



GIS Certification Institute

# An Update on the GISCI

*(and a little on the GISP)*

*An Update on the GISCI: What's  
Happening and What's New*

TEXAS **GIS** FORUM  
**REACHING  
NEW REALITIES**

**Oct 21 - 25, 2024**  
**Austin, Texas**

TONY SPICCI, GISP  
GIS CERTIFICATION INSTITUTE

OCTOBER 24, 2024

# THE GIS CERTIFICATION INSTITUTE

**The GISCI is a not-for-profit organization that provides the geographic information systems (GIS) community with an internationally-recognized, complete certification program, a GISP® Certification.**

# Who is the GIS Certification Institute?

- The GIS Certification Institute (GISCI) is a 501(c)(6) non-profit organization.
- Based in the United States but present worldwide.
- Born from the late 1990's, URISA survey of its membership. The overwhelming response was a desire for professional certification.

# GISCI Member Organizations

GISCI is composed of a group of Member Organizations representing the broad range of the geospatial community.



**GISP – Elected  
Board Member**



# Governance

- One of the strengths of GISCI has been the strong and diversified Board representation over the years.
- Each Member Organization nominates two of its members to serve.
- An executive director works at the discretion of the Board.
- A small staff support the operations.



# CURRENT ACTIVITIES AT THE GISCI

**What's going on?**

# GISP Certification Accreditation

- GISCI is now a member of The Council of Engineering & Scientific Specialty Boards (CESB)
- GISP Certification Accreditation was recently approved in October 2024
  - Category: Engineering Technician Category



# New Testing Provider

- GISCI is switching to Pearson Vue
- GISPs will have access to over 4,400 testing centers
- Exam sign up process will be the same as in the past



# Other News And Announcements

- American Society for Photogrammetry & Remote Sensing joins GISCI Board
  - ASPRS GIS/LIS Technologist / Scientist certifications will sunset.
- New website launched in 2024
- New official study guide for GISP exam released

# Ongoing Efforts & Future Directions

GISCI continues to work to promote the field of GIS and its professionals.

- Exam maintenance & updating – every 3 to 4 years
  - Blueprint update underway: expected completion Fall 2024
- Increasing communication with and involvement in the broad geospatial community
- Expanding our footprint within the geospatial community
- Increase our growth with international professionals

# Ongoing Efforts & Future Directions

GISCI continues to work to promote the field of GIS and its professionals.

- Grow our involvement in monitoring legislative issues that impact the profession
- Greater student outreach and engagement
- New designation for retired GISPs

# Student Outreach

## USGS Internship

- Annual GIS Summer Fellows Program with USGS
- Summer 2026 deadline is September 30, 2025
- More info: <https://www.gisci.org/PreGISP/Internships>

## URISA Mentoring Network

- Foster strong connections between geospatial professionals at all stages of their careers.
- Prospective mentee is matched with a mentor, each pair is expected to meet monthly
- More information: <https://www.urisa.org/mentoring>

# GISP - Retired

GISP-R allows current GISP's to maintain their certification in a limited capacity upon retirement from the workforce and a paid position as a GIS Professional.

## Minimum Qualifications

- GISP in good standing for a minimum of 3 consecutive recertification cycles (9 years).
- Must not be employed as a GIS professional.

## Required Criteria

- Activities limited to using GIS professional skills in voluntary or charitable roles
- Signed ethics statement
- Fee \$50 (Initial 3-year period and each 3-year renewal with a 6-month grace period)

# GISCI Endorsing Employer Designation

- Created to help increase the value of GISP Certification for our stakeholders, and to help facilitate the growth of the GISP Program.
- Granted to organizations that the GISCI deems to be supportive of GIS Professionals and the GISP Certification process.
- Available to all organizations at no cost.
- Each approved GISCI Endorsement will last for three (3) years, provide the organization with permission to display their organization logo on our website and provide permission to display the GISCI Endorsement designation on their website.

