Table of Contents

It will be the responsibility of each student to review a copy of the handbook which will be posted electronically on the official college website (www.opt.uh.edu). Handbook content is subject to change with administrative consent.

Student Optometric Oath .............................................................................................................3

Academic Regulations ..................................................................................................................4

Nonacademic Regulations ..........................................................................................................5

- Rules of Conduct .........................................................................................................................5
- Sexual Misconduct .......................................................................................................................5
- Ethics .........................................................................................................................................7
- Other Student Information .........................................................................................................8
- Mentor/Mentee Eligibility Policy & Procedures ......................................................................9

Financial Information ..................................................................................................................11

Student Services ..........................................................................................................................14

Organizations ................................................................................................................................16

Professional Curriculum ............................................................................................................18

- First year ..................................................................................................................................18
- Second year .................................................................................................................................19
- Third year ..................................................................................................................................20
- Fourth Year .................................................................................................................................21

Course Descriptions ....................................................................................................................22
OATH OF A STUDENT OPTOMETRIST

WITH FULL DELIBERATION, I FREELY AND SOLEMNLY PLEDGE THAT:

- I will practice the art and science of optometry faithfully and conscientiously, and to the fullest scope of my competence.

- I will uphold and honorably promote by example and action the highest standards, ethics and ideals of my chosen profession and the honor of the degree, Doctor of Optometry, which will be granted to me upon completion of all academic requirements.

- I will provide professional care for those who seek my services, with concern, with compassion and with due regard for their human rights and dignity.

- I will place the treatment of those who seek my care above personal gain and strive to see that none shall lack for proper care.

- I will hold as privileged and inviolable all information entrusted to me in confidence by my patients.

- I will advise my patients fully and honestly of all which may serve to restore, maintain or enhance their vision and general health.

- I will strive continuously to broaden my knowledge and skills so that my patients may benefit from all new and efficacious means to enhance the care of human vision.

- I will share information cordially and unselfishly with my fellow optometrists and other professionals for the benefit of patients and the advancement of human knowledge and welfare.

- I will do my utmost to serve my community, my country and humankind as a citizen as well as an optometrist.

I HEREBY COMMIT MYSELF TO BE STEADFAST IN THE PERFORMANCE OF THIS MY SOLEMN OATH AND OBLIGATION
Academic Policy & Procedure
The University of Houston College of Optometry policies were developed in accordance with the General Provisions of the University of Houston Academic Honesty policy: “Honor systems within the professional colleges are especially encouraged.” This document establishes the policies and procedures governing academic and clinical performance, as well as the general principles and expectations regarding ethical and professional conduct that apply to students taking courses in the professional program within the College of Optometry. The full document was drafted by the college Academic Committee and is based on existing principles and practices established by the University Student Handbook, College Student Handbook, and University Eye Institute Policies Manual. Where applicable, the language, policies, and definitions are meant to conform to the University of Houston’s academic policies as defined in the student handbook. However, these policies and procedures are intended to address the unique standards of academic performance and conduct expected of health-care professionals. View the policy in its entirety at: http://www.opt.uh.edu/current-students/academic-resources/academic-policy-and-procedures/.
Rules of Conduct

Except for the following rules of conduct and those relating to academic matters, students disseminate their own behavior codes through approved student organizations and student committees established in cooperation with the Office of Optometry Relations. The college assigns great importance to self-discipline, the ability to work effectively with others, and the ability to conduct oneself in a professional manner. A demonstration of deficiency in any of these qualities will be deemed as evidence that the student is not suited to a professional career. The faculty of the college has the authority to establish and maintain standards of ethical and personal conduct for students in the professional degree program. The Dean is responsible either for enforcing all rules governing student affairs or for delegating the enforcement to others.

By accepting admission to the College of Optometry, students indicate their willingness to subscribe to and to be governed by these rules and regulations. They acknowledge the right of the college and the university to take disciplinary action, determined through regular process, either for failure to abide by such rules and regulations or for conduct determined by such process to be detrimental to the college or the university. The college may terminate enrollment of any student at any time for what the faculty and administration believe to be good and sufficient reasons, such as cheating, plagiarism, misuse of university property, or unprofessional conduct.

It is the responsibility of students to be familiar with University and College regulations and meet the conditions they impose.

Sexual Misconduct Policy

Sexual misconduct is unwelcome behavior of a sexual nature. "Unwelcome" behavior is determined by the complainant (anyone who makes a complaint of sexual misconduct), and it is not the intent behind the sexual behavior that counts but its impact on the respondent (anyone who has been accused of committing an act of sexual misconduct) that constitutes sexual harassment.

For purposes of this policy, consent is an informed and freely & affirmatively communicated willingness to participate in a particular sexual activity (for a fully detailed definition of consent, please see Section 5 of the UH Sexual Misconduct Policy found here: http://www.uhsystem.edu/students/salutations/index.php). Alcohol and other drugs can lower inhibitions and create an atmosphere of confusion over whether consent is freely/effectively given. Being intoxicated or high is never an excuse for engaging in sexual misconduct.

Sexual misconduct may include:

- Sexual assault, sexual exploitation, sexual intimidation, sexual harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking (for definitions of these terms in regard to this policy, please see Section 6 of the UH Sexual Misconduct Policy found here: http://www.uhsystem.edu/students/salutations/index.php);
- Use of graphic or degrading verbal, written, or electronic comments of a sexual nature about a person;
- Verbal remarks of a sexual nature, including sexually offensive jokes;
• Any unwelcome physical contact (touching, pinching);
• Actual or threatened physical assault.

Protection from sexual harassment applies not only to instructional and workplace settings but also to clinical settings, where the person exhibiting the inappropriate behavior may be a patient, relative of a patient, or anyone working in the clinic. Sexual misconduct is illegal. Furthermore, the University of Houston College of Optometry acts in accordance with the University of Houston’s commitment to addressing sex discrimination & harassment by complying with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. This act prohibits discrimination based on sex in education programs or activities, and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, prohibits sex discrimination in employment. Sexual misconduct, as defined by the UH Sexual Misconduct Policy, constitutes a form of sex discrimination prohibited by Title VII & Title IX.

