I. Geography: Its Nature and Perspectives
The AP Human Geography course emphasizes the importance of geography as a field of inquiry. The course introduces students to the importance of spatial organization — the location of places, people, and events; environmental relationships; and interconnections between places and across landscapes — in the understanding of human life on Earth. Geographic concepts emphasized throughout the course are location, space, scale, pattern, regionalization, and globalization. These concepts are basic to students’ understanding of spatial interaction and spatial behavior, the dynamics of human population growth and movement, patterns of culture, economic activities, political organization of space, social issues, and human settlement patterns, particularly urbanization. Students learn how to use and interpret maps. They also learn to apply mathematical formulas, interpret models, and analyze quantitative and qualitative geographic data.

The course teaches the concepts of space, place, and region; enables students to consider the regional organization of various phenomena; and encourages geographical imagination in order to understand processes in a changing world. For example, geographical perspectives on nature and society examine human alterations to the global and local environment, including impacts on land, water, and atmosphere, as well as effects on population, biodiversity, and climate. A significant outcome of the course is students’ awareness of geographic methods and the relevance of geospatial technologies to everyday life, planning and public policy, professional decision making, and problem solving at scales from local to global. This combination of the conceptual and the applied helps give students a sophisticated view of the world and an appreciation of the practical applications they have learned in the course.

II. Population and Migration
An understanding of the ways in which the human population is organized geographically provides AP students with the tools they need to make sense of cultural, political, economic, and urban systems. Thus many of the concepts and theories encountered in this part of the course connect with other course units. In addition the course themes of scale, pattern, place, and interdependence can all be illustrated with population topics. For example, students may analyze the distribution of the human population at different scales: global, regional, national, state or provincial, and local. Explanations of why population is growing or declining in some places center on understanding the patterns and trends of fertility, mortality, and migration. In stressing the relevance of place context, for example, students may assess why fertility rates have dropped in some parts of the developing world, examine how age–sex structures (shown in population pyramids) vary from one country to another, and comprehend the social, political, and economic implications of an aging population. Analysis of refugee flows, immigration, internal migration, and residential mobility helps students appreciate the interconnections between population phenomena and other topics. For example, environmental degradation and natural hazards may prompt population redistribution at various scales, which in turn creates new pressures on the environment.

This part of the course also enhances students’ critical understanding of population trends across space and over time by considering models of population growth and decline, including Malthusian theory, the demographic transition, and the epidemiological (mortality) transition model. For example, as a country develops, the economic, social, and political roles of women in society change and influence levels of fertility, mortality rates, and migration trends. Given these kinds of understandings, students are in a position to evaluate the role, strengths, and weaknesses of major population policies, which attempt to either promote or restrict population growth.

III. Cultural Patterns and Processes
Understanding the components and regional variations of cultural patterns and processes is critical to human geography. In this section of the course, students begin with the concepts of culture and culture traits. They learn how geographers assess the spatial and place dimensions of cultural groups as defined by language, religion, ethnicity, and gender, in the present as well as the past. A central concern is to comprehend how cultural patterns are represented at a variety of geographic scales from local to global. Diffusion is a key concept in understanding how culture traits (e.g., agricultural practices, language, technology) move through time and space to new locations, where interactions between global and local forces result in new forms of cultural expression. Students learn that the concept of region is central to understanding the spatial distribution of cultural attributes. The course explores cultural interaction at various scales, along with the conflicts that may result. The geographies of language, religion, ethnicity, and gender are studied to illustrate patterns and processes of cultural differences. Students learn to distinguish between languages and dialects, ethnic and universalizing religions, ethnic political movements, and popular and folk cultures, and to understand why each has a different geographic pattern. Another important emphasis of the course is the way culture shapes relationships between humans and the environment. Students learn how culture is expressed in landscapes, and how land use in turn represents cultural identity. Built environments enable the geographer to interpret cultural values, tastes, symbolism, and sets of beliefs. For example, both folk and contemporary architecture are rich and readily available means of comprehending the cultural landscape and how different cultures view it in separate ways.

