

**University of Alabama at Birmingham
School of Optometry**

**ON-SITE RESIDENCY
PROGRAM INFORMATION**

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I. Introduction

Consistent with its educational mission, the University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Optometry (UABSO) places significant emphasis on residency education. UABSO strives to develop, maintain, advance, and promote post-doctoral clinical training programs of excellence in all of the major areas of optometric care. In so doing, the School serves as a leader in residency education.

The School began its first residency program in 1978, and 272 optometrists have completed UABSO residencies to date. Currently, seven residency programs offer a total of twelve residency positions. Eleven of the twelve residency programs are accredited by the Accreditation Council on Optometric Education. The twelfth program, the Residency in Ocular Disease at VisionAmerica of Birmingham, will pursue its accreditation in this its first year.

On-Site Residencies

- Family Practice Optometry (1 position)
- Pediatric Optometry (1 position)
- Cornea and Contact Lenses (1 position)

External Residencies

- Hospital-based / Primary Eye Care at the Tuscaloosa Veterans Affairs Medical Center (2 positions)
- Geriatric and Low Vision Rehabilitative Optometry at the Birmingham Veterans Affairs Medical Center (3 positions)
- Ocular Disease at Omni Eye Services of Atlanta (3 positions)
- Ocular Disease at VisionAmerica of Birmingham (1 position)

II. Administrative Structure

Each residency program has a Supervisor who is responsible for the daily functioning and clinical activities of that particular program. These Residency Supervisors report to the Director of Residency Programs. The Director of Residency Programs is responsible for the coordination of all activities related to the administration of these programs. The Director of Residency Programs reports to the Director of Clinical Programs who reports to the Chief of Staff and through him/her to the Dean of UABSO. A Residency Advisory Committee advises the Dean through the Director of Residency Programs about such issues as the selection of new programs or other issues for which the Dean seeks advice in regard to residency education.

III. Recruitment of Residents

UABSO has committed a significant amount of its resources to residency education. Optometry students at UABSO provide part of the national pool of applicants to residencies. These students need to be made aware of the value of residency training and the availability of residency programs. Faculty need to be educated and involved in residency programs.

Beginning before classes commence in the first year, optometry students at UABSO are encouraged to pursue residency training. The Director of Residency Programs gives a presentation on residency education at the orientation program for incoming first year students. To facilitate the placement of graduates into residencies, the Director of Residency Programs regularly distributes information about programs to all fourth year students. Students are encouraged to meet individually with the Director of Residency Programs and with other faculty members to discuss the benefits of pursuing a residency as well as specific programs which would be of interest. The ASCO website (www.opted.org), along with its on-line directory of residency programs, is also promoted as an up-to-date source of general information on all available optometric residencies. The UABSO website residency pages are a useful source of information for potential applicants (<http://main.uab.edu/Sites/optometry/about/programs/residency/>).

UABSO advertises all of its on-site residencies in the AOA News. The School also encourages its external residencies to advertise in the AOA News. A residency brochure has been developed and is mailed in the fall to each school and college of optometry for distribution to every fourth year student. Additionally, a brochure is given to prospective applicants at the AOSA and AAO meetings. This brochure describes, in general terms, the on-site and external residencies of UABSO.

IV. Application to Residencies

All residency programs utilize the Optometric Residency Matching Service (ORMS). Admission eligibility criteria include:

- Applicant must comply with all ORMS procedures and submit an ORMS application with all supporting documentation by the February 1 deadline as described at www.optometryresident.org.
- Applicant must have earned an O.D. degree, or will have earned such a degree by the time of matriculation, from an Accreditation Council on Optometric Education accredited school or college of optometry.
- Applicant must have passed parts I, II, and III of the National Board of Examiners in Optometry.
- An interview by the committee with each final applicant may be required.
- The University of Alabama at Birmingham affirms that all residency applicants are evaluated without regard to sex, race, color, creed, national origin, or non-disqualifying physical disability.