Sexual misconduct may be committed by men or women, strangers or acquaintances, and may occur between people of the same or opposite sex. This policy applies regardless of the complainant’s or respondent’s sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. An attempt to engage in conduct that constitutes sexual misconduct under this policy may be treated itself as an act of sexual misconduct.

**COURSE OF ACTION**

**Harassment by a patient:** If you believe a patient in a UHCO clinic is engaging or attempting to engage you in any form of sexual misconduct, you should excuse yourself from the examination room and notify your service director immediately. Your director will assist you in managing or resolving the situation. No student is ever expected to remain in a sexual misconduct-related situation in a clinic (internal or external), a classroom, or any other setting of the College. Sexual misconduct is rare, but it does occur and is unacceptable in the College and the University. Students, like other professionals, are expected to understand what constitutes sexual misconduct and to act accordingly.

**Other circumstances:** If you believe you have a reportable instance of sexual misconduct involving someone other than a patient, you may report your concern to the Dean of the College or to the Associate Dean of Professional Studies. You may also submit a report via UH’s secure web-based MySafeCampus ([http://www.mysafecampus.com](http://www.mysafecampus.com)), which allows the option of anonymity. You may also contact the Equal Opportunity Services Title IX Coordinator at 713-743-8835 to receive counseling or to file a formal complaint. Ignoring sexual harassment does not make it go away. Students should speak up, tell someone, keep a record of what happened, and seek support and counseling.

For additional information on ways to report incidents of sexual misconduct, please see Section 9 of the UH Sexual Misconduct Policy found here:

[http://www.uhsystem.edu/students/salutations/index.php](http://www.uhsystem.edu/students/salutations/index.php)
CODE OF ETHICS
UHCO follows the Code of Ethics approved by the American Optometric Association in 1944. It shall be the Ideal, the Resolve, and the Duty of the Members of the American Optometric Association:

| TO KEEP | the visual welfare of the patient uppermost at all times; |
| TO PROMOTE | in every possible way, in collaboration with this Association, better care of the visual needs of mankind; |
| TO ENHANCE | continuously their education and technical proficiency to the end that their patients shall receive the benefits of all acknowledged improvements in visual care; |
| TO SEE THAT | no person shall lack visual care, regardless of his financial status; |
| TO ADVISE | the patient whenever consultation with an optometric colleague or reference for other health professional seems advisable |
| TO HOLD | in professional confidence all information concerning a patient and to use such data only for the benefit of the patient; |
| TO CONDUCT | themselves as exemplary citizens; |
| TO MAINTAIN | their offices and their practices in keeping with professional standards; |
| TO PROMOTE | and maintain cordial and unselfish relationships with members of their own profession and of other professions for the exchange of information to the advantage of mankind. |

PERSONAL ATTIRE AND HYGIENE
Since the treatment of patients occurs in close proximity to classrooms and laboratories, each student is expected to dress appropriately and in a professional manner, and in accordance with the clinical attire policy whenever in patient care areas. Students who are not properly attired or who have not observed adequate personal hygiene may be barred from patient areas by the faculty.

HAZING
Initiations by organizations may involve NO action that is either dangerous or degrading to students.

NONACADEMIC DISCIPLINARY ACTION
Any student who engages in an act that violates existing UH student life policy is subject to disciplinary action, including dismissal. Moreover, students who demonstrate blatant disregard for the rights of others or who show other unprofessional conduct may be dismissed from the college.
OTHER INFORMATION

CONTACT INFORMATION

All students are responsible for keeping the college’s Office of Optometry Relations informed of their current local address, cell or alternate telephone number, home address, home telephone number, and where they may be reached if employed. This includes keeping information updated in PeopleSoft and responsible for checking UH and UHCO messages which are sent through approved system accounts.

EXTERNAL CLINIC ROTATIONS

Students spend 32 weeks in clinic rotations during the fourth year. Several of these clinics are in or near Houston and require no extra expense except for transportation. Other externship sites are located in other regions, states, or countries. A complete list of current externship sites is available through the Office of Optometry Relations. Students should plan for additional transportation and room and board expenses for extern assignments outside the Houston area.

I.D. CARDS

Each student is required to have in his or her possession a photo-I.D. card issued by the University of Houston. Students may go online to your cougarnet account and click the cougar card icon. Upload a picture or stop by the CougarCard office located next door to the UH Welcome Center parking garage. If you have any questions regarding your CougarCard, please contact 713-743-2273.

PARKING

There are a variety of parking options available for students through the Parking and Transportation Office. To view options and purchase parking permits, visit your cougarnet account and click the parking icon for more information. There is NO student parking allowed in the UEI/UHCO designated patient lot. Student vehicles parked in any unauthorized spaces on campus will be towed at the owner’s expense. Optometry students who park in the patient parking area may be charged with unprofessional conduct and will be referred to the Dean.

Right to Privacy

Privacy of student records and other personal information is protected under the Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974, as amended (PS. 93-380), (http://www.uh.edu/legal-affairs/contract-administration/pdf-documents/FERPA%20Authorization%20Form%20OGC-SF-2006-02.pdf) and by policies issued by the university. Students who have specific questions concerning government and university policies on privacy should consult the Office of Optometry Relations. Transcripts and other personal information will be released by that office only upon receiving written permission from a student or from persons authorized by law.

OPTOMETRIC SERVICES

Current students, faculty, staff, and members of their immediate families (spouse, children, stepchildren, parents, stepparents, and siblings) may obtain examinations at the clinical center operated by the college. NOTE: Covered children and medical exams require a referral from their PCP for billing purposes. If you are unable to obtain this referral, services are rendered at no cost. Extended family members (grandparents, aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, cousins, in-laws) may
also receive courtesy reductions on services provided. Insurance policies will be billed, and copays will be collected when applicable.

