Optometry Centralized Application Service
OptomCAS Applicant Data Report – A National Snapshot

2014-2015

Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry
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Introduction

OptomCAS is the centralized application service for the Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry (ASCO) and is administered by Liaison International, an education information technology company located in Watertown, MA. OptomCAS allows optometry applicants to use a single web-based application and one set of materials to apply to multiple schools and colleges of optometry. Applicants who apply through OptomCAS submit a completed web-based application comprised of biographical data, colleges and universities attended, academic course history, letters of recommendation, work experience, extracurricular activities, honors and a personal essay. It is the applicant’s responsibility to read and follow specific instructions for OptomCAS and the schools and colleges of optometry.

OptomCAS began its first year on July 15, 2009 for Admissions Cycle 2009-2010. Since its implementation, all eligible schools and colleges of optometry have participated in the centralized application service. OptomCAS provides validated numbers for the optometry application process.

This report will focus on OptomCAS Cycle 6, which is the Admissions Cycle 2014-2015. This cycle opened on July 1, 2014 and closed on June 2, 2015. The application fee was $155 for one institution and $55 for each additional institution.

Participating Institutions for 2014-2015

As noted in Table 1, twenty one schools and colleges of optometry participated in OptomCAS in Admissions Cycle 2014-2015.

Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Illinois College of Optometry</th>
<th>Salus University Pennsylvania College of Optometry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indiana University School of Optometry</td>
<td>Southern California College of Optometry at Marshall B. Ketchum University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter American University of Puerto Rico School of Optometry</td>
<td>Southern College of Optometry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCPHS University School of Optometry</td>
<td>State University of New York State College of Optometry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan College of Optometry at Ferris State University</td>
<td>University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Optometry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midwestern University Arizona College of Optometry</td>
<td>University of California, Berkeley School of Optometry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New England College of Optometry</td>
<td>University of Missouri at St. Louis College of Optometry</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Northeastern State University Oklahoma College of Optometry  
Nova Southeastern University College of Optometry  
The Ohio State University College of Optometry  
Pacific University College of Optometry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University of Houston College of Optometry</th>
<th>University of the Incarnate Word Rosenberg School of Optometry</th>
<th>Western University of Health Sciences College of Optometry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**OptomCAS Trends**

**Applicants and Applications**

The number of OptomCAS individual mailed applicants to the twenty one schools and colleges of optometry for 2014-2015 was 2,732. These applicants submitted a total of 13,261 applications for an average of 4.85 applications per applicant. See Table 2 below for a comparison to previous cycles.

**Table 2.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mailed Applicants</td>
<td>2,545</td>
<td>2,639</td>
<td>2,604</td>
<td>2,732</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mailed Applications</td>
<td>13,393</td>
<td>13,210</td>
<td>13,164</td>
<td>13,261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Mailed Applications per Applicant</td>
<td>5.26</td>
<td>5.01</td>
<td>5.06</td>
<td>4.85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There was a 5% increase in the number of applicants for 2014-2015. The total mailed applications decreased slightly to below five applications per applicant.

**Applicants by Offers per Applicant**

Of the 2,732 applicants who applied to OptomCAS with mailed application status, 1,896 (69%) received one or more offers of admission, while 836 (31%) receive no offers (reference Table 3).

**Table 3.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Applications Submitted Per Applicant</th>
<th>Number of Total OptomCAS Applicants per Application Count</th>
<th>0 Offer Recvd</th>
<th>1 Offer Recvd</th>
<th>2 Offers Recvd</th>
<th>3 Offers Recvd</th>
<th>4 Offers Recvd</th>
<th>5 Offers Recvd</th>
<th>6 Offers Recvd</th>
<th>7 Offers Recvd</th>
<th>&gt;= 8 Offers Recvd</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>343</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>175</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>288</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>62</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>334</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>376</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>517</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The top three designations for applicants to the Doctor of Optometry program were: Salus University Pennsylvania College of Optometry, Illinois College of Optometry and Nova Southeastern University College of Optometry (reference Table 4). Please note these are OptomCAS applicant numbers and some institutions have a supplemental application that must be completed before an applicant will be considered for their program.

Table 4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Total Applicants</th>
<th>Applicants Denied</th>
<th>Applicants Offered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IL</td>
<td>Illinois College of Optometry</td>
<td>1097</td>
<td>768</td>
<td>329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IN</td>
<td>Indiana University School of Optometry</td>
<td>530</td>
<td>368</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PR</td>
<td>Inter American University of Puerto Rico School of Optometry</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA</td>
<td>MCPHS University School of Optometry</td>
<td>648</td>
<td>498</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MI</td>
<td>Michigan College of Optometry at Ferris State University</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AZ</td>
<td>Midwestern University Arizona College of Optometry</td>
<td>676</td>
<td>561</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA</td>
<td>New England College of Optometry</td>
<td>905</td>
<td>609</td>
<td>296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK</td>
<td>Northeastern State University Oklahoma College of Optometry</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FL</td>
<td>Nova Southeastern University College of Optometry</td>
<td>1067</td>
<td>872</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR</td>
<td>Pacific University College of Optometry</td>
<td>595</td>
<td>439</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA</td>
<td>Salus University Pennsylvania College of Optometry</td>
<td>1125</td>
<td>692</td>
<td>433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Southern California College of Optometry at Marshall B. Ketchum University</td>
<td>648</td>
<td>478</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TN</td>
<td>Southern College of Optometry</td>
<td>855</td>
<td>615</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NY</td>
<td>State University of New York State College of Optometry</td>
<td>551</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OH</td>
<td>The Ohio State University College of Optometry</td>
<td>561</td>
<td>467</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AL</td>
<td>University of Alabama at Birmingham School of</td>
<td>372</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Designations

