UAB SCHOOL OF OPTOMETRY

STUDENT HANDBOOK
2014-2015
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UABSO DIRECTORY

Please call the receptionist if you need the number for someone within the School of Optometry or if you need to be transferred to another telephone number within the school.

Receptionist  Brenda Carter  934-3063  bfc@uab.edu

Please dial “0” when you are on campus to obtain a campus phone number. You may also look up a phone number online at www.uab.edu, look under “Quicklinks” for the Directory.

UAB Operator  934-4011

ELECTRONIC PHONEBOOK  http://www.uab.edu/phonebook

UAB CONTACTS

Financial Aid  Mark Martin  934-8707  mmartin@uab.edu
Financial Aid  Ann Little  934-8223  aclittle@uab.edu
Student Accounting  Cecelia Boyd  934-9893  cwboyd@uab.edu
Student Health  Jenna Hammer  975-7751  jdyar@uab.edu
Student Dental Health  Dorothy Andrews  934-5234  ddandrew@uab.edu
Transportation Services (Parking)  934-3513
Security/UAB Police  934-4460
UAB Registrar’s Office (for official transcripts)  934-8222
UAB EyeCare  975-2020

UABSO OFFICE OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

All calls for the Office of Student Affairs  975-0739

UABSO EXTERNSHIP OFFICE

Dr. Leo Semes  934-6773  lsemes@uab.edu
Cynthia Perry  934-2624  cmbb11@uab.edu

UABSO DEAN’S OFFICE

Donna Scott  975-9935  dscott@uab.edu

UABSO DEVELOPMENT AND ALUMNI AFFAIRS OFFICE

Peggy Striplin  934-9838  pstriplin@uab.edu
Barbara Sobko  934-3839  bsobko@uab.edu
Virginia Rogers  975-9931  vsr@uab.edu

UABSO INFORMATION SERVICES

Joey Jones  934-2833  hjones@uab.edu
STUDENT INFORMATION

- **Student Mailboxes** are located in the student lounge on the first floor.

- Mail will be placed in your mailboxes and must be checked at least once per day. Outgoing mail should be given to Brenda Carter at the front desk on the first floor of the Henry Peters Building for faculty, staff, and other students. The mail will be distributed throughout the day. **Students are not allowed in the first floor mailroom.**

- A telephone is available in the lounge for local calls. You can dial “9” to make off-campus local calls.

- There are refrigerators and microwaves located in the lounge on the 1st floor. It is the responsibility of the student organization members to keep the refrigerators and microwaves clean. Please see the monthly assignment list on the refrigerator. Paper towels are provided to cover your food while using the microwaves.

- The **Student Computer Lab** is located on the 3rd floor in room 304.

- **Student Absence Forms**: Can be obtained online at [http://www.uab.edu/optometry/home/images/StudentAffairs/Student_Absence_Request_Form.pdf](http://www.uab.edu/optometry/home/images/StudentAffairs/Student_Absence_Request_Form.pdf)

- **Clinic Student Absence Request Forms**: Can be obtained online at [http://iweb.opt.uab.edu/clinicmanual](http://iweb.opt.uab.edu/clinicmanual) or from the clinic administration office.

- **Emergency Loan Forms**: Can be obtained online at [http://www.uab.edu/optometry/home/images/StudentAffairs/Emergency_Loan_Application_Form.pdf](http://www.uab.edu/optometry/home/images/StudentAffairs/Emergency_Loan_Application_Form.pdf) Upon completion of the Emergency Loan Request Form, return the form to the Office of Student Affairs. Confidential envelopes are provided in the Student Lounge if you wish to keep your form confidential.

- **Loans, Deferments, Insurance Forms, or Verification of Enrollment Letters**: Requests should be made in writing to the Office of Student Affairs-no verbal requests will be accepted. Please include the name of the company, the company’s address, contact person’s name, and the fax number of the company. Please leave any official forms to be completed with your written request. Make sure that you have completed all sections. When the original form or letter has been mailed, a copy will be placed in your mailbox for your records.

- **Notary Public**: See Dena Clemons in clinic administration on the ground floor for this service. Most local banks will be able to notarize a form for a small fee.
• **Transcripts:** Official and unofficial transcripts must be requested online through BlazerNET.

