



## Ophthalmic Technician Program Admission Requirements

Dear Prospective Student,

Thank you for your interest in Tennessee's only Ophthalmic Technician Program. This packet will introduce you to the Volunteer State Community College Associate of Applied Science Degree, Ophthalmic Technician option. This is a "one-plus-one" program consisting of one year of general education plus one year of ophthalmic-specific technical courses. Upon graduation, students will be eligible to take the Certified Ophthalmic Technician exam.

Ophthalmic technology is a wonderful career wherein demand for technicians far outweighs the number of graduates we can supply. Historically, students are offered jobs weeks to months prior to completion of the Program.

An ophthalmic technician works under the direction of an ophthalmologist (an M.D.) with duties including, but not limited to, taking patient medical histories, visual acuity testing, refractometry, ophthalmic photography, visual field testing, assisting in ophthalmic surgery, ophthalmic ultrasound, and performing a variety of technology-based diagnostic testing and patient services.

After reviewing the enclosed information, you may want to ask additional questions or tour our Program facilities on campus. Additionally, I've listed some helpful websites for more information on this unique career. The link for the last website will show you the other ophthalmic programs in the U.S. and show that we are an accredited program.

[www.jcahpo.org](http://www.jcahpo.org)

[www.atpo.org](http://www.atpo.org)

[www.icaccreditation.org](http://www.icaccreditation.org)

If you are already a Vol State student, you may apply for the program online by completing the "Application Form" on the Ophthalmic Program website: <http://www.volstate.edu/oph>. The program's "Information Packet" can also be found on this website and will give information on the sequencing of courses and the process for application to the program.

I look forward to meeting you and helping you in your pursuit of this wonderful profession.

Sincerely,

*Alisha Cornish, O.D.*

Director, Ophthalmic Technician Program  
Volunteer State Community College  
1480 Nashville Pike  
Wallace Building South, S-219  
Gallatin, TN 37066  
Office: 615-230-3723 Fax: 615-230-3251



## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **What is an Ophthalmic Technician?**

**Answer:** Ophthalmic Technology is a career of service to others. It is an opportunity to become part of a team in a medical setting providing quality eye care to the public.

Ophthalmic technicians work under the direction of an ophthalmologist in a variety of settings:

- Academic medical centers
- Ophthalmic clinics or private practices

Duties of the Ophthalmic Technician generally include:

- Case history
- Visual acuity measurement
- Visual field testing
- Imaging: Photography, optical coherence tomography, optical biometry, B scan ultrasonography
- Refractometry
- Contact lenses
- Caring for and maintaining ophthalmic instruments
- Assisting the doctor in minor ophthalmic surgery
- Administering diagnostic tests
- Providing patient services
- Performing a variety of clinical skills

Successful completion of the program allows graduates eligibility to apply for and to take the certification examination to become a Certified Ophthalmic Technician. Certification is available through the Joint Commission on Allied Health Personnel in Ophthalmology (JCAHPO).

### **How do I apply for the Program?**

**Answer:**

1. You must complete an application to the college. Visit <http://www.volstate.edu/admissions/> for details.
2. Submit official transcripts from all colleges/universities previously attended.
3. Complete all necessary prerequisite courses, including OPH 105 Introduction to Ophthalmic Technology with imbedded job shadow
4. Complete the online application form, found under the “Application Form” heading on the ophthalmic website. [www.volstate.edu/oph](http://www.volstate.edu/oph)
5. Complete formal interview process which takes place in April each year

**What courses must I take prior to the screening and official admission into the Program?**

You will be required to complete all general education/prerequisite courses as listed on page 9 of this information packet, including INFS 1010 or the Computer Competency Exam, OPH 105 Introduction to Ophthalmic Technology, and AHC 115 Medical Terminology, prior to being eligible for formal admission into the Program. These courses (also referred to as “prerequisites”) must be completed by the end of the spring semester in which you apply.

**What if I have not completed all of my prerequisite courses prior to the program deadline date?**

You will be ineligible for the Ophthalmic Program if you cannot complete all prerequisites and the computer requirements by the end of the spring semester in which you apply.

**When does screening occur and how many are admitted each year?**

The deadline for application to the program is March 31st. The screening and interview process will be conducted in April. All eligible applicants are notified by email as to the specific date and time of their interview. The program has a maximum class size of 15. Selection is based on GPA, completion of OPH 105 and job shadow, anatomy and physiology grade, essay (written on the day of the interview), and effectiveness in the interview setting.