The top three designations for applicants to the Doctor of Optometry program were: Salus University Pennsylvania College of Optometry, Illinois College of Optometry and Nova Southeastern University College of Optometry (reference Table 4). Please note these are OptomCAS applicant numbers and some institutions have a supplemental application that must be completed before an applicant will be considered for their program.
OptomCAS demographic data are captured on the OptomCAS application. This information is optional for the applicant to include and cannot be verified by Liaison staff.

Gender

As shown in Figure 1, females comprise 69% (1,891) of the OptomCAS applicant pool with males at 30% (821). One-percent (20) of the applicant pool Declined to State the gender. These figures remained comparable to the previous OptomCAS admissions cycle.
Age

Figure 2.

Figure 2 shows that the majority of applicants were in the 20-25 age range. The average age for all applicants was 23.17 with a median age of 22. The youngest applicant was 19 and the oldest was 55. There was a slight change from the previous OptomCAS admissions cycle regarding the average and median age.

Ethnicity

Figure 3.

As shown in Figure 3, the majority of applicants were White (48%) with the other applicants reporting Asian (30%); Spanish/Hispanic/Latino/Latina (9%); Black/African-American (3%); Two or More Races (3%); American Indian/Alaska Native (less than 1%); and Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander (less than 1%). Seven percent of applicants did not report a race.
There were major shifts in the ethnicity categories for Cycle 6 from last application cycle with the increase in Spanish/Hispanic/Latino/Latina applicants and in applicants who did not identify a race. There was a decrease in applicants in this cycle who reported two or more races.

**Citizenship**

As shown in Figure 5, the majority of applicants for 2014-2015 were US citizens at 86%. Ten percent of applicants reported they were foreign citizens and 4% US permanent residents. This was very similar to last year.

**State of Residence**
The top five states where OptomCAS applicants claimed their state of residence in 2014-2015 were: California, Texas, Florida, New York and Pennsylvania. There were 258 applicants from Canada. In the 2013-2014 Admissions Cycle, the top five states were: California, Texas, New York, Florida and Illinois and 216 applicants from Canada.

First Generation College Student

For 2014-2015, 65% of submitted OptomCAS applications had a parent who has attended/graduated from college, while 28% of applications are first generation college students. Seven percent declined to answer the question. This was not a substantial change from last year.

Military Experience

Less than 1% of OptomCAS applicants had previous military experience, which was the same as the last admissions cycle.

Influences

The top five influences on why an applicant chose to apply to a Doctor of Optometry program are: non-relative optometrist (52%); a parent who is a non-optometrist (18%); relative optometrist (9%); other health professional (6%); and friend (5%). Most of these influences were similar to last admissions cycle.

Academic Information on the Doctor of Optometry Applicant

Major

The most selected major on the OptomCAS application was Biology. Biology was also the top major last year.

Institution

The University of California higher education system claims three of the top five spots for feeder institutions for OptomCAS applicants. These institutions are: University of California, Irvine, University of California, Los Angeles, University of Houston, The Ohio State University and University of California, San Diego in the fifth spot. These schools were the same as last year with the exception that University of California, Berkeley and University of Texas were included.
GPA
OptomCAS calculates a standardized GPA to aid the schools and colleges of optometry in evaluating applicants using uniform and consistent criteria. The overall cumulative GPA for all applicants was 3.32 – for males it was 3.27 and 3.34 for females. The GPAs were similar in the last admissions cycle – 3.29 for males and 3.32 for females.

Accepted Profile of the Doctor of Optometry Applicant

Gender

For Admissions Cycle 2014-2015, 69% of accepted applications were female and 30% were male. One-percent declined to state their gender. In Cycle 2013-2014, 70% of accepted applications were female and 30% were male.

Age

The median age for accepted applicants was 23 years old. This was the same for last admissions cycle as well.

Ethnicity

This table and graph on acceptances by ethnicity is not available this year as it has been since the 2009-2010 cycle, but it will be included in next cycle’s final report.

Citizenship
Eighty-six percent of applications accepted were US citizens; 11% were foreign applications (this includes Canadian residents); and 3% were permanent residents of the US. In 2013-2014, the breakdown was similar.

**GPA**

The average GPA for accepted applications at the twenty one schools and colleges ranged from 3.10 to 3.45.

**More Information**

Please submit any questions or comments you have on the OptomCAS Applicant Data Report – A National Snapshot to:

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ppence@opted.org