

# OPTOMETRY SCHOOL APPLICATION CALENDAR



Recommended



Possible

## Letters of Evaluation

- Ask for letters as early as possible (need at least 4)
- Letters should detail character traits and interpersonal skills
- Collect/submit letters through the OptomCAS application.

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JUL

AUG

SEP

## OAT

- Give yourself at least 3-5 months to prepare for the OAT
- Take the OAT no later than June of your application year
- You cannot retake the OAT for 90-days (so plan carefully)

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## Primary Application

- OptomCAS is the primary application for optometry school
- The application opens around the 1<sup>st</sup> week of July every year
- Early submission is recommended due to rolling basis

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NOV

DEC

JAN

FEB

## Secondary Application

- Requested after OptomCAS application has been reviewed
- Will ask questions specific to each optometry school
- Should be completed within 2 weeks of receipt

AUG

SEP

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NOV

DEC

## Interviews

- Follows review of secondary application and OAT scores
- Be sure to schedule a Mock Interview for practice
- Research each program and know your application well

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## Letters of Evaluation

- Your letter-writers should be people that know you well and can detail specific character traits (maturity level, reliability, leadership ability, etc.) and your interpersonal skills.
- You will need to submit a minimum of four letters of evaluation for optometry school. Two should come from a faculty member with whom you have taken a hard science course and one should come from an optometrist with whom you have shadowed or volunteered. One additional letter is required as well—from either another academic professional, optometrist, a supervisor, or someone who knows you well enough to speak positively on your behalf.
- You will need to collect and submit your letters of evaluation through the OptomCAS application once it opens at the end of June or beginning of July.
- *Always* waive your right to view your letters of evaluation.

## OAT

- The OAT is offered multiple times per year and currently costs \$435.
- Most students take the OAT in the Spring/Summer between their junior and senior year—with April, May, and June being the preferred months.
- The University Testing Center offers the exam in Athens, however, there are several testing sites across the state of Georgia, including Atlanta, Columbus, Macon, and Augusta.
- You may elect to self-study or take a guided OAT-prep course (or both!) to prepare for the OAT. What you decide is completely dependent on your own financial situation and confidence in your study skills. It is recommended to take multiple (at least 5-6) full-length practice exams.
- It is advised that students take 12-13 hours during the semester they are studying for the OAT.

## Primary Application

- The Optometry Centralized Application Service (OptomCAS) is the centralized application processing service used to apply to participating U.S. optometry schools.
- OptomCAS opens in late June/early July and should be submitted as early as possible.
- You *can* submit your OptomCAS application before your letters of evaluation and OAT score are received.

## Secondary Application

- After your OptomCAS application has been verified and reviewed, most of the optometry schools you have applied to will send you a secondary application.
- Secondary applications consist of short-answer essay questions specific to each program.
- It is important to complete your secondary applications within two weeks of receiving them.

## Interviews

- Interviews are granted only by invitation after the admissions committee has determined you to be academically qualified. The purpose of the interview is to determine what type of person you are and whether you have the qualities that the school is looking for in an optometry student.
- Make sure to schedule a Mock Interview for practice with the Career Center or Honors College.
- Be prepared to discuss your interest in optometry and goals for the future.
- Have some familiarity with the optometry school before the interview and a good reason for why you are interested in attending. You should have some idea of (and questions about) the opportunities for research or any innovative programs being implemented at that institution.
- Everything listed in your application is fair game. Therefore, it is important that you know it inside and out. An interviewer may ask about a specific volunteer or research experience and expect you to talk in detail about it.