

Entrance Exams

Biology Senior Seminar

Sep 3, 2021

Types of Entrance Exams

- **GRE** = graduate record exam for graduate school, vet school, & physical therapy)
- **MCAT** = medical college admission test
- **PCAT** = pharmacy college admission test
- **PA-CAT** = physician assistant college admission test
- **DAT** = dental admission test
- **LSAT** = law school admission test

COSTS

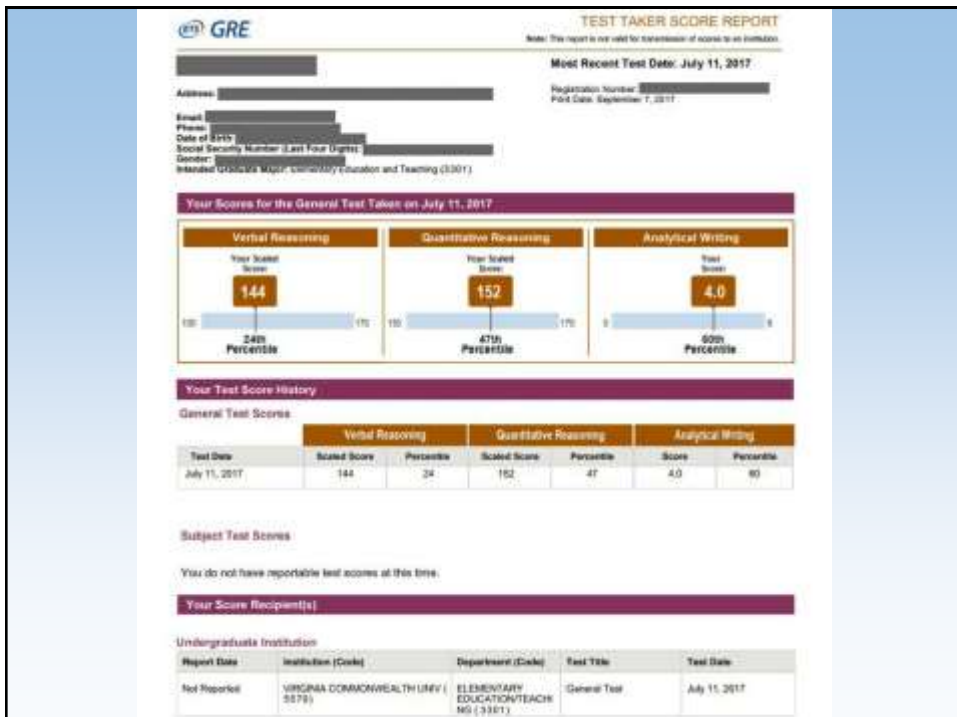
- GRE \$205
- MCAT \$315
- PCAT \$210
- DAT \$360

Why Admissions Tests?

- Standardized tests do have some predictive value for academic success in a program.
 - Based on years of data.
- Test scores help level the “playing field.”
- With the GPA, are the two numbers that you are initially judged by.
 - Getting past these opens up the door for the rest of the application and the interview process.

GRE

- **Current test score scales:**
 - Verbal Reasoning: 130-170 points
 - Quantitative Reasoning: 130-170 points
 - Analytical Writing: 0-6
- **The GRE does not penalize for guessing.**
- **Average for getting in:**
 - Grad School: >300 points total
 - PA School: >290 points total
 - PT School: >60th percentile
 - Vet School: >310 point on VR/QR and >4 on AW
- **Cost: \$205**



MCAT

- **Current test score scales:**
 - Biological Science: 118-132 points
 - Chemical/Physical Sciences: 118-132 points
 - Psychological/Social Foundations: 118-132 points
 - Critical Analysis/Reasoning: 118-132 points
- **The MCAT does not penalize for guessing.**
- **Average for getting in:**
 - MUSC: 509
 - Columbia: 506
 - Greenville: 507
 - VCOM: 500
- **Cost: \$315**

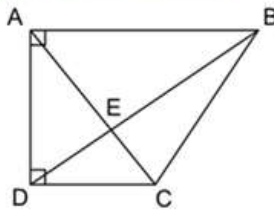
Section	Score	Confidence Band ¹	Percentile Rank of Score ²	Score Profile ³
Chemical and Physical Foundations of Biological Systems	124	123 125	45%	
Critical Analysis and Reasoning Skills	123	122 124	33%	
Biological and Biochemical Foundations of Living Systems	127	126 128	77%	
Psychological, Social, and Biological Foundations of Behavior	127	126 128	75%	
MCAT Total	501	499 503	54%	

