



Post-MCAT Questionnaire

2021 Report

February 2022

Table of Contents

	Page
Executive Summary	1
Background Information	3
Demographic Information	3
Parent Education and Occupation	4
Premedical Experiences	4
Decision to Study Medicine	4
Undergraduate Experiences	5
Enrollment Status	5
MCAT Preparation	7
Preparation Strategies	7
Preparation Resources	8
Preparation Challenges	12
Career Plans and Interest	13
Graduate/Professional Programs	13
Influences on Decision to Study Medicine	14
Financial Information	16
College/Premedical Financial Situation	16
Noneducational/Consumer Debt	17
Coursework	18

2021 AAMC Post-MCAT Questionnaire Summary Report

Executive Summary

Background

The Post-MCAT Questionnaire (PMQ) is administered by the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC). The survey collects information from individuals who have taken the Medical College Admission Test® (MCAT®) for the purpose of helping medical schools and medical educators understand more about aspiring and potential medical students. The Summary Report presents data from the 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, and 2021 PMQs. Copies of the Summary Report and the survey tool are publicly available on the AAMC website at www.aamc.org/data/pmq.

Methodology

The PMQ is administered online. MCAT registrants are invited via email to take the PMQ within five days of sitting for the exam. In prior years, PMQ participants had three weeks to complete the survey. Limiting the time to respond to the survey to three weeks ensured that examinees could only respond to the PMQ prior to receiving their MCAT scores. In 2021, the PMQ's administration schedule was adjusted to accommodate some MCAT exams with expedited score releases. In these cases, PMQ participants had twelve days to complete the survey. MCAT registrants are invited to take the PMQ each time they take the MCAT.

Of the 81,077 individuals invited to take the PMQ in 2021, 24,721 individuals responded (for a response rate of 30.5% in 2021). While MCAT examinees are eligible to participate in the PMQ each time that they take the MCAT, the PMQ Summary Report only includes information from the first PMQ that an individual completed. Survey data for participating individuals may not be comparable to data for non-participants.

PMQ Content Changes

Content of the PMQ was changed during the 2019 PMQ cycle as a result of on-going efforts to re-engineer the AAMC Student Surveys. Therefore, data for some sections of this report are not displayed for years prior to 2020. For new survey items, comparisons to prior years cannot be made. Blank rows and columns indicate that comparable data are not available.

Selected Findings

Background Information

Respondents most often were categorized with having an AAMC SES Education Occupation (EO) indicator of EO-5, which indicates that the highest education level of any parent reported was a doctoral degree, and that parent worked in an executive, managerial, or professional occupation (24.5% in 2021). The number of respondents reporting an SES EO indicator of EO-1, which indicates that the highest education level of any parent reported was less than a college degree regardless of occupation, has decreased over the past five years to 22.8% in 2021.

Premedical Experiences

Just over three-fifths of respondents indicated that they definitely decided to study medicine before college, either before high school or during high school (61.9% in 2021). Over half of respondents in 2021 had taken courses at a four-year college or university within the three months before their MCAT exam (61.4% in 2021). Each year, the majority of respondents were full-time students throughout their undergraduate education (93.2% in 2021).

In 2021, respondents were less likely to report participation in any premedical experiences such as laboratory research apprenticeships for college students, volunteering in the healthcare field, and participating in an international volunteer experience. The abrupt changes in premedical experience participation may be attributed, in part, to the COVID-19 pandemic.

MCAT Preparation

PMQ respondents used a diverse set of preparation resources to prepare for the MCAT exam. The preparation resources most commonly reported by respondents were Official MCAT Practice Exams (89.2% of respondents in 2021) and MCAT preparation books published by a commercial company (69.9% of respondents in 2021). Nearly 90% of respondents took a timed online practice exam with scheduled breaks to mimic the exam day to prepare for the exam (89.4% in 2021).

Career Plans and Interest

Each year, the majority of respondents indicated that they are “Very likely” to apply to an MD-granting medical program (87.1% in 2021). Over the last five years, the percentage of respondents indicating that “availability of social support in medical school” would encourage them to apply to medical school has increased from 54.3% in 2017 to 64.0% in 2021. Each year, the most commonly cited item that would discourage respondents from applying to medical school was “Grades, MCAT scores, and other academic qualifications” (72.4% in 2021).

Financial Information

Each year, more than half of respondents indicated that they do not have, or will not have, outstanding education loans for their college/premedical education. This percentage has increased from 59.4% in 2017 to 63.1% in 2021. For those with debt, the median education debt decreased from \$27,000 in 2020 to \$25,000 in 2021. Additionally, respondents who had noneducational, consumer debt reported a median debt increase from \$8,000 in 2020 to \$8,600 in 2021.

