

MVC Fall 2021 Webinar: Findings from the 2021 AO Survey

October 25, 2021



Association of American Medical Colleges

Agenda

□ Purpose of this session: review survey results

- Important findings
- Additional analysis/research questions
- Ideas for the admissions manuscript
- □ Part I: Review synthesis of survey findings
- □ Part II: Preview upcoming LSL session
- □ Next steps



Part I: 2021 MCAT admissions survey results



About the MCAT Admissions Officers Survey 2021

- ✓ What are schools trying to accomplish?
- ✓ What gets in the way?
- ✓ How are they currently doing it?
- ✓ Where are the opportunities for improvement?



Today's call focuses on a few highlights from the survey about schools' needs for and use of MCAT scores in admissions

Bottom line up front

- Diversity is a common focus across schools
 - School mission and context drive their focus
- The top 5 barriers to diversity include some factors external to admissions, including finances and student/faculty diversity
 - For some students, these are important factors
- □ Schools put MCAT scores/UGPAs in the context of opportunity
 - Data about applicants' college, high school, and community would add value
- □ Internal pressures about student success drive focus on higher MCAT scores
 - Feedback loops with student performance data could help alleviate pressure
- □ Schools have different needs from MCAT scores and UGPAs
 - And they tailor student support to their local context
- □ Most are not interested in alterations to the MCAT score scale

Diversity is a common focus across schools

Geographic location

- 83% Medically underserved areas
- 72% In-state
- 70% Rural
- 62% Tribal
- 48% Urban

BAB9 BAB9 of schools consider **contributing to a diverse physician workforce** important to their missions

Individual characteristics

- > 99% URM
- 97% Experienced disadvantage
- ▶ 96% Low-SES
- > 92% 1st Gen
- 47% Multilingual

Undergraduate experience

- 35% Under-resourced university
- > 21% Non-science major
- > **19%** Community college



Factors students consider important in choosing the medical school to attend (for those with >1 offer)

Data from 2018-2020 Matriculating Student Questionnaire (MSQ)	Black	White
Financial considerations/cost of attending	81%	70%
Amount of financial support offered	81%	57%
Programs for minority and/or disadvantaged students	81%	26%
Diversity of the student body	84%	54%
Diversity of the faculty	75%	46%
Interviews/meetings with administrators	73%	6 <mark>0%</mark>

Schools put MCAT Scores/UGPAs in context (but could do more)

Educational data

Upward/downward college grade trends (95%) BCPM coursework/ grades (87%) Post-college coursework/degrees (≥81%) Letters of recommendation (81%) Required coursework (77%)

Background/experience data
Evidence of grit (98%)
1st gen, lower-SES, URM (≥94%)
Work experience (93%)
Essays/personal statements (91%)

College data

Prehealth advisor (29%)Average MCAT/UGPA (29%)% graduates who continue education (29%)Graduation rate (29%)

High school data

% who go to college (35%) Average SAT/ACT score (20%) Graduation rate (25%)

Community data

Poverty rate (33%) Housing stability (36%) % single-parent households (38%) Crime rate (28%)

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Most

Concerns about student outcomes are a top driver for higher MCAT scores in admissions



63% Passing licensure exams
60% Matching to residency
58% Graduating on time/+1
52% Financial & social risks with not graduating
31% USNWR ranking
30% Expectations from administration/ board



Use of performance data by MCAT/GPA

71% 1st time pass rates on licensure exams58% Graduation rates38% Match rates

14%-29% would use these data if available

At the validity schools, the "minimum" MCAT score varies widely so a survey would help us understand the variability.

What's the lowest MCAT score your school can admit WITHOUT academic support?



Schools have different needs

The MCAT/GPA thresholds for students who can succeed with/without academic support and the number of students supportable in each entering class are wide-ranging across schools.



Schools support their students in different ways

Wellness and counseling services (80%)

S

service

offered

Most

Step 1 prep (76%)

Content tutoring (75%)

Pre-matriculation program on foundational sciences (46%)

Deceleration with one extra year (41%)

Post-matriculation coursework on foundational sciences (28%) _east offered services

Little interest on test optional; low interest on alternative MCAT score scales

 One medical school implemented a limited test-optional policy for the 2022 application cycle



considering alternative MCAT score scales

MCAT 2021

For the Fall 2022 application cycle, the MCAT exam will be optional for those who have not yet taken the exam. We will consider and accept applicants without MCAT scores. If an applicant already has a MCAT score, or has a pending MCAT score, it will be considered by the Admissions Committee. The current deadline to take the MCAT is September 30, 2021 for those choosing to take the MCAT in the 2022 application cycle.

