

PRE-OPTOMETRY ADVISING SHEET

This sheet is designed to give a typical pre-optometry student a general understanding of the minimum course work generally required for OAT preparation and as required for acceptance to optometry schools. This document may not be equally suitable for all students and should be used solely as an initial guide since specific prerequisite course requirements vary between optometry schools. This variation can include how these schools view credit awarded for AP/IB credit and courses taken online, as well as the types of courses and number of credit hours required in each subject. **Therefore, students are responsible for checking the specific admission prerequisites for each optometry school to which they apply.** An overview of the prerequisites for the 23 schools that use the OptomCAS system can be found on the web at <http://www.optomcas.org/information-about-schools-colleges/school-college-prerequisites>

Typical minimal preparation for optometry school requirements and OAT examination:

Biology

Biological sciences with lab (BI 210 and BI220)

Microbiology (BI438) or Principles of Pathogenic Microbiology (BI325)

Anatomical and Physiological coursework

Physiology (BI411) and Vertebrate Biology (BI317), or Human Anatomy and Physiology 1 & 2 (BSHS 334 and 335)

Chemistry, listed in sequence according to pre-requisites:

General chemistry with lab (CH 105 and CH 106, or CH 107)

Organic chemistry with lab (CH 351 and CH 352)

Introduction to Biochemistry (361) **or** Biochemistry I (CH362) and Biochemistry II (CH462)*

Other courses that can be taken at any point before application:

Psychological Inquiry (SW 250-PS)

Physics with lab (PH 107 and PH 108)

Elementary Statistics (MA162) and college-level math**

* Introduction to Biochemistry should be sufficient for any optometry school requiring *one semester* of biochemistry. *If a student chooses to take the two course Biochemistry 1 and 2 sequence, both courses should be completed.* Some optometry schools will not accept one semester of a two course sequence as sufficient coverage (even if their requirements state only one semester is required). Cellular and Molecular Biology (BI220) is a prerequisite for Biochemistry 1 (CH362).

**Students should check with their optometry schools of interest to determine the mixture of statistics and mathematics courses required for admission.

In addition to the typically required courses, we recommend taking as many of the following as possible:

Upper level (≥ 300 level) biology courses

Upper level (≥ 300 level) chemistry courses

Additional Psychology or Sociology

Research:

While optometry schools do not list research experiences as required, it is suggested that pre-optometry students engage in this intellectually challenging and highly educational pursuit. Generally, the first place students should look for these activities is within the academic department that houses the student's major.

Pre-professional advising:

Pre-optometry students should contact the Engaged Learning Center (formerly known as CHASE) administrative assistant to ensure that they are included on the pre-optometry email listserv. Pre-optometry students are also encouraged to find more details on Butler's pre-health website at <https://www.butler.edu/pre-health-advising/pre-optometry>.

Optometry is a primary health care profession focusing on the visual system (eye). Optometrists do a variety of things from examining, diagnosing, treating, and managing disease, injuries and disorders of the eye. Optometry is a four-year program and requires a state license. (Ophthalmologists, on the other hand, are medical doctors that have gone to medical school and done additional years of training. Ophthalmologists are MDs or DOs and can do everything an optometrist does in addition to surgery of the eye.) For more information on optometry visit the website of the [Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry\(ASCO\)](http://www.opted.org/) (<http://www.opted.org/>).

Applying to Optometry School: For more details, please consult the Butler pre-health website at <https://www.butler.edu/pre-health-advising/applying-optometry>

Optometry Admission Test (OAT): Students interested in pursuing a career in Optometry are required to take the Optometry Admission Test (OAT). Applicants should take the OAT exam with enough lead time to allow score release early in June at the latest.

Letters of Recommendation: Students will submit up to three individual letters of recommendation from professors. In most cases, two of these letters must be from professors who have instructed you in science courses and one letter must be from a faculty who has taught a non-science course. However, each school has specific numbers of letters that they will accept and has rules about how many must be from science or non-science. Check with the specific school's website to determine which letters need to be sent to which school.

Personal statement: A personal statement is a well thought out explanation of why optometry is right for you based on the experiences that have led you to this conclusion. Experiences from your life, work, research, or shadowing that are pertinent to explaining your call to optometry need to be included as part of this statement. Journaling is a convenient way of keeping track of formative experiences and their impact on you as they occur.

Application timeline: Applications are submitted approximately one year prior to entrance into optometry school. Applicants can begin to build their application in June of the year in which they apply. Applications are built within and submitted through the [Optometry Central Application Service](#) (OptomCAS). Secondary applications from individual schools begin to arrive in August or September of that year and they must be completed and returned immediately.

Pre-health Advising:

Contact: Should you have more questions, please visit the ELC office (JH105) or request to meet with one of the two current faculty pre-health advisors (<https://www.butler.edu/pre-health-advising/advisors>). The advisors are happy and excited to work with you to help ensure you become the best candidate possible for professional school.

Sophomore review: In the spring semester of the sophomore year, each pre-dental student will meet with one of the pre-health advisors for a review of their preparation to date. The student's coursework, overall GPA, volunteering and shadowing experiences, and other extra-curricular activities will be discussed.

Programing: Our programming goal is to provide general information and advice to students, while also providing individualized advising sessions. Programing for pre-optometry and pre-health professional students starts the first-week students are on campus and extends through their time at Butler and beyond. First-year programming includes an introduction of the advisors and what they do, along with information on what students can do to start building a competitive application. Second-year programming includes our Networking Night with local health professionals, which can lead to shadowing and other opportunities. Our third year programming focuses on helping students understand the application process and timeline. We support alumni up to five years after graduating from Butler.