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MCAT, LSAT and Physics Bachelor's

Physics majors pursue a wide variety of career paths, many of which are not what you might expect. Some pursue advanced training by applying to graduate schools, medical schools or law schools. The data in this report show that the physics majors who applied to either medical schools or law schools in the 2012 academic year scored quite well as a group on their admission tests. Although one should choose a major based on personal interests and goals, these data show that physics can be an excellent entry degree for programs outside of physics.

About the MCAT

The Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT) has three sections of standardized multiple choice questions with an additional writing sample comprised of two essays. Each section has a potential score range of 1-15.

As a group, the physics bachelor's who apply to medical school achieve high scores on the MCAT exam

Table 1

Average MCAT Scores* by Selected Majors, 2012

	Physical Science	Biological Science	Verbal Reasoning	Number of Applicants
Economics	10.8	10.8	9.9	633
Physics	**11.1**	**10.4**	**9.8**	**228**
Biomedical Engineering	11.1	10.6	9.6	1,147
Mathematics	10.6	10.4	9.3	340
Electrical Engineering	10.9	10.1	9.4	135
Neuroscience	10.1	10.6	9.5	1,615
English	9.6	10.1	10.2	380
Biochemistry	10.1	10.4	9.0	2,864
Chemistry	9.5	10.0	9.0	2,113
Microbiology	9.2	10.1	8.8	759
Psychology	9.1	9.6	9.1	2,327
Biology	9.0	9.7	8.7	13,605
Premedical	8.3	8.9	8.1	587
All Majors	**9.5**	**9.9**	**9.0**	**44,464**

*** Sorted by total score. Based on test takers who applied to Medical School. Applicants are allowed to take the MCAT exam more than once; these averages are computed using each applicant's most recent MCAT exam scores.**

Source: Compiled by the Statistical Research Center based on data collected by the Association of American Medical Colleges

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Table 2

Average LSAT Scores* by Selected Majors, 2012

	Average Score*	Number of Applicants
Mathematics	162.2	254
Physics	**162.1**	**126**
Economics	159.1	2,468
Engineering	157.3	1,127
Chemistry	156.7	267
History	156.7	3,323
English	155.8	3,728
Biology	155.2	1,095
Political Science	154.3	12,215
Psychology	153.3	3,335
Computer Science	152.3	327
Pre-Law	149.0	994
Criminal Justice	145.3	2,878
All Majors	**153.6**	**66,197**

*** Based on test takers who applied to Law School. Applicants are allowed to take the LSAT exam more than once; these averages are computed using each applicant's highest score on the LSAT exam.**

Source: Compiled by the Statistical Research Center based on data collected by the Law School Admission Council

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As a group, the physics bachelor's who apply to law school achieve high scores on the LSAT exam.

About the LSAT

The Law School Admission Test (LSAT) is a half-day, standardized test administered four times each year at designated testing centers throughout the world. All law schools approved by the American Bar Association require applicants to take the LSAT as part of their admission process. According to the Law School Admission Council (LSAC), raw scores are converted to an LSAT scale that ranges from 120 to 180, with 120 being the lowest possible score and 180 the highest possible score. According to US News & World Report, the median LSAT score for applicants accepted by all 193 ranked schools is 157, and the median for applicants accepted to the top 13 schools is 170. If you're interested in a specific school, you can check the LSAC website for a matrix of LSAT scores by GPA, showing the probable likelihood of acceptance for each school.

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