Coursework

Each year, about 70% of respondents had taken or were taking a course in genetics (70.6% in 2021). Similarly, about three quarters of respondents had taken or were taking a course in molecular or cellular biology at the time of their MCAT exam (74.5% in 2021).

Providing Feedback

We encourage constituents to provide feedback regarding the PMQ report. If you would like to provide feedback, please contact pmq@aamc.org.

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Total number of individuals who responded to the questionnaire:	32,316	30,425	28,251	33,339	24,721
1. Sex:					
Note: This information is populated from other AAMC data sources (e.g., MCAT).					
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Male	41.5	39.7	39.1	37.2	35.8
Female	58.5	60.3	60.9	62.8	64.2
Number of respondents	32,224	30,348	28,166	33,235	24,631
2. How do you self-identify?					
Note: Percentages may not sum to 100% as multiple responses are allowed. Self-identified race/ethnicity is only reported for U.S. citizens and permanent residents. Self-identified race/ethnicity and citizenship/permanent residency status are populated from other AAMC data sources (e.g., MCAT).					
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.9	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.9
Asian	19.2	19.7	19.2	20.9	21.2
Black or African American	9.7	9.6	10.1	10.1	9.9
Hispanic, Latino, or of Spanish origin	9.8	10.8	11.1	10.8	11.1
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
White	50.8	50.7	49.9	49.7	50.7
Other	2.5	2.4	2.6	2.4	2.6
Non-U.S. Citizen and Non-Permanent Resident	14.2	14.0	14.5	13.8	13.1
Number of respondents	31,404	29,851	27,716	32,722	24,324

3. Parental Education and Occupation

The Socioeconomic Status (SES) Education Occupation (EO) indicator classifies individuals into five ordered groups (EO-1 through EO-5) based on four aggregated categories of education (No college degree, Bachelor's degree, Master's degree, Doctoral degree) and two aggregated categories of occupation (Executive, managerial or professional; Service, clerical, skilled and unskilled labor). The lowest (most disadvantaged) SES group is EO-1, and the highest is EO-5. Determination of an EO indicator is based on having both education and occupation information for at least one parent. If a respondent provided complete information for two parents, the EO indicator displayed is for the parent with the higher value. The EO indicator is only reported for U.S. citizens and permanent residents.

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
EO-1 Less than a college degree (regardless of occupation category)	25.8	25.5	25.4	24.1	22.8
EO-2 College, master's, or doctoral degree; Service, clerical, skilled and unskilled labor occupations	8.6	8.7	8.9	8.8	9.1
EO-3 College degree; Executive, managerial or professional occupations	21.0	22.0	21.9	21.2	21.5
EO-4 Master's degree; Executive, managerial or professional occupations	20.3	20.2	20.0	20.6	22.1
EO-5 Doctoral degree; Executive, managerial or professional occupations	24.4	23.6	23.8	25.4	24.5
Number of respondents	26,725	25,248	23,263	27,742	20,630

4. When did you definitely decide that you wanted to study medicine?

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
I have not definitely decided that I want to study medicine	2.2	2.1	2.0	1.7	1.9
Before high school	27.4	27.9	27.8	27.8	27.8
During high school/before college	31.4	31.6	32.6	34.1	34.1
During the first two years in college	18.0	17.6	17.7	17.7	17.6
During junior year in college	7.4	7.5	7.3	7.1	6.7
During senior year in college	3.5	3.5	3.2	3.0	3.0
After receiving a bachelor's degree	8.1	7.7	7.2	6.6	6.7
After receiving an advanced degree	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1
Number of respondents	31,057	29,278	27,194	31,906	23,508

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
5. Please indicate any experiences in which you have participated.					
Note: Percentages may not sum to 100% as multiple responses are allowed.					
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Middle school premedical or science program	11.2	10.7	11.3	11.1	11.8
Magnet science/health science high school	8.2	8.7	8.9	9.5	9.6
Summer laboratory research apprenticeship for high school students	9.5	9.4	9.4	10.0	9.9
Classroom-based summer, after-school, or Saturday premedical program for high school students	9.4	9.0	9.0	10.1	10.6
Laboratory research apprenticeship for college students	51.4	51.8	51.0	50.7	47.2
Summer academic enrichment program for college students	15.6	15.6	15.8	15.2	14.0
Non-degree post-baccalaureate program to strengthen academic skills	7.2	7.7	7.7	7.5	7.3
Non-degree post-baccalaureate program to complete premedical requirements	7.9	8.4	7.8	7.4	7.7
Volunteered in the healthcare field	85.5	86.0	86.2	84.9	82.1
Volunteered in a non-healthcare field	77.3	77.0	77.4	79.9	77.6
International volunteer experience	27.4	26.9	26.2	24.8	19.4
Shadowed a physician or other healthcare professional	82.0	82.3	82.0	80.9	78.0
None of the above	1.6	1.8	1.6	1.5	1.8
Number of respondents	30,922	29,249	27,119	31,806	23,409
6. During the last three months, what describes your attendance at school or college?					
Note: Percentages may not sum to 100% as multiple responses are allowed.					
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
I did not attend any school in the last three months	24.1	25.1	25.7	27.6	26.3
High school	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.2
Community college	2.1	2.0	2.1	1.7	1.7
Four-year college or university	62.1	61.7	61.2	59.9	61.4
Post-baccalaureate premedical program	6.5	6.1	5.8	5.1	5.7
Graduate/professional program (e.g., MS, PhD, JD)	7.5	7.4	7.6	7.9	7.0
Number of respondents	30,701	29,068	26,952	31,622	23,264
7. What best describes your enrollment status throughout your undergraduate education?					
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Full-time	93.3	93.2	93.1	93.4	93.2
Full-time during some years and part-time during others	5.1	5.2	5.2	4.9	5.2
Part-time	1.6	1.6	1.7	1.7	1.6
Number of respondents	30,692	28,913	26,799	31,440	23,090

