

# MASTERING THE MCAT

Bethune SOS Seminar

Presenters: Elia, Kiana, Tina

Guest Speaker: Nourallah

Date: November 1st, 2023, 5:30 pm





# Who are we?

## Peer Mentors:

**Elia Xhindole**, 4th year Biomedical Sciences Major, French Studies Minor | [eliakh@my.yorku.ca](mailto:eliakh@my.yorku.ca)

**Kiana Baniasad**, 2nd year Biomedical Sciences Major | [kianab99@my.yorku.ca](mailto:kianab99@my.yorku.ca)

**Tina Barhagh**, 4th year Biomedical Sciences Major | [tina1381@my.yorku.ca](mailto:tina1381@my.yorku.ca)

## Speaker :

**Nourallah Salem**, 3rd year Neuroscience Major (Molecular and Cellular Specialization)

# Agenda

- **What is the MCAT?**
- **Timelines**
- **How to prepare and study**
- **How to reserve a seat**
- **Resources**
- **Sample Questions**
- **Q&A with Nourallah**



# What is the MCAT?



# Introduction

- **MCAT = Medical College Admissions Test**
- **Standardized test** created by the AAMC (Association of American Medical Colleges)
- Required for **admission** to most medical schools in Canada and US
- **Comprehensive review** of biology, chemistry, physics, biochemistry, anatomy, physiology, psychology, sociology + reading comprehension
- **Critical Analysis and Reasoning Skills** assesses comprehension and analysis abilities, from various social sciences + humanities disciplines, No specific content knowledge required





# Aids and Scores

- **No calculators, formula sheets or other aids allowed besides a provided periodic table + white boards.**
  - White boards can not be erased but they can be exchanged for a new white board.
  - Review some math for chemistry and physics (logs, trig, ratios, etc.)
  - Must memorize all necessary equations, pathways, definitions, etc.
- **Scaled scoring, rather than percentage grading**
  - Perfect score overall is 528
  - Perfect score per section is 132
  - 500 is the median score
  - Not a bell curve
- **To score or to void?** That is the question.
  - Consider voiding if you left many questions blank, felt ill on test day

# Sections and Questions

- **4 sections:**
    - Chemistry and physics, 59 Qs
    - CARS (Critical Analysis and Reasoning Skills), 53 Qs
    - Biology and biochemistry, 59 Qs
    - Psychology and sociology, 59 Qs
  - **Passage-based exam**
    - Answer 5-7 Qs based on the passage or similar concepts
  - **230 questions total**
  - **90-95 minutes per section**
  - **7.5 hours total (including breaks and introduction)**
    - Two 10-minute breaks and 30-minute lunch break
    - 3 minutes to decide if you want to score or void the attempt
  - \* **People registered with accessibility services** can apply for **extra time** or stop the clock breaks as long as they do so far in advance
- Qs = Questions



# MCAT FAQs

## How many times can I take the MCAT?

- You may attempt the exam no more than three (3) times in a testing year; no more than four (4) times over two consecutive testing years; and no more than seven (7) times in your lifetime.

## When should I register for the MCAT?

- At least 60 days prior to your preferred exam date. However, it depends on different factors. We will discuss more in the registration section.

## If my score is pretty average, should I retake the MCAT?

- This depends on the Med School you are applying to. Schools consider different aspects of your application differently such as your personal statement, letters of recommendation etc...

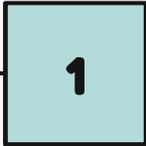
# Suggested Timelines / Steps



# Timeline

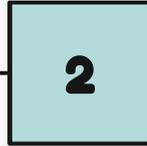
## Research

Learn what the MCAT is, testable content, registration process, and how to study for it.



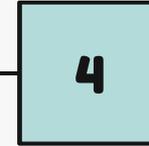
## Gather Resources

Take a mock test to get an idea of what it is like to write the test and where your weak points are.



## Plan

Make a detailed study plan/schedule. Prioritize high yield content and tricky concepts.



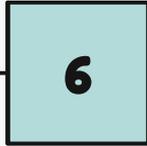
## Study

Begin studying.

# Timeline

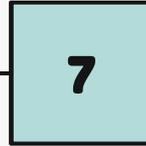
## Write Practice Tests

Take practice tests under exam conditions.



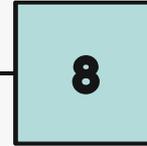
## Visit Test Centre

Check out the test centre within a week of your exam date.



## Make Modifications

Make changes to your plan as necessary



## Write the MCAT

Good luck!

