

AN OVERVIEW OF THE WATER RESOURCES CERTIFIED PLANNER PROGRAM AND THE PLANNING ASSOCIATES PROGRAM (& HOW TO APPLY!)

Kim Townsend, HQUSACE
16 May 2024



US Army Corps
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WATER RESOURCES CERTIFIED PLANNER PROGRAM

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16 May 2024



PURPOSE OF THE WRCP PROGRAM



- Identify workforce capability and competency
- Identify experienced planners to provide leadership on particularly complicated, controversial, and/or high visibility studies
- Promote a standard of excellence for Planners to strive toward
- Improve the PCoP's understanding of the experience and diversity of our workforce



WHO ARE WATER RESOURCES CERTIFIED PLANNERS?



- From every sub-CoP
- Supervisors as well as PDT members
- District, MSC, and Headquarters staff
- Review team members
- Experienced in GI, CAP, and other studies



CRITERIA FOR CERTIFICATION



- Education & Training
- Experience (Studies & Reviews)
- Knowledge of Policy and Process
- Mentoring, Communication, and Leadership



BENEFITS TO BECOMING A WRCP



- Leadership on cutting edge, ground-breaking studies
- Opportunities to participate in national teams, task forces, and PCXs
- Justification for continuing education
- Demonstrate expertise as you move up in your Planning career
- Opportunity to "give back" to the organization by mentoring and by helping USACE deliver high quality products
- Evidence of your advanced skillset!



RESPONSIBILITIES



- Remain actively engaged in Planning
- Mentor and develop other planning professionals
- Be available to support water resources challenges and address projects of regional or national scope
- Remain informed on current Civil Works guidance and policies
- Recertify every 5 years – ***2019 Cohort to be recertified this year***



SIGNS YOU MAY QUALIFY



- You serve as a go-to resource and regularly mentor other planners
- You can speak confidently to planning policy, guidance, and processes
- You have experience leading a diverse array of studies from start to finish
- You are ATR-certified
- You have teaching or other leadership experience



SCHEDULE FOR FY24 WRCP SELECTIONS



Complete Application within Planner Database



Submit Application and Secure Supervisory Validation



Applications Scored



Qualifying Candidates Prepare Essays



Panels Conduct Interviews and Score Essays



Recommendations Presented to Planning Advisory Board



HQUSACE Announces new WRCPs!



Certification Status Updated within Planner Database



TROUBLE FILLING OUT YOUR APPLICATION?

...CONTACT ME!

HAVE IDEAS ON HOW TO IMPROVE THE PROGRAM?

...CONTACT ME!

QUESTIONS?



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PLANNING ASSOCIATES PROGRAM & APPLICATION PROCESS

Presented by:

Lisa Rabbe
Planning Associates Program Manager
IWR

Brandon Wadlington
Planning Graduate
Class of 2023



Planning Associates Class of 2023



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AGENDA

- PA Overview
 - Vision and goals
 - History of the Program
 - General Curriculum of the Program
- Application Process
 - Eligibility requirements
 - Expectations for PAs and Supervisors
 - Application process and timeline
- Why you should apply
- Q&A



PA PROGRAM VISION

The vision of the Planning Associates Program is to develop and sustain a national network of **agile and informed planning leaders** who are capable of solving the nation's most complex water resource issues.



PA PROGRAM GOALS

The Planning Associates Program will develop planning leaders who are capable of executing today's USACE Planning mission and are prepared for tomorrow's mission challenges.

The goals of the PA program are:

- Provide an opportunity for journey-level planners to develop knowledge, skills, and abilities that will help them grow into expert planners.
- Develop future planning leaders who can influence the Civil Works Program, including study execution, planning processes, and development and application of policy.



PA HISTORY

First PA class was in 1962.
It ran from 1962-1995

Then in 2003, it was started
up again as a 1-year intensive
program.

In 2018, it shifted to a 2-year
program.



