

AP Human Geography Course Syllabus¹

American Heritage School

Fall 2023 – Spring 2024

Instructor Information

Ms. Caroline McNiven

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Location: Room 127 / Assistant Principal's office

Required Materials

- Library Checkout Textbook: Hildebrandt, Barbara, et al. *Human Geography for the AP Course*. 1st ed. BFW Publishing, 2021.
- Computer access: *AHS student email account with Canvas access, Word processing software (i.e.: Word, Pages, Google Docs, etc.), general Internet for assignments and research*
 - Student accounts for the following: College Board, AP Classroom.
- 3" Binder with 8 dividers provided (AP Docs/Mapwork, Unit 1, Unit 2, Unit 3, Unit 4, Unit 5, Unit 6, Unit 7, assessments/revision): *Students will keep and organize their work by unit in this binder. Handouts, graded assignments, study guides, etc. are critical tools in understanding and retaining knowledge, so students will KEEP THEM. Final exams, as well as the AP exam, will be cumulative.*
- Subject notebook for reading assignment: *Students will be required to read an article related to Geography, outline the text information, as well as identify major terms and ideas. There will be scheduled 5-minute presentations to assess student understanding of reading materials.*
- Pens/pencils, highlighters, colored pencils, RED PEN.
- Index cards to create vocabulary flash cards. Student purchase requirement.

Course Information

Purpose: AP Human Geography (APHG) is an introductory college course in human geography. Students will be introduced to a systematic study of patterns and processes that have shaped human's understanding, use, and alteration of Earth's surface. They will look spatially at Earth to analyze human's organization of space and the environmental, social and political consequences of these decisions. Students will look at patterns across the cultural landscape, identifying trends and anticipate future phenomena. They will use different methods and tools geographers use in their science and practice. This class is designed to meet AP standards and requirements (these can be found on the AP College Board website). The class will prepare students to take the cumulative AP Human Geography test at the end of the school year.

The goal for AP Human Geography students is *"to become more geoliterate, more engaged in contemporary global issues, and informed about multicultural viewpoints"* (College Board 2019). They will develop skills in approaching problems geographically, using maps and geospatial technologies, thinking critically about texts and graphic images, interpreting cultural landscapes, and applying geographic concepts such as scale, region, diffusion, interdependence, and spatial interaction, among others. Students will see geography as a discipline relevant to the world in which they live. The content is presented thematically rather than regionally and is organized around the discipline's main subfields: economic, cultural, and urban geography.

¹ *NOTE: I reserve the right to change the policies of this syllabus for the proper facilitation of this course.

Content Coverage:

This year is going to be full of wonderful experiences, excitement, anticipation, and, of course, hard work. You have enrolled in AP Human Geography. This class will be challenging and require preparation and dedication outside of the classroom.

Each unit will expose students to “Big Ideas” and how they spiral across the units, in order that students encounter and improve their knowledge, skills, and understanding as the big ideas become more complex. The “Big Ideas” are: **Patterns and Spatial Organization (PSO)**; **Impacts and Interactions (IMP)**; and **Spatial Processes and Societal Change (SPS)**.

- Big Idea 1: PSO- Spatial patterns and organization of human society are arranged according to political, historical, cultural and economic factors;
- Big Idea 2: IMP- Complex relationships of cause and effect exist among people, their environments, and historical and contemporary actions;
- Big Idea 3: SPS- A spatial perspective allows for a focus on the way phenomena are related to one another in particular places, which in turn allows for the examination of human organization and the environmental consequences.

The AP curriculum is extensive and multidimensional. We will be using the following in our year-long study of Human Geography:

- Course text Hildebrandt, Barbara, et al. *Human Geography for the AP Course*. 1st ed. BFW Publishing, 2021. (Library check out copy to remain at home and digital eBook available online to access at school.)
 - Maps, maps, maps!
 - National Geographic
 - Podcasts – listened to and approved by Ms. McNiven (but also let me know what`)
 - Contemporary news articles from an array of sources.
 - Video resources such as clips from national and international news organizations, and documentaries.
 - Published data in varied forms that require objective and interpretive analysis.

To prepare you for your end of the year exam, you will be:

- Reading the assigned textbook chapters and other readings,
- Participating in class lectures and activities,
- Using Memrise to learn the key terms and definitions for each unit.
- Regularly practicing answering analytical and interpretive free-response questions like those on the AP exam,
- Regularly practicing answering multiple choice questions like those on the AP exam.