• **Student Emergency:** If a student is injured or becomes ill the contact information you entered in BlazerNet will be used to notify your spouse, or other family member of your condition. Therefore, you need to enter at least two family contacts in BlazerNet.

• **Family Emergency:** If you are listed as the “emergency contact” for any of your family members, it is important that you supply their work or school with your personal and direct contact information as well as that contact information of local family members (or close friends) that can handle an emergency in your absence. This does not mean that you cannot give the Office of Student Affairs as a contact number – just keep in mind that there can be issues involved with getting the message to you in a timely manner. It is best to list several family members or friends as contacts first and make the School the last option. Our greatest concern is that you can be reached directly in an emergency situation.

**STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS**

All students participating in student eye care mission trips must complete a student eye care mission release agreement. This form can be found at [http://www.uab.edu/optometry/home/images/StudentAffairs/Student_Eye_Care_Mission_Waiver_And_Release_Agreement.pdf](http://www.uab.edu/optometry/home/images/StudentAffairs/Student_Eye_Care_Mission_Waiver_And_Release_Agreement.pdf)

**AAO – American Academy of Optometry UABSO Student Chapter**
The American Academy of Optometry UABSO Student Chapter began in July 2010. Membership in the organization will be open to any student from 1st through 4th year. The focus of the chapter will be to educate its members on topics related to the Academy and to make the transition from graduate to Fellow of the Academy easier. If you have ever wondered what exactly the Academy does or think you might like to become a Fellow one day, check us out!

**AOSA – American Optometric Student Association**
This organization serves as the government association. Students are automatically members when they enroll at the UABSO. The membership fee is paid by the School so that there is no out-of-pocket expense for the student. The AOSA sponsors seasonal activities such as the fall party, Christmas semi-formal, the Eye Ball in the spring, and student-faculty basketball and softball tournaments. Their major fund-raiser is the AOSA Golf Scramble, which is usually held in the fall. In addition, we also work with the Alabama Optometric Association attending board meetings and volunteering to help as needed.

**BSK— Beta Sigma Kappa International Optometric Honor Society**
Founded in 1925, it serves over 1,800 active members plus 950 honor student members. A student must attain a GPA of 3.5 in their first professional year, a cumulative GPA of 3.4 for the first two years, a 3.3 cumulative GPA for the first three years, and a 3.2 cumulative GPA for all four professional years. The BSK organization gives members a certificate that is suitable for framing. Members of BSK wear honor cords during the Doctoral Convocation and Hooding Ceremony and their names are listed in the graduation program.
Gold Key International Optometric Society
The purpose of the Gold Key is to recognize upper-class students who have demonstrated outstanding professional and ethical attitudes through leadership in their class college and profession. All second, third and fourth year students are potential candidates for membership. However, no more than 8 students per class can join. Applications are sent out to everyone in the 2nd and 3rd year classes in January or February. New members are selected by the current members. Although it is not GPA based, the student must be in good academic standing. Not all 8 spots need to be used if the members do not feel as if there are enough qualified applicants. If all 8 spots are not filled the remaining spots will be offered the next year.

SVOSH – Student Volunteers in Optometric Service to Humanity
SVOSH is a charitable organization dedicated to providing vision care to people in the United States and abroad who would not otherwise receive care. Activities include collecting used eyeglasses and participating in vision screenings in underdeveloped countries and the U.S. Members work hard to raise money year-round to fund their annual trip to a third-world nation. You will acquire skills that will benefit you in your professional education on these trips. The work prior to and during the trip is challenging but rewarding. The group usually allots time for sightseeing while abroad, after they complete the scheduled days of mission work.

FCO – Fellowship of Christian Optometrist
A nondenominational Christian organization designed to provide fellowship to optometrists and students. Activities include bi-weekly luncheon devotionals, social activities, and service projects which include helping those in need, (Jessie’s Place, Angel Tree, Operation Christmas Child) and providing vision screenings in the U.S. and abroad. There are no fees for student membership, so go and have a great time with your fellow optometry students.