CLASS OF 1962
CARL GAUM
The First PA



WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THE PROGRAM? CURRICULUM IN PERSON TRAININGS

Approximately 12 weeks of in-person learning over a 2-year period.

Leadership, Teambuilding & Effective communications Course – 2-weeks

DC experience I Course – 2-weeks

Navigation Course (Deep Draft, Inland Nav & SBH) – 2 weeks

Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration – 1 week

Integrated Water Resource Management Course - 1 week

Flood Risk Management Course - 1 week

Coastal Storm Risk Management Course – 1 week

DC experience II Course – 2 weeks

Capstone & Graduation Week

**The order of the courses depends if you are an even or odd year graduating class*



WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THE PROGRAM?

CURRICULUM

VIRTUAL TRAININGS

Additional Virtual Engagements include, but are not limited to:

ESA

Hydropower

Water Supply

Recreation

Tribal

Other topics or engagements of HQ importance

***Note – these engagements may be combined with in-person courses depending on course instructor availability and funding.*



WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THE PROGRAM? YEAR 1 CAPSTONE PROJECT

COURSE OWNER: DR. JUDY MCCREA (HQ)

The Capstone is an **individual component** of the PA Program which provides an opportunity for each PA to actively synthesize, integrate, **critically think**, and apply the knowledge and skills required throughout the PA Program to analyze a hot topic or **issue begging for a creative solution**.

The Capstone occurs during Year 1 of the PA Program and includes completion of a draft report and “dry-run” oral presentation completed in June (virtual), and final reports and presentations delivered to the Planning Community of Practice in August in-person for HQUSACE (Washington D.C.)



**WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THE PROGRAM?
YEAR 2
APPLIED LEARNING ASSIGNMENT**

COURSE OWNER: MONIQUE SAVAGE (HQ)

Individual Assignment – start giving back to the Planning Community by tackling a problem or serving in another capacity.

Potential assignments include, but are not limited to, serving within our training program (e.g., guest instructor for Prospect or PA course, training content updates, PCoP webinar on specialized content, case study overview), implementation of a PA Capstone project, support overarching PCX tasks/responsibilities (i.e., SOP updates, template updates, webinar on specialized content, training, R&D), or support an overarching policy issue resolution process.



2 YEARS OF COURSES TO MULTIPLE PA “COHORTS”

FY 2023:

Cohort 1
(Capstone Year)

DC Experience I
Flood Risk Management Course
Coastal Storm Risk Reduction Course

FY 2024:

Cohort 1 (Applied
Learning &
Graduation Year)

Cohort 2
(Capstone Year)

DC Experience I for Cohort 2 and DC Exp II for Cohort 1
Navigation Course
Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration Course
IWRM Course

FY 2025:

Cohort 2 (Applied
Learning &
Graduation Year)

Cohort 3
(Capstone Year)

DC Experience I for Cohort 3 and DC Exp II for Cohort 2
Flood Risk Management Course
Coastal Storm Risk Reduction Course

FY 2026:

Cohort 3 (Applied
Learning &
Graduation Year)

