

# 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

Year	Organization
1917	American City Planning Institute (ACPI)
1932	Association of Planning Officials (ASPO)
1939	American Institute of Planners (AIP)
1978	American Planning Association (APA)
	American Institute of Certified Planners

# 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

# Do I Qualify?

Degree	Years of Experience
Masters Planning Degree from PAB Accredited Institution	2
Masters Planning Degree from Non-Accredited Institution	3
Any Other Graduate or Post Graduate Degree	4
No Degree	8

# Two Exam Taking Windows: Two Weeks in May & November

May 2013						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
 <small>New Moon 10</small>	 <small>Waxing Crescent 19</small>	 <small>First Quarter 29</small>	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	 <small>Full Moon 31</small>

November 2013						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	 <small>New Moon 3</small>	 <small>Waxing Crescent 12</small>	 <small>First Quarter 19</small>	 <small>Waxing Gibbous 27</small>	1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30



# It's futile to guess about exam content!



CBR001146 [RF] © www.visualphotos.com

# Key to Success: Effective Exam Preparation



# Why do Smart People Fail the AICP Exam?

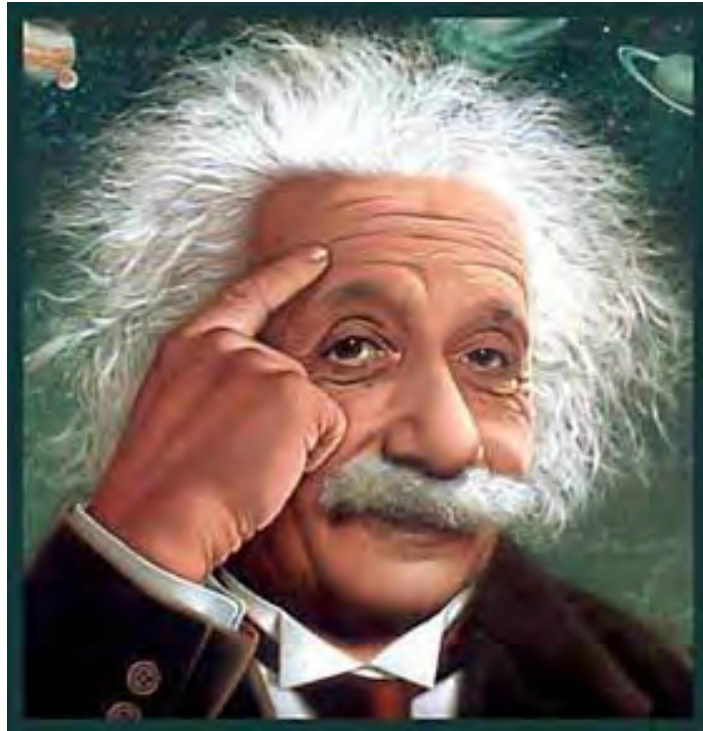
Exam Misperceptions: Misleading information about the exam.

Exam Mis-Preparation: Preparing the wrong way.

# Exam Misperceptions



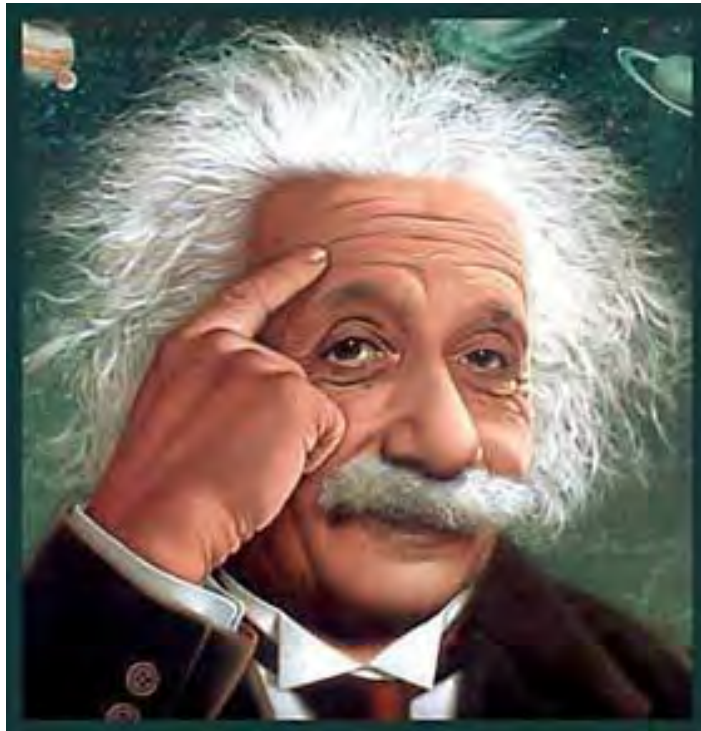
# Myth # 1: “It was Easy!”