# Preparing & Studying for the MCAT





# How and when can I write the MCAT?

- **Test dates vary each year, are usually offered on weekends January - early September**
- **There are fees associated with signing up for and rescheduling/cancelling the exam**
  - Currently \$335 USD + tax to register and write
  - Fee assistance program is available to eligible students in need of financial assistance (Eligibility are tied directly to the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services poverty level guidelines)
  - Examinees testing outside the US, Canada, or US Territories will be charged a \$120 International fee in addition to the initial registration fee. International fees are non-refundable upon registration cancellation



# Useful resources when getting started

01

## **Social media! (i.e. YouTube, blogs, Reddit, etc.)\***

- Tons of people share their experiences, check out some videos/ blogs
- r/MCAT has so many links to legitimate free resources, Anki decks, mnemonics, and study plan spreadsheets

02

## **AAMC website**

- Carefully read all of the info they have online! + practice materials

03

## **Friends, peers and mentors!**

- Reach out to anyone you know who has written the MCAT for advice!

\*be mindful that some people are breaking their MCAT agreement on these sites





# 3 Key Parts of Studying

## 1 | Content review

- Khan academy!! (free)
- YouTube videos (free)
- Exam prep books (third party companies)
- Flash cards (i.e. Anki decks, quizlet, etc.)

## 2 | Practice questions

- AAMC practice questions/ passages
- Exam prep company practice materials
- Free online practice (i.e. Khan Academy, Jack Westin, etc.)

## 3 | Practice exams

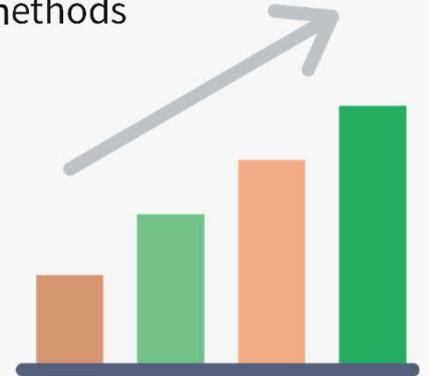
- AAMC Full Length practice exams
- Exam prep company Full Length exams



# Following your plan

- **Stay on track**
  - Discipline and sustainability
- **Monitor your progress**
  - Practice tests
- **Adaptability**
  - Be willing to alter your plan or change your resources/study methods
- **Make adjustments to your schedule/ plan as necessary**
  - Life happens!

For more information: [MCAT Study Schedule Tips & Template](#)





# Practice Tests

## How should I go about doing practice tests?

- **MCAT morning routine**
- **Start at the same time as your scheduled test**
- **Scheduled exam breaks**
- **No unnecessary materials, food, drinks, phone, etc!**
- **No notes or practice test answers!**
- **Stay focused**

For more information: [How to Take MCAT Practice Tests](#)

# Checking out the Test Centre

- **Check out the test centre within a week of your exam date**
  - Reduce your stress the day of the exam by checking out the route and parking situation
- **There are 16 locations in Ontario, 7 of which are in Toronto**



# Reserving A Seat / Test Date





# Signing up for the MCAT

- You can follow the instructions from the AAMC guide to registration:  
<https://vimeo.com/477161485>
- If you are signing up in the day that the registration opens, make sure to log in before 11:50 am ET. You will have 10 minutes to get back to the queue once it is your turn.
- Registration for Jan-June is currently open and July-September registration will begin on February 22 at 12 pm ET.
- If you qualify for the fee assistance program, apply before you register for an exam date.
- Have 3 dates that will work for you in case your first choice is not available.

# Resources





# York Courses with Overlapping MCAT Material

## BIOLOGY

BIOL 1000, 1001

BIOL 2020, 2021

## CHEMISTRY

CHEM 1000, 1001

CHEM 2020, 2021

## OTHER

PSYC 1010

SOCI 1010

PHYS 1510

NRSC 2000

KINE 2021

### DISCLAIMERS:

\*This is NOT a comprehensive list of courses that NEED to be taken to write the MCAT

\*\*Your final grade earned in these courses, should you be taking them, may not reflect your performance on the MCAT

\*\*\* Some courses on this slide may have prerequisites, please refer to the York Courses Website to learn more about courses and their prerequisites



# Document with Helpful Links

- Scan the QR code to access a document containing helpful links!



<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1oavKEjD5MHHlzLYZlGVUQFddgDCUlrmW9lvGVNr6kJQ/>



# Things to keep in mind...

- Everyone's studying will be different
- What works for you, may not work for someone else, and vice-versa
- The MCAT is a marathon, not a sprint
  - Burnout is extremely common, try to prevent burnout rather than doing damage control when you are already too burned out to study
- Consider the circumstances you will be studying under (i.e. will you be working? Taking a classes? Playing sports? Travelling? Doing research?)
- Consider your "baseline" when you start studying to gauge how long and how often you will need to study



# Meet our Guest Speaker!



# Q&A



What is one tip that helped you start studying for the MCAT?



Do you have any tips for  
time management?



What would you do differently if you had to retake the MCAT?



# Thank You

CREDITS: This presentation template was created by [Slidesgo](#), and includes icons by [Flaticon](#), and infographics & images by [Freepik](#)