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
8. Have you already graduated from college?					
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Yes	49.1	49.8	50.3	53.0	49.5
No	50.9	50.2	49.7	47.0	50.5
Number of respondents	30,709	29,064	26,944	31,593	23,238
9. How many years have passed since you graduated from college?					
Note: Only those who responded "Yes" to Q8 could respond to this item.					
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Less than 1 year	42.7	43.2	42.6	42.0	42.8
1-2 years	28.8	28.7	29.6	31.9	30.3
3-4 years	15.5	15.6	15.3	14.1	14.1
5 or more years	13.0	12.5	12.5	12.0	12.8
Number of respondents	15,056	14,370	13,481	16,671	11,472
10. How did you spend your time between college and taking the MCAT?					
Note: Those who responded "Less than 1 year" in Q9 could not respond to this item. Percentages may not sum to 100% as multiple responses are allowed.					
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Worked at another career	55.0	55.8	55.2	55.1	57.3
Worked to improve finances	44.2	44.7	45.1	45.7	46.3
Continued coursework to prepare for the MCAT exam	41.2	42.3	42.6	40.7	43.1
Continued coursework to fulfill premedical requirements	24.8	25.7	24.6	23.1	24.7
Took premedical courses for the first time	11.8	11.3	10.4	8.9	10.1
Pursued graduate studies	30.6	30.9	31.4	31.6	29.8
Worked/volunteered internationally	12.6	12.8	12.3	10.5	8.8
Worked/volunteered in research	37.8	39.2	39.6	40.4	38.2
Helped fulfill family obligations	30.7	33.9	35.7	36.4	38.3
Other	7.9	7.6	8.1	6.7	6.9
Number of respondents	8,603	8,138	7,719	9,649	6,543

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
11. What strategies did you use to structure your preparation?					
Note: Percentages may not sum to 100% as multiple responses are allowed.					
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Got started by finding out what is tested on the MCAT exam				81.4	83.3
Discussed the test and how to prepare with an advisor or fellow students				48.1	47.5
Created a study plan to fit my schedule				75.2	74.7
Identified my strengths and weaknesses using a practice exam				78.3	77.7
Focused study time on my weaker subject areas				74.6	73.9
Planned time for relaxation/breaks				62.0	61.1
Assessed my learning progress along the way by taking practice exam(s)				82.4	81.6
Assessed my readiness for the exam by taking a final practice exam				78.4	77.1
Other				2.3	1.9
Number of respondents				30,430	22,336

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
12. What strategies did you use to learn the concepts tested on the exam?					
Note: Percentages may not sum to 100% as multiple responses are allowed.					
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Tested my understanding of what I had studied				80.7	79.4
Wrote down notes about what I was learning from memory				56.5	53.3
Answered practice questions as I studied each topic				87.8	87.6
Explained why the answer choices in practice questions were correct or incorrect				74.7	72.3
Reviewed content I had already studied throughout my preparation				82.6	80.1
Mixed my review of different topics throughout studying				74.9	73.1
Explained concepts aloud or to a study partner/friend				41.9	39.6
Created or used flashcards of important details				67.4	69.6
Other				1.5	1.4
Number of respondents				30,321	22,227

