**U.S. History Syllabus**

Prepared by Wayne Sager, DHS

Authorized by College Board as Syllabus 1071808v1

Based on AP® U.S. History Sample Syllabus 4

**Course Description**

AP U.S. History is a survey course covering American history from the Pre-Columbian period to the present. The class is taught in accordance with the AP U.S. History curriculum framework, and is designed to prepare students for the AP U.S. History Exam in May.

**Textbooks, Supplemental Texts and Resources**

Newman, John J. and Schmalbach, John M. United States History: Preparing For The Advanced Placement Examination, AMSCO Publication, A Division of Perfection Learning,

Iowa, 2018.

**Units of Study**

Each unit of study will address the concept questions as related to the time period.

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| **Themes** | **Concept Questions** |
| Identity | How has the American national identity changed over time? |
| Peopling | How have changes in migration and population patterns affected  American life? |
| Politics and  Power | How have various groups sought to change the federal govern-  ment’s role in American political, social, and economic life? |
| America in the  World | How has U.S. involvement in global conflicts set the stage for  domestic social changes? |
| Environment and  Geography | How did the institutions and values between the environment and  Americans shape various groups in North America? |
| Work, Exchange,  and Technology | How have changes in markets, transportation, and technology  affected American society? |
| Ideas, Beliefs,  and Cultures | How have changes in moral, philosophical, and cultural values  affected U.S. history? |

**First Grading Period**

**Introduction**

The student will identify the different schools of historiography and the historians associated with each.

“Reading like a Historian” lessons “What is History?” and “Historical Thinking Skills”— contextualization, evaluating sources, corroboration.

**PERIOD 1: 1491-1607**

**Content**

Demographics of Europe, the Americas, and West Africa; Meso-American culture; transatlantic commerce; comparison of colonies across the Americas (religion, economies, politics, cultures); and foundations of slavery.

**AP U.S. History**

**Review**

As a review for the unit, students will work in groups discussing and framing answers to the essential questions.

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| --- | --- |
| Identity | How did the identities of colonizing and indigenous American societies change as  a result of contact in the Americas? |
| Work, Exchange,  and Technology | How did the Columbian Exchange—the mutual transfer of material goods,  commodities, animals, and diseases—affect interaction between Europeans and  natives and among indigenous peoples in North America? |
| Peopling | Where did different groups settle in the Americas (before contact) and how and  why did they move to and within the Americas (after contact)? |
| Politics and Power | How did Spain’s early entry into colonization in the Caribbean, Mexico, and South  America shape European and American developments in this period? |
| America in the  World | How did European attempts to dominate the Americas shape relations between  Native Americans, Europeans, and Africans? |
| Environment and  Geography | How did pre-contact populations of North America relate to their environments?  How did contact with Europeans and Africans change relations in North America? |
| Ideas, Beliefs, and  Cultures | How did cultural contact challenge the religious and other values systems of peoples  from the Americas, Africa, and Europe? |

**PERIOD 2: 1607–1754**

**Content**

European colonization; American Indian resistance; economic and population patterns; formation of race and identity; and tensions with Britain.

**AP U.S. History**

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**PERIOD 2: 1607–1754**

**Content**

European colonization; American Indian resistance; economic and population patterns; formation of race and identity; and tensions with Britain.

**PERIOD 3 1754–1800**

**Content**

British colonial policies; enlightenment ideas; war for independence; formation of republic and national identity; work and labor (free and unfree); and regional economic differences.

As a review for the unit, students will work in groups discussing and framing answers to the essential questions.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Identity | What were the chief similarities and differences among the development of English,  Spanish, Dutch, and French colonies in America? |
| Work, Exchange,  and Technology | How did distinct economic systems, most notably a slavery system based on African  labor, develop in British North America? What was their effect on emerging cultural  and regional differences? |
| Peopling | Why did various colonists go to the New World? How did the increasing integration  of the Atlantic world affect the movement of peoples between its different regions? |
| Politics and  Power | In what ways did the British government seek to exert control over its American colonies in the 17th and 18th centuries? |
| America in the  World | How did the competition between European empires around the world affect  relations among the various peoples in North America? |
| Environment and  Geography | How and why did the English North American colonies develop  into distinct regions? |
| Ideas, Beliefs,  and Cultures | How did the expansion of cultural contact that took place with permanent  colonization alter conditions in North America and affect intellectual and religious life,  the growth of trade, and the shape of political institutions? |

**PERIOD 3: 1754–1800 continued**

**Content**

British colonial policies; enlightenment ideas; war for independence; formation of republic and national identity; work and labor (free and unfree); and regional economic differences.

