

Advanced Placement United States History

Mrs. Casey

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Classroom: 528

“Every accomplishment starts with the decision to try.” - President John F. Kennedy

Welcome to AP United States History! This is an introductory college-level course in U.S. history. Students cultivate their understanding of U.S. history from c. 1491 CE to the present through analyzing historical sources and learning to make connections and craft historical arguments as they explore concepts like American and national identity; work, exchange, and technology; geography and the environment; migration and settlement; politics and power; America in the world; American and regional culture; and social structures.

This course is divided into nine historical periods. Below is a breakdown of how these periods will be reflected on your AP Exam.

Unit	Exam Weighting
Unit 1: Period 1: 1491–1607	4%–6%
Unit 2: Period 2: 1607–1754	6%–8%
Unit 3: Period 3: 1754–1800	10%–17%
Unit 4: Period 4: 1800–1848	10%–17%
Unit 5: Period 5: 1844–1877	10%–17%
Unit 6: Period 6: 1865–1898	10%–17%
Unit 7: Period 7: 1890–1945	10%–17%
Unit 8: Period 8: 1945–1980	10%–17%
Unit 9: Period 9: 1980–Present	4%–6%

Grading Policies:

Assessments 70%

Homework assignments 15%

Participation 15 %

You will be assessed in various ways throughout this course to reflect the AP Exam. In addition to multiple-choice questions, you must write essays, DBQs, LEQs, and SAQs. These acronyms will become more familiar to you as we move forward.

All homework & classwork is due on the day & time they are assigned. Any late work or submissions will **not** be accepted for any **unexcused** absence or lateness to class. You will be assigned readings and homework each week. You are responsible for turning in classwork on time. If you are on a field trip, you are responsible for missed work. Be mindful of your time as you manage your other responsibilities.

Some homework assignments require you to handwrite your work and submit it at the start of class, while others will be submitted through Google Classroom. The AP Exam will be digital this year– you must be prepared to do your best. You will also be assigned practice work on AP Classroom and Albert.io.

Class Expectations:

- ★ **No cell phones or AirPods** during class—they must be put away in your locker (NYS cell policy/school policy & rules)– Your focus and participation are important
- ★ **Be on time**– we move fast in this course–time is valuable.*
- ★ **Responsibility**– You are responsible for your work (cheating is unacceptable and will result in a zero)
- ★ Be **respectful** – fostering an environment that is respectful & understanding is paramount
- ★ Stay **organized*** Bring your charged Chromebooks to class each day! Utilize Google Classroom, AP Classroom, and Albert.io. Your dedication to your homework, studying, and classwork will ultimately help you achieve.

Supplies:

- Chromebook/Google Classroom
- Loose-leaf paper & either a binder or folder to keep handwritten work
- Pencils and blue or black pens
- The textbook and supplemental readings will be provided digitally on our Google Classroom page.
- College Board account and AP Classroom
- Student Square App

Textbook: Advanced Placement Edition United States History, 2018, AMSCO

Absences

You cannot make up for an **unexcused absence** on an assessment day. If you have an excused absence, it must be taken within five days of your return.

Extra Help:

I offer extra help in the morning and after school in 528, but please email me the day before to let me know. You can also email me if you have any questions.

End of year/essential dates:

- ★ You will take your Advanced Placement Exam on **Friday, May 8th, 2026**
- ★ You will also take the U.S History Regents Exam on **Tuesday, June 23, 2026**

Scroll below, and you will find a breakdown of the AP Exam. These are helpful pointers and will give you an idea of what we will be doing this year to prepare you. Again, all acronyms will be explained in class.

I am looking forward to a great school year with all of you!

APUSH Exam: Format, Timing, Scoring

Section IA: Multiple Choice (MC)

55 Questions | 55 Minutes | 40% of Exam Score

- MC Questions will be in sets of 3 or 4 questions per document.
- Questions may cover all “periods” (units) of the course: 1491 (just before European contact) through 2001.
- Documents will include primary and secondary sources, as well as images, graphs, and maps.
- MC Questions will require you to analyze historical texts (primary sources like speeches, newspaper articles, etc.), historians’ interpretations (secondary sources with historians evaluating/interpreting historical issues), and historical evidence (these might be visuals--graphs, data, political cartoons, photos, etc., and are most likely to be primary sources).
- BE CAREFUL; the MC questions are tricky!*
- You have ONE minute per question.

