

# Building the Foundation: MCAT Prep for Community College and 1st/2nd Year Students



# Meet Your Speaker



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# Introduction

What we'll cover in today's webinar



How to Develop Study Skills as a Community College or 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> year undergraduate student



Strategies for Preparing for Each Section of the MCAT



Q&A

# Focus On Your Courses Before the MCAT

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- Ideally, you want to take all of the MCAT pre-requisite courses before you take the MCAT. Here are all of the courses you should plan on taking:
  - General Chemistry I and II
  - Organic Chemistry I and II
  - Physics I and II
  - Biochemistry
  - Biology I and II
  - Introduction to Psychology
  - Introduction to Sociology

- Some students benefit a lot from studying with others while other students do better with independent study
- Some students enjoy studying in the library while others prefer cafés or their bedroom
- Some students like to take notes, make study guides, or create flashcards for review
- Some students like to go class and others like to watch class recordings





# ➤ Why is the MCAT Chem/Phys section so difficult?

1. Integrates a broad range of subjects
2. Luck Factor
3. Requires a complex set of reasoning skills
4. Math
  - Time pressure from calculation questions
  - Equations and constants

## Subjects

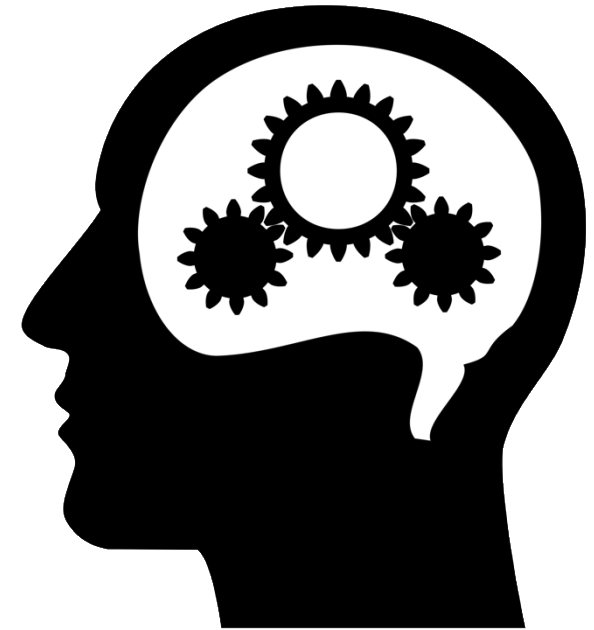
- **30% General Chemistry**
- **25% Biochemistry**
- **25% Physics**
- **15% Organic Chemistry**
- **5% Biology**

## Skills Tested

- Knowledge of scientific concepts and principles
- Scientific reasoning and problem solving
- Reasoning about the design and execution of research
- Data-based and statistical reasoning

# Tip 1: Commit high yield content to memory

- Keep a running list of physics/chemistry equations in your notebook
- Review those formulas often
- Memorize the key biochemical pathways and the amino acids
- Study important lab techniques in chemistry and biochemistry



# ➤ Why is the MCAT CARS section so difficult?

1. No content knowledge required
2. Critical analysis and reasoning skills can be difficult to obtain
3. Passages cover a variety of disciplines (humanities and social studies)
4. Time pressure (90 minutes, 9 passages, 53 questions)

## Humanities Disciplines

- ☐ Architecture
- ☐ Art
- ☐ Dance
- ☐ Ethics
- ☐ Literature
- ☐ Music
- ☐ Philosophy
- ☐ Popular Culture
- ☐ Religion
- ☐ Theater
- ☐ Studies of Diverse Cultures