Courtesy reductions for ophthalmic materials are provided when applicable. The service director alone has the authority to extend professional courtesy to a patient, in the form of a total or a partial waiving of the examination fee.

**STUDENT E-MAILS**

All information sharing and correspondences with faculty, staff and administrators must be conducted through the UHCO alumni e-mail account provided to each admitted student at time of matriculation. Failure to do so will null and void said correspondence with the intended recipient. Any communication or information sent from a personal email account will be treated as spam/junk/not received by the faculty, staff and administration who are not required to respond or act upon the email exchange. The official university/college operating hours are M-F 8am-5pm, excluding holidays, and e-mail and phone messages will be returned during this time. If your message is of an urgent nature (illness, family emergency etc.), note URGENT in the e-mail subject line and send a copy of the message to the Student Advocate. Text messages, social media or other forms of contact are not acceptable forms of communication. If a faculty member has provided a phone number in the syllabus and instructed you to contact them regarding emergencies via phone, you may call the number and leave a message. Send an email message to the faculty member in addition to the call in cases where you must leave a voice mail, and forward a copy of the e-mail message to the Student Advocate and/or members of the UHCO administration as appropriate. This will ensure your message is received should the faculty member be traveling or unavailable to return to call.

**MENTOR/MENTEE ELIGIBILITY POLICY & PROCEDURES**

- At the beginning of summer, after the OPT I students’ spring grades are posted, the Program Manager for Admissions and/or the Program Manager for Current Student Services (or another designated Team OOR member) reviews all OPT I GPAs to determine eligibility for serving as a mentor going forward in the program.
- A rising OPT II student must have earned a cumulative GPA of 2.5 or higher during his/her OPT I year in order to serve as a mentor and receive a mentee from the incoming OPT I class. In addition, a rising OPT II student must not have been on academic probation, suspension or have appeared before the Academic Committee for other academic or disciplinary reasons.
- The list of names of eligible mentors – including information on students’ hometowns and alma maters – is shared with the rising OPT II members of the Orientation Committee (OC) who are designated to match mentors with incoming mentees. No GPAs or other explanations of ineligibility are shared with the OC members. The OC members are instructed to refer any students with questions regarding eligibility to the OOR; the OC members should never feel responsible for explaining eligibility.
- The Program Manager for Admissions and/or the Program Manager for Current Student Services messages individually each ineligible rising OPT II student to explain the mentor selection policy and the circumstances of his/her ineligibility.
- OC members match mentors and mentees based on social media research, knowledge and requests of their own classmates and the information provided them by OOR.
• Around the beginning of August (or when the matching is complete), OC members contact mentors and provide them with their mentee(s)’ name and email address. Mentors are encouraged to reach out to their mentee(s) to welcome them to UHCO, share their contact information, encourage questions and interaction and, overall, establish their relationship prior to the OPT I students’ arrival for Orientation.

• OC members’ notes and the mentor/mentee matching information are shared with OOR to keep on file.

Later in August or early September, mentors and mentees are invited to attend a dinner celebrating their pairing and furthering the encouraging/mentoring relationship. Mentors go on to serve as sounding boards for their mentees when it comes to any aspects of the UHCO program, moving to and around the city of Houston and more. Mentees benefit their mentors by serving as patients as the OPT II students prepare for their pre-clinical practical exams.
FINANCIAL INFORMATION

For complete information about loans and scholarships or to obtain needed forms, contact the financial aid officer in the Office of Optometry Relations. UHCO Academic deadlines and Academic calendar may differ from the UH Main Campus deadlines and calendar. The EXCEPTION to this occurs with Financial Aid deadlines which are University System wide and applied universally. File all financial paperwork according to UH Policy.

FINANCIAL AID SERVICES

The college works with a university financial aid officer to assist students with loans, grants and scholarships. The financial aid officer is located at the UH Welcome Center and holds limited office hours at the college. To schedule an advising appointment or inquire about financial aid, please contact Scott Parker in person or via e-mail at sparke2@central.uh.edu.

EDUCATIONAL COSTS

Tuition rates for all UHCO students will be $591.85 per semester credit hour for Texas Residents and $1,081.85 per semester credit hour for non-residents plus the mandatory University and College fees. Tuition and mandatory fees for first year students will total approximately $23,674 (Texas residents) and $43,274 (out-of-state residents). *(Source: UH Office of Student Business Services; figures as of AY 15/16)*

BOOKS AND EQUIPMENT

Students are required to purchase designated textbooks and equipment. Books and supplies purchased at the University Bookstore cost approximately $800 during the first year. Estimated books cost are approximately $650 for the second year and $550 for the third year. Costs for the fourth year are substantially less. Students may be required to purchase a laptop or notebook computer. Students may purchase their required first year equipment kits through the Optometric Student Association for slightly below cost, which is approximately $2,300. Trial lenses and hand-held instruments—a retinoscope, direct and indirect ophthalmoscopes—are some of the required pieces of equipment that are used throughout the student’s educational career and later in professional practice. Additional equipment is required during first and second year totaling approximately $3,600. A service policy may be purchased with the equipment. Students receive specific equipment lists and information concerning purchase and rental possibilities prior to enrollment.

STUDENT EMPLOYMENT

The optometry curriculum requires the major portion of a student’s time and concentration. During the first academic year, students should outline a financial plan that does not require them to work. College assignments and clinical duties cannot be altered to fit work schedules. Students should discuss the possibility of any employment with the Director of the Office of Optometry.

STUDENT HINTS

Every year in the spring, students submit their “Student Data Sheet” with information which qualifies them for an array of scholarships at UHCO.

If you receive a bill or have questions regarding billing information, you need to contact the Bursar’s Office at (713) 743-1010.
Relations to determine if their academic performance would be jeopardized. Work-study funds and a limited number of teaching and research assistantships are available for upper-level students with excellent academic records.

