

The logo for Next Step Test Prep is centered in a blue square. The words "Next" and "Step" are stacked vertically in a large, white, sans-serif font. Below them, the words "TEST PREP" are written in a smaller, white, all-caps, sans-serif font. The background of the slide is dark blue with a repeating pattern of small white plus signs. A large white arrow points downwards from the top of the slide, framing the logo.

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# **Intro to the MCAT**

# Today's Info Session

- ▶ Welcome to this Info Session!
- ▶ Introduction
- ▶ MCAT overview
- ▶ How to prep
  - ▶ Starting early
  - ▶ Or a little later...
- ▶ How Can Next Step Help?
- ▶ Questions?

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**MCAT**  
Medical College  
Admission Test

WHAT IS YOUR NEXT STEP?

# Introduction

**Hi, I'm Phil!**

- ▶ **MCAT Content writer**
  - ▶ **Tutored and taught for 9+ years**
  - ▶ **Attended University of Nebraska Medical Center as an MD/PhD student.**
- ✓ **Next Step is a team of test prep and educational experts committed to excellence.**



# Who Is Next Step?

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- Began in 2009 as a tutoring company
- Focus on graduate admissions tests only
- Team of educational experts
- First company to have materials built from ground up for 2015 MCAT format
- Now the first company to have new 2018 MCAT Interface

✓ **We never stop improving our materials!**



# Understanding the test

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The MCAT is a test like no other

Exam Overview		
Section	# of Questions	Time Allotted
Examinee Agreement		8 minutes
Tutorial (optional)		10 minutes
Chemical and Physical Foundations of Biological Systems	59	95 minutes
Break (optional)		10 minutes
Critical Analysis and Reasoning Skills	53	90 minutes
Mid-Exam Break (optional)		30 minutes
Biological and Biochemical Foundations of Living Systems	59	95 minutes
Break (optional)		10 minutes
Psychological, Social, and Biological Foundations of Behavior	59	95 minutes
Void Question		5 minutes
Satisfaction Survey (optional)		5 minutes
Total Content Time		6 hours   15 minutes
<b>Total "Seated" Time*</b>		<b>Approx. 7 hours   33 minutes</b>

\*Total seated time does not include check-in time on arrival at the test center.

# Subjects Tested

## Chemical and Physical Foundations

- 30% general chemistry
- 25% physics
- 25% biochemistry
- 15% organic chemistry
- 5% biology

## Bio and Biochemical Foundations

- 65% biology
- 25% biochemistry
- 5% organic chemistry
- 5% general chemistry

## Psychological and Sociological Foundations

- 65% psychology
- 30% sociology
- 5% biology

# “High-Yield”

**Warning: anything on the AAMC MCAT outline is fair game!**

**However, some topics are more likely to appear than others...**

Topic	Number of questions
Biology	45
Biochem	30
Physics	15
Gen Chem	20
Organic Chem	11
Psychology	38
Sociology	18
CARS	53
<b>Total</b>	<b>230</b>

Takeaways:

Biology and biochemistry are about 1/3 of the test!

You have more psychology questions than physics and chemistry combined.

Organic chemistry is about 5% of your questions.

# Things to think about

- **Content**

**LOTS of stuff you need to know**

- **Strategy**

**Strategy is important in every area, but ESPECIALLY in CARS.**

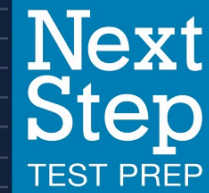
**- Cars is not a test of your knowledge. It's a test of skill.**

- **Timing / endurance**

**Many students are exhausted by the time they get to the Psych section.**



# Where to begin



- **Getting started:**
  1. **ASAP: take a diag**
  2. **Based on diag, set up a study plan (can use NS's free)**
    - **If you're already at your goal – take a month to do AAMC**
    - **If you're ~5 pt's below your goal – take 1-2 months**
    - **If you're 5-10 pt's below your goal – take 3-4 months**
    - **If you're 10-15 pt's below your goal – take 5ish months**
    - **If you're 15-20+ pt's below your goal – 6+ months**
  3. **Download and review AAMC's science outline**

<https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/whats-mcat-exam/>

# Starting out?

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**Correlate with classwork and plan ahead!**

