



# 2015–2016 NC Final Exams of World History, American History I, American History II, and American History: The Founding Principles, Civics, and Economics

## North Carolina Assessment Specifications

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### **Purpose of the Assessments**

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.

North Carolina’s Final Exams for High School Social Studies courses will measure students’ academic progress in the NC *Essential Standards*, adopted by the North Carolina State Board of Education in June 2010. The NC *Essential Standards* are posted at:

<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/acre/standards/new-standards>.

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 State Board of Education policy GCS-A-016 directs schools to use the results from all course-specific NC Final Exams as a minimum of 20% of the student’s final course grade.

<http://sbepolicy.dpi.state.nc.us/>

NC Final Exams will not be used for school and district accountability under the READY Accountability Model or for Federal reporting purposes.

### **Developing Assessments**

North Carolina educators were recruited and trained to write new items for the NC Final Exams. The diversity among the item writers and their knowledge of the current standards was addressed during recruitment. Trained North Carolina educators also review items and suggest improvements, if necessary. The use of North Carolina educators to develop and review items strengthens the instructional validity of the items. If a teacher is interested in training to become an item writer or reviewer for the North Carolina Testing Program, he/she can visit

[https://center.ncsu.edu/nc/x\\_courseNav/index.php?id=21](https://center.ncsu.edu/nc/x_courseNav/index.php?id=21).

For an in-depth explanation of the test development process see State Board policy GCS-A-013 or reference <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/testing/shared/testdevprocess>.

## Curriculum and Assessment Cycle

- 2010: North Carolina State Board of Education adoption of the *NC Essential Standards*.
- 2012–13: Operational administration of the Measures of Student Learning: Common Exams.
- 2013–14: Redesign and subsequent first operational administration of the NC Final Exams.
- 2014–15: Second operational administration of the NC Final Exams.
- 2015–16: Third operational administration of the NC Final Exams.

## Prioritization of Standards

Members of the Test Development section of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) 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.

Tables 1–4 describe the percentage range of total score points that will appear on the NC Final Exam forms. All of these NC Final Exams will contain both multiple-choice items and a constructed response item. The multiple-choice items are worth one point each and the constructed response 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 1 across as many items as possible. The table of test specification weights describe the percent of total score points, rather than the percent of total items.

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

Standard 1	Standard 2	Percent of Total Score Points
WH.1	WH.2	16% to 20%
WH.1	WH.3	8% to 12%
WH.1	WH.4	8% to 12%
WH.1	WH.5	8% to 12%
WH.1	WH.6	8% to 12%
WH.1	WH.7	12% to 16%
WH.1	WH.8	20% to 24%
Total		100%

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

Standard 1	Standard 2	Percent of Total Score Points
AH1.H.1	AH1.H.2	12% to 18%
AH1.H.1	AH1.H.3	10% to 15%
AH1.H.1	AH1.H.4	25% to 30%
AH1.H.1	AH1.H.5	11% to 15%
AH1.H.1	AH1.H.6	8% to 12%
AH1.H.1	AH1.H.7	13% to 17%
AH1.H.1	AH1.H.8	3% to 7%
Total		100%

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

Standard 1	Standard 2	Percent of Total Score Points
AH2.H.1	AH2.H.2	15% to 20%
AH2.H.1	AH2.H.3	18% to 22%
AH2.H.1	AH2.H.4	15% to 21%
AH2.H.1	AH2.H.5	11% to 15%
AH2.H.1	AH2.H.6	11% to 15%
AH2.H.1	AH2.H.7	12% to 16%
AH2.H.1	AH2.H.8	3% to 7%
Total		100%

*Table 4. Test Specification Weights for the American History: The Founding Principles, Civics, and Economics NC Final Exam*

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%
Total	100%

### **Cognitive Rigor**

The items on the NC Final Exams in Social Studies were aligned to the NC *Essential Standards* using the Revised Bloom’s Taxonomy (RBT).

### **Types of Items and Supplementary Materials**

The NC Final Exams will consist of four-response-option multiple-choice items and two constructed response items.

