

## Preparation for a Profession in Optometry

A bachelor's degree is not required for admissions into most optometry schools, although most successful applicants have completed a bachelor's degree. Optometry schools expect candidates to demonstrate the intellectual, analytical, and problem-solving skills necessary to succeed in their programs. Students are strongly advised to balance coursework in the natural sciences with coursework in humanities and social sciences. The General Education component of a Liberal Arts degree provides a sound foundation for demonstrating an interest in and knowledge of a diverse and global society. Candidates should also consider coursework in areas such as anthropology, communication, economics, ethics, logic, psychology, sociology, and statistics.

Most schools base admissions decisions on a balanced combination of the following:

- Grade point average: This varies by school but is usually above a 3.0 minimum.
- OAT scores (Optometry Admission Test)
- Personal statement from the candidate
- Professional experience (employment, volunteer work, shadowing, etc.)
- Interview
- Recommendations from academic instructors (usually in the sciences), an academic advisor, and an optometrist.

### Core Courses for Optometry Programs: a minimum requirement

- Engl 101 English Composition I (3) **and** 102 English Composition II (3)
- Comm 111 Public Speaking (3)
- Math 111 College Algebra (3) **and** 123 College Trigonometry (3) **or** Math 112 Pre-Calculus (5)
- Chemistry 211 General Chem. I (5) **and** 212 General Chem. II (5)
- Chemistry 531 Organic Chemistry I (5) **and** 532 Organic Chemistry II (5)
- Biology 210 General Biology I (4) **and** 211 General Biology II (4)  
Biology 527 Comparative Anatomy (5) **and** Biology 534/535 Mammalian Physiology w/lab (5)
- Physics 213 General Physics I (5) **and** 214 General Physics II (5) **or**  
Physics 313 University Physics I with lab (315) **and** 314 University Physics II with lab (316)

The core classes above meet the minimum prerequisites for admission to most optometry schools, however many schools also require advanced courses in biology, chemistry, and mathematics. Students should check with the specific schools they are interested in for a list of specific requirements. For most schools, the following are necessary in addition to the core:

- Math 242 Calculus I (5)    • Biology 330 Microbiology (5)    • Chemistry 661 Introductory Biochemistry (3)
- Statistics 370 Elementary Statistics (3)    • Psychology 111 General Psychology (3)

**Admission Test:** The Optometry Admission Test (OAT) is required for admission to optometry schools. Optometry school admission is very competitive. Most successful applicants have a GPA of at least 3.3 and an OAT score of 320 or higher.

**Application:** The application period for optometry schools occurs during the fall and early spring before the fall semester one wishes to begin optometry studies. Students will apply directly to the optometry schools that they wish to attend.

**Midwest Optometry Schools:**

- Northeastern State University College of Optometry [arapaho.nsuok.edu/optometry](http://arapaho.nsuok.edu/optometry)
- Southern College of Optometry [www.sco.edu](http://www.sco.edu)
- University of Missouri at St. Louis College of Optometry [www.umsl.edu/divisions/optometry](http://www.umsl.edu/divisions/optometry)

**Important Websites:**

- OAT registration: [www.ada.org/oat](http://www.ada.org/oat)
- Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry [www.opted.org](http://www.opted.org)
- American Association of Optometry [www.aoa.org](http://www.aoa.org)

**Pre-Med Advising Resources**

Pre-med Student Association: [www.wudoc.org](http://www.wudoc.org)

Blackboard site for Pre-Med professions students:

Pre-Med information

Scholarship Information

Speakers

Shadowing opportunities

To join, send your email address and WSU ID to an advisor listed below.

LASI 150P Intro to Health Professions (1) A fall semester class that shows student a wide range of professions, salaries, and admission requirements.

Pre-Medical Advisors

Blake Cienas: all medical areas

[blake.cienas@wichita.edu](mailto:blake.cienas@wichita.edu)

Nick Endicott: all medical areas

[nick.endicott@wichita.edu](mailto:nick.endicott@wichita.edu)

Nancy Krehbiel: all medical areas

[nancy.krehbiel@wichita.edu](mailto:nancy.krehbiel@wichita.edu)