

University of Southern Mississippi
College of Science and Technology
Pre-Optometry Curriculum rev. 10/21/09

The “pre-optometry curriculum” is just *a list of courses that are required for admission to optometry school*. **It is NOT an academic major, a minor, or an emphasis area.**

Students wishing to study optometry must complete three or more years in a *preprofessional program*, for example at Southern Miss. Optometry programs at the [University of Alabama at Birmingham](http://www.uab.edu), the [Southern College of Optometry](http://www.sco.edu) in Memphis, Tennessee, and the [University of Houston](http://www.opt.uh.edu) admit residents of Mississippi (and other states) to professional study. Preference is given to residents of those states.

UAB: <http://main.uab.edu/Sites/optometry/>

SCO: <http://www.sco.edu/Pages/default.aspx>

UH: <http://www.opt.uh.edu/>

The prerequisites for admission to optometry programs are somewhat different, depending on the school, so the student will need to determine the specific preprofessional curriculum to be followed.

Students must consult the specific admission requirements and application deadlines for the school(s) to which they plan to apply.

Strategy for Success

- Students should focus on doing well in their academic studies.
- Students should become involved with extracurricular activities, including meaningful **community service learning** and **volunteer activities** that will demonstrate effective interactions with diverse people and effective time management skills. Students should maintain a record of the dates and total hours spent performing such activities.
- Students should start getting some **hands-on exposure** to optometry (sights, sounds, smells, feel).

University of Alabama at Birmingham

Exceptional students may apply with a minimum of 90 semester hours; no more than 60 hours from a two-year college.

Required courses:

- two semesters of biology with laboratory
- one semester of microbiology
- two semesters of general chemistry with laboratory
- one semester of organic chemistry with laboratory
- one semester of biochemistry
- two semesters of physics with laboratory
- one course of calculus
- one course of statistics
- two semesters of English composition
- one semester of psychology

- two semesters of social and behavioral sciences (any combination of sociology, economics, anthropology, history, political science, or additional psychology)

Southern College of Optometry

Exceptional students may apply with 90 semester hours; however, preference given to students with a baccalaureate degree.

Required courses:

- two semesters of biology with laboratory
- one semester of microbiology
- two semesters of general chemistry with laboratory
- one semester of organic chemistry with laboratory
- one semester of biochemistry (or one semester of molecular biology)
- two semesters of physics with laboratory
- one semester of calculus
- one semester of statistics
- two semesters of English composition
- one semester of general psychology
- two semesters of social sciences (any combination of sociology, psychology, political science, history, economics, anthropology, geography, religion, or philosophy)

University of Houston

Applicants must have a *baccalaureate degree prior to matriculation*, including the following *required courses*:

- biological sciences with laboratory (8 hours)
- advanced physiology with laboratory (4 hours)
- human anatomy with laboratory (4-8 hours)
- microbiology with laboratory (4 hours)
- general chemistry with laboratory (8 hours)
- organic chemistry with laboratory (4 hours)
- biochemistry (3 hours)
- college algebra or trigonometry (3 hours)
- calculus (3 hours)
- general physics with laboratory (8 hours)
- introductory psychology (3 hours)
- statistics with application to biological and social sciences (3 hours)

Progress toward a Baccalaureate Degree

Course work toward a baccalaureate degree at Southern Miss must be planned so the student meets all the requirements for the preprofessional curriculum, a major, a minor if appropriate, the University General Education Curriculum, and the College core. At Southern Miss, a minimum of 124 hours is needed for most baccalaureate degrees, with 45 of these hours from courses at the 300-level or above.

Students may follow a modified *suggested course sequence* as detailed for the **Pre-medical or Pre-dental curricula**, as appropriate; however, such suggested course sequences are merely guidelines. Students must consult the USM Undergraduate Bulletin, the USM Class Schedule Guide for each semester, and their academic advisor. During the last semester of the Sophomore year, students should develop a more detailed plan for the Junior and Senior years because many upper level courses are offered in specific semesters (Fall or Spring only) and/or on a rotating two-year cycle.

The **Optometry Admission Test (OAT)** is a requirement for admission to all colleges of optometry and should be taken in the fall of the third year of preprofessional study.

Link: <https://www.ada.org/oat/index.html>

For more information about a career in Optometry, you may contact:

Ms. Sharon Hokanson, Development Coordinator

601.266.4741

sharon.hokanson@usm.edu

Pre-Professional Office

College of Science and Technology

118 College Dr., #5165

Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001

Dr. Patricia Biesiot, Associate Dean

601.266.4883

patricia.biesiot@usm.edu

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College of Science and Technology

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