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

AP 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)
- Timeline of American Planning History (or Pathways) – APA website or Google to find this listing from 1785 to 2000
Test Tips

Other Sources
- Chapter Presidents Council manual – newly updated
- www.planetizen.com
- www.studystack.com (search AICP)
- www.oyez.org (legal)
- online forums?

Practice exams are critical!

Test Tips

Reading Materials

Test Tips

- Get plenty of rest for the exam
- Dress in layers
- Eat before the exam
- Arrive early
- Answer every question
- Use the “marking” option
- Think of answer before reviewing choices
- Skim answers before reading long questions
- Do math twice
- Think national
### 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