# GISCI Endorsing Employer Designation

## Criteria

- Encourage or require all GIS staff to have or obtain GISP certification during employment.
- Pay for initial GISP certification fees for candidates.
- Pay for ongoing GISP recertification fees for candidates.

In addition, organizations are strongly encouraged to meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Pay for training.
- Pay for GIS-related continuing education.
- Tie compensation to GISP Certification (e.g., bonus, raises).
- Promotion criteria includes required GISP Certification.
- Provide support for ongoing activities to maintain certification.
- Strive to meet the GISCI's ethical standards and support GISPs in meeting those standards.

THE GISCI WELCOMES OUR NEWEST  
ENDORISING EMPLOYER!



FIVE POINT  
ENERGY

*And recognizes our existing Endorsing Employers:*







# FUTURE DIRECTION OF GISCI

**What's next?**

# PREGISP PROGRAM



**GISCI is moving into the emerging professional segment by creating a pathway for recent graduates to grow into the requirements for becoming a GISP while becoming a geospatial professional.**

# What is the PreGISP Program?

- Accelerated pathway to becoming a GISP
- Offered as a certification
- Exam-only based
- Based on a standardized pre-professional exam based on UCGIS Geospatial Body of Knowledge
- Offered at the end of a student's career in their final GIS&T class
- Allows student to add credential to CV

# What is the PreGISP Credential?

- Students who successfully pass the exam will be awarded the Emerging GISP credential and may use the GISP-E postnominal after their name.
- The credential will be valid for 3 years from date of award.
- The exam will be offered as an online proctored exam during a limited window in May and December.
- GISCI will work with academic institutions to integrate this into curriculums and potentially offer the exam at college campuses.

# Who is a GISP-E candidate?

- Designed to be a capstone event for a graduating student of an accredited institution.
- May be taken at the conclusion of a student's academic career.
- Open to all students enrolled in a geospatially-related (as defined by the GIS&T Body of Knowledge) degree or certificate program.
- In the initial roll out, there will be an option for recent graduates (within 1 year of graduation), but after that concludes, it will only be available in the semester of or immediately after graduation.

# When will the PreGISP kickoff?

- The PreGISP program is currently in development with key pieces completed.
- **Soft rollout in December 2024**
  - Limited number of participants
    - To be considered, candidates must sign up on the PreGISP page of GISCI.org
  - Ensure the system works properly
- **Main rollout in May 2024**
  - Develop sign up system
  - Open to all qualified candidates

# Important Notes

- You must be in the final semester of your academic career to be eligible to take the exam or within 6 months of graduation.
- GISP-Es are eligible to become a GISP one-year early (3 years instead of 4) but will still be subject to all other requirements.
- Once the GISP-E expires, it cannot be renewed.
- GISP-Es will still need to complete the portfolio and exam requirements to become GISPs.

