



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

2018-2019

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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 Inc., 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 Admissions Cycle 2018-2019. This cycle opened on June 28, 2018 and closed on June 3, 2019. The application fee was \$175 for one institution and \$70 for each additional institution.

Participating Institutions for 2018-2019

As noted in Table 1, twenty-three schools and colleges of optometry participated in OptomCAS in Admissions Cycle 2018-2019.

Table 1.

Arizona College of Optometry, Midwestern University	Salus University Pennsylvania College of Optometry
Chicago College of Optometry, Midwestern University	Southern California College of Optometry at Marshall B. Ketchum University
Illinois College of Optometry	Southern College of Optometry
Indiana University School of Optometry	State University of New York College of Optometry
Inter American University of Puerto Rico School of Optometry	University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Optometry
MCPHS University School of Optometry	University of California, Berkeley School of Optometry
Michigan College of Optometry at Ferris State University	University of Houston College of Optometry
New England College of Optometry	University of the Incarnate Word Rosenberg School of Optometry
Northeastern State University Oklahoma College of	University of Missouri at St. Louis College of

Optometry	Optometry
Nova Southeastern University College of Optometry	University of Pikeville, Kentucky College of Optometry
The Ohio State University College of Optometry	Western University of Health Sciences College of Optometry
Pacific University College of Optometry	

OptomCAS Trends

Applicants and Applications

The number of OptomCAS individual verified applicants to the twenty-three schools and colleges of optometry for 2018-2019 was 2,472. These applicants submitted a total of 11,746 applications for an average of 4.75 applications per applicant. See Table 2 below for a comparison to previous cycles.

Table 2.

	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019
Verified Applicants	2,604	2,732	2,812	2,687	2,527	2,472
Verified Applications	13,164	13,261	13,620	13,339	12,293	11,746
Total Verified Applications per Applicant	5.06	4.85	4.84	4.96	4.86	4.75

There was a 2% decrease in the number of applicants compared to the previous cycle. The total verified applications decreased by 4%.

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 3). 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 3.

State	School	Total Applicants
AZ	Arizona College of Optometry, Midwestern University	558
IL	Chicago College of Optometry, Midwestern University	536
IL	Illinois College of Optometry	935
IN	Indiana University School of Optometry	458
PR	Inter American University of Puerto Rico School of Optometry	174
MA	MCPHS University School of Optometry	568

