

# Optometry School

## Before You Apply—fall semester/early spring of application year

- Check with schools about any questions on coursework, for example, will they accept CHM 12901 on its own? Will they accept it with the CHM 11500 credit exam? Do you need to do something else?
- Plan for Letters
  - Verify that the letters you intend to get will meet the needs of the schools at which you intend to apply BEFORE you apply to those schools.
  - Meet with and ask letter writers for letters no later than spring break.
- Allow 3-4 months to prepare for the OAT and consider taking it early if possible (see OAT, below).
- Become familiar with the application process. Read the optometry school websites and the OptomCAS Help Center (application instructions), linked below.
- Always use the same form of your name in all documents that you send for your application.
- When it comes to all application materials, read and follow all instructions. Carefully edit materials that you submit and save a copy of everything you turn in to programs.
- Research schools
  - Go to individual school websites to research schools.
  - Also spend some time at the [ASCO Information About Schools](https://www.optomcas.org/information-about-schools-colleges/)  
<https://www.optomcas.org/information-about-schools-colleges/>

## Applying—OptomCAS (the common application) typically opens toward the end of June—plan to submit your application in July or early August

- Learning More About the Application
  - [ASCO Information About Schools](https://www.optomcas.org/information-about-schools-colleges/) <https://www.optomcas.org/information-about-schools-colleges/>
  - Also go to individual school websites
  - [Optometry Program Admissions Directory](https://myasco.opted.org/searchEngines/admissions_advanced_search_form.aspx)  
[https://myasco.opted.org/searchEngines/admissions\\_advanced\\_search\\_form.aspx](https://myasco.opted.org/searchEngines/admissions_advanced_search_form.aspx)
- Common Application (open end of June)
  - OptomCAS: [Applicant Help Center](https://help.liaisonedu.com/OptomCAS_Applicant_Help_Center)  
[https://help.liaisonedu.com/OptomCAS\\_Applicant\\_Help\\_Center](https://help.liaisonedu.com/OptomCAS_Applicant_Help_Center)

## Once the Application Opens

- Start filling out your application immediately—it is important to **send your transcripts** as early as possible since Purdue only sends PAPER transcripts which is a slower process as they need to be mailed. Purdue does not use the online distribution systems for transcripts required to send e-Transcripts
- Get to the **Academic History** section and enter all colleges from which you earned college credit
  - For each college/university you will then obtain from OptomCAS a **Transcript ID Form**
  - The Transcript ID Form needs to be sent along with each transcript to help with matching that school's transcript to your application
    - If you need to get transcripts from schools other than Purdue, contact those schools to find out how to send them the Transcript ID form and send the transcripts following the OptomCAS instructions.
  - Instructions for sending Purdue transcripts ON PAPER are attached below.

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- You will also want unofficial transcripts to work with when entering your course information in OptomCAS
- There is no need to pay extra money to have someone do this for you.

### Recommendation Letters—ask for letters by about Spring Break

- [Research letter requirements](#) early so that you know what your schools require.  
<https://www.optomcas.org/information-about-schools-colleges/letters-of-recommendations/>
- Meet with your letter writers and finalize your letters by about spring break so that your writers have plenty of time to write them.
- Offer them the [PPA Letter Writer Guide](#) to provide them with tips for writing letters.  
<https://www.purdue.edu/preprofessional/Documents/Letter%20Writer%20Guide.pdf>
- You will need at least 1 letter for your application to be processed and can have a maximum of 4 letters.

### What else do you need to do?

- Ensure all documents arrived to your application—transcripts and letters.
- Thank your letter writers.
- Keep up with volunteering, research, and shadowing..
- Check to see if any of your schools require the [CASPer](#) situational judgement exam and **take this during the summer/early fall**. <https://takealtus.com/casper/>
- Keep up on health news in preparation for interviews—check for [Health News Sources](#) here <https://www.purdue.edu/preprofessional/Documents/Health%20News%20Resources.pdf>
- If you are eligible for U.S. Federal Loans, submit your FAFSA even before you know you have been admitted.

### Optometry Admission Test (OAT)—take as early as summer before application year to April, May or June of application year

- [Register](#) 60-90 days in advance for your OAT as dates do fill. <https://oat.ada.org/en/apply-to-take-the-oat>
- Plan ahead as you need 90 days between test dates—hopefully, you only need to take it once.
- If you need to request accommodations, this will take additional time.
- [2022 Optometry Admissions Test Candidate Guide](#)  
[https://oat.ada.org/~media/OAT/Files/oat\\_examinee\\_guide.pdf?la=en](https://oat.ada.org/~media/OAT/Files/oat_examinee_guide.pdf?la=en)

### Ordering Transcripts from Purdue—order transcripts early in the application process (ideally in June/early July soon after the application opens)

- Follow instructions in the **Academic History** section of your application to obtain the **Transcript ID Form**—this Form ensures that your transcript will be matched with your OptomCAS application.
- For Purdue, you need to order an OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT to be sent on PAPER and attach a PDF of the TRANSCRIPT ID FORM to this request.
- This is all sent to OptomCAS and the address is in the Academic History section of the Help Center.
- **Current Purdue Students** follow these steps to order your transcript:
  - Login to MyPurdue
  - Click on Academic Tab

### *Preparing for your Giant Leap*

[purdue.edu/preprofessional](https://purdue.edu/preprofessional)

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- On the bottom left corner click on order OFFICIAL Transcript
- Request that they send a PAPER COPY (do not send it electronically)
- Attach an electronic version (PDF) of OptomCAS' Transcript ID Form
- **Former Purdue Students** follow these steps to order your transcript:
  - Use this [e-transcript](https://sswis.mypurdue.purdue.edu/eTranscript/login/auth;jsessionid=C2CE2C70DAC3F265E39C2B534E2ACC1E) link to set up an account to order your OFFICIAL transcript  
<https://sswis.mypurdue.purdue.edu/eTranscript/login/auth;jsessionid=C2CE2C70DAC3F265E39C2B534E2ACC1E>
  - Be sure to attach OptomCAS' Transcript ID Form
  - Request that Purdue send a PAPER copy (do not send an electronic copy of your transcript)
- You will need a separate Transcript ID Form for any other schools at which you have college credit and will need to determine how to send these forms to the appropriate offices at those schools and how they distribute transcripts (using appropriate electronic systems or on paper).
- **Be sure to get an unofficial copy for yourself to use to enter all your coursework into your application!**

**Pre-Professional Advising is here to help you throughout your application process. We know that you have worked hard to reach the point of application and we are honored to have the opportunity to help you through this next part of your journey toward professional school.**