******To guarantee a score of five, aim for 80% on the MC. 65% puts you in the four range, and 55% in the three range. But remember that if multiple choice is your weakness, 60% of your score is the writing parts.******

Section IB: Short Answer (SAQ)

3 Questions | 40 Minutes (approx. 13 minutes per question) | 20% of Exam Score

In the short-answer (SAQ) section, you’ll write answers to questions in your test booklet. Some questions include texts, images, graphs, or maps.

For Questions 1 and 2 (no choice; you answer both), you will be provided with a document or visual(s). You may be asked to

- Analyze historical developments described in the sources (causes, effects)
- Put those historical developments and processes in context
- Make connections between those historical developments and processes
- You might have to explain different historical interpretations (2 historians with different ideas) and give historical evidence supporting these different interpretations

The Breakdown of the periods in the questions:

- Question 1 is required and includes 1 or 2 secondary sources (if there are 2, they will likely be from two historians with different interpretations of the same event or development). It focuses on historical developments between 1754 and 1980.
- Question 2 is required, includes 1 primary source, and focuses on historical developments between 1754 and 1980.
- **The 3rd question: You will need to choose one of the two options.** Question 3 will focus on historical developments between 1491 and 1877. Question 4 will focus on historical developments between 1865 and 2001. No sources (documents) are included for either Question 3 or Question 4.

To maximize your SAQ score:

- ***Be as specific as possible & answer in complete sentences. The SAQs do not have partial credit. You will either receive 1 point or 0 points for each part of the question. So do NOT be***

vague! Generally, you should try to answer each part of the question in 3 sentences. **Use the strategy: T (topic sentence) -E (evidence) -A (analysis)**

- **PLAN YOUR RESPONSES**—You should have plenty of time on this part of the test (13 minutes per question). **Read all parts of the question before you start your answer** (each question will have three parts), and make sure you know what you want to say for each part of the question. This is **VITAL** as the questions often build upon your previous answer.
 - **SAQS on visual documents/primary sources (maps, images, graphs):** You might have to explain the cause and/or effect of the information shown in the visual.
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Section IIA: Document-Based Question (DBQ)

1 Question | 1 Hour (includes 15-minute reading period*) | 25% of Exam Score

- The DBQ prompt can cover any period from 1754 (the beginning of the French and Indian War) to 1980 (the election of Reagan). This is “period 1” through “period 8” in our curriculum.
- They will provide **seven documents** offering various perspectives on historical development. Some documents will include text, graphs/data, and visuals (such as images or maps).
- Your DBQ essay will assess/analyze these documents as historical evidence and will develop an argument supported by an analysis of this historical evidence.
- **You must describe at least four documents in your essay AND apply them to your argument.**
- **Also, you must HIPP:** You must “source” **four documents** by explaining the relevance of the document’s historical situation, intended audience, purpose, or point of view.

The APUSH DBQ Rubric has a total of 7 points:

- 1 point for **contextualizing the question** (this means at least 3 sentences worth of background information to the period of time or the theme of the prompt)
- 1 point for a **provable thesis** that answers the prompt and addresses its complexity (this means that the prompt is a question, and your thesis is the answer). **Your thesis must be in your intro, AND you should REPEAT it in your conclusion.** If they do not see a provable, strong thesis in your intro, they will skim down to your conclusion. Frequently, after writing an essay, you may decide to refine (and strengthen) your thesis. So, if it’s not perfect in your intro, make sure it is ideal in your conclusion.
- 2 points for **correctly describing (summarizing)** the content of at least 4 docs of the 7 (without quoting them) and using them to prove your thesis (**applying them to your argument**). This means you briefly identify/explain what the doc is saying and then explain how it fits into your argument. The breakdown is 1 point for describing or summarizing and 1 point for applying them to your thesis.
- 1 point for **correctly identifying and explaining the relevance of a doc’s HIPP to your argument** (historical situation, intended audience, purpose, or point-of-view)

- 1 point for **outside information that helps prove your thesis** (you provide additional evidence and develop/explain that evidence in complete sentences). **You cannot just throw in random facts for this point; you must introduce a valid piece of evidence that helps prove your thesis, explain that evidence, and specifically apply it to your argument to get this point.**

Section IIB Long Essay (LEQ): 1 Question | 40 Minutes | 15% of Exam Score

You'll have a **choice of three** questions and pick one to answer.

Each question tests the same skills and reasoning process or historical thinking skill:
comparison (compare and contrast), causation (cause and effect), or continuity and change

The three choices will come from different periods:

- One choice from 1491 to 1800
- One choice from 1800 to 1898
- One choice from 1890 to 2001

You'll be asked to develop and support an argument based on evidence. It is recommended that you provide **four** examples of evidence to support your thesis in your essay..