**SCHOLARSHIPS AND FINANCIAL AID**

Before pursuing a degree in Optometry, students must consider a sound financial plan for their educational expenses early in their decision-making process. Financial assistance may or may not meet all of the student’s expenses. Eligible students will be awarded as much financial assistance as possible but not beyond their cost of attendance (budget). All financial aid awards are based on information provided on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) ([www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov)) needs analysis form. A Student Aid Report is sent to the student shortly after applying. Financial aid is not awarded until the Student Aid Report is on file at the university and the student is admitted.

Many of the financial aid programs are funded by either governmental agencies or sponsoring individuals and organizations and therefore may be changed or eliminated at any time. All aid programs are subject to the rules, regulations and guidelines of the U.S. Department of Education, State of Texas, University, UH Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid and the College of Optometry Scholarship and Financial Aid Committee. There are no special loan application forms for the Federal loan programs or grants. Applicants who complete the FAFSA may be eligible for these loan programs. Early applicants are given first consideration for these loans. The UHCO financial aid priority-processing deadline is **March 15. All financial aid applicants are strongly encouraged to complete and submit their FAFSA online in January and no later than mid-February.**

The UHCO Financial Aid Office provides information on a variety of other private loan programs for students who need financial assistance beyond the traditional resources in order to meet their expenses. Credit based private loans are available from major lenders. Please borrow only the loan funds needed and know your rights and responsibilities as a borrower.

**FEDERAL DIRECT LOAN PROGRAMS**

**FEDERAL UNSUBSIDIZED DIRECT LOANS**

These loans are for eligible students who show no financial need based on information provided on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid; i.e. if their FAFSA Expected Family Contribution (EFC) figure is higher than their financial aid budget total. Current eligibility for this loan is $40,500 for the Fall & Spring semester and $47,167 for the 12-month period per academic period (Fall, Spring, and Summer). The annual maximums shown are for both types of Direct Loans combined. (See also the Financial Aid Budget Limitation note). The lifetime maximum for both subsidized and unsubsidized Direct Loans is $224,000.

**UNSUBSIDIZED DIRECT LOAN INTEREST PAYMENTS**

Students are cautioned to use this loan program only when necessary because the Federal government does not pay the interest while the student is in school. Students can make the decision to: 1) have the interest added (capitalized) to the amount borrowed or 2) make quarterly interest payments while enrolled when billed.
ENROLLMENT
All students must enroll for at least 6 hours each semester in order to be considered for the Direct Loans. Per Federal loan guidelines, Summer enrollment will require a 6-hour minimum enrollment. Direct loan amounts are reduced for enrollment less than 12 hours.

INTEREST RATES:
The interest rate for the Direct Unsubsidized loan for the 2015/2016 academic year is 5.84%.

LOAN ORIGINATION FEES
Loan fees for the Direct Loans are deducted prior to disbursement to the student. Presently, a 1.068% origination fee is deducted prior to disbursement.

LIFETIME AND ANNUAL DIRECT LOAN LIMITS
Total Direct lifetime limit allowed for graduate or professional students is $224,000, i.e., $65,500 in Subsidized and $158,500 in Unsubsidized Direct Loans. The graduate debt limit includes loans received for undergraduate study. Students are reminded that the maximum nine (9) month Direct Loan limit is $40,500. The maximum student can borrow for the Fall, Spring and Summer semesters is $47,167.

SUMMER FINANCIAL AID
The only financial assistance available in the Summer is a Direct Loans. You must enroll for at least 6 hours to be considered for the summer Stafford loan.

OTHER TUITION & FEE PAYMENT OPTIONS
If your financial aid file is not complete by the tuition due date if you do not have accepted sufficient financial aid, there is an Emergency Deferment Plan available. This option will defer your tuition & fees for the current semester only. This deferment will incur an interest charge. Additionally, a student can also be placed on an installment plan if their financial aid is insufficient. Please see the Student Business Services page at the UH website for further details.

FINANCIAL AID BUDGET LIMITATION
In no case will the student be awarded aid over and above their financial aid budget total. For example, if the financial aid budget total is $43,000, the total of all aid offered including grants, loans, scholarship etc. would not exceed $43,000.

OVER-AWARDS
Students can be over awarded aid due to a number of circumstances such as receipt of a late scholarship, change in tuition amounts, and change of residency status (out of state to in state), reduced enrollment and other circumstances. If the aid awarded exceeds the student budget, the university is required to reduce the amount of aid awarded and the student may be responsible for repayment of the over award. However, the student will still receive aid equal to 100% of their financial aid budget.

OTHER LOAN PROGRAMS
Many state optometric associations and related organizations have loan or grant programs for resident students. To obtain information or apply, students should contact their state optometric association.

AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS
The UHCO Scholarship Committee and/or the UHCO Financial Aid Office will notify by e-mail or the scholarship website (LINK) all students of any currently available scholarships. Each scholarship will have different requirements, deadlines and application forms. The UHCO Scholarship and Financial Aid Committee meet as necessary to review all scholarship applications.

COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY LOANS
A limited number of short-term loans are available for unexpected emergency financial needs. Students who experience such needs should contact the Office of Optometry Relations for information on this loan.
THE COLLEGE’S OFFICE OF OPTOMETRY RELATIONS (OOR) PROVIDES STUDENT SERVICES FOR FUTURE OPTOMETRISTS. STUDENTS MAY CALL OR VISIT THE OFFICE FOR ASSISTANCE OR INFORMATION ABOUT ANY OF THE FOLLOWING:

TUTORING
Students may request tutoring assistance through the Office of Optometry Relations. It is the student’s responsibility to identify the need for tutoring and actively seek assistance. The tutoring program also provides a source of income for academically advanced second- and third-year students who have previously taken the course they want to tutor and have received an A in the course. Any student who has incurred academic sanctions (e.g. suspension or probation) is ineligible to serve as a tutor. Tutors will be assigned based on availability.