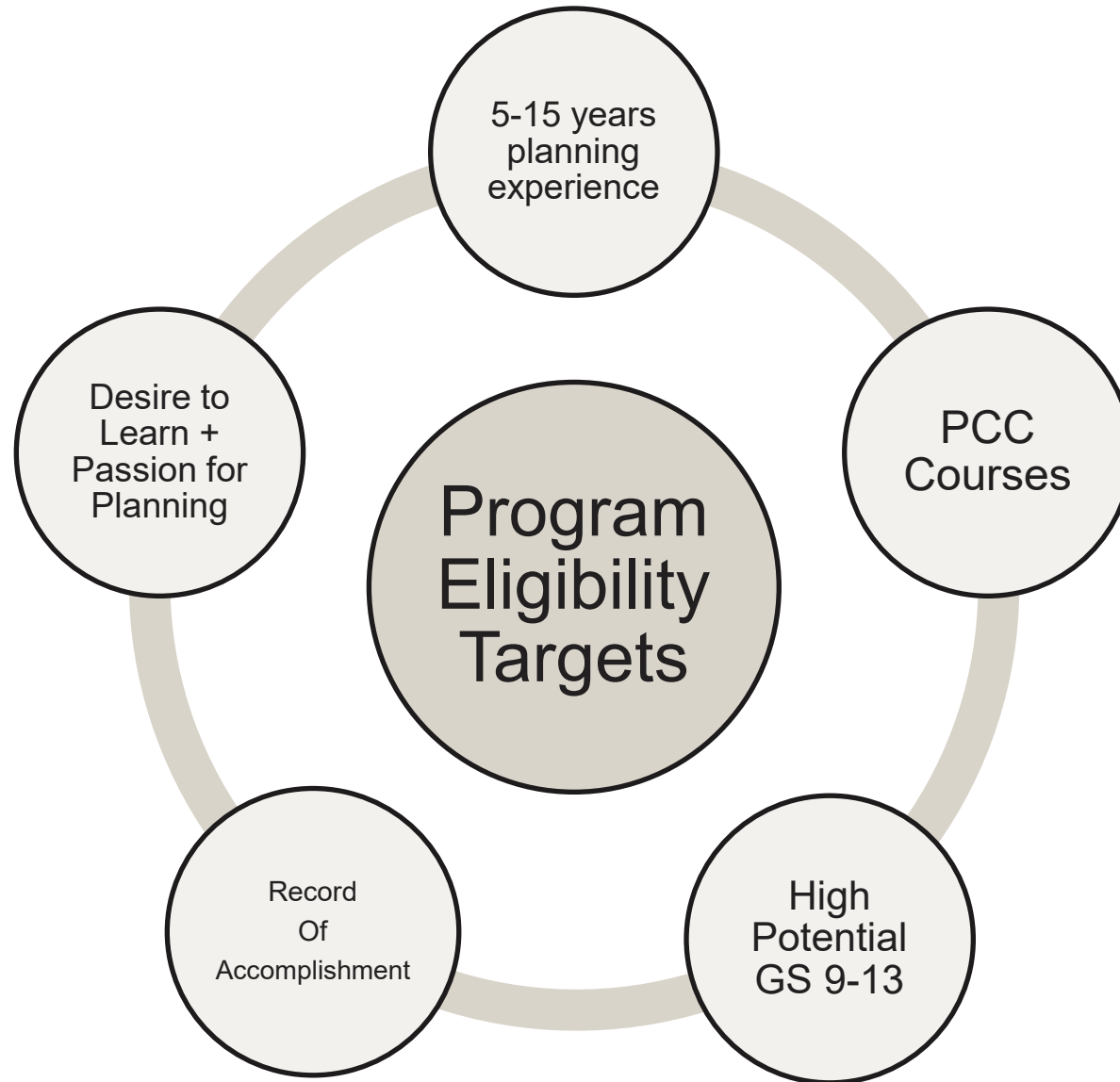
Cohort 4
(Capstone Year)

DC Experience I for Cohort 4 and DC Exp II for Cohort 3
Navigation Course
Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration
IWRM Course

Year 1 for each cohort includes: Orientation Webinar & Leadership/Team Building/Effective Communications Course



**SOUNDS GREAT, BUT HOW DO I KNOW IF
I QUALIFY FOR THIS COMPETITIVE
PROGRAM?**





EXPECTATIONS FOR PLANNING ASSOCIATES

- ✓ Attend all training sessions
- ✓ Fully participate
- ✓ Complete pre-course work and homework
- ✓ Contribute to team projects
- ✓ Complete Capstone project AND Application Assignment
- ✓ Attend graduation
- ✓ Expect some work to be done on your own time and ensure family realizes this is a commitment on your part (think Graduate school)



