

Pre-Optometry Requirements

Introduction: This information is based on the general requirements of most (>50%) optometry schools across the nation. It will be up to each student to research schools of interest and to finalize any remaining requirements.

- It is strongly advised that students take every course tested on the OAT (marked with *).
- Optometry schools do not require any particular major. Students should select a major based on academic strengths and interests.
- Each student should develop a plan based on: necessary optometry school requirements and, should they choose to earn a BS/BA, the requirements for their undergrad degree.
- A draft of this academic plan needs to be reviewed with the student's advisor from their major.

Required by MOST Optometry Schools

Chemistry: 2 Semesters

- *General Chemistry I: CHEM 1031 + CHEM 1033
- *General Chemistry II: CHEM 1032 + CHEM 1034

Organic Chemistry: 1-2 Semesters

- *Organic Chemistry I: CHEM 2201 + CHEM 2203
- *Organic Chemistry II: CHEM 2202 + CHEM 2204

Psychology: 1 Semester

Introduction to Psychology: PSY 1001

English: 2 Semesters

Analytical Reading & Writing: ENG 0802
Intellectual Heritage I: IH 0851
Intellectual Heritage II: IH 0852

Biology: 3 Semesters

- *Intro. to Organismal Biology: BIOL 1111
- *Intro. to Cellular & Molecular Bio.: BIOL 2112
- Microbiology: BIOL 2001 (or BIOL 3317)

Math: 2 Semesters

Calculus I: MATH 1041
Calculus II: MATH 1042
Statistics: MATH 1044, PSY1003, SOC 1167, BIOL 3312

Physics: 2 Semester

Physics requirement dictated by major. Content covered in Physics 2021 / 2022 is recommended.

- *Physics I: PHYS 2021 (or 1061 or 1021)
- *Physics II: PHYS 2022 (or 1062 or 1022)

Required by SOME Optometry Schools

**Tested on the OAT*

Anatomy & Physiology: 2 Semesters

Check schools of interest on whether a lab is required
KINS 1223 (or 1221 or BIOL 2233)
KINS 1224 (or 1222 or BIOL 3334)

Upper Level Sciences:

Refer to schools of interest to determine if any additional sciences are required. Recommended courses below:

Biochemistry: BIOL 4375, CHEM 4401 or 3401

Sample Timeline

	Fall Semester	Spring Semester	Summer
Year 1	Chemistry I Calculus I	Chemistry II Biology I Statistics	<i>Exposure to Healthcare Community Service</i>
Year 2	Organic Chemistry I Biology II	Organic Chemistry II Psychology	<i>Continue Volunteering Research</i>
Year 3	Physics I <i>OAT Prep</i>	Physics II Microbiology <i>OAT Prep</i>	OAT Exam by <i>May/June</i> Apply to Optometry School July/Aug. <i>Secondary Applications</i>
Year 4	Any Additional Requirements <i>Optometry school interviews</i>	Any Additional Requirements <i>Optometry school interviews</i>	<i>Take a break before optometry!</i>

This timeline is an example of how you may wish to take courses *in a perfect world*. Timing of these courses may change due to placement exams or major requirements. In addition to these courses, each student will fit in any classes required by their major. Develop an academic plan based on the sequence above that is tailored to your needs so that you and your advisor can discuss your plan.

Visit Temple's bulletin to view the availability and prerequisites of each course: www.temple.edu/courses

ePortfolio

ePortfolio is a tool that will help students stay organized for a professional school application. Through the ePortfolio process, students will set up a 'mock application' that includes GPAs and professional development experiences. **ePortfolio drafts are due to PPHS June 30th two years before students plan to enter professional school. 2+4 students should submit their ePortfolio draft immediately following their freshman year.**



The circle above represents four areas that are important for admission to professional school. As you embark on your journey to optometry school, think about ways to enhance each of these four sections.

Applying to Optometry Schools

Application Process: A centralized application service is available through the Optometry Centralized Application Service (OptomCAS) which is administered by the Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry (ASCO). Applications are submitted one year before students expect to enter optometry school and are available for submission in late June. Schools view applicants on a rolling basis – apply early when the application opens!

Undergraduate Major: There is no preferred major for optometry school and many schools may not even require that a student earns an undergraduate degree. Students will be required to select a major at the very least as a backup option. We, however, strongly encourage students to consider earning their bachelor's degree. Students should select a major that they find interesting and consider a strength.

GPA: Optometry schools will consider both a student's overall and math/science GPA. Math/science GPA is calculated using scores from any course taken in the departments of Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and Math. **An overall and math/science GPA of 3.3 or above is preferred. GPAs below 3.0 may need to consider Post-Baccalaureate coursework / programs before applying.**

Optometry Admission Test (OAT): Courses in General Chemistry, Biology, Organic Chemistry, and Physics should be completed before taking the exam. This test is often taken the same summer in which the student applies to professional school (one year before walking through the doors of optometry school). A test date in May would allow a student to see their scores before applying when the application opens in June. Remember, take time to prepare for the exam.

**Biology
Chemistry
Organic Chemistry**

**Physics
Quantitative Reasoning
Critical Reasoning**

Professional Development: Optometry schools will first review your numbers (overall GPA, Math/Science GPA, OAT scores). If these are in a competitive range, they will then assess your extracurricular and volunteer experiences. Exposure to healthcare, community service, and research encompass an important part of your preparation. Look for experiences where you can observe a practicing optometrist directly. Demonstrated experiences in healthcare need to be a part of your profile for future admission.

Letters of Recommendation: Letters for optometry school will be sent directly through the OptomCAS application at the time a student applies. Schools generally like to see 2-3 letters of recommendation with at least 1 from science faculty and 1 from an optometrist they shadowed. Look into schools of interest for more specifics on what might be preferred.

Additional Resources:

Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry (ASCO): www.opted.org