**Some classes are not technically required, but can be helpful for the MCAT.**

**Anatomy and Physiology**

**Neurology**

**Immunology**

**Endocrinology**

**Think about those extra's!**

**Lab experience**

**Shadowing**

**Letters of recommendation**

# Things to think about

- **Content**

**ACTIVE** engagement – ask yourself Q's, quiz yourself. Do **NOT** just passively read

**STOP** taking notes and **START** “taking questions”

e.g. don't write “here is the structure of generic amino acid”

**INSTEAD** write “what is the structure of a generic amino acid?”

# Haven't taken a class?

- **Content Classes – haven't taken Biochem yet?!**
  - ▶ **If you're missing a class, you can self-study (or take a college class) for about 1 semester's worth of stuff while ALSO MCAT prepping (e.g. I never took sociology, so I'm going to self-teach sociology while MCAT prepping)**
  - ▶ **If you're missing 1+ years worth of class content DO NOT PREP for the MCAT (e.g. I've never taken any physics or Biochem and I want self-teaching a year of physics while MCAT prepping – NO NO NO NO!!!!)**

# Open Q & A

- **MCAT Prep – is NOT cleanly, perfectly divisible into “content” and “practice”**
  - ▶ **Nobody is EVER done with “all my content” so instead it’s transition from a mix of content/strategy/practice that slowly moves towards more practice**
  - ▶ **RIGHT FROM VERY BEGINNING you should be practicing passages/questions**
  - ▶ **As you progress, you should be using tests to help you determine what are your content weaknesses.**

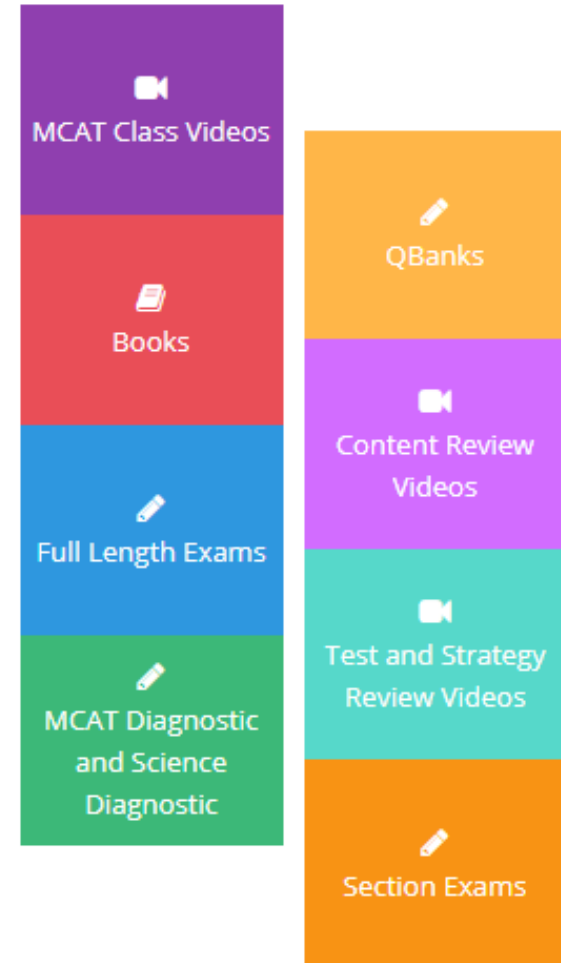
# Why is an MCAT study plan important?

- Studying and practicing for the MCAT tend to be doable...  
...but when you factor in planning as well, it can get stressful!
- This is especially true if you:
  - ▶ Work full-time
  - ▶ Are also taking college courses
  - ▶ Have a weak content background or specific MCAT needs

# What should this plan include?

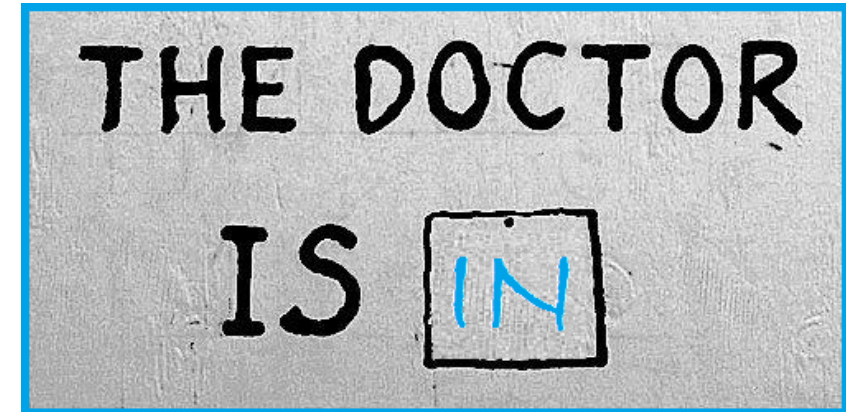
- **Content review**
  - Book chapters (from a set of prep books)
  - And/or content review videos
- **Strategy/practice**
  - Individual question practice (topic-specific)
  - Passage practice (topic-specific)
  - Full sections
  - Full-length exams
- **AAMC resources**

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# Why is it important to take a diagnostic?

