

# CLAS Academic Advising Center

Academic advising for students pursuing majors and/or minors offered by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences  
Call Us: (616) 331-8585 • Visit us On-line: [www.qvsu.edu/clasadvising](http://www.qvsu.edu/clasadvising)

## Optometry School Fact Sheet

### **What degree can I earn?**

O.D.= Doctor of Optometry

### **What is the nature of this profession?**

Optometrists diagnose vision problems and eye diseases, and they test patients' acuity, depth and color perception, and ability to focus and coordinate the eye. They also manage and treat conditions and diseases of the human eye and visual system. Most optometrists work in private practice. They typically work 40 hours a week though some evenings and weekends may be required to accommodate the needs of patients, but generally have a good work-life balance.

### **Where can I find additional information about optometry?**

- The Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry [www.opted.org](http://www.opted.org)

### **What major and pre-requisites are required for optometry school?**

**You can major in anything as long as you fulfill the pre-requisites for optometry school.**

#### **The following courses are strongly recommended as preparation for the OAT and Optometry School:**

BIO 120: General Biology I	CHM 115: Principles of Chemistry I
BMS 208: Human Anatomy	CHM 116: Principles of Chemistry II
BMS 309: Laboratory in Human Anatomy (Cadaver)	CHM 241: Organic Chem for Life Sciences I
BMS 212/213: Introductory Microbiology w/lab	CHM 242: Organic Chem for Life Sciences II
BMS 290/291: Human Physiology w/lab	CHM 461: Biochemistry I
PHY 220: General Physics I	PSY 101: Introductory Psychology
PHY 221: General Physics II	

*\*\*Please note that pre-requisites may vary from school to school. Do your research to make sure that you have met the pre-requisites for the optometry schools to which you intend to apply. See your faculty advisor or an advisor in the CLAS Academic Advising Center for assistance in choosing elective courses.*

### **What entrance exam is required and what GPA do I need?**

<b>OAT</b>	<b>GPA</b>
<p>You will need to take The Optometry Admissions Test (OAT). Traditionally, applicants plan to take the exam the year before you starting optometry school. The OAT is scored between 200-400.</p> <p>For the 2010 entering class, the average total science scores on the Optometry Admission Test (OAT) ranged from 292 to 365. Average academic OAT scores ranged from 298 to 353. The OAT test was recently recalibrated and scores are not comparable to previous years.</p>	<p>To gain entrance to optometry school, usually a minimum cumulative collegiate GPA of 3.0 is required. No grade below a C is allowed for pre-requisite courses. Average undergraduate GPAs for entering classes ranged from 2.88 to 3.68. You should check with individual colleges to determine a competitive GPA.</p>

## What do I need to do to be a competitive applicant to optometry school?

Besides a strong GPA and OAT score, optometry schools look for the following:

- ✓ Optometry-related Clinical Volunteer Experience and/or Shadowing an Optometrist
  - See <http://www.gvsu.edu/clasadvising/optometry--od-74.htm> for a list of optometrists in the area
- ✓ Extracurricular Activities [www.gvsu.edu/studentlife/stuey](http://www.gvsu.edu/studentlife/stuey)
  - Pre-Optometry Club; other clubs of interest
- ✓ Community service [www.gvsu.edu/service](http://www.gvsu.edu/service) (subscribe to their newsletter for frequent event updates)
- ✓ Research experience [www.gvsu.edu/ours](http://www.gvsu.edu/ours); Departmental Websites: Listing of research by faculty member and discipline
- ✓ Strong letters of recommendation

\* Keep a journal of your experiences so you have accurate records for your application. Include dates, hours, supervisors, and what you took away from the experience. This can also include awards and honors. Remember that while participating in various activities, you are a GVSU ambassador and should act professionally. At all times and in all ways, make sure that you are proud to be a Laker and appropriately represent GVSU for both yourself and your fellow Lakers who will follow after you.

## Want more information?

- Discuss other options and interests with your faculty advisor and/or CLAS Academic Advisor
- Plan to also attend events sponsored by the CLAS Academic Advising Center (workshops in Writing Personal Statements, the Application Process, getting Healthcare experience, etc.) to assist you through this process while at GVSU. Log on to your Blackboard site and click on CLAS Academic Advising Center under MyOrganizations.

<b>Sample Optometry School Curriculum</b>	
Years 1 & 2	Courses in clinical sciences and vision science; basic science
Year 3	Specialty course with patient care
Year 4	Rotations (4-12 weeks each)

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