LEARNING SUPPORT SERVICES (LSS)
Learning Support Services offers assistance in study skills, time management and test anxiety. Counselors are familiar with the demands of the optometry program and have experience with counseling optometry students. All services are funded by Student Service fees and are free to currently enrolled students. LSS is located in room 321 Social Work building, 713-743-5411.

REGISTRAR SERVICES
The University uses PeopleSoft (MyUH) for all registration and student service needs. Students register and view their schedules at www.my.uh.edu. The Office of Optometry Relations will remind students via-email of the time of registration and other matters including: academic records, residency status determinations, graduation, orientation, and degree confirmation. Notary services are available. The Office of Optometry Relations, Program Manager for Current Student Services, notifies all students of required courses and electives due to requirements, lab assignments, etc. If the student or Associate Dean of Profession Studies makes changes due to academic issues, it is the responsibility of the student to notify the Academic Advisor of any changes to his/her schedule and accept those changes through their PeopleSoft account. The Academic Advisor will assist in registration for course overload and changes made by the college after registration deadlines. Fees accrued through any course changes are the student’s responsibility, and a reimbursement will not be issued. IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE STUDENT TO CHECK HIS OR HER UHCO ASSIGNED E-MAIL ACCOUNT ON A REGULAR BASIS. FAILURE TO RESPOND TIMELY BECAUSE YOU HAVE NOT CHECKED MESSAGES IS UNACCEPTABLE, AND EXCEPTIONS WILL NOT BE GRANTED.

STUDENT COUNSELING
Program Manager for Admissions & Recruiting, Lyle Tate (dltate@central.uh.edu) is available to provide guidance and counseling for a broad range of student issues, both academic and nonacademic. Additional student counseling is also available at the UH Counseling and Testing Center (713-743-5454). Melissa Mares, Assistant Dean for Student Affairs, serves as student advocate and advisor in dealings with the Academic Committee. For appointments: mamares@central.uh.edu

STUDENT HINTS

Q: When and how should I seek help in a course?
A: Do not wait until after your first test; seek help the minute you begin to have difficulties.

Q: How do I become a tutor?
A: You must have completed the course and get permission from the professor and the Office of Optometry Relations.
MESSAGES
Students who must unavoidably miss classes or exams due to an emergency may use the Office of Optometry Relations to notify the college at large. However, students should contact instructors and clinic coordinators directly if they must miss an exam, class, or clinic. Students should then coordinate directly with the faculty member and/or the clinic coordinator, to arrange any make up work. Instructors and clinic should be notified before—not after—an exam or clinic assignment is missed. It is the student’s responsibility to verify that the appropriate person receives the appropriate notification. It is recommended an e-mail message be sent with a copy to the Student Advocate to ensure your message is received and seen. In cases where the faculty member is unavailable, the Advocate will notify the appropriate UHCO/UEI Administrator.

LIBRARIES
The Weston A. Pettey Library is a resource for alumni, faculty, staff and students of the College of Optometry. The Library has an excellent core collection in optometry, ophthalmology, vision science, psychophysics, optics, vision rehabilitation, neuroscience, ocular pharmacology, psychology, general medicine and pediatrics. Electronic access for journals is provided through the UH Libraries. For materials not available through the University Libraries, the Pettey Library staff will obtain the materials for you, free of charge, from Inter-Library Loan. The Library has a computer lab providing access to 36 computers, 2 laser printers and 2 scanners. All computers are networked providing word processing, email, and Internet access. Students are able to access class assignments through the College’s Intranet. Students and faculty are able to use their personal computer via Ethernet connections to the UHCO network throughout the Library. The Library also offers 24 netbook computers with wireless capabilities for checkout. We have nine group study rooms with Ethernet connections and two rooms with audiovisual capabilities. Students may also use the materials and services of the M.D. Anderson Library or any of the other libraries on the University of Houston campus.

HEALTH INSURANCE
All students enrolled at the University of Houston are eligible for a private endorsed insurance policy. Information is available through the University Health Center, 713-743-5151. The American Optometric Association provides medical insurance at low rates, or students may contract for health insurance at a special group rate. (https://www.uhcsr.com/AOSA)

Non-immigrant International students will be enrolled and charged for health insurance each semester to satisfy the University policy regarding maintaining acceptable health insurance coverage. A waiver of the health insurance fee may be requested online with proof of acceptable alternate insurance. (http://www.studentinsurance.com/Schools/TX/UH/) The insurance plan and University’s criteria are reviewed periodically and may be subject to change.
Students are urged to participate in student government at the college and campus-wide levels. In the college, each class elects representatives annually and students serve on standing faculty committees. Student affiliates of optometric associations offer additional opportunities to participate in student governance and activities. Information is provided by each college organization.

**AOSA:** [American Optometric Student Association](#)
The purpose of the American Optometric Student Association is to improve the visual welfare and health of the public, to promote the profession of optometry, and to enhance the education and welfare of optometry students. AOA is the voice of optometry as a whole and speaks as your advocate before the government.

**BSK:** [Beta Sigma Kappa](#)
Is the International Optometric Honor Society and their mission is to stimulate scientific attainment, academic excellence and the ethical practice of optometry; and to promote and provide financial support for worthy research projects relating to vision care and the eyes.

**FCO:** [Fellowship of Christian Optometrists](#)

**NOSA:** [National Optometric Student Association](#)
The National Optometric Student Association is the student extension of the National Optometric Association and is a service organization dedicated to providing the delivery of effective and adequate eyecare to the minority and underserved communities. In addition, NOSA creatively markets the field of optometry in an effort to increase recruitment and retention of underrepresented minorities into the profession.

**OSA:** [Optometric Student Association](#)
The Optometric Student Association is to promote the profession of optometry to students and encourage high professional standards within the student body. The OSA is there for the students to help contribute to and enhance the educational experience of its members. The OSA serves as a liaison to the optometric profession at the local, state and national level.
SOPMA:  **Student Optometric Practice Management Association**  
Our mission is to provide optometry students with the education, resources, and confidence necessary to pursue their individual goals as optometric professionals and preserve the integrity of the profession.

