





## The Pathway to Optometry School

### GETTING STARTED

**Medical Applicant Portal (MAP):** MAP is an online resource for undergraduate students and alumni to identify themselves as Pre-Optometry and stay informed of important dates and events. It also serves as a portfolio to help prepare students for the application process. Create a MAP account in StudentHub!

**Selecting a Major:** Students admitted to optometry schools come from **all undergraduate majors**. Optometry schools appreciate academic diversity. You are encouraged to select a major based on your interests. Common majors include Biology, Behavioral Neuroscience and Health Science.

**Connect with us:** [Meet our staff](#) and find who your advisor is. Sign up for our [monthly newsletter](#) and read up on our latest [blog posts](#) from students, staff, and alumni! Follow us on Instagram and Facebook @NUPreHealth  

### EXPERIENTIAL PREPARATION

**Community Engagement:** Working in healthcare requires a service orientation and commitment to your community. Engage your campus community through [student organizations](#), a [Community Service & Civic Engagement program](#), and/or a Service-Learning course. Volunteer in meaningful ways to become an engaged and educated citizen dedicated to helping others.

**Research:** Though not required, research experience makes your application stand out among the applicant pool. Having a solid understanding of the research process allows for an informed interpretation of hypotheses, results and translation into practice. Examples may include volunteering in academic labs, co-curricular opportunities (E.g., Directed Study, Capstone, etc.), research awards/fellowships, and/or paid employment.

**Clinical:** Experiences within the field of healthcare are an important way to demonstrate ongoing interest in the profession and gain exposure to a diverse array of specialties. Experiences should include direct interaction with practitioners and patients, but do not need to be at an advanced level. Examples may include clinical volunteering, shadowing, or paid employment.

### REQUIRED COURSEWORK

Requisite courses are **school specific**. For detailed course requirements, please review:

- [ASCO Prerequisites](#)  
Common courses include:
- **Biology** with labs (Two semesters)
- **General/Inorganic Chemistry** with labs (Two semesters)
- **Organic Chemistry** with lab (One semester)
- **Physics** with labs (Two semesters)
- **Anatomy & Physiology** (One semester)
- **Microbiology** with lab (Requires Genetics and Molecular Biology)
- **Biochemistry** with lab (Requires Organic Chemistry II & Genetics and Molecular Biology)
- **Math** (One Calculus & One Statistics)
- **Social Science/Humanities** (Two semesters)
- **Psychology**

**AP/IB credit** is typically accepted for prerequisite courses. In the case that it is not, students should complete upper-level coursework to satisfy the requirement. Please refer to individual program websites for more detail on their AP/IB credit policy.

### ENTRANCE EXAM

Pre-Optometry students will take the **Optometry Admissions Exam (OAT)**. The OAT should be scheduled only after all laboratory science prerequisite courses are successfully completed and the applicant has had 3-5 months to study.

### THE NU EXPERIENCE

**Co-Op:** Northeastern's Co-op Program is one way students can obtain experiential preparation. There are no designated Pre-Optometry co-ops. Rather, students should apply to co-op jobs based on their individual interest in, and qualifications for the position.

**Global Experiences:** Coursework taken through many of Northeastern's global academic programs do not pose any issues for Pre-Optometry students, including NUin and Global Scholars (beginning Fall '23), and DOCs. However, planned coursework abroad through other study abroad programs should be reviewed with your PreHealth Advisor prior to departure for consideration toward Pre-Optometry requirements.