

Optometric Technician

One-Year Technical Diploma

Allied Health Program Cluster

Program offered at Madison Campus

For information call: (608) 246-6065 or (608) 246-6557

About the Program

An optometric technician works under the supervision of an optometrist or ophthalmologist and performs:

- Patient pre-testing such as visual acuity, color vision, depth perception, pupil testing, pressure inside the eye, corneal curvature, peripheral vision and blood pressure.
- Contact lens ordering, verification and patient education. The technician may also assist the doctor in the fitting of contact lenses.
- Eyeglass selection, ordering, verification and adjustment.

Established in 1978, the Optometric Technician Program is a one-year technical diploma program that may be completed in nine months of full-time study. The program accepts new students in August.

Instructors train students to work in eye care and emphasize the unique duties required of an optometric technician to provide quality vision care services to patients. The technical training includes optometric terminology, optical properties of light, patient pretesting skills, frame and lens selection, eyeglass adjustment, contact lens patient education, ocular anatomy and physiology, visual training and practice management. Clinical experience—working directly with doctors and patients—is an important part of the curriculum.

Unique Requirements for Admission

1) High school graduate, HSED or GED; 2) satisfactory scores on the COMPASS or equivalent assessment test.

Program Requirements

1) Physical exam and completed Personal History Form on file prior to beginning the clinical affiliation; and 2) written proof of Adult and Child CPR certification prior to beginning the clinical affiliation.

Curriculum

FIRST YEAR

First Semester		Credits	Hrs/week Lec-Lab
31-516-325	Optical Dispensing 1	3	3-2
31-516-301	Ophthalmic Pre-Testing	3	3-3
31-516-305	Basic Optical Concepts	3	3-2
31-516-315	Ocular Anatomy.....	2	3-1
31-543-335	Body Structure.....	2	3-0
31-516-339	Human Relations.....	1	2-0
Semester Total		14	

Second Semester

31-516-326	Optical Dispensing 2	2	2-2
31-516-327	Clinical Ophthalmic Procedures.....	2	0-4
31-516-330	Contact Lenses	3	3-2
31-516-335	Ophthalmic Specialty Testing.....	3	3-3
31-516-340	Patient Relations and Practice Management.....	2	3-0
31-516-345	Preclinical	2	0-4
31-516-350	Clinical Experience*	3	0-40
Semester Total		17	

*Clinical experience lasts six weeks and begins on week 15 of the second semester of study.

Note: A copy of the essential functions necessary to successfully complete the program of study is available upon request from the division office.

Program Courses

31-516-301 Ophthalmic Pre-Testing 3 credits

Covers the history of optometry, relationships between optometry, ophthalmology and opticianry and various paraprofessional careers in vision care. The course involves the study of and practical experience in patient pre-testing such as case history, visual acuity, color vision, pupil evaluation and depth perception as well as the specialized testing procedures such as keratometry and blood pressure.

31-516-305 Basic Optical Concepts 3 credits

Covers the properties of light and the function of a lens in vision correction. Included is a review of basic math needed in vision care and the physiological aspects of vision. This course begins the study of the neutralization and verification of spectacle lens powers, to include spherical, cylindrical and prism lenses.

31-516-315 Ocular Anatomy 2 credits

Familiarizes the optometric technician with the form and function of the human eye. The foundation of the lecture material is the anatomy of the eye, but we will discuss the physiology and function of the eye as much as possible. We will also discuss the actions and uses of diagnostic pharmaceutical agents, as their function is based on interference with normal ocular physiology. This course also covers optometric terminology as well as prescription translation.

31-516-325 Optical Dispensing 1 3 credits

Covers frame definition, parts and types of frames, measurement of frames and lenses, alignment of frames, inserting and removing lenses, introduction to dispensing of eyewear and frame repairs.

31-516-326 Optical Dispensing 2 2 credits

This course assists the student in developing a mastery of the alignment and adjustment of eyewear. It also covers the various lens materials, multifocal styles and lens tints. Prerequisites: 31-516-325 and 31-516-305.

31-516-327 Clinical Ophthalmic Procedures 2 credits

This course prepares the technician to assist the doctor in advanced office techniques in the area of ultrasound, in-office surgical procedures, case history and scribing. Students will also study various systemic diseases and their affect on the eye. The performance of various skills is emphasized in the laboratory sessions. Prerequisites: 31-516-315, 31-516-301, 31-516-305, 31-509-303

31-516-330 Contact Lenses 3 credits

Gives the student in-depth exposure to the technical aspects of clinical contact lens practice. Lecture and laboratory experiences emphasize lens verification, patient education and evaluation. Prerequisites: 31-516-301, 31-516-305 and 31-516-315.

31-516-335 Ophthalmic Specialty Testing 3 credits

Provides the student experience and knowledge in areas of special vision care procedures: subjective refraction, visual field testing, slit lamp, Goldmann and non-contact tonometry, basic concepts of orthoptics and the treatment of eye diseases including instillation of eye medications and eye patching. Patient instruction and assistance are emphasized in laboratory sessions. Prerequisites: 31-516-301, 31-516-305 and 31-516-315.

31-516-339 Human Relations 1 credit

Introduces students to their personal and vocational responsibilities as an optometric technician. The development of communication skills one needs as an optometric technician are introduced. The ethical and legal responsibilities of an optometric technician are defined. Time management techniques will be presented. Basic concepts of stress and how it affects behavior, and stress management are discussed. The course also covers writing a job application letter and resume as well as interview techniques.

31-516-340 Patient Relations and Practice Management 2 credits

Provides a study of front office management techniques including telephone and appointment book management, filing, recall systems, bookkeeping and insurance claim processing.

31-516-345 Preclinical 2 credits

Prepares students for clinical affiliation by having them complete vision screenings on patients from the college. Class discussions are held analyzing the results of the screening as well as the students' performance. Prerequisites: 31-516-301, 31-516-305 and enrollment in 31-516-335.

31-516-350 Clinical Experience 3 credits

Students participate 40 hours per week for six weeks of assigned clinical experience in an optometric or clinic setting. The student is expected to achieve specific educational objectives determined for this experience. Prerequisite: satisfactory completion of all first-semester courses plus enrollment in second-semester courses.

Required Related Course

31-543-335 Body Structure 2 credits

Internet-Based Courses

Internet-based courses are available for individuals already employed in eye care. For detailed information, see the Optometric Technician program on the MATC Website at matcmadison.edu. From the homepage, click on "Programs of Study."

Career Potential:

- **Optometric Technician**
- **Ophthalmic Assistant**
Person assists an optometrist or ophthalmologist in the delivery of eye care. Duties may include preliminary testing procedures, dispensing of glasses and contact lenses and front office management.
- **Dispensing Optician**
This person specializes in the fitting and dispensing of eyewear. They may be employed by an optometrist, ophthalmologist or clinic, or own their own optical dispensary.
- **Contact Lens Technician**
Duties may include the ordering, verification and dispensing of contact lenses. The contact lens technician may also assist the doctor in chairside techniques of fitting contact lenses.