NOSA – The National Optometric Student Association
NOSA is the student branch of the National Optometric Association. The NOSA is dedicated to increasing minority representation in the field of optometry. Members participate in community health fairs by doing vision screenings, speaking to local high schools and community groups, assisting the office of student affairs with recruiting activities, and sponsoring luncheon seminars featuring minority optometrists. This group also works hard throughout the year to raise money to attend the national convention of the NOA/NOSA. Past conventions have been held in Florida, Philadelphia, Seattle, and Jamaica.
THE COMPUTER AND E-MAIL

UABSO Executive Committee - Student use of e-mail addresses

The committee concluded that the UAB e-mail account established for each student will be the only account used for official communications with students. Students should not expect UABSO faculty, staff, or administration to use any other e-mail accounts. **Students can instruct the UAB account to forward communications to any other e-mail server of the student’s choosing, but under these circumstances the School of Optometry cannot be responsible for any lost or misdirected e-mails.**

All e-mail will be sent to your official uab.edu address. No other e-mail services will be recognized for school use. E-mail must be checked by the student at least once per day.

UAB does not guarantee that all of your UAB e-mail will be forwarded to an external e-mail address, therefore it is the student’s responsibility to check their UAB e-mail account daily.

Student Affairs, faculty and staff will communicate many important messages to you via e-mail. We appreciate your communications via e-mail.

Please e-mail us with your questions or concerns. There will be times when we can respond to your e-mails when we are not in our offices.

What is the best way to communicate with faculty and staff? E-mail!

If you have a problem with your e-mail account, who should you contact?

Joey Jones in Information Services can be reached by e-mail at hjones@uab.edu or by phone at 934-2833.

Should I open an e-mail with an address beginning with so-students@uab.edu or so-2013class@uab.edu?

Yes! These e-mails are sent to a specific class or the entire student body and contain important information. It is the best way for the staff and faculty to communicate with student groups.

DON’T:
- Ignore e-mails sent to everyone
- Open SPAM or any suspicious e-mail
- Delete important messages, save them in a folder
- Let your e-mail box become so full that you cannot receive messages
Students are responsible for updating the following information in BlazerNET:

Address – a local mailing address is necessary and must be updated to receive financial aid information from the university along with other important documents.

Cell and Home Phone Numbers - faculty and staff on occasion have important information to relay to the student that requires a phone call.

Emergency Contacts—please enter two or more emergency contacts in the event you are injured or become ill while attending school.

www.uab.edu

BlazerNET is designed for the internal UAB community that provides centralized access to the information and services that student, faculty and staff need on a daily basis.

A few things you will find on BlazerNET:

- Class Registration
- Grades
- Financial Aid
- Events
- Policies
- Forms
- News
- Order Transcripts
Lister Hill Library of the Health Sciences is your resource for medical information:

- Connect from home to the library’s resources, including full-text
- Find Books and Journals in the library’s catalog
- Find Journal Articles related to optometry in MEDLINE
- Get Images and Pictures you can use for class projects

There are COPY MACHINES available for student use at the Lister Hill Library. All of the machines take copy cards, which can be purchased from the cashier in the copy room on the ground floor. Two of the copiers also accept coins. Please check with the Information Desk for prices on color and black and white copies.

Lister Hill hours are:

- **Monday-Thursday** 7:00 a.m. – 11:00 p.m.  **Saturday** 9:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.
- **Friday** 7:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.  **Sunday** 12:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.

Lister Hill Library Circulation Desk: 205-934-3306

Lister Hill Library Information Desk: 205-934-2230

Lister Hill Library can only be accessed with your school ID. This library is only open to students and employees of UAB and other local universities. It is also open to state health and legal professionals.
Web-Based Medical Clearance
The service is provided by CertifiedBackground.com, a secure, confidential web-based company that is HIPPA/FERPA compliant. They provide an Immunization Tracker and Certified Record Review.

Students will receive emails, both from UAB and our medical clearance vendor, several months prior to their first semester of enrollment. An evite from CertifiedProfile.com will invite students to create an account and upload their immunization documentation. When creating your account, you will be asked to provide your social security number: you should enter all zeros in this field as this is not essential information and need not be supplied.

