

# Next Step Advisor Office Hours: Chemical and Physical Foundations Section

- Welcome to Advisor Office Hours!
- Introduction
- Section Overview
- Subjects Tested
- College Subjects to Take
- Specific Advice
- Questions?

**MCAT**  
Medical College  
Admission Test

# Introduction

- Clara Gillan
  - Senior content developer at Next Step
  - 526 MCAT score
  - Worked with hundreds of students
  - Written and reviewed thousands of MCAT questions



# Section Overview

- First of four sections
- Same format/time constraints as other science sections
- Passages and discrete questions alternate
- Some math required, but no calculator is provided

Section	Time Allowed	Number of Questions	Question Format
Chemical and Physical Foundations	95 min	59	10 passages, 15 discretives
Critical Analysis and Reasoning Skills	90 min	53	9 passages
Biological and Biochemical Foundations	95 min	59	10 passages, 15 discretives
Psychological and Sociological Foundations	95 min	59	10 passages, 15 discretives

# Subjects Tested

## Chemical and Physical Foundations

30% general chemistry

25% physics

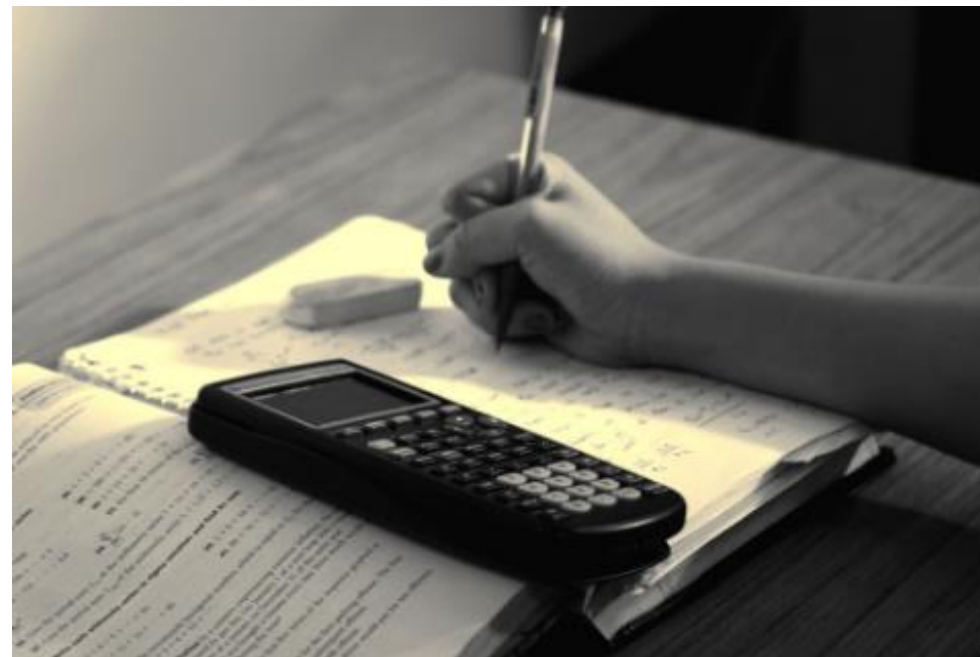
25% biochemistry

15% organic chemistry

5% biology

# College Courses to Take

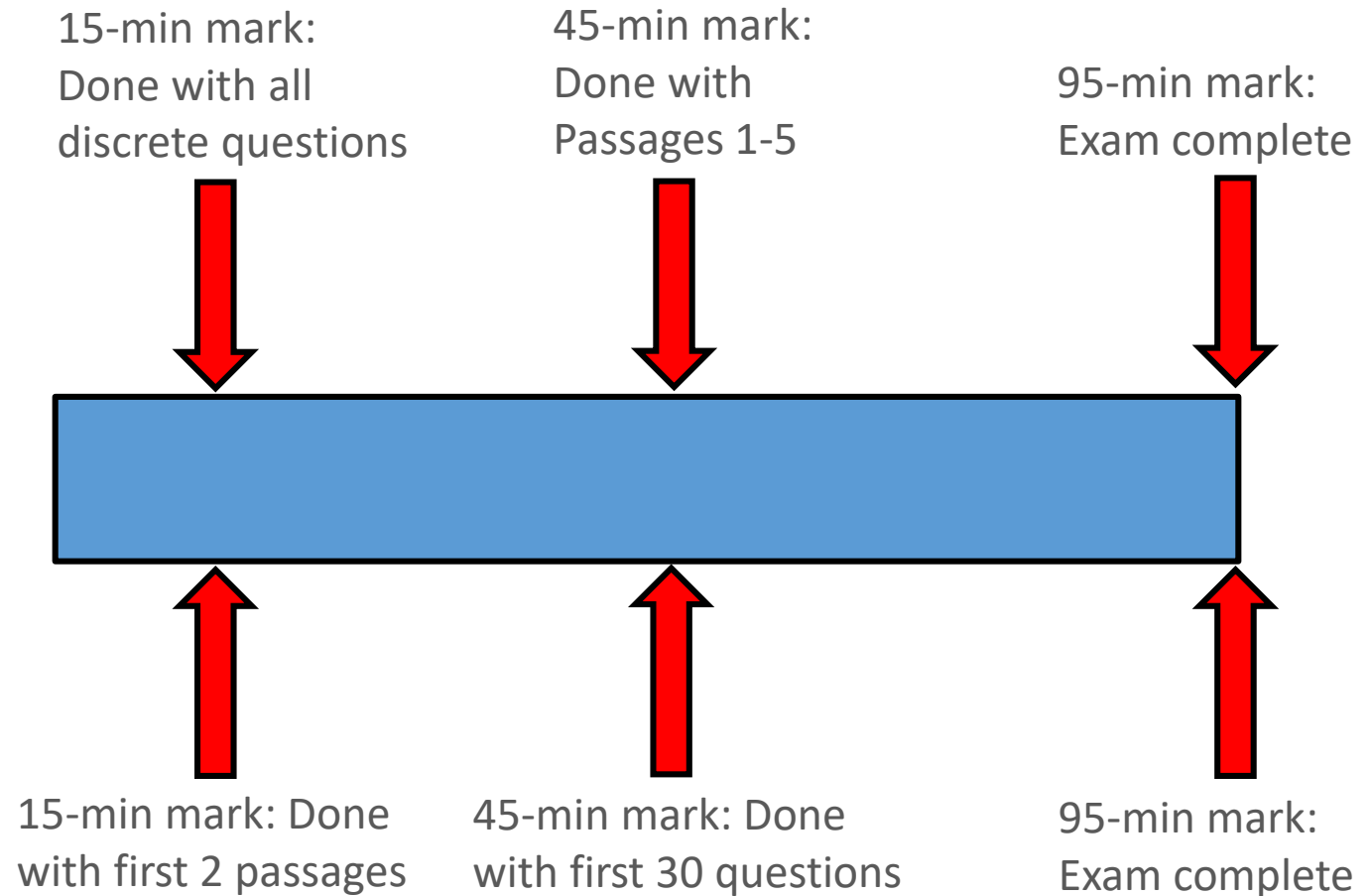
- Definitely aim to take before MCAT date:
  - Biology (2 semesters)
  - General chemistry (2 semesters) ←
  - Organic chemistry (1-2 semesters) ←
  - Physics (2 semesters) ←
