So you want to take the AICP Exam...
Secrets of Effective Exam Preparation

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The Value of AICP Certification

- Setting Professional Standards through improvement in the Planning Practice and Code of Ethics.
- Professional Development and Education.
- Recognized Nationally.
- Upward Mobility.
- Higher Salary.
Founding of AICP

Frederick Olmsted, Jr.
## Evolution of AICP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1917</td>
<td>American City Planning Institute (ACPI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>Association of Planning Officials (ASPO)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1939</td>
<td>American Institute of Planners (AIP)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>American Planning Association (APA)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>American Institute of Certified Planners</td>
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AICP Exam: Basic Facts

- Multiple Choice Format

- 170 Questions:
  150 Regular Questions + 20 Experimental

- Administered by Prometric

- Passing Score: Scaled Score of 55

- Pass Rate: 60%
AICP Exam Subject Categories

I. History, Theory and Law
II. Plan Making and Implementation
III. Functional Areas of Practice
IV. Spatial Areas of Practice
V. Public Participation and Social Justice
VI. AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Years of Experience</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Masters Planning Degree from PAB Accredited Institution</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Masters Planning Degree from Non-Accredited Institution</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any Other Graduate or Post Graduate Degree</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Degree</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Two Exam Taking Windows:
Two Weeks in May & November
It’s futile to guess about exam content!
Key to Success:
Effective Exam Preparation
Why do Smart People Fail the AICP Exam?

Exam Misperceptions: Misleading information about the exam.

Exam Mis-Preparation: Preparing the wrong way.
Exam Misperceptions
Myth # 1:
“It was Easy!”

"I'm a genius!"
Myth # 2:
“I passed the exam, but I didn’t prepare for it!”

“I'm a genius!”
Myth # 3:
“If you have a planning degree you don’t need to prepare for the AICP Exam!”
Myth # 4:

“If you have 10+ years of experience, you don’t need to prepare for the AICP Exam!”
Myth # 5:
“The questions on the AICP Exam are the same every year.”
Myth # 6:
“The AICP Exam is just like the GRE and SAT.”
Myth # 7:

“You can prepare for the exam just by reading Local Planning: Contemporary Principles and Practice”
Myth #8:

“You can learn concepts covered in the AICP Exam drilling with Multiple Choice questions.”

A IS CORRECT

BUT B IS MORE CORRECT
Myth # 9:

“AICP covers a greater proportion of topics in comparison to others in a predictable fashion.”
Myth #10:
“You can prepare for the AICP Exam at your own pace.”
Exam Mis-Preparation
Prepare Beyond the Workshop

Workshops are useful. Attend as many as you can...

but what you do in between workshops is even more important.
Over-Reliance on Exam Auditing

Auditing provides realistic perceptions of the AICP Exam

But it can’t be used to predict content on next year’s exam.
Study Groups

Good Study Group:  Bad Study Group:
Over-Reliance on Practice Questions

Unit 1 Multiple Choice Questions – Human Geography

1. Newspaper delivery areas are an example of which type of region?
   A. Formal
   B. Functional
   C. Statistical
   D. Geographical
   E. Vernacular

2. Who was the first to coin the term geography?
   A. Plato
   B. Aristotle
   C. Eratosthenes
   D. Zheng He
   E. Socrates

3. The linking of places by common traits or characteristics is defined as:
   A. place
   B. location
   C. region
   D. area
   E. Zone

4. What geographical approach suggests that humans possess the ability to dominate their environment
   rather than that they are defined by their environment?
   A. Anthropic approach
   B. Temporistic approach
   C. Environmental determinist approach
   D. Sociology approach
   E. Fossilist approach

5. What is the term for the phenomenon that the further a feature moves from a beach, the less dominant
   it is?
   A. Coastal place
   B. Concomitance circle
   C. Regional analysis
   D. Distance decay
   E. Sequent occupation

6. If an area has objects in it that are tightly arranged, it is said to be what?
   A. Dense
   B. Clustered
   C. Dispersed
   D. Scattered
   E. Regionalized
The Road to Passing the AICP Exam
Cover a Broad Range of Topics

Breadth, not depth.
Cover Each Topical Area with Equal Importance

Keep Your Bases Covered!
Don’t just memorize, LEARN!
Focus on your weak areas.
Make Self-Study the Foundation of Your Preparation
Select Study Locations with Care

Here:

Not Here:
Focus on Federal Legislation and Standards

This:

Not This:
Focus on Key Words

Case:
Village of Euclid Ohio Vs. Ambler Realty

Police Power
Look for Logical Trends in Planning History

From City Beautiful

To City Efficient
Use Practice Exams for Self-Evaluation
Read Planning Magazine Religiously
Start Early!

May 2014 Exam Date?

Start Preparing in May 2013
Only Use Up-to-Date Texts

This:

Not This:

If it's Green, it's Obsolete!
Don’t Use Someone Else’s Study Cards
Write up Your Own!
Choose Exam Prep Material with Care
Traditional Study = Success
Good Luck
Future AICP Members!