The decision to take the MCAT will depend on individual circumstances. Applicants should seriously evaluate the benefit and risk of taking the exam for themselves and their immediate contacts such as family members and roommates. Additionally, consideration of test availability and accessibility may be important. Without an MCAT score, the Admissions Committee will rely more on grades and science GPA to evaluate an applicant's academic preparation for medical school. Applicants with an inconsistent academic record, or a previous low MCAT score, should strongly consider taking the MCAT or delay application until they feel they can do so with less risk or delay. This will provide the Committee an additional metric to consider with their grades and/or previous MCAT score.

When the application has been received by the UWSOM, applicants without a score and test date will be asked to declare if they intend to take the MCAT within two weeks of receiving the request. Given the linear nature of the admissions process, applicants cannot change their mind once they have declared they are not taking the exam. If an applicant declares that they are not taking the MCAT but decide to register or take the exam, their application will be immediately withdrawn from consideration.

4% of schools currently convert MCAT scores

"MCAT scores are part of a academic assessment formula that also includes BCPM GPA and individual coursework."

"We currently take the percentile and divide it by .50 and then add to GPA score."

19% of schools are interested in options

"Our school is interested in moving to a threshold or a tiered system." "A conversion score where it takes GPA and MCAT score and converts into score to indicate likelihood of passing USMLE and unimpeded progress in medical school."

Schools need MORE information not less to inform their admissions decisions

Test optional

 Only one school offered a limited test optional policy for the 2022 cycle

Pass/fail or categorical scoring

- Less than a handful of schools currently convert MCAT scores into other scales (half of them use formulas that include MCAT scores rather than converting to P/F or tiers)
- Less than 20% of schools are interested in options (less than 10 schools are specifically interested in P/F or tiers)

Putting MCAT scores in context

 Data about applicants' college, high school, and community would add value

Feedback loops with performance data

- Internal pressures about student success drive focus on higher MCAT scores
- Schools are interested in data to predict likelihood of success

Tailoring student support to local context

 Schools have different needs from MCAT scores and UGPAs

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Group discussion





□ What additional analyses would you like to see?

- What are the most important topics/insights schools would want to learn from the survey?
- □ Which survey results surprised you the most?



Group exercise with "sticky notes": https://ideaboardz.com/for/AO%20Survey%20/3985194



Part II: LSL session





Admitting Diverse Classes: Strategies, Barriers, and Possibilities for Using MCAT Scores in Context



Leila Amiri Assistant Dean for Admissions and Recruitment University of Illinois College of Medicine



Ngozi Anachebe Associate Professor of Obstetrics, Gynecology & Associate Dean for Admissions and Student Affairs Morehouse School of Medicine

Join us at Learn Serve Lead 2021

November 9 12:45 PM-1:45 PM ET



Kristen Goodell Associate Dean for Admissions and Assistant Professor of Family Medicine Boston University School of Medicine



Catherine Lucey Executive Vice Dean, Vice Dean for Education University of California, San Francisco School of Medicine

Q&A





Sharing innovative/promising practices

- Pipeline/pathway programs
- Admissions
- □ Student support

We will follow up after the webinar to invite you to share your school's promising practices in these (or other) areas



Next Steps



AMCAS/MCAT Integrated Reports



MCAT Admissions Insights Series

- Focus on supporting admissions on the use of MCAT scores in ways that align with school missions
 - Provide evidence-based insights/tidbits for quick consumption
 - Connect to additional tools, resources, and related content
 - Opportunities for continuous conversations with the admissions community with open questions/ feedback/ comments



Admissions Officers' Survey Data Snapshot

As we shared with the admissions community last month, this new MCAT Admissions Insights email series will deliver evidence-based insights, resources, and tools to help you use MCAT scores in ways that align with your schools' missions and contexts. We invite you to join the conversation and share your reactions, comments, and insights with us.

At Learn Serve Lead 2021: The Virtual Experience, members of the AAMC MCAT Validity Committee will bring the findings of the 2021 MCAT Admissions Officers Survey to life with promising practices at their schools. In the weeks leading up to the meeting, we will highlight key results from the survey. This week, we will share data about schools' focuses on diversity in admissions. Next week, we will take a deeper dive into data that admissions officers use to contextualize MCAT scores in holistic review.



