



AP Human Geography

Syllabus

Course Introduction

AP® Human Geography is a yearlong college-level course designed to prepare students for the Advanced Placement (AP) Human Geography Exam. The course focuses on the study of human populations and their interaction with one another, as well as with the physical and built environments.

Emphasis is placed on critical and evaluative thinking skills, free-response writing, and research. Students will demonstrate that they can understand and implement skills via written work, project-based activities, and assessments.

Course Materials

Students will need copies of the textbook to complete readings offline. All supplemental readings are included in the online course.

Textbook

The following textbooks are both acceptable:

- Rubenstein, James M. *The Cultural Landscape: An Introduction to Human Geography*. 11th ed. New York: Prentice Hall, 2014.
- Rubenstein, James M. *The Cultural Landscape: An Introduction to Human Geography*. 12th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson, 2017.

Note: There are slight differences between key issue titles in the two editions of the textbook. If you are using the 12th ed., please see the addendum at the end of this document.

Supplemental Readings

The course includes a variety of supplementary readings from newspapers, magazines, and journals to expand upon textbook readings. These supplements highlight real-life examples of geographic concepts while providing greater depth of inquiry.

Additional materials, including case studies, videos, and aerial photos, will be used to supplement primary course materials.

Course Activities

Course Organization

The course is divided into seven units. Students will receive direct instruction through lectures and textbook readings, and a wide variety of projects, class discussions, supplemental readings, and short writing activities are included to engage student inquiry.



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Each unit includes essential questions and key terms for students to master, as well as a regional study of the world to be completed and turned in at the end of the unit. Students complete regional map activities to reinforce their knowledge of regions, political geography, physical geography, cultural geography, and key toponyms.

Throughout the course, students will complete a wide variety of research projects, including a cultural landscape analysis of a public space.

Essays

Throughout the course, free-response essays help students to practice for the AP Human Geography Exam. Each unit includes a practice free-response question, and the course's final unit includes full practice exams to help students prepare for the AP exam.



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Course Outline

Unit 1: Geography: Its Nature and Perspectives

Rubenstein, Chapter 1: Basic Concepts

- Key Issue 1.1: How Do Geographers Describe Where Things Are?
- Key Issue 1.2: Why Is Each Point on Earth Unique?
- Key Issue 1.3: Why Are Different Places Similar?
- Key issue 1.4: Why Are Some Human Actions Not Sustainable?

Essential Questions

- What is human geography and what themes are studied?
- What historic and contemporary tools are employed by the geographer?
- How is each unique place on the planet characterized?
- What creates similarity between regions?
- How do humans affect sustainability of the Earth?
- What is spatial perspective?

Instructional Concepts

1. The study of geography
 - a. Fundamental questions of geography (where, why there)
 - b. Branches and categories of study
 - i. Human geography
 - ii. Physical geography
 - c. Uses of geography
2. Fundamental concepts of geography
 - a. Fundamental themes and elements of geography
3. Fundamental geographic skills
 - a. Mapping and spatial thinking
 - b. Regionalization
 - c. Place



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4. A geographer's toolset
 - a. GIS and mapping
 - b. Remote sensing
 - c. GPS
 - d. Mapping and cartography
5. Regional studies: Oceania, Australia, and Antarctica

Activities

- World Map activity
- Physical Geography of Oceania, Australia, and Antarctica
- Cultural Geography of Oceania, Australia, and Antarctica
- Thinking Geographically
- Geographic Concepts
- Working with Maps and Data in Geography
- Understanding Physical Geography

Unit 2: Population

Rubenstein, Chapter 2: Population and Health

- Key Issue 2.1: Where Is the World's Population Distributed?
- Key Issue 2.2: Why Is Global Population Increasing?
- Key Issue 2.3: Why Does Population Growth Vary among Regions?
- Key Issue 2.4: Why Do Some Regions Face Health Threats?

Rubenstein, Chapter 3: Migration

- Key Issue 3.1: Where Are Migrants Distributed?
- Key Issue 3.2: Where Do People Migrate within a Country?
- Key Issue 3.3: Why Do People Migrate?
- Key Issue 3.4: Why Do Migrants Face Obstacles?

