A Lot

All About the MCAT®

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Cornell Career Services
February 28, 2014
Agenda

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- MCAT Facts and Figures
- MCAT 2014 and January 2015
- Timing, Preparation, Test Day
- MCAT Changes in 2015
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MCAT Overview

• The MCAT (Medical College Admissions Test) is a tool used by medical schools as an important component of the admission decision.

• Tests for mastery of basic biology, general chemistry, organic chemistry, and physics concepts; plus problem-solving and critical thinking ability.

• MCAT score and GPAs (overall and BCMP) are weighed in an algorithm to determine whom to invite for an interview.
Common Misconceptions

• The MCAT is just a content test, summing up the courses taken during your undergraduate education.
  – Rather, critical thinking, ability to reason and integrate information, and creative problem-solving are tested.

• The MCAT is not particularly predictive of my success in medical school.
  – Studies have shown that the MCAT is highly predictive of 1st and 2nd year grades in medical school, as well as performance on the U.S. Medical Licensing Exam.
Essential Resource
Essential Resource

Medical College Admission Test® (MCAT®)

The MCAT exam is a standardized test that has been a part of the medical school admissions process for more than 80 years.

More about the MCAT exam

MCAT Registration Testing Dates and Locations

- 2014-January 2015 MCAT Exam Schedule for the United States and Canada
- 2014 MCAT Exam International Testing Dates
- MCAT Exam Registration: 10 Tips from the Experts

The MCAT Exam (2014-January 2015 Testing Year)
Below is a list of resources and tools to get you started thinking about the MCAT exam. For more detailed information see the tabs at the left.

- 2014 MCAT® Essentials
- 2014-Jan. 2015 Registration Deadline Schedule
MCAT Facts and Figures

• >85,000 tests administered each year.
• Cost: $275 ($100 if qualify for fee assistance); surcharge for late registration, change of testing site, etc.
• Duration: 5 hours, 10 minutes (“seated” time).
• Offered: late January through early September, at designated test centers in all 50 states and in Canada.
• Closest test centers to Ithaca: Prometric Testing Centers in Vestal (near Binghamton) and East Syracuse.
• Attempts allowed: maximum of 3 between January 2014 through January 2015 (cancellations and voids included).
MCAT Facts and Figures

• Maximum Score: 45 (15 points per scored section).
• Score Choices:
  – *I wish to have my MCAT exam SCORED.*
  – *I wish to VOID my MCAT exam.*
• Scores Available: view in Testing History (THx) Score Reporting System 30-35 days after test date.
• Scores Honored: “oldest MCAT considered” varies by individual schools (check MSAR).
• Score Reporting: automatically to AMCAS and inserted into your application; you release from THx System to other recipients (e.g., AACOMAS, CASPA, SOPHAS, etc.).
MCAT Facts and Figures

Mean MCAT Scores, Applicants and Matriculants 2000 - 2011

Source: AAMC, Data extracted from Table 17: MCAT Scores and GPAs for Applicants, and Matriculants to U.S. Medical Schools, 2000-2011.
https://www.aamc.org/data/facts/applicantmatriculant/
When to Take the MCAT

- Take test as soon after completing covered material in your coursework as practicable.
- Allow time for self-directed learning on topics you have not yet studied.
- Take test with lead time on the application cycle. If at all possible, know your score before you choose where you want to apply.
- AAMC recommends taking in year of application; may not always be practicable.
When Not to Take the MCAT

• Before You’re Ready.
• Late in the Application Season.
• During Periods of High Demand:
  – Prelims, final exams, etc.
MCAT 2014 and January 2015

• Test Sections
  – Physical Sciences: 52 questions.
  – Verbal Reasoning: 40 questions.
  – Biological Sciences: 52 questions.
  – Trial Section (voluntary; 32 questions; 45 minutes).

• Writing Sample dropped in 2013.
MCAT 2014: What’s Covered

- **Physical Sciences**
  - Assesses the application of introductory-level knowledge of general chemistry and physics to solve scientific problems.
  - Topics are commonly taught in introductory general chemistry and physics courses.

- **Verbal Reasoning**
  - Assesses examinees’ ability to understand, evaluate, and apply information and arguments presented in text.

- **Biological Sciences**
  - Assesses the application of introductory-level knowledge of biology and organic chemistry to solve scientific problems.
  - Topics are commonly taught in introductory biology and organic chemistry courses.