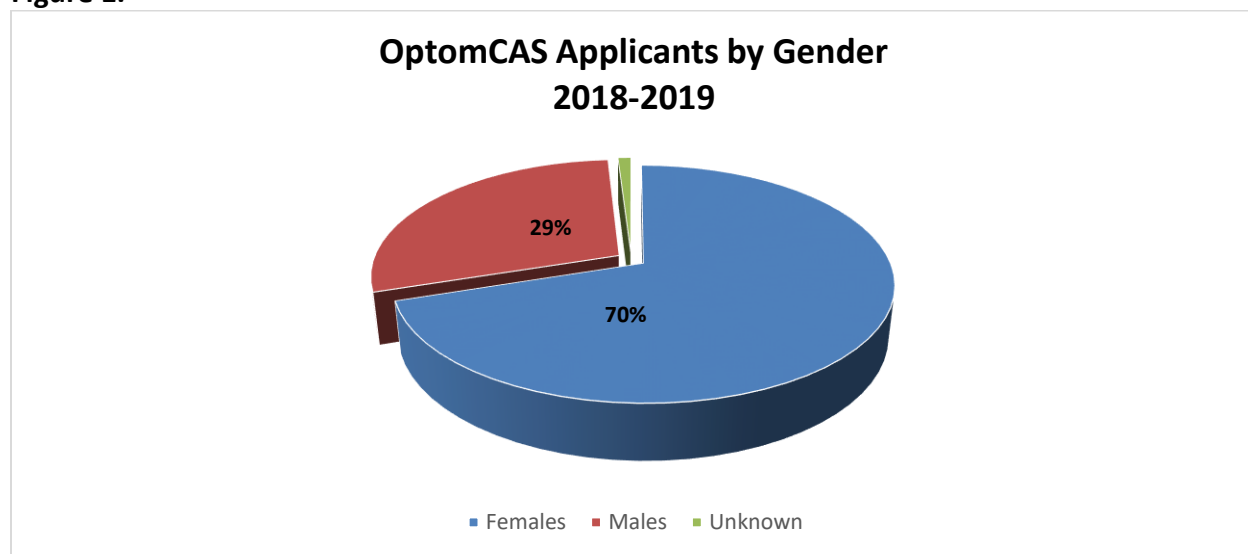
MI	Michigan College of Optometry at Ferris State University	221
MA	New England College of Optometry	806
OK	Northeastern State University Oklahoma College of Optometry	242
FL	Nova Southeastern University College of Optometry	890
OH	The Ohio State University College of Optometry	498
OR	Pacific University College of Optometry	516
PA	Salus University Pennsylvania College of Optometry	973
CA	Southern California College of Optometry at Marshall B. Ketchum University	483
TN	Southern College of Optometry	754
NY	State University of New York College of Optometry	417
AL	University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Optometry	354
CA	University of California, Berkeley School of Optometry	184
TX	University of Houston College of Optometry	568
TX	University of the Incarnate Word Rosenberg School of Optometry	460
MO	University of Missouri at St. Louis College of Optometry	280
KY	University Pikeville, Kentucky College of Optometry	457
CA	Western University of Health Sciences College of Optometry	414

Demographic Information on the Doctor of Optometry Applicant

OptomCAS demographic data are captured on the OptomCAS application. This information cannot be verified by Liaison staff.

Gender

Figure 1.



As shown in Figure 1, females comprised 70% of the OptomCAS applicant pool with males at 29%. Less than 1% of the applicant pool's gender was unknown. This was the same as last application cycle.

Age

Figure 2.