"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.”



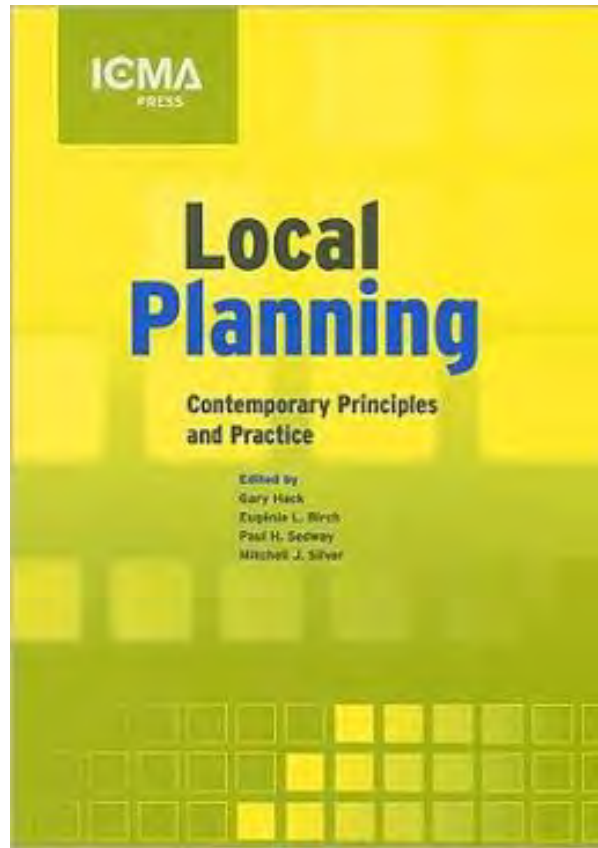
## Myth # 6:

“The AICP Exam is just like the GRE and SAT.”



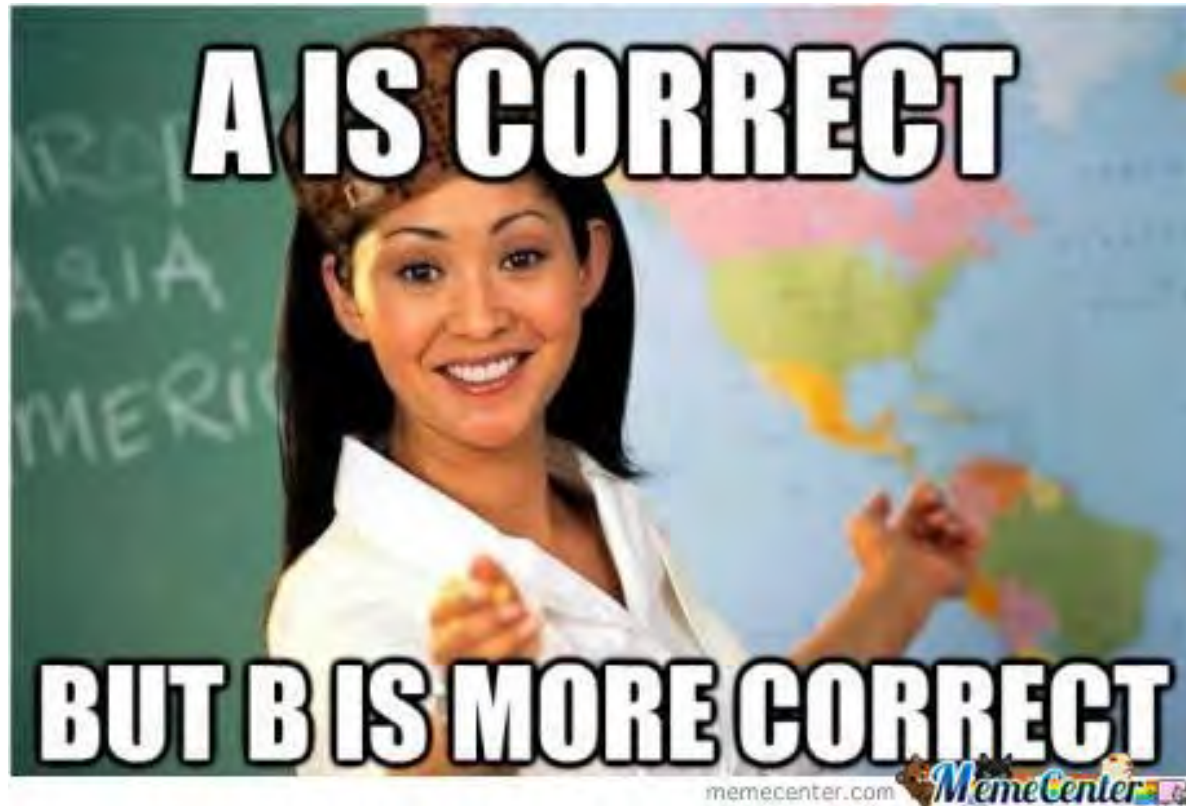
# Myth # 7:

