

Optometry Pre-Professional Program 2025-2026

Nature of Work: Optometrists examine people's eyes to diagnose vision problems and eye diseases. They treat vision problems and, in most states, they treat some eye diseases such as conjunctivitis or corneal infections as well. Optometrists use instruments and observation to examine eye health and to test patients' visual acuity, depth and color perceptions, and their ability to focus and coordinate their eyes. They analyze test results and develop a treatment plan. Optometrists prescribe eyeglasses, contact lenses, vision therapy, and low vision aids (for visually impaired patients).

All optometrists provide general eye and vision care—some through general practice, and others through more specialized practice such as contact lenses, geriatrics, low vision services, pediatrics, sports vision, and vision therapy. Other optometrists may choose to enter optometric education and perform scientific research.

Professional Training: Doctors of Optometry must successfully complete a four-year accredited degree program at one of the schools of optometry. Most students who are accepted by a school or college of optometry have completed their undergraduate degree, even though the minimum entrance requirement is often only two years of undergraduate course work. Each institution has its own undergraduate prerequisites, so applicants should contact the school or college of their choice for specific requirements.

Job Outlook: According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), “Employment of optometrists is projected to grow 10 percent from 2021 to 2031, about as fast as the average for all occupations. About 1,700 openings for optometrists are projected each year, on average, over the decade.” Generally, older adults require more vision care than any other population, and as the baby boomer generation ages this will increase demand for optometrists. (See www.bls.gov)

Earnings: In the May 2021 salary survey, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reports the median annual wage for optometrists was \$124,300 with the lowest 10 percent earning less than \$61,590 and the highest 10 percent earning more than \$192,390. (See www.bls.gov)

Note: Walla Walla University does not offer the clinical portion of this degree.

Entry requirements vary according to the professional school; it is the students' responsibility to contact the school of their choice & to meet the requirements for that school.

PRE-PROFESSION: OPTOMETRY

Winter Education Complex
(509) 527-2476

Websites

[Walla Walla University](#)
[University Bulletin](#)

[Pre-Profession: Optometry](#)

Faculty

Advisor
[Tom Ekkens](#)

Professional Organizations
[American Optometric Association](#)

[Association of School & Colleges of Optometry](#)

Additional Sources

[Optometry Students Resource](#)

Suggested Degree Path

TOTAL CREDITS REQUIRED 96 cr. for acceptance into the program at Pacific University. [See the Undergraduate Bulletin for Details](#)

The chart below details one suggested path a student may take to complete the requirements for entry into the Optometry Program at Pacific University.

Cognates are listed in *italics*

Freshman Year

Fall Courses		Hours
General Chemistry & Lab	(CHEM 141 & 144)	4
*Precalculus I	(MATH 121)	4
Intro to Analytical Writing	(ENGL 121)	3
General Studies		5
Total		16
Winter Courses		Hours
General Chemistry & Lab	(CHEM 142 & 145)	4
*Precalculus II	(MATH 122)	4
Intro to Research Writing	(ENGL 122)	3
General Studies		5
Total		16
Spring Courses		Hours
General Chemistry & Lab	(CHEM 143 & 146)	4
Calculus I	(MATH 171)	4
General Psychology	(PSYC 130)	4
General Studies		4
Total		16

Sophomore Year

Fall Courses	Hours
General Biology (BIOL 141)	4
General Physics & Lab (PHYS 211 & 214)	4
Research Writing (ENGL 223)	3
General Studies	5
Total	16
Winter Courses	Hours
General Biology (BIOL 142)	4
General Physics & Lab (PHYS 212 & 215)	4
General Studies	8
Total	16
Spring Courses	Hours
General Biology (BIOL 143)	4
General Physics & Lab (PHYS 213 & 216)	4
General Studies	8
Total	16

Junior Year

Fall Courses	Hours
Anatomy & Physiology (BIOL 121)	4
Organic Chemistry I & Lab (CHEM 321 & 324)	5
General Studies	7
Total	16

Winter Courses	Hours
Anatomy & Physiology (BIOL 122)	4
Organic Chemistry II & Lab (CHEM 322 & 325)	5
General Studies	7
Total	16

Spring Courses	Hours
Anatomy & Physiology (BIOL 123)	4
Microbiology (BIOL 222)	5
General Studies	7
Total	16

Senior Year

Fall Courses	Hours
Foundations of Biochemistry (CHEM 431)	4
General Studies	12
Total	16

Winter Courses	Hours
General Studies	16
Total	16

Spring Courses	Hours
General Studies	16
Total	16

+ Offered even years only

- Offered odd years only

*May be satisfied by a good secondary mathematics background

This chart is based on the Pacific University prerequisites, but since the basic entrance requirements vary for each school of optometry, students should obtain catalogs from each school of interest in order that all prerequisites may be fulfilled.