**What are the requirements for admission?**

Acceptance is contingent upon completion of the general education/prerequisite courses, with a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better in these prerequisite courses. A grade lower than a “C” in a course required for entrance into the program, will not be accepted.

**If I am officially admitted into the program, are there requirements other than the cost of the maintenance fees for my course?**

Yes. The requirements are:

| <b>Extra Ophthalmic Costs</b>                    | <b>Approximate Cost</b>    |
|--|----------------------------|
| Text books                                       | \$500                      |
| Website membership                               | \$150                      |
| Thumb drive                                      | \$30                       |
| CPR course (provided after admission to program) | \$60                       |
| *Background check                                | \$50                       |
| *10 Panel drug screen                            | \$40                       |
| *Professional liability insurance                | \$40                       |
| Scrubs   | \$40 per pair              |
| *TB skin test                                    | \$25                       |
| Tetanus vaccination                              | \$50                       |
| Varicella vaccination                            | \$125                      |
| MMR vaccination                                  | \$70                       |
| Hepatitis B                                      | \$75 each (3) total needed |
| Health Insurance                                 | Various cost               |
| Certified Ophthalmic Technician Exam             | \$325                      |

\*Requirements completed only after formal admission to the program

Students must provide proof of the immunizations below. If documentation of proof of immunization cannot be located, titers can be drawn to prove immunity.

- MMR: Proof of two live measles (rubeola and rubella) and mumps vaccinations (if born after January 1, 1957)
- Varicella: 2 doses or credible history of disease if born on or after January 1, 1980
- Hepatitis B: proof of 3 doses before the start of patient care
- Tetanus: within last 10 years

### **How long is the program?**

After completion of all prerequisites and formal admission, the Ophthalmic Program is 12 months (3 semesters) in length. The program begins in the summer.

### **How will I pay for my education?**

Every student has a unique financial situation. You are encouraged to discuss your situation with a member of the Financial Aid Department in the Wood Campus Center room 116, as you begin your college education and again if you are admitted into the Ophthalmic Technician Program. You can find information online regarding financial aid at, <http://www.volstate.edu/FinancialAid/>.

For information on current tuition and fees, visit <http://www.volstate.edu/BusinessOffice/Fees.php>.

### **What are the technical aspects of the program that I must meet if accepted into the program?**

In order to perform the duties of an ophthalmic technician an individual must be able to:

1. Visually assess patient's condition.
2. Visually assess results of ophthalmic testing.
3. Demonstrate adequate visual acuity to assess a patient's condition, read patient charts, check proper function of equipment, and to distinguish colors.
4. Push and pull wheelchair with patient seated in wheelchair.
5. Lean over to lock wheelchair and lift footrests.
6. Verbally instruct patient in a clear, concise, easily understandable manner.
7. Interact appropriately with patients, co-workers, and visitors.
8. Read and comprehend written communications. Provide written communication to medical and technical staff.
9. Demonstrate manual dexterity in handling of syringes for injection, manipulation of small knobs and equipment controls, and preparation of equipment while maintaining sterile technique.
10. Ability to ascend and descend stairway in case of fire or emergency in absence of an elevator.
11. Bend and rest on knees for performing chest compressions.
12. Use extended arms and force of shoulders and upper back to compress chest 2 inches.
13. Respond appropriately to sounds, i.e. patient voice and movements, at a normal conversational volume.
14. Respond appropriately to equipment signals such as sound and light.
15. Manipulate mechanical and patient care equipment simultaneously, i.e. dials, switches, push buttons, keyboards, and blood pressure equipment.
16. Perform for a prolonged period without breaks, e.g., typical shift of eight hours.

17. Oral communication skills sufficient to communicate in English with accuracy, clarity, and efficiency with patients, their families, and other members of the health care team, including non-verbal communication, such as interpretations of facial expressions.

**Who on the Vol State campus can answer other questions that I might have?**

Alisha Cornish, located in the Wallace Health Science Building South, room S-219, will be glad to answer any questions you may have. To schedule an appointment for advising, contact Alisha by email at: [alisha.cornish@volstate.edu](mailto:alisha.cornish@volstate.edu) or call 615-230-3723. To ensure your questions are answered fully, please review the information on the Ophthalmic Program's website, [www.volstate.edu/oph](http://www.volstate.edu/oph), prior to setting up your advising appointment.

