

Admissions

AZCOPT considers for admission those students who possess the academic, professional, and personal qualities necessary for development as exemplary optometrists. AZCOPT uses multiple criteria to select the most qualified candidates including cumulative and prerequisites grade point averages (GPAs), admission test scores, personal experiences and character, ability to communicate, familiarity with the profession, volunteer/community involvement, research experience, and other considerations. AZCOPT uses a competitive, rolling admissions process.

Admission Requirements

Students seeking admission to AZCOPT must submit the following documented evidence:

1. A minimum cumulative GPA and science coursework GPA of 2.75 on a 4.00 scale.
2. A baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited institution. A B.A. degree is acceptable but a B.S. degree is preferred.
3. Submit the results of one of the following entrance examinations: Optometry Admissions Test (OAT), Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT), Dental Aptitude Test (DAT), Pharmacy College Admissions Test (PCAT) or the Graduate Record Exam (GRE). A competitive test score (at least at or above the mean score for each exam) is recommended of all applicants. In order to be considered for admittance to the class in the Fall of each academic year, the entrance examination must be taken and results submitted by April 30th of the year of matriculation. Entrance exam scores must be earned no more than five years prior to the planned enrollment year.
4. Complete the necessary course prerequisites. All prerequisite courses must be completed with grades of C or better. Only courses designed for science majors or pre-professional students are acceptable for the science prerequisites.
5. Provide two letters of recommendation. One letter must be from a practicing optometrist. The other letter must be from a prehealth advisor, a science professor, an employer, or an extracurricular activity advisor.
6. Have a good understanding of optometric medicine. Candidates are strongly encouraged to shadow and observe a practicing optometrist in the clinical setting.
7. Participate in extracurricular and/or community activities that indicate a well- rounded background and demonstrate a service orientation.
8. Embody interpersonal and communication skills necessary to relate effectively with others.
9. Pass criminal background check.
10. A commitment to abide by the Midwestern University Drug-Free Workplace and Substance Abuse Policy.

Prerequisite Courses

Course	Semester/Hour Requirements
Biology with lab	8 Sem/12 Qtr hours
General/inorganic chemistry with lab	8 Sem/12 Qtr hours
Organic chemistry with lab	4 Sem/6 Qtr hours
Physics	6 Sem/9 Qtr hours
Calculus	3 Sem/4 Qtr hours
Microbiology	3 Sem/4 Qtr hours

Course	Semester/Hour Requirements
Statistics	3 Sem/4 Qtr hours
Psychology	3 Sem/4 Qtr hours
English	6 Sem/9 Qtr hours

**AZCOPT strongly recommends Anatomy, Physiology, and Biochemistry.*

The Doctor of Optometry degree program is rigorous and challenging. The Admissions Committee will therefore assess the quality and rigor of the pre- optometry academic records presented by applicants. When assessing an application, the Admissions Committee will view with concern applicants with:

1. Cumulative and science grade point averages below 3.00 on a 4.00 scale.
2. Admission test scores below the mean for each exam.
3. Prerequisite science coursework completed more than 10 years ago. More recent (within five years) math and science coursework is preferred.

Application Process and Deadlines

Applicants are strongly encouraged to apply early in the cycle. Applications are considered on a first come first served basis only until all seats are filled.

1. OptomCAS Application

Applicants are required to submit online applications and application fees to OptomCAS by April 1st of the year of matriculation. In addition to the online application and application fees, an applicant must forward to OptomCAS official transcripts from all colleges and universities attended by the April 1st date. An application will be considered complete after all official transcripts have been received by OptomCAS. The verification process by OptomCAS will begin once the application has been completed.

Students must apply for admission via OptomCAS at www.opted.org or www.optomcas.org. Please refer to the OptomCAS application instructions for specific details about completing the OptomCAS application, required documents, and processing times.

OptomCAS applications are available starting in June or July for applicants seeking admission in August of the following year. Due to the large number of applicants and the limited number of seats available, students are strongly encouraged to complete their OptomCAS application early in the cycle. AZCOPT will consider completed applications on a first-come, first-served basis until all seats are filled.

2. Admission Test

AZCOPT prefers the OAT but will accept the MCAT, DAT, PCAT, or GRE test scores as an alternative.

Applicants must arrange for scores from the admission exam to be sent directly to Midwestern University. Only test scores received directly from the testing agency will be accepted. Any of these admission exam scores must be earned no more than 5 years prior to the planned enrollment year.