Once your account is created, you will click on each requirement and upload your immunization information, preferably using the UAB Student Health Immunization Form (available on the UAB Student Health Services website) or actual physician documentation (blue forms, etc.). This information will be reviewed, and you will receive automatic emails for incomplete records or other problems. You will need to log into your tracker — after 72 hours to check your tracker’s progress — and periodically thereafter, until all requirements are approved. You will periodically receive automatic notices of required impending clearance updates (annual TB renewal, etc.) from CertifiedBackground.com. You will be able to access and view your records at any time by logging into your account.

If you have any questions about this process, you may contact CertifiedBackground.com at 1-888-666-7788 and they will be happy to assist you. Or you may contact Jenna Hammer at Student Health Services at 205-975-7751 or 205-975-7753.

OPTOMETRY POLICY ON STUDENT IMMUNIZATIONS
http://uab.edu/studenthealth/medical-clearance/dentistry-medicine-optometry

Students matriculating or enrolled in the School of Optometry must comply with the University policy. The information on the web site is kept up-to-date. Students should refer to the site for details on all required immunizations.

THE FOLLOWING IMMUNIZATIONS ARE REQUIRED:

1. Tuberculin Skin Test and/or Chest X-Ray/Report
   - Within 3 months prior to enrollment and prior to the beginning of each academic year
   - School of Optometry students should have their annual test in the summer to ensure that evidence of testing can be confirmed by the Office of Student Affairs prior to the beginning of the Fall Semester
   - School of Optometry students will not be allowed to attend classes or participate in patient care until the Student Affairs Office has received appropriate confirmation

2. Tetanus Booster—within past 10 years

3. Rubeola (Red Measles) Booster

4. Hepatitis B Immunization
   - Matriculating students must receive the three shot series and antibody titer to document their
immune response. One or more boosters or other testing may be required.

- Students entering the School of Optometry should have this performed within one year prior to matriculation
- Documentation of antibodies to Hepatitis B is only required once. Repeat testing for returning students is not required.

MANDATORY HEALTH INSURANCE

Health Insurance is required for all students enrolled in the schools of Dentistry, Health Related Professions, Medicine, Nursing and Optometry. These students will be automatically enrolled unless they sign a waiver and provide proof of coverage under another plan. This is mandatory per university policy.

MANDATORY HIPAA TRAINING

Optometry students must complete online HIPAA training (http://www.hipaa.uab.edu) during orientation prior to beginning optometry school.

CLASS ATTENDANCE

During your undergraduate education it may have been permissible to miss class without any adverse effect on grades or learning. However, you will soon find that the curriculum for the professional program is more demanding and requires much more time management and class/lab participation. Regardless of whether the instructor includes class attendance as part of the course syllabus, school policy requires that you attend class. If for any reason you have an emergency (illness, family crisis, etc.) that necessitates being out of school, please notify your instructors by e-mail for the courses you will miss and copy the Office of Student Affairs. It is particularly important that the appropriate faculty or staff be notified prior to scheduled examinations.

INCREMENET WEATHER

WBHM (90.3 FM) is the official source for University closings. All faculty, staff, and students should monitor WBHM for current and accurate information. WBHM will repeatedly broadcast the status of the University every 10 to 30 minutes until the situation has eased. WBHM broadcasts 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

One of the following announcements will be released:

- The University of Alabama at Birmingham will remain open, classes will be held as scheduled
- UAB is closed (for the day/until noon, etc.) except for the hospital and emergency personnel.
- Any patients who have appointments today should confirm the appointments by telephone prior to traveling to UAB. UAB personnel should contact their supervisors for further information
- Stay tuned to this station for updates
In a situation where the University is not officially closed, students experiencing problems (flooding or impassible roads, etc.) should report in the following manner:

Didactic Courses:   E-mail your professors and copy Student Affairs

Clinic Assignments:   If you are scheduled for the clinic call, follow the procedure delineated in the Clinic Manual at http://iweb.opt.uab.edu/clinicmanual

Remember – our first priority is your safety

Students remember to keep the phone numbers you need at home or look them up on the UAB website in the UAB Electronic Phonebook.