Units: We will be covering the following 7 units.

1. Thinking Geographically
2. Population & Migration Patterns and Processes
3. Cultural Patterns and Processes
4. Political Patterns and Processes
5. Agriculture & Rural Land Use Patterns and Processes
6. Cities & Urban Land Use Patterns and Processes
7. Industrial and Economic Development Patterns and Processes

AP Exam Taking Policy:

The AP Human Geography Exam is scheduled for Tuesday, May 7, 2024.

You will be taking the AP Human Geography Exam at the end of the school year. You must exert your full energies and efforts to ensure you grasp the course content to pass the exam. Students who fall below a C and show signs of not taking the AP course and exam seriously will be subject to teacher/parent meetings and possible withdrawal from the AP program. You must take the AP exam in order to receive AP level credit for the course.

The AP exam is administered in school and scored by the College Board organization. ***Your performance on the AP exam is scored independently of your in-class grade.*** Rather, students who pass the AP exam will earn college credit! Students are given a score between 1-5, with 5 being a perfect score. In order to pass and earn credit, a student must receive a 3 or higher.

Upon completion, the exams are mailed to College Board, scoring takes 1-2 months, and students will receive their scores sometime during the summer after the school year ends

Tentative Unit Exam Dates:

1. Thinking Geographically – w/b: September 11th, 2023
2. Population Migration – w/b: October 16th, 2023
3. Agriculture and Rural Land Use – w/b: November 13th, 2023
4. Cultural Geography – w/b: January 8th, 2024
5. Political Patterns and Processes – w/b: February 26^h, 2024
6. Economic Geography – w/b: March 11th, 2024
7. Cities and Urban Land Use – w/b: April 8th, 2024

“Geography is an earthly subject, but a Heavenly science” - Edmund Burke

Classroom Procedures & Consequences

Classroom Expectations:

1. Be on time.
2. Respect yourself and others.
3. Be prepared.
4. Do your best work, always.
5. Maintain an environment for learning.
6. Keep a positive attitude.
7. Take responsibility.
8. Keep and maintain the school’s Honor Code for dress and technology.
9. Use your time wisely.

Attendance:

Students are expected to be in class every day (*Please refer to the Student Handbook on the school’s policies toward absences*).

I do understand that there are unavoidable circumstances in which a student will be absent. When this occurs, ***it is the student’s responsibility to acquire the materials (i.e.: notes, assignments, etc.) that they missed.*** There is an absentee binder that is used to hold any handouts, worksheets, notes, etc. that were presented in class. Please refer to Canvas to hold for organizing homework assignments, due dates, and scheduling for tests and quizzes (*you can check on Veracross also*).

Tardiness:

Tardiness is absolutely unacceptable. It does not only affect the individual who is tardy, but his/her classmates. Each class day we will have a bell ringer and/or quiz and the timer will start on the bell. If a student is tardy, they will miss those points that are crucial to learning, applying the knowledge gained. Habitual tardiness will result in administrative action.

For all periods, students must be present and in their assigned seats at the start of class at the final bell.

Leaving the Classroom:

It is the student’s responsibility to come to class prepared. Once the class period bell rings, students are expected to have their materials for that day ready immediately. With the exception of using the restroom and calls from the front office, students will not be permitted to leave the classroom during class time. If a student needs to use the restroom, they may raise their hand to be excused. In this case, students are to turn in their cell phone to the teacher.

Start of Class: Students will be expected to do the following each day:

1. Come to class on time.
2. Pick up the required, teacher-produced materials needed for that day’s lesson.
3. Do their bell-ringer assignment / quiz for the day.

4. Sit in their assigned seat.
5. Review the “Agenda” for their class. Complete any tasks listed within the agenda for the day by the end of the timer (i.e. getting out notes/materials from a prior lesson). This means that students should have all materials ready to go immediately upon conclusion of the instructor taking attendance.

Grading Policy

Grading Philosophy: Grading in this course will reflect a student’s achievement relative to the assigned coursework (i.e.: tests, quizzes, homework, class work, participation, group projects, etc.).

Course Grading: Each student will receive a letter grade upon completion of this course. This grade will correlate with the effort and achievement of individual students on class assessments and assignments. All assessments and assignments will be recorded in the online grading resource. All points, regardless of category (i.e.: tests/quizzes, classwork, homework), will be weighted equally to the calculation of the course grade. Students and parents can access course grades using Veracross through the school’s website.

