

PRE-OPTOMETRY, MINOR IN

The pre-optometry minor provides foundational courses for students that are preparing to be competitive applicants for Doctor of Optometry (O.D.) programs after completing their bachelor's degree at VCU. The pre-optometry minor can be completed as a part of any undergraduate degree. Completing this minor does not guarantee admission into any optometry program. This minor is structured to academically prepare students to apply for optometry programs broadly. Clinical and non-clinical experiences are a requirement of application to most optometry schools. In addition to this minor, students should participate in clinical and non-clinical experiences to develop a competitive application for optometry school. Visit the VCU Career Services - Pre-Professional Health Career Advising (<https://careers.vcu.edu/majors-and-careers/career-pathways/health-care/>) website for more information and to schedule an appointment with a pre-professional health and STEM career counselor.

Optometry schools across the U.S. have different prerequisites for admission. The list below shows courses that may be required by various optometry programs. It is always recommended that you check with each optometry school that you are interested in applying to because requirements can and do change. Students are encouraged to meet with their academic adviser to integrate these courses into their academic plan. In addition, students are encouraged to discuss career plans with their pre-professional health academic minor adviser and career counselor for additional guidance.

For the pre-optometry minor, a minimum of nine credits in upper-level science (300-level or higher) courses must be taken at VCU. All upper-level science courses at a 300-level or higher listed in this minor are strongly recommended to be completed at VCU. It is encouraged to demonstrate future academic success in optometry school through a rigorous course schedule. Optometry schools may prefer students complete these courses at a four-year institution in order to demonstrate future academic success in optometry school coursework.

Declaring the pre-optometry minor

To declare the pre-optometry minor:

- Students must complete a minimum of 12 credit hours to be eligible to declare the minor.
- Students must obtain a minimum cumulative VCU GPA of 3.0
- Students must complete BIOL 151 and BIOZ 151 with minimum grades of C

Maintaining the pre-optometry minor (progression policy)

- Students must maintain a minimum 3.0 VCU cumulative GPA.
- If a student's VCU cumulative GPA drops below 3.0, they will be placed on probation in the minor and allowed one semester to raise their cumulative GPA to 3.0 — provided it is mathematically possible to do so. If it is not mathematically possible to do so, or if the student fails to raise their minimum cumulative GPA to 3.0 during their probationary semester, they will be removed from the pre-optometry minor and can re-declare the minor once eligible. Students are strongly encouraged to meet with their minor adviser to discuss their academic plans/progress.

- Students cannot exceed more than three attempts of any course within the minor including withdrawals and historical repeat attempts. If a student exceeds three attempts for any course within the minor, they will not be eligible to maintain and graduate with the minor.

Required courses

| Course | Title | Hours |
|--|---|--------------|
| BIOL 151 & BIOZ 151 | Introduction to Biological Sciences I and Introduction to Biological Science Laboratory I | 4 |
| BIOL 152 & BIOZ 152 | Introduction to Biological Sciences II and Introduction to Biological Science Laboratory II | 4 |
| BIOL 300 | Cellular and Molecular Biology | 3 |
| BIOL 303 | Microbiology | 3 |
| CHEM 101 & CHEZ 101 | General Chemistry I and General Chemistry Laboratory I | 4 |
| CHEM 102 & CHEZ 102 | General Chemistry II and General Chemistry Laboratory II | 4 |
| CHEM 301 & CHEZ 301 | Organic Chemistry and Organic Chemistry Laboratory I | 5 |
| CHEM 302 & CHEZ 302 | Organic Chemistry and Organic Chemistry Laboratory II | 5 |
| CHEM 403 | Biochemistry I | 3 |
| MATH 151 | Precalculus Mathematics | 4 |
| MATH 200 | Calculus with Analytic Geometry I | 4 |
| PHIS 206 & PHIZ 206 | Human Physiology and Human Physiology Laboratory | 4 |
| PHYS 201 or PHYS 207 | General Physics I ¹ University Physics I | 4-5 |
| PHYS 202 or PHYS 208 | General Physics II ² University Physics II | 4-5 |
| PSYC 101 Play course video for Introduction to Psychology | Introduction to Psychology | 4 |
| STAT 210 | Basic Practice of Statistics | 3 |
| Total Hours | | 62-64 |

1

MATH 200 is a prerequisite for PHYS 207.

2

MATH 201 is a prerequisite for PHYS 208.

Additional recommended courses and information

Optometry programs across the U.S. have different prerequisites for admission. Students should discuss career plans with a pre-professional health career counselor for additional guidance. If the 300-level science course requirements have been completed, students are encouraged to continue taking upper-level science courses to demonstrate academic rigor and success. The list below shows courses required by various optometry programs beyond the courses listed above for the pre-

optometry minor. Completing courses from the list below will not contribute to the pre-optometry minor requirements.

| Course | Title | Hours |
|----------|--------------------------------|-------|
| BIOL 205 | Basic Human Anatomy | 4 |
| UNIV 191 | Student Success Special Topics | 1-3 |