Note: A total of 116 schools responded to the survey (76% response rate). Percentages shown represent responses of "important" and "very important" to the survey questions: "How important is it for your school to select students for your 2021 entering class who are likely to contribute to the following educational mission areas?" and "Among the

Modulated training videos

Sample topics:

- □ Interpreting repeater scores
- □ Using percentile scores
- Understanding confidence bands
- Examining MCAT score profiles
- Triangulating academic metrics



Using MCAT[®] Data in 2022 Medical Student Selection



MCAT[®] is a program of the Association of American Medical Colleges

ww.aamc.org/mcat

Next steps

- □ Learn Serve Lead live Q&A
- Admissions manuscript
 - Working group focus in upcoming months
- □ AAMC-wide activities/analysis in progress
 - Data from the 2021 admission cycle
 - Follow-on interviews to learn about promising practices in diversifying classes (partnership with AP4)
 - Reimagining admissions/application modernization



Appendix: Full Survey Results



Admissions Goals and Educational Missions

01) How important is it for	Contributing to a diverse physician workforce	<u>92%</u> 78%				6%
Q1) How important is it for your school to select	Serving the health needs of underresourced communities				1	8% <mark>3</mark> %
students for your 2021	Serving the health needs of the regions served by your school			16%	11%	
entering class who are likely	Becoming leaders in medicine or medical education	41%		45%		14%
to contribute to the	Becoming primary care physicians	35%		44%	16	6% <mark>5%</mark>
following educational mission areas?	Becoming medical educators	20%	45%		33%	
	Becoming researchers and scientists	28%	34%		28%	9%
	Helping meet global health needs	20%	42%		34%	<mark>4%</mark>
Q2) Among the many	Racial and ethnic groups that are underrepresented in medicine*		89%			10%
factors in your holistic	Lived or worked with groups that have experienced disadvantage	56	5% 5%		41%	3%
review, how important to your educational mission is	From households with low-SES		67%		28%	4%
considering applicants with	First-generation college		61%		31%	8%
the following backgrounds	From a medically underserved area	46%	37%		16%	
and lived experiences?	From your school's state or region	539	%	19%	16%	11%
	From a rural area	43%		27%	18%	12%
	From a Tribal area	33%	29%	1	9%	19%
	From an urban area	17%	31%	28%	2	5%
	Multilingual	13% 3	4%	45%	6	9%

DACA recipient (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals)

From an under-resourced university

Non-science undergraduate major

Transferred from community college to four-year undergraduate institution 4%

> 0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

24%

35%

Very Important Moderately Important

A little Important

7%

4%

18%

17%

15%

17%

28%

Not at all Important

33%

35%

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Barriers to Diversity

Q16) Which of the following barriers does your school face in diversifying its entering class?



Strategies for Diversifying

Q20) Which of the following strategies does your school currently use to help you increase the diversity of your applicant and accepted pools?

Highlight school diversity in recruiting activities	87%		12%
Address financial barriers to attending medical school for students from groups that are URM/disadvantaged	79%		8% 13%
Regularly track outcomes and refine holistic review processes	78%		14% 8%
Regularly evaluate and plan for needed academic support resources	77%		10% 13%
Recruit from undergraduate institutions that predominately serve students from groups that are URM/disadvantaged	73%	1	15% 12%
Provide a pre-matriculation or bridge program	64%	7%	28%
Offer pathway programs with institutions that predominately serve students from groups that are URM/disadvantaged	64%	13%	24%
Address financial barriers to applying to medical school and interviewing	56%	14%	30%
Give students the option to decelerate the curriculum	20% 12%	68%	
Currently use Plan to use in the	e future Will not use in the	future	

Use of Holistic Review

Q4) Which of the following strategies does your school use as part of the holistic admissions process, during application review and in making interview invitations, during interviews and in making acceptance offers, and in accepting applicants from the waitlist?