“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.”



## Myth # 9:

“AICP covers a greater proportion of topics in comparison to others in a predictable fashion.”



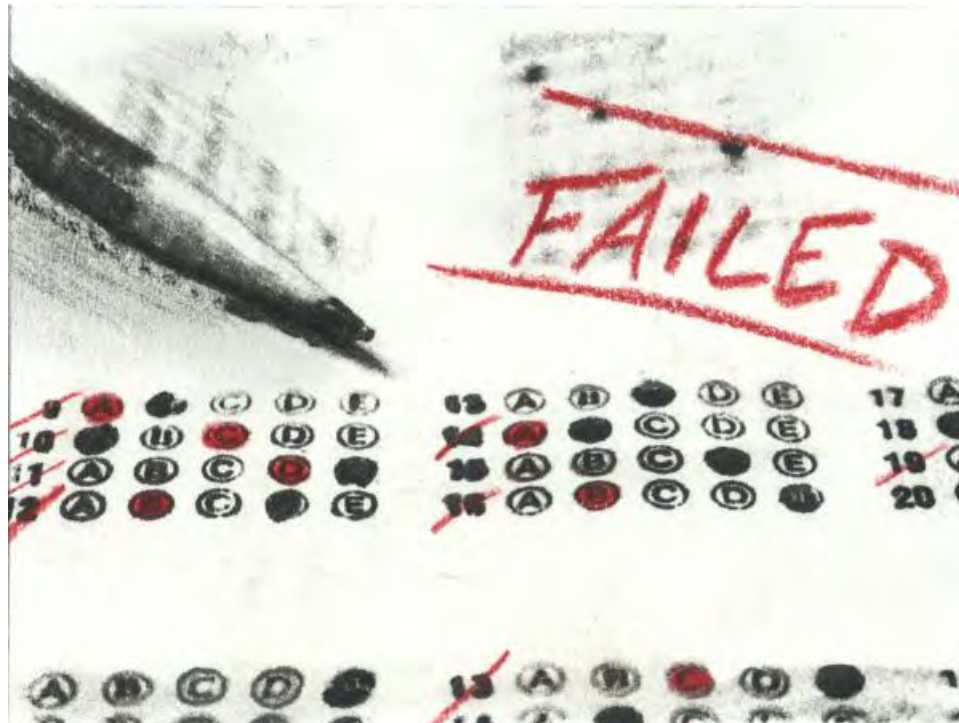


# Myth #10:

“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 years' 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. Graphical
  - 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. Animistic approach
  - B. Temperate approach
  - C. Environmental determinist approach
  - D. Sociology approach
  - E. Possibilist approach
5. What is the term for the phenomenon that the farther a feature moves from a hearth, the less dominant it is?
  - A. Central place
  - B. Concentric circle
  - C. Regional analysis
  - D. Distance decay
  - E. Sequent occupance
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:**