DAT

- **Current test score scales:**
 - Biology: 1-30 points
 - General Chemistry: 1-30 points
 - Organic Chemistry: 1-30 points
 - Reading Comprehension: 1-30 points
 - Quantitative Reasoning: 1-30 points
 - Perceptual Ability (6 subtests): 1-30 points
- **The DAT does not penalize for guessing.**
- **Average for getting in:**
 - MUSC: 20 Academic Average/20 Perceptual
- Cost: \$360

Sample questions

Try this GRE Question



What is the area of triangle BCD given that the area of triangle ADE is 16 & the area of triangle CDE is 12?

a) 12 b) 16 c) 20 d) 28
e) Cannot be determined

See Answer

Sample questions

103. Concerning the transcription of a *lac* operon, the synthesis of mRNA starts from which part of the operon?

- A. From the beginning of the promoter
- B. From the middle of the promoter
- C. From the beginning of the operator
- D. From the middle of the operator
- E. From the beginning of the *lac Z* gene

104. Self-splicing, which does not rely on protein-based enzymatic activities, is found in the splicing of:

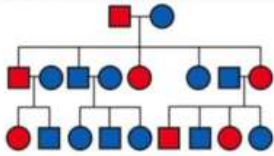
- A. Double-stranded RNAs.
- B. mRNA precursors.
- C. tRNA precursors.
- D. rRNA precursors.
- E. snRNAs.

Sample questions

Crack the PCAT

Question 38 of 48 Time Remaining: 00:39:41

38. In the pedigree below, affected individuals are colored red. The type of disease that is represented by the pedigree below is caused by a(n)

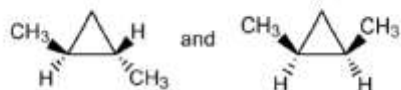


- A. X-linked trait
- B. Y-linked trait
- C. Autosomal dominant trait
- D. Autosomal recessive trait

BACK MARK NEXT REVIEW

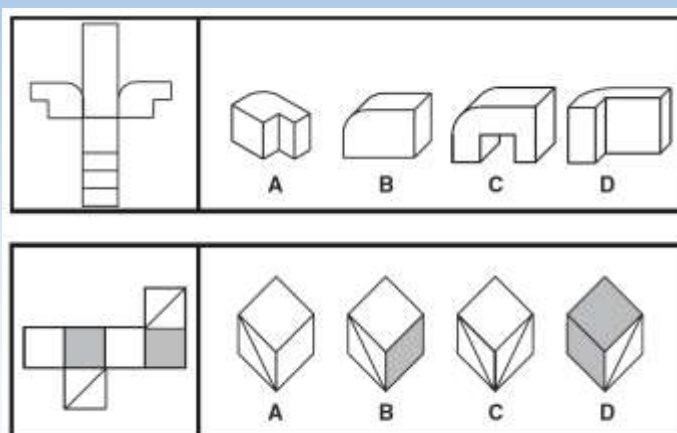
Sample questions

81. What are the following?



- A. Structural isomers
- B. Enantiomers
- C. Diastereomers
- D. Identical compounds
- E. Meso compounds

Sample questions



Click the following links for example questions:

- ▣ • [MCAT questions](#)
- ▣ • [GRE questions](#)
- ▣ • [DAT questions](#)
- ▣ • [PCAT questions](#)

Test-taking prep

- Start months in advance
- Become familiar with exam content, timing, etc.
- Master sample questions, vocabulary, geometry, etc.

Preparation, continued

- Find out how to register (date, cost, location)
- Familiarize yourself with exam structure
- Practice, preferably under conditions of the test
 - free sample tests and questions
 - purchase test-prep materials
 - take a previous exam
 - consider paying for tutoring/prep course

Still preparing!

- Identify your strengths and weaknesses
- Focus on your trouble spots and improve in those areas
- Familiarize yourself with test-taking procedures



General guidelines

- Verbal skills persist over time
- Math skills are very vulnerable to forgetting
- Analytical skills only improve with exposure and practice

Stress and performance during preparation

- Three levels of stress:
 - low stress
 - optimal stress ("The Zone")
 - high stress
- Procrastination leads to both low and high stress
- Consistent practice leads to the best test scores



Stress and performance during the exam

- Leave early and know your route and destination
- Dress comfortably
- Mimic your state of mind while studying
- Think positively!

Final comments

- YOU are not your test score.
- You can take the test again, if necessary.
- Selection criteria include more than this exam score.
- Practice, practice, practice. It's worth it!

FMU Resources

- ▣ • [Office of Counseling & Testing](#)
- ▣ • [Career Development Center.](#)