

College Board Concept Outline Period 9: 1980 to the Present

Directions: The Concept Outline below presents the required concepts and topics that students need to understand for the APUSH test. The statements in the outline focus on large-scale historical processes and major developments. Our course has focused on specific and significant historical evidence from the past that illustrate each of these developments and processes. Complete each table on the outline below by choosing two specific examples of relevant historical evidence that illustrate the concepts in greater detail. You may choose from among the ones provided OR provide one of your own. Define or describe the example and explain its significance to the thesis statement directly above the box.

Overview: As the United States transitioned to a new century filled with challenges and possibilities, it experienced renewed ideological and cultural debates, sought to redefine its foreign policy, and adapted to economic globalization and revolutionary changes in science and technology.

Key Concept 9.1: A new conservatism grew to prominence in U.S. culture and politics, defending traditional social values and rejecting liberal views about the role of government.

- I. Reduced public faith in the government’s ability to solve social and economic problems, the growth of religious fundamentalism, and the dissemination of neoconservative thought all combined to invigorate conservatism.
 - A. Public confidence and trust in government declined in the 1970s in the wake of economic challenges, political scandals, foreign policy “failures,” and a sense of social and moral decay.

Examples: OPEC oil embargo (1973), 1970s stagflation, Iranian hostage crisis (1979-1981)

Example	Definition/Description	Significance to the Thesis

- B. The rapid and substantial growth of evangelical and fundamentalist Christian churches and organizations, as well as increased political participation by some of those groups, encouraged significant opposition to liberal social and political trends.

Examples: Focus on the Family (1977), Moral Majority (1979)

Example	Definition/Description	Significance to the Thesis

- II. Conservatives achieved some of their political and policy goals, but their success was limited by the enduring popularity and institutional strength of some government programs and public support for cultural trends of recent decades.

- A. Conservatives enjoyed significant victories related to taxation and deregulation of many industries, but many conservative efforts to advance moral ideals through politics met inertia and opposition.

Examples: Reaganomics tax cuts (1981), George W. Bush tax cuts (2001), Contract with America (1994), *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* (1992)

Example	Definition/Description	Significance to the Thesis

- B. Although Republicans continued to denounce “big government,” the size and scope of the federal government continued to grow after 1980, as many programs remained popular with voters and difficult to reform or eliminate.

Examples: expansion of Medicare and Medicaid, growth of the budget deficits

Example	Definition/Description	Significance to the Thesis

Key Concept 9.2: The end of the Cold War and new challenges to U.S. leadership in the world forced the nation to redefine its foreign policy and global role.

- I. The Reagan administration pursued a reinvigorated anti-Communist and interventionist foreign policy that set the tone for later administrations.
 - A. President Ronald Reagan, who initially rejected détente with increased defense spending, military action, and bellicose rhetoric, later developed a friendly relationship with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, leading to significant arms reductions by both countries.

Examples: “Star Wars” missile defense system (1983), START I (1991)

Example	Definition/Description	Significance to the Thesis

- B. The end of the Cold War led to new diplomatic relationships but also new U.S. military and peacekeeping interventions, as well as debates over the nature and extent of American power in the world.

Examples: Iran-Contra scandal (1987), US-Soviet summit meetings (1985-1988), Persian Gulf War (1991)

Example	Definition/Description	Significance to the Thesis

- II. Following the attacks of September 11, 2001, U.S. foreign policy and military involvement focused on a war on terrorism, which also generated debates about domestic security and civil rights.

- A. In the wake of attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, U.S. decision-makers launched foreign policy and military efforts against terrorism and lengthy, controversial conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Examples: Operation Nobel Eagle (2001), War on Terror (2001), Department of Homeland Security (2002)

Example	Definition/Description	Significance to the Thesis

- B. The war on terrorism sought to improve security within the United States but also raised questions about the protection of civil liberties and human rights.

Examples: Patriot Act (2001), Guantanamo detainees

Example	Definition/Description	Significance to the Thesis

Key Concept 9.3: Moving into the 21st century, the nation continued to experience challenges stemming from social, economic, and demographic changes.

- I. The increasing integration of the U.S. into the world economy was accompanied by economic instability and major policy, social, and environmental challenges.

- A. Economic inequality increased after 1980 as U.S. manufacturing jobs were eliminated, union membership declined, and real wages stagnated for the middle class.

Examples: Reaganomics, Air Traffic Control Strike (1981)

Example	Definition/Description	Significance to the Thesis

- B. Policy debates intensified over free trade agreements, the size and scope of the government social safety net, and calls to reform the U.S. financial system.

Examples: North American Free Trade Agreement (1994), Affordable Health Care Act of 2010, Social Security reform.

Example	Definition/Description	Significance to the Thesis

- C. Conflict in the Middle East and concerns about climate change led to debates over U.S. dependence on fossil fuels and the impact of economic consumption on the environment.

Examples: Global warming, Al Gore, Keystone pipeline

Example	Definition/Description	Significance to the Thesis

D. The spread of computer technology and the Internet into daily life increased access to information and led to new social behaviors and networks.

Examples: Facebook (2004), Wikileaks (2010), Y2K (2000), Microsoft violation of Sherman Antitrust Act (2000)

Example	Definition/Description	Significance to the Thesis

II. The U.S. population continued to undergo significant demographic shifts that had profound cultural and political consequences.

A. After 1980, the political, economic, and cultural influences of the American South and West continued to increase as population shifted to those areas, fueled in part by a surge in migration from regions that had not been heavily represented in earlier migrations, especially Latin America and Asia.

Examples:

Example	Definition/Description	Significance to the Thesis

- B. The new migrants affected U.S. culture in many ways and supplied the economy with an important labor force, but they also became the focus of intense political, economic, and cultural debates.

Examples: Welfare Reform Act of 1996, No Child Left Behind (2002)

Example	Definition/Description	Significance to the Thesis

- C. Demographic changes intensified debates about gender roles, family structures, and racial and national identity.

Examples: Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, Repeal of “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” policy (2011)

Example	Definition/Description	Significance to the Thesis