MCAT Program Updates

NAAHP Regional Meetings
2021

April- June 2021
Agenda

• 2021 Testing Plan
• Health and Safety
• MCAT Preparation
• MCAT Validity Data Snapshot
• Q&A
2021 Testing Year
The 2021 Testing Plan Balances Important Priorities

• Using health and safety protocols to help keep students safe
• Supporting 2021 applicants who needed to test in January and February
• Introducing new sets of scored questions to refresh test forms and resume piloting new questions to build future forms
• Providing flexibility in exam scheduling for those impacted by COVID-19
2021 Testing Plan Overview

• 31 exam dates – one extra date in January this year to support 2021 applicants

• Return to the traditional length exam – 7 hrs. 30 mins.

• Scores reported in 30-35 day schedule

• Exams offered at 7:30 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. to reduce number of people in the test center and social distance

• Rigorous health and safety protocols
Supporting Examinees During COVID

• Follow state and local health and safety guidance and will decrease testing capacity or cancel exams based on the restrictions. **At this time, we anticipate very few exams will be impacted.**

• Waived rescheduling and cancellation fees and an emergency cancellation process for anyone impacted by COVID-19 close to exam day

• Extension of AAMC MCAT Official Prep Products for cancelled examinees

• Fee Assistance Program benefit extensions and changes to eligibility guidelines
Registration is Open for All Dates
Scheduling Tips for Your Students

• Take the exam when ready
  • Resource: "When is the Right time to Take the MCAT Exam? Three Questions to Ask Yourself"

• Use the Appointment Notification Request
  • Helps examinees secure preferred test date and location if it becomes available
  • Can have up to 5 notification requests

• When possible, reschedule/cancel an exam early
  • Helps students who are on the appointment notification lists secure dates.
AMCAS Frequently Asked Questions about MCAT Scores

Students do not need an MCAT score to submit their application.

Students should include their exam date in the application.

Scores automatically transmit to schools.
Medical School Admission Requirements™ (MSAR®)

• The MSAR website features current, trusted information on and from LCME-accredited medical schools in the U.S. & Canada.

• MSAR Reports (free, PDF) – 22 collated reports w/ information, deadlines and policies from MSAR.

• www.aamc.org/msar

• https://aamc.org/msarreports
Health and Safety
Important Health and Safety Protocols

- **6’ social distancing** in the testing room
- **Cleaning and disinfecting practices** between and after exam sessions
- **Providing hand sanitizer and allowing students to bring their own**
- **Masks required**

**Continued monitoring**

- Compliance monitoring: secret shops, end of day surveys, test center reports, and other channels
- Remediating protocol lapses and closing centers that don't safely test

[www.aamc.org/mcat-covid](http://www.aamc.org/mcat-covid)
Continued Health and Safety Monitoring

End of Exam Satisfaction Survey

96% of examinees Satisfied or Very Satisfied with Implementation of Protocols

97% of examinees report feeling Safe or Very Safe at Testing Centers

Response Rate: 98%  N>36,000
MCAT Preparation
AAMC MCAT Official Prep Products & Resources

- **15** online products (including new CARS) + **discounted bundles**
- **Fee Assistance Program** recipients receive all online products
- **Free resource enhancements:** Content Outline, Sample Test, Study Plan guide
- >1000 videos and 3000 questions in the **Khan Academy’s MCAT Collection**
- Prehealth **advisors receive 30% off** all MCAT Official Prep products - aamc.org/mcataadvisor
Free Road Map to MCAT CARS in Khan Academy

A Road Map to MCAT® Critical Analysis and Reasoning Skills in the Khan Academy MCAT Collection

Select the links below to view the Khan Academy CARS Collection practice passage sets. The questions in each passage set are randomized and not displayed in any specific order. We have provided the first part of each question in order to identify the question assessed by each skill.

### Practice Passage Sets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice passage set: Film adaptation of Chinese literature</th>
<th>Practice passage set: Disaster risk knowledge in Nepal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- According to the passage, Deppman’s …</td>
<td>- Which of the following statements …</td>
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<tr>
<td>- What is the function of the statement …</td>
<td>- Which of the following best captures …</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Which of the following conclusions …</td>
<td>- Which of the following would most …</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- A central message the author is trying …</td>
<td>- Assume that recent data …</td>
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<tr>
<th>Reading Within the Text (RWT)</th>
<th>Reading Beyond the Text (RBT)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>none</td>
<td>- Which of the following is LEAST …</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Because of changes in technology …</td>
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</tbody>
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CARS Diagnostic Tool

Welcome to the MCAT Official Prep CARS Diagnostic Tool | 1 Task

- Step 1: Review the Critical Analysis and Reasoning Skills Section of the MCAT Exam | 6 Tasks
- Step 1: Review the Critical Analysis and Reasoning Skills Section of the MCAT Exam | 1 Task
- Step 1: Review the Critical Analysis and Reasoning Skills Section of the MCAT Exam | 2 Tasks

Strategies to Improving Skills

Now that you’ve completed the practice sets and reviewed your questions to better understand your strengths and weaknesses, you may be considering the next steps to strengthen certain skills. The following strategies may help you focus on each skill tested in the CARS section of the MCAT exam.