As a review for the unit, students will work in groups discussing and framing answers to the essential questions.

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| --- | --- |
| Identity | How did different social group identities evolve during the revolutionary struggle?  How did leaders of the new United States attempt to form a national identity? |
| Work, Exchange,  and Technology | How did the newly independent United States attempt to formulate a national economy? |
| Peopling | How did the revolutionary struggle and its aftermath reorient white-American Indian  relations and affect subsequent population movements? |
| Politics and  Power | How did the ideology behind the revolution affect power relationships between different  ethnic, racial, and social groups? |
| America in the  World | How did the revolution become an international conflict involving competing European  and American powers? |
| Environment and  Geography | How did the geographical and environmental characteristics of regions opened up to  white settlement after 1763 affect their subsequent development? |
| Ideas, Beliefs,  and Cultures | Why did the patriot cause spread so quickly among the colonists after 1763? How did the  republican ideals of the revolutionary cause affect the nation’s political culture after  independence? |

**Second Grading Period**

**PERIOD 4 1800–1848**

**Content**

Definition of democratic practices; expansion of the vote; market revolution; territorial and demographic growth; two-party system; Andrew Jackson; and role of the federal government in slavery and the economy.

As a review for the unit, students will work in groups discussing and framing answers to the essential questions.

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| Identity | How did debates over American democratic culture and the proximity of many different  cultures living in close contact affect changing definitions of national identity? |
| Work, Exchange,  and Technology | How did the growth of mass manufacturing in the rapidly urbanizing North affect definitions  of and relationships between workers, and those for whom they worked?  How did the continuing dominance of agriculture and the slave system affect southern social,  political, and economic life? |
| Peopling | How did the continued movement of individuals and groups into, out of, and within the U.S.  shape the development of new communities and the evolution of old communities? |
| Politics and  Power | How did the growth of ideals of mass democracy, including such concerns as expanding  suffrage, public education, abolitionism, and care for the needy affect political life and  discourse? |
| America in the  World | How did the United States use diplomatic and economic means to project its power in the  western hemisphere? How did foreign governments and individuals describe and react to the  new American nation? |
| Environment and  Geography | How did environmental and geographic factors affect the development of sectional  economics and identities? |
| Ideas, Beliefs,  and Cultures | How did the idea of democratization shape and reflect American arts, literature, ideals,  and culture? |

**PERIOD 5: 1844-1877**

**Content**

Tensions over slavery; reform movements; imperialism; women and nonwhites; public education; Mexican War; public education; Civil War; and Reconstruction.

As a review for the unit, students will work in groups discussing and framing answers to the essential questions.

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| Identity | How did migration to the United States change popular ideas of American Identity and  citizenship as well as regional and racial identities? How did the conflicts that led to the  Civil War change popular ideas about national, regional, and racial identities throughout  this period? |
| Work, Exchange,  and Technology | How did the maturing of northern manufacturing and the adherence of the South to an  agricultural economy change the national economic system by 1877? |
| Peopling | How did the growth of mass migration to the United States and the railroad affect  settlement patterns in cities and the West? |
| Politics and  Power | Why did attempts at compromise before the war fail to prevent the conflict? To what extent, and in what ways, did the Civil War and Reconstruction transform American political and social relationships? |
| America in the  World | How was the American conflict over slavery part of larger global events? |
| Environment and  Geography | How did the end of slavery and technological and military developments transform the environment and settlement patterns in the South and the West? |
| Ideas, Beliefs,  and Cultures | How did the doctrine of Manifest Destiny affect debates over territorial expansionism and the Mexican War? How did the Civil War struggle shape Americans’ beliefs about equality, democracy, and national destiny? |

**Review and Semester Exam**

**3rd Grading Period**

**PERIOD 6 1865–1898**

**Content**

Reconstruction; U.S. imperialism, industrialization, immigration, urbanization; women’s movement; and working class culture and leisure.

As a review for the unit, students will work in groups discussing and framing answers to the essential questions.