STOA:  **Student Texas Optometric Association**  
The Student’s Texas Optometric Association (STOA) serves as an open line of communication between the students and the Doctors of Optometry in Texas. Our goals include; working to ensure that each community in Texas has access to the highest quality eye care continually providing Optometry students with up-to-date information regarding Legislation influencing Optometry’s scope of practice further strengthening the links between students and Optometrists in both academic and clinical settings.

SVOSH:  **Student Volunteer Optometric Services to Humanity**  
The mission of SVOSH is to provide eye care services to all who need it, especially those who would not normally receive such care, primarily through vision screenings at the local level, eye prescriptions and eyeglasses at the international level, and finally to assist those patients in gaining access to the needed health care services.

SPHVCA:  **Student Public Health Vision Care Association**  
The Student Public Health Vision Care Association (SPHVCA) promotes health and wellbeing, with an emphasis on vision and eye health, through interdisciplinary partnerships. The goal of SPHVCA is to foster a relationship between optometrists and other health care advocates so that the overall health of the community is improved. All SPHVCA members also belong to the American Public Health Association (APHA).

SAAO:  **Student Chapter of the American Academy of Optometry**  
The purpose of this organization is to serve as an extension of The American Academy of Optometry to the students at The University of Houston. We will strive to uphold the mission and values of The American Academy of Optometry by promoting the art and science of vision care through lifelong learning.

TSOSO:  **Texas State Optical Student Organization**  
TSOSO looks to strengthen these ties and build more networking opportunities for TSO optometrists and UHCO students, as well as inform students of opportunities and news TSO has to offer.
## DOCTOR OF OPTOMETRY PROGRAM CURRICULUM (177 HOURS)

### Fall Semester (First Year)

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## Spring Semester (Second Year)

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**Summer Semester (Third Year)**

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**Spring Semester (Third Year)**
**Rotation A (Summer or Fall or Spring)**  
**Externship I – Primary Care**

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**Rotation B (Summer or Fall or Spring)**  
**Externship II – Medical Care**

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**Rotation C (Summer or Fall or Spring)**  
**Specialty Clinic/Didactic**

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*Elective requirements may be fulfilled at any time prior to graduation. They are listed in the curriculum only for suggested times.*  
*The professional curriculum is delivered by two academic units: optometric sciences and basic sciences.*
5000 LEVEL COURSES

5111: Optics I Laboratory Cr. 1. (0-3). Selected experiments in geometrical optics.

5112: Optics II Laboratory Cr. 1. (0-3). Selected experiments in physical and modern optics.

5133: Human Anatomy Laboratory Cr. 1. (0-3). Laboratory in human anatomy with emphasis on head and neck.

5134: Neuroanatomy Laboratory Cr. 1. (0-3). Laboratory in neuroanatomy with emphasis on the visual system.

5135: Ocular Anatomy Laboratory Cr. 1. (0-3). Laboratory in ocular anatomy.

5171: Clinic I Practicum Cr. 1. (0-3). Prerequisite: Concurrent enrollment in OPTO 5271. Laboratories in diagnostic and therapeutic techniques used in primary care optometric practice. Introduction to ocular health assessment techniques and use of ophthalmic diagnostic agents.

5172: Clinic II Practicum Cr. 1. (0-3). Prerequisites: OPTO 5191; concurrent enrollment in OPTO 5272. Laboratories in objective and subjective examination of refractive error, and binocular vision assessment. Application of psychophysical methods to the clinical examination.

5194: Ophthalmic Optics Laboratory Cr. 1. (0-3). Prerequisites: OPTO 5311 and 5111; concurrent enrollment in OPTO 5312, 5112. Lenses and frame selection; ordering; fabrication; verification; dispensing procedures.

5221: Vision Science II Cr. 2. (2-0). The optics and image-forming properties and refractive conditions of the eye.

5233: Advanced Human Anatomy Cr. 2. (2-0). Prerequisites: Concurrent enrollment in OPTO 5133. Advanced human anatomy for health care professionals with emphasis on the gross anatomy and histology of the human structure for the eye-care specialist and vision scientist.

5271: Optometry I Cr. 2. (2-0). Prerequisite: Concurrent enrollment in 5171. Overview of the optometric examination. Discussion of the diagnostic examination process with emphasis on the patient history interview. Introduction to problem-oriented record keeping as applied to optometric practice.

5272: Optometry II Cr. 2. (2-0). Prerequisites: OPTO 5271; concurrent enrollment in OPTO 5172. Conventional therapies utilized in delivering basic optometric primary care services, diagnostic strategies, and problem solving. Topics of discussion include: epidemiology of ametropias; diagnosis, management, and treatment of ametropias; optical principles of diagnostic instrumentation; symptoms and management of binocular vision anomalies and presbyopia.

5282: Community Health Cr. 2. (2-0). This course is designed to acquaint the student with the organization of the health care delivery system and to provide the underpinning of the profession of optometry including its history and socioeconomic, ethical and legal elements. It will include epidemiology and biostatistics as they apply to optometry.

5314: Optics I Cr. 3. (3-0). Prerequisites: Concurrent enrollment in OPTO 5111. Propagation of light; reflection and refraction; lenses and prisms; aberrations.

5315: Optics II Cr. 3. (3-0). Prerequisite: concurrent enrollment in OPTO 5112. The nature of light; apertures and stops; optical instruments; photometry
dispersion; polarization, interference, diffraction; lasers and modern optics.

5320: Vision Science I Cr. 3. (3-0). Monocular sensory aspects of vision; including sensitivity to light and color, and spatial vision.

5331: General Pathology and Medicine Cr. 3. (3-0). Fundamental pathological processes; anomalies of cellular function; disorders of organ systems; immunology; and principles of medicine.

5334: Human Neuroanatomy and Physiology Cr. 3. (3-0). Prerequisite: concurrent enrollment in OPTO 5134. Neuroanatomy and neurophysiology with emphasis on the visual system.

