Western Carolina University | Pre-professional Pathways

Pre-Optometry

In order to become an optometrist, you must:

- complete a bachelor's degree (in any major) *WCU Undergraduate Major Options*
- take the appropriate prerequisite coursework *2021 program prerequisite requirements chart*
- take the Optometry Admission Test *OAT Registration Page*
- obtain shadowing/observation hours and or interview practicing optometrists *(optional)*
- apply through OptomCAS, some colleges may require additional applications *Optomcas.org*
- complete a Doctor of Optometry degree (O.D.) from an accredited program *List of programs*
- Receive license/certification in state of practice

What should I major in?

While there is no prescribed major for admission into an optometry program, it is imperative that students complete all required courses for admission. Optometry programs vary significantly in their requirements, and it is important for you to learn what coursework the schools that interest you require. Students should choose their major according to their strengths, interests and alternative career choices. The Optometry Centralized Application System (OptomCAS) is used by the majority of optometry schools but individual schools may also require a separate application to their institution as well.

Minimally, a student should complete these courses at WCU for entrance into many optometry programs:

BIOL 150, BIOL 291, BIOL 292, BIOL 313
General Bio. I, Human Anat. & Phys. I, Human Anat. & Phys. II, Microbiology in Health and Nutrition

CHEM 139, CHEM 140, CHEM 241, CHEM 242, BIOL 361/CHEM 361
General Chemistry I, General Chemistry II, Organic Chemistry I, Organic Chemistry II, Principles of Biochemistry

MATH 170, MATH 153
Applied Statistics, Calculus I

PHYS 130, PHYS 131
Introductory Physics I, Introductory Physics II

PSY 150 and/or other course in social or behavioral science
General Psychology

Advanced coursework in Biology and Chemistry is highly recommended

WHO CAN HELP ME AT WCU?

For information on undergraduate program options and admission requirements for optometry schools, contact pre-professional advisors:

Pre-Professional Students:
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