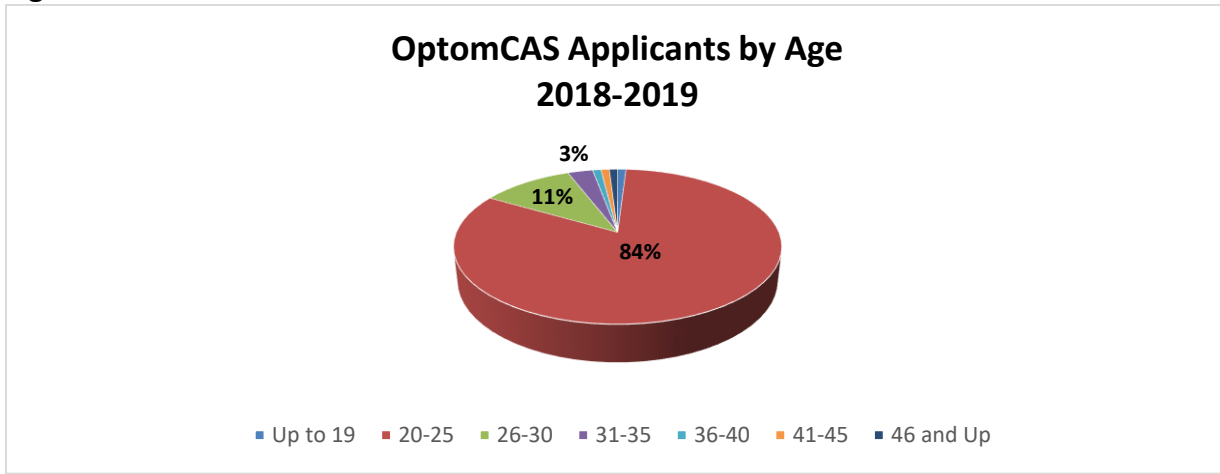
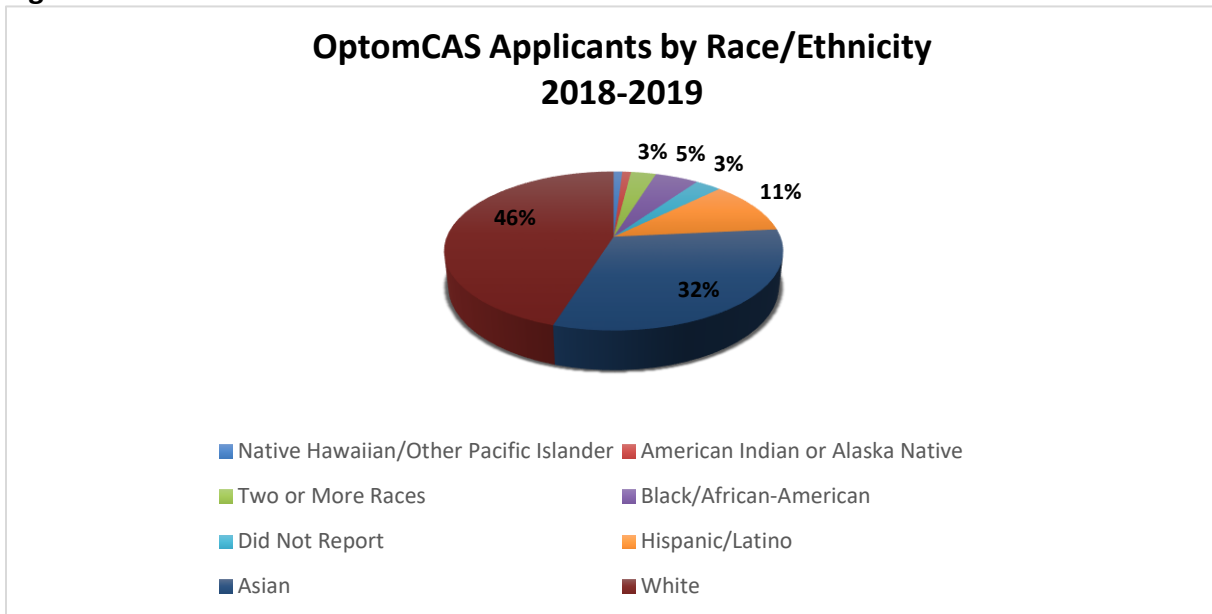


Figure 2 shows that the majority of applicants were in the 20-25 age range followed by the 26-30 age range. The average age for all applicants was 23.2 with a median age of 22. The youngest applicant was 18 and the oldest was 61. There was no significant change from the previous OptomCAS admissions cycle regarding age.

