



# PREOPTOMETRY INFORMATION SUMMARY

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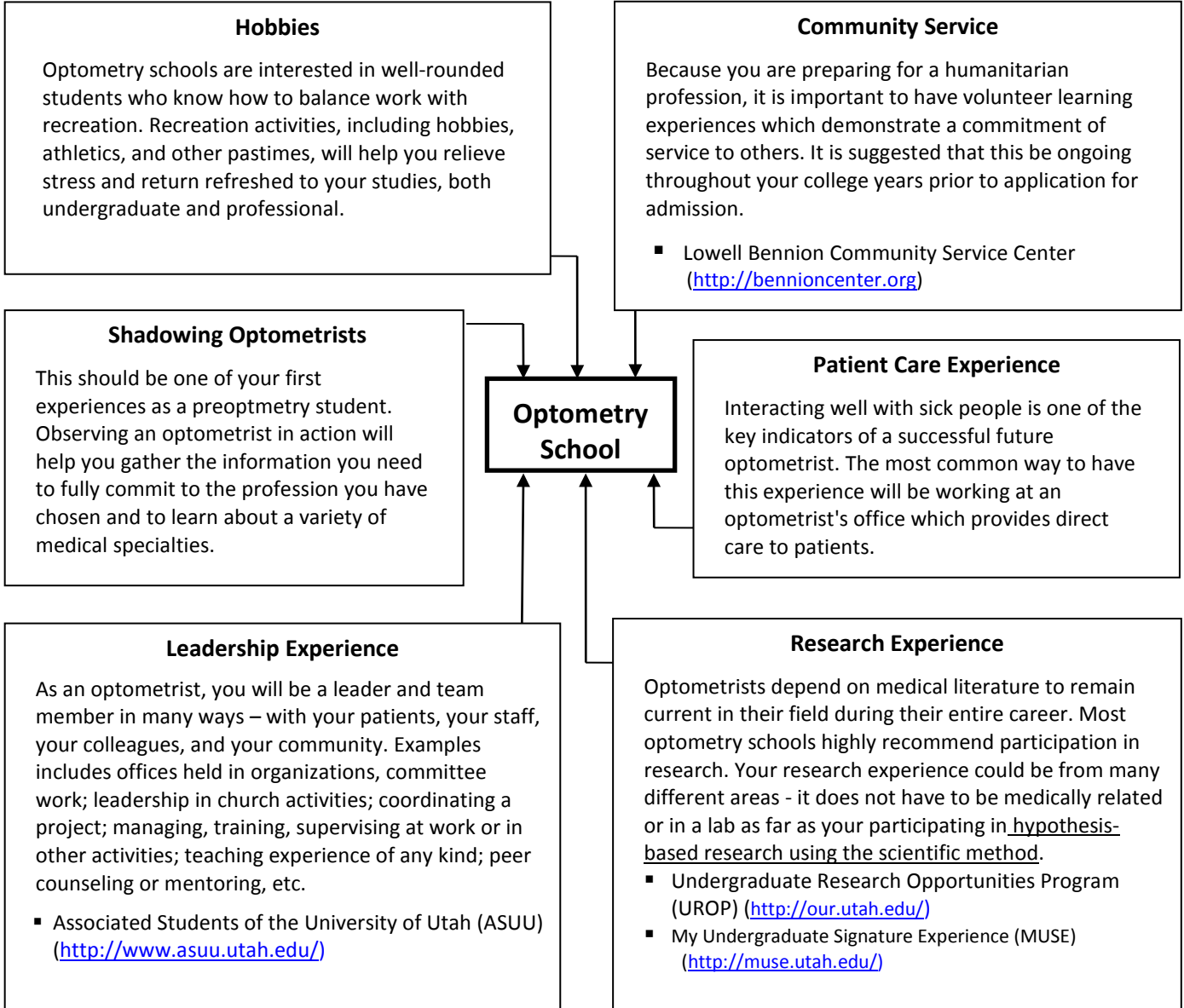
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Doctors of Optometry examine the eyes and related structures to detect the presence of vision problems, eye diseases and other abnormalities. For more information about the profession and schools, visit [www.opted.org](http://www.opted.org).

## ❖ EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES



### Things to Remember

- Make sure you have contact information of supervisors and optometrists you shadow or work with in case you need to have them write recommendation letters. Even if you discontinue some activities, try to keep a relationship with them.
- Record all hours of service and experiences. Writing your reflections in a journal will be helpful when you write a personal statement.

