



***Essential Standards* for High School Social Studies Courses**

North Carolina Assessment Specifications Summary

NC Final Exams for World History, American History I, American History II, and Civics & Economics

Purpose of the Assessments

- Measures of Student Learning: North Carolina's Final Exams for High School Social Studies courses will measure students' academic progress in the *Essential Standards*, adopted by the North Carolina State Board of Education in June 2010.
- NC Final Exam scores (along with any other relevant end-of-course or end-of-grade assessment scores) will be used in the Educational Value Added Assessment System (EVAAS) to produce student growth measures to satisfy Standards 6 and 8 of the North Carolina Educator Evaluation System.
- For more information on the North Carolina Educator Evaluation System go to <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/effectiveness-model/>.
- NC Final Exams were developed to replace locally developed assessments, providing teachers and principals with a common measure for all students state-wide during a given testing window.
- For high school courses, NC Final Exams will count at minimum 20% toward the student's final course grade.
- NC Final Exams will not be used for school and district accountability under the READY Accountability Model or for Federal reporting purposes.

Curriculum Cycle

- 2010: North Carolina State Board of Education adoption of the *Essential Standards*.
- 2011–2012: Item development begins for the Common Exams and later the NC Final Exams.
- 2012–2013: Operational administration of the Common Exams.
- 2012–2013: Redesign and subsequent first operational administration of the NC Final Exams.

Standards

- The *Essential Standards* are posted at: <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/acre/standards/new-standards>.

Prioritization of Standards

□ The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction invited teachers to collaborate and develop recommendations for a prioritization of the standards indicating the relative importance of each standard, the anticipated instructional time, and the appropriateness of the standard for multiple-choice and constructed response item formats. Subsequently, curriculum and test development staff from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction met to review the results from the teacher panels and to develop weight distributions across the domains for each grade level.

□ Tables 1 through 4 describe the range of percentage of score points that will appear on a given form of the NC Final Exams in World History, American History I, American History II, and Civics and Economics. All of these NC Final Exams will contain both multiple choice (MC) items and a constructed response (CR) item. The MC items are worth one point each and the CR item is worth two points. In order to ensure that the four dimensions of historical thinking remain central to the history tests, item developers incorporated standard 2 (Tables 1-3) across as many MC and CR history items as possible. The table of weights describe the percent of total score points, rather than the percent of total items.

Table 1. Test Specification Weights for the NC Final Exam for World History

Standard 1	Standard 2	Percent of Total Score Points
WH.2	WH.1	16% to 20%
WH.3	WH.1	8% to 12%
WH.4	WH.1	8% to 12%
WH.5	WH.1	8% to 12%
WH.6	WH.1	8% to 12%
WH.7	WH.1	16% to 20%
WH.8	WH.1	24% to 27%

Table 2. Test Specification Weights for the NC Final Exam for American History I

Standard 1	Standard 2	Percent of Total Score Points
AH1.H.2	AH1.H.1	8% to 12%
AH1.H.3	AH1.H.1	13% to 17%
AH1.H.4	AH1.H.1	31% to 35%
AH1.H.5	AH1.H.1	11% to 15%
AH1.H.6	AH1.H.1	8% to 12%
AH1.H.7	AH1.H.1	13% to 17%
AH1.H.8	AH1.H.1	3% to 7%

Table 3. Test Specification Weights for the NC Final Exam for American History II

Standard 1	Standard 2	Percent of Total Score Points
AH2.H.2	AH2.H.1	13% to 17%
AH2.H.3	AH2.H.1	18% to 22%
AH2.H.4	AH2.H.1	21% to 27%
AH2.H.5	AH2.H.1	11% to 15%
AH2.H.6	AH2.H.1	11% to 15%
AH2.H.7	AH2.H.1	11% to 15%
AH2.H.8	AH2.H.1	3% to 7%

Table 4. Test Specification Weights for the NC Final Exam for Civics and Economics

Standard	Percent of Total Score Points
CE.C&G.1	8% to 12%
CE.C&G.2	11% to 15%
CE.C&G.3	13% to 17%
CE.C&G.4	3% to 7%
CE.C&G.5	3% to 7%
CE.PFL.	21% to 25%
CE.E.	28% to 32%

Cognitive Rigor

The items on the NC Final Exams in Social Studies were aligned to the Essential Standards using the Revised Bloom’s Taxonomy (RBT). To learn more about RBT go to: <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/acre/standards/>.

Types of Items

The NC Final Exams will consist of four-response-option Multiple-Choice (MC) items and a Constructed Response (CR) item.

The CR item allows students to demonstrate their understanding of social studies concepts by using facts to support ideas through written expression. The answer sheet may be reviewed at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/accountability/common-exams/mccr.pdf>.

Many of the items will require students to process factual content as they read, interpret, and/or analyze stimulus material, including maps, graphs, and excerpts of primary and secondary-source documents.

Sample items, released items, and released forms are available at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/common-exams/>.

Testing Structure and Time

- The NC Final Exams of World History, American History I, and American History II will contain 42 items: 41 MC items and 1 CR item.
- The NC Final Exam of Civics and Economics will contain 45 items: 44 MC items and 1 CR item.
- Included in the total item counts are embedded field test items that will not count toward the students score but will be used for purposes of developing items for future test forms.
- Students will be given 120 minutes to answer all test questions. Students should monitor the clock to ensure they allow themselves adequate time to respond to all test questions.

Delivery Mode

- The NC Final Exams are designed for a paper/pencil delivery mode only.