POLICY ON STUDENT ABSENCES

INTRODUCTION: This document specifies policies for student attendance at the School of Optometry and methods of obtaining authorized absences. It is anticipated that students enrolled in the School of Optometry will attend all lectures and laboratories. Course instructors are responsible for monitoring classroom attendance.

NON-CLINIC ABSENCES

AUTHORIZED ABSENCES

ABSENCES DUE TO PERSONAL EMERGENCIES:
In this category are absences due to illness, accident, death, legal or financial crisis.

ABSENCES DUE TO APPROVED STUDENT PROJECTS, PROFESSIONAL MEETINGS AND OTHER SPECIAL ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES:
In this category are absences to attend annual meetings of optometric professional organizations such as the AOA, AAO, ARVO, AOSA, and SECO. Some meetings will involve cancellation of all classes and others not. The academic schedule should be consulted for each meeting. When not specifically canceled, absences will require make-up.

PROCEDURES

ABSENCES DUE TO PERSONAL EMERGENCIES:
Such absences will be considered on an individual basis, but generally not approved for personal business. Unexplained, unauthorized or excessive absences may result in disciplinary action. Notification to appropriate faculty by e-mail and specify (1) reason for absence, (2) estimated length of absence, (3) assigned clinic responsibilities, and (4) phone # during period of absence.

ABSENCES FOR STUDENT PROJECT, ETC.:
Permission must be obtained from instructors whose class will be missed. Lecture and lab courses must have at least two weeks advanced notice.
STUDENT ABSENCE REQUEST FORM for didactic courses can be found at http://www.uab.edu/optometry/home/images/StudentAffairs/Student_Absence_Request_Form.pdf

CLINIC ABSENCES
Please note that the clinic has their own policy regarding student absences—scheduled and emergency absences. Please see the Clinic Manual online at:

http://iweb.opt.uab.edu/clinicmanual

OPTOMETRY LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY
On rare occasions, a student may request a temporary leave of absence from the professional program. A leave of absence may be granted for personal or medical reasons. A personal leave may be granted if a student in good academic standing encounters circumstances that significantly hamper academic or clinical progress. The student’s academic standing refers to both recent performance (i.e. whether on academic probation) and performance in the current academic term. A medical leave may be granted if a student has a significant health issue (such as serious illness, hospitalization, surgery/recuperation, pregnancy, maternity leave, etc.) that requires extended time for healing, treatment, or recovery. For a personal leave of absence, the minimum duration is one academic term. The maximum duration of a personal or medical leave of absence is one year. If a student requires more than one year away from the professional program, this will be considered a withdrawal.

The intent of a leave of absence is to provide the student with a temporary departure from the program, while maintaining his or her status and position within the curriculum. The student considering a leave of absence should discuss his or her situation with the Director of Student Affairs prior to making a formal request.

Procedure for Requesting a Leave of Absence
To request a leave of absence, the student must submit the following to the Director of Student Affairs:

• A written request detailing the circumstances involved and the duration of the anticipated leave.

• In the case of a medical leave, a letter from the student’s physician supporting the need for and duration of the leave. At the end of the leave period, another physician letter will be required confirming that the student is able to return to the professional program.

• if the duration of the requested leave is less than one year, a written proposal of how the student intends to make up the missed classes, laboratories, and/or clinic assignments. This proposal will be reviewed by appropriate administration and may be modified to comply with the policies and requirements of the professional program (see below). The Dean must approve the final plan.

Academic Progression and Leave of Absence
A leave of absence is a temporary suspension of all academic and clinical activities in the optometry professional program. As such, a leave of absence may jeopardize forward progress in the professional curriculum and delay expected graduation. It is the policy of the UAB School of Optometry that
progression in the professional program may not be possible if significant absence is incurred due to leave, according to the following conditions:

- If a leave of absence precludes attendance in didactic (classroom) courses for less than or equal to 25% in any given term, continuation in these courses will occur only with the approval of the Associate Dean for Student Success, after consultation with the involved course instructors. If allowed to continue, the student will be responsible for making up all assignments and activities missed during the leave.

- If a leave of absence precludes attendance in didactic (classroom) courses for more than 25% of any given term, continuation in those courses will not occur, and the student will receive a “W” (withdraw) grade for the involved courses. The student will be permitted to re-enter the courses in good standing at the next available offering of the course.