Additional information on the OAT may be found at www.opted.org or in writing to:

Optometry Admission Testing Program

211 East Chicago Avenue

Chicago, Illinois 60611 800/232-1694

email: oatexam@ada.org

3. Letters of Recommendation Applicants must submit two letters of recommendation from professionals to OptomCAS (www.optomcas.org). One letter must be from a practicing optometrist. The second letter must be from a prehealth advisor, a science professor, an employer, or extracurricular activity advisor. Letters of recommendation from relatives, personal and/or family friends are not acceptable.

4. Completed Application

All application materials, including the OptomCAS application, admission test scores (as reported to Northwestern University), and two letters of recommendation (as submitted to OptomCAS) must be received by the Office of Admissions on or before April 30th of the year of matriculation. Only completed applications received by the Office of Admissions on or before the deadline date will be reviewed for potential entrance into the program.

Please note: Applicants are responsible for tracking the receipt of their application materials and verifying the status of their applications on the University website.

The Office of Admissions will send qualified applicants instructions for checking the status of their application materials online.

Applicants are responsible for notifying the Office of Admissions of any changes in their mailing address or e-mail address.

Midwestern University Office of Admissions
19555 North 59th Avenue
Glendale, AZ 85308
623/572-3215 or 888/247-9277
admissaz@midwestern.edu

Rolling Admissions

AZCOPT uses a rolling admissions process in which applications are processed and reviewed during regular intervals in the admissions cycle until the class is filled.

Interview Process

Before an invitation is issued to attend an interview, applicants must meet the admission requirements previously listed. After the Office of Admissions receives all required application materials, applicant files are reviewed to determine whether an applicant merits an invitation for an interview. Applicants may also be placed on a waiting list pending possible openings in a later part of the admissions cycle.

Interviews are typically held between August and May. Invited applicants must attend an interview to receive further consideration in the admissions process.

The interview day is approximately five hours. Each interviewee will meet with at least two interviewers. Applicants will be evaluated on verbal communication skills, understanding of the optometry profession, commitment to patient care, and other elements as determined by the College. Applicants will also learn more about Northwestern University, AZCOPT, financial aid programs, student services, campus housing, and the Glendale Campus.

Following the interview, an applicant's file will be forwarded to the Admissions Committee for review. The committee may recommend to accept, deny, or place the applicant on an alternate list.

Recommendations are then forwarded to the Dean for final approval. The Dean, via the Office of Admissions, notifies applicants of their status within two weeks of their interview date, provided that the file is complete.

Requests for the withdrawal of an application must be made in writing.

Dual Acceptance Program with selected affiliated universities

The Dual Acceptance Program is an early acceptance program for selected students who successfully complete the specified pre-optometry coursework. The Dual Acceptance Programs are currently in effect with Arizona State University and Arizona Christian University.

Benefits of the DAP:

- Provides for an excellent foundation in pre-optometry education.
- Sets out a clear road map for which courses to take and when.
- Exempts the student from the Optometry Admissions Test (OAT) and associated fees.
- Exempts the student from the OptomCAS application process and associated fees.
- Guarantees entry to MWU AZCOPT well in advance with successful completion of all program requirements.

To receive consideration for the Dual Acceptance Program, high school senior students must meet the following eligibility requirements:

1. Earn admission to one of the affiliated universities.
2. Apply online to the AZCOPT Dual Acceptance Program as a high school senior.
3. Obtain a minimum score of 28 on the ACT or 1250 on the SAT.
4. Demonstrate a people or service orientation through community service or extracurricular activities.
5. Demonstrate motivation for and commitment to the optometry profession as demonstrated by previous work, volunteer, or other life experiences.
6. Possess the oral and written communication skills necessary to interact with patients and colleagues.

After the Midwestern University Office of Admissions receives all completed application materials, applicant files are reviewed to determine whether applicants merit invitations for an interview. Invited applicants must participate in an on campus interview for further consideration in the admissions process.

During the interview day, candidates will be evaluated for verbal communication skills, understanding of the optometry profession, commitment to patient care, and other elements as determined by the

college. Applicants may be required to participate in writing sample exercises during the visit. Candidates will learn more about the optometry program, financial aid, student services, and tour the Midwestern University campus.

