



POSITION PAPER

Optometry Graduates' Clinical Competencies

Approved, ASCO Board of Directors on 3/13/25

Optometric education is the foundation upon which clinical practice skills and competencies are learned, practiced and evaluated, with rigor, to meet the highest possible levels for eye health and vision care. ASCO's position is that:

- Life-long learning builds on this educational foundation.
- The advancement of optometric education constantly evolves to meet the demands of the patient population, in order to best serve its primary eye health and vision care needs.
- Optometry is a legislated profession, and each state's scope of practice is dictated by the laws within that state, which are enacted by that state's legislative body according to the available evidence which supports the contemporary practice of optometry. This evidence represents a valuable resource for well-informed scope of practice.
- The Schools and Colleges of Optometry are upheld by elected officials at the state and federal levels as the definitive leaders on curricula that teach all aspects of comprehensive optometric education.

All optometry schools and colleges within the United States are members of the Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry (ASCO) that follow the standards of the Accreditation Council on Optometric Education (ACOE), thus ensuring their graduates have attained the clinical competencies necessary for the independent practice of contemporary optometry. Furthermore, all ASCO member institutions regularly ensure ongoing curricular review and evaluation with guidance from appropriate stakeholders. All accredited schools and colleges of optometry teach to the highest levels of optometric practice, so as to best prepare future Doctors of Optometry and future leaders of the profession.