- Take if possible:
  - Biochemistry (1 semester) ←
  - Psychology or sociology (1 semester)
- What if a student can't fit these courses in?



# Specific Advice - Timing

- 95 min, 59 questions
- ~30 questions per 45 min, or 1.5 min per question
- Aim for >8 min per passage
- Each question is worth the same amount! For this reason, **avoid** spending more than 2 minutes on any one question.
- What to do with extra time?

Ideal timing pattern varies depending on student strategy



# Specific Advice - 5 Ways to Combat Test Anxiety

- Students often especially nervous about this section
- Advice:
  - #1. Warm up before exam by reading a few passages

# Specific Advice - 5 Ways to Combat Test Anxiety

- Students often especially nervous about this section
- Advice:
  - #2. Practice all math without a calculator while studying



# Specific Advice - 5 Ways to Combat Test Anxiety

- Students often especially nervous about this section
- Advice:
  - #3. Focus on the “easy points”

# Specific Advice - 5 Ways to Combat Test Anxiety

- Students often especially nervous about this section
- Advice:
  - #4. Learn math “tricks” (rounding, manipulating scientific notation) and get very familiar with units of measurement

# Specific Advice - 5 Ways to Combat Test Anxiety

- Students often especially nervous about this section
- Advice:
  - #5. Take entire break after section to clear your head!

# Questions?