V. Selection of Residents

Prospective residents are encouraged to visit the program before the application deadline. Selection of residents for on-site programs is initially made by each residency supervisor. After ranking selections for each program, the selections are presented to the Residency Advisory Committee. The residency supervisors, Director of Residency Programs, and other committee members reach a consensus opinion and rank order the choices. The recommendation for resident selection then goes to the Dean, who has final responsibility for approval of the ranked list which is submitted to ORMS.

Once the ORMS match results are announced, the appropriate residency supervisor may telephone or e-mail the successful residency applicant to notify him/her of the decision to admit. A contract is then mailed for signature. The contract details the conditions of employment and is signed by the Director of Residency Programs and the Dean. The contract must be signed and returned by the applicant within a specified period of time.

All records related to residency application and selection are filed in the office of the administrative assistant to the Director of Residency Programs.

VI. Orientation

Orientation is conducted on the first two days at the beginning of the residency year. On one of these two days, each resident is oriented to UAB policies and procedures by the Office of Human Resource Management. Since UAB considers residents full-time temporary employees, they are entitled to certain UAB benefits. All information covered during UAB New Employee Orientation, including benefits, can be reviewed over the internet at www.hrm.uab.edu. During the second day, each resident is oriented to UABSO residency policies and procedures. In addition to being oriented to this Residency Manual and the UABSO Clinic Procedures and Policies Manual (which includes infection control and facility safety policies and the UABSO Clinic Compliance Plan) (available on the UAB intranet at <http://iweb.opt.uab.edu/clinicmanual>), the residents are informed that the Optometric Clinical Practice Guidelines of the American Optometric Association (available in the clinic) are used as clinical practice protocols for the residency.

VII. Resident Status

A resident is a full-time temporary employee of UABSO. The current annual salary for a resident is \$37,644 plus benefits as presented during UAB New Employee Orientation. A limited license is required and will be issued by the Alabama State Board of Optometry on certification of admission by the Dean, payable by the resident. Residents are covered with regard to professional liability insurance by the University Professional Liability Trust Fund, payable by UABSO. This insurance also covers action taken subsequent to the residency for acts that occurred during the residency which were undertaken as part of the training program. Residents are supplied with clinic coats. Laundering of clinic coats is provided by UABSO at no cost to the resident. Each resident is reimbursed up to \$600 in travel expenses for optometric meetings. The availability of additional resources is presented in the Resident's Guide to Resources in Research and Scholarship.

Each residency is 53 weeks in duration, commencing in June one week before the start of the second summer session. Two weeks (ten working days) of leave may be granted with prior approval of the Supervisor of the appropriate residency and the Director of Residency Programs. Holidays are listed at www.hrm.uab.edu, and the severe weather policy is delineated on the UAB intranet at <http://iweb.opt.uab.edu/clinicmanual>.

Each resident is expected to participate in residency activities 40 hours per week. He/she is also expected to provide emergency coverage for the clinic during day, night, and weekend hours on a rotating basis. Outside employment by the resident during the residency is not allowed.

VIII. Criteria for Residency Completion

When a resident successfully completes the training program, the Director of Residency Programs recommends to the Dean the granting of a certificate. Criteria for residency completion include:

- The resident is required to deliver clinical services at a level which is satisfactory to the faculty member in charge, the Residency Advisory Committee, and the administration.
- The resident is required to keep a record of patient encounters. Cases are reviewed periodically by the residency supervisor.
- The resident is required to write a paper based on original research, literature review, or a clinical case for publication in a refereed ophthalmic journal.
- The resident is expected to perform in a professional manner in the delivery of patient care services and to observe those proprieties of conduct and courtesies that are consistent with the rules and regulations governing the clinics of the School.
- The resident is required to participate in and complete the requirements set forth in the curriculum.

IX. Adverse Decisions and Complaints

Any resident accepted for training can be dismissed, without receiving a certificate of completion, for infractions of the rules and regulations which govern UABSO or for any action which jeopardizes the safety of patients, personnel, or physical facilities. UAB policy regarding termination of employment is available at www.hrm.uab.edu. UAB grievance procedure, including due process provided to the resident on adverse decisions, is also available at www.hrm.uab.edu.