Essential Questions



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- How is population measured?
- What factors change the global population?
- How is population growth modeled?
- How do population stages relate to health?
- What patterns are seen in migration?
- Why has migration within large countries changed?
- What models and theories of migration exist?
- What issues do international migrants face?

Instructional Concepts

1. Population
 - a. Measuring population
 - b. Population distribution
 - i. Population density maps
 - ii. Aerial photographs
 - c. Population density
 - d. Population composition
 - i. Demographic transition model
 - ii. Population pyramids
2. Population patterns
 - a. Global and regional population distribution
 - b. Historical trends
3. Factors affecting population
 - a. Fertility and mortality
 - b. Health care and disease
 - c. Population policies
 - d. Eugenics and genocide
4. Migration and population



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- a. Types of migration
 - b. Reasons for migration
 - c. Consequences and challenges surrounding migration
5. Regional studies: South Asia and East Asia

Activities

- Physical Geography of Asia
- Cultural Geography of Asia
- Population Distribution
- Recognizing Population Patterns and Historical Trends
- Patterns of Fertility and Mortality
- Health Care and Disease
- Politics, Policies, and Population
- Movement: Migration
- Immigration: Refugees and Asylees
- Economics of Migration

Unit 3: Cultural Patterns and Processes

Rubenstein, Chapter 4: Folk and Popular Culture

- Key Issue 4.1: Where Are Folk and Popular Leisure Activities Distributed?
- Key Issue 4.2: Where Are Folk and Popular Material Culture Distributed?
- Key Issue 4.3: Why Is Access to Folk and Popular Culture Unequal?
- Key Issue 4.4: Why Do Folk and Popular Culture Face Sustainability Challenges?

Rubenstein, Chapter 5: Languages

- Key Issue 5.1: Where Are Languages Distributed?
- Key Issue 5.2: Why Is English Related to Other Languages?
- Key Issue 5.3: Why Do Individual Languages Vary among Places?
- Key Issue 5.4: Why Do People Preserve Local Languages?

Rubenstein, Chapter 6: Religions



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- Key Issue 6.1: Where Are Religions Distributed?
- Key Issue 6.2: Why Do Religions Have Different Distributions?
- Key Issue 6.3: Why Do Religions Organize Space in Distinctive Patterns?
- Key Issue 6.4: Why Do Territorial Conflicts Arise among Religious Groups?

Rubenstein, Chapter 7: Ethnicities

- Key Issue 7.1: Where Are Ethnicities Distributed?
- Key Issue 7.2: Why Do Ethnicities Have Distinctive Distributions?
- Key Issue 7.3: Why Do Conflicts Arise among Ethnicities?
- Key Issue 7.4: Why Do Ethnicities Engage in Ethnic Cleansing and Genocide?

Essential Questions

- How is culture characterized and distributed?
- Why is material culture different around the world?
- How do cultures sustain practices, and what obstacles exist?
- How does globalization impact cultures?
- How are languages classified, modeled, and distributed?
- Why are languages related?
- How do variations within a language family develop?
- Why do language differences remain in a globalized world?
- How are religions characterized and distributed?
- What are the origins and diffusions of major religions?
- How do religions alter cultural landscape?
- Why do religious conflicts occur?

Instructional Concepts

1. Introduction to culture
 - a. Components of culture and culture traits
 - b. Diffusion of culture
 - c. Factors affecting culture
2. Cultural differences and diffusion patterns



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- a. Cultural differences and diffusion
 - i. Language
 - ii. Religion
 - iii. Race and ethnicity
 - iv. Gender
 - v. Popular cultures and subcultures
 - vi. Regional and local cultures
 - b. Cultural conflicts
 - i. Eugenics and genocide
3. Factors shaping culture
- a. Culture and place
 - b. Environmental effects on culture
 - c. Cultural effects on the environment
4. Regional studies: the Middle East, Russia, and Central Asia

Instructional Activities

- Project: Regional Cultural Landscape analysis
- Physical Geography of the Middle East
- Cultural Geography of the Middle East
- Exploring Culture: Concepts of Culture
- The Environment: Shaping Cultures
- Exploring Culture: Language
- Exploring Culture: World Religions
- Exploring Culture: Diffusion of Religion
- Exploring Culture: Race, Ethnicity, and Gender
- Controlling Population: Eugenics and Genocide

Unit 4: Political Organization of Space



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Rubenstein, Chapter 8: Political Geography

- Key Issue 8.1: Where Are States Distributed?
- Key Issue 8.2: Why Are Nation-States Difficult to Create?
- Key Issue 8.3: Why Do Boundaries Cause Problems?
- Key Issue 8.4: Why Do States Cooperate and Compete with Each Other?

