

# Pre-Optometry Program at Messiah College

Messiah College has a proud tradition of preparing students for careers in Optometry. While the academic and experiential requirements *may* vary by institution, most of them have similar requirements. Prospective applicants are encouraged to research the schools to which they may apply to best plan their curriculum. The purpose of this document is to present a brief outline of what is generally expected of successful applicants to Optometry School, and how Messiah College prepares its students to meet and often exceed these requirements. You will note that at Messiah we have a Pre-Optometry **Program**. Our program is described here and is best thought of as an overlay of courses that can be scheduled as part of most majors, with the exception of engineering and nursing.

## Preparing for a Career in Optometry

<b>Description of the Profession</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• U.S. Department of Labor <i>Occupational Outlook Handbook</i> <a href="http://www.bls.gov/oco/home.htm">www.bls.gov/oco/home.htm</a></li> <li>• <a href="http://www.explorehealthcareers.org">www.explorehealthcareers.org</a></li> </ul>
<b>Course Requirements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 year general biology</li> <li>• 1 year general chemistry</li> <li>• 1 year organic chemistry</li> <li>• 1 year general physics</li> <li>• 1 year English</li> <li>• 1 year math (algebra/trigonometry/calculus)</li> <li>• Some schools may also require additional biology and psychology (check <i>Schools and Colleges of Optometry Admission Requirements</i> or online at <a href="http://www.opted.org">www.opted.org</a>)</li> </ul>
<b>Application Timeline</b>	<p>Optometry school directly after Messiah College:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Required courses completed by end of junior year</li> <li>• Apply during summer between junior and senior years or in the early fall of senior year</li> </ul>
<b>Standardized Test</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Optometry Admission Test (OAT)</li> <li>• Given virtually daily at computer test centers</li> <li>• Take after general biology, general chemistry, organic chemistry, and physics are completed</li> <li>• Register on-line (<a href="http://www.opted.org">www.opted.org</a>)</li> <li>• Length 275-300 minutes</li> <li>• 4 sections : Survey of the Natural Sciences (Biology, General Chemistry, Organic Chemistry), Reading Comprehension, Physics, Quantitative Reasoning</li> <li>• Receive scores immediately</li> <li>• Scaled scores range from 200 to 400</li> <li>• <i>Examinee Guide</i> available at <a href="http://www.opted.org">www.opted.org</a></li> </ul>
<b>Application Service</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No centralized application service</li> <li>• Apply directly to each optometry school</li> <li>• APPLY EARLY!!!</li> </ul>

<b>Admissions Criteria</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Overall and science GPA</li><li>• OAT</li><li>• Letters of evaluation (usually committee letter; additional letters may be required)</li><li>• Interview</li><li>• Extracurricular activities</li><li>• Health-related experience</li><li>• Research experience</li></ul>
<b>Length of Program</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Optometry school: 4 years</li><li>• Optional 1 year residency</li></ul>
<b>Degree</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Doctor of Optometry (OD)</li></ul>
<b>Additional Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry (<a href="http://www.opted.org">www.opted.org</a>)</li><li>• American Academy of Optometry (<a href="http://www.aaopt.org">www.aaopt.org</a>)</li><li>• American Optometric Association (<a href="http://www.aoanet.org">www.aoanet.org</a>)</li></ul>