AICP Exam: Overview

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Professional Development Officer, Georgia Chapter of APA
1. Become Eligible

To apply to take the AICP Exam, you must:

1. Be a current APA member.
2. Be engaged in professional planning, either currently or in the past.
3. Have completed, at the time of applying, the required education and years of professional planning experience (see next slide).
## Required education and years of planning work experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Education</th>
<th>Total Years Professional Planning Work Experience Required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduate degree in planning (PAB accredited)</td>
<td>2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s degree in planning (PAB accredited)</td>
<td>3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate degree in planning (not PAB accredited)</td>
<td>3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any other post-graduate, graduate, or undergraduate degree</td>
<td>4 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No college degree</td>
<td>8 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Applying for the Exam

1. Read the AICP Certification Exam Guide (available on the APA website)
2. Prepare application materials
3. Submit application
Exam Fees

• Application fee: $70
• Early Bird Resubmission Fee: $70
  (for applications that are denied the first time around)
• Registration Fee: $425
• Transfer Fee: $100
  (for postponing your test date)
Common pitfalls:

• Incomplete application
• Insufficient, or insufficiently documented, work experience
• Leaving things until the last minute
• Applying too early (if in doubt, just wait a few more months until you definitely have enough work experience)
Resources

• Most applicants who are denied are denied based on items explicitly addressed in the AICP Exam Guide. So, read the AICP Exam Guide.

• Apply early. Early bird applicants can revised their application if rejected. High volumes of applications are received right before the deadline.

• Prepare early. You will need verification letters from past employer(s) to verify employment. You will need official transcripts.
Professional Planning Experience Criteria
(from the AICP Exam Guide)

• CRITERION 1: Involve a professional level of responsibility and resourcefulness while applying a planning process appropriate to the project or situation

• CRITERION 2: Demonstrate a comprehensive point of view when implementing professional planning tasks

• CRITERION 3: Influence public decision making in the public interest

(See pages 13 – 17 of the AICP Exam Guide)
Applicant Criterion Response Checklist

• Available on the APA website
• Help you determine whether you’ve met the criteria

From the Checklist:
“Every exam application cycle, qualified applicants are denied because they did not carefully review the requirements of each criterion.”
More common pitfalls:

• Proofread your responses. Spelling and grammar errors can get your application rejected.

• Project managers or people with substantial experience in the field sometimes take it for granted that their application will be accepted, and don’t answer the questions on the application in sufficient detail.
In short: When applying:

- Many further resources are on the APA website.
- Apply on the APA website.
- Many (but not all) employers may pay for their employees to register and take the exam.
# Upcoming schedule

## November 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Application Window Opens</td>
<td>June 1, 2018, 9:00 a.m. CT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Bird Deadline</td>
<td>June 7, 2018, 11:59 p.m. CT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Application Deadline</td>
<td>June 28, 2018, 5:00 p.m. CT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Bird Notification Deadline</td>
<td>August 10, 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Notification Deadline</td>
<td>September 28, 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registration and Transfer Deadline</td>
<td>October 31, 2018, 5:00 p.m. CT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Testing Window</td>
<td>November 5–19, 2018</td>
</tr>
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</table>

## May 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Application Window Opens</td>
<td>December 3, 2018, 10:00 a.m. CST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Bird Deadline</td>
<td>December 10, 2018, 5:00 p.m. CST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Application Deadline</td>
<td>December 28, 2018, 5:00 p.m. CST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Testing Window</td>
<td>May 6–20, 2019</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
You have been approved and registered for the exam. Now what?
Exam Composition

- Fundamental Planning Knowledge: 25%
- Plan Making & Implementation: 30%
- Areas of Practice: 30%
- Leadership, Administration, & Management: 5%
- Code of Ethics: 10%
Exam Composition

• 170 multiple choice questions
• Written by AICP members who are practitioners or educators working in the public and private sectors
• Relates to what planners should know today
• Tests knowledge of planning as practiced throughout the United States, not in any particular region or place
Study Resources

• APA’s “AICP Exam Prep 3.0” - $199

• Planetizen
  • Standard Class - $245
  • Enhanced Class - $589
  • Premium Class - $689

• Many other resources: Free
Free Resources

- [www.planningprep.com](http://www.planningprep.com) – website was down for a while but appears to be back up now
- Provided by Houseal Lavigne Associates, LLC
- 1,668 practice questions, 12 practice exams
Essential Readings
APA Policy Guides

- 25 guides
- A few pages each
- Member-driven

Aging in Community (2014)
Agricultural Land Preservation (1999)
Billboard Controls (1997)
Climate Change (2011)
Community and Regional Food Planning (2007)
Community Residences (1997)
Endangered Species and Habitat Protection (1999)
Energy (2012)
Factory Built Housing (2001)
Food Planning (2007)
Freight (2016)

Hazard Mitigation (2014)
Healthy Communities (2017)
Historic and Cultural Resources (1997)
Homelessness (2003)
Housing (2006)
Impact Fees (1988)
Neighborhood Collaborative Planning (1998)
Provision of Child Care (1997)
Security (2005)
Smart Growth (2012)
Surface Transportation (2010)
Takings (1995)
Water (2016)
Other resources

• Planetizen Newswire
• Know the Code of Ethics word for word (it’s only a few pages)
• Chapter websites
Professional Development Officer

• Your chapter PDO is a critical information source. They may know about study groups, study resources and tips, and more.