Essential Questions

- How are ethnicities distributed at varying scales?
- Why do spatial patterns of ethnic distribution exist?
- What geographic factors may cause conflicts between ethnic groups?
- What historic and recent conflicts were results of ethnic cleansing?
- How are political states defined and where are they distributed?
- Why are nation-states rare?
- What are boundaries and how do they function within or between states?
- What theories of economic and political power do geographers examine?
- How do states form alliances and why do conflicts occur?

Instructional Concepts

1. Organization of space
 - a. Territory and boundaries
 - i. Nature of boundaries
 - ii. Types of boundaries (internal and external)
 - b. Factors affecting the creation of boundaries
 - c. Influences of boundaries on culture
2. Types of political organization
 - a. Forms of governance and organization
 - b. Regional and local organization
3. History of political boundaries and territorial organization



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- a. Formation of nation-states
 - b. Colonialism
 - c. Imperialism
 - d. Post-colonialism
 - e. Communism and democratization
4. Challenges and changes affecting territorial arrangements and organization
- a. Globalization and territorial organization
 - i. Unification, fragmentation, and devolution in modern states
 - ii. Modern supranational organizations
 - b. Politics and organization
 - c. Threats to organization and territorial arrangements
5. Regional studies: Africa

Instructional Activities

- Physical Geography of Africa
- Cultural Geography of Africa
- Territory and Boundaries in Geography
- Geographer's Perspective: The Influence of Boundaries on Culture
- Geographer's Perspective: Types of Government and Political Systems
- Geography and Internal Boundaries
- Changing Geography: Colonialism
- Colonialism in Africa, Asia, and the Americas
- Changing Geography: Creating the Nation-State
- Post-Colonial Governments in Asia
- Post-Colonial Governments in Africa
- Post-Colonial Governments in the Americas
- Changing Geography: Changing Politics
- Terrorism: The Global Threat



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- Modern Global Concerns

Unit 5: Agricultural and Rural Land Use

Rubenstein, Chapter 10: Food and Agriculture

If using the 12th ed., see addendum for Key Issues 10.1–10.4.

- Key Issue 10.1: Where Did Agriculture Originate?
- Key Issue 10.2: Why Do People Consume Different Foods?
- Key Issue 10.3: Where Is Agriculture Distributed?
- Key Issue 10.4: Why Do Farmers Face Economic Difficulties?

Essential Questions

- What is the origin and diffusion of agriculture?
- What role does climate play in agriculture?
- Why is production and consumption of food different around the world?
- How is agriculture in developed regions different from agriculture in developing regions?
- What challenges do farmers face in developed regions and developing regions?

Instructional Concepts

1. Development of modern agriculture
 - a. Neolithic Agricultural Revolution
 - b. Agricultural hearths
 - c. Second Agricultural Revolution
 - d. Green Revolution
2. Land use and settlement patterns
 - a. Agricultural land use
 - b. Von Thünen model
 - c. Agriculture and modern settlement patterns
3. Production and consumption
 - a. Agricultural production regions
 - b. Altering the land



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- c. Consumption
- d. Modern commercial agriculture
 - i. Effects of mechanization and new technologies
 - ii. Effects of the growth of commercial agriculture
 - iii. Biotechnology and its effects
 - 1. GM Foods – production and consumption
 - 2. Organic farming
 - 3. Criticisms
- e. Challenges in agriculture
 - i. Land and water resources
 - ii. Limited resource farming
 - iii. Famine and population growth
- 4. Environmental impact of agriculture
 - a. Deforestation
 - b. Desertification
 - c. Damming and its effects
 - d. Erosion
- 5. Regional Studies: The United States and Canada

