



American Planning Association
Pennsylvania Chapter
Making Great Communities Happen

AICP Exam Prep

Professional Development Committee

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Today's Agenda

- ❖ Why/What of AICP
- ❖ Eligibility and Application
- ❖ Background and Tips
- ❖ Content



What is AICP – American Institute of Certified Planners?

- ❖ APA's professional institute
- ❖ To be AICP, a planner must:
 - meet requirements for education and experience,
 - pass the AICP exam,
 - pledge to uphold ethical standards (AICP Code of Ethics), and
 - engage in ongoing professional development (Certification Maintenance)



Why AICP?

- ❖ Demonstration to elected officials, community leaders, and employers of a commitment to excellence
- ❖ Potential employment
- ❖ Salary survey



Eligibility

- ❖ Current APA member
- ❖ Submit online application meeting education and experience criteria
- ❖ Fee of \$485
- ❖ Pass exam

APA website –
www.planning.org and the
Exam Candidate Bulletin for
all the details



Education and Experience Criteria

- ❖ Education
 - Graduate planning degree (PAB): 2 years
 - Bachelors planning degree (PAB): 3 years
 - Graduate planning degree (non-PAB): 3 years
 - Other degree: 4 years
 - No college degree: 8 years
- ❖ Experience – *Professional Planning as defined by AICP*
 - Apply a planning process appropriate to the situation
 - Employ an appropriately comprehensive point of view
 - Involve a professional level of responsibility and resourcefulness
 - Influence public decision making in the public interest



Education and Experience

- ❖ Verifications!!!
 - For degrees and all employment you are claiming as professional planning experience
 - Check dates carefully



Test Windows – 2 weeks

- ❖ May: Application due in January after being open for approximately 5 weeks; response in March
- ❖ November: Application due in July after being open for approximately 5 weeks; response in September
- ❖ Early bird: new process that allows you to hear back sooner
- ❖ Approvals and incompletes are notified by email
- ❖ Denials are issued by letter



Need to know...

- ❖ Schedule on your own with Prometric
- ❖ Approvals are good for 4 exam cycles, but need to inform APA if not taking the exam in the next window
- ❖ APA Exam Bulletin and APA staff for any questions – don't wait until its too late



Test Background

- ❖ 170 multiple choice questions, including 20 sample questions
- ❖ 3 ½ hours to complete (brief tutorial before exam)
- ❖ Scoring on a scale, pass rate is approximately 65%
- ❖ Test centers
 - Arrive 30 minutes early for paperwork
 - Take required IDs – make sure name and spelling is matching
 - Calculator/paper/pencil provided
- ❖ Study early and often
 - Identify weak areas
 - Study groups and practice exams



Test Tips

Study Materials from PA Chapter



www.planningpa.org
****AICP Exam under Career Center****

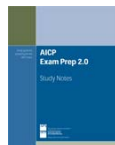
- ❖ Prior Prep Session PowerPoints
- ❖ Ethics presentation and scenarios
- ❖ PDC Study Notes
- ❖ Other Chapter information (NC, WA, WI, RI, FL)



Test Tips

Study Materials from APA

www.planning.org and www.planning.org/certification/examprep



- ❖ AICP Exam Prep 2.0
- ❖ Ethics Code and Information/PowerPoints
- ❖ Policy Guides (latest is on climate)
- ❖ Top 25s (25th Anniversary): Planning Stories, Cases in Planning and Environmental Law, APA Award Winners, Most Significant Planning Laws (1978 – 2003), Individuals Who Influenced Planning Before 1978
<http://myapa.planning.org/25anniversary> or Google
- ❖ Timeline of American Planning History (or Pathways) – APA website or Google to find this listing from 1785 to 2000



History, Theory, and Law – 15%

- ❖ History of planning – refer to Green Book and Timelines (or Pathways) of American Planning History, know people and events, philosophies and movements
- ❖ Planning law – amendments (1, 5, and 14) and case law
- ❖ Theory of planning - synoptic rationality, incremental, transactive, advocacy, radical, utopianism
- ❖ Patterns of human settlement



Plan Making and Implementation – 30%

- ❖ Visioning and goal setting
- ❖ Quantitative and qualitative research methods
- ❖ Collecting, organizing, analyzing and reporting data
- ❖ Demographics and economics
- ❖ Natural and built environment
- ❖ Land use and development regulations
- ❖ Application of legal principles
- ❖ Environmental analysis
- ❖ Growth management techniques
- ❖ Budgets and financing options
- ❖ GIS/spatial analysis and information systems
- ❖ Policy analysis and decision making
- ❖ Development plan and project review
- ❖ Program evaluation
- ❖ Communications techniques
- ❖ Intergovernmental relationships
- ❖ Stakeholder relationships
- ❖ Project and program management



Functional Areas of Practice – 25%

- ❖ Community development
- ❖ Comprehensive or long range planning
- ❖ Development regulation or administration
- ❖ Economic development and revitalization
- ❖ Economic analysis and forecasting
- ❖ Educational, institutional, or military facilities planning
- ❖ Energy policy
- ❖ Food system planning
- ❖ Growth management
- ❖ Hazard mitigation and disaster planning
- ❖ Historic preservation
- ❖ Housing
- ❖ Infrastructure
- ❖ Labor force or employment
- ❖ Land use
- ❖ Natural resources and the environment
- ❖ Parks, open space, and recreation
- ❖ Planning law
- ❖ Policy planning
- ❖ Public services
- ❖ Social and health services
- ❖ Transportation
- ❖ Urban design

Understand the history, legislative background, terminology, and implementation tools for these topics



Spatial Areas of Practice – 15%

- ❖ Planning at national level (environmental, housing, transportation)
- ❖ Planning for multi-state or bi-state regions (TVA, transportation)
- ❖ Planning for state (environmental)
- ❖ Planning for sub-state region (Outer Banks)
- ❖ Planning at county level (hazard mitigation planning, growth management)
- ❖ Planning for urban areas (infill, redevelopment)
- ❖ Planning for suburban areas (old and new, sprawl, infrastructure)
- ❖ Planning for small town (infrastructure, economic opportunity)
- ❖ Corridors (transportation, environmental)
- ❖ Neighborhoods (access to services, walkability)
- ❖ Waterfronts (hazard mitigation, access and economic opportunity)
- ❖ Historic districts or areas (National Register and local)
- ❖ Downtowns (mixed use, signage, events/tourism)



**Why plan at all of these different levels?
Because the resource demands it.**



Public Participation and Social Justice – 10%

- ❖ Public involvement planning
- ❖ Public participation techniques
- ❖ Identifying, engaging, and serving underserved groups
- ❖ Social justice issues, literature, and practice
- ❖ Working with diverse communities
- ❖ Coalition building

*Understand techniques and how they function
and when they are best used*

Know names - Alinsky, Davidoff, Arnstein

*Understand basic social justice issues and
approaches to solving them*



AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct – 5%

- ❖ Three major sections
 - Principles to Which We Aspire – responsibility to the public, clients, employers, profession, and colleagues, no sanctions for violating
 - Our Rules of Conduct - 25 rules that you can be sanctioned for violating, many on accurate information and conflict of interest
 - Our Code Procedures – informal advice, formal advice, charges of misconduct



*"We need to draw the line on unethical behavior.
But let's draw it with an Inch-a-Sketch and
don't be afraid to shake it a little."*



