

PERIOD 8 Content Outline: 1945–1980

The content for APUSH is divided into 9 periods. The outline below contains the required course content for Period 8, which corresponds to our Unit 8. The Thematic Learning Objectives (historical themes) are referenced in parentheses along the way and are included following each segment. You should be confident in answering these questions with substantial historical evidence by the end of the unit. All questions on your assessments will measure understanding of both content and themes. Bolded items emphasize some of the important people/places/things that you are likely to be asked directly about on the AP exam. All content in this outline is potential material on any assessment; however the illustrative examples will not *explicitly* appear on the AP exam (although you may see them on class assessments).

Main Idea

After World War II, the United States grappled with prosperity and unfamiliar international responsibilities, while struggling to live up to its ideals.

Key Concept 8.1: The United States responded to an uncertain and unstable postwar world by asserting and attempting to defend a position of global leadership, with far-reaching domestic and international consequences.

- I. After **World War II**, the United States sought to **stem the growth of Communist military power and ideological influence**, create a stable global economy, and build an international security system. (WOR-4) (WOR-7) (WOR-8)
 - A. The United States developed a foreign policy based on **collective security** and a **multilateral economic framework** that bolstered **non-Communist nations**.
 - B. The United States sought to “**contain**” Soviet-dominated communism through a variety of measures, including military engagements in **Korea** and **Vietnam**.

Illustrative Examples: development of hydrogen bomb, massive retaliation, space race
- B. The **Cold War** fluctuated between periods of direct and indirect military confrontation and periods of mutual coexistence (or **détente**).

Thematic Learning Objectives

WOR-4 Explain how the U.S. involvement in global conflicts in the 20th century set the stage for domestic social changes.

WOR-7 Analyze the goals of U.S. policymakers in major international conflicts, such as the Cold War, and explain how U.S. involvement in these conflicts has altered the U.S. role in world affairs.

WOR-8 Explain how U.S. military and economic involvement in the developing world and issues such as terrorism and economic globalization have changed U.S. foreign policy goals since the middle of the 20th century

- II. As the United States focused on **containing communism**, it faced increasingly complex foreign policy issues, including **decolonization**, **shifting international alignments and regional conflicts**, and **global economic and environmental changes**. (ENV-5) (WOR-3) (WOR-7) (WOR-8)
- A. **Postwar decolonization** and the emergence of powerful nationalist movements in **Asia, Africa**, and the **Middle East** led both sides in the **Cold War** to seek allies among new nations, many of which remained nonaligned.
 - B. **Cold War** competition extended to **Latin America**, where the U.S. supported non-Communist regimes with varying levels of commitment to **democracy**.
 - C. Ideological, military, and economic concerns shaped U.S. involvement in the **Middle East**, with several **oil crises** in the region eventually sparking attempts at creating a **national energy policy**.

Illustrative Examples: Suez Crisis, OPEC

Thematic Learning Objectives

ENV-5 Explain how and why debates about and policies concerning the use of natural resources and the environment more generally have changed since the late 19th century.

WOR-3 Explain how the growing interconnection of the United States with worldwide economic, labor, and migration systems affected U.S. society since the late 19th century.

WOR-7 Analyze the goals of U.S. policymakers in major international conflicts, such as the Cold War, and explain how U.S. involvement in these conflicts has altered the U.S. role in world affairs.

WOR-8 Explain how U.S. military and economic involvement in the developing world and issues such as terrorism and economic globalization have changed U.S. foreign policy goals since the middle of the 20th century.

- III. **Cold War policies** led to continued public debates over the **power of the federal government**, acceptable means for pursuing international and domestic goals, and the **proper balance between liberty and order**. (ID-3) (POL-7) (WOR-4) (CUL-5)
- A. Americans debated policies and **methods designed to root out Communists** within the United States even as both parties tended to support the broader **Cold War strategy** of **containing communism**.
 - B. Although the **Korean conflict** produced some minor domestic opposition, the **Vietnam War** saw the rise of sizable, passionate, and sometimes violent **antiwar protests** that became more numerous as the war escalated.
 - C. Americans debated the merits of a large **nuclear arsenal**, the "**military-industrial complex**," and the appropriate **power of the executive branch** in conducting foreign and military policy.

Thematic Learning Objectives

ID-3 Analyze how U.S. involvement in international crises such as the Cold War influenced public debates about American national identity in the 20th century.

POL-7 Analyze how debates over civil rights and civil liberties have influenced political life from the early 20th century through the early 21st century.