The constructed response item type allows students to demonstrate their understanding of social studies concepts by using facts to support ideas through written expression. Students taking the exam on paper will write their responses on the lines provided on the answer sheet. Students must not write beyond the end of the lines or in the margins. Words written in the margins or unlined areas of the answer sheet will not be scored. Students must not add more lines to the answer sheet. Words written on extra lines will not be scored. Scorers will review student responses according to a rubric developed to the expectations outlined in the item. Students should respond in complete sentences. The answer sheet (i.e., Multiple-Choice and Constructed Response) may be reviewed at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/common-exams/answer-sheets/>. The answer sheet may be shared with students to familiarize them with the expectations.

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.

A complete list of the supplemental test materials (i.e., *NC Final Exams Materials List*) may be reviewed at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/common-exams/>.

Released items are available at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/common-exams/released-items/>. Released items may be used by school systems to help acquaint students with items. These materials must not be used for personal or financial gain.

### Testing Structure and Test Administration Time

The NC Final Exams of World History, American History I, and American History II will contain 40 items: 38 multiple-choice items and two constructed response items.

The NC Final Exam of American History: The Founding Principles, Civics, and Economics will contain 43 items: 41 multiple-choice items and two constructed response items.

Included in the total item counts are embedded multiple-choice field test items that will not count toward the students score but will be used for purposes of developing items for future test forms.

The exams include two constructed response items. One constructed response item is an embedded field test item and will not be included in the student's score but will be used for purposes of developing items for future test forms. One constructed response item is operational and will be included in the student's score. The operational constructed response item is worth 2 points.

NC Final Exam 2015–16	Number of Operational Items	Number of Field Test Items*	Total Number of Items
World History	34 multiple-choice, 1 constructed response	4 multiple-choice, 1 constructed response	40
American History I	34 multiple-choice, 1 constructed response	4 multiple-choice, 1 constructed response	40
American History II	34 multiple-choice, 1 constructed response	4 multiple-choice, 1 constructed response	40
American History: The Founding Principles, Civics, and Economics	36 multiple-choice, 1 constructed response	5 multiple-choice, 1 constructed response	43

\*Field test items 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 items.

Appendices A-D show the number of operational items for each clarifying objective for the 2015–16 exams. Note that future coverage of objectives could vary within the constraints of the test specifications weights in *Tables 1–4*.

### **Test Cycle and Delivery Mode**

The NC Final Exams are administered to students enrolled in fall and spring courses. A list of course codes that align with the 2015–2016 NC Final Exams (i.e., *Course Codes that Align with the NC Final Exams*) is available at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/common-exams/>.

The NC Final Exams are administered through NCTest, the NCDPI's online assessment platform. Paper editions are available.

**Appendix A**  
**World History NC Final Exam 2015–16**  
**Number of Operational Items by Clarifying Objectives**

The following table shows the number of operational (scored) test items for each clarifying objective. Note that future coverage of objectives could vary within the constraints of the test specification weights in *Tables 1–4*. Some objectives not designated with tested items (i.e., “–”) may be a prerequisite objective, may be tested within the context of another objective or may be included as an embedded field test item.

World History Clarifying Objectives	Number of Operational Items Per Objective*
<b>Analyze ancient civilizations and empires in terms of their development, growth and lasting impact.</b>	
WH.H.2.1	–
WH.H.2.2	2
WH.H.2.3	–
WH.H.2.4	1
WH.H.2.5	–
WH.H.2.6	2
WH.H.2.7	–
WH.H.2.8	1
WH.H.2.9	–
<b>Understand how conflict and innovation influenced political, religious, economic and social changes in medieval civilizations.</b>	
WH.H.3.1	–
WH.H.3.2	2
WH.H.3.3	2
WH.H.3.4	–
<b>Analyze the political, economic, social and cultural factors that lead to the development of the first age of global interaction.</b>	
WH.H.4.1	1
WH.H.4.2	1
WH.H.4.3	1
WH.H.4.4	1
<b>Analyze exploration and expansion in terms of its motivations and impact.</b>	
WH.H.5.1	–
WH.H.5.2	–
WH.H.5.3	3
WH.H.5.4	1