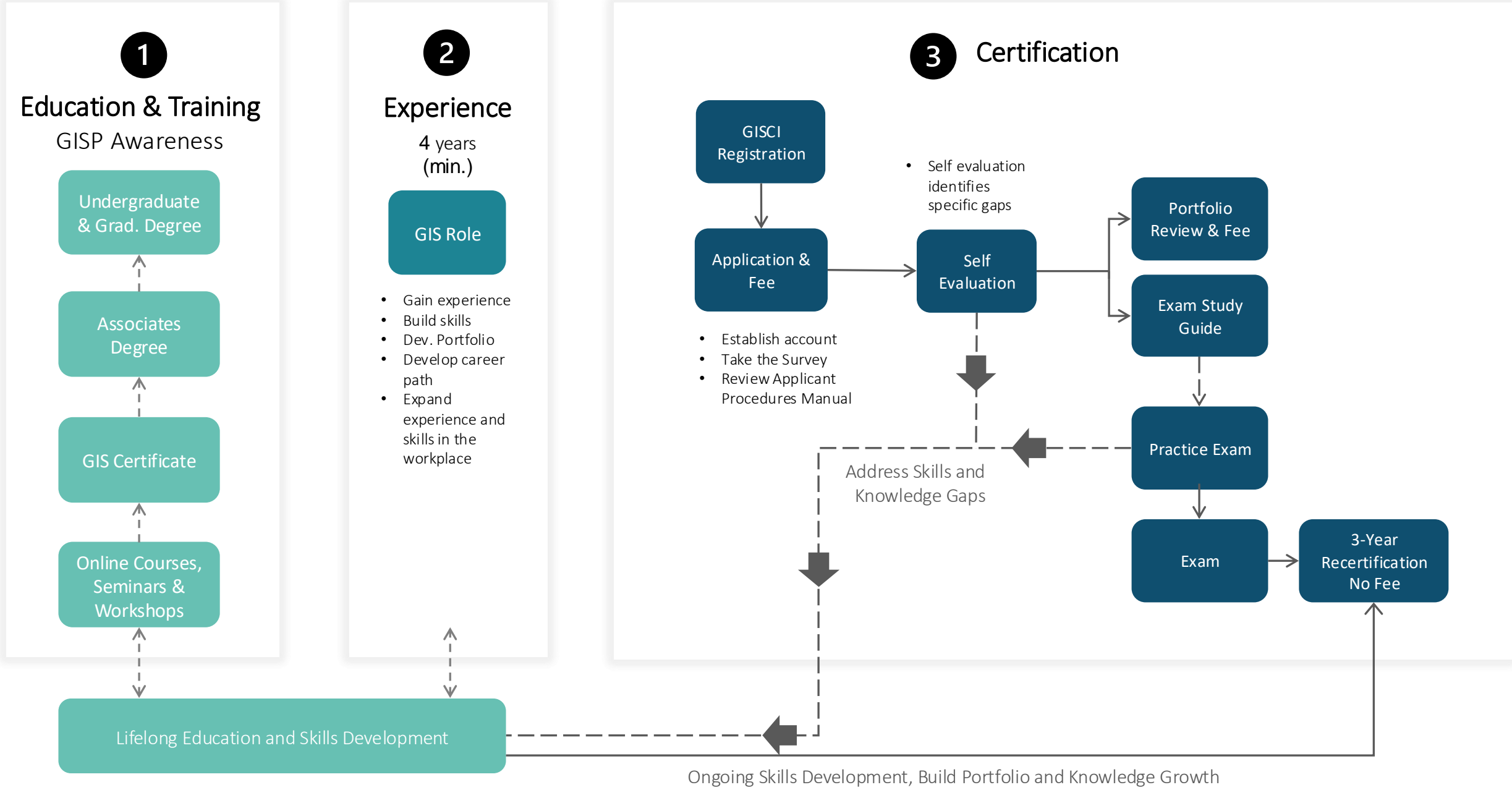
# Young Professional Outreach

## Pathways to GISP

- Guide to becoming a GISP candidate and geospatial professional
- Designed to provide portfolio guidance along with exam prep advice
- Help young professionals to become a part of our profession
- Roll out of program and documents was Spring of 2024
- Development of additional materials in early 2025
- Partnering with URISA's Vanguard Cabinet for mentoring



# General Pathway (Components of the GISP Certification)



2

## Experience

4 years (min.)

- Gain experience
- Build skills
- Dev. Portfolio
- Develop career path
- Expand experience and skills in the workplace

