

THE WAY I APPROACHED THE ARE..... AND PASSED!

October 10, 2001

I followed these steps...

1. Make your appointments.
 - A. When you finish IDP, the Illinois Registration Board will forward your approval for testing along with an 800-number for making appointments through an automated system.
 - B. **MAKE ALL OF YOUR APPOINTMENTS AT ONCE AND STICK WITH IT!** Set up a schedule ahead of time of when you would like to take each test. Allow two weeks between easier tests and three weeks between more difficult tests. Please note, they will charge you credit card the day you make the appointments, but, this will force you to stick with your schedule.
 - C. Take the test that you are fairly confident that you can pass first. It is good to start the process by passing the first one. It helps your confidence for the rest of the process.
 - D. Take the more difficult tests next. If you do not pass, you will need to wait six months before retaking. By the time you finish all of your testing, it will be time to retake those you failed.
 - E. Take Pre-Design last. This test essentially covers everything you have already taken (plus a little more) so you will have partially studied for it already!
2. Study for the Exams.
 - A. I recommend using the Architectural License Seminars books for the multiple choice exams and attending the graphic exam seminar presented by the AIA once a year for the graphic exams.
 - B. Set up a study schedule. (i.e. Plan to study every Tuesday and Wednesday after work and every Saturday) This will help for planning your work schedule and personal activities and will become habit if you stick to it. (habit isn't as frustrating)
 - C. Graphic Exams:
 - A. Attend the AIA seminar about the graphic exams.
 - B. Practice taking the exams with the software sent by NCARB.
 - C. Practice taking the issued exams from the seminar with the software sent by NCARB.
 - D. Keep in mind, this test is not about the "aesthetic quality" of your design. It is based on fulfilling the program requirements and complying with codes. Do not be concerned about how your building looks, only about fulfilling the program COMPLETELY and complying to ALL code requirements so

- health, safety, and welfare is not compromised.
- E. Be sure to practice with timing yourself. Running out of time will compromise your exam.
- F. Take the exam, AND PASS!!

D. Multiple Choice Exams:

- A. Purchase the ALS study guides and computer exams (or equivalent study guides).
- B. Read the books that apply to your next exam from front to back, highlighting as you go.
- C. Re-read highlights and take notes. At this time, take each test at the end of each chapter.
- D. Re-read notes and take the final exam at the end of the book. Review subjects and chapters where you were weak.
- E. Take computer exams for final refresher and practice with timing.
- F. Take the exam, AND PASS!!

3. Final Thoughts.

- A. Don't cram the night before. If you have followed your study schedule, you should be able to relax the night before.
- B. Stick to the schedule you have set for yourself. It gets frustrating if you drag it out.
- C. Don't slack off. Half way through it gets hard studying every week, but remember, if you don't pass, you have to pay again. Get your money's worth!!
- D. Don't get frustrated if you fail an exam. This is normal!! Just get back on the horse.
- E. Utilize the reference section in each exam. This has valuable information in it!
- F. Wear clothes for average temperatures to the test site, but bring a sweatshirt! The climate can change and you don't want to be too hot or too cold!
- G. If you need silence, practice taking the exam with ear plugs. There are ten other people taking other exams (some typing, other people are coughing, etc.) The testing center will supply ear plugs, so feel comfortable wearing them.
- H. Bring a snack to eat at the breaks. You don't want anything distracting you!
- I. Don't forget your calculator. The calculators they provide sometimes are not scientific. It's hard to figure the Cosine30° without it! Programmable calculators are not acceptable.
- J. Finally... relax!!

Phone numbers for ALS study guides:

Phone 310.208.7112

Fax 310.824.7028

The tests:

Multiple Choice:

1. Pre-Design
2. General Structures

3. Lateral Forces
4. Mechanical & Electrical
5. Materials & Methods
6. Construction Documents & Services

Graphic:

1. Site Planning
2. Building Planning
3. Building Technology

My Phone number with any questions:

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