

AP HUMAN GEOGRAPHY TOPIC OUTLINE from College Board



Following is an outline of the major content areas covered by the AP Human Geography Exam, as well as the approximate percentages of the multiple-choice section that are devoted to each area. This outline is a guide and is not intended as an exclusive list of topics.

I. Geography: Its Nature and Perspectives 5–10%

- A. Geography as a field of inquiry
- B. Evolution of key geographical concepts and models associated with notable geographers
- C. Key concepts underlying the geographical perspective: location, space, place, scale, pattern, regionalization, and globalization
- D. Key geographical skills
 1. How to use and think about maps and spatial data
 2. How to understand and interpret the implications of associations among phenomena in places
 3. How to recognize and interpret at different scales the relationships among patterns and processes
 4. How to define regions and evaluate the regionalization process
 5. How to characterize and analyze changing interconnections among places
- E. New geographic technologies, such as GIS, remote sensing, and GPS
- F. Sources of geographical ideas and data: the field, census data, and satellite imagery

II. Population 13–17%

- A. Geographical analysis of population
 1. Density, distribution, and scale
 2. Implications of various densities and distributions
 3. Patterns of composition: age, sex, race, and ethnicity
 4. Population and natural hazards: past, present, and future
- B. Population growth and decline over time and space
 1. Historical trends and projections for the future
 2. Theories of population growth, including the Demographic Transition Model
 3. Patterns of fertility, mortality, and health
 4. Regional variations of demographic transitions
 5. Effects of population policies
- C. Population movement
 1. Migration selectivity
 2. Major voluntary and involuntary migrations at different scales
 3. Theories of migration, including push and pull factors, human capital, and life course
 4. International migration and refugees
 5. Socioeconomic consequences of migration



III. Cultural Patterns and Processes..... 13-17%

A. Concepts of culture

1. Traits
2. Diffusion
3. Acculturation, assimilation, and globalization
4. Cultural regions



B. Cultural differences

1. Language
2. Religion
3. Ethnicity
4. Gender
5. Popular and folk culture

C. Cultural landscapes and cultural identity

1. Values and preferences
2. Symbolic landscapes and sense of place
3. Environmental impact of cultural attitudes and practices

IV. Political Organization of Space..... 13-17%

A. Territorial dimensions of politics

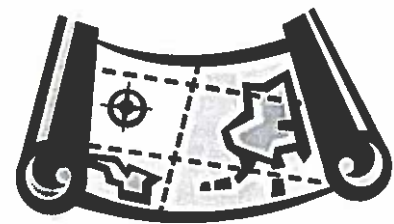
1. The concept of territoriality
2. The nature and meaning of boundaries
3. Influences of boundaries on identity, interaction, and exchange
4. Federal and unitary states
5. Spatial relationships between political patterns and patterns of ethnicity, economy, and environment

B. Evolution of the contemporary political pattern

1. The nation-state concept
2. Colonialism and imperialism
3. Democratization

C. Changes and challenges to political-territorial arrangements

1. Changing nature of sovereignty
2. Fragmentation, unification, alliance
3. Supranationalism and devolution
4. Electoral geography, including gerrymandering
5. Terrorism



V. Agriculture and Rural Land Use 13-17%

A. Development and diffusion of agriculture

1. Neolithic Agricultural Revolution
2. Second Agricultural Revolution
3. Green Revolution
4. Modern Commercial Agriculture



B. Major agricultural production regions

1. Agricultural systems associated with major bioclimatic zones
2. Variations within major zones and effects of markets
3. Linkages and flows among regions of food production and consumption

C. Rural land use and settlement patterns

1. Models of agricultural land use, including von Thünen's model
2. Settlement patterns associated with major agriculture types
3. Land use/land cover change, irrigation, conservation (desertification, deforestation)

D. Modern commercial agriculture

1. Biotechnology, including genetically modified plants and animals
2. Spatial organization and diffusion of industrial agriculture
3. Organic farming and local food production
4. Environmental impacts of agriculture

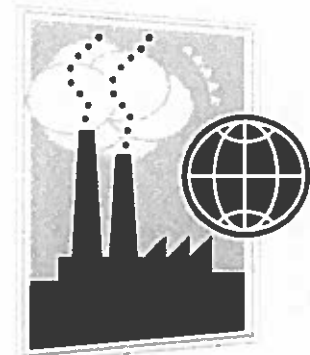
VI. Industrialization and Economic Development 13-17%

A. Growth and diffusion of industrialization

1. The changing roles of energy and technology
2. Industrial Revolution
3. Evolution of economic cores and peripheries
4. Geographic critiques of models of economic localization (i.e., bid rent, comparative costs of transportation), industrial location, economic development, and world systems

B. Contemporary patterns and impacts of industrialization and development

1. Spatial organization of the world economy
2. Variations in levels of development
3. Deindustrialization and economic restructuring
4. Globalization and international division of labor
5. Natural resources and environmental concerns
6. Sustainable development
7. Local development initiatives: government policies
8. Women in development



VII. Cities and Urban Land Use 13-17%

A. Development and character of cities

1. Origin of cities
2. Rural-urban migration and urban growth
3. Global cities and megacities
4. Suburbanization and edge cities

B. Models of urban systems

1. Rank-size rule
2. Central place theory
3. Gravity model

C. Models of internal city structure

1. Concentric zone model
2. Sector model
3. Multiple-nuclei model
4. Changing employment mix
5. Changing demographic and social structures
6. Uneven development, ghettoization, and gentrification

D. Built environment and social space

1. Housing
2. Transportation and infrastructure
3. Political organization of urban areas
4. Urban planning and design
5. Patterns of race, ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic status

