

Overview



December 14, 2020



Agenda

1. Welcome
2. Introduce new members
3. Recap the 2020 testing year
4. Preview 2021 testing year
5. Preview meeting agenda for the week

Welcome to new MVC members



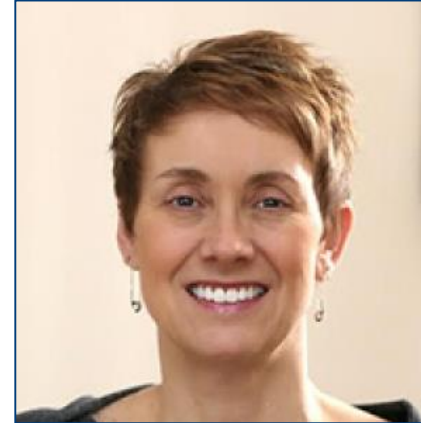
THE UNIVERSITY
OF ARIZONA



Kadian McIntosh, PhD
Director of Research and
Analytics
University of Arizona
College of Medicine



Michelle Albert, MD, MPH
Associate Dean for Admissions
University of California, San
Francisco School of Medicine



Rhona Beaton, MAT
President-Elect, NAAHP



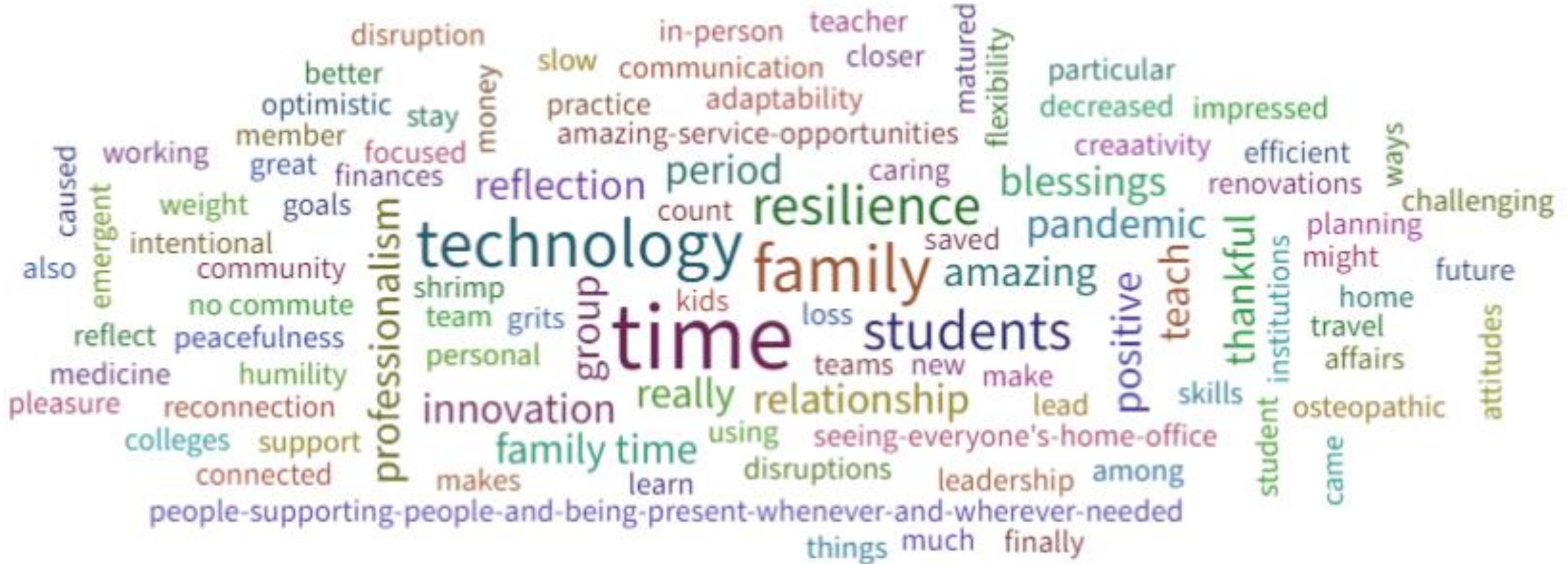
Faculty of Medicine



Barton Thiessen, MD, UBC, FRCPC
Assistant Dean for Admissions
Memorial University of
Newfoundland Faculty of Medicine

What is the best thing that has come out of the disruption of this year's COVID-19 pandemic for you?

