

Pre-Optometry Quick Facts

Average Matriculate Numbers

- Overall/Science GPA: 3.59/3.66
- OAT: 340 (AA)/340 (TS)

Optometrists (those with O.D. degree) are independent primary health care providers who examine, diagnose, treat, and manage disorders of the visual systems and diseases of the eye and associated structures. The scope of optometric care ranges from vision testing and correction to managing complex eye and vision problems and diagnosing the presence of systemic diseases such as diabetes and hypertension. There is no “best” major for pre-optometry students. Instead, students are encouraged to pursue majors in which they are most interested and in which they believe they will excel.

Required Courses and GPA Calculation

UH College of Optometry Pre-Requisites*

Biology: BIOL 1306/1106 & 1307/1107

Biochemistry: BCHS 3304

Calculus: MATH 2413

General Chemistry: CHEM 1311/1111 & 1312/1112

Organic Chemistry I: CHEM 2323/2123

Microbiology: BIOL 2321/2121

Psychology: PSYC 2301

Physics: PHYS 1301/1101 & 1302/1102

Statistics: MATH 1342 or 3339 or PSYC 2317

Additional Advanced Biology:** BIOL 3324, BIOL 3301, BIOL 4315, BIOL 4320, BIOL 4323, BIOL 4354, BIOL 4374.

***DISCLAIMER:** This list includes only UH College of Optometry requirements—though other optometry programs have similar requirements. Please refer to optometry program websites for specific requirements regarding coursework and AP/IB credit before applying. You may also meet with an advisor in the Pre-Health Advising Center to discuss other options.

**[UH College of Optometry](#) requires 8-hours of advanced Biology coursework (*3000-level or above*). At least three of these eight hours must come from junior/senior-level physiology or anatomy (*freshman/sophomore-level A&P courses will not satisfy these requirements*).

Science GPA Calculations

Optometry programs via the OptomCAS application use the **BCP GPA**: **b**iology, **c**hemistry, and **p**hysics. All course attempts are included in the GPA calculation. OptomCAS also utilizes the +/- grade convention.

Optometry Admission Test (OAT)

Required Pre-OAT

Biology: BIOL 1306/1106 & 1307/1107

Biochemistry: BCHS 3304

General Chemistry: CHEM 1311/1111 & 1312/1112

Organic Chemistry I: CHEM 2323/2123

Physics: PHYS 1301/1101 & 1302/1102

Statistics: MATH 1342 or 3339 or PSYC 2317

Recommended Pre-OAT

Calculus: MATH 2413

Physiology: BIOL 3324

Genetics: BIOL 3301

Microbiology: BIOL 2321/2121

The OAT is required for admission into optometry school and is offered multiple times per year at a cost of \$450. Before you can register for the OAT you must secure an OATPIN. You can register for a PIN at ADA.org/OAT. You must register at least 60-90 days in advance.

The OAT is computer based and ~5 hours. The OAT consists of four tests: *Survey of the Natural Sciences* (Biology, General Chemistry, and Organic Chemistry), *Reading Comprehension*, *Physics*, and *Quantitative Reasoning*. You should plan to take the exam only once. Retakes are allowed but are limited and should be considered very carefully. Further, you must wait 90 days between test attempts.

It is advised you take the OAT before the opening of the admissions cycle at the end of June. Official scores will be reported electronically to your “My Account,” (within 3-4 weeks of your test date) and to the optometry schools you select on your OAT application. If you have time in your schedule, you should take the advised pre-OAT courses as they will be very helpful for the exam. Commercial prep courses are not required to perform well on the OAT, but they can provide structure for studying. You should always plan to take at least 5-6 full length practice exams to prepare and gauge your progress.

Letters of Evaluation

The University of Houston College of Optometry (and most other OD programs) requires **three letters of recommendation**:

- Two letters from professors
- One letter from a licensed optometrist with whom you have shadowed

Letters of recommendation must be requested via and submitted directly to OptomCAS.

Shadowing Experience

You are expected to spend time **shadowing** an optometrist to experience the “doctor/patient” interaction. Shadowing means **hands-off observation only**. This experience demonstrates your knowledge of the optometry profession, but there is no specific hour requirement. Ideally, you should build a strong relationship with at least one O.D., so that you may request a letter of evaluation.

Optometry School Application Timeline

Junior Year	
Fall	Shadow/Write Personal Statement/Study for OAT/Register for OATPIN
Jan-May	Study for OAT
Feb-March	Ask for Letters of Evaluation (give letter writers at least 1-month to compose)
April-May	Take OAT
Summer	
Last week of June	Submit OptomCAS Application (submit early—even if OAT score or LOEs are not received) Send out Letters of Evaluation requests through OptomCAS
July	Prepare for Secondary Applications (look online for previous year’s questions)
August	Complete Secondary Applications (within 2 weeks of receiving each application)
Senior Year	
Fall	Interview (beginning last August/early September through Spring) Continue to shadow
Spring	Graduate