



PRE-OPTOMETRY



GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR OPTOMETRY SCHOOL | *Courses and MCAT*

Course requirements for optometry schools vary widely. For example, some schools require calculus and others do not. Most programs prefer students with broad, well-rounded backgrounds and value a liberal arts education. A science major is not necessarily required for professional programs; in fact, a major or minor in the arts, humanities, or social sciences may be attractive to some optometry schools. However, you must balance the requirements of your major with those of optometry school admissions and take a wide variety of science courses. Careful planning is essential to avoid scheduling conflicts.

It is recommended that you investigate the particular requirements of optometry schools to which you are interested in applying. These

can be found at optomcas.org. Regardless of a school's particular course requirements, students applying to optometry school programs must take the Optometry Admissions Test (OAT). The OAT requires specific knowledge content that you need to obtain from your courses here at Hollins. The content categories are:

- *Survey of the Natural Sciences (biology, general chemistry, and organic chemistry)*
- *Reading Comprehension*
- *Physics*
- *Quantitative Reasoning (mathematical problems in algebra, calculations, conversions, etc.)*

Information about the exam and complete content description can be found at optomcas.org.

GENERAL COURSEWORK REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION

to *most* optometry schools, and the courses at Hollins that satisfy them

Two semesters of General Chemistry	CHEM 101/102 or 105/214
Two semesters of Organic Chemistry.....	CHEM 221/222
One semester of English.....	ENG 100/elective
Two semesters of General Biology	BIOL 220/236
Two semesters of Introductory Physics	PHYS 151/152 or 201/202
One semester of Biochemistry.....	BIOL/CHEM 351

In addition, many schools require the following.

Precalculus or Calculus	MATH 140 or 241/242
Microbiology	BIOL 312
Comparative Anatomy	BIOL 315
Intro to Statistics	STAT 140
Intro to Psychology	PSY 141

It is imperative that you take the OAT as soon as you have finished the biology, general chemistry, organic chemistry, and physics sequences. Please plan on taking it no later than the summer after your third year if you are planning to enter optometry school following graduation from Hollins. It is administered at specific testing sites most days of the year and you are required to have an appointment weeks in advance, so the earlier you plan, the better. It takes three to four weeks to receive your score. If your test scores are not what you would like, you must wait 90 days to retake the test. The OAT can only be taken up to three times, so plan to score well the first time you take the test. Information about the exam, locations, and fees can be found at ada.org.

APPLYING TO OPTOMETRY SCHOOL

Official optometry school application deadlines vary, but the application cycle opens between late June and early August, with deadlines spanning from December through June. It is **strongly** advised that you apply early as most schools have rolling admission. This requires that you take the OAT by the summer after your third year.

In addition to transcripts and test scores, you will need letters of recommendation from your professors. You must request these from professors

who can honestly comment on your potential to successfully navigate an optometry program. You may submit up to four names. The pre-health advisor will coordinate the collection and collation of the letters and their submission. Most optometry schools use the Optometry Centralized Application Service (OptomCAS) system for recommendation letter submission. Information about OptomCAS, participating colleges, fees, and deadlines can be found at optomcas.org.



FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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