95%

93%

93%

93%

87%

77%

72%

<u>Overall</u>	Provide information or training about your school's diversity aims to those in admissions
	Provide unconscious bias or diversity training to those in admissions
Incl	ude individuals from diverse backgrounds or from the local community in the admissions process
Consider the alignm	ent between applicants' backgrounds and lived experiences and your school's mission and goals
	Include measures of distance-traveled, resilience or grit in the application
Use performance data	to identify the full range of MCAT/UGPAs submitted by students who succeed in your curriculum
Pro	ovide information or training about the impact of educational inequities on academic achievement

During application review and in making interview invitations

In rolling admissions, give timely review to the applicants who will contribute to the diversity of your incoming class	78%	
Consider applicants whose backgrounds will enrich the learning environment but have MCAT scores between 495-504	78%	
Use filters or scoring rubrics that consider backgrounds and lived experiences	63%	
Consider backgrounds and lived experiences before considering MCAT/UGPAs	49%	
Consider performance on written measures of personal characteristics	34%	
Remove MCAT/UGPAs from the admissions process after determining that applicants meet the admissions thresholds	15%	

Use of Holistic Review

Q4) Which of the following strategies does your school use as part of the holistic admissions process, during application review and in making interview invitations, during interviews and in making acceptance offers, and in accepting applicants from the waitlist?



In accepting applicants from the waitlist

Select from the waitlist based on characteristics that align with your school's mission and goals	70%
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Emportance of MCAT Scores/UGPAs

Q5) How important are MCAT scores and UGPAs relative to other criteria in reviewing applications, deciding which applicants to interview, and deciding which applicants to admit for your 2021 entering class?

Reviewing Applications 2017 32% 23% 46% -21% 2021 12% 41% 31% 16% **Selecting Interviewees** 2017 6% 8% 53% 34% -27% 11% 4% 2021 18% 68% **Making Acceptances** 2017 18% 62% 18% -14% 2021 6% 53% 41% MCAT/UGPA are JUST AS **MCAT/UGPA** are **SOMEWHAT MCAT/UGPA** are **MOST MCAT/UGPA** are LESS **MORE** important important important important

External Pressures to Admit Higher MCAT Scores

Q17) From each of the following external factors, how much pressure does your school face to accept applicants with high MCAT scores?



Internal Pressures to Admit Higher MCAT Scores

Q18) From each of the following internal factors, how much pressure does your school face to accept applicants with high MCAT scores?

Preference to admit students who are likely to pass licensure exams on the first try Preference to admit students who are likely to match to a residency Preference to admit students who are likely to graduate on schedule or with an extra year Concern about the financial and social risk students assume if they're unable to graduate Concern about using a place in medical school that may not produce a physician Some committee members' preference to admit students with the highest possible scores Preference to admit students who are likely to be easy to teach Goal to meet specific MCAT means or medians for your entering class Some committee members' preference to admit students like themselves Goal to improve on the MCAT means or medians for past entering classes

	21%			42%		269	%	11%
	25%			35%		19%		22%
	16%		Z	12%		27%		14%
	22%		3	80%		29%		19%
	12%	12% 22%		25%				
	6%	26%		349	34%			
Ì	3% <mark></mark>	26%		36%	35%			
5	9%	16%		29%		46%		
	6%	15%	3	31%		48%		
3	8%	13%	27%	27%		53%		
0	%	209	%	40% 60% 80%			10	

A lot of pressure A moderate amount of pressure

A little pressure
No pressure
Gernal Pressures to Admit Higher MCAT Scores

Q18) From each of the following internal factors, how much pressure does your school face to accept applicants with high MCAT scores?



MCAT Scores/UGPAs in Context

Q6) Which of the following data about an applicant's educational opportunities, lived experiences, and background characteristics does your school currently consider when interpreting applicants' MCAT scores and UGPAs?

ades over time		95%			<mark>3%</mark> 3%
atural sciences		87%			<mark>4%</mark> 9%
uate programs		82%			17%
eate programs		81%		6%	6 13%
commendation		81%			18%
e requirements		77%		<mark>3%</mark>	20%
social sciences		57%	9%	34%	, D
graduate major	41%	8%		51%	
te from college	36%	10%		55%	
te institution(s)	34%	5%		61%	
leges attended	17% <mark>3%</mark>		80%		

Educational data	Increases or decreases in grades over time
	Coursework and grades in the natural sciences
	Participation in graduate programs
Participation in pathv	vay, enrichment, or post-baccalaureate programs
	Letters of recommendation
	Completion of pre-medical course requirements
Coursework	and grades in the behavioral and social sciences
	Undergraduate major
	Number of years to graduate from college
Ac	ademic reputation of undergraduate institution(s)
	Number of colleges attended

	98	3%			
	969	%			3%
	95%	6			<mark>3%</mark>
	94%	, 0			5%
	93%)			6%
	91%				9%
52%		12%		36%	
33%	7%		60%		

Experience and background data

Evidence of overcoming adversity or demonstrating grit First-generation college student From households with low-SES Racial/ethnic groups that are underrepresented in medicine Work experience Essays or personal statements Foreign language spoken in the home DACA status

Currently use

Will consider using if available

Will not consider using if available

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MCAT Scores/UGPAs in Context

Q8) Which of the following data about an applicant's educational opportunities, lived experiences, and background characteristics does your school currently consider when interpreting applicants' MCAT scores and UGPAs?