General strategies to improve critical analysis and reasoning skills:

- All reading practice can be useful in preparing for the CARS section. Remember that CARS passages are between 500 and 600 words, so you may want to focus your reading on shorter essays or articles.
- Read for pleasure in a variety of genres, both fiction and non-fiction, that are also outside your usual preference (historical fiction, non-fiction about art, science fiction, etc.).
- Use some of the questions below to think critically about what you have read and about the important details that help clarify the author’s opinion or purpose.

- To practice Foundations of Comprehension (FOP) skills:
  - Read any article or passage, ask yourself the following questions:
    - What is the purpose of the passage (e.g., to
    - Read letters to the editor from newspapers and magazines.
    - Challenge yourself to read opinion articles and op-eds.
    - Is the author of the letter...
Free Online Study Plan Guide Enhancements

- Progress Points
- New navigation pane with a Resources tab and Search feature
- Editable spreadsheets
MCAT Validity Data Snapshot
MCAT Validity Committee

• Since before this version of the MCAT exam was introduced in 2015, representatives from medical schools across North America formed the MCAT Validity Committee to evaluate the exam.
  • Including advisors, Dr. Julie Chanatry and Dr. Francie Cuffney
• Today’s findings come from 2016, 2017 entrants with new scores and looked at:
  • Preclerkship outcomes for almost 2,800 medical students
  • Step 1 scores for over 23,000 U.S. students
  • Clerkship exam scores from over 750 students
  • Clerkship grades from almost 650 students
  • Step 2 CK scores from over 6,200 U.S. students
What do we know so far about the value of MCAT scores in predicting students’ likely performance in medical school?

3. MCAT scores predict performance better than undergraduate GPAs.
   ▪ Together, they provide better prediction than either academic metric alone.

4. MCAT scores provide comparable prediction for students from different sociodemographic backgrounds
   ▪ Students with different backgrounds, admitted with same MCAT score, have similar outcomes in med school.

www.aamc.org/mcatadmissions
Reflections on the Introduction of the New MCAT Exam

Julie Chumley, PhD, and Francie Coffey, PhD

In April 2015, medical school applicants began taking a redesigned MCAT exam. The exam was updated to test the foundational knowledge and reasoning skills that medical educators and students, admissions officials, and faculty said are important for incoming students to have on day one of medical school. It moved from being a test that asked examinees what they knew to one that asked them to show how well they could apply their knowledge to solve problems and think critically. The exam better aligns with the way science is taught and the scientific competencies that are important for students to develop (AAMC-SIPPI 2009; Mitchell et al, 2013). It also reflects the importance of behavior about opportunity to learn was essential groundwork, but we believe understood that our advising community would need to work together to understand the changes and what they would mean for our institutions—and that we could provide students with the information they needed to be ready for the exam. From the moment the new MCAT design was announced until its launch in April 2015, we shared information with each other about new curricula we were developing at our schools and tactics to support our faculty and ultimately our premedical students, eager to learn the concepts and skills needed for medical school (Blough et al., 2013).
How to help students strategically prepare for the MCAT exam

- Provides a framework for how students can get started on their preparation plan
- **Academic Medicine** – March 2020
Resources
Examinee and Prehealth Advisor Communications

✓ **Students can sign up for 2021 testing year email updates**

✓ Emails that describe testing plans, provide at-risk or cancellation notices, and helpful information about health and safety protocols, security, etc.

✓ **www.aamc.org/mcat-covid**

✓ AAMC website, which will continue to reflect the most up-to-date information available regarding testing and systems availability

✓ **@AAMC_MCAT** provides updates
Advisor Hub at www.aamc.org/advisors

✓ 30% discount on all MCAT Official Prep resources

✓ Resources on MCAT scores, data and research, recorded webinars

✓ Downloadable MSAR Reports on Medical school programs and requirements, including MCAT policies: www.aamc.org/msarreports

✓ And more on FIRST, AMCAS, and the Advisor Information System
Premed Resources Hub and Virtual Fairs

- A one-stop-shop for print-friendly premed resources
- Easily receive information for each phase of the premed journey
- Premed Webinars section includes all recorded webinars and PDF slides

aamc.org/premedresources

AAMC Virtual Medical School Fairs
"The Road Less Traveled: Nontraditional Pathways Medical School" – June 24, 2021
"Pathways, Strategies, and Resources for Diverse Medical School Aspirants" – Sept. 30, 2021

www.aamc.org/virtualfair
Prehealth Advisors

As a prehealth advisor, you have a critical role in guiding your students on their individual paths to medical school. The AAMC provides accurate, reliable resources and tools on medical school admission requirements, financial aid, the application process, and more, to support you in providing the best guidance to your students.
Thank you!

Questions?