## ❖ APPLICATION PROCESS

All students who want to apply for optometry schools in the US, Canada and Puerto Rico must use centralized application service called OptomCAS. Some schools also require supplemental applications and additional fees. Even though many optometry schools do not require a bachelor's degree, we strongly recommend students complete the degree.

### ▪ OAT & GPA

Take the Optometry Admission Test (OAT) when you have finished the necessary coursework. The OAT is administered year around at Prometric Test Centers (SSB 490 @ the U, 801-581-7310). Taking the exam by spring will enable you to apply earlier. The OAT is divided into four sections: Survey of the Natural Sciences (Biology, General Chemistry, and Organic Chemistry), Reading Comprehension, Physics and Quantitative Reasoning. For more information about OAT exam, visit <https://www.ada.org/oat/index.html>. The exam can be taken unlimited times, but you must wait for at least 90 days between testing dates. The best strategy is to prepare thoroughly and take the OAT once.

Optometry schools look at GPA in 2 different ways; science and overall.

### ▪ OptomCAS

The Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry (ASCO) sponsors a centralized application service called Optometry Centralized Application Service (OptomCAS). It centralizes and standardizes your application information. Apply to the schools of your choice using OptomCAS at [www.optomcas.org](http://www.optomcas.org). Application requirements include transcripts, personal background information, recommendation letters, extracurricular experiences, personal statement and fees. OptomCAS will be available in mid July and end in mid May of following year. Because many schools use a "rolling" admission process (they begin reviewing applications and admitting before deadlines), it will enhance your chances if you submit your application early regardless of when you take OAT. Even if you do not have your OAT score by the time you submit your application, OptomCAS will process your application without the score. To help us advise students we would appreciate if you would release your information to the Health Professions Advisor. This information will always be kept confidential.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun					
OAT	Register & Take exam																						
Recom. Letters	Request letters (Have all letters send to OptomCAS via Electronic Letters of Recommendation service along with your application form)																						
Application	<b>Prep</b> - Research Schools - Write Personal Statement						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- OptomCAS is available online from late June for a year.</li> <li>- Applications will be sent to designated schools starting Aug.</li> <li>- Fill-out the form &amp; submit as early as possible.</li> <li>- Request transcript by printing out transcript request form.</li> <li>- Application deadlines are usually from Dec. through Apr.</li> </ul>																
	Supplemental Application																						
							Interviews																
													Acceptance Notifications										
Financial Aid															Priority filing for federal financial aid								

### ▪ WICHE

WICHE (Western Interstate Commission of Higher Education) enables Utah residents to enroll in out-of-state professional programs at reduced tuition. For more information about WICHE program in general, please visit <http://www.wiche.edu/psep>. In order to qualify for WICHE you must have been a **resident of Utah for at least 5 years** when you apply to optometry schools. In the summer when you apply to optometry schools you should also apply to be WICHE certified. Visit <http://www.wiche.edu/psep/cert-off>. **The application deadline is October 15.**

## ▪ Letters of Recommendation (LOR)

OptomCAS recommend students to use their Electronic Letter of Recommendation service which allow letter writers to submit their letters online. Many optometry schools require letters from **1) optometrist** and **2) academic professor** (mainly science), but you can provide up to 4 letter writers. It is always a good idea to check with what your designated schools require. The more recent the letters, the better for your application.

### < GET TO KNOW YOUR PROFESSORS BETTER! >

- Let professors know at the beginning that you would like them to keep an eye on your performance in class. It will give them a longer “observational window”. Visit their offices regularly and ask them for a letter at the end of the semester if you do well and they are agreeable.
- A key to a good letter is the establishment of a relationship between student and professor based on shared academic interests.
  - Ask thoughtful questions
  - Delve deeper into concepts presented in lectures
  - Share your academic and career goals
  - Ask for recommendations for additional reading
  - Inquire about their areas of interest and research
- After you have gotten to know professors, ask about further opportunities, e.g. teaching assistantships, individual research projects, etc.

### < WHEN YOU REQUEST THE LETTER >

- Ask if the professor feels capable of writing a supportive letter. If not, you should probably try someone else.
- Remind the professor of topics, e.g. a project, a presentation or paper done for the class; a particular interest demonstrated in the class, or interaction you had with fellow students in the class.
- Ask if the professor would welcome written background material. You could include a brief biographical sketch, your interests and activities, career goals, and motivation toward your intended profession. You could also include a snapshot, copy of a paper written for that class, or transcript.
- Always give the professor ample time—two to three weeks minimum. Follow up to make sure that your letters have been sent. Send thank you notes.