Following the interview, their completed applications are forwarded to the AZCOPT Admissions Committee for review. The committee may recommend to accept or to deny applicants for admission. These recommendations are then forwarded to the Dean for final approval. The Dean, via the Office of Admissions, notifies applicants of their status within two weeks of their visits. Accepted applicants will be ensured a seat at AZCOPT upon successful completion of the program requirements:

1. All prerequisite pre-optometry courses must be completed at an affiliated university. Official AP and dual-enrollment credits completed during high school, and that are listed on the affiliated university's transcript as equivalent courses, are acceptable for meeting the prerequisites.
2. Completion of a baccalaureate degree at an affiliated university within 4 years.
 - a. Authorization to extend an undergraduate degree beyond 4 years is at the discretion of the Dean, Arizona College of Optometry. Requests must be submitted to the Arizona College of Optometry office of the Dean; decisions will be made on a case by case basis.
3. A minimum overall GPA of 3.40 on a 4.00 scale must be attained.
4. A minimum science GPA of 3.40 on a 4.00 scale must be attained.
5. Students must earn a grade of "C" or higher in all required courses. A grade of "C-" or lower is not acceptable.
6. Students are not permitted to withdraw from more than 2 courses during their 4 year undergraduate program.
 - a. Authorization to withdraw from more than 2 courses is at the discretion of the Dean, Arizona College of Optometry. Requests must be submitted to the Arizona College of Optometry office of the Dean; decisions will be made on a case by case basis.
7. Students are not permitted to repeat courses for a higher grade for which they have already received credit.
8. Accepted students are required to sign a letter of understanding upon acceptance. Accepted students will submit a deposit fee within 1 year prior to matriculation. All fees are applied toward the student's first quarter tuition.

Students who are not accepted to or fail to complete the Dual Acceptance Program may apply to AZCOPT using the standard procedures.

[Click here to access the application.](#)

Articulation Agreement

Articulation Agreement with Northwestern University Biomedical Sciences Degree Programs

AZCOPT will accept MCAT, DAT, PCAT, or GRE test scores as an alternative to OAT scores for currently enrolled students in the Northwestern University Biomedical Sciences degree programs (Master of Arts in Biomedical Sciences or Master of Biomedical Sciences) who wish to apply to AZCOPT. Any of these alternative admission test scores must be earned no more than 5 years prior to the planned enrollment year at AZCOPT.

Reapplication Process

After receiving either denial or end-of-cycle letters, or after dismissal from the College, applicants may reapply for the next enrollment cycle. Before reapplying, however, applicants should seek the advice of a MWU admissions counselor.

Transfer Admission Policy

AZCOPT may elect to accept transfer students from other U.S. accredited schools of optometry who are currently enrolled, are in good academic standing, and provide acceptable reason(s) for seeking transfer.

Typically, students will transfer at the beginning of the second year of the curriculum.

Students requesting transfers must meet the College's general requirements for admission. They must also submit the following:

1. A letter to the Director of Admissions outlining the reasons for requesting transfer and explaining any difficulties encountered at the previous institutions.
2. Course syllabi for all optometry coursework for which advanced standing credit is requested.
3. Official scores from the OAT, MCAT, DAT, PCAT, or GRE.
4. Official transcripts from all schools attended - undergraduate, graduate, and professional.
5. A letter from the Dean of the college in which the student is enrolled that describes current academic status and terms of withdrawal or dismissal.
6. Additional documents or letters of recommendation as determined necessary by the Director of Admissions or Dean.

Following receipt of these materials, a decision by the Dean is made regarding whether or not the student merits an on-campus interview. If the student receives an invitation, the individual interviews with an appropriate interview team. The interview team then makes an admissions recommendation to the Dean, who is responsible for approving both the student's admissions status and class standing.

The transfer application must be received sufficiently early to allow for processing of the application, interview, and relocation of the student prior to the start of the next academic term.

Readmission after Dismissal for Poor Academic Performance

It is at the discretion of AZCOPT to readmit a student who has been dismissed for poor academic performance. To initiate the reapplication process, candidates must complete and submit an application and proceed through the standard application process established by the program. Before reapplying, however, individuals should seek the advice of an admissions counselor, Associate Dean, or Dean. It is expected that the individual would have addressed documented deficiencies before reapplication and be able to demonstrate that the student meets all admission requirements and technical standards of the College.

The College's Admissions Committee will review completed applications of candidates and submit recommendations to the Dean for action. The Dean, via the Office of Admissions, then notifies applicants in writing of admissions decisions.

No guarantee of readmission is implied, and questions related to advanced standing and similar issues will be addressed as they are for new applicants.

Reapplications are allowed only within the first two years following dismissal and readmission will be granted only once.