

AP[®] European History

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 History Program

The AP Program offers three history courses: AP European History, AP United States History, and AP World History: Modern. All three history courses focus on the development of historical thinking while learning required course content. Themes foster deep analysis by making connections and comparisons across different topics within the course. Each AP History course corresponds to a typical introductory college history course.

AP European History Course Overview

In AP European History, students investigate significant events, individuals, developments, and processes from approximately 1450 to the present. Students develop and use the same skills and methods employed by historians: analyzing primary and secondary sources; developing historical arguments; making historical connections; and utilizing reasoning about comparison, causation, and continuity and change. The course also provides seven themes that students explore throughout the course in order to make connections among historical developments in different times and places: interaction of Europe and the world, economic and commercial development, cultural and intellectual development, states and other institutions of power, social organization and development, national and European identity, and technological and scientific innovations.

RECOMMENDED PREREQUISITES

There are no prerequisites for AP European History. Students should be able to read a college-level textbook and write grammatically correct, complete sentences.

AP European History Course Content

The course content is organized into commonly taught units of study that provide a suggested sequence for the course. These units comprise the content and conceptual understandings that colleges and universities typically expect students to master to qualify for college credit and/or placement. This content is grounded in themes, which are cross-cutting concepts that build conceptual understanding and spiral throughout the course.

Historical Thinking Skills

The AP historical thinking skills describe what students should be able to do while exploring course concepts. The list that follows presents these skills, which students should develop during the AP European History course.

- Developments and Processes
 - ◆ Identify and explain a historical concept, development, or process.
- Sourcing and Situation
 - ◆ Identify and explain a source's point of view, purpose, historical situation, and/or audience.
 - ◆ Explain the significance of a source's point of view, purpose, historical situation, and/or audience, including how these might limit the use(s) of a source.
- Claims and Evidence in Sources
 - ◆ Identify and describe a claim and/or argument in a source.
 - ◆ Identify the evidence used in a source to support an argument.
 - ◆ Compare the arguments or main ideas of two sources.
 - ◆ Explain how claims or evidence support, modify, or refute a source's argument.
- Contextualization
 - ◆ Identify and describe a historical context for a specific historical development or process.
 - ◆ Explain how a specific historical development or process is situated within a broader historical context.
- Making Connections
 - ◆ Identify patterns among or connections between historical developments and processes.
 - ◆ Explain how a historical development or process relates to another historical development or process.
- Argumentation
 - ◆ Make a historically defensible claim.
 - ◆ Support an argument using specific and relevant evidence.
 - ◆ Use historical reasoning to explain relationships among pieces of historical evidence.
 - ◆ Corroborate, qualify, or modify an argument using diverse and alternative evidence in order to develop a complex argument.

AP European History Exam Structure

AP EUROPEAN HISTORY EXAM: 3 HOURS, 15 MINUTES

Assessment Overview

The AP European History Exam assesses student understanding of the historical thinking skills and learning objectives outlined in the course framework. The exam is 3 hours and 15 minutes long. Students are required to answer 55 multiple-choice questions, 3 short-answer questions, 1 document-based question, and 1 long essay question.

Format of Assessment

Section I (Part A): Multiple Choice | 55 Questions | 55 Minutes | 40% of Exam Score

- Typically appear in sets of 3-4 questions, each with one or more stimuli, including primary and secondary texts, images, maps, and charts or other data.
- Require analysis of the stimulus sources and historical developments or processes described therein.

Section I (Part B): Short Answer | 3 Questions | 40 Minutes | 20% of Exam Score

- Question 1 is required and includes secondary source stimuli.
- Question 2 is required and includes primary source stimuli.
- Questions 3 and 4 do not include stimuli; students may complete either question.

Section II: Free-Response | 2 Questions | 1 Hour, 40 Minutes | 40% of Exam Score

- Question 1 is document-based, with seven documents offering varying perspectives (**25% of Exam Score; 60 minutes**).
- Question 2, 3, and 4 are long essays. Students select one question from the three options (**15% of Exam Score; 40 minutes**).
- Essay responses require a complex understanding demonstrated by a historically defensible thesis, historical analysis, and supporting evidence.

Exam Components

Sample Multiple-Choice Question

“Marx himself was passionately interested in the history of the French Revolution... in all of Marx’s historical writings, the Revolution served as a touchstone; it fostered the development of capitalism by breaking the feudal stranglehold on production, and it brought the bourgeoisie as a class to power. These two, inseparable elements—the establishment of a suitable legal framework for capitalist development and the class struggle won by the bourgeoisie—have characterized Marxist historical accounts of the Revolution ever since... In the Marxist account, the Revolution was bourgeois in nature because its origins and outcomes were bourgeois.”

Lynn Hunt, historian, *Politics, Culture, and Class in the French Revolution*, 1984

In the passage, Lynn Hunt outlines the Marxist interpretation of the French Revolution. What evidence would support the argument that the Revolution was fundamentally bourgeois?

- (A) The wave of spontaneous peasant attacks on the nobility in 1789
- (B) The abolition of hereditary privileges by the National Assembly during the first phase of the Revolution
- (C) The price controls on basic foodstuffs instituted by the Revolutionary government
- (D) The leading role in the Revolution of members of the nobility, such as the Marquis de Lafayette

Sample Short-Answer Question

Answer parts A, B, and C.

- (A) Describe one significant continuity in the role of organized religion in European life in the twentieth century.
- (B) Describe one significant change in the role of organized religion in European life in the twentieth century.
- (C) Explain how one political development affected the role of organized religion in European life in the twentieth century.

Sample Free-Response Question: Document-Based Question

Evaluate whether the Thirty Years’ War was fought primarily for religious or primarily for political reasons.

Students examine seven primary documents, including a letter from the Holy Roman Emperor, excerpts from the Bohemian Federation constitution, Jesuit report to the Elector of Bavaria, letter from Gustavus Adolphus, account of a meeting between Swedish high chancellor and Brandenburg official, political cartoon with Cardinal Richelieu as the subject, and a papal declaration.

Sample Free-Response Question: Long Essay Question

Evaluate the most significant long-term effect of the French Revolution during the period 1815–1900.