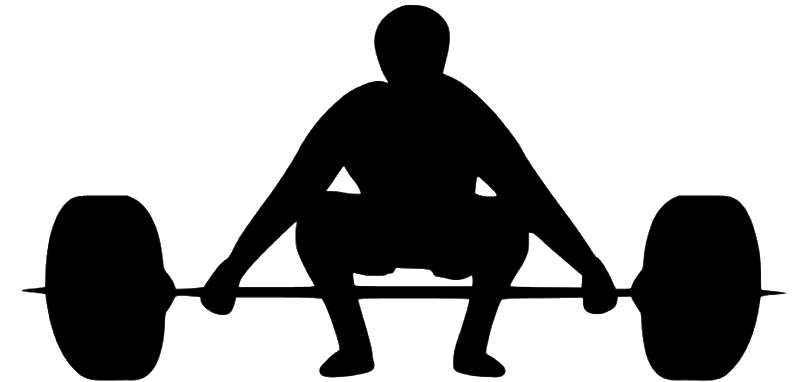
## Social Studies Disciplines

- ☐ Anthropology
- ☐ Archaeology
- ☐ Economics
- ☐ Education
- ☐ Geography
- ☐ History
- ☐ Linguistics
- ☐ Political Science
- ☐ Population Health
- ☐ Psychology
- ☐ Sociology
- ☐ Studies of Diverse Cultures



Tip 2: CARS is like strength training: you have to do some heavy lifting to see any gains

- Regular CARS practice is the best way to improve your score in this section.
  - If you are close to your CARS goal score 1-2 passages per day is sufficient.
  - If you are far from your CARS goal score you need to add even more practice.



## Tip 3: Who is the author?

- Try to paint an image of the author in your head based on their opinions
- Language of emphasis like “undoubtedly, surely, especially” are the best places to locate the author’s opinion.
- Also, you need to figure out the audience of the piece and why the author bothered to write it in the first place. Every author has a reason for why they wrote a piece, so what is that reason?



## ➤ Why is the MCAT Bio/Biochem section so difficult?

1. Covers a broad range of topics
2. Requires a complex set of reasoning skills
3. Complex research passages

### Subjects

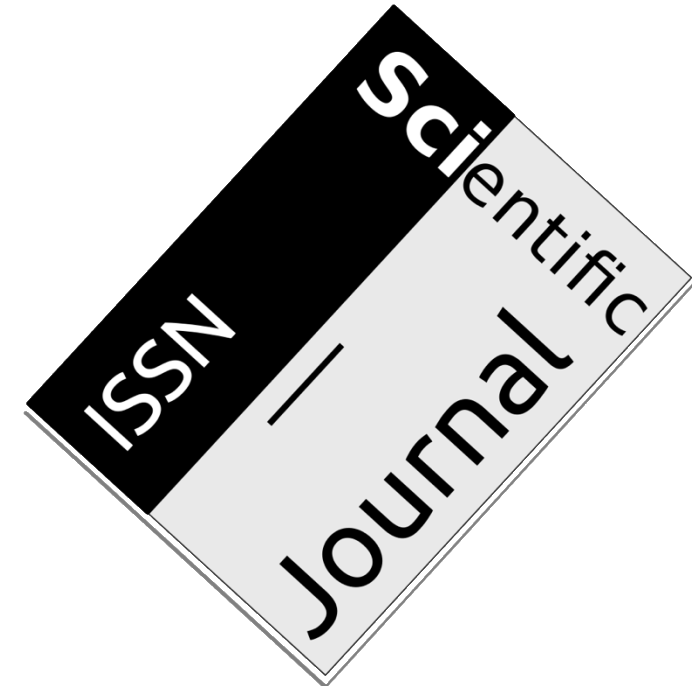
- **65% Biology**
- **25% Biochemistry**
- **5% General Chemistry**
- **5% Organic Chemistry**

### Skills Tested

- Knowledge of scientific concepts and principles
- Scientific reasoning and problem solving
- Reasoning about the design and execution of research
- Data-based and statistical reasoning

## Tip 4: Practice analyzing scientific literature

- Try reading cover publications from scientific journals in your free time
- While reading the passages, try summarizing figures/graphs/tables
- For signaling pathways, draw a quick signaling map



# ➤ Why is the MCAT Psych/Soc section so difficult?

1. A lot of vocabulary terms and names that need to be memorized
2. Newest section of the MCAT
3. Research-focused passages
4. Exam fatigue

## Subjects

- **65% Psychology**
- **30% Sociology**
- **5% Biology**

## Skills Tested

- Knowledge of scientific concepts and principles
- Scientific reasoning and problem solving
- Reasoning about the design and execution of research
- Data-based and statistical reasoning

# Tip 5: Focus on Definitions AND Examples

- Psych/Soc is highly memorization-based unlike some of the other science sections.
- However, examples are just as important as memorizing definitions.



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**Q&A**

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If you have any questions, please  
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