EXPECTATIONS FOR SUPERVISORS

- ✓ Make PA available to learn
- ✓ Ensure PA Program work has priority
- ✓ Ensure Program is on DPMAP
- ✓ Cover some labor costs
- ✓ Provide laptop & mobile phone

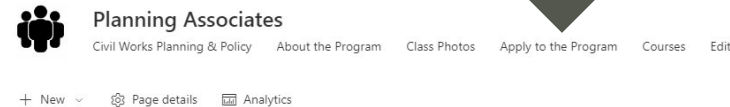


SUBMIT AN APPLICATION

You've thought about it and talked with

- Family
- Supervisor
- Past Graduates
- Current Classes

.... And you're ready to start your application process.



1. Go to the Planning Associates Program's Knowledge Management Portal

usace.dps.mil/sites/KMP-PAPR

- Click on the Apply to the Program link





2. Download the approvals and signature packet

- Read, agree to, and save as PDF
- Update your resumé (Do not include PII in your application like address and schools attended)

How to Apply to the Program

The application period opens every spring and lasts several weeks. There are three parts to the process: application questions, approvals & signatures packet, and an up-to-date resumé with no Personal Identifiable Information (PII) such as address or phone number. This is a masters level program. You will need to commit to flexibility to travel, some physical activity, additional work outside of normal working hours, and to work for USACE for 1 year after program completion.

To apply, you will need to [submit an application](#) and an [approvals and signature packet](#). Class will begin in **Fall 2024** (Qtr 1 FY25). The application collects basic information, has questions about PCC courses completed, and 8 essay questions. You will also need to download the approvals & signatures packet, have it signed by all appropriate parties, combine it with your resumé into a single PDF, and upload it with your application.



3. Review the sample application for a preview of the info needed to complete the online applicant info and questionnaire.



Quick Links

- [Apply to the Program](#)
- [Sample Application](#)
- [Approvals & Signatures packet](#)
- [Expected Course Work](#)



Fill out the
Questionnaire

Quick Links

- [Apply to the Program](#)
- [Sample Application](#)
- [Approvals & Signatures packet](#)
- [Expected Course Work](#)

4. Click on "Apply to Program"

5. Route approval & signature packet for nomination through District and MSC

Highly recommended to include:

- Resume
- Questionnaire responses

Provides District and MSC leadership opportunity to get to know you and provide input

19. Professionally, what is your most significant accomplishment and why is the world a better place for you having done it? *

4000 character limit

Enter your answer

20. How would participating in the PA program impact your professional performance in 5 years? *

4000 character limit

Enter your answer

Save your responses as a PDF

27. Print then save your responses *

To print your responses:

- Use your browser to print this page (ctrl + p) and print in **LANDSCAPE** to ensure your full response appears in the PDF. Use the option "Save as PDF", then click "Next" below to save your responses. You will be able to edit the responses before the application is submitted if needed.

Back

Next

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If Nominated by your MSC/Lab

4. Return to the submit an application link to

- If your MSC is going to nominate you, they will provide the signed signature package back to you
 - May include a letter of endorsement/cover letter
- Go back to the 'Submit an application' page and upload a single PDF containing the MSC Commander cover letter, the approvals/signatures packet, and your resumé.
- Hit Submit!

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Best of luck to this year's applicants!