**Police Power**

**Village of Euclid Ohio**

**Vs.**

**Ambler Realty**



# Look for Logical Trends in Planning History

**From City Beautiful**



**To City Efficient**

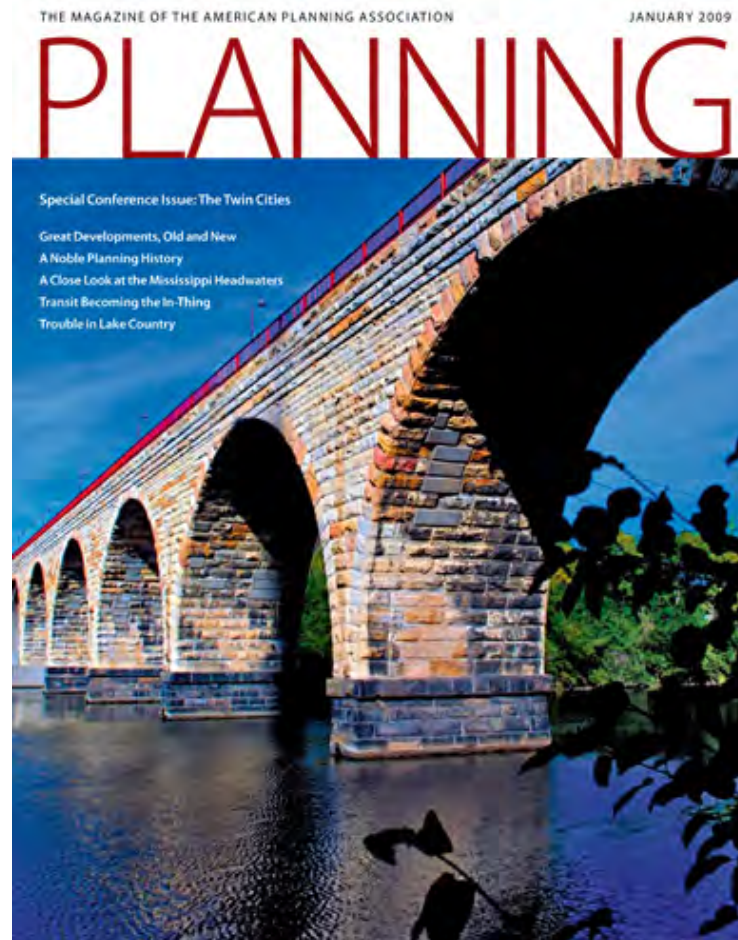


# Use Practice Exams for Self-Evaluation





# Read Planning Magazine Religiously



# Start Early!

**May 2014 Exam Date?**



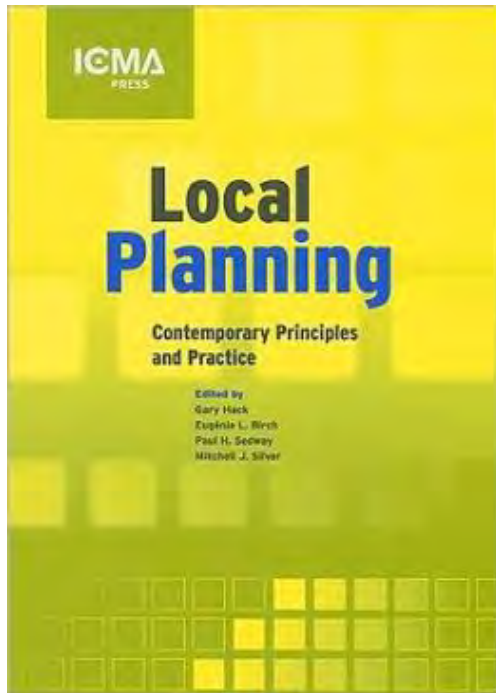
