

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 your academic plan needs to be reviewed with your advisor from your major.

Required by MOST Optometry Schools

Chemistry: 2 Semesters

*CHEM 1031 + CHEM 1033

*CHEM 1032 + CHEM 1034

Organic Chemistry: 1-2 Semesters

*CHEM 2201 + CHEM 2203

*CHEM 2202 + CHEM 2204

Psychology: 1 Semester

PSY 1001

English: 2 Semesters

ENG 0802

IH 0851

IH 0852

Biology: 3 Semesters

*BIOL 1111

*BIOL 1112 or 2112

BIOL 2001 or BIOL 3317

Math: 2 Semesters

MATH 1041

MATH 1042

MATH 1044, PSY 1003, SOC 1167, BIOL 3312, or EPBI 2219

Physics: 2 Semesters

Physics requirement dictated by major.

*PHYS 1021 (or 1061 or 2021)

*PHYS 1022 (or 1062 or 2022)

***Tested on the OAT**

To look up courses please navigate the [bulletin](#)

Required by SOME Optometry Schools

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 Medicine 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>	<i>OAT Exam by May/June Apply to Optometry School by June/July Secondary Applications</i>
Year 4	Any Additional Requirements <i>Optometry School Interview</i>	Any Additional Requirements <i>Optometry School Interview</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. **The 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.

ePortfolio

ePortfolio is a tool that will help students stay organized for a 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 PPHA June 30th two years before students plan to enter professional school.**

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 School

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 | [ASCO Future Eye Doc](#)

Please join the [PPHA Canvas page](#) for more information.