Applying to Doctor of Optometry (OD) Degree Programs

Application Information

UTSA does not offer advanced degrees in optometry. However, students are able to take pre-requisite coursework while completing any major at UTSA. Students are encouraged to take coursework in the basic sciences, social and behavioral sciences, and humanities to prepare for their optometry education.

A common timeline for students attending optometry school is shown below:

This timeline is subject to change based on student competitiveness and readiness to apply.

Optometry schools generally use centralized application services for students applying to their programs.

Most Texas schools and out-of-state schools use OptomCAS, which can be accessed at [www.optomcas.org](http://www.optomcas.org).

University of Houston Optometry Pre-requisites

- BIO 1404: Biosciences I (new format, includes lab)
- BIO 1414: Biosciences II (new format, includes lab)
- BIO 3713 & BIO 3722: Microbiology & Lab
- 8 Hours of Upper Division Biology
  - BIO 3123: Comparative Vertebrate Anatomy and BIO 3413
  - BIO 3422: Advanced Physiology and Lab are preferred
- CHE 1103 & CHE 1121: General Chemistry I & Lab
- CHE 1113 & CHE 1131: General Chemistry II & Lab
- CHE 2603 & CHE 2612: Organic Chemistry I & Lab
- BIO 3513 OR CHE 4303: Biochemistry
- PHY 1603 & PHY 1611: Algebra-based Physics I & Lab
- PHY 1623 & PHY 1631: Algebra-based Physics II & Lab
- STA 1053 OR STA 1403 OR PSY 2073: Statistics
- MAT 1214 or MAT 1193: Calculus
- PSY 1013: Introduction to Psychology

University of Houston Optometry Application

- Deadline for OptomCAS application for fall entry: February 16th. (Subject to change each cycle.)
- Three recommendation letters are required to be submitted to OptomCAS. Two must be academic letters from faculty members.
- After completion of OptomCAS application, applicants must complete a supplemental application, found here: [www.opt.uh.edu](http://www.opt.uh.edu). Deadline to submit supplemental application: March 15. (Subject to change each cycle.)
- Students must complete all pre-requisite courses and a Bachelor’s degree prior to matriculation into the Optometry program.
- All pre-requisite courses must be completed with a grade of C or better.
- Psychology, Calculus, Statistics and Organic Chemistry must have been taken within ten years of application.
- All other pre-requisites must have been taken within five years of application.
- Students applying to optometry must meet functional guidelines for application, including observation abilities, communication abilities, sensory/motor coordination, intellectual abilities and social and behavioral attributes. More information is available on University of Houston website.
Shadowing/Volunteering/On-Campus Involvement

Admission to optometry schools is becoming increasingly holistic. As such, students are strongly encouraged to participate in optometry-related activities, including community service, working or shadowing in an optometry setting, and involvement on-campus. As optometrists are leaders in the medical field, students are encouraged to develop leadership and teamwork skills.

Ways to get involved:
- UHPO keeps a list of volunteer opportunities in the San Antonio area in our office and on our website, located here: http://www.utsa.edu/healthprofessions/volunteer.html.
- UTSA student organizations participate in service and optometry-related activities. Information about getting involved on-campus can be found on RowdyLink: https://utsa.collegiatelink.net/.
- Students are encouraged to shadow optometrists to gain an understanding of the profession.
- Pre-optometry students are encouraged to apply for leadership roles in their community and/or on-campus to develop necessary communication and teamwork skills.
- Attend UTSA’s Health Professions Day, held each February, to meet with representatives from various optometry schools.

Optometry Admissions Test (OAT)

The OAT is one of the measures used by Optometry Schools to determine a student’s eligibility for admission.

Some general information about the OAT:
- Four Sections:
  1. Natural Sciences:
     - Biology (40 questions): Cell, molecular, developmental, systems, genetics, evolution, ecology, behavior
     - General Chemistry (30 questions): Stoichiometry, Solid/Liquid/Gas, Acids/Bases, Thermodynamics, Kinetics, Atomic Structure
     - Organic Chemistry (30 questions): Mechanisms, Stereochemistry, Acid-Base Chemistry, Aromatics, Bonding
  2. Reading Comprehension (50 questions)
  3. Physics (40 questions): Units, Vectors, Dynamics, Optics, Statics, Energy and Momentum
- Total test time: 4 hours, 50 minutes
- Scores range from 200-400 with a mean of 300.

More information about the OAT can be found on the Examinee Guide: http://www.ada.org/~/media/OAT/Files/oat_examinee_guide.pdf?la=en