The Advising Center, located in the Ramer Building, Suite 174, can also answer advising questions. Please see the Advising Center's website for specific information on speaking with an academic advisor. <https://www.volstate.edu/advising/>

***\*Curriculum changes for prerequisites and The Ophthalmic Program are subject to change at the end of the year. Please visit www.volstate.edu, click on: Academics – Health Sciences – Ophthalmic Tech to view changes.***



**OPHTHALMIC TECHNICIAN PROGRAM  
COURSE DESCRIPTION BY SEMESTER**

**The OPH course below will be completed as a prerequisite to The Ophthalmic Program.**

***INTRODUCTION TO OPHTHALMIC TECHNOLOGY - OPH 105***

**COURSE CREDIT:** 2 Credit Hours  
**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course introduces students to the history of ophthalmic technology, including roles and responsibilities in the field. Ethics of patient care and medical economics will also be discussed.

**Summer**

***OCULAR ANATOMY AND PHYSIOLOGY - OPH 102***

**COURSE CREDIT:** 2 Credit Hours  
**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course will present the normal anatomy of the adnexa, globe and visual pathway and the physiology of ocular movements and vision. In addition, some of the more common pathophysiology will be discussed and identified. Thirty lecture hours per semester.

***OPHTHALMIC PROCEDURES 1 - OPH 150***

**COURSE CREDIT:** 3 Credit Hours  
**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** Basic principles and skills for ophthalmic procedures will be taught. These include visual acuity measurement, lens measurements, tonometry, charting, medical history documentation, use of slit lamp, OSHA requirements, and papillary exam.

***CLINICAL OPTICS I - OPH 112***

**COURSE CREDIT:** 2 Credit Hours  
**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** Students will learn the basic physical, geometric, and physiologic optical principles as applied to the eye and visual system including the visual pathway, light transmission, absorption, reflection and refraction.

**CLINICAL APPLICATIONS I - OPH 110C**

**COURSE CREDIT:** 4 Credit Hours

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** Supervised practice of clinical skills learned during the Summer Semester. 202 clinical hours for the semester

**FALL**

**BASIC OPHTHALMIC PHARMACOLOGY - OPH 121**

**COURSE CREDIT:** 1 Credit Hour

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course will acquaint the student with ocular pharmacology including diagnostic agents, therapeutic agents, antibiotics, topical anesthetics, antivirals, antihistamines/anti-allergic agents, and many of the systemic medications with which they come into contact. Indications for these agents and their common side effects will be discussed. A review of the autonomic nervous system as it relates to medications and their actions will be presented.

**INTRODUCTION TO OCULAR DISEASES - OPH 123**

**COURSE CREDIT:** 1 Credit Hour

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** Basic characteristics of common ocular disorders will be presented in this course. Included are: the anterior segment, ocular adnexa, posterior segment diseases and conditions most common to the ophthalmology practice. A review of systemic diseases relating to ocular conditions will be presented as well as common diagnostic and therapeutic treatments. Triage for ocular emergencies will be presented in detail.

**RETINOSCOPY and REFRACTOMETRY - OPH 127**

**COURSE CREDIT:** 2 Credit Hours

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course will introduce students to the principles and techniques of retinoscopy and intermediate refractometry measurements with emphasis on skill development using various retinoscopes. Principles and techniques of spectacle fitting and adjustment will also be included. Fifteen lecture and 30 lab hours per semester.

**OPHTHALMIC PROCEDURES II - OPH 151**

**COURSE CREDIT:** 3 Credit Hours

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course introduces the student to the fundamentals of surgical assisting, microbial control procedures, and safe handling of equipment and supplies. Students will learn to use specialized equipment to perform acuity testing, ultrasonography,

ophthalmic photography, and corneal topography. Basic interpretations of fluorescein angiography and laser procedures are also included.  
Thirty lecture and 30 lab hours per semester.

### ***CLINICAL APPLICATIONS II - OPH 120C***

**COURSE CREDIT:** 8 Credit Hours  
**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** Supervised practice of clinical skills learned during the Spring Semester. 404 clinical hours per semester

## **SPRING**

### ***OPHTHALMIC PROCEDURES III - OPH 152***

**COURSE CREDIT:** 3 Credit Hours  
**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course introduces the student to the fundamentals of contact lens fitting and patient instruction techniques will also be covered. The course will also cover various other ophthalmic skills and procedures.  
Thirty lecture and 30 lab hours per semester.