IV. Political Organization of Space
This section of the course introduces students to the nature and significance of the political organization of territory at different scales. Students learn that political patterns reflect ideas of territoriality — how Earth’s surface should be organized—which in turn affect a wide range of exercises of power over space and boundaries. Two major themes are the political geography of the modern state and relationships between countries. Students are introduced to the different forces that shaped the evolution of the contemporary world political map. These forces include the rise of nation-states in Europe, the influence of colonialism, the rise of supranational organizations, and devolution of states.
Students learn about the basic structure of the political map, the inconsistencies between maps of political boundaries and maps of ethnic, economic, and environmental patterns. In addition students consider some of the forces that are changing the role of individual countries in the modern world, including ethnic separatism, terrorism, economic globalization, and social and environmental problems that cross national boundaries, such as climate change. This part of the course also focuses on subnational and supranational political units. For example, at the scale above the state, attention is directed to regional alliances, such as NATO, the European Union, ASEAN, and NAFTA. At the scale below the state, students are introduced to the ways in which electoral districts, municipalities, indigenous areas, and autonomous lands affect political, social, and economic processes.

V. Agriculture, Food Production, and Rural Land Use
This section of the course explores four themes: the origin and diffusion of agriculture; the characteristics and processes of the world’s agricultural production systems and land use; the impact of agricultural change on quality of life and the environment; and issues in contemporary agriculture. Students examine centers where domestication originated and study the processes by which domesticated crops and animals spread. This diffusion process makes clear why distinct regional patterns emerge in terms of diet, energy use, and the adaptation of biotechnology.

The course also covers the major agricultural production regions of the world. Extensive activity (fishing, forestry, nomadic herding, ranching, shifting cultivation) and intensive activity (plantation agriculture, mixed crop/livestock systems, market gardening, horticulture, large-scale commercial agriculture) are examined, as are settlement patterns and landscapes typical of each major agriculture type. Students learn about land survey systems, environmental conditions, sustainability, global food supply problems, and the cultural values that shape agricultural patterns. In addition this section presents the roles of women in agricultural production, particularly in subsistence farming and market economies in the developing world. Explanations for patterns of rural land use and associated settlements (e.g., von Thünen’s land use model) are major concerns. Also important are the impacts of large-scale agribusiness on food production and consumption. The effects of economic and cultural globalization on agriculture and the need to increase food supplies and production capacity conclude this section.

VI. Industrialization and Economic Development
This section of the course presents the geographic elements of industrialization and economic development, including past and present patterns of industrialization, types of economic sectors, and how places acquire comparative advantage and complementarity. Students also learn how models of economic development, such as Rostow’s stages of economic growth and Wallerstein’s World Systems Theory, and programs like the Millennium Development Goals help to understand why the world is divided into a more-developed economic core and a less-developed periphery. Measures of development (e.g., gross domestic product [GDP] per capita, the Human Development Index [HDI], the Gender Inequality Index [GII], and the Gini coefficient) are tools to understand patterns of economic differences. The analysis of contemporary patterns of industrialization and their impact on development is the third major theme of this section. Topics to be studied include Weber’s industrial location theory and accounts of economic globalization, which accent time–space compression and the international division of labor. As an example, students study the reasons why some Asian economies achieved rapid rates of growth in the mid- to late 20th century, whereas most sub-Saharan African economies did not. In addition, students need to understand patterns of economic growth and deindustrialization in a region such as in North America, where the emergence of service sectors, high technology, and growth poles (e.g., Silicon Valley, the Research Triangle, universities, and medical centers) is transforming the contemporary economic landscape.

Countries, regions, and communities must confront new patterns of economic inequity that are linked to geographies of interdependence in the world economy, including global financial crises, the shift in manufacturing to newly industrialized countries (NICs), imbalances in consumption patterns, and the roles of women in the labor force. Communities also face difficult questions regarding raw material, energy use, the conservation of resources, and the impact of pollution on the environment and quality of life.

VII. Cities and Urban Land Use
The course divides urban geography into two subfields. The first is the study of systems of cities, focusing on where cities are located and why they are there. This involves an examination of such topics as the current and historical distribution of cities; the political, economic, and cultural functions of cities; reasons for differential growth among cities; and types of transportation and communication linkages among cities. Theories of settlement geography, such as Christaller’s central place theory, the rank-size rule, and the gravity model, are introduced. Quantitative information on such topics as population growth, migration, zones of influence, and employment is used to analyze changes in the urban hierarchy. The second subfield focuses on the form, internal structure, and landscapes of cities and emphasizes what cities are like as places in which to live and work. Students are introduced to such topics as the analysis of patterns of urban land use, ethnic segregation, types of intracity transportation, architectural traditions (e.g., neoclassical, modern, postmodern), cycles of uneven development, and environmental justice (e.g., the disproportionate location of polluting industries in low-income or minority residential areas). Students’ understanding of cities as places is enhanced by both quantitative data from the census and qualitative information from narrative accounts and field studies. Students also study models of internal city structure and development in the United States and Canada (e.g., the Burgess concentric zone model, the Hoyt sector model, the Harris–Ullman multiple nuclei model, and the galactic city model) and discuss the strengths and weaknesses of these theories.