Instructional Activities

- Physical Geography of the United States and Canada
- Cultural Geography of the United States and Canada
- Evolution of Geographic Theories and Ideas
- Early Agrarian Societies
- Revolutions in Agriculture
- Land Use: Settlement Patterns
- Agri-Zones: Regions of Production
- Agriculture: Products and Consumption



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- Economic Factors of Agricultural Production
- Modern Agriculture: Changing Landscapes
- Changing Face of Farms
- Changing Technology, Changing Agriculture

Unit 6: Industrialization and Economic Development

Rubenstein, Chapter 9: Development

If using the 12th ed., see addendum for Key Issues 9.1–9.4.

- Key Issue 9.1: Why Does Development Vary among Countries?
- Key Issue 9.2: Why Does Development Vary by Gender?
- Key Issue 9.3: Why Are Energy Resources Important for Development?
- Key Issue 9.4: Why Do Countries Face Obstacles to Development?

Rubenstein, Chapter 11: Industry and Manufacturing

- Key Issue 11.1: Where Is Industry Distributed?
- Key Issue 11.2: Why Are Situation and Site Factors Important?
- Key Issue 11.3: Where Does Industry Cause Pollution?
- Key Issue 11.4: Why Are Situation and Site Factors Changing?

Essential Questions

- How is development measured and what patterns are seen?
- Why is gender considered in development?
- How does sustainability of resources relate to development?
- What theories apply to development and what obstacles may exist?
- How did industrialization begin and diffuse?
- What factors are determinants for distribution of industries?
- How have human advancements with industrialization impacted the environment?
- What shifts are occurring with the new international division of labor?

Instructional Concepts



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1. Economic and social development
 - a. What is development?
 - i. How is development measured?
 - ii. Models of economic development
 1. Rostow's Modernization model
 2. Neocolonialism
 3. The Brandt Line
 4. World Systems Theory
 - b. Economic development
 - i. Economic sectors
 - ii. Comparative advantage and specialization
 - iii. Economic systems
 - iv. Formal and informal sectors
 - c. Factors affecting development and economic growth
 - d. Increasing development and economic growth
 - i. Export processing zones (maquiladoras)
 - ii. Outsourcing
 - iii. Government incentives
 - iv. NGOs
2. Economics of industrialization
 - a. First and Second Industrial Revolutions
 - b. Global financial resources
 - i. IMF
 - ii. World Bank
 - iii. NGOs
 - iv. Successes and criticisms
 - c. Gender and economic development



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3. Global economic issues
 - a. Westernization
 - b. World-systems theory (core, periphery)
 - c. World Trade Organization
 - d. Multinational organizations
 - e. Challenges of industrialization
 - f. Labor issues
 - g. Environmental issues
4. Regional Studies: Europe

Instructional Activities

- Physical Geography of Europe
- Cultural Geography of Europe
- Economic and Social Development
- Global Economic Sectors and Systems
- Barriers to Economic Growth
- Gender and Economic Development
- Revolutions in Technology
- Financial Resources and Global Lending
- Westernization and Commoditization
- Ethics of Industrialization
- Environmental Concerns of Industrialization
- Greening the Globe

Unit 7: Cities and Urban Land Use

Rubenstein, Chapter 12: Services and Settlements

- Key Issue 12.1: Where Are Services Distributed?
- Key Issue 12.2: Where Are Consumer Services Distributed?



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- Key Issue 12.3: Where Are Business Services Distributed?
- Key Issue 12.4: Why Do Services Cluster in Settlements?

Rubenstein, Chapter 13: Urban Patterns

- Key Issue 13.1: Why Do Services Cluster Downtown?
- Key Issue 13.2: Where Are People Distributed within Urban Areas?
- Key Issue 13.3: Why Are Urban Areas Expanding?
- Key Issue 13.4: Why Do Cities Face Challenges?

Essential Questions

- What are services and where are they located?
- How do theories explain distribution of services for consumers?
- What are business services and where are they located?
- How do services vary between rural settlements and urban settlements?
- What defines “downtown,” and how are cities described?
- How do models explain the distribution of people in urban structures?
- As urban areas expand, how are patterns of transportation, population distribution, and governments changing?
- What challenges do urban areas face—physically, socially, and economically?