WOR-4 Explain how the U.S. involvement in global conflicts in the 20th century set the stage for domestic, social changes.

CUL-5 Analyze ways that philosophical, moral, and scientific ideas were used to defend and challenge the dominant economic and social order in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Key Concept 8.2: Liberalism, based on anticommunism abroad and a firm belief in the efficacy of governmental and especially federal power to achieve social goals at home, reached its apex in the mid-1960s and generated a variety of political and cultural responses.

- I. Seeking to fulfill **Reconstruction-era promises**, **civil rights activists** and **political leaders** achieved some legal and political successes in ending **segregation**, although progress toward equality was slow and halting. (ID-8) (POL-3) (POL-4) (POL-7)
- A. Following World War II, civil rights activists utilized a **variety of strategies** — legal challenges, direct action, and nonviolent protest tactics — to combat racial discrimination.
- Illustrative Examples:* Fannie Lou Hamer, John Lewis, Thurgood Marshall
- B. Decision-makers in each of the three branches of the federal government used measures including **desegregation of the armed services**, ***Brown v. Board of Education***, and the **Civil Rights Act of 1964** to promote greater racial justice.
- C. Continuing **white resistance** slowed efforts at **desegregation**, sparking a series of **social and political crises** across the nation, while tensions among **civil rights activists** over tactical and philosophical issues increased after 1965.

Thematic Learning Objectives

ID-8 Explain how civil rights activism in the 20th century affected the growth of African American and other identity-based political and social movements.

POL-3 Explain how activist groups and reform movements, such as civil rights activists and social conservatives, have caused changes to state institutions and U.S. society.

POL-4 Analyze how and why the Great Society and the modern conservative movement all sought to change the federal government's role in U.S. political, social, and economic life.

POL-7 Analyze how debates over civil rights and civil liberties have influenced political life from the early 20th century through the early 21st century.

- II. Stirred by a growing awareness of inequalities in American society and by the **African American civil rights movement**, **activists** also addressed issues of identity and **social justice**, such as **gender/sexuality** and **ethnicity**. (POL-3) (ID-8)
- A. Activists began to question society's **assumptions about gender** and to call for social and economic equality for **women** and for **gays and lesbians**.
- Illustrative Examples:* *The Feminine Mystique*, Gloria Steinem
- B. **Latinos**, **American Indians**, and **Asian Americans** began to demand social and economic equality and a redress of past injustices.
- C. Despite the **perception of overall affluence** in postwar America, advocates raised awareness of the prevalence and persistence of **poverty** as a national problem, sparking efforts to address this issue.

Thematic Learning Objectives

POL-3 Explain how activist groups and reform movements, such as civil rights activists and social conservatives, have caused changes to state institutions and U.S. society.

ID-8 Explain how civil rights activism in the 20th century affected the growth of African American and other identity-based political and social movements.

- III. As many **liberal principles** came to dominate **postwar politics** and **court decisions**, **liberalism** came under attack from the left as well as from **resurgent conservative movements**. (POL-2) (POL-5) (POL-7)
- A. **Liberalism** reached its zenith with **Lyndon Johnson's Great Society** efforts to use federal power to end **racial discrimination**, eliminate **poverty**, and address other social issues while attacking **communism** abroad.
- B. **Liberal ideals** were realized in **Supreme Court decisions** that expanded **democracy** and **individual freedoms**, **Great Society** social programs and policies, and the **power of the federal government**, yet these unintentionally helped energize a new **conservative movement** that mobilized to defend **traditional visions of morality** and the **proper role of state authority**.

Illustrative Examples: *Griswold v. Connecticut, Miranda v. Arizona*

- B. **Groups on the left** also assailed **liberals**, claiming they did too little to transform the **racial and economic status quo** at home and pursued **immoral policies abroad**.

Illustrative Examples: Students for a Democratic Society, Black Panthers

Thematic Learning Objectives

POL-2 Explain how and why major party systems and political alignments arose and have changed from the early Republic through the end of the 20th century.

POL-5 Analyze how arguments over the meaning and interpretation of the Constitution have affected U.S. politics since 1787.

POL-7 Analyze how debates over civil rights and civil liberties have influenced political life from the early 20th century through the early 21st century.

Key Concept 8.3: Postwar economic, demographic, and technological changes had a far-reaching impact on American society, politics, and the environment.