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
13. What kinds of resources did you use to prepare for the MCAT exam?					
Note: Percentages may not sum to 100% as multiple responses are allowed.					
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
What's on the MCAT Exam? Interactive tool				25.1	44.6
The Official Guide to the MCAT® Exam (print version or e-book)				37.9	40.4
The Online Practice Questions from the Official Guide to the MCAT® Exam				41.1	42.1
Official MCAT® Practice Exams				85.4	89.2
Official MCAT® Sample Test				56.4	68.9
CARS Diagnostic Tool					39.5
Official MCAT® Question Packs				64.3	62.7
Official MCAT® Section Bank				60.4	59.8
Official MCAT® Flashcards				42.8	43.3
How to Create a Study Plan for the MCAT® Exam				10.0	10.7
Practice with Exam Features (free tool to simulate the MCAT® Exam test taking experience)				24.4	17.8
How I Prepared for the MCAT® Exam Testimonials				7.1	8.1
Road Map to the MCAT® Content in Sociology and Psychology Textbooks				2.9	4.3
Road Map to the MCAT® Content in Biochemistry Textbooks				2.7	4.2
Road Map to MCAT Critical Analysis and Reasoning Skills in The Khan Academy MCAT Collection					6.2
Khan Academy				71.0	65.8
MCAT preparation book (paper version) published by a commercial company				72.6	69.9
MCAT preparation book (electronic version or e-book) published by a commercial company				22.5	22.6
MCAT practice tests published by a commercial company				62.0	59.2
Books, handouts, practice questions, or other materials from an MCAT test preparation course offered by a university, medical school, or post-baccalaureate program				20.4	21.7
MCAT-related social media sites, blogs, and online communities				43.6	43.2
Free online flashcard generators				37.3	42.5
Other free MCAT preparation resources				39.3	46.7
Other educational materials that are not specifically labeled for MCAT preparation (e.g., textbooks, course notes, online modules, journals)				21.8	21.5
Number of respondents				29,971	21,896

14. How useful were each of the following resources to prepare for the MCAT exam?
Note: Only those who selected a given resource in Q13 could respond to this item.

	Percentage of Respondents Selecting Each Rating				Count
	Not useful	Somewhat useful	Useful	Very useful	
What's on the MCAT Exam? Interactive tool					
2021	2.5	28.0	45.0	24.5	8,935
2020	3.0	30.3	44.9	21.8	6,903
2019					
2018					
2017					
The Official Guide to the MCAT® Exam (print version or e-book)					
2021	3.3	28.9	43.3	24.5	8,051
2020	3.7	29.7	42.5	24.1	10,445
2019					
2018					
2017					
The Online Practice Questions from the Official Guide to the MCAT® Exam					
2021	1.5	14.7	43.0	40.7	8,353
2020	1.5	15.4	43.3	39.8	11,261
2019					
2018					
2017					
Official MCAT® Practice Exams					
2021	0.4	4.7	21.7	73.2	18,341
2020	0.3	4.5	22.0	73.1	24,096
2019					
2018					
2017					
Official MCAT® Sample Test					
2021	1.4	10.3	31.7	56.6	13,995
2020	1.4	10.6	32.9	55.1	15,635
2019					
2018					
2017					
CARS Diagnostic Tool					
2021	2.5	14.7	36.5	46.3	7,913
2020					
2019					
2018					
2017					
Official MCAT® Question Packs					
2021	1.2	10.8	36.3	51.7	12,766
2020	1.1	11.4	36.3	51.3	17,977
2019					
2018					
2017					
Official MCAT® Section Bank					
2021	0.6	6.9	31.5	61.1	12,124
2020	0.7	7.2	30.5	61.7	16,856
2019					
2018					
2017					

14. How useful were each of the following resources to prepare for the MCAT exam?**Note: Only those who selected a given resource in Q13 could respond to this item. (Continued)**

	Percentage of Respondents Selecting Each Rating				Count
	Not useful	Somewhat useful	Useful	Very useful	
Official MCAT® Flashcards					
2021	3.1	21.6	39.3	36.1	8,752
2020	3.9	22.6	37.0	36.5	11,809
2019					
2018					
2017					
How to Create a Study Plan for the MCAT® Exam					
2021	7.6	32.9	37.8	21.8	2,096
2020	8.9	34.5	35.2	21.4	2,696
2019					
2018					
2017					
Practice with Exam Features (free tool to simulate the MCAT® Exam test taking experience)					
2021	2.2	16.4	35.0	46.4	3,471
2020	1.8	16.6	35.9	45.7	6,608
2019					
2018					
2017					
How I Prepared for the MCAT® Exam Testimonials					
2021	7.6	37.7	32.5	22.2	1,561
2020	7.0	37.9	35.6	19.5	1,924
2019					
2018					
2017					
Road Map to the MCAT® Content in Sociology and Psychology Textbooks					
2021	5.0	25.0	39.7	30.3	821
2020	5.6	23.8	40.8	29.7	780
2019					
2018					
2017					
Road Map to the MCAT® Content in Biochemistry Textbooks					
2021	4.3	23.4	41.9	30.4	795
2020	5.1	24.7	40.9	29.4	722
2019					
2018					
2017					
Road Map to MCAT Critical Analysis and Reasoning Skills in The Khan Academy MCAT Collection					
2021	3.9	23.7	40.3	32.0	1,180
2020					
2019					
2018					
2017					
Khan Academy					
2021	0.9	11.9	34.4	52.8	13,421
2020	0.9	12.8	35.7	50.7	19,985
2019					
2018					
2017					

