OPTOMETRY SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS

APPLICATION PROCESS
Programs leading towards the Doctor of Optometry consist of four years of specialized professional education and clinical training. Some programs accept applicants who have completed a minimum 3 years of undergraduate study, however most programs prefer or will require completion of undergraduate degree prior to matriculation. There is variance between schools regarding the earliest time to apply, but it is best to apply as early as possible.

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION
The Career Center offers UCLA students and alumni a service which stores and sends letters of recommendation to graduate schools. To open a PPS letter file, visit career.ucla.edu. All letters should be forwarded directly to the Career Center by the author, as these are confidential documents.

STANDARDIZED TESTS
All schools require the Optometry Admission Test (OAT), which tests academic ability and scientific comprehension and is administered at Prometric Test Centers (http://www.prometric.com). If your application is approved, Prometric will contact you directly with instructions on how to schedule a testing appointment.

The OAT consists of four sub-tests: Survey of Natural Sciences (Biology, General Chemistry, Organic Chemistry), Reading Comprehension, Physics and Quantitative Reasoning. There are also three optional sections: Tutorial (scheduled prior to the Survey of Natural Sciences), Break (scheduled between the end of Reading Comprehension and the beginning of Physics) and Post Test Survey (scheduled at the conclusion of the OAT).

REQUIRED COURSES
This is NOT a comprehensive or required list of prerequisites for all optometry programs. Students maintain responsibility for verifying course selection with individual optometry programs. Be sure to check the catalogs of potential schools or the Admissions Requirements for Schools and Colleges of Optometry.

PREPARATION COURSEWORK

- **Biology**
  Life Sciences 1, 2, 3, 4. One year of coursework with lab. Notes: If you took LS 2 and 3 before Fall 98, then take two additional life science lab courses (in departments such as EE BIOL, MCD BIO, Neuroscience, Psychobiology, or Physiological Science). These courses prepare you for the Natural Science section of the OAT.

- **Human Anatomy**
  Physci 13 or 107 (upper division Physci courses are generally restricted to Phy Sci majors). Physci 13 through UCLA Extension is another good option.

- **Human Physiology**
  *Physci 166 (formerly OBEE M166) or Physci 3 or 111A-C (upper division Physci courses are generally restricted to Phy Sci majors). *Physci 166 (Animal Physiology) may not be acceptable for some schools; please check with the individual schools.

- **Microbiology**
  MIMG 101/103L or MIMG 101/100L. One quarter with lab. One course from a community college with lab may also be acceptable.

- **Chemistry**
  Life science or non-science majors: Chemistry 14A, 14B/BL, 14C/CL, 14D. Physical, life or non-science majors: Chemistry 20A, 20B/L, 30A/AL, 30B/BL, 30C. These courses prepare you for the Natural Sciences section of the OAT.
• **Biochemistry**  
  Chemistry 153A/153L

• **Physics**  
  Physics 6A, 6B, 6C or 6AH, 6BH, 6CH or 1A, 1B, 1C, 4AL, 4BL. One year with labs is generally recommended. Trigonometry-based physics can also satisfy this requirement, but UCLA only offers calculus-based courses and these are required for the various science majors. These courses prepare you for the Physics section of the OAT.

• **Psychology**  
  Psych 10 plus 1 upper division class (e.g., Psych 127).

• **Math**  
  Math 3A, 3B, 3C or 31A, 31B, 32A. This is your preparation for calculus-based physics. One year of math can include statistics (see below) and computer programming classes (PIC 10A, 10B, 10C). These courses prepare you for the Quantitative Reasoning section of the OAT.

• **Statistics**  
  Statistics 10, M11, M12, 13, Biostatistics or Biomath, Psychology 100A (Check with individual schools for acceptability of classes offered outside of the Statistics department). These courses prepare you for the Quantitative Reasoning section of the OAT.

• **English**  
  One year of college level literature and composition. Writing I and Writing II courses, select general education literature courses, and any upper division English literature or English Composition courses will satisfy this requirement. Please see the “English requirement for health professions schools” sheet for a complete list of suggested courses (http://www.career.ucla.edu/Students/GradProfSchCounseling/PreHealthCareerServices/EnglishRequirement.aspx). These courses prepare you for the Reading Comprehension section of the OAT.

The following course work is **RECOMMENDED** for most schools:

• **Other Biology courses** in physiology, anatomy, embryology, histology, or cellular biology are all recommended. **Check with each individual department counselor for availability of upper division courses.**  
  *Embryology – MCD Bio 138*  
  *Cellular Biology - Any upper division Microbiology or MCD Bio class, EE Biol M158*

• **Other Humanities and Social Science** courses are strongly recommended. The non-science GPA is an important component to your overall academic record, and liberal arts education. Courses in the following can enhance your communication skills and overall understanding of the world: Anthropology, Communication Studies, Economics, any ethnic studies area (e.g. Women’s Studies, LGBT Studies, Afro-American Studies, Chicana/Chicano Studies, Near Eastern Studies), Philosophy, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology, and Speech to name a few.

• **Computer skills** are strongly recommended. Many programs have incorporated computers and electronic media into their curriculum. Several programs are strongly recommending that a student owns a computer.
HEALTH CARE RELATED INTERNSHIPS AND OTHER SUGGESTIONS
Experiential educational and volunteer programs are an excellent way to expand your knowledge of the health professions beyond the classroom. Participation in health related internships will strengthen your application to professional schools and provide exposure experiences that can be highlighted in the personal statement. A select number of health care internships focusing on research, legislation and public policy are available through the Career Center’s internship office on a local, national and international basis. A sampling of internship opportunities include (but are not limited to) the National Institute of Health, the Surgeon General’s Office, Cedar Sinai, AIDS Action, the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services and the American Heart Association. Visit the Career Center’s Internship and Study Abroad Services Office for a resource sheet handout providing an overview of health related internships.

Please visit http://www.career.ucla.edu/Students/GradProfSchCounseling/PreHealthCareerServices/HealthCareInternships.aspx for more information.

We strongly suggest working with an optometrist to get experience within the field.

Research projects with faculty members are also recommended. The Student Research Program (SRP), located at 2121 Life Sciences, is a good way to find professors who are willing to do research with undergraduates.

USEFULL RESOURCES
American Optometric Association: www.aoanet.org
Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry (ASCO): www.opted.org
The American Academy of Optometry: www.aaopt.org
The American Optometric Student Association: http://www.theaosa.org/
Member Schools and Colleges (ASCO): http://www.opted.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=3336