

UCSB Health Professions Student Preparation Timeline: Optometry School

	Academic Preparation (See Optometry Track for details.)	Optometry School Preparation	Personal Characteristics & Professionalism
1st Year	<p>General Chemistry Series Chem 1A/AL, 1B/BL, 1C/CL</p> <p>Begin Math Courses Math (34A-B or 2A-B or 3A-B, and Stats (PSTAT 5A or 5LS)</p> <p>*Begin Physics Series Physics 6A/6AL, 6B/6BL, 6C/6CL</p> <p>*Students who have demonstrated success in Gen. Chem. may consider starting Physics during Winter or Spring. Speak to an advisor first.</p> <p>Take GEs as needed.</p> <p>*Students are encouraged to take at least one intro course in Psychology and Sociology, but this can be done any time throughout undergrad.</p>	<p>Connect with a pre-health advisor.</p> <p>Become familiar with Health Professions Advising website, join listserv, follow on social media.</p> <p>Volunteer/Shadow during breaks and/or summer.</p> <p>Review the AAMC's Anatomy of an Applicant Guide, which applies across all health professions, and consider how your extracurricular involvement will help you gain and demonstrate those competencies.</p>	<p>Explore pre-health and other student organizations.</p> <p>If struggling academically, connect with CLAS for an academic skills consultation ASAP.</p> <p>Begin getting to know your professors by going to office hours.</p> <p>Begin journaling about experiences and working on response to the question, "Why do you want to be an Optometrist?"</p>
2nd Year	<p>Introductory Biology Series MCDB 1A & 1B, EEMB 2 & 3, MCDB 1LL & EEMB 2LL</p> <p>Organic Chemistry Series Chem 109A-B-C and try to get into Chem 6AL and Chem 6BL</p> <p>*Begin Physics Series Physics 6A/6AL, 6B/6BL, 6C/6CL</p> <p>Take GEs as needed.</p>	<p>Explore service opportunities in the community.</p> <p>Seek direct-patient contact/clinical experiences (voluntary or paid).</p> <p>Research professional school programs and OAT prep options.</p> <p>Meet with a pre-health advisor to discuss current level of competitiveness.</p> <p>If interested in research, begin looking into undergraduate research opportunities.</p>	<p>Evaluate involvement in orgs and volunteer opportunities and consider leadership opportunities.</p> <p>Continue to develop relationships with instructors and staff.</p> <p>Continue journaling about experiences/Use developmental planning worksheets in AAMC Anatomy of an Applicant Guide.</p> <p>Assess academic success. If assistance is needed, connect with academic skills services in CLAS.</p>

<p>3rd Year</p>	<p>Biochemistry MCDB 108A (MCDB 108B Highly Recommended) or MCDB 110</p> <p>*Begin/Finish Physics Series Physics 6A/6AL, 6B/6BL, 6C/6CL</p> <p>Continue with Upper Division sciences as required by major, or if not a science major, consider taking recommended courses such as Genetics and Physiology.</p> <p>Continue with GEs as needed.</p>	<p>Review OAT prep research to find a good fit for yourself. (Summer between 3rd/4th year often works well for UCSB students to prep--8 to 10 weeks--then take OAt.)</p> <p>Meet with a pre-health advisor to discuss competitiveness and readiness to apply.</p> <p>*If applying during late-spring/summer between junior and senior year: Become familiar with optometry school application system (OptomCAS) and review the OptomCAS Applicant Guide. Get interviewing experience.</p> <p>Consider who you will ask to write letters of rec.</p> <p>Begin application as soon as it is available (See above).</p>	<p>Continue getting to know instructors and staff and consider who may be able to provide a strong letter of rec.</p> <p>Continue to gain clinical, research, volunteer, and other experiences when possible.</p> <p>Review AAMC's Anatomy of an Applicant Guide and begin to determine how you have demonstrated the competencies through your experiences.</p>
<p>4th Year</p>	<p>Finish additional prereqs this year or during gap year(s), which may include Microbiology (1 course) and Human Anatomy w/Lab and Human Physiology w/Lab.</p> <p>Continue taking UD courses for major and/or UD recommended science courses.</p> <p>Take GEs as needed.</p> <p>Consider optometry-related electives or other electives of high interest to you.</p>	<p>*If you began your application during late-Spring/Summer of 3rd Year: Complete secondary apps as soon as possible.</p> <p>Prep for and attend admissions interviews. (Connect with Career Services to set up a mock admissions interview.)</p> <p>Stay mindful of "Traffic Rules" for accepting offers.</p> <p>Consider retaking OAT if needed or pursuing a gap year.</p> <p>*If applying this year, see info above.</p>	<p>Continue participating in the meaningful experiences you started in past years (clinical experiences, volunteering, research, etc.).</p>
<p>Gap Year</p>	<p>Taking a gap year often provides students with more flexibility in course scheduling, more opportunities to become involved in special areas of interest, and more time to develop their competitiveness as applicants. Discuss taking a gap year with a pre-health advisor early in your undergraduate career, but especially if later you find yourself one of the following two situations. A) You need to improve competitiveness due to low GPA or lack of clinical experiences, or B) You are likely to be considered a competitive applicant but would like time off to gain more clinical experience or personal experiences (travel abroad).</p>		