- **Trial Section**
  - Biochemistry, psychology, and sociology; biologically-based chemistry and physics.
How to Prepare

• See covered topics/skills in *AAMC Content Outlines*.
• Use *The Official Guide* to the MCAT Exam.
• Take the free e-MCAT Practice Test 3 to get a baseline score. www.aamc.org/freemcatpractice.
• Review *The Official MCAT Self-Assessment Package*.
• Study by targeting your weaknesses and reinforcing your strengths.
• Take additional e-MCAT Practice Tests (fee based) to determine your progress.
• Consider a prep course.
Test Day

- Rules Apply, So Know Them!
  - Arrival time.
  - Allowed personal items.
  - Identification requirements.
  - Etc.
Concerns After the Exam

- Inform Test Center Administrator on day of test.
- Written concern must arrive by fax or mail within five business days:
  
  Attention: Test Center Concerns
  Association of American Medical Colleges
  2450 N Street, NW
  Washington, DC 20037-1127
  Fax: 202/828-4799
"...the health system of tomorrow will require a different kind of physician. And that is why, in 2015, there will be a new Medical College Admission Test® (MCAT®)."

-Darrell G. Kirch, M.D., AAMC President and CEO

https://www.aamc.org/newsroom/reporter/march2012/276772/word.html
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MCAT® 2015 Subject Areas</th>
<th>No. of items / minutes</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Biological and biochemical foundations of living systems</strong></td>
<td>67 / 95 min</td>
<td>1-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chemical and physical foundations of living systems</strong></td>
<td>67 / 95 min</td>
<td>1-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Psychological, social, and biological foundations of behavior</strong></td>
<td>67 / 95 min</td>
<td>1-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Critical analysis and reasoning skills</strong> based on readings in humanities and social sciences (includes ethics, philosophy, cross-cultural studies, and population health)</td>
<td>60 / 90 min</td>
<td>1-15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Which Exam Should You Take?

**Which Exam Will You Take?**

There are two primary factors to consider in deciding whether to take the current MCAT exam or the MCAT2015 exam. The first question is when you want to start medical school. The medical school admissions cycle begins the year before you start medical school. Specific application deadlines vary by medical school, but most application cycles begin in the summer. Many medical schools require MCAT scores before applications are considered. It’s important to know the application deadlines of the schools to which you’ll apply to ensure that your scores are delivered on time. Remember that MCAT scores are released 30-35 days after your test date.

The second factor to consider in deciding which exam to take is when you’ll be ready to test. While there are no courses required to be successful on the MCAT exam, your coursework will help you build the knowledge and skills you’ll need to do well. To ensure that you are prepared and ready for the exam, get familiar with the content for which you’ll be responsible. Content outlines for the current exam are available. For the MCAT2015 exam, we suggest you consult with the Preview Guide for the MCAT2015 Exam (Second Edition) for preparation.

When do you want to start medical school?  
- 2014 or later  
- 2016, 2017, 2018  
- 2010 or earlier

When will you be ready to test?  
- Spring 2013 or later  
- Between 2013 and January 2015  
- 2013

You should take:  
- Current MCAT exam  
- MCAT2015 exam

*Most medical schools will accept scores from the last 2 or 3 years. About 40% of schools accept scores that are up to 2 years old; another 40% accept scores up to 3 years old. A few medical schools accept scores that are 4 or more years old. Check the Medical School Admission Requirements® guide for complete details: [www.aamc.org/msar](http://www.aamc.org/msar)*

Register for the MCAT exam  
Get Your Test Scores  
MCAT2015 Exam  
MCAT2015 for Students  
MCAT2015 for Medical Schools and Undergraduate Programs  
The Official MCAT® Self-Assessment Package  
Updates  
MCAT registration will open on:  
- February 11, 2014— for June-September 2014 dates  
- February 13, 2014— for October 2014-January 2015 dates  
Follow us on Twitter:  
@AAMC_MCAT  
Are you a pre-health advisor or admissions officer?  
AMCAS® (American Medical College Application Service®)
Contacting MCAT

- Association of American Medical Colleges
- Medical College Admission Test
- 2450 N Street, NW
- Washington, DC 20037
- Phone: 202/828-0690
- E-mail: mcat@aamc.org (No Attachments)
- Hours of Operation
  - Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday: 9:00 am-5:00 pm ET
  - Wednesday: 9:00 am-3:00 pm ET
Questions?