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| --- | --- |
| Identity | How did the rapid influx of immigrants from other parts of the world than northern and  western Europe affect debates about American national identity? |
| Work, Exchange,  and Technology | How did technological and corporate innovations help to vastly increase industrial  production? What was the impact of these innovations on the lives of working people? |
| Peopling | How and why did the sources of migration to the United States change dramatically  during this period? |
| Politics and  Power | How did the political culture of the Gilded Age reflect the emergence of new corporate  power? How successful were the challenges to this power? Why did challenges to this  power fail? |
| America in the  World | How did the search for new global markets affect American foreign policy and territorial  ambitions? |
| Environment and  Geography | In what ways, and to what extent, was the West “opened” for further settlement through  connection to eastern political, financial, and transportation systems? |
| Ideas, Beliefs,  and Cultures | How did artistic and intellectual movements both reflect and challenge the emerging  corporate order? |

**PERIOD 7 1890–1945**

**Content**

Progressive reform; radicalism; World War I and Russian revolution; first red scare; first great migration of African Americans; race riots; culture wars of the 1920s; Hoover and FDR in the capitalist crisis; New Deal; and World War II.

As a review for the unit, students will work in groups discussing and framing answers to the essential questions.

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| Identity | How did continuing debates over immigration and assimilation reflect changing ideals of  national and ethnic identity? How did class identities change in this period? |
| Work, Exchange,  and Technology | How did movements for political and economic reform take shape in this period, and how  effective were they in achieving their goals? |
| Peopling | Why did public attitudes towards immigration become negative during this time period?  How and why did people migrate within the U.S. during this time period? |
| Politics and  Power | How did reformist ideals change as they were taken up by reformers in different time  periods? Why did opposition emerge to various reform programs? |
| America in the  World | Why did U.S. leaders decide to become involved in global conflicts such as the Spanish  American War, World War I, and World War II? How did debates over intervention reflect  public views of America’s role in the world? |
| Environment and  Geography | Why did reformers seek for the government to wrest control of the environment and national  resources from commercial interests? |
| Ideas, Beliefs,  and Cultures | How did “modern” cultural values evolve in response to developments in technology? How  did debates over the role of women in American public life reflect changing social realities? |

**This Unit is started in the 3rd Grading Period but finished in the 4th Grading Period**

**PERIOD 8 1945–1980**

**Content**

Atomic age and the Cold War; suburban development and the affluent society; the other America; Vietnam; social movements of the long 1960s; Great Society programs; economic and political decline in the 1970s; and rise of conservativism.

As a review for the unit, students will work in groups discussing and framing answers to the essential questions.

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| --- | --- |
| Identity | How did the African-American Civil Rights movement affect the development of other  movements based on asserting the rights of different groups in American society? How did  American involvement in the Cold War affect debates over American national identity? |
| Work, Exchange,  and Technology | How did the rise of American manufacturing and global economic dominance in the years  after World War II affect standards of living among and opportunities for different social  groups? |
| Peopling | How did the growth of migration to and within the United States influence demographic  change and social attitudes in the nation? |
| Politics and  Power | How did the changing fortunes of liberalism and conservatism in these years affect broader  aspects of social and political power? |
| America in the  World | Why did Americans endorse a new engagement in international affairs during the Cold War?  How did this belief change over time in response to particular events? |
| Environment and  Geography | Why did public concern about the state of the natural environment grow during this period,  and what major changes in public policy did this create? |
| Ideas, Beliefs,  and Cultures | How did changes in popular culture reflect or cause changes in social attitudes? How did  the reaction to these changes affect political and public debates? |

**PERIOD 9: 1980-present**

**Content**

Reagan at home and abroad; growth of poverty; Bush, Sr. and end of Cold War; Clinton and the internet; race relations; NAFTA and other trade agreements; 9/11; Patriot Act; education policies of Bush, Jr. and Obama; and environmental policies.

**Review and AP Exam**

**Review and Semester Exam**

As a review for the unit, students will work in groups discussing and framing answers to the essential questions.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Identity | How did demographic and economic changes in American society affect popular debates  over American national identity? |
| Work, Exchange,  and Technology | How did the shift to a global economy affect American economic life? How did scientific  and technological developments in these years change how Americans lived and worked? |
| Peopling | How did increased migration raise questions about American identity and affect the nation  demographically, culturally, and politically? |
| Politics and  Power | How successful were conservatives in achieving their goals?  To what extend did liberalism remain influential politically and culturally? |
| America in the  World | How did the end of the Cold War affect American foreign policy?  How did the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 impact America’s role in the world? |
| Environment and  Geography | How did debates over climate change and energy policy affect broader social and political  movements? |
| Ideas, Beliefs,  and Cultures | How did technological and scientific innovations in areas such as electronics, biology,  medicine, and communications affect society, popular culture, and public discourse?  How did a more demographically diverse population shape popular culture? |