- It's vital to get a feel for the exam early on! Then, you can:
  - Review weak areas
    - Sections, topics, timing or endurance issues
  - Optimize future prep
    - Start your Lessons Learned Journal
    - Begin planning your study schedule
- But remember, it's still early in the process! DON'T:
  - Worry about your score or feel pressure to improve right away
  - Assume your strengths/weaknesses will be the same on every test





# What comes next?

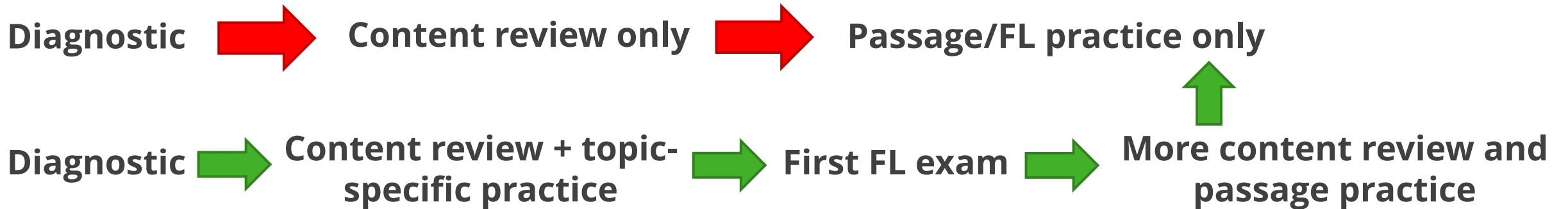
- Content review!
- **However:** it's very important to start question/passage practice early, too.
- Don't plan to do 100% of your content review before moving on to strategy!

Not ideal!

Diagnostic → Content review only → Passage/FL practice only

# What comes next?

- Content review!
- **However:** it's very important to start question/passage practice early, too.
- Don't plan to do 100% of your content review before moving on to strategy!



# What comes next?

- Content review!
- **However:** it's very important to start question/passage practice early, too.
- Don't plan to do 100% of your content review before moving on to strategy!

Much better!



# How many FLs should you take?

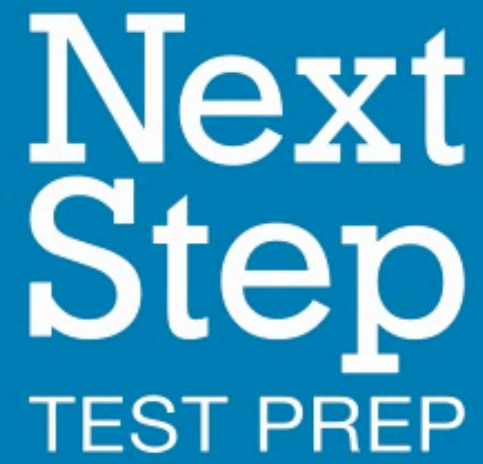
- **MYTH:** The more practice FLs you take, the better.
- In reality – thorough review is most important!
- # of FLs should vary based on prep timeline, endurance, etc.
  - “Typical” student: takes 7-8 FLs
  - If you have endurance of timing problems: take more
  - If you’re confident/crunched for time: 4-5 may be enough!
- Remaining FLs can be taken as separate sections

# Plans can evolve over time!

- For example: Prep is much more time-consuming than expected?
  - ▶ Evaluate how thoroughly you are reading/taking notes
  - ▶ Reprioritize assignment types and topics
- Or are you having trouble staying focused?
  - ▶ Cover multiple topics in a day instead of a single topic
  - ▶ Break content review up into more manageable chunks
  - ▶ Don't forget to stay healthy!

