

# PRE-OPTOMETRY

Employment of optometrists is expected to grow over the next decade as the population ages, but it is still a small and competitive profession. Optometry school requires four years of additional schooling after college.

Undergraduate preparation for the study of optometry requires a strong foundation in science and mathematics. UWM offers all of the prerequisites needed to apply to one of the 19 accredited optometry programs in the United States. There are no optometry programs in Wisconsin; the closest one is in Chicago. Although it is possible to enter an optometry program after completing the necessary science and math courses but before earning the bachelor's degree, it is a highly-rare situation. The majority of students accepted into optometry programs have completed their bachelor's degree.

Please review the Pre-Optometry Fact Sheet (<http://uwm.edu/letters-science/programs?discipline=Pre-Optometry>) for information about suggested undergraduate courses to prepare for optometry school, experiential opportunities available to UWM students, career outlook for optometrists, and options for your major. Pre-Optometry is not a major, and students must still choose a major. Since most of the pre-requisites necessary for application to optometry school are in the sciences, many students choose a science major, though it is not required. Our specialized pre-optometry advisor works with students to ensure they understand all of the milestones that must be met in college in order to be a competitive applicant to optometry school. A significant number of volunteer or work hours is often a requirement for application to optometry school so it is important to work with this advisor beginning in freshman year in order to plan all needed activities into your college career.

## Requirements

Entrance to an optometry program is very competitive. Applicants must take the Optometry Admission Test (OAT). The OAT is a standardized examination designed to measure general academic ability and comprehension of scientific information. At least one year of college education, which should include courses in biology, general chemistry, organic chemistry, and physics, is required prior to taking the OAT. Most students, however, elect to complete two or more years of college prior to taking the exam in order to be better prepared.

Due to the variance in admission requirements, it is recommended that students consult with the Pre-Optometry Advisor every semester.

Although specific admission requirements may vary among programs, recommended coursework includes:

Code	Title	Credits
BIO SCI 150 & BIO SCI 152	Foundations of Biological Sciences I and Foundations of Biological Sciences II	8
BIO SCI 202 & BIO SCI 203	Anatomy and Physiology I and Anatomy and Physiology II	8
Select a Microbiology course		
Select a Biochemistry course		
CHEM 102 & CHEM 104	General Chemistry and General Chemistry and Qualitative Analysis	10

CHEM 343	Organic Chemistry	3
CHEM 344	Organic Chemistry Laboratory	2
CHEM 345	Organic Chemistry	3
Select one of the following options:		10
Option 1:		
PHYSICS 120 & PHYSICS 121	General Physics I (Non-Calculus Treatment) and General Physics Laboratory I (Non- Calculus Treatment)	
PHYSICS 122 & PHYSICS 123	General Physics II (Non-Calculus Treatment) and General Physics Laboratory II (Non- Calculus Treatment)	
Option 2:		
PHYSICS 209 & PHYSICS 214	Physics I (Calculus Treatment) and Lab Physics I (Calculus Treatment)	
PHYSICS 210 & PHYSICS 215	Physics II (Calculus Treatment) and Lab Physics II (Calculus Treatment)	
Select a Calculus course		
Select a Statistics course		
PSYCH 101	Introduction to Psychology	3
Total Credits		47

Other common course requirements include, but are not limited to and may vary by program: anatomy and physiology, cell biology, molecular biology, and immunology.

## Contact Information

Current Students contact the Pre-Optometry Advisor Ian McLaughlin, [mclaughl@uwm.edu](mailto:mclaughl@uwm.edu)

Prospective Students contact a Letters & Science Admissions Counselor at

(414) 229-7711 or [let-sci@uwm.edu](mailto:let-sci@uwm.edu)

<http://uwm.edu/letters-science/programs?discipline=Pre-Optometry>