What is the best thing that has come out of the disruption of this year's COVID-19 pandemic for you?



Hopes for the future

- “I hope that we internalize that we are better when we are together--in purpose and action.”
- “My hope is that the willingness to creatively collaborate as team across previously perceived barriers will persist.”
- “The realization that resources are truly finite and that the choices of what to support - education, public health, etc. matter.”
- “I hope that we can sustain the creativity we have demonstrated to make positive change in all the ways in which we work-- to achieve equity, inclusion and opportunity for all.”

Surprise!

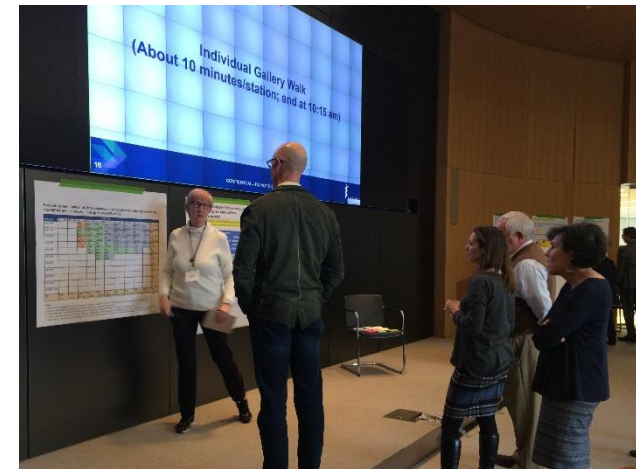
Work with the MR5 Committee on revising the MCAT exam