Topics such as economic systems, housing finance, culture, architectural history, and innovations in transportation can be useful in the analysis of spatial patterns of urban landscapes. Although much of the literature in urban geography focuses on the cities of
North America, comparative urbanization is an increasingly important topic. The study of European, North African and Middle Eastern, East and South Asian, Latin American, and sub-Saharan African cities serves to illustrate how differing economic systems and cultural values can lead to variations in the spatial structures and urban landscapes. Students also examine current trends in urban development that are affecting urban places, such as the emergence of edge cities, new urbanism, smart growth, and the gentrification of neighborhoods. In addition, students evaluate sustainable urban-planning design initiatives and community actions, such as the bikeways and walkable mixed-use commercial and residential developments that reduce energy use and protect the environments of future cities.

**Topic Outline**
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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I. Geography: Its Nature and Perspectives</th>
<th>5–10%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Geography as a field of inquiry</td>
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<tr>
<td>B. Major geographical concepts underlying the geographical perspective: location, space, place, scale, pattern, nature and society, regionalization, globalization, and gender issues</td>
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<td>C. Key geographical skills</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. How to use and think about maps and geospatial data</td>
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<td>2. How to understand and interpret the implications of associations among phenomena in places</td>
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<td>3. How to recognize and interpret at different scales the relationships among patterns and processes</td>
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<td>4. How to define regions and evaluate the regionalization process</td>
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<td>5. How to characterize and analyze changing interconnections among places</td>
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<tr>
<td>D. Use of geospatial technologies, such as GIS, remote sensing, global positioning systems (GPS), and online maps</td>
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<tr>
<td>E. Sources of geographical information and ideas: the field, census data, online data, aerial photography, and satellite imagery</td>
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<tr>
<td>F. Identification of major world regions</td>
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<tr>
<th>II. Population and Migration</th>
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<tr>
<td>A. Geographical analysis of population</td>
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<td>1. Density, distribution, and scale</td>
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<td>2. Implications of various densities and distributions</td>
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<td>3. Composition: age, sex, income, education, and ethnicity</td>
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<td>4. Patterns of fertility, mortality, and health</td>
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<tr>
<td>B. Population growth and decline over time and space</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Historical trends and projections for the future</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Theories of population growth and decline, including the Demographic Transition Model</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Regional variations of demographic transition</td>
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<td>4. Effects of national population policies: promoting population growth in some countries or reducing fertility rates in others</td>
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<td>5. Environmental impacts of population change on water use, food supplies, biodiversity, the atmosphere, and climate</td>
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<td>6. Population and natural hazards: impacts on policy, economy, and society</td>
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<td>C. Migration</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Types of migration: transnational, internal, chain, step, seasonal agriculture (e.g., transhumance), and rural to urban</td>
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<td>2. Major historical migrations</td>
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<td>3. Push and pull factors, and migration in relation to employment and quality of life</td>
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<td>4. Refugees, asylum seekers, and internally displaced persons</td>
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<td>5. Consequences of migration: socioeconomic, cultural, environmental, and political; immigration policies; remittances</td>
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<th>III. Cultural Patterns and Processes</th>
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<td>A. Concepts of culture</td>
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<td>1. Culture traits</td>
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<td>2. Diffusion patterns</td>
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<td>3. Acculturation, assimilation, and multiculturalism</td>
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<td>4. Cultural region, vernacular regions, and culture hearths</td>
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<td>5. Globalization and the effects of technology on cultures</td>
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<td>B. Cultural differences and regional patterns</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Language and communications</td>
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<td>2. Religion and sacred space</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Ethnicity and nationalism</td>
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</table>
Seven Major Curriculum Topics

Mr. Purdy

4. Cultural differences in attitudes toward gender
5. Popular and folk culture
6. Cultural conflicts, and law and policy to protect culture

C. Cultural landscapes and cultural identity
   1. Symbolic landscapes and sense of place
   2. The formation of identity and place making
   3. Differences in cultural attitudes and practices toward the environment
   4. Indigenous peoples

IV. Political Organization of Space

A. Territorial dimensions of politics
   1. The concepts of political power and territoriality
   2. The nature, meaning, and function of boundaries
   3. Influences of boundaries on identity, interaction, and exchange
   4. Federal and unitary states, confederations, centralized government, and forms of governance
   5. Spatial relationships between political systems and patterns of ethnicity, economy, and gender
   6. Political ecology: impacts of law and policy on the environment and environmental justice

