The above graph provides information regarding the score distribution of first takers from your medical school relative to the distribution for all U.S./Canadian first takers in each discipline and organ system. All scores are scaled in standard score units based on the performance of U.S./Canadian first takers: the mean and standard deviation (SD) for this group are 0 and 1, respectively, for each discipline and organ system. The mean performance of U.S./Canadian first takers is represented by the vertical solid green line at 0.0. Roughly 68% of U.S./Canadian first takers scored within one SD of the mean, between −1.0 and 1.0. The distribution of performance for first takers from your school is represented by the red boxes and horizontal lines. The red box depicts the mean performance of first takers from your school. The distance from the red box to one end of the red line indicates one SD for your school. The interval spanned by each red line represents your school mean plus/minus one SD; approximately 68% of your students scored in this interval.

By comparing the locations of the red boxes, you can determine the disciplines and organ systems in which the performance of your students was relatively strong or weak. Because many of the scores are based on a relatively small number of items, differences smaller than a few tenths of an SD are not likely to be meaningful. In addition, Step 1 test items are deliberately designed to be integrative; most items contribute to the calculation of scores in more than one discipline. No numerical comparisons are given because the degree of integration makes it very difficult, if not impossible, to attribute performance differences across scores to individual courses.