### ***OPHTHALMIC PROCEDURES IV - OPH 153***

**COURSE CREDIT:** 2 Credit Hours  
**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course introduces the student to the principles and techniques of visual field measurement, causes of visual field loss, basic external ophthalmic exam and the documentation of all testing and exam results.  
Fifteen lecture and 30 lab hours per semester

### ***OCULAR MOTILITY - OPH 126***

**COURSE CREDIT:** 2 Credit Hours  
**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** Principles and techniques of keratometry, exophthalmometry, tonography, and advanced motility are presented with emphasis on skill development in these procedures. Fifteen lecture and 30 lab hours per semester.

### ***CLINICAL APPLICATIONS III - OPH 130C***

**COURSE CREDIT:** 7 Credit Hours  
**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** Supervised practice of clinical skills learned during the Summer Semester. 353.5 clinical hours for the semester.



## Volunteer State Community College Ophthalmic Technology Program

### *AAS Degree Student Check List*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

The following must be completed and turned in with application to program.

| General Educational/Prerequisites   | Courses part of Associate Degree  | HRS        | Taken |
|-------------------------------------|---|------------|-------|
| AHC 115                             | Medical Terminology   | 3          |       |
| Fine/Arts/Humanities<br>Choose one  | ART 1030-Intro to Art<br>MUS 1030-Music Appreciation<br>ENGL 1030-Intr Film | 3          |       |
| BIOL 2010                           | Human Anatomy & Physiology I(Lecture/Lab)                                   | 4          |       |
| BIOL 2020                           | Human Anatomy & Physiology II (Lecture/Lab)                                 | 4          |       |
| ENGL 1010                           | English Composition I   | 3          |       |
| MATH 1010 or<br>MATH 1130 or higher | Math Liberal Art<br>College Algebra   | 3          |       |
| PSYC 1030                           | General Psychology  | 3          |       |
| OPH 105                             | Introduction to Ophthalmic Technology                                       | 2          |       |
| INFS 1010                           | Computer Applications   | 3*See Note |       |
|                                     | <b>Total Gen Ed</b>   | <b>28</b>  |       |

\*If you have not completed all of the requirements at the time of the application process, please contact an advisor in the Health Sciences Department to discuss you eligibility.

### REQUIREMENTS AFTER FORMAL ACCEPTANCE INTO PROGRAM

| Summer   | Course                        | HRS       |
|----------|-------------------------------|-----------|
| OPH 102  | Ocular Anatomy and Physiology | 2         |
| OPH 150  | Ophthalmic Procedures I       | 3         |
| OPH 110C | Clinical Applications I       | 4         |
| OPH 112  | Ophthalmic Optics             | 2         |
|          | <b>Total Summer</b>           | <b>11</b> |

| Fall     | Course                              | HRS       |
|----------|-------------------------------------|-----------|
| OPH 120C | Clinical Applications II            | 8         |
| OPH 121  | Basic Ophthalmic Pharmacology       | 1         |
| OPH 123  | Introduction of Ophthalmic Diseases | 1         |
| OPH 127  | Refractometry/Retinoscopy           | 2         |
| OPH 151  | Ophthalmic Procedures II            | 3         |
|          | <b>Total Fall</b>                   | <b>15</b> |

| Spring   | Course                    | HRS       |
|----------|---------------------------|-----------|
| OPH 130C | Clinical Applications III | 7         |
| OPH 152  | Ophthalmic Procedures III | 2         |
| OPH 153  | Ophthalmic Procedures IV  | 3         |
| OPH 126  | Ocular Motility           | 2         |
|          | <b>Total Spring</b>       | <b>14</b> |
|          | <b>Total Major Core</b>   | <b>40</b> |

**IMPORTANT:** Prior to graduation, all students must successfully complete Computer Applications (INSF 1010, 3 credit hours) or pass the competency exam. For more information visit: <http://www.volstate.edu/ComputerLiteracy/>. Students are strongly encouraged to complete this requirement prior to the interview process.

**NOTE to Scholarship students/financial aid students:** Please contact your advisor for sequencing of courses each semester prior to registration. If transferring credits to VSCC, all transferred courses must be on file with Records Office by graduations dates.