Work with the PSBB Committee to evaluate the validity of PSBB section scores



Work with the MCAT Validity Committee

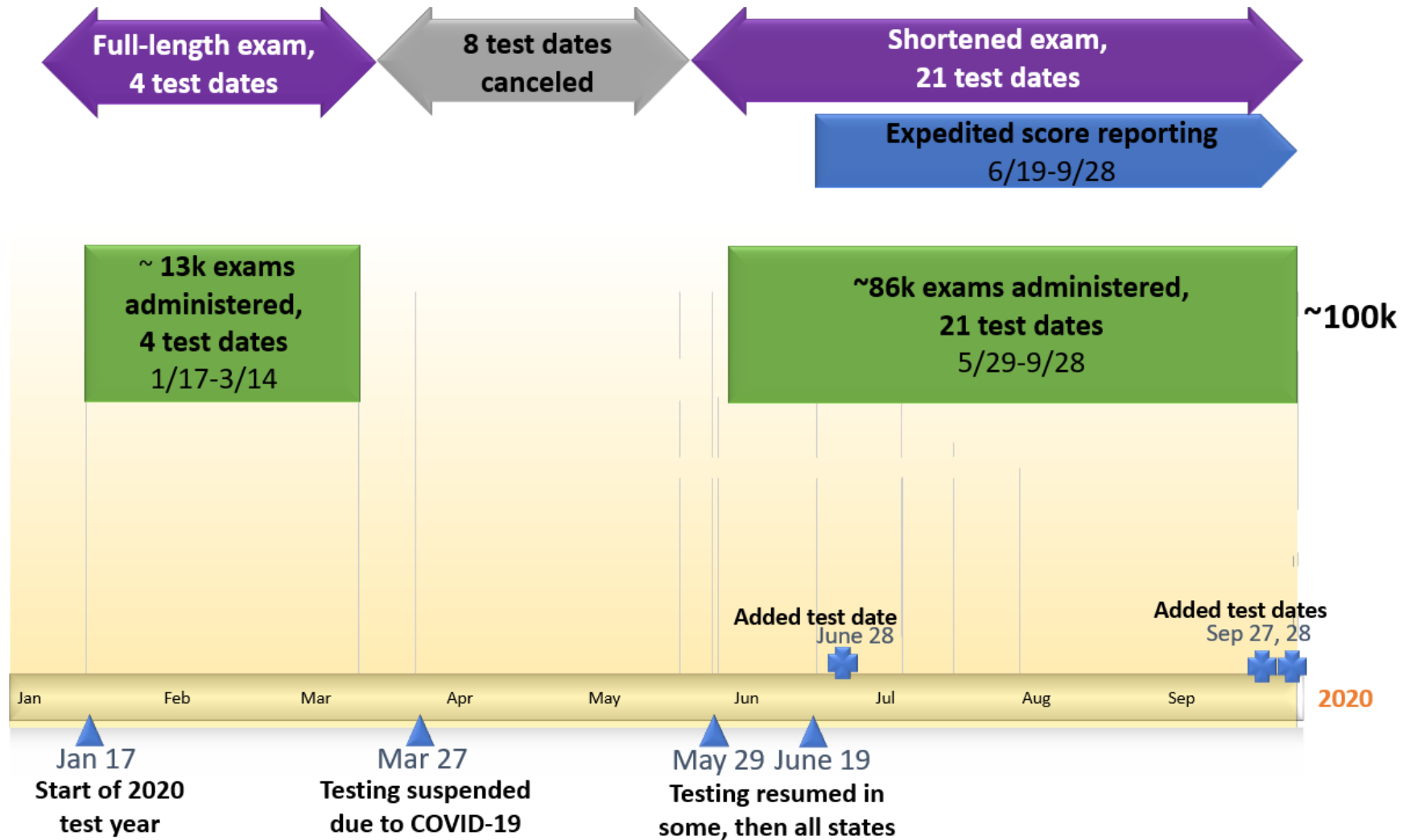


AAMC Holiday Parties



Recap of the 2020 MCAT testing plan

Mass cancellations due to COVID-19 in March through May

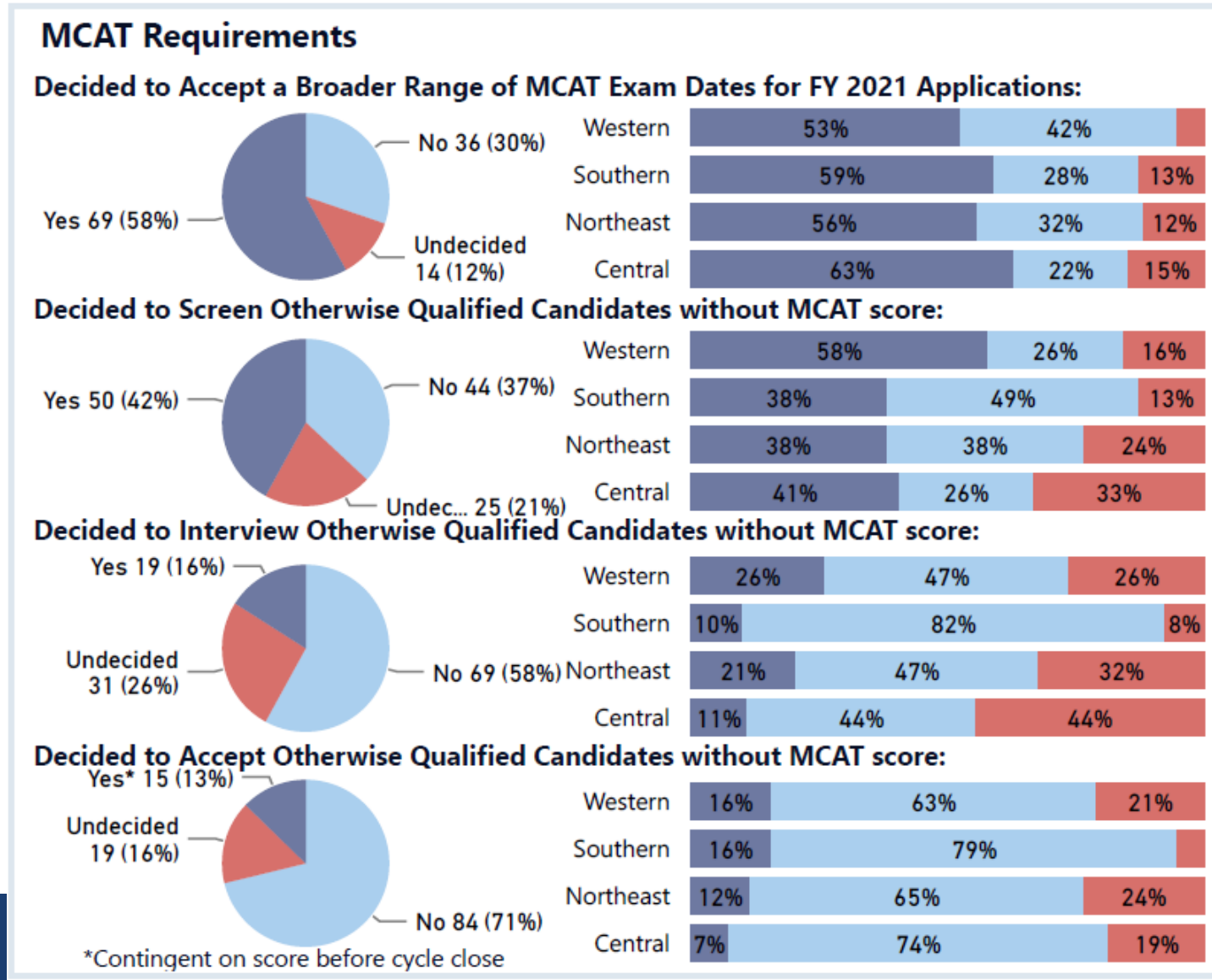


Overview of 2020 testing plan

The Revised Testing Plan	
Shortened exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 hours and 30 minutes to 5 hours and 45 minutes • Removed administrative and unscored elements to shorten seat time • # scored questions remains the same • Same knowledge and skills at the same levels of difficulty • Reporting the same scores with the same precision
3 testing sessions per day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standard start times at 6:30 a.m., 12:15 p.m., 6:00 p.m.
3 additional test dates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • June 28, September 27, and September 28
Expedited scoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All exams administered from June 19 to September 28 will receive scores in about 2 weeks
Waived fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No rescheduling or cancellation fees • Expanded income eligibility guidelines to help more students with financial need qualify for Fee Assistance
Prep product extensions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extended subscriptions to AAMC prep products until the end of testing year 2020 so that students with adjusted test dates can continue preparing for the exam

14,583 received FAP in 2020—a 63% increase from 2019

How schools have adapted during this admissions cycle



Major findings

- Exams administered from 1/17-3/14, and from 5/29-9/28
 - 50% more capacity than a typical year
 - Health & safety protocols in place from May 29 through September
- More than 88,000 examinees took nearly 100,000 exams in 2020 (~2% increase)
 - >13,000 exams in Jan. - March 14; ~86,000 exams May 29 – Sept. 28
 - About 1.5% tested with accommodations
- 92% of surveyed examinees were satisfied or very satisfied with the implementation of health and safety protocols; 5% responded neutrally
- Demographic makeup of 2020 examinees mirror that of 2019 examinees
- Same % of first-time and repeat examinees
- 2020 MCAT scores are comparable to 2019 scores
- Early analysis on test preparation data show an increase across the board

Discussion

1. What questions do you have about the 2020 testing plans?
2. What questions do you have about the equity analyses presented in the read ahead materials?
3. What other information would help you think about equity in the 2020 testing year?

