

## B.S. Degree, Biology Major Including Preparation for Optometry Programs

The curriculum described here leads to a BS degree with a major in biology (pre-medical science concentration) and also incorporates all the prerequisites for admission to Southern College of Optometry (SCO) in Memphis, TN. There are 20 schools of optometry in the US. Admission requirements for other optometry schools are similar to those at SCO, but check the exact requirements for schools you plan to apply to as there are some differences. Although admission to SCO only requires 90 credit hours, they give strong preference to applicants who have completed a baccalaureate degree. In recent years, less than 5% of applicants who were admitted had not completed a degree. Although you may choose any DSU major, most pre-optometry students major in biology because all of the required and most of the recommended elective pre-optometry courses can be applied directly to the biology degree. If you wish to pursue a different major, please consult the pre-optometry advisor.

	Courses	Credit	Notes
<b>General Education Requirements</b>			
English Composition	ENG 101 and ENG 102 or 103	6	Two semesters of English composition
Communication Studies	COM 101 or 202	3	Take either Public Speaking or Interpersonal Communications.
Literature and Fine Arts	2 literature courses plus one from: ART 101, 212, 401, 402, 405; MUS 114, 115, 116, 117; THE 225, 320	9	Most students choose ENG 203/204 for literature. For fine arts, choose an art, music, or theater course from those listed. (See <i>Bulletin</i> for course descriptions)
History	Choose any two from: HIS 101, 102, 201, or 202.	6	History of civilization (101/102) or United States history (201/202)
Mathematics	(see next section)		Satisfied by mathematics taken for Special Degree Requirements
Perspectives on Society	PSY 101 plus two from: ANT 101, ECO 210 or 211, GEO 201 or 303, PHI 201, PSC 103 or 201, SOC 101	9	General psychology plus two of the listed courses from the fields of anthropology, economics, geography, philosophy, or sociology. (See <i>Bulletin</i> for course descriptions)
Personal Development	(see next section)		Satisfied by foreign language, which is required under special degree requirements.
Writing Proficiency	ENG 300, ENG 301, passing CAAP score, or passing GRE writing score	0-3	Take the Writing Proficiency Exam (ENG 300) after taking both semesters of English composition and one semester of literature. If you don't pass, you must take ENG 301. This requirement may also be satisfied by a score of 3 or higher on the CAAP exam, or by a score of 3.5 or higher on the writing portion of the GRE.
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<b>Special Degree Requirements</b>			
Foreign language	SPA 101, 102 or FRE 101, 102 or GER 101, 102	6	Two semesters of Spanish, French, or German. May be satisfied with 6 hours at the 200 level if two years of language were taken in high school. One semester of language also satisfies the general education personal development requirement.
Mathematics	MAT 104/105 or MAT 106 plus MAT 203 or 251 plus MAT 300, or PSY 331	9-12	There are three requirements here: (1) college algebra and trigonometry, or precalculus; (3) calculus (business calculus or calculus I), and (3) statistics (math or psychology).
Chemistry	CHE 101, 102, 103, 104	8-10	First and second semesters of general chemistry with laboratories
<b>23-28</b>			
<b>Major Requirements</b>			
Biology Core	BIO 100, 101, 300, 301, 328	20	Principles of biology I and II, cell biology, ecology, and genetics.
200 or 300-level elective	BIO 217	4	Introduction to microbiology. (There are other electives in this category for biology majors, but optometry requires microbiology).
400-level electives	Choose any three BIO courses at the 400-level with the exception of BIO 470, 492, and 499	9-12	Any three 400-level biology courses except internship, special topics, or readings in biology. Recommended courses for pre-optometry that fall in this category include: histology and immunology.
BIO electives	Choose any two BIO courses except those designated as "not for biology major credit."	6-8	Any two biology courses except those designated for non-science majors. Your advisor will help you choose courses specific to your interests and goals.
Advanced chemistry	CHE 319, 320, 321, 322, and 440	12-14	Two semesters of organic chemistry plus biochemistry. Optometry technically requires only one semester of organic chemistry, but both organic I and II are prerequisites for biochemistry, and both are required for the pre-medical science biology concentration. Organic I and II are also considered essential preparation for the OAT exam.

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**Recommended electives**

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Advisor  
recommendations

Consult your advisor

Work with your advisor to choose courses related to your interests, your career goals, and preparation for any professional or graduate schools you might be considering. You must take enough electives to bring your total credit to at least 124. See additional requirements below.

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**Additional Notes:**

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- The optometry program at SCO begins each August. The application period begins July 15th of the previous year. Admission decisions are done on a rolling basis beginning in mid-September. Although the application deadline is March 1st, you must apply as early as possible. Most slots are filled well in advance of this deadline. Start your application process in July of the year before you plan to graduate.
- A baccalaureate degree from Delta State requires a minimum of 124 credit hours. Of that 124 hours, at least 62 must be taken at a senior college, at least 31 must be taken at DSU, and at least 40 must be 300- or 400-level courses. Courses taken at 2-year schools cannot be counted at the 300- or 400-level. 24 of the last 30 hours must be taken at DSU.
- Enrollment in upper-level BIO courses (BIO 200 and above) requires that you have "Full Admission" status. You have full admission status if you have completed BIO 100, 101, and CHE 101, 102, 103, and 104 with no grades below C. Consult the Bulletin or the Division of Biological and Physical Sciences web site, or see your advisor for more information.
- Applicants to optometry schools must submit an official score on the Optometry Admissions Exam (OAT). The OAT is given only in computerized format. For information on test dates, test sites, application procedure, etc., consult the Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry web site at: <http://opted.org>.
- SCO does not state a minimum number of required observation hours, but they recommend at least 40 hours or more of observation time which should include 2 or more different optometry practices.
- For more information on the optometry program at Southern College of Optometry, visit their web site at: <http://www.sco.edu>.
- Degree requirements are revised frequently. This list is a summary based on the current DSU Bulletin. Consult the Bulletin for complete details on all requirements for graduation. You should follow the requirements stated in the issue of the Bulletin that was current for the semester you first enrolled at DSU. You may elect to follow a more recent Bulletin issue if you wish.
- **IMPORTANT:** Application to health professional schools is very competitive. Completion of the minimum requirements will not ensure admission. Admission decisions are based on policies established by the professional school's faculty and admission committee. Successful applicants typically have GPAs and other qualifications well in excess of stated minimums. Talk to your advisor for more information on what is realistically needed to have a good chance of getting into your desired professional school.