GIS Role

1

## Education & Training

GISP Awareness

Undergraduate & Grad. Degree

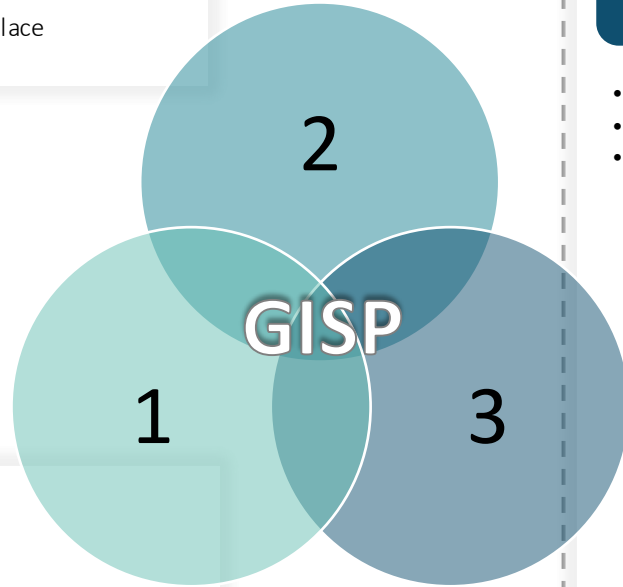
Associates Degree

GIS Certificate

Online Courses, Seminars & Workshops

Lifelong Education and Skills Development

Ongoing Skills Development, Build Portfolio and Knowledge Growth



3

## Certification

GISCI Registration

Application & Fee

- Establish account
- Take the Survey
- Review Applicant Procedures Manual

- Self evaluation identifies specific gaps

Self Evaluation

Portfolio Review & Fee

Exam Study Guide

Practice Exam

Exam

3-Year Recertification No Fee

Address Skills and Knowledge Gaps



# Other Activities

- Working with other countries to strengthen the GISP international presence.
- Review of portfolio certification guidelines.
- Implementation of a new strategic plan for 2024-2026

# GISCI Geospatial Core Technical Knowledge Exam

Next Testing Date: December 7 - 15, 2024

Deadline to Apply: Two Weeks Before Test Session Starts

Location: Worldwide at authorized Pearson VUE testing centers

- 1) Submit your exam application. Apply online at the GISCI website ([www.gisci.org](http://www.gisci.org)).
- 2) Pay the application and exam fees.
- 3) Schedule your specific exam date. After your payment is confirmed, Pearson VUE will send you an email with authorization to schedule your exam.
- 4) Take the exam at your scheduled test facility.

For more information, visit: <https://www.gisci.org/Want-to-be-a-GISP/The-Exam>

# Closing Thoughts

- Becoming a GISP takes a long-term investment
- Maintaining your GISP also requires an investment
- GISPs are active in their profession leaders in their field

***It reinforces behaviors that enrich the profession.***

William F. Johnson - Carpe Geo Evangelist, Applied Geographics, Inc (AppGeo)



**GIS Certification Institute**

# Thank You!

## Questions?

**Contact Tony: [tspicci@gisci.org](mailto:tspicci@gisci.org)**

# GISP PROCESS

**Requirements & Costs for  
New and Recertifying GISPs**

# GISP Certification Requirements

## Initial GISP: Portfolio + Exam

- Sign **Ethics Statement**
- Submit **Portfolio** Application online
  - Meet point requirements in Education, Experience, and Contributions to the Profession
  - Requires a minimum of 4 years of Geospatial Experience (employment)
- Pass GISCI Geospatial Core Technical Knowledge **Exam**

***3 Year Certification Period***

*NOTE: You can complete the exam and portfolio in the order of your choosing.*

## Recertification: Portfolio Only

- Sign **Ethics Statement**
- Submit **Portfolio** Application online
  - Meet point requirements in Education and Contributions to the Profession (Experience Points optional)

***3 Year Recertification Period***



# GISP Certification Costs

## Initial GISP

- Portfolio Review Fee: \$200 (one-time fee)
- Exam Fee: \$250 (\$300 if international)
- Annual Maintenance Fee: \$95/year  
*(starts in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of initial certification period)*

### **3 Year Certification Period**

*NOTE: If you do not pass the exam and need to retake, you will be charged the \$250 exam fee to retake but not the \$100 application fee.*

## Recertifying GISP

- Annual Maintenance Fee:  
\$95/year or single payment of \$285

### **3 Year Recertification Period**