**Start Preparing  
in May 2013**



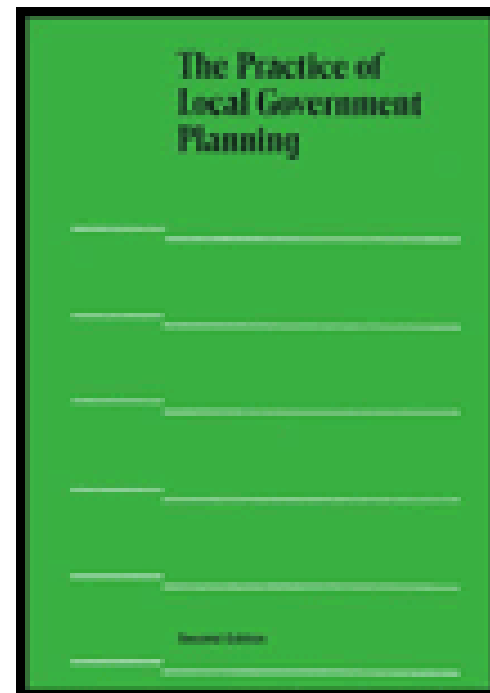


# Only Use Up-to-Date Texts

**This:**



**Not This:**

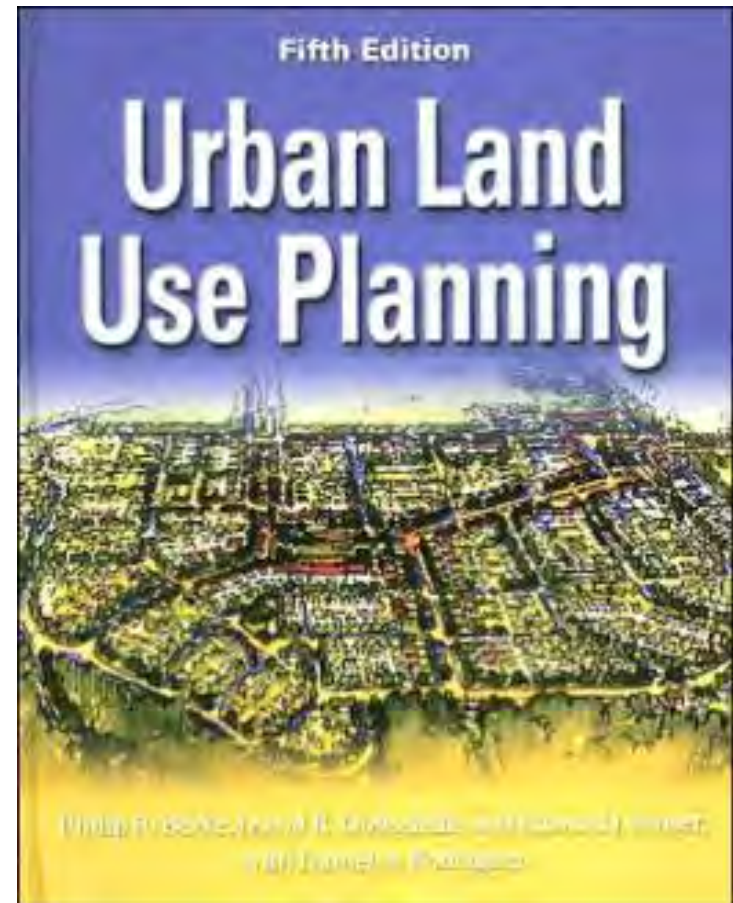
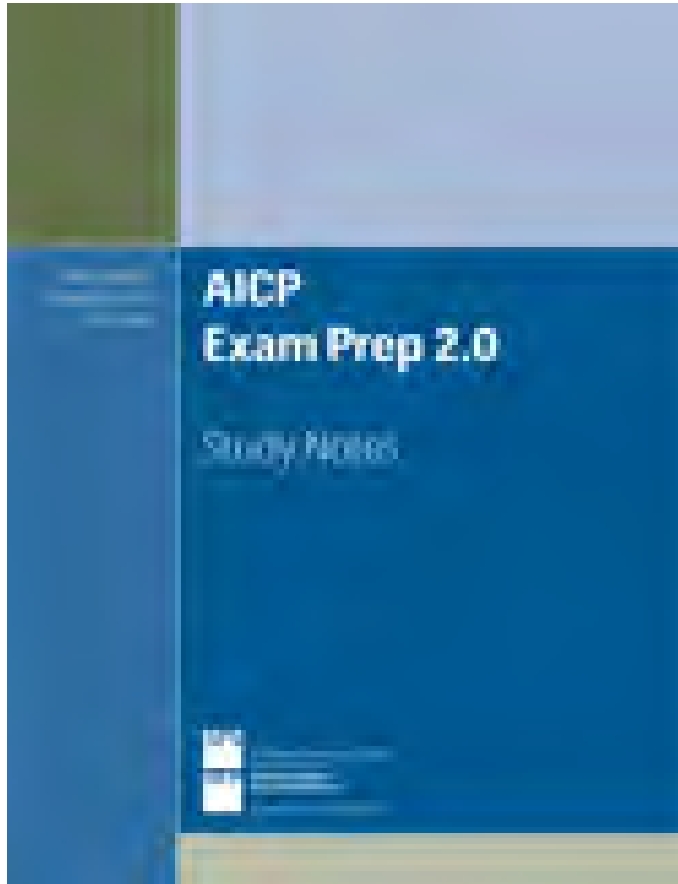


**If it's Green, it's Obsolete!**

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!