- If a leave of absence precludes any attendance in clinical courses, the student will be permitted to make up equivalent clinical experiences only with approval of the appropriate Clinic Service Directors, with final approval by the Director of Clinical Affairs. The student should meet with each Clinic Service Director to develop a written plan that satisfies the requirements of the particular clinic. If an approved plan is not possible, the student will re-enter the clinical courses at the beginning of the next available offering of the courses.

**REFUND POLICY**

Tuition for the term will be refunded if withdrawal occurs prior to the second week of a term. Fifty percent of tuition will be refunded if withdrawal occurs between week two and week four of the term. No refund of tuition will be made for withdrawals after the fourth week of a term.
GUIDELINES FOR PROBLEM RESOLUTION

- *Academic problems with a course* – contact the instructor for assistance. (They may recommend a free tutor.)

- *Personal problems with an instructor* - 1) meet with the instructor to discuss and try to resolve the matter; 2) if unsuccessful, make an appointment with the Associate Dean for Student Success.

Normally, such complaints can be resolved quickly through discussion with the faculty directly involved. In rare situations where such resolution does not occur, the student should contact the Associate Dean for Student Success to file a formal grievance. The student’s grievance should be submitted in writing and accompanied by any appropriate documentation. If the matter cannot be settled within the department, the student may appeal to the Dean. At the dean’s discretion, an advisory panel may be appointed to study the disagreement and make a recommendation to the Dean. However, it is the responsibility and prerogative of the Dean alone to make, in a timely manner, a decision on any academic disputes which have not been resolved at lower levels, and the decision of the Dean is final. The Academic Policy contains additional detailed instructions for filing formal grade appeals and formal academic status appeals.

When complaints regarding non-academic matters cannot be settled by the persons directly involved, a written complaint should be forwarded to the UABSO Office of Student Affairs. If the UABSO Office of Student Affairs is unsuccessful in resolving the complaint, it may then be forwarded in writing to the University Office of Student Affairs or a designee for further consideration.

- *Complaints of harassment or discrimination* – contact the Director of the UABSO Student Affairs Office immediately. The complaint will be forwarded to the University’s Office of Student Affairs for investigation (per UAB policy)

Other events can have a direct impact on your ability to perform well academically. You are encouraged to communicate with the Office of Student Affairs regarding any potentially life-altering personal experiences as soon as they occur. All members of the Student Affairs staff are able to handle most any student question or concern. Examples of these may include, but are not limited to personal illness (physical or mental), family tragedy, marital problems and serious family illness. There are many avenues available to you – leave of absence, tutors, on-campus professional counseling and more. DO NOT wait until the end of a term to ask for help as it may very well be too late to prevent academic problems.
ACADEMIC POLICY FOR THE FIRST PROFESSIONAL DEGREE PROGRAM (Doctor of Optometry)

Grading System
All School of Optometry courses (didactic and clinical) will use the following letter grades and corresponding percentages:

- A 90-100%
- B 80-89%
- C 70-79%
- F below 70%
- P Pass
- I Incomplete. The temporary notation of I may be reported at the discretion of the instructor to indicate that the student has performed satisfactorily in the course but, due to unforeseen circumstances, has been unable to finish all course requirements. An incomplete is given when the student, for nonacademic reasons beyond his/her control, is unable to complete course requirements. This notation should not be used unless there is reasonable certainty that the requirements will be completed during the following regular term, since at the end of that term the I automatically changes to an F. In highly unusual circumstances the student may request an extension of the time to complete the requirements. This request must be submitted in writing in advance of the time when the grade automatically changes to an F since the approval of the instructor, professional program director, and Dean are all required.
- W Withdraw
- WP Withdraw Passing
- WF Withdraw Failing
- AU Audit
- P/F grading policy will be determined by the instructor

The grade point average is calculated by dividing the total number of quality points attained by the total number of semester hours attempted. The number of quality points attained for each course is determined by multiplying the earned quality points by the semester hour value of the course.