14. How useful were each of the following resources to prepare for the MCAT exam?**Note: Only those who selected a given resource in Q13 could respond to this item. (Continued)**

	Percentage of Respondents Selecting Each Rating				Count
	Not useful	Somewhat useful	Useful	Very useful	
MCAT preparation book (paper version) published by a commercial company					
2021	2.5	16.3	40.0	41.2	14,300
2020	2.1	14.5	38.4	45.0	20,386
2019					
2018					
2017					
MCAT preparation book (electronic version or e-book) published by a commercial company					
2021	2.3	15.7	42.2	39.8	4,542
2020	2.5	15.4	40.1	42.1	6,199
2019					
2018					
2017					
MCAT practice tests published by a commercial company					
2021	2.0	19.0	40.6	38.4	12,190
2020	2.2	18.9	39.7	39.2	17,515
2019					
2018					
2017					
Books, handouts, practice questions, or other materials from an MCAT test preparation course offered by a university, medical school, or post-baccalaureate program					
2021	3.0	17.5	44.2	35.2	4,301
2020	3.0	17.8	43.4	35.8	5,616
2019					
2018					
2017					
MCAT-related social media sites, blogs, and online communities					
2021	2.8	24.9	36.9	35.4	8,828
2020	2.8	25.8	36.2	35.3	12,246
2019					
2018					
2017					
Free online flashcard generators					
2021	2.3	18.0	33.5	46.1	8,661
2020	2.2	21.6	35.0	41.2	10,451
2019					
2018					
2017					
Other free MCAT preparation resources					
2021	1.1	18.5	46.0	34.4	9,447
2020	1.3	22.0	46.2	30.4	10,888
2019					
2018					
2017					
Other educational materials that are not specifically labeled for MCAT preparation (e.g., textbooks, course notes, online modules, journals)					
2021	1.3	21.6	45.8	31.2	4,381
2020	1.2	23.6	44.7	30.4	6,104
2019					
2018					
2017					

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
15. What did you do to prepare for the exam day?					
Note: Percentages may not sum to 100% as multiple responses are allowed.					
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Learned about the testing day by reading the MCAT Essentials bulletin				67.2	66.7
Took a timed online practice exam with scheduled breaks to mimic the exam day				89.7	89.4
Practiced pacing myself so I could get through all the questions in each section without running out of time				85.0	83.7
Practiced strategies for dealing with challenging questions to make sure I could finish the exam on time				69.9	69.6
Planned how to make the best use of breaks on exam day				62.8	65.4
Practiced ways to reduce my anxiety during the exam (e.g., deep breathing)				66.4	66.6
Went to the test site in advance to make sure I knew how to get there				55.9	56.5
Got plenty of sleep the night before the exam				79.0	79.2
Other (please specify)				2.3	2.0
Number of respondents				27,583	19,891

16. What kinds of challenges, if any, have you had getting ready for the MCAT exam?

Note: Percentages may not sum to 100% as multiple responses are allowed.

	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Difficulty learning new material for which I lacked relevant coursework				47.8	48.8
Difficulty relearning material I learned a while ago				49.4	49.8
Difficulty getting concrete and detailed information about the MCAT exam				22.3	21.4
Difficulty affording preparation courses and materials				38.7	36.9
Difficulty balancing my time between studying for the MCAT and my job				51.3	56.0
Difficulty balancing my time between studying for the MCAT and family obligations				50.5	50.3
Difficulty balancing my time between studying for the MCAT and school				49.9	52.8
Difficulty getting through the amount of material to be learned				60.0	62.1
Difficulty finding a place to study without distraction				51.1	42.9
Difficulty minimizing social media use during studying				33.8	32.4
Difficulty obtaining reliable/affordable internet access to use online preparation resources				12.3	11.4
Difficulty finding a mentor to provide resources, support, guidance, and/or role modeling				26.3	27.9
Difficulty preparing myself mentally and/or physically for the exam day				34.7	35.4
Difficulty staying confident that I could do well on the MCAT exam				67.6	67.4
Difficulty sticking to my study plan				39.7	41.6
Other (please specify)				2.9	1.8
None of the above				1.0	1.1
Number of respondents				27,257	19,628