Instructional Concepts

1. The urban environment
 - a. Early cities
 - b. Growth of early cities
 - c. Urban planning and design
 - i. Models of urban growth
 1. Central place theory
 2. Concentric zone model
 3. Hoyt model (sector model)
 4. Multiple-nuclei model



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- ii. Built vs. natural environments
- iii. Organic vs. planned growth
- d. Influence of transportation and infrastructure
- e. The suburban environment
 - i. Factors affecting growth
 - ii. Commercial landscapes
 - iii. Urban sprawl and decay
 - iv. Edge cities
 - v. Sustainability models
- 2. Modern urban spaces
 - a. Demographic changes
 - b. Immigration and migration
 - i. Influence on city culture and architecture
 - ii. Enclaves
 - iii. Assimilation
 - c. Factors leading to unequal development
 - i. Gentrification
 - ii. Segregation
 - iii. Ghettoization
 - iv. Poverty and economic decline
- 3. Comparative urban environments
 - a. Categorization
 - i. Rank-size distribution
 - ii. Lower and higher order settlements
 - iii. Primate cities
 - iv. Influences on planning (colonization, history, political ideology, religion)
 - b. Global cities
 - i. Influence of globalization and westernization



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- ii. Economic and cultural effects
- iii. Megacities
- c. Challenges
 - i. Rapid economic development
 - ii. Unequal access to resources and services
 - iii. Outsourcing, job loss, and unemployment
 - iv. Overcrowding and poverty
 - v. Insufficient housing
 - vi. Environmental issues
 1. Pollution
 2. Endangered species
 3. Water
 4. Climate change
 4. Regional Studies: Latin America

Instructional Activities

- Physical Geography of Latin America
- Cultural Geography of Latin America
- Urbanization and the Early City
- Growth of Early Cities
- Urban Planning and Design
- Comparative Urban Environments
- Global Cities
- Altering the Environment
- Transportation and Infrastructure in the Modern Space
- The Suburban Environment in the Modern Space
- Immigration and Urban Enclaves



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- Race and Class in the City
- Challenges Facing the Modern Urban Space

Unit 8: Exam Preparation and Review

This unit will help students prepare for the AP Human Geography exam. Students review content from each of the previous units and complete two practice exams.



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Addendum: 12th Edition Textbook

Edgenuity course content is structured for the 11th edition of *The Cultural Landscape: An Introduction to Human Geography* textbook. Students using the 12th edition will encounter discrepancies in the titles of key issues, but unless otherwise indicated, content changes will not impede student progress. The following deviations are noted:

Example: The 11th edition Key Issue 9.1 will be the 12th edition Key Issue 10.1.

11th Edition Key Issue		Corresponding 12th Edition Key Issue	
2.3	Why Does Population Growth Vary among Regions?	2.4	Why Might Population Increase in the Future?
2.4	Why Do Some Regions Face Health Threats?	2.3	Why Do Some Places Face Health Challenges?
9.1	Why Does Development Vary among Countries?	10.1	Why Does Development Vary among Countries?
9.2	Why Does Development Vary among Gender?	10.2	Where Are Inequalities in Development Found?
9.3	Why Are Energy Resources Important for Development?	11.3	Why Do Industries Face Resource Challenges? (pages 400–413)
9.4	Why Do Countries Face Obstacles to Development?	10.3	Why Do Countries Face Challenges to Development?
		10.4	Why Are Countries Making Progress in Development?
10.1	Where Did Agriculture Originate?	9.1	Where Did Agriculture Originate?
10.2	Why Do People Consume Different Foods?	9.2	Why Do People Consume Different Foods?
10.3	Where Is Agriculture Distributed?	9.3	Where Is Agriculture Distributed?
10.4	Why Do Farmers Face Economic Difficulties?	9.4	Why Do Farmers Face Sustainability Challenges?
11.3	Where Does Industry Cause Pollution?	11.3	Why Do Industries Face Resource Challenges? (pages 414–419)