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  
Mosaic I: IH 0851  
Mosaic II: IH 0852

**Biology:** 3 Semesters  
*Introduction to Biology I: BIOL 1111  
*Introduction to Biology II: BIOL 2112  
Microbiology: BIO 2001 (or BIO 3317)

**Math:** 2 Semesters  
Calculus I: MATH 1041  
Statistics: MATH 1044, PSY 1167, PSY 1003, SOC 1167, BIOL 5312

**Physics:** 2 Semester  
*Physics I: PHYS 2021 (or 1061 or 1021)  
*Physics II: PHYS 2022 (or 1062 or 1022)

**Anatomy & Physiology:** 2 Semesters  
*Check schools of interest on whether a lab is required  
*KINS 1223 (or 1221 or BIO 2233)  
*KINS 1224 (or 1222 or BIO 3334)

**Upper Level Sciences:**  
*Refer to schools of interest if any additional sciences are required. Recommended courses below:  
Biochemistry: BIOL 4375 or CHEM 4401

*Tested on the OAT
## Sample Timeline

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

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](http://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 portfolio 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 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. The latest you should take the test is in January the year before you expect to enter optometry school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Biology</th>
<th>Physics</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td>Quantitative Reasoning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organic Chemistry</td>
<td>Critical Reasoning</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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](http://www.opted.org)

Pre-Professional Health Studies (PPHS)
1810 Liacouras Walk, STE 100 | 215-204-2513
www.temple.edu/healthadvising
healthadvising@temple.edu