple choice questions
55 minutes to complete
Multiple Choice questions consist of 5 options (ABCDE)

Section 2:	Free-Response Examination	50% of score
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Part A	Document Based Question
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- ✕ Essay question with about 7 – 9 primary source documents
- ✕ Documents include primary source writings, usually one or two visual aids (i.e. political cartoon, newspaper ad, etc.), and usually a chart or a graph.
- ✕ Objective: Students must construct an essay response that balances an interpretation of the documents as well as “outside information” (the student’s knowledge of the time period).
- ✕ Time: Students are given one hour to complete this section. There is a mandatory reading period of fifteen minutes for students to read the prompt and documents, and plan their essays. Once the reading period time has expired, students may begin work. Students are recommended to spend 45 minutes writing the DBQ essay.
- ✕ Scoring: All essays are scored on a 0 – 9 scale using a specific rubric. Students are familiar with this format from our own in-class DBQ and essay assignments.

Parts B & C	Free-Response Questions
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- ✕ Students are provided with two sets of two essay questions. In both sets, they may choose only one essay question.
- ✕ Students will begin with “Part B” and choose a question from a selection of two. They are recommended to spend 5 minutes planning and 30 minutes writing. The total time allowed for Part B is 35 minutes.
- ✕ Once students have completed their Part B essay, they will then begin the Part C essay using the same format.

Note regarding time: Once the writing period has begun, students may transition from writing one essay to the next at their own pace. Proctors will notify the students after 45 minutes have passed that they “should move on to the Part B essay.” After another 35 minutes, proctors will recommend that students “move on to the Part C essay.”

Material Covered:

This test is intended as a cumulative exam of United States History from the pre-Columbian period to present day. Please refer to the course outline posted to our website. Below is an overview of the materials included:

SOURCE: http://www.collegeboard.com/prod_downloads/ap/students/ushistory/ap-cd-ushist-0708.pdf

Time Period	Percentage Covered
Pre-Columbian to 1789	20%
1790 to 1914	45%
1915 to the present	35%

Whereas the multiple-choice section may include a few questions from the period since 1980, neither the DBQ nor any of the four essay questions in Part B and C will deal exclusively with this period.

Together, the multiple-choice and free-response sections cover political institutions, behavior, and public policy; social change, and cultural and intellectual developments; diplomacy and international relations; and economic developments.

Material Covered	Approximate Percentage of Test
Political Institutions, behavior, and public policy	35%
Social change, and cultural and intellectual developments	40%
Diplomacy and international relations	15%
Economic developments	10%

The U.S. History Development Committee’s note on social and cultural history:

Much recent scholarship in U.S. history merges social and cultural history. Based on college curriculum survey data, the Development Committee decided to combine these two categories into one called social change, and cultural and intellectual developments.

A substantial number of social, cultural, and economic history questions deal with such traditional tropics as the impact of legislation on social groups and the economy or the pressure brought to bear on political processes by social, economic, and cultural developments. Because historical inquiry is not neatly divided into categories, many questions pertain to more than one area.

Test Scoring:

Scores for each component of the AP exam are totaled and segregated into 5 levels. The entire exam is given a score of 1 – 5 based on the sum of points accumulated from each section. The AP score is intended to reflect a score earned in a similar college-level course in U.S. History as follows:

5	Extremely Well Qualified	(usually represents the “A” level)
4	Well Qualified	(usually represents the “B” level)
3	Qualified	(usually represents the “C” level)
2	Possibly Qualified	
1	No Recommendation	

SOURCE: AP Program Information from [The College Board](#) (2004).