Race/Ethnicity

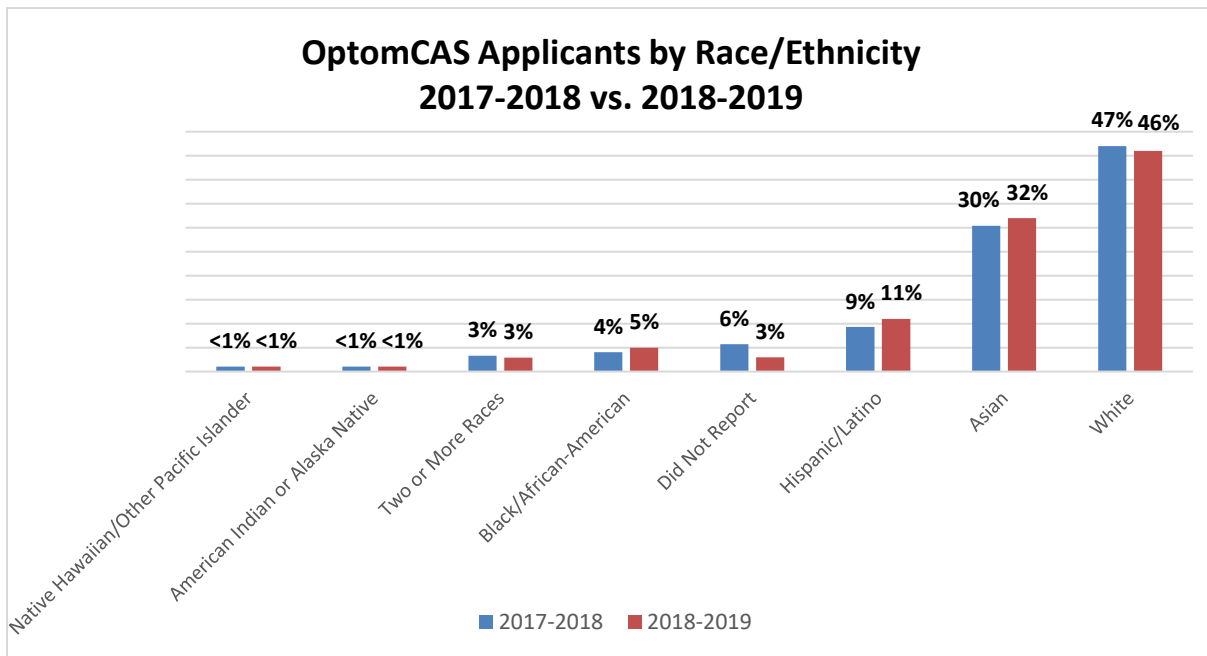
Figure 3.



As shown in Figure 3, the majority of applicants were White (46%) with the other applicants reporting Asian (32%); Hispanic/Latino (11%); Black/African-American (5%); Two or More Races

(3%); American Indian/Alaska Native (less than 1%); and Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander (less than 1%). Three percent of applicants did not report a race.

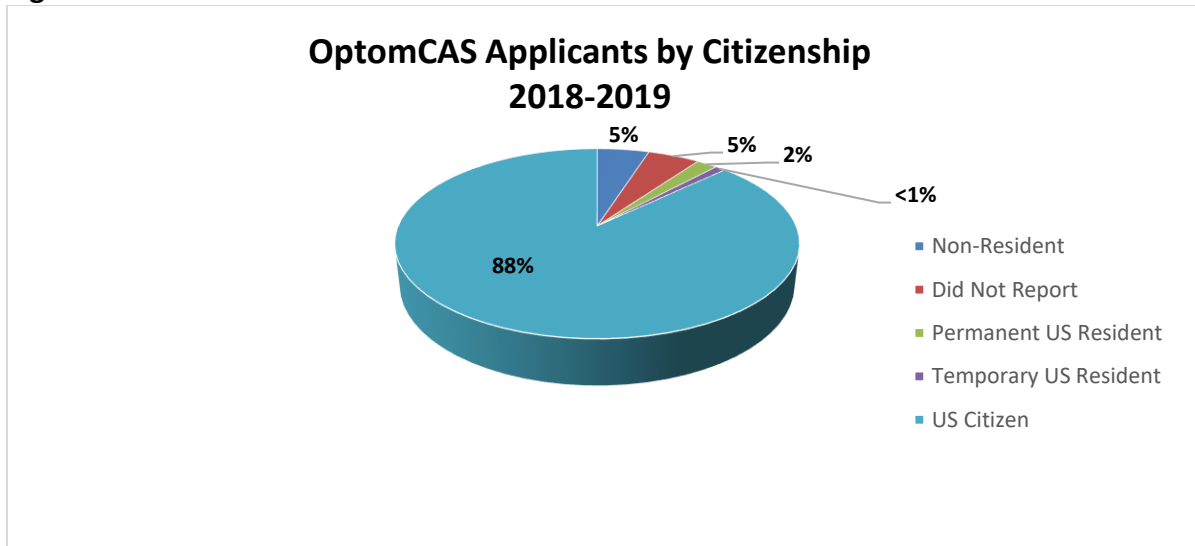
Figure 4.