Preview of the 2021 MCAT testing plan

FLEXIBILITY IS STILL THE KEY

The 2021 testing plan balances four important priorities

- Provide timely reporting of MCAT scores for 2021 applicants finishing their applications
- Introduce new sets of scored questions as soon as possible to refresh the test forms
- Resume piloting new questions to prepare for building future forms
- Provide flexibility in exam scheduling and adapt health and safety protocols to be ready for uncertainty in the pandemic's course

The 2021 testing year will go from January through September

2021 Testing Year

- 31 exam dates - 1 additional date (33% more capacity) in January
- Three testing periods (January-March, April-June, July-September)
- Return to the traditional length exam
- Scores reported on normal 30-35-day schedule **for test dates in March and beyond**

For exams administered in January and March (testing periods 2 and 3 TBD)

- Strict health and safety protocols
- Exams offered at 7:30 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. to observe social distancing and limit the number of people in the test center
- Rescheduling and cancellation fees waived
- Scores reported in about 2 weeks **for the 4 January test dates**

Testing with Accommodations will Reflect Improvements

The AAMC is committed to providing all individuals with an opportunity to demonstrate their proficiency on the MCAT exam, including ensuring access to persons with disabilities

Process improvements

- Scheduling January and March examinees in advance of the Nov. 10 registration opening.
- Work on other process improvements is ongoing.

Continue Health & safety protocols that were in place this year



- Requiring examinees to acknowledge that they meet the CDC recommendations for health guidelines (that they have not been diagnosed with or been in close contact with anyone who tested positive for COVID-19 within 14 days before their exam date) and that they will follow health and safety guidelines while testing by providing their signature on the e-pad during check-in. (Anyone who does not meet this requirement is not allowed to test.)
- Requiring the use of face masks for all staff and MCAT examinees. (Anyone who does not comply with the policy will be removed from the test center.)
- Observing 6' social distancing between individuals in the testing room.
- Limiting the number of people in each MCAT test session. Cleaning and disinfecting regimens in between all testing appointments and throughout the day.
- Utilize clear sneeze guards to create a barrier between test center staff and examinees during check in.
- Approving the use of gloves while testing (upon inspection).
- Having hand sanitizer available during testing. Examinees will be asked to wash their hands or use hand sanitizer before they enter the testing room.

Health & safety protocols will continue, with improvements



Health and Safety Protocols

- In 2021, will continue applying safety protocols, compliance monitoring program, and remediation steps instituted in 2020
- This includes investigating every report of COVID-19 that students report, watching videos, checking for safety lapses, using secret shops, and inviting students to report health and safety concerns through surveys and a variety of other ways



Process improvements (in progress)

- Enhanced communications, such as an email communication about health and safety protocols to examinees with upcoming test dates
- Allowing personal hand sanitizer bottles in the test room (upon inspection)
- Under investigation: additional protections, influenced by current and emerging information

We will continue to provide regular communications to the admissions community in 2020

- Regular school-specific emails
- Monthly topical emails in the limited-edition series *Medical School Admissions in the time of COVID-19*
 - November 13: Recap of the 2020 testing year
 - December 18: Updates on the 2021 testing year
- Other updates in 2021 based on feedback about the topics of interest and the frequency of communications needed

Example: Regular school-specific emails

- # of submitted applications for the 2021 admissions cycle: **7,468** (compared to **3,779** at the same time in the 2020 admissions cycle)
- # of submitted applications with MCAT scores (includes scores for recent exams that will be released within two weeks): **7,409**
 - # of submitted applications with MCAT scores that will be released on Oct. 13: **392**
- # of submitted applications with MCAT scores that are anticipated on Oct. 27 (including applicants who have tested on a make-up date or are still registered to test on a future make-up date): **1**
- # of submitted applications without MCAT scores - applicants are NOT registered to test on a future test date: **59**

Dear Colleague,

To help the medical school admissions community navigate this year's unprecedented admission cycle, the AAMC has been providing national data and regular updates on the progress of the MCAT testing plan and AMCAS applications on the [AMCAS website](#) and through the [Medical School Admissions in the Time of COVID-19](#) weekly email series.