## ❖ USEFUL WEBSITES

- Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry ([www.opted.org](http://www.opted.org))
- Tutoring Center (<http://tutoringcenter.utah.edu/>) ---328 SSB, 581-5153

## ❖ Pre-Optometry CURRICULUM

### Policies

<b>CLEP Credit &amp; Correspondence Study</b>	Check with optometry schools you want to apply.
<b>AP Credits</b>	Generally students must take coursework beyond introductory classes waived by AP.
<b>Online Courses</b>	Check with optometry schools you want to apply.
<b>Repeats</b>	All repeated courses will be considered but only the most recent course you took will be included in GPA calculation.
<b>Withdrawals</b>	W's should normally be used only for non-academic emergencies.

# PreOptometry Science Course Guide<sup>1</sup>

Shading indicates most commonly required by optometry schools

\*=can be taken @ SLCC

BIOLOGY	CHEMISTRY	MATH <sup>2</sup>		PHYSICS		
		990 (0) Pre-Algebra		➤ Physics has 2 options. Consult with both your major advisor and a PPA advisor to choose the right sequence.		
		1010 (4) Intermediate Algebra				
*1210 (4) Principles of Biology <i>may be waived by AP Bio</i>		*1050 (4) & *1060 (3) College Algebra & Trig Can be substituted with 1080 (5)				
2325 (4) <sup>4</sup> Human Anatomy Recom. by <u>most</u> schools Fulfills BIOL lab requirement for most schools	*1210 (4) 1215 (1) Gen Chem 1+ Lab (Prereq: Math 1050)	1210 (4) Calculus 1 (Prereq: 1050 & 1060 or 1080)	1070 (3) Stats Required by <u>most</u> schools (Prereq: Math 1010)			
2420 (4) Human Physiology Recom. by <u>most</u> schools (Prereq: Biol & Chem 1210)	*1220 (4) 1225 (1) Gen Chem 2 + Lab	1220 (4) Calculus 2 <u>Optional</u> (Prereq: Math 1210)			2010 (4) 2015 (1) Gen. Physics1 +Lab (Prereq: Math 1060)	2210 (4) 2015 (1) for Scientists & Engineers 1 + Lab (Prereq: Math 1210)
*2020 (3) Cell Biology Fulfills 2 <sup>nd</sup> General Bio req. (Prereq: Biol & Chem 1210)						
PATH 3100 (3) Medical Microbiology Required by <u>most</u> schools	2310 (4) 2315 (2) O-Chem 1 + Lab			2020 (4) 2025 (1) Gen. Physics2 +Lab	2220 (4) 2025 (1) for Scientists & Engineers 2 + Lab	
	2320 (4) 2325 (2) O-Chem 2 + Lab Required by <u>some</u> schools					
BIOL/CHEM 3510 (3) Biochem I Required by many schools. (Prereq: Biol 2020, 2030 & Chem 2320)						
<p><b>2 Biology LABs</b> are required by most optometry schools. Taking either the Anatomy OR Physiology lab will fulfill the first biology lab for most schools. The second biology lab can be fulfilled by any biology course such as <b>BIOL 2015, 3115, 3205, 3235, 3515, 3525</b> and more. Taking labs at SLCC is also acceptable.</p>						
<p>&lt; <b>Non-Science Courses</b> &gt;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>2 semesters of English Composition (WRTG 2010 &amp; CW)</b></li> <li>• <b>1 Psychology course.</b></li> </ul>						

## Notes

- 1) This guide is designed for students preparing for Optometry schools. Some courses may not be required by all professional schools and some schools may require additional courses not on this list. See a PPA advisor for more information.
  - 2) In order to take the proper math class, you must have ACT, SAT or math placement test scores, or successfully pass a prerequisite math course.
- Optional preparatory courses are available for Math, Chemistry and Physics:
    - **MATH 10 Math Boot Camp for Intermediate Algebra** (1 week workshop offered the week before fall and spring semesters begin.)
    - **MATH 15 Math Boot Camp for Precalculus** (1 week review workshop offered the week before fall and spring semesters begin.)
    - **CHEM 10 Chemistry Boot Camp for General Chemistry** (1.5 hrs /day x 5days x 2wks)
    - **CHEM 1200 (3) Prep for College Chemistry** (Usually offered online. Check class schedule for more information.)
    - **CHEM 1208 (1) Intro to Periodic Table** (Offered online between semesters for 2 weeks.)
    - **CHEM 2308 (1) Intro to O Chem** (Offered online between semesters for 2 weeks.)
    - **PHYS 1500 (3) Prep for College Physics** (Offered once a year. Check class schedule for more information.)