It is anticipated that most complaints from residents can be resolved without a grievance being filed in the Office of Human Resource Management. A resident with a complaint should first attempt to resolve the issue with the other involved party. If this step is not successful, then he/she should approach the appropriate Residency Supervisor. If this step is not successful, then he/she should approach the Director of Residency Programs. If this step is not successful, then he/she should approach the Director of Clinical Programs. If this step is not successful, then he/she should approach the Chief of Staff. If this step is not successful, then he/she should approach the Dean. All records related to resident complaints are filed in the office of the Administrative Assistant to the Director of Residency Programs.

Counseling or remediation of the resident, when needed, are arranged by the appropriate Residency Supervisor. When counseling or remediation cannot be satisfactorily accomplished at this level, then the Director of Residency Programs, Director of Clinical Programs, Chief of Staff, and ultimately the Dean may become involved in the process.

X. Curriculum

It is desirable that the curriculum for all UABSO residency programs be very clinically oriented. The residents are involved in direct patient care approximately four and one-half days per week. The remainder of the residents' time is devoted to such academic interests as conferences, symposia, case presentations and discussion, and research. Residents spend 40 hours per week in the School but are expected to be available for rotating emergency coverage after-hours. The residency duration is 53 weeks.

Residency Conference

The entire Residency Conference schedule is presented from July through May. During the first several weeks, topics of general interest are covered in order to achieve a relatively equal common knowledge base. In addition to these core topics, a series of topics germane to the various specialty areas is presented throughout the year.

Scheduling

The schedule has been designed with maximum utilization of space and the resident's time in mind. It is desirable that the residents gain clinical experience in such outside facilities as VisionAmerica of Birmingham, Neonatal Clinic, Sparks Center, and others. The residents also spend a significant portion of their time in the clinical services of UABSO. Regardless of where the resident is located on a particular day, all residents provide direct patient care.

Clinical Grand Rounds

It is required that the residents participate in grand rounds. Specifically, the resident is required to present patients periodically to students, residents, and clinical faculty. This aspect of the program rotates between UABSO, Birmingham VAMC, and Tuscaloosa VAMC.

Journal Club

All residents are required to attend and participate in the journal club. In the journal club, residents select papers to be discussed in terms of the overall content, research design, and results. This serves to familiarize the residents with the current literature and various aspects of research methodologies.

Paper for Publication

All residents are required to write a paper suitable for publication in a refereed ophthalmic journal. This paper may be a unique or unusual case report, clinical review, or original research. This serves not only to teach residents the elements of research and paper writing but also to enrich the optometric literature.

Clinical Teaching Experience

Each resident provides at least 6 half days of clinical teaching during the first summer session at the conclusion of the residency year. In addition, some residents participate in various clinical teaching aspects in contact lenses and pediatric optometry. Residents may also be invited to present specific topics to optometrists and/or paraoptometricians as part of continuing education programs.

XI. Credentials and Privileges

The resident is allowed an increasing level of independence in diagnosis and management as the residency year progresses, with supervision close at the beginning and relaxed over time. Although each resident presents credentials and receives privileges identical to those of faculty members, a faculty member is always available for consultation when patient care is rendered by a resident.

Residents provide clinical services in accordance with the statutory provisions of the state of Alabama. Accordingly, services include the independent use of topical and oral medications, including certain controlled substances. Co-management of patients is undertaken for clinical services that fall outside the current scope of practice.

The following guidelines apply to each resident:

- Until the resident obtains an Alabama license, he/she cannot examine patients independently. During this time, the patient record must be signed by, and insurance claim filed under, a licensed attending with a provider number. This attending must also see the patient.
- With an Alabama license but no provider number, the resident can legally examine a patient and sign the chart but cannot file a claim for third party reimbursement. It must be filed by a licensed attending with a provider number. This attending must also see the patient and sign the patient record.
- With an Alabama license and a provider number, the resident can function independently, examining the patient, signing the chart, and filing a claim for third party reimbursement.