17. How likely are you to apply to the following graduate or professional programs?

	Percentage of Respondents Selecting Each Rating				Count
	Not likely	Somewhat likely	Likely	Very likely	
MD-granting medical program					
2021	1.5	2.9	8.6	87.1	19,615
2020	1.5	2.9	8.8	86.8	27,219
2019	1.6	3.5	9.5	85.4	23,311
2018	1.5	3.3	8.7	86.5	26,755
2017	1.6	2.9	7.8	87.8	27,500
DO-granting medical program					
2021	27.5	23.1	16.0	33.4	18,964
2020	30.7	22.8	14.2	32.4	26,281
2019	28.6	23.0	15.7	32.7	22,413
2018	29.3	22.8	15.4	32.4	25,403
2017	30.0	22.1	15.7	32.3	25,896
Other health program (e.g., Veterinary, Dental, Physician Assistant, Pharmacy)					
2021	74.4	17.8	5.2	2.6	18,533
2020	75.6	17.2	4.9	2.4	25,676
2019	72.2	19.0	5.9	2.9	21,892
2018	71.3	19.6	6.1	3.0	24,659
2017	68.5	20.6	7.2	3.7	25,012
Graduate program in science, technology, or math					
2021	59.2	23.9	9.7	7.2	18,586
2020	59.3	22.9	10.1	7.7	25,825
2019	57.5	23.9	10.9	7.7	22,011
2018	56.6	24.3	10.9	8.3	24,783
2017	55.8	24.1	11.8	8.3	25,086
Non-health professional program (e.g., law, MBA)					
2021	87.0	9.4	2.6	1.0	18,432
2020	86.0	9.7	2.9	1.3	25,569
2019	85.5	10.4	2.8	1.3	21,755
2018	84.9	10.6	3.1	1.4	24,448
2017	84.0	11.2	3.4	1.5	24,749
Graduate program in behavioral or social sciences (e.g., psychology, sociology)					
2021	80.5	14.5	3.6	1.4	18,470
2020	80.8	14.0	3.7	1.5	25,638
2019	81.9	13.0	3.5	1.5	21,826
2018	81.6	13.5	3.6	1.3	24,491
2017	80.8	13.8	3.9	1.4	24,851
Graduate program in the humanities (e.g., history, English)					
2021	95.2	3.8	0.6	0.4	18,385
2020	95.2	3.6	0.8	0.4	25,492
2019	95.4	3.5	0.8	0.3	21,693
2018	95.6	3.3	0.7	0.3	24,324
2017	95.1	3.8	0.8	0.4	24,609

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
18. What type of medicine are you interested in pursuing?					
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Primary care medicine (e.g., family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics)	27.7	27.8	28.5	27.3	27.5
Medical specialty (e.g., allergy/immunology, cardiology, dermatology)	30.8	31.8	31.5	31.2	32.1
Surgical specialty (e.g., general surgery, orthopedic surgery, neurosurgery)	23.0	23.1	22.6	22.2	21.5
Not sure/undecided	18.6	17.3	17.5	19.4	18.9
Number of respondents	27,487	26,846	23,391	27,298	19,687
19. Which of the following items would encourage you to apply to medical school?					
Note: Percentages may not sum to 100% as multiple responses are allowed.					
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Finding a medical school where I will feel comfortable	85.4	86.3	88.3	88.9	88.5
Fit between my personal interests/goals and a medical school's mission	79.3	80.3	81.5	83.4	83.1
Availability of academic support in medical school	64.0	65.5	70.0	71.0	71.0
Availability of financial support in medical school	72.2	73.9	76.4	75.0	74.3
Availability of social support in medical school	54.3	56.7	61.5	63.9	64.0
Grades, MCAT scores, and other academic qualifications	72.5	72.0	72.3	70.1	68.5
Number of respondents	27,452	26,730	23,358	27,230	19,656
20. Which of the following items would discourage you from applying to medical school?					
Note: Percentages may not sum to 100% as multiple responses are allowed.					
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Amount of current debt	27.3	28.6	32.1	31.5	31.1
Cost of applying to medical school	45.9	47.4	52.7	53.1	53.8
Cost of medical school	62.9	64.2	68.0	68.9	69.2
Grades, MCAT scores, and other academic qualifications	71.5	72.0	73.1	72.5	72.4
Family obligations	21.2	20.9	22.0	22.1	21.8
Number of respondents	25,102	24,716	21,827	25,429	18,324

21. Please indicate the extent to which the following individuals have positively or negatively influenced your decision to pursue a career in medicine.

