

UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON | OPTOMETRY

What to Expect on Your UHCO Interview Day

University of Houston College of Optometry (UHCO)'s faculty admissions committee and Office of Optometry Relations (OOR) staff review approximately 650 verified OptomCAS and UHCO supplemental applications each cycle, and our most qualified and competitive applicants are invited to campus for a College visit and interview. We are eager to learn more about who you, our applicants, are "off the page" and outside of the classroom. We want to know more about your passion for optometry, your preparation for our curriculum, why you've chosen to apply to UHCO, and more. Additionally, we are excited to welcome you to the College so you can experience first-hand our phenomenal facilities; visit with a number of our current students; connect with a few of UHCO's outstanding didactic, clinical, and research faculty members, recognized across the globe as leaders in both the practice of and research in the fields of optometry, vision science, and physiological optics; explore the exciting city of Houston; and more.



While your interview day at UHCO is a professional experience, we want it also to be an exciting, conversational, and inspirational day for you. We want you to come away from the day having felt warmly welcomed and at home at the College, in addition to having gained further insight into our programs, curricula, research initiatives and opportunities, our diverse patient population and clinical experiences that await you, and much more. Please bring questions for anyone and everyone you'll meet at the College! It's YOUR interview day; take the opportunity to interview us – faculty, students, and staff alike – and let us share UHCO with you.

In preparation for your visit, an OOR team member will email to you a campus map with directions to our parking garage and building. When you check in with OOR, you can expect to be among eight to twelve applicants visiting the College that day, and you will spend the majority of the day together. A typical interview day will begin with casual conversation among applicants and OOR team members as we get to know each other and find out what aspects of optometry inspire each other most. A presentation about UHCO's history, programs, organizations, and more will follow. You will then visit with our financial aid advisor who will share information regarding federal loans, grants, FAFSA, scholarship opportunities, financial planning, and more. Remember – ask questions anytime!

Next, we will take a tour of UHCO's classrooms, clinics, and laboratories. The tour will last approximately 45 minutes, and then, at noon, you'll share lunch with UHCO's best recruiters and resources – our current students. This is a fantastic opportunity to ask any questions you have of students currently living the optometry life! Typically, OPT II and OPT III students will be at lunch, and they are excited to welcome you to our College and enthusiastic to share their experiences with you in helping you plan for your transition into a professional school environment. They are your best resources for what it's *really* like to juggle classwork, hours of study time, exams, patient care, student organization and community involvement, career planning, and so much more. Every student volunteer who helps with UHCO's interview day is willing to share his or her email or phone number with you in case you think of further questions later on or just want to stay in contact. Definitely take advantage of all the advice they have to offer.



After lunch, an OOR team member will lead you to your interview room where you will meet individually (i.e., separately from other applicants) with a panel of three to five UHCO faculty members who represent the many areas of our program – from classroom to clinic, research to administration. These panelists will have a copy of your OptomCAS application, your letters of recommendation, and your OAT scores. The interview typically lasts between 20 and 30 minutes, and the casual tone of the day truly continues into your visit with the faculty panelists. They are not there to quiz you, trip you up, or be adversarial; they simply want to learn more about how you've academically prepared for optometry school – specifically UHCO, what aspects of your shadowing/work in optometry you've enjoyed and learned from most, how you envision possibly using your O.D., and more. They may ask about certain courses you've taken and grades you've earned, but remember – this is YOUR interview. Who knows more about you than YOU? You have all the answers, so don't let the panel format cause you undue stress. Just be prepared to represent yourself and your passion for optometry. Also, remember your questions – ones you've prepared for the day and any on your mind after the morning's presentation and your lunch with our students. Having a notepad and pen handy during your interview is perfectly fine; in fact, we provide you with both at the top of the day. We love to see applicants who've prepared questions, and you may certainly take notes as you visit with the panelists.



When everyone's interview has concluded, you will meet one last time as a group for a short wrap-up of the day. We will talk about the next steps in the admissions process including when and how you can look forward to hearing from us. At the end of the interview day, you are welcome to stay and visit with OOR and explore more of the College if you'd like.

Finally, a few take-aways and tips to keep in mind:

- OOR will confirm with you the beginning time for your specific interview day, but the day's events typically begin at 10:00am and end by 3:00pm.
- Houston is a wonderful city, but you never really know how traffic may affect your travel time. If you plan to be parked and on your way into the College by 9:45am, you'll be right on time.
- If you're catching a flight after your interview, please keep in mind that 3:00pm is a **typical** but not guaranteed ending time for the day's events. A ride to Houston/Hobby (HOU) from the UH campus is around 20 minutes; a ride to Houston/George Bush Intercontinental (IAH) could be around 45 minutes.
- Feel free to park in the area of the UH Welcome Center Student Garage marked for you on your map. We have parking vouchers you may use when leaving campus but only for that specific garage. If you park elsewhere, you should expect to pay around \$10.
- Our building tends to stay chilly, so you might consider bringing along a jacket or sweater.
- If you're traveling with luggage, you are welcome to bring it with you, and OOR will keep it safe.
- Bottles of water will be available at every stop throughout the day, so please stay hydrated; we hope you'll be doing lots of talking!
- At lunch, try to sit with UHCO students on either side so you can talk with and get advice from as many as possible.
- If you've not already, do a little research on UHCO prior to your interview day. Be familiar with our [mission & goals](#), [demographics](#), [faculty](#), [patient care](#), [residency](#) and [research opportunities](#), and more. You will almost certainly be asked during your interview about how UHCO appeals to you.
- You are welcome to bring along a guest, and your guest can join in all aspects of the day except for your interview. Please let OOR know before your interview day that you're bringing a guest so name tag and lunch arrangements may be made.
- Remember to ask questions anytime! We love conversational, interactive groups.
- You can always contact OOR with questions about your interview day, your application, and more. Find us [here](#).