# Finally : remember breaks!

- Breaks are absolutely essential to staying at your best throughout your prep.
- How should a break be spent?
  - ▶ Exercising; keeping a normal routine
  - ▶ Catching up with other obligations (and even having fun)
  - ▶ NOT thinking about the MCAT!
- For longer prep plans, set aside 1 day for a break per week
- For shorter timelines, set aside 1 half-day per week

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**Q&A**

# Next Step: Core Values

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**Educate Daily**



**Approachability**



**Authenticity**



**Professionalism**

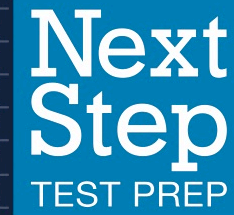


**Ownership**

We are dedicated to providing **personalized support**, advice and prep options that match each student's **individual needs**.



# Students Have a Choice



- ✓ **Over 80,000 students have used Next Step Test Prep in their MCAT Prep journey**

**“Next step is an invaluable resource, they truly have the best strategies in regards to approaching each section of this test.” - T.D.**

**“Next Step helped me take my score from a 496 to a 523!! That's 35th percentile to 99th! Every service they offer is top notch and definitely helps you prepare for the MCAT” - Gus**

**“This course has significantly improved the way I approach the exam, how I study, and has given me great support with any questions I have had along the way.” - Tyler**

# Representative Practice Exams

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- ✓ **The most representative practice exams available**
- **Continually updated for AAMC Changes**
- **Most students score within 1-2 points of our tests on the actual exam**



# New 2018 MCAT Interface

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- Hundreds of hours of video lessons and content review
- 99<sup>th</sup>+ Percentile Instructors
- Small-group Office Hours 5 days/week
- Direct access to the MCAT Content Team

Next Step is ready. Are you?

✓ Your practice experience matters! Prep with the most realistic testing environment with Next Step.

Medical College Admission Test - Clara Gillan Time Remaining: 01:21:34 18 of 59

Highlight Strikethrough Flag for Review

Remove Highlight

**Figure 1** Eosinophil activation as measured by percent of CD69-positive cells after 3 and 12 hours of co-culture (\*p < 0.05, \*\*p < 0.01, \*\*\*p < 0.001)

Next, researchers aimed to assess the effect of NK co-culture on eosinophil degranulation. After 3 and 12 hours of co-culture, samples were centrifuged at 1500 rpm, and ECP levels were measured in the supernatants (Figure 2). No ECP was detected in supernatant culture of NK cells alone.

**Question 18**

Which of the statements below is supported by the experimental results, as shown in Figures 1 and 2?

- A. The duration of Eos co-culture with NK cells directly and linearly correlates to the amount of ECP found in the supernatant after centrifugation.
- B. Cells cultured with a 1:1 NK-to-Eos ratio displayed statistically similar levels of activation to cells cultured with a 5:1 NK-to-Eos ratio, as measured by CD69 expression.
- C. NK co-culture stimulates Eos activation while inhibiting degranulation.
- D. Co-culture with NK cells significantly increased Eos degranulation in all groups, as compared to Eos cells cultured alone.

Periodic Table Review Screen Previous Next

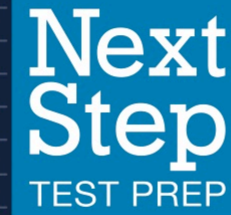
# 1-on-1 Personal Tutoring

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- ✓ Personalized help from some of the best MCAT experts
- Get matched with a 520+ tutor
- Completely flexible and customizable study plan



# FREE MCAT Practice Bundle



## ✓ Includes

- Half-length MCAT diagnostic
- Full-length MCAT exam
- Content Review Videos
- Customizable Study Planner Tool
- & More

## ✓ Supplement your prep with additional support tools

- Question of the Day Quick Prep
- YouTube, Facebook and Instagram Content
- Ongoing Public Webinars and Q&A Sessions
- MCAT Blog: Content and Admissions
- Next Step MCAT Forum

Get your  
**FREE MCAT Practice  
Bundle**

<https://nextstepprep.com/mcat-resources-page/>

# MCAT Study Options

- **Best-in-Class MCAT Tutoring Packages**
  - Variety of packages: Crash Course to Elite
  - Choices include our MCAT Online Course
  - Personalized Study Plan for each student
  - Top-scoring tutors
- **Most up-to-date MCAT Course**
  - All new books in 4-color, all online AAMC resources
  - 10 full-length exams aligned to new interface
  - Live online office hours for any Q&A held 5 days per week
  - Study Plan Generator to match each student's strengths, weaknesses and schedule needs.
- **MCAT Practice Test Bundles**
  - Available in 4-, 6-, and 10-pack bundles

**\$200 off the course!**

**DR2020**

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