As shown in Figure 4, the only major shift from last application cycle was with the Did Not Report category, which decreased to 3% this cycle.

Citizenship

Figure 5.



As shown in Figure 5, the majority of applicants in 2018-2019 were US citizens at 88%; 5% were non-residents; 5% did not report; 2% were permanent US residents; and less than 1% were temporary US residents.

State of Residence

The top five states where OptomCAS applicants claimed their state of residence in 2018-2019 were: California, Texas, New York, Florida and Illinois. There were 212 applicants from Canada. In the 2017-2018 Admissions Cycle, the top five states were the same with 205 applicants from Canada.

First Generation College Student

In 2018-2019, 64% of OptomCAS applicants had a parent who attended/graduated from college, while 32% of applicants are first generation college students. Four percent declined to answer the question. There was not a significant 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 were: non-relative optometrist, a parent who is a non-optometrist, relative optometrist, other health professional and friend. These influences were the same as 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 top five spots for feeder institutions for OptomCAS applicants in 2018-2019 were: University of Houston; University of Texas; The Ohio State University; University of California, Los Angeles; and University of Central Florida. In 2017-2018, the top five feeder schools were: University of Houston; University of California, San Diego; University of California, Los Angeles; University of Texas; and University of California, Irvine.

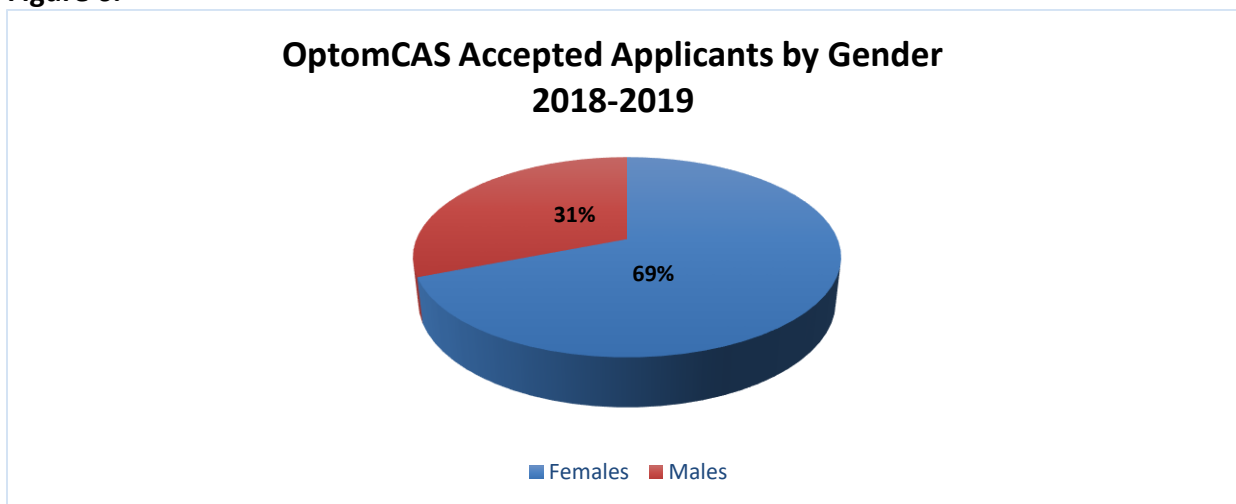
GPA

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 3.36 – for males it was 3.35 and 3.36 for females. The GPAs were similar in the last admissions cycle – 3.31 for males and 3.35 for females.

Accepted Profile of the Doctor of Optometry Applicant

Gender

Figure 6.



For Admissions Cycle 2018-2019, 69% of accepted applicants were female and 31% were male. This was the same in the 2017-2018 application cycle.