1 In addition to other course criteria as set by the coursemaster/instructor

Academic Term
The academic year consists of the following terms: Fall A, Fall B, Fall, Spring A, Spring B, Spring, and Summer. The academic year begins in the fall and ends after summer term at which time, promotion to the next sequential year occurs.

Program Length
Students are expected to complete the professional optometry program in four academic years. Due to extenuating circumstances, including repeating a year, and other ramifications of non-academic and academic probation, students may require more than four academic years to complete the program. The maximum time allowed to complete the professional program is six years (72 months) from the date of a student’s beginning of classes.
**Promotion/Graduation**

Students who have an annual and cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 or greater, without rounding, who have successfully completed all courses within an academic year, and who have a satisfactory record of professional conduct will be promoted to the succeeding year, or will be eligible to graduate from the professional program if in the final year. In order to progress from the spring semester to the summer semester, prerequisites require that each student has successfully completed all courses in the professional program curriculum up to and including the spring semester, unless otherwise recommended by the Academic Review Committee (ARC) and approved by the Executive Council (EC). Each course in the program must be successfully completed in order for a student to receive the O.D. degree. Passing scores in Parts I and II of the National Board Examination in Optometry are required for graduation, as are demonstration of acceptable professional standards and ethical values, as defined by the UABSO Code of Ethics and the document entitled Basic Competency for Entry-Level Optometrists.

**Student-Initiated Withdrawals**

A student-initiated withdrawal from the program means that the student is voluntarily severing his/her connection with the School of Optometry, prior to completion of requirements for the OD degree. The student’s request for withdrawal shall be made in writing to the Director of Student Affairs. Consistent with overall University policy, the Director of Student Affairs may approve the student’s request for withdrawal, but such approval carries no stated or implied commitments concerning future readmission to the School of Optometry.

At the point in which a student withdraws from the School of Optometry program, the coursemaster of each course in which the student is enrolled will be responsible for assigning a grade reflective of the student’s performance up to that point in the course, and should issue either a Withdraw Passing (WP) or Withdraw Failing (WF). If the student withdraws at a point during the term in which the coursemaster feels that he/she cannot appropriately assign a grade because performance has not been evaluated, a Withdraw (W) can be issued.

Student-initiated withdrawals from a single course are not permitted.

**Academic Review Committee**

The ARC is charged with monitoring the academic status of students enrolled in the UABSO and enforcing the Academic Policy of the program. The ARC will meet on a regular basis, as needed, primarily at the end of each academic term. The ARC will review grades, performance of students on academic probation, material from coursemasters regarding failures in their courses and student documentation pertaining to a failure of a course (only after the student has discussed the failure with the coursemaster). The coursemaster should communicate the failure of his/her course to the student by the date on which grades are due for that term. The coursemaster will advise students of the method by which a course failure will be communicated. The coursemaster shall also provide written notice of a course failure, to the ARC chairperson, the Director of Student Affairs, and copied to the Student Affairs Program Manager, by the date on which grades are due for that term, absent extenuating circumstances.
For any F grade issued, the coursemaster will provide the ARC a written summary of the student’s performance, with a recommendation to the ARC. If an F grade is received in a clinical course, the coursemaster may ask the instructor(s) assigned to the student for input when drafting the summary and recommendation. Factors used to determine the appropriate course of action for the management of an F grade include, but are not limited to, the following: overall course performance, current and past academic performance, attendance, demonstrated efforts toward self-help and documented special circumstances that may have contributed to poor performance, such as personal or family illness. If a student believes that extenuating circumstances contributed to a failing grade, a letter documenting such factors should be submitted to the Chairperson of the ARC, prior to the committee meeting.

In the event that a member of the ARC is the course instructor who issued a failing grade, the member will recuse himself/herself from participation in the discussion of the student to whom s/he assigned the failing grade and will refrain from voting on the committee recommendation for that student.

The ARC will make recommendations to the EC regarding the promotion, probationary status, course repetition, remediation and/or dismissal of the student. The EC will review the recommendation and make a final decision on the action to be taken. The course instructor who assigned the F grade will not move forward with his/her recommendation or re-examine the student, until after the ARC and the EC have evaluated the student’s overall performance and determined the appropriate action, absent extenuating circumstances.

Any decisions involving academic actions will be conