



STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK  
COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY<sup>SM</sup>

## DOCTOR OF OPTOMETRY (OD) DEGREE



## ADMISSIONS GUIDE

[SUNYOPT.EDU/EXPLORE](http://SUNYOPT.EDU/EXPLORE)

# THE DOCTOR OF OPTOMETRY (OD) DEGREE

The four-year Doctor of Optometry (OD) program at SUNY Optometry is highly selective and academically rigorous. Over four years, students examine and treat an unparalleled array of ocular diseases and visual conditions at the College's state-of-the-art patient care facility, the University Eye Center. Students improve critical thinking and problem-solving skills through challenging coursework in biological and visual sciences.

Beginning in the first year, students are exposed to patient care with faculty who help to integrate classroom material with what they are observing clinically. During the third and fourth years, student interns complete rotations in all specialty areas, including three clinical rotations at off-campus hospitals and other healthcare facilities as part of the External Clinical Education Program.

## Specialty areas

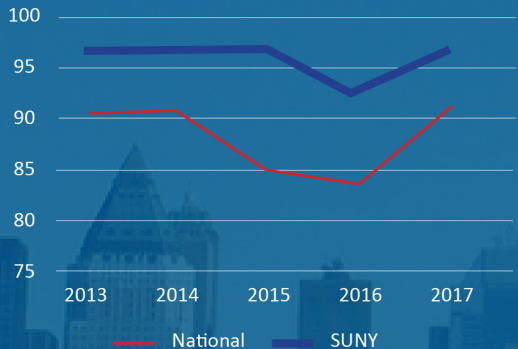
Pediatrics	Biofeedback	Dry eye
Infant vision	Visual perception	Special testing
Children with special needs	Learning disabilities	Glaucoma
Myopia control	Low vision	Oculoplastics
Vision rehabilitation	Cataract	Neuro-Ophthalmic Disease
Strabismus and amblyopia	Cornea	Retina
Head trauma	Contact lens	Sports vision

## Percentage of candidates who passed all NBEO parts at graduation\*

**97%**

2017 PASS RATE

SUNY Optometry students consistently exceed the average national pass rate on the National Board of Examiners in Optometry exams. In 2017, 97% of students passed all parts at graduation.



\*REFERENCE: [https://sunyopt.edu/nbeo\\_graduation](https://sunyopt.edu/nbeo_graduation)



# WHY OPTOMETRY?

## 1. Make a positive impact

Improve patients' lives by maximizing their vision and detecting and managing ocular diseases, including glaucoma and retinal diseases, refractive errors and myopia, and oculomotor conditions.

## 2. Choose your own path

It's a dynamic field, with opportunities to work in many different settings, including private or group practice, clinics, hospitals and academia.

## 3. Enjoy job security

Optometry is one of the fastest growing health professions: Nearsightedness (myopia) is on the rise, and an aging population pushes more people to seek eye care than ever before.

## 4. Find fulfillment

With multiple career pathways, regular hours, and a relaxed, congenial work environment, optometry is regarded as one of the most fulfilling and enjoyable health professions.



## Estimated Job Growth

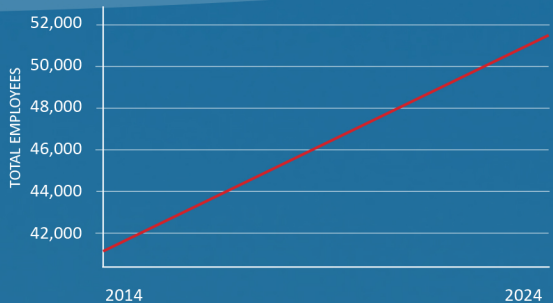
**17.9%**

OPTOMETRY

**7.4%**

NATIONAL AVERAGE

This line chart shows the 10-year projected employment growth (from 2014 to 2024) for optometrists. This profession is expected to grow at more than double the rate of national job growth.



**REFERENCE:** [https://datausa.io/profile/soc/291041/#job\\_growth](https://datausa.io/profile/soc/291041/#job_growth)



# WHY SUNY OPTOMETRY

1. Students complete a comprehensive curriculum designed to integrate basic sciences with clinical care training.
2. First-year students receive extensive clinical training, working with the University Eye Center from day one and taking on more responsibility as their academic careers progress.
3. The University Eye Center handles 70,000+ annual patient visits, offering students the opportunity to train in one of the largest and most diverse clinics in America.
4. Students study in Manhattan, one of the most vibrant cities in the world.
5. Students have access to state-of-the-art technology, from advanced clinical tools to virtual reality teaching labs.
6. Faculty partner with students to conduct eye and vision science research that moves the profession forward.
7. SUNY works with several international partners and offers rotations in China and Australia.
8. The College has a remarkably low 1:4 faculty-to-student ratio.
9. SUNY Optometry offers more than a dozen active student organizations, contributing to a strong feeling of community.

## Value-added programs

<b>OD/MS</b>	The combined OD/MS in Vision Science degree program is designed for students interested in conducting independent, original research in addition to their optometric education, including those aspiring to careers in academia and industry.
<b>OD/PhD</b>	The OD/PhD is a comprehensive program that trains students in translational or clinical vision research and is designed to prepare students for faculty positions in academic optometry or industry research and development.
<b>OD/MBA certificate</b>	Qualified students working toward their OD degree may apply for the Advanced Graduate Certificate in Optometry Business Management.



*My business partner once told me the key to success is to not worry about being the smartest person in the room but instead to worry about surrounding yourself with the smartest people. When I look back 5 years later after graduating from SUNY Optometry, I realize that my attendance at the University achieved just that. SUNY is home to some of the most talented doctors, professors, and students who have seen and done it all.*

**MATT GELLER, OD, CLASS OF 2013**

# APPLICATION PROCESS

The SUNY Optometry Admissions Committee considers a full picture of applicants when making enrollment decisions. For that reason, while undergraduate GPA and OAT scores are important, they are just two of many factors. The Admissions Committee also weighs the following when deciding if you are a good fit: quality of your undergraduate institution, type of undergraduate degree pursued, progression of grades, extracurricular activities, leadership and community involvement, communication and interpersonal skills, letters of recommendation, personal interview, and commitment to the optometry profession.

## Rolling Admissions

**Submission of OptomCAS and supplemental applications**  
Starting July 1

**Deadline for OAT submission**  
February 28

**Deadline for application submission**  
March 1

*Admissions is conducted on a rolling basis.  
We strongly encourage submitting applications as early as possible.*

## Application Materials

All application materials, including official transcripts, must be submitted through the Central Application at [www.optomcas.org](http://www.optomcas.org)

## Letters of Recommendation

A composite letter of recommendation must be submitted by the pre-professional committee at the undergraduate school where you completed the majority of your coursework. In addition to the committee's evaluation, it should also include:

- Two letters that assess academic performance in the sciences
- One letter from an optometrist you shadowed



*SUNY Optometry was my top choice because academically I knew it'd best prepare me for a successful optometric career, and it's in a city with a ton to offer. NYC is such a diverse place and SUNY Optometry's patient base and the variety of conditions we see on a daily basis reflect that diversity.*

**RACHEL CHO, CLASS OF 2020**

If a pre-professional committee exists and cannot submit a letter of recommendation, you should instead submit a letter from the committee indicating why it cannot provide the required information. If such a committee does not exist at your undergraduate institution, you must submit the three letters of recommendation referenced on the previous page. All letters, whether submitted as a composite document or individually, should be submitted through OptomCAS.

## Supplemental Questions and Fee

Once you have designated SUNY Optometry as a school you are applying to within OptomCAS, you will have access to a page called Supplemental Questions. It will appear under the School Designations section on your Application Checklist. After submitting the regular OptomCAS application and the SUNY Optometry supplemental questions, please pay the \$40 supplemental fee.

## OAT scores

We strongly recommend that you take the OAT before submitting your application, ideally in July, August, or September of your application year. Scores should be sent directly to SUNY Optometry. The exam must be taken no earlier than 24 months before the opening of the current OptomCAS session. If you take the OAT after February 28 of the calendar year in which you wish to enroll, it will not be accepted.

## Accelerated Programs

<p><b>3/4 Joint Degree Program</b></p>	<p>SUNY Optometry and 27 colleges and universities in New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania offer an affiliation program to highly qualified students whereby students may complete a joint BS or BA degree and OD degree in just seven years instead of the usual eight.</p> <p><a href="http://www.sunyopt.edu/34">www.sunyopt.edu/34</a></p>
<p><b>Foreign applicants and those with foreign credentials</b></p>	<p>Advanced placement may be considered for applicants with foreign credentials. In addition to all of the materials required for the OD application, applicants will need to have their foreign transcripts evaluated by the World Education Services (WES) and complete a TOEFL, where a score of 550 or higher is required.</p> <p><a href="http://www.sunyopt.edu/ia">www.sunyopt.edu/ia</a></p>



*I chose SUNY Optometry because of its University Eye Center, which in addition to being one of the largest vision care clinics in the nation, serves a diverse patient base and utilizes state-of-the-art technology.*

**ALINA SAMPLE, CLASS OF 2021**

## Academic Requirements

Candidates seeking admission in the SUNY Optometry OD program are strongly advised to first complete a four-year baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution. Students who have completed all prerequisite courses and a minimum of three years (90 semester credits) of undergraduate study at an accredited institution will also be considered for admission.

Required Courses	Semester(s)	Quarter(s)
General Biology (with lab)	2	3
General Chemistry (with lab)*	2	3
General Physics (with lab)	2	3
Organic Chemistry (with lab)*	2	3
Calculus	1	1
English Composition and Literature	2	3
Social Science	2	3
General Psychology	1	1
Statistics	1	1

\*Biochemistry may be substituted for one term. For a full list of possible substitutions, visit [www.sunyopt.edu/prereq](http://www.sunyopt.edu/prereq)

Recommended Courses	Semester(s)	Quarter(s)
Microbiology	1	1
Biochemistry	1	1
Anatomy and Physiology	1	1

SUNY Optometry does not limit the number of courses it will accept from community colleges. If you have taken prerequisite courses at two-year colleges, the Admissions Committee encourages you to take upper-division science courses at a four-year institution. Letter grades must be awarded for all required courses, and they should be completed with a grade of C or better. More information on our prerequisite course information can be found at [sunyopt.edu/prereq](http://sunyopt.edu/prereq).



*I chose SUNY Optometry because of its welcoming community and the numerous cutting-edge research opportunities that SUNY offers. Currently, I am part of a team conducting research to identify objective visual biomarkers in patients suffering from mild traumatic brain injury in an effort to provide more effective treatments.*

RAYMOND FARMER, CLASS OF 2021

# AT A GLANCE

**100** Students  
SIZE OF EACH  
INCOMING CLASS

**28** States / **4** Countries  
REPRESENTED IN STUDENT BODY

**350**  
Average OAT  
OF ENTERING CLASS

**70%:30%**  
Female/Male Ratio

**3.50**  
Average GPA  
OF ENTERING CLASS

**1:4**  
Faculty/Student Ratio

**1,500-2,000**  
Patient Encounters  
A STUDENT WILL HAVE OVER 4 YEARS

**70K** Patient Visits  
TO UNIVERSITY EYE CENTER  
PER YEAR (ONE OF THE LARGEST PRIMARY  
AND SPECIALIZED VISION CENTER  
IN THE NATION)

## CONTACT

**SUNY College of Optometry**  
33 W. 42nd Street, New York, NY 10036  
[www.sunyopt.edu/admissions](http://www.sunyopt.edu/admissions)

**Office of Student Affairs and Admissions**  
tel: (800) 291-3937 or (212) 938-5500  
[admissions@sunyopt.edu](mailto:admissions@sunyopt.edu)

The SUNY College of Optometry is accredited by the Board of Regents of the State University of New York (State Education Department). The College is regionally accredited by the Commission on Higher Education of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. Its professional program and its programs of residency education are accredited by the Accreditation Council on Optometric Education of the American Optometric Association.

The College does not discriminate on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, race, national origin, age, disability, or residence in its admission policy.

In compliance with federal regulations, the College's Annual Security Report may be viewed at [www.sunyopt.edu/offices/university\\_police/crime\\_report](http://www.sunyopt.edu/offices/university_police/crime_report).



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