XII. Physical Facilities and Equipment

The resident clinical areas in UABSO serve as both operatories and offices. Each operatory is fully equipped in order to maximize clinical efficiency. The clinic conference room serves as the primary location of Residency Conference.

XIII. Faculty and Staff

The cost of educational support for the residencies is borne by UABSO. It is anticipated that residencies require involvement of 80% of the Department of Optometry faculty for participation either in the didactic portion of the program or in direct clinical consultation.

In order to insure clinical and administrative efficiency, staff support is provided to the residencies in the following areas: secretarial, receptionist, and technician. Secretarial support is provided by the administrative assistant to the Director of Residency Programs. The receptionist is responsible for greeting patients, preparing the patient registration information, and rescheduling patients. The technician is responsible for assisting the resident with patient work-ups and special testing.

XIV. Evaluation

Self-Evaluation

At the beginning of the residency year, each resident should complete a Self-Evaluation of Resident form and submit it to the administrative assistant to the Director of Residency Programs, who will forward a copy to the Director of Residency Programs and to the appropriate residency supervisor for review.

Continuing Evaluation

Evaluation of the resident consists of several aspects. These include ongoing and continuing evaluation in which the residency supervisor maintains periodic contact with the resident in order to provide informal evaluations with regard to the attainment of personal and program goals.

Patient Encounter Log

All residents are required to keep a complete log of patient encounters. The log is maintained electronically on a secure server. The appropriate Residency Supervisor will review the electronic log at least monthly. At the conclusion of the program, the administrative assistant to the Director of Residency Programs will print out the final log for inclusion in the resident's file.

Quarterly Evaluations

At the conclusion of each quarter (fall, winter, and spring), the Director of Residency Programs provides an Evaluation of Resident form to each Residency Supervisor. Each Supervisor completes this written evaluation, tailored to meet the needs and specific goals set forth by the resident at the beginning of the program, and submits it to the administrative assistant to the Director of Residency Programs, who will forward a copy to the Director of Residency Programs and to the appropriate resident for review.

Also at the conclusion of each quarter (fall, winter, and spring), the Director of Residency Programs provides Evaluation of Residency Supervisor/Faculty and Evaluation of Residency Program forms to each resident. Each resident completes these written evaluations and submits them to the administrative assistant to the Director of Residency Programs, who will forward a copy to the Director of Residency Programs and to the appropriate Residency Supervisor or faculty for review. Note that the Evaluation of Residency Supervisor/Faculty form is designed for a resident to use in evaluating his/her Supervisor and all other faculty who have played a significant role in the resident's training.

Final Evaluations

At the conclusion of the spring quarter, the Director of Residency Programs also provides an Evaluation of Residency Director form to each resident. Each resident completes this written evaluation and submits it to the administrative assistant to the Director of Residency Programs, who will forward a copy to the Director of Residency Programs and to the appropriate Residency Supervisor for review.

At the conclusion of the program, each resident is scheduled for an exit interview. In addition to querying the resident regarding strengths, weaknesses, and need for changes in the program, this interview provides the resident with verbal feedback as to his/her performance.

XV. Mission Statements

Residency in Family Practice Optometry

The Residency in Family Practice Optometry provides advanced clinical training to post-graduate optometrists. This residency's comprehensive didactic experience, strong clinical foundation in primary eye care, and flexible system of rotations in other areas of family practice optometry allow residents upon completion of the program to pursue professional opportunities which require a high level of clinical expertise, such as academia or specialty private practice.

Residency in Cornea and Contact Lenses

The Residency in Cornea and Contact Lenses aims to provide advanced clinical training for post-graduate optometrists, allowing residents completing the program to pursue professional opportunities which require a high level of expertise in the area of cornea and contact lenses such as academia, industry, and specialty private practice.

Residency in Pediatric Optometry

The Residency in Pediatric Optometry seeks to provide a specialty post-graduate clinical program of excellence to the highest quality optometric graduates. The program aims to foster exceptional and independent clinicians who will have the opportunity to excel in the areas of patient care, education, and research within pediatric optometry.