OAT Preparation and Scores:

What do I need to know about the OAT?

The OAT (Optometry Admissions Test) is administered by ASCO (www.opted.org) and is given at a Prometric testing centers. You must call and reserve a test date. Should it be necessary to repeat the test to improve your scores, you are permitted to retake the OAT at 90 day intervals.

For a traditional applicant—one applying between their junior and senior year of undergrad—it is best to take the OAT in the summer between your junior and senior year. If your scores are not satisfactory, taking it this early in the admissions cycle will give you plenty of time to retake the test to improve your scores and not be too late for a rolling admissions cycle. For more information about rolling admissions, email us at ODadmissions@ketchum.edu and request the FAQ entitled "Rolling Admissions."

It is not necessary to have taken the OAT before submitting your application through OptomCAS (www.optomcas.org).   OAT scores are reported directly to SCCO by ASCO. The admissions cycle runs July 1 through March 15 of any given year. To meet the March 15 application deadline, the last date to take the OAT is March 1 of any admissions cycle.

OAT scores do expire. For the OAT scores to be valid, it is required that the OAT test date be no more than 24 months prior to the beginning of the admissions cycle, which begins on July 1 of any given year. For example, if you apply for the 14-15 admissions cycle, you will have had to have taken the OAT in the time period of 24 months prior to July 1, 2014 for your OAT test scores to be valid.

OAT Preparation Information: Call 800-232-2159

How does SCCO evaluate OAT scores?

SCCO's admissions process uses your best **SET** of scores. A set of scores are those scores generated on a certain test day. No averaging of OAT scores is done. We take into consideration your **highest set of scores** and you are not penalized for repeating the OAT. The OAT test score is indexed on a scale of 200 to 400. If you get a score of 300 which represents the 50th percentile, it would mean that 50% of candidates taking the OAT scored higher than you and 50% lower.

To be a competitive applicant for SCCO, you are advised to be at or above the 50th percentile; therefore, at or above 300 in all sections of the OAT. Given the competitiveness of any

admissions cycle, we may accept scores lower than 300 in each section. As a way to strategize for being a competitive applicant, you are advised to score at least 300 or above in each section.

For more information on this topic, email ODadmissions@ketchum.edu and ask for the FAQs entitled:

- "The Academics—First Qualifying Round"
- "10 Steps to Becoming a Competitive Applicant"

What are some of the preferred ways to prepare for the OAT?

ASCO's FAQs for the OAT: https://www.ada.org/oat/index.html

ASCO's website also offers the option to take a practice OAT.

MCAT Prep Book: Students preferred this book over all other study guides. Their comments were that it was the MOST similar to the actual OAT test. They reported that it was "Great because it was a very condensed, straight-forward review that pulls out all the main points that you need to know for the exam."

Kaplan Study Course and Prep Book: Kaplan offers a live-taught course and also a very good prep book. For more information go to www.kaptest.com or 800-527-8378. The live-taught course is good but sometimes doesn't begin and end to accommodate a desired testing date. Many courses are now offered online.

OAT Professor www.OatProfessor.com is a new, online subscription service with sample questions, tests and flash card formats. A fee is paid for the time interval you choose to utilize their service. It is interactive. There is an advisor who chats in live time should help be needed. Students report that it is challenging—just what one would want in this type of venue. Go online and take advantage of their free trial offer.

Exam Krackers www.examkrackers.com is an online site dedicated to MCAT preparation which will also be helpful with the OAT. I like the "Daily MCAT Quiz Questions". Membership is free.

OAT Achiever can be found at www.3tquest.com is a downloadable OAT test prep program. It is very new and I have no recommendations pro or con.

OAT Destroyer http://orgoman.com/oatdestroyer.html is a syllabus which encompasses a wide range of problems with detailed solutions that act as a teaching aid.

ScholarWare www.scholarware.com They offer a CD-ROM available for purchase. Someone savvy with computers could download the info to a PDA for convenient study. No user reviews were available.

Coursesaver http://www.coursesaver.com/ Coursesaver is a compilation of shared resources made up by many students who are focused on a pre-health career.

SCCO's Admissions Blog is a comprehensive resource for OAT preparation tips: http://optometryadmissions.com/category/oat/

There is also a listing of used OAT materials for sale: http://optometryadmissions.com/oat-materials-for-sale/

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