<b>Understand the Age of Revolutions and Rebellions.</b>	
WH.H.6.1	2
WH.H.6.2	2
WH.H.6.3	–
WH.H.6.4	–
<b>Understand how national, regional, and ethnic interests have contributed to conflict among groups and nations in the modern era.</b>	
WH.H.7.1	1
WH.H.7.2	–
WH.H.7.3	1
WH.H.7.4	2
WH.H.7.5	1
WH.H.7.6	–
<b>Analyze global interdependence and shifts in power in terms of political, economic, social and environmental changes and conflicts since the last half of the twentieth century.</b>	
WH.H.8.1	1
WH.H.8.2	2
WH.H.8.3	3
WH.H.8.4	–
WH.H.8.5	1
WH.H.8.6	1
WH.H.8.7	–

\* Some objectives not designated with tested items (i.e., “–”) may be a prerequisite objective, may be tested within the context of another objective or may be included as an embedded field test item.

**Appendix B**  
**American History I NC Final Exam 2015–16**  
**Number of Operational Items by Clarifying Objectives**

The following table shows the number of operational (scored) test items for each clarifying objective. Note that future coverage of objectives could vary within the constraints of the test specification weights in *Tables 1–4*. Some objectives not designated with tested items (i.e., “–”) may be a prerequisite objective, may be tested within the context of another objective or may be included as an embedded field test item.

American History I Clarifying Objectives	Number of Operational Items Per Objective*
<b>Analyze key political, economic and social turning points in American History using historical thinking.</b>	
AH1.H.2.1	1
AH1.H.2.2	5
<b>Understand the factors that led to exploration, settlement, movement, and expansion and their impact on United States development over time.</b>	
AH1.H.3.1	2
AH1.H.3.2	2
AH1.H.3.3	1
AH1.H.3.4	–
<b>Analyze how conflict and compromise have shaped politics, economics and culture in the United States.</b>	
AH1.H.4.1	3
AH1.H.4.2	3
AH1.H.4.3	1
AH1.H.4.4	3
<b>Understand how tensions between freedom, equality and power have shaped the political, economic and social development of the United States.</b>	
AH1.H.5.1	2
AH1.H.5.2	3
<b>Understand how and why the role of the United States in the world has changed over time.</b>	
AH1.H.6.1	2
AH1.H.6.2	1
<b>Understand the impact of war on American politics, economics, society and culture.</b>	
AH1.H.7.1	2
AH1.H.7.2	1
AH1.H.7.3	2

<b>Analyze the relationship between progress, crisis and the “American Dream” within the United States.</b>	
AH1.H.8.1	1
AH1.H.8.2	–
AH1.H.8.3	–
AH1.H.8.4	–

\* Some objectives not designated with tested items (i.e., “–”) may be a prerequisite objective, may be tested within the context of another objective or may be included as an embedded field test item.

**Appendix C**  
**American History II NC Final Exam 2015–16**  
**Number of Operational Items by Clarifying Objectives**

The following table shows the number of operational (scored) test items for each clarifying objective. Note that future coverage of objectives could vary within the constraints of the test specification weights in *Tables 1–4*. Some objectives not designated with tested items (i.e., “–”) may be a prerequisite objective, may be tested within the context of another objective or may be included as an embedded field test item.