This email provides an additional data snapshot tailored to your school's applicants. The following data show the number of your applicants with and without scores. The 2020 testing year is now complete. Scores for applicants who tested on one of the last two test date, Sept. 27 and 28, will be reported on Oct. 13. There are a small number of make-up appointments in October for individuals whose exams were canceled by the AAMC or who have been working with AAMC to schedule their exams. Scores for these make-up exams will be reported on Oct. 27. The data below are based on applicants to [REDACTED] of Oct. 6, 2020.

- # of submitted applications for the 2021 admissions cycle: **7,468** (compared to **3,779** at the same time in the 2020 admissions cycle)
- # of submitted applications with MCAT scores (includes scores for recent exams that will be released within two weeks): **7,409**
 - # of submitted applications with MCAT scores that will be released on Oct. 13: **392**
- # of submitted applications with MCAT scores that are anticipated on Oct. 27 (including applicants who have tested on a make-up date or are still registered to test on a future make-up date): **1**
- # of submitted applications without MCAT scores - applicants are NOT registered to test on a future test date: **59**

If you have any questions about these data or about the testing plan, please do not hesitate to contact us at MCATAdmissions@aamc.org.

Sincerely,

Cynthia Searcy, PhD

Senior Director, MCAT Research and Development

Discussion

1. What questions do you have about the 2021 testing plans?
2. What types of information will be most impactful during the 2021 testing year?
 - a) What resources did you get this year that you would like to continue to get next year?
 - b) What do you wish you had that you didn't get?

Poll Question: What resources did you get this year that you would like to continue to get next year?

- Health and safety updates for testing
- Regular updates on testing progress (# of people registered vs. tested)
- Projected score availability for applicants (national)
- Project score availability for applicants at your school (tailored school data emails)
- Equity analysis
- Using MCAT scores in admissions guide
- Template slide deck for the MCAT data guide
- Research summary on MCAT predicting more than Step 1
- Fall validity report
- Other (Type your answer into chat in WebEx)

What do you wish you had that you didn't get?

Type your answers into the chat in WebEx

Meeting Agenda

Wednesday, 12/16, 2 – 4 pm

Topic: Present and future MCAT research agenda

- Review AAMC's strategic action plan for diversifying tomorrow's doctors
- Discuss how the current context could affect the MVC research agenda
- Discuss future research topics and how to prioritize them

Prewrite

- AAMC strategic plan (optional)
- Fall 2020 Validity Report
- MCAT Validity Research Agenda: Overview of Findings (from the March 2020 MVC meeting)
- Think about insights that might reduce opportunity gaps, equity in admissions decisions, and equity in medical student performance outcomes given opportunity gaps
- Review the map of research topics proposed at the March 2020 MVC meeting

Activity: Identify any new research topics not reflected in the results of the March 2020 brainstorming exercise

Research topics map: <https://docs.google.com/drawings/d/19TdGj-cOTxB4CJPPbqyF3bhcYwNPDR403-xz0rOncL0/edit>