5335: Ocular Anatomy and Physiology Cr. 3. (3-0). Anatomy and physiology of the eye and visual system.

5344: Advanced Human Physiology and Molecular Biology Cr. 3. (3-0). Advanced human physiology and molecular biology for health care professionals with emphasis on the physiology of major organ systems of the body and the molecular basis for health and disease. This course is specialized for eye-care practitioners and vision scientists.

6173: Clinic Practicum III Cr. 1. (0-3).
Prerequisites: OPTO 5171, OPTO 5172, OPTO 5271, and OPTO 5272. Advanced diagnostic and therapeutic techniques. Continued practice in diagnostic and therapeutic techniques used in optometric practice with emphasis on preparation for the Pre-Clinic Credentialing Examination. Vision screenings.

6174: Contact Lens Laboratory Cr. 1. (0-3).
Prerequisites: OPTO 5190 and concurrent enrollment in OPTO 5374 and OPTO 5292. Modification of rigid lenses. Procedures for fitting and dispensing rigid and flexible contact lenses. Introduction to contact lens clinic policies and procedures for follow-up care and record keeping.

6190: Ophthalmic Optics Laboratory Cr. 1. (0-3). Prerequisites: OPTO 5194; concurrent enrollment in OPTO 6311. Frame selection and ordering, dispensing, spectacle fabrication, and contact lens verification.

6219: Vision Science III Cr. 2. (2-0). Normal and abnormal eye movements, pupil responses, and accommodation.

6224: Perception Cr. 2. (2-0). Development and function of visual perception.

6234: Ocular Pathology I Cr. 2. (2-0). Prerequisites: OPTO 5335, 5171, 5234, and 5135. Development of logical diagnostic sequence for patients with disease presentations. Obtaining appropriate problem-focused history. Familiarization with various presentations of ocular disease, isolates specific tissue(s) affected by the disease process, and identifies the main features of the condition. Management or referral of patient will be covered.

6291: General Clinic II Cr. 2. (0-10). Prerequisites: OPTO 5331, 5131, 5132, 5190, 5222, 5232, and 5373. Clinical practice in the primary care clinic. Patient communication and interpersonal relationships.
6311: Optics III Cr. 3. (3-0). Physical and optical characteristics of ophthalmic lenses and prisms; multifocal lenses.

6312: Optics IV Cr. 3. (3-0). Theory of lens design; reflectance; absorption; protective lenses; optics of anisometropia, aphakia, and aniseikonia; optics of visual aids.

6333: Ocular Pharmacology and Therapeutics Cr. 3. (3-0). Prerequisites: OPTO 5234, OPTO 5331, OPTO 5335, OPTO 6234, and OPTO 6434; concurrent enrollment in OPTO 6335. Ocular pharmacology and therapeutics, actions of ophthalmic drugs, clinical considerations including indications, contraindications, and side effects.

6335: Ocular Pathology II Cr. 3. (3-0). Prerequisites: OPTO 5135, 5171, 5335, 5234, 5233, and 5232. Etiological, histo-pathological clinical presentation, differential diagnosis, treatment and management (medical, surgical, and laser) of diseases of the anterior segment of the eye.

6351: Pediatric Optometry I Cr. 3. (3-0). Role of the optometrist in the diagnosis, remediation, and clinical management of enigmatic learning problems including visual and auditory perception skills, learning disabilities, dyslexia and minimal brain damage; clinical procedures and practices in the diagnosis and prognosis of strabismus and amblyopia.

6363: Primary Optometry Cr. 3. (3-0). Prerequisites: concurrent enrollment in OPTO 5191, 5131, and 5222. Understanding of vision analysis data pertaining to binocular vision including: stereopsis, fixation disparity, accommodation and convergence relationships, and binocular refraction.

6374: Contact Lens I Cr. 3. (3-0). Prerequisites: OPTO 5190, and 5373. Concurrent enrollment in OPTO 5192. Optometric diagnosis and treatment: effects of contact lenses on corneal physiology; applied optical principles of contact lenses; rigid and flexible contact lens fitting; patient care of lenses; adverse effects of contact lenses.

6434: General Pharmacology Cr. 4. (4-0). General principles of pharmacodynamics, pharmacokinetics, and therapeutics. Fundamental biochemical and cellular sites and mechanisms of action of drugs.

7000 LEVEL COURSES

7120: OPT III Rounds/Case Discussion Cr. 1. (1-0). Clinical decision-making through case discussions. Case presentations and discussion will be used to illustrate and integrate clinical diagnosis and management. Topics include binocular anomalies, refractive problems, low vision, and systemic and ocular pathology.

7130: Ophthalmic Lasers, Refractive Procedures, and Surgical Techniques Lab Cr. 1. (0-3). Prerequisites: Concurrent enrollment in OPTO 7330. Hands on learning with several laser and surgical techniques. Lab exercises on appropriate use of Nd:YAG, argon, and Excimer lasers. Both non-living tissue exercises as well as simulations with living tissue will be offered. Suturing techniques, injection techniques, miscellaneous minor surgical procedures and proper operating room protocol.

7150: Developmental Optometry Cr. 1. (1-0) Prerequisites: OPTO 6151, and 6351; concurrent enrollment in OPTO 7493. Role of the optometrist in diagnosis, remediation, and clinical management of enigmatic learning problems including visual and auditory perception skills, learning disabilities, dyslexia, and minimal brain damage.

7152: Pediatric Optometry II Laboratory Cr. 1. (0-3). Perquisites: OPTO 5151 and 5351; concurrent enrollment in 6352. Instrumentation and methods used to remediate anomalies of binocular vision.

7162: Vision Rehabilitative Laboratory Cr. 1. (0-2). Techniques for assisting visually impaired patients including trial frame refraction, fitting biotic telescope systems, use and verification of telescopic, microscopic, and magnifier systems. Billing codes and strategies for payment from agencies will be discussed.
**7230: Glaucoma** Cr. 2. (2-0). Prerequisites: OPTO 6234, OPTO 6333, OPTO 6335, and OPTO 7493; concurrent enrollment in OPTO 7336, OPTO 7361, and OPTO 7494.