	Percentage of Respondents Selecting Each Rating					Count
	Very negative	Somewhat negative	Somewhat positive	Very positive	Not applicable	
Prehealth advisor						
2021	4.9	10.5	29.7	24.4	30.5	19,345
2020	5.4	10.1	29.4	24.5	30.6	26,870
2019	4.8	10.1	29.2	25.9	30.1	23,001
2018	4.0	9.7	28.8	24.3	33.1	26,171
2017	4.0	9.7	29.1	25.7	31.5	26,795
Research advisor or faculty member (not a prehealth advisor)						
2021	1.2	3.4	27.2	41.6	26.6	19,291
2020	1.2	3.7	27.4	42.5	25.1	26,809
2019	1.3	3.8	27.4	43.7	23.8	22,954
2018	1.0	3.5	27.2	40.3	28.0	26,061
2017	1.2	3.8	27.6	39.8	27.6	26,506
Career guidance counselor (not a prehealth advisor)						
2021	2.4	4.4	20.7	14.1	58.4	19,193
2020	2.4	4.8	19.9	13.2	59.8	26,637
2019	2.0	4.7	21.0	15.6	56.7	22,793
2018	1.7	4.1	18.9	13.1	62.2	25,846
2017	1.8	4.2	19.8	15.4	58.8	26,292
Physician						
2021	0.4	2.0	18.2	66.9	12.5	19,308
2020	0.4	2.1	18.5	67.8	11.1	26,808
2019	0.6	2.4	18.9	66.9	11.3	22,978
2018	0.6	2.5	18.2	65.0	13.8	26,139
2017	0.6	2.5	18.3	64.9	13.7	26,813
Family member						
2021	0.9	3.1	19.8	69.3	6.9	19,340
2020	0.9	3.3	19.8	69.0	7.0	26,850
2019	0.9	3.0	18.8	71.2	6.1	23,019
2018	0.9	2.9	19.4	68.9	7.9	26,213
2017	0.9	3.2	19.1	68.6	8.2	26,868
A college student						
2021	1.1	4.5	27.6	46.5	20.4	19,268
2020	1.0	4.4	27.7	47.6	19.2	26,772
2019	1.1	4.7	27.7	48.6	17.8	22,913
2018	1.1	4.0	27.1	44.2	23.6	26,033
2017	1.0	4.3	26.2	44.1	24.4	26,665
A medical student						
2021	0.8	2.8	22.3	45.6	28.6	19,266
2020	0.6	2.8	22.5	45.9	28.2	26,748
2019	0.8	3.4	23.8	46.1	25.8	22,908
2018	0.7	2.9	22.8	42.6	31.0	26,023
2017	0.8	3.3	22.4	42.9	30.6	26,660

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
22. How are (or were) your college/premedical education costs paid?					
Note: The percentage is the average of the percentages for the category. Responses needed to total 100%.					
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Scholarships or awards	35.2	35.9	36.6	36.5	36.9
Scholarships or awards with a service commitment (NHSC, Military, etc.)	1.6	1.7	1.8	1.7	1.9
Loans	18.1	18.6	17.9	17.0	16.5
Work-study program	1.4	1.4	1.2	1.3	1.2
Personal income and savings	7.1	7.6	7.7	7.6	8.0
Money from parents, guardians, or other relatives	34.7	33.2	33.0	34.1	33.9
Money from spouse or partner	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.4
Other	1.5	1.3	1.3	1.5	1.3
Number of respondents	24,040	22,798	19,741	22,700	16,156
23. Do you (or will you) have any outstanding education loans for your college/premedical education?					
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Yes	40.6	41.0	40.3	38.6	36.9
No	59.4	59.0	59.7	61.4	63.1
Number of respondents	26,581	25,712	22,797	26,492	19,117
24. What is, or will be, the total amount of outstanding education loans for your college/premedical education?					
Note: Amounts totaling > \$500,000 were treated as invalid. Only those who responded "Yes" to Q23 could respond to this item.					
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
No debt (\$0)	61.5	61.2	62.3	64.2	66.0
\$1 to \$4,999	1.7	1.8	1.6	1.5	1.4
\$5,000 to \$9,999	3.3	3.1	3.2	2.7	2.9
\$10,000 to \$14,999	3.9	4.0	4.0	3.5	3.7
\$15,000 to \$19,999	3.3	3.2	3.2	2.9	2.6
\$20,000 to \$24,999	5.2	5.6	4.8	4.9	4.7
\$25,000 to \$29,999	3.3	3.3	3.1	3.1	3.0
\$30,000 to \$49,999	8.6	8.0	8.0	7.2	6.6
\$50,000 to \$74,999	4.8	4.6	4.4	4.1	3.9
\$75,000 to \$99,999	1.9	2.0	2.0	2.2	1.8
\$100,000 to \$500,000	2.7	3.3	3.4	3.7	3.2
Number of respondents	25,675	24,784	21,847	25,332	18,252
Median premedical debt of those reporting premedical debt	\$26,000	\$25,000	\$26,000	\$27,000	\$25,000

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
25. Do you have any noneducational, consumer debt that you are legally required to repay? (This includes credit card debt, car loans, home mortgages, or other consumer debt.)					
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Yes	17.8	18.4	18.6	16.0	15.0
No	82.2	81.6	81.4	84.0	85.0
Number of respondents	26,454	25,597	22,677	26,396	19,031

26. Please list the amount of your noneducational, consumer debt.

Note: Amounts totaling > \$500,000 for credit cards, car loans, and other debt were treated as invalid, and amounts totaling > \$10,000,000 for mortgage and total debt were treated as invalid. Only those who responded "Yes" to Q25 could respond to this item.

