



OPTOMETRY

We highly recommend you consult with the admission counselor and/or transfer representative with **each campus** for specific admission requirements. The courses listed are recommended courses and are not articulation agreements.

Optometrists are primary health care providers who diagnose, manage, and treat conditions and diseases of the human eye and visual system. They also prescribe treatments such as corrective lenses, contact lenses or vision therapy. They may practice as independent practitioners, in a group practice, a health clinic, or hospital. Job opportunities are expanding rapidly.

How Much Education Does It Take?

For optometry, earning a degree typically takes eight to nine years. Students typically have four to five years of undergraduate college **and** a baccalaureate degree. This is followed by four years of Optometry School, which includes classroom, lab study, and clinical training. Residencies are required for some programs (not mandatory for all programs), which enhance learning rather than introduce new topics. Doctor of Optometry graduates must pass written and clinical state board exam and renew licenses every 1-3 years (continuing education credits needed for renewal). In CA, optometrists must be licensed by the California Board of Optometry.

Courses at ECC that can fulfill admissions requirements at most US Optometry Schools	
One year of Inorganic (General) Chemistry	Chemistry 1A & 1B
One semester of Organic Chemistry	Chemistry 7A
One semester of Biochemistry	Can take at transfer institution
One year of Biology	Biology 110, 120
Microbiology	Micro 33
One year of Physics	Physics 3A & 3B or Physics 2A & 2B **Phys 3 series requires Calc
One year of English	English 1A & 1B or 1C
Behavioral Science Courses	Psychology 101
Statistics	Math 150
Human Anatomy	Anatomy 32
Human Physiology	Physiology 31

What is the Selection Process?

Optometry schools review candidate qualifications in the following areas: personal qualifications, academic qualifications, communication skills, and motivation.

- **Bachelor's Degree** or 3 or more years of undergraduate course work.
- **GPA (grade point average)**. College grades, particularly science grades, will receive *considerable* attention in the preliminary review.
- **Optometry Admission Test (OAT)**, a standardized exam, is required by all Optometry schools. The OAT tests include the following subjects: biology, chemistry, organic chemistry, quantitative ability (math), physics and reading comprehension. The OAT is offered via [Prometric Testing Centers](#).
- **Letters of Recommendation**. Many programs require at least 3 letters of recommendation, and suggested recommenders include an optometrist who can verify the candidate's understanding and commitment to optometry field, a professor, and an employer/extracurricular supervisor.
- **Clinical Experience**. Requirements vary from school to school, but many programs mandate or recommend certain hours of shadowing experience. This is also a great opportunity to obtain a letter of recommendation from the optometrist you are shadowing.

California Schools

There are 23 schools of optometry in the United States. There are two optometry schools in California. As admission is competitive, students must consider applying broadly.

- Marshall B. Ketchum University – Southern California College of Optometry Fullerton.
 - Link: <https://www.ketchum.edu/sites/default/files/21-22-Articulation-Agreements/ElCaminoCollege-.pdf>
- University of California, Berkeley.
 - Link: <https://optometry.berkeley.edu/admissions/how-to-apply/course-requirements/>

Resources

[The Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry \(ASCO\)](#). Resources for applicants and advisors.

[Optometry Admissions Test \(OAT\)](#). Resources and guidance for the exam that optometry education programs use to assess candidates' potential for success.

[OptomCAS](#). The service provided by the association of schools and colleges of optometry (ASC) facilitates the optometry admission process for applications for schools and colleges of optometry.