American History II Clarifying Objectives	Number of Operational Items Per Objective
<b>Analyze key political, economic and social turning points in American History using historical thinking.</b>	
AH2.H.2.1	2
AH2.H.2.2	5
<b>Understand the factors that led to exploration, settlement, movement, and expansion and their impact on United States development over time.</b>	
AH2.H.3.1	5
AH2.H.3.2	–
AH2.H.3.3	2
AH2.H.3.4	–
<b>Analyze how conflict and compromise have shaped politics, economics and culture in the United States.</b>	
AH2.H.4.1	2
AH2.H.4.2	3
AH2.H.4.3	1
AH2.H.4.4	–
<b>Understand how tensions between freedom, equality and power have shaped the political, economic and social development of the United States.</b>	
AH2.H.5.1	3
AH2.H.5.2	2
<b>Understand how and why the role of the United States in the world has changed over time.</b>	
AH2.H.6.1	4
AH2.H.6.2	–
<b>Understand the impact of war on American politics, economics, society and culture.</b>	
AH2.H.7.1	2
AH2.H.7.2	1
AH2.H.7.3	2
<b>Analyze the relationship between progress, crisis and the “American Dream” within the United States.</b>	
AH2.H.8.1	–
AH2.H.8.2	1

**Appendix D**  
**American History: The Founding Principles, Civics, and Economics NC Final Exam**  
**2015–16**

**Number of Operational Items by Clarifying Objectives**

The following table shows the number of operational (scored) test items for each clarifying objective. Note that future coverage of objectives could vary within the constraints of the test specification weights in *Tables 1–4*. Some objectives not designated with tested items (i.e., “–”) may be a prerequisite objective, may be tested within the context of another objective or may be included as an embedded field test item.

American History: The Founding Principles, Civics, and Economics Clarifying Objectives	Number of Operational Items Per Objective*
<b>Analyze the foundations and development of American government in terms of principles and values.</b>	
FP.C&G.1.1	–
FP.C&G.1.2	1
FP.C&G.1.3	–
FP.C&G.1.4	1
FP.C&G.1.5	1
<b>Analyze government systems within the United States in terms of their structure, function and relationships.</b>	
FP.C&G.2.1	1
FP.C&G.2.2	–
FP.C&G.2.3	–
FP.C&G.2.4	3
FP.C&G.2.5	–
FP.C&G.2.6	–
FP.C&G.2.7	–
FP.C&G.2.8	1
<b>Analyze the legal system within the United States in terms of the development, execution and protection of citizenship rights at all levels of government.</b>	
FP.C&G.3.1	2
FP.C&G.3.2	1
FP.C&G.3.3	–
FP.C&G.3.4	–
FP.C&G.3.5	1
FP.C&G.3.6	1
FP.C&G.3.7	–
FP.C&G.3.8	–

<b>Understand how democracy depends upon the active participation of citizens.</b>	
FP.C&G.4.1	1
FP.C&G.4.2	–
FP.C&G.4.3	–
FP.C&G.4.4	–
FP.C&G.4.5	1
<b>Analyze how political and legal systems within and outside of the United States provide a means to balance competing interests and resolve conflicts.</b>	
FP.C&G.5.1	1
FP.C&G.5.2	–
FP.C&G.5.3	–
FP.C&G.5.4	1
FP.C&G.5.5	–
<b>Analyze the concepts and factors that enable individuals to make informed financial decisions for effective resource planning.</b>	
FP.PFL.1.1	–
FP.PFL.1.2	1
FP.PFL.1.3	–
FP.PFL.1.4	–
FP.PFL.1.5	1
FP.PFL.1.6	2
<b>Understand how risk management strategies empower and protect consumers.</b>	
FP.PFL.2.1	2
FP.PFL.2.2	1
FP.PFL.2.3	1
FP.PFL.2.4	1
FP.PFL.2.5	–
<b>Understand economies, markets and the role economic factors play in making economic decisions.</b>	
FP.E.1.1	1
FP.E.1.2	–
FP.E.1.3	2
FP.E.1.4	–
FP.E.1.5	–
FP.E.1.6	–

<b>Understand factors of economic interdependence and their impact on nations.</b>	
FP.E.2.1	–
FP.E.2.2	2
FP.E.2.3	1
FP.E.2.4	–
<b>Analyze the role of government and economic institutions in developing and implementing economic stabilization policies in the U.S.</b>	
FP.E.3.1	2
FP.E.3.2	1
FP.E.3.3	2

\* Some objectives not designated with tested items (i.e., “–”) may be a prerequisite objective, may be tested within the context of another objective or may be included as an embedded field test item.