• Georgia Chapter typically holds a study session at Georgia Tech in January and review sessions at the Fall Conference.
Pass Rates

• Overall: about 67% pass
• Graduates of PAB-accredited programs have higher pass rates (76%)
• Planetizen states that 88% of people who take its course pass
After the exam

• You no longer find out immediately if you passed. It takes 6 – 8 weeks.
• APA will invoice you for your AICP dues. Once you pay, you are an AICP member in good standing.
• Certification maintenance reporting period begins on Jan. 1 of the year after you became an AICP member.
• 32 CM credits every 2-year period, including 1.5 Law and 1.5 Ethics. 16 credits can carry over to the next period.
• Earn CM credits at conferences, or many opportunities free online.
AICP Candidate Pilot Program

• For students and graduates of PAB-accredited programs

• Take the AICP exam sooner, while all that stuff is fresh in your mind

• If you pass the exam, you’re an “AICP Candidate.” Then you need to gain the required work experience and earn 16 CM credits. After that, you can apply to become AICP-certified.
AICP Candidate Pilot Program

Traditional Sequence

- Education
- Professional Planning Experience
- Exam
- AICP

AICP Candidate Pilot Program Sequence

1. Education/Enroll for Candidate Program
2. Exam
3. AICP Candidate
4. Professional Planning Experience
   - STEP 1
   - STEP 2
   - STEP 3
   - AICP
AICP Candidate Program Advantages

• Take the AICP exam soon after graduating (while you’re still in “studying” mode). PLUS: As a student, access to more free study materials?

• Defer costs: Pay $20 to sign up for the Candidate Pilot Program, $100 to take the exam, and the remaining $375 when after you’ve gained the work experience and apply to have the AICP certification.
AICP Candidate Pilot Program Enrollment Path

I enroll any time throughout the year if I am a student in or a recent graduate of a PAB-accredited program.

I graduated (or I will) in December
The earliest I can take the exam is May, following graduation

I submit graduation documentation*
For graduates, this is part of enrolling. For students, this happens after graduation.
*Allow 6 weeks for APA to verify graduation documentation

By first Monday of March

APA approves my graduation documentation. I am eligible to register for the exam.

I register to take the AICP Certification Exam

Opens the first business day in December
Closes the last business day in April

Exam Registration Window

Opens the first business day in June
Closes the last business day in October

I take the AICP exam (first opportunity)
When my registration is confirmed, I schedule my testing date.

May

November

I pass the AICP exam and become an AICP Candidate!

I start or continue earning professional planning experience
Undergraduate: 3 yrs  |  Graduate: 2 yrs

I submit my AICP application, and once approved, I pay my AICP dues.

I become an AICP member!
Advanced Specialty Certifications

• Offered for the last time in May 2018.
• Credentials earned are still supported and can be maintained: Certified Environmental Planner (CEP), Certified Transportation Planner (CTP), and Certified Urban Designer (CUD).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Salary Range</th>
<th>APA Dues</th>
<th>AICP Dues</th>
<th>Total APA &amp; AICP Dues</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Member/Introductory</td>
<td>$75</td>
<td>$70</td>
<td>$145</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A &amp; B</td>
<td>Less than $42,000</td>
<td>$180</td>
<td>$100</td>
<td>$280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>$42,000 – $49,999</td>
<td>$210</td>
<td>$115</td>
<td>$325</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>$50,000 – $59,999</td>
<td>$245</td>
<td>$125</td>
<td>$370</td>
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<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>$60,000 – $69,999</td>
<td>$270</td>
<td>$135</td>
<td>$405</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>$70,000 – $79,999</td>
<td>$295</td>
<td>$145</td>
<td>$440</td>
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<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>$80,000 – $89,999</td>
<td>$320</td>
<td>$155</td>
<td>$475</td>
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<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>$90,000 – $99,999</td>
<td>$345</td>
<td>$165</td>
<td>$510</td>
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<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>$100,000 – $119,999</td>
<td>$375</td>
<td>$175</td>
<td>$550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>$120,000 and above</td>
<td>$410</td>
<td>$185</td>
<td>$595</td>
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<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>Undisclosed Salary</td>
<td>$415</td>
<td>$190</td>
<td>$605</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Member (Introductory Rate)</td>
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<tr>
<td>U.S. Student Member</td>
<td>$0</td>
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<td>$0</td>
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<tr>
<td>U.S. Retired Member*</td>
<td>$90</td>
<td>$25</td>
<td>$115</td>
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<tr>
<td>U.S. Life Member*</td>
<td>$65</td>
<td>$15</td>
<td>$80</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unemployed/In Transition*</td>
<td>$50</td>
<td>$25</td>
<td>$75</td>
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AICP associated with higher salaries
Questions?

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