Review of anatomy and physiology of the eye pertinent to glaucoma mechanisms. Overview of the diagnostic process including photographic analysis, visual fields, gonioscopy, nerve fiber analysis, and patient examination. Secondary glaucoma is discussed as they relate to differential diagnosis of primary open angle glaucoma. Treatment strategies for all forms of glaucoma, including acute glaucoma, POAG, and secondary glaucoma. Treatment strategies will include: topical medical, surgical, and systemic approaches, as well as advancements in therapeutic strategies as they occur.

**7252: Pediatric Optometry II** Cr. 3. (3-0).
Prerequisites: OPTO 5151, 5191, 5351 and 5373; concurrent enrollment in 6152.

Treatment of binocular vision anomalies including those conditions which result in a reduction of visual efficiency (phorias, decreased vergence facility) and conditions which result in decreased binocular function (amblyopia and strabismus).

**7253: Pediatric Optometry III** Cr. 2. (2-0).
Clinical assessment and management of the young patient (birth through preschool) with emphasis on the modification of standard clinical procedures to accommodate the very young patient and how the development of various visual functions affects treatment and management decisions.

**7262: Rehabilitative Optometry** Cr. 2. (2-0).
Concepts of management of patients with visual impairment, neurological injuries, and multiple handicaps. Includes examination strategies, the optics of low vision devices, and their use. Also includes the rehabilitation system and referral networks.

**7300: Ophthalmic Lasers, Refractive Procedures, and Surgical Techniques** Cr. 3. (3-0).
Prerequisites: OPTO 6234, OPTO 6333, OPTO 7230, and OPTO 7336; concurrent enrollment in OPTO 7130.

Familiarization with ophthalmic laser instrumentation, surgical laser procedures, management of ocular conditions with lasers. Types of ophthalmic lasers, laser-tissue interactions, and technical considerations associated with laser surgery, and pre- and post-operative considerations for ocular conditions commonly managed with lasers. Principles of refractive surgery including pre-operative, procedural, and post-operative and complication management of radial keratotomy, lamellar procedures, and laser procedures. Special consideration given to anatomy, wound healing, and wound healing modulators. Role of optometry in refractive surgery. Operating room protocols, injection, and suturing techniques.

**7356: Ocular Pathology III** Cr. 3. (3-0).
Prerequisites: OPTO 5232, 5332, 5134, and 5334.
Congenital anomalies and diseases of the posterior segment and optic nerve. Differential diagnosis and interpretation of clinical data.

**7337: Ocular Pathology IV** Cr. 3. (3-0).
Prerequisite: OPTO 6331.
Neuro-optometry including the neurological assessment of the eye and visual system. Routine non-invasive assessment of the pupil, diplopia, nerve palsies, transient vision loss, optic nerve, nerve head and visual fields, and diagnostic imaging procedures.

**7361: Geriatric Optometry** Cr. 3. (3-0).
Prerequisites: OPTO 4333, 5132, 5232, 5332, 5373; concurrent enrollment in 6491.
Psychological, physiological, social, and ocular problems of the elderly. Examination procedures in the care of geriatric patients. Special eye and vision problems of concern to the elderly patient. Special problems of the institutionalized and the bedridden patient. Problems of therapy management and compliance.

**7375: Contact Lens II** Cr. 3. (3-0).
Prerequisites: OPTO 5192, 5374. Concurrent enrollment in OPTO 6491.
Advanced contact lens fitting techniques. Special topics in contact lens fitting.
7383: Practice Management I Cr. 3. (3-0). 

7493/7494/7495: General Clinic III A/B/C Cr. 4. (0-16). Prerequisite: OPTO 7493. Clinical practice under supervision of clinical faculty; emphasis on general care of children and geriatric population; diagnosis of ocular disease; contact lenses; visual training and dispensing.

8000 LEVEL COURSES

8338: Recent Developments/Rounds Cr. 3. (3-0). Recent developments and case presentations with emphasis on integration of knowledge representing the full scope of optometry.

8384: Practice Management II Cr. 3. (3-0). Prerequisite: OPT 6383. Managing an optometric practice. Day-to-day operations of a practice including communication with patients and the community; office equipment; establishing office policies; enhancing and expanding professional services; dispensary services; and estate planning.

8990:8991: Community Health Clinics Cr. 9 semester hours per 320 clock-hour unit. (0-40). Patient care provided in an interdisciplinary health care setting. Clinical environments are external to the campus in hospitals, health centers, prepaid care facilities, extended care centers, home health services to special populations, and ambulatory care centers. Practice in various areas of community health is provided, and a community health project will be completed.

8992:8993: Community Health Clinics Cr. 9. (0-20). Patient care provided in medical and surgical eye care setting. Completion of all required elements of the first three years of the professional curriculum.

8696: General Clinic IV Cr. 6. (0-16). Prerequisite: OPTO 6492. Emphasis on total scope of primary optometric care in a group practice setting.

Summary of Elective Courses**

1. Nutrition and the Eye
2. Decision Making in Optometric Office
3. Contact Lens Induced and Related Complications
4. Spanish for Optometrists
5. In-Office Binocular Vision Training
6. Continuing Education for Elective Credit
7. Contact Lens Workshop and Follow-Up Care
8. What Optometrists Should Know About Kids With Special Needs
9. Practical Pharmacology
10. Clinical Integration
11. Sports Vision Enhancement
12. Orthokeratology and Controlled Kerato-Reformation
13. Corneal Pathology

** These courses are not all the elective courses offered, but are examples of electives courses offered throughout an academic year. Students must refer to the Elective Course Preference Sheet sent out each semester.

**Students must satisfactorily complete a minimum of seven semester credit hours of approved elective courses to qualify for the O.D. degree. Courses in the graduate program or upper division courses in another college may be selected with the approval of the student’s academic advisor and the Associate Dean for Professional Studies.