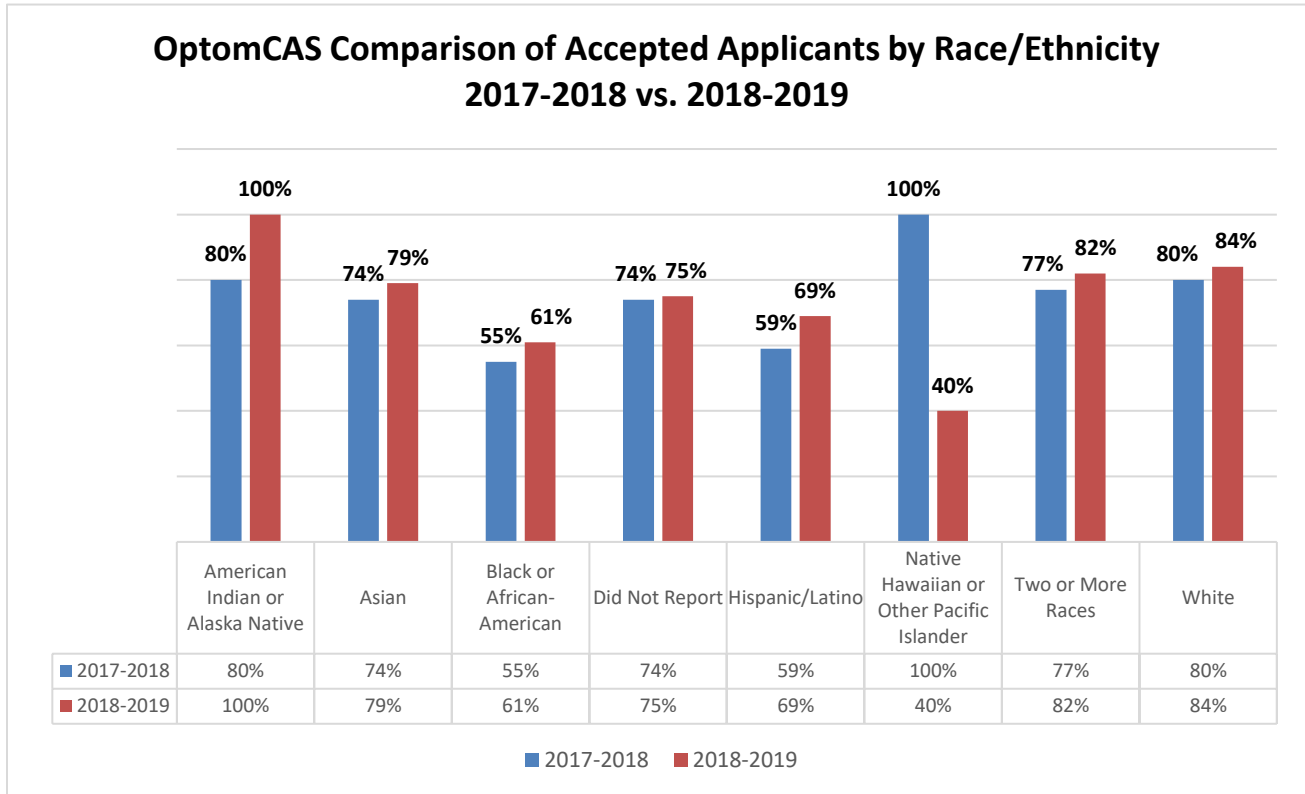
Age

The median age for accepted applicants was 22 years old. It was the same last cycle.

Race/Ethnicity

As shown in Figure 7 below, American Indian/Alaska Native had the highest rate of acceptance at 100%, followed by White at 84%; Two or More Races at 82%; Asian at 79%; Did Not Report at 75%; Hispanic/Latino at 69%; Black/African-American at 61%; and Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander at 40%.

Figure 7.



All races/ethnicities except Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander increased the rate of acceptance from 2017-2018.

GPA

For 2018-2019, the average overall GPA for accepted applicants at the twenty-three schools and colleges was 3.44.

More Information

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

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