



SCCO's Competitive Applicant Profile

When the admissions season begins and the competition gets underway, it's up to each applicant to compete for an interview invitation. For any given admissions cycle, it's impossible to predict exactly what it takes to be a competitive applicant because the process is not formulaic. Each season's competition varies depending on the number of applicants and the competitiveness within the applicant pool. The advice given here is based on patterns from past seasons.

- **GPA:** Applicants are advised to have an Overall GPA of at least 3.0.
- **OAT Scores:** OAT section scores are based on an index ranging from 200 to 400. A competitive applicant has OAT section scores of at least 300. We evaluate your best "set" of scores, which are scores from one single test date. Alternate test scores are accepted, [click here](#) for more information.
- **Demonstrated Passion for Optometry:** Exploring, understanding, and being able to articulate your reasons for making the decision to become a doctor of optometry is key. You'll need a broad experiential base to make that all-important decision. Shadowing in person or interviewing an optometrist are ways to gain that experience. Shadowing is not an internship nor is it work experience. The most important objectives for shadowing are to gain a working knowledge of the profession, and to learn why it is a good fit for you personally. For more tips on shadowing, visit our blog at www.optometryadmissions.com. Informational interviews are also helpful ways to learn about the profession.

Another useful resource and great way to keep on top of admission trends, get tips from students just like you who wish to be doctors of optometry, and hear presentations from optometry school representatives is to join the **Pre-Optometry Club** on your campus.

- **Community Service with Emphasis on Leadership Experience:** Good doctors have a heart for service, not only for their patients but for their communities as well. Applicants demonstrate these qualities by the way they spend their discretionary time. Optometry is always on the lookout for its future leaders. Applicants showing leadership potential will stand out when it comes time to interview. Community service does not necessarily need to be optometry-related, but rather experiences that help broaden an applicant's understanding of working with the public and serving those in need.
- **Possess Good Time-Management and Stress-Management Skills:** Successful students know how to prioritize. They are organized and have learned to be good time-managers. They are disciplined in their practices. Questions related to this topic are an integral part of the interview process. Having successful time and stress management skills are essential.
- **Communicate Effectively:** Clear and concise communication is a skill required to be a successful, compassionate, culturally-sensitive health care provider. This pertains to both written, verbal and non-verbal communication.