

# Pre-Optometry Academic Prerequisite Guide 2009/2010

\*\*\*There are academic prerequisite variations between Optometry Schools. Therefore it is up to each student to research the school(s) of interest for specific requirements.\*\*\*

## Overall Academic GPA

The overall academic GPA for the 2008 entering class as reported by the Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry (ASCO) ranged from a high of 3.70 to a low of 3.05 on a 4.0 scale.

## OAT

The average OAT scores for the entering class of 2006 as reported by the ASCO ranged from 283-368.

The Optometry Admissions Test (OAT) is a standardized test sponsored by the Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry (ASCO). This test is required to be considered for admission to most optometry schools.

The OAT is a computerized exam administered through the Optometric Admission Testing Program. Examinees are allowed to take the OAT an unlimited number of times but must wait at least 90 days between testing dates. Students should not take the OAT until they have completed the General Chemistry, Organic Chemistry, Biology, and Physics prerequisites.

## Required Courses

Most Optometry Schools require the following courses:

Biology	BIOL 1110/11 BIOL 1120/21 BIOL 1130/31	12 hrs.
General Chemistry	CHEM 1110/11 CHEM 1120/21	8 hrs.
Organic Chemistry	CHEM 2010/11 CHEM 2020/21	10 hrs.
Biochemistry	BIOL 4147/57 or BIOL 4167/77	4 hrs.
Microbiology	HSCI 2230/31	4 hrs.
Human Anatomy	HSCI 3000	4 hrs.
Human Physiology	HSCI 3020	4 hrs.
Physics*	PHYS 2110 PHYS 2120	10 hrs.
English	ENGL 1010 ENGL 1020	6 hrs.
Calculus	MATH 1910 MATH 1920	8 hrs.
Statistics	MATH 1530	3 hrs.
Psychology	PSYC 1310	3 hrs.

\*General Physics I and II (PHYS 2010/11 & PHYS 2020/21) may be substituted for Technical Physics I and II. However, students are encouraged to take Technical physics, which is more Calculus based.

## **Majors**

You do not have to choose a major in a science field. The choice of a major is yours. Choose a course of study that interests you. Optometry Schools do not assume that you have had any courses other than those required. It is true that students who have an extensive science background have an easier time with the optometry school basic sciences than non-science majors.

## **The Application Process**

Students are encouraged to begin the application process at the end of their junior year. The application for each school is found on the school's website. Application deadlines differ between schools, therefore, it is up to the student to turn in the application on time.

Most optometry school applications require a personal statement as well as a Composite Evaluation Letter of Academic Work. ETSU's MPA office provides this service and will assist students through the process. Evaluation requirements vary by school. Check with each individual school for specifications.

## **Related Experience**

Applicants are required to explore the optometry field either by employment or in a volunteer capacity. Optometry schools want applicants to have a realistic view of what the profession entails. Students should gain as much experience as possible without sacrificing grades.

## **Extracurricular Activities**

The admissions committees of optometry schools are interested in seeing a range of extracurricular activities, especially those demanding a significant leadership role. Students should demonstrate their ability to balance full academic schedules with extracurricular involvement on campus and/or employment. Students should visit the SORC located on the first floor of the Culp center or [www.etsu.edu/sorc](http://www.etsu.edu/sorc) for more information regarding extracurricular activities. It is not beneficial to simply join an organization, you must demonstrate leadership qualities!

## **Volunteer Opportunities**

Optometry schools are looking for candidates who express a commitment to community service. Students should seek volunteer projects that focus on giving back to their community. Students are encouraged to also look for volunteer opportunities related to the optometry field.

## **Concerns**

Students must meet with their pre-professional and academic advisor each semester. Furthermore, students who are Athletes or in the Honors College must also seek advisement from those parties. Serious consequences can occur if students fail to meet with advisors, such as not graduating on schedule, not taking the appropriate courses to prepare for the OAT, etc.

## Take Note

Be cautious when putting anything on social networking sites and the internet (such as MySpace, Facebook, YouTube, Email, Voicemail, Mobile Text Messaging, Twitter, and blogs).

Email addresses should also be considered when corresponding with professional schools. Remember that first impressions can also be based on correspondence. Is your email address appropriate for professional communication?

Messages and images you send electronically are reflections of your judgment and potential suitability for Professional Careers. Self-deprecating behaviors shared on an accessible venue can be viewed and/or shared by anyone, resulting in detriment to your acceptance into a Professional School.

**\*\* PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS DO LOOK AT INTERNET SOURCES WHEN CONSIDERING CANDIDATE APPLICATIONS!!!**

## Suggested Two Year Schedule for Pre-Optometry Students

### Fall Freshmen Year

Course	Credit Hours
CHEM 1110/1111	4
BIOL 1110/1111	4
MATH 1910	4
ENGL 1010	3
Elective	3
	18

### Fall Sophomore Year

Course	Credit Hours
CHEM 2010/2011	4
PHYS 2010/2011	4
MATH 1530	3
SPCH 1300	3
Elective	3
	17

### Spring Freshmen Year

Course	Credit Hours
CHEM 11120/1121	4
BIOL 1120/1121	4
MATH 1920	4
ENGL 1020	3
Elective	3
	18

### Spring Sophomore Year

Course	Credit Hours
CHEM 2020/2021	4
PHYS 2020/2021	4
Elective	3
Elective	3
Elective	3
	17

**\*Students should maintain a minimum of 17-19 credit hours each semester.**