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Admissions' Use of Student Performance Data

Q33) Does your school provide information about students' success in the curriculum to the admissions office so you can use that information for future planning?

YES (84%)

Q10) Which of the following data summaries about your school's applicants, accepted applicants, and matriculants do you currently use to contextualize applicants' MCAT scores and UGPAs?

Data summaries for your school's applicants/accepted applicants/matriculants

MCAT scores and UGPAs by demographic group MCAT scores and UGPAs that compare your school to your competitor schools MCAT scores and UGPAs from undergraduate institutions that are your top feeder schools MCAT scores and UGPAs that compare your school to other medical schools in your state



First-time pass rates on licensure exams by MCAT scores and UGPAs
Graduation rates by MCAT scores and UGPAs
Match rates by MCAT scores and UGPAs

Currently use

71%			14% 14%	
58%		21%	21% 21%	
38%	29%		34%	

Will consider using if available Will not consider using if available

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Minimum MCAT Scores with/without Academic Support

Q30) What are the MINIMUM MCAT total scores that your committee generally believes represent readiness for your curriculum with academic support or without academic support?



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Minimum GPAs with/without Academic Support

Q30) What are the MINIMUM total cumulative GPAs that your committee generally believes represent readiness for your curriculum with academic support or without academic support?



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Minimum BCPM GPAs with/without Academic Support

Q30) What are the MINIMUM BCPM GPAs that your committee generally believes represent readiness for your curriculum with academic support or without academic support?



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Student Support

Q32) What types of required and optional support does your school provide for students who are ready for your curriculum with support and for students who are ready without support?



Need Support: Required

Do not need Support: Required

Do not need Support: Optional

Need Support: Optional

Student Support

Q31) For each entering class and with the infrastructure you have, about how many students can your school matriculate who may need academic support to be ready for your curriculum? Please insert the number here ______.





Attitudes about the MCAT Exam

Q28) In general, have administrator or faculty attitudes about the MCAT exam become more positive, more negative, or stayed the same at your school in the last couple of years?

Q26) What is the one most important reason that you use MCAT scores at your school?

"A leveling agent for applicants from multiple undergrad institutions."

"The MCAT sets the minimum academic threshold is needed for a student to be successful."

"To determine a threshold to succeed in our curriculum, pass licensing exams on first attempt, and graduate in 4 or 5 years."

"To gauge applicants aptitude for the rigors of the coursework."



Q27) What is the one most negative impact of using MCAT scores at your school?

More negative 15% "The reliance on high scores more than others [metrics] prevents us from truly diversifying our classes."

Stayed the same 70% "Applicants from economically disadvantaged backgrounds are not able to afford to take multiple test nor are they usually able prep courses."

"Convincing the committee that a wider range of scores still allows for high likelihood of student success."

Alternative MCAT Scoring Scale

Q12) Does your school currently convert MCAT scores to a different scale that groups scores into ranges?

Q13) Please describe the conversion process your school currently uses.

"MCAT scores are part of a academic assessment formula that also includes BCPM GPA and individual coursework."

"We currently take the percentile and divide it by .50 and then add to GPA score."



Q14) Please describe the conversion process your school is interested in using.

"Our school is interested in moving to a threshold or a tiered system. The applicant is above the threshold for academic readiness, the applicant meets the threshold, or the applicant is below the threshold for academic readiness."

"A conversion score where it takes GPA and MCAT score and converts into score to indicate likelihood of passing USMLE and unimpeded progress in medical school."

Test Optional Policy

Q22) Has your school decided to make MCAT scores optional (i.e., not require MCAT scores for admission) for your 2022 applicants or is your school considering it?

- One medical school decided to make MCAT scores optional for 2022 applicants
- One medical school is considering making MCAT scores optional for 2022 applicants
- All other schools will require MCAT scores for 2022 applicants

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