B. Evolution of the contemporary political pattern
   1. The nation-state concept
   2. Colonialism and imperialism
   3. Democratization
   4. Fall of communism and legacy of the Cold War
   5. Patterns of local, regional, and metropolitan governance

C. Changes and challenges to political-territorial arrangements
   1. Changing nature of sovereignty
   2. Fragmentation, unification, and cooperation
   3. Supranationalism and international alliances
   4. Devolution of countries: centripetal and centrifugal forces
   5. Electoral geography: redistricting and gerrymandering
   6. Armed conflicts, war, and terrorism

V. Agriculture, Food Production, and Rural Land Use

A. Development and diffusion of agriculture
   1. Neolithic Agricultural Revolution
   2. Second Agricultural Revolution
   3. Green Revolution
   4. Large-scale commercial agriculture and agribusiness

B. Major agricultural production regions
   1. Agricultural systems associated with major bioclimatic zones
   2. Variations within major zones and effects of markets
   3. Interdependence 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: subsistence, cash cropping, plantation, mixed farming, monoculture, pastoralism, ranching, forestry, fishing and aquaculture
   3. Land use/land cover change: irrigation, desertification, deforestation, wetland destruction, conservation efforts to protect or restore natural land cover, and global impacts
   4. Roles of women in agricultural production and farming communities

D. Issues in contemporary commercial agriculture
   1. Biotechnology, including genetically modified organisms (GMO)
   2. Spatial organization of industrial agriculture, including the transition in land use to large-scale commercial farming and factors affecting the location of processing facilities
   3. Environmental issues: soil degradation, overgrazing, river and aquifer depletion, animal wastes, and extensive fertilizer and pesticide use
   4. Organic farming, crop rotation, value-added specialty foods, regional appellations, fair trade, and eat-local-food movements
   5. Global food distribution, malnutrition, and famine

VI. Industrialization and Economic Development

A. Growth and diffusion of industrialization
   1. The changing roles of energy and technology
   2. Industrial Revolution
3. Models of economic development: Rostow’s Stages of Economic Growth and Wallerstein’s World Systems Theory
4. Geographic critiques of models of industrial location: bid rent, Weber’s comparative costs of transportation and industrial location in relation to resources, location of retailing and service industries, and local economic development within competitive global systems of corporations and finance

B. Social and economic measures of development
   1. Gross domestic product and GDP per capita
   2. Human Development Index
   3. Gender Inequality Index
   4. Income disparity and the Gini coefficient
   5. Changes in fertility and mortality
   6. Access to health care, education, utilities, and sanitation

C. Contemporary patterns and impacts of industrialization and development
   1. Spatial organization of the world economy
   2. Variations in levels of development (uneven development)
   3. Deindustrialization, economic restructuring, and the rise of service and high technology economies
   4. Globalization, manufacturing in newly industrialized countries (NICs), and the international division of labor
   5. Natural resource depletion, pollution, and climate change
   6. Sustainable development
   7. Government development initiatives: local, regional, and national policies
   8. Women in development and gender equity in the workforce

VII. Cities and Urban Land Use..................................................................................................................13–17%
A. Development and character of cities
   1. Origin of cities; site and situation characteristics
   2. Forces driving urbanization
   3. Borchert’s epochs of urban transportation development
   4. World cities and megacities
   5. Suburbanization processes

B. Models of urban hierarchies: reasons for the distribution and size of cities
   1. Gravity model
   2. Christaller’s central place theory
   3. Rank-size rule
   4. Primate cities

C. Models of internal city structure and urban development: strengths and limitations of models
   1. Burgess concentric zone model
   2. Hoyt sector model
   3. Harris and Ullman multiple nuclei model
   4. Galactic city model
   5. Models of cities in Latin America, North Africa and the Middle East, sub-Saharan Africa, East Asia, and South Asia

D. Built environment and social space
   1. Types of residential buildings
   2. Transportation and utility infrastructure
   3. Political organization of urban areas
   4. Urban planning and design (e.g., gated communities, New Urbanism, and smart-growth policies)
   5. Census data on urban ethnicity, gender, migration, and socioeconomic status
   6. Characteristics and types of edge cities: boomburbs, greenfields, uptowns

E. Contemporary urban issues
   1. Housing and insurance discrimination, and access to food stores
   2. Changing demographic, employment, and social structures
   3. Uneven development, zones of abandonment, disamenity, and gentrification
   4. Suburban sprawl and urban sustainability problems: land and energy use, cost of expanding public education services, home financing and debt crises
   5. Urban environmental issues: transportation, sanitation, air and water quality, remediation of brownfields, and farmland protection