- I. Rapid **economic and social changes** in American society fostered a **sense of optimism** in the postwar years, as well as underlying concerns about how these changes were affecting **American values**. (WXT-3) (WXT-5) (CUL-5) (CUL-6) (CUL-7) (PEO-3)
- A. A burgeoning **private sector**, continued **federal spending**, the **baby boom**, and **technological developments** helped spur economic growth, middle-class **suburbanization**, **social mobility**, a rapid expansion of **higher education**, and the rise of the "**Sun Belt**" as a political and economic force.
- B. These economic and social changes, in addition to the **anxiety engendered by the Cold War**, led to an increasingly **homogeneous mass culture**, as well as challenges to **conformity** by artists, intellectuals, and **rebellious youth**.
- Illustrative Examples:* Beat movement, *The Affluent Society*, rock and roll music
- C. **Conservatives**, fearing **juvenile delinquency**, **urban unrest**, and challenges to the **traditional family**, increasingly promoted their own values and ideology.

Thematic Learning Objectives

WXT-3 Explain how changes in transportation, technology, and the integration of the U.S. economy into world markets have influenced U.S. society since the Gilded Age.

WXT-5 Explain how and why different labor systems have developed, persisted, and changed since 1800 and how events such as the Civil War and industrialization shaped U.S. society and workers' lives.

CUL-5 Analyze ways that philosophical, moral, and scientific ideas were used to defend and challenge the dominant economic and social order in the 19th and 20th centuries.

CUL-6 Analyze the role of culture and the arts in 19th- and 20th-century movements for social and political change.

CUL-7 Explain how and why "modern" cultural values and popular culture have grown since the early 20th century and how they have affected American politics and society.

PEO-3 Analyze the causes and effects of major internal migration patterns such as urbanization, suburbanization, westward movement, and the Great Migration in the 19th and 20th centuries.

- II. As **federal programs** expanded and **economic growth** reshaped American society, many sought greater access to prosperity even as critics began to question the burgeoning use of **natural resources**. (ID-6) (PEO-2) (PEO-3) (PEO-7) (ENV-5) (WXT-8)
- A. **Internal migrants** as well as **migrants from around the world** sought access to the economic boom and other benefits of the United States, especially after the passage of **new immigration laws in 1965**.
 - B. Responding to the **abuse of natural resources** and the alarming **environmental problems**, **activists and legislators** began to call for **conservation measures** and a fight against **pollution**.

Illustrative Examples: Rachel Carson, Clean Air Act

Thematic Learning Objectives

ID-6 Analyze how migration patterns to, and migration within, the United States have influenced the growth of racial and ethnic identities and conflicts over ethnic assimilation and distinctiveness.

PEO-2 Explain how changes in the numbers and sources of international migrants in the 20th century altered the ethnic and social makeup of the U.S. population.

PEO-3 Analyze the causes and effects of major internal migration patterns such as suburbanization in the 20th century.

PEO-7 Explain how and why debates over immigration to the United States have changed since the turn of the 20th century.

ENV-5 Explain how and why debates about and policies concerning the use of natural resources and the environment more generally have changed since the late 19th century.

WXT-8 Explain how and why the role of the federal government in regulating economic life and the environment has changed since the end of the 19th century.

- III. **New demographic and social issues** led to significant **political and moral debates** that sharply divided the nation. (ID-7) (POL-5) (CUL-6) (CUL-7)
- A. Although the image of the **traditional nuclear family** dominated popular perceptions in the postwar era, the **family structure** of Americans was undergoing profound changes as the number of **working women** increased and many **social attitudes** changed.
 - B. **Young people** who participated in the **counterculture** of the 1960s rejected many of the social, economic, and political values of their parents' generation, initiated a **sexual revolution**, and introduced greater **informality** into **U.S. culture**.
 - C. **Conservatives** and **liberals** clashed over many new **social issues**, the **power of the presidency** and the **federal government**, and movements for greater **individual rights**.

Illustrative Examples: Watergate, *Bakke v. University of California*, Phyllis Schlafly

Thematic Learning Objectives

ID-7 Analyze how changes in class identity and gender roles have related to economic, social, and cultural transformations since the late 19th century.

POL-5 Analyze how arguments over the meaning and interpretation of the Constitution have affected U.S. politics since 1787.

CUL-6 Analyze the role of culture and the arts in 19th- and 20th-century movements for social and political change.

CUL-7 Explain how and why "modern" cultural values and popular culture have grown since the early 20th century and how they have affected American politics and society.