	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
No debt (\$0)	83.3	83.8	83.7	86.1	86.9
\$1 to \$4,999	7.2	6.9	6.7	5.4	4.9
\$5,000 to \$9,999	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.2	2.0
\$10,000 to \$14,999	1.9	1.7	1.8	1.8	1.4
\$15,000 to \$19,999	1.2	1.2	1.3	1.0	1.1
\$20,000 to \$24,999	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.7
\$25,000 to \$29,999	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.4
\$30,000 to \$49,999	0.6	0.5	0.6	0.5	0.6
\$50,000 to \$74,999	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
\$75,000 to \$99,999	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1
\$100,000 or more	1.8	1.7	1.8	1.6	1.8
Number of respondents	26,109	24,924	22,039	25,736	18,608
Median noneducational debt of those reporting noneducational debt	\$6,500	\$6,000	\$7,000	\$8,000	\$8,600

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
27. Please list the amount of your noneducational, consumer debt for each category listed below.					
Note: The number shown in each category is the median of those providing valid figures. Amounts totaling greater than \$500,000 for credit cards, car loans, and other debt were treated as invalid, and amounts totaling greater than \$10,000,000 for mortgage and total debt were treated as invalid. Only those who responded "Yes" to Q25 could respond to this item.					
Credit Cards					
Median	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
Number of respondents	3,414	3,138	2,793	2,573	1,725
Car Loans					
Median	\$10,000	\$11,000	\$10,000	\$11,000	\$12,000
Number of respondents	1,848	1,735	1,586	1,711	1,192
Mortgage					
Median	\$155,000	\$176,000	\$180,000	\$180,000	\$200,000
Number of respondents	575	522	471	494	384
Other Consumer Loans					
Median	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$4,400	\$4,000	\$4,500
Number of respondents	413	352	317	296	219
Total Amount					
Median	\$6,500	\$6,000	\$7,000	\$8,000	\$8,600
Number of respondents	4,362	4,044	3,587	3,565	2,440

28. Which of the following courses have you taken or are you currently taking?

Note: Percentages may not sum to 100% as multiple responses are allowed. Blank cells indicate the course was not a response option in the corresponding year.

	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Introductory biology	93.1	94.1	93.5	93.4	93.2
Molecular or cellular biology	73.5	74.7	74.5	74.8	74.5
Anatomy or physiology	67.7	69.5	69.2	69.5	69.4
Genetics	70.1	71.8	71.8	71.9	70.6
Introductory (inorganic) chemistry	90.6	91.7	91.3	91.2	90.8
Biochemistry	87.6	90.4	91.0	91.7	91.3
Organic chemistry	94.6	96.4	96.6	96.2	96.1
Introductory physics	92.6	94.6	94.1	93.8	93.9
Calculus	85.8	87.1	86.4	86.9	86.3
Research methods	40.8	40.1	41.7	42.7	41.4
Statistics	82.9	85.5	86.4	87.6	88.5
Public health	21.6	21.8	22.3	23.8	24.0
Ethics or philosophy	48.9	48.9	48.7	50.1	49.0
English composition/writing	84.2	84.2	84.0	83.8	84.3
English literature or other humanities	75.1	75.9	75.2	75.8	75.3
Introductory psychology	83.6	85.8	85.9	85.6	86.3
Other psychology	42.2	43.4	42.8	43.7	43.4
Introductory sociology	51.7	53.4	53.9	53.2	54.1
Other sociology	17.4	17.7	17.4	18.4	18.2
Cultural anthropology, urban studies, or other courses about different cultures	33.5	33.7	32.7	33.3	32.6

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
28. Which of the following courses have you taken or are you currently taking?					
Note: Percentages may not sum to 100% as multiple responses are allowed. Blank cells indicate the course was not a response option in the corresponding year.					
(Continued)					
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Course that combined two natural science subject areas	25.7	26.5	25.9	26.4	25.9
Course that combined two behavioral or social science subject areas	15.8	15.4	15.7	16.4	16.3
Course that combined one natural and one behavioral or social science subject areas	35.9	36.7	36.1	37.5	37.3
Course that focuses on critical thinking, reasoning, or problem-solving	33.2	34.5	32.7	32.5	32.2
Course that focuses on improving study skills			10.2	9.8	10.4
Course that focuses on improving reading skills			9.9	9.5	9.9
Number of respondents	26,937	25,570	22,625	26,349	19,028