

Optometry

As defined by the American Optometric Association, optometrists are “independent primary health care providers who examine, diagnose, treat and manage diseases and disorders of the visual system, the eye and associated structures as well as diagnose related systemic conditions.” Today’s optometrist is more than just a provider of eyeglasses, and must be prepared to treat the whole patient. The demand for optometric services is growing. Although most optometrists are in general practice, a growing number are involved in a specialty practice such as contact lenses, geriatrics, pediatrics, sports vision, and vision therapy.

There are currently 23 accredited and 1 with preliminary approval (as of 3/23/15) Optometric Degree Programs in the US, Puerto Rico, and Canada. Nearby programs include:

The Ohio State University College of Optometry
Indiana University School of Optometry
Illinois College of Optometry
Pennsylvania College of Optometry
Ferris State University College of Optometry (MI)

Typical Admission Prerequisites include:

English - 1 year (ENG 111, 112)
Calculus - 1 semester (MTH 151 or 153)
Statistics - 1 semester (e.g. STA 261)
Biology - 1 year (BIO 115, 116)
Microbiology - 1 semester (e.g. MBI 201)
Physiology - 1 or 2 semesters (BIO 305)
Inorganic Chemistry - 1 year (CHM 141 or 141.R, 142,144, 145)
Organic Chemistry/Biochemistry - 1 year (CHM 241/244, 242/245 or CHM 231 & CHM 332)
Physics - 1 year (PHY 161, 162)
Psychology - 1 semester (e.g. PSY 111)
Social Sciences - 1 year (e.g. SOC 151, 154)

NOTE: Some schools do not require all of these courses, or require or recommend other courses such as Human Anatomy (BIO 201) or Developmental Psychology (PSY 231). For advanced chemistry, requirements range from one semester of Organic Chemistry to one year of Organic plus one semester of Biochemistry; the CHM 231 & CHM 332 combination is the best choice for some, but not all, schools. Contact the schools you are interested in to check specific admission requirements.

The Optometry Admission Test (OAT) is available only by computer. Application information, preparation material, and test sites may be obtained from: (<https://oat.ada.org/>) or by calling 800-232-2159. It is advisable to take this in February of the year preceding application.

Recently an Optometry’s Centralized Application Service (OptomCAS) has been launched where 21 schools and colleges of optometry will be included. The link to access the application and other important information is www.optomcas.org. If you have further questions, you can call 617-612-2888 or check optomcasinfo@optomcas.org. Additional information is available from: Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry (<http://www.opted.org>) and from the American Optometric Association (<http://www.aoa.org/>).

Also, consider joining our Pre-Optometry and Visual Sciences Club, and check for independent study opportunities via the Center for Visual Sciences at Miami University (CVSMU):
<http://www.units.muohio.edu/visualsciences/>.