Analyses of existing data	New data collections (e.g., admissions, PMQ surveys)	Future research ideas beyond MVC	Needs for resources
<p>Relative contributions of educational disadvantages vs. test prep. Does test prep help disadvantaged students more?</p> <p>High- vs. low- impact test prep strategies</p> <p>Examine PMQ open-ended responses from students from disadvantaged backgrounds to gain insight into their strategies and challenges</p> <p>Positive (or negative) deviant analysis: students that perform better (or worse) than their MCAT scores predict</p> <p>School cluster analysis: - How missions/focuses on social/educational outcomes relate to whether schools accept applicants with lower scores - Schools with similar missions and similarly accept applicants with lower scores but have different outcomes - Compare schools with different curricular approaches/learning environments - HBCUs vs. other</p> <p>Fit between school mission and applicant intention/motivation (characteristics of applicants applying to schools with similar vs. different missions)</p> <p>Predictive validity for MCAT section scores: - PSBB and CARS predicting Step 2 CS failure rate - Combining the two natural science sections</p> <p>Predictive validity of academic metrics: - Separating BCPM, AO, post-bac/graduate GPAs - Research hours - Hours of science coursework</p> <p>Characteristics of high MCAT performing URIM/low SES students, particularly those from low-resourced schools (anti-deficit model)</p>	<p>Types of support available for students with MCAT scores in the middle 3rd</p> <p>Alignment/coordination among admissions, student affairs, faculty, etc. to construct a class</p> <p>Attitudes of admissions committees regarding acceptability of "+1" strategy.</p> <p>Impact of MCAT threshold (P/F) on admissions committee decision making: - National cutoff - Local school cutoff - Peer group cutoff - Cutoff based on z-score/SD</p> <p>Drivers of high MCAT average/barriers of accepting students with lower MCAT scores</p> <p>Impacts of COVID disruptions on admissions: : - Changes in use of MCAT scores - Changes in admissions outcomes - Schools that are test optional</p> <p>Measure of fixed vs. growth mindset in test prep (PMQ)</p> <p>Challenges faced by disadvantaged students in test prep: anxiety, defensiveness, feeling slapped back, etc. (PMQ)</p> <p>Admissions decision-making process: - Weight of MCAT - Reasoning/justification for accepting students with lower scores</p> <p>Measure of motivation of examinees (PMQ)</p>	<p>Impacts of Step 1 P/F change on validity: - Change in curriculum - Change in preparation - Change in test-taking approach/motivation</p> <p>Longitudinal study of MCAT validity - Specialty choice/selection - Knowledge/care</p> <p>Predictive validity of MCAT against shelf exams - Role of clinical science shelf exams in preparing for Step 2 CS given Step 1 going P/F</p> <p>Tailor time use study in test prep—using wearable gear/time tracking device to study time spent studying, working, sleeping, commuting, in class, with family obligations, etc.</p>	<p>Guidance (one-page outline) on how to use section scores</p> <p>Narratives/success stories for students: - Admitted with modest scores - Admitted with different section scores</p> <p>Training on holistic review/decision-making: case scenarios/best practices from similar schools that have successful outcomes</p> <p>Information on students who do not succeed to set realistic expectations about how hard medical school is</p> <p>Targeted outreach: - Publicize "find an advisor" - Reaching individuals interacting with students - Digital strategies (e.g., podcasts) to increase impact of test prep resources</p> <p>Local school report/validity data analysis</p> <p>Validity findings for schools that are similar (in mission, class make-up, etc.)</p> <p>Targeted test prep resources to help disadvantaged students: - Test-taking strategies - Different way of thinking (outside of the box, higher levels of Bloom's Taxonomy) - Confidence - Growth mindset - Partner with aspiring docs, HSPEP, and others</p>

Type your ideas in the "sticky notes" and drag and drop them into one of the four columns.

Friday, 12/18, 1 – 2:30 pm

Topic: Next Steps in the Evaluation of the MCAT Exam

- Working groups provide updates about their discussions and decisions
- Discuss priorities during the committee's remaining tenure
- Gather feedback about the virtual committee meeting experience

Prewrite

- Working groups convene on 12/17 as needed to refine action plans and pose feedback questions for the MVC

Questions





Tomorrow's Doctors, Tomorrow's Cures®

Learn

Serve

Lead

Association of
American Medical Colleges