Grade Breakdown: The grade percentages that correlate with the actual letter grade are listed below.

Percentage	Letter Grade
90-100+%	A
80-89%	B
70-79%	C
60-69%	D
below 60%	F

Late Work:

Being prompt on classwork is critical. Students are to effectively manage their time in order to complete the work assigned to them. If a student develops a habit of not turning in work on time, immediate communication with both the student and his/her parent/guardian will occur to resolve the issue. This policy is meant to prepare students for the time management skills needed in a challenging college/university environment.

The obvious exception is that of the ill or absent student. Students are granted two days upon their return to make up class work and missed tests and quizzes.

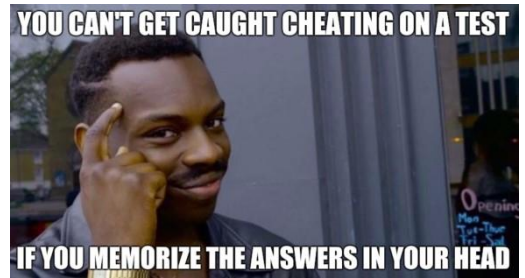
Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is defined as “the unauthorized use or close imitation of the language and thoughts of another author and the representation of them as one’s own original work”.² Students will be expected to properly cite any information they use in formal assignments. Most instances of plagiarism are accidental, but this does not make it acceptable. If a student engages in plagiarism, they will receive a grade of 0 on whatever assignment, test, or project that contains the plagiarism. Further occurrences will result in administrative discipline. *Plagiarism is serious business*; students must make sure to evaluate their work carefully and critically to avoid this pitfall. This includes the use of AI software – it is not the student’s own work and is being presented as such.

² "Plagiarism." *Dictionary.com*. N.p., 2010. Web. 28 Apr 2010.
 <<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/plagiarism>>.

Cheating:

Cheating is defined as “tak[ing] an examination or test in a dishonest way, as by improper access to answers.”³ Cheating on any exam, quiz, or assignment in this class will result in a grade of 0. No exceptions, no excuses. Students that engage in cheating will be subject to administrative discipline.



Expected Student Behavior

Student Attention:

Students will be expected to pay attention during the lesson. Paying attention while someone else is speaking is a major part of creating a respectful environment. In addition, most of the course material will be presented via lecture. Notes are mandatory to do well in this class. The majority of the information will not be blatantly printed on the provided materials. This means that you will have to attend to the entire lecture and generate your own, marginal notes consistently. This is preparation for a college environment, where student-centered note-taking is a crucial skill.

Cell Phones & Other Devices:

Students are expected to have their devices turned off and stored away during class time as per our technology policy. This is a point of respect for the teacher and classmates and the student’s commitment to our Honor and Technology Codes; while in class, students should have their complete attention on the work of the course.

If a cell phone, or other like device, is used in class, it will be confiscated as per our school’s policy and turned in to the administration.

Computers and devices of any kind may not be in sight or used during any testing period. This includes when a student is finished with an assessment. The use or presence of a device during an exam or quiz will automatically render a score of zero for the student.

Discussion Decorum:

Throughout this course, we will be discussing some controversial issues. Unlike our elected officials, it is expected that students respectfully disagree with one another. **I will not tolerate any personal attacks or rude comments between any students.** Any breach of this decorum will result in loss of credit for the assignment that day and potentially administrative action.

Parent Communication

Parents may contact me using the contact information listed at the top of this syllabus. Email is the best mode of contact. Thank you for your support as we navigate this new class at American Heritage School. I suspect we will experience some teething problems, that hopefully with respectful dialogue we can address and perfect. I am always open to suggestions and feedback.

There will be sensitive topics addressed during the course. We will always keep our school’s Mission Statement at the forefront as we enter into and discuss these various topics. You can access course topics and curriculum on your students’ canvas account and refer to their text books that they will have at home. You are also welcome to come and observe any class. Any videos shown will be approved as per our school’s policies.

If you have any expertise or experience related to any of our units, we would love for you to come and present to our class to have real life experience and examples to refer to. Our students love to hear from others to broaden their frames of reference. Thank you in advance.

Student signature: _____

Parent Signature: _____

³ “Cheating.” *Dictionary.com*. N.p., 2010. Web. 28 Apr 2010. <<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/cheating>>.