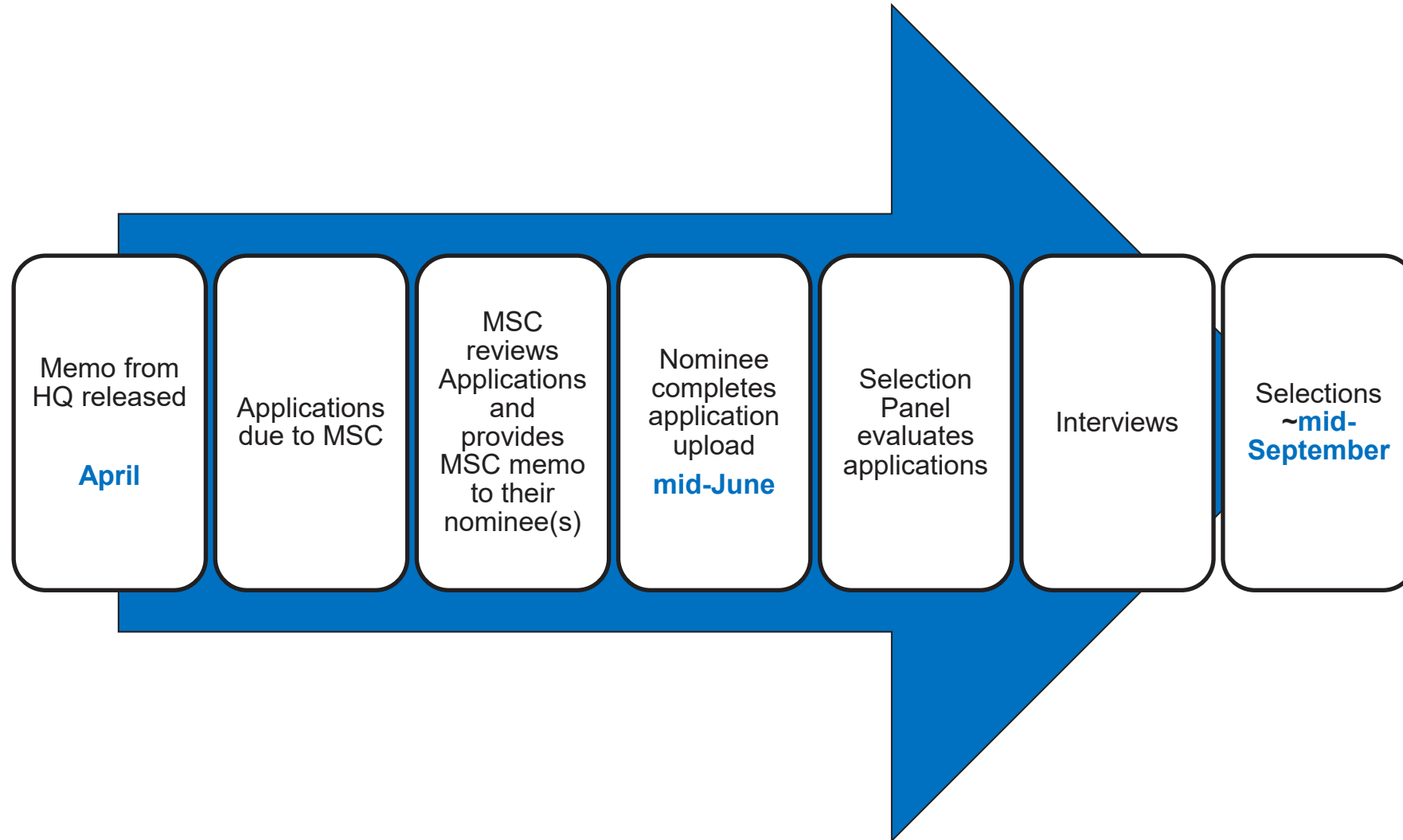
Quick Links

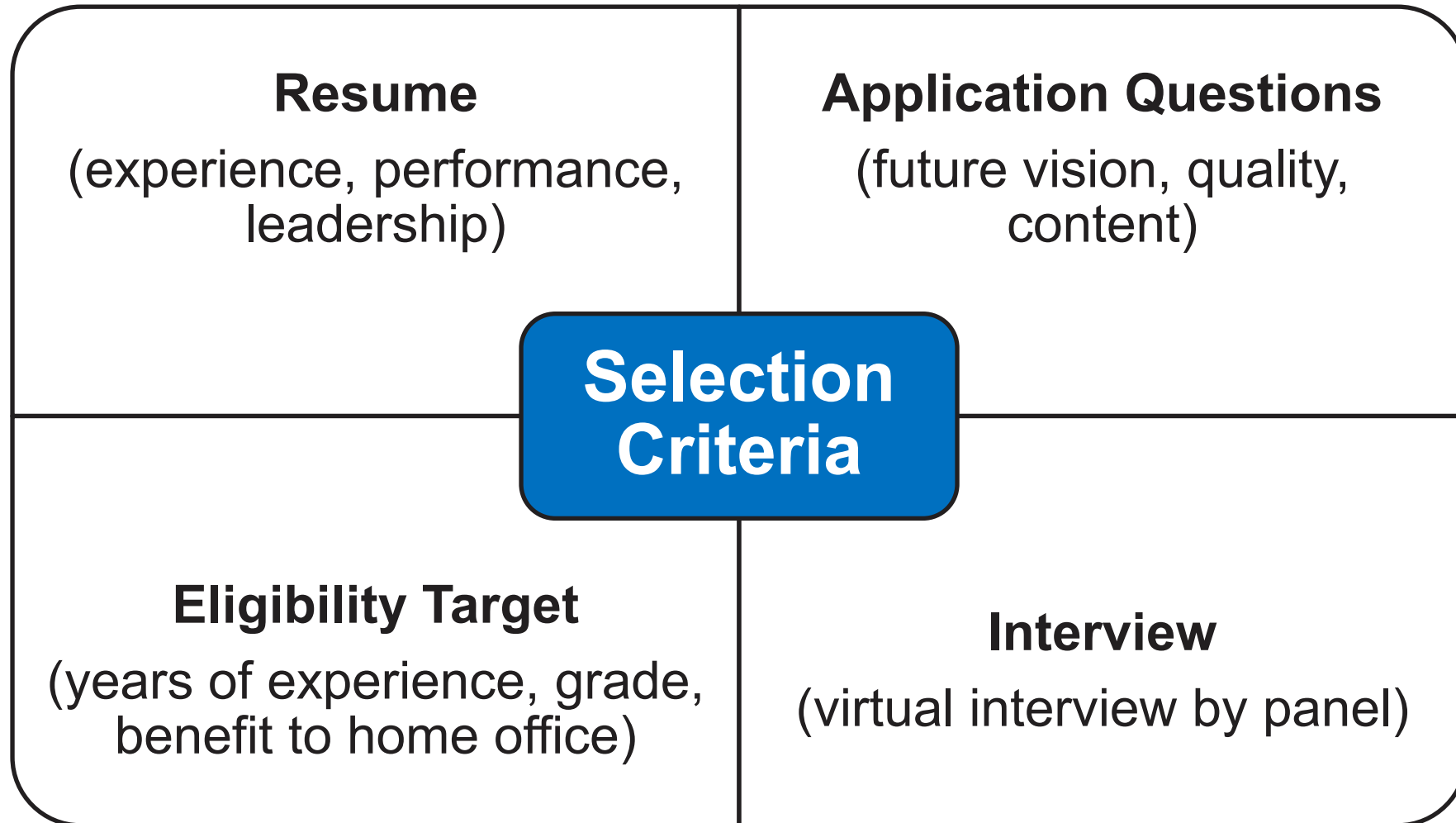


- [Apply to the Program](#)
- [Sample Application](#)
- [Approvals & Signatures packet](#)
- [Expected Course Work](#)



SELECTION PROCESS







WHY YOU SHOULD APPLY

If you want to grow professionally and personally in the Planning community, have stamina, and a strong desire to solve complex water resource problems – then please compete for a seat in this prestigious Program!!

If selected, watch your Planning Rolodex of SME's and new friends grow!!



QUESTIONS?

Type questions in the chat box.
We will answer as many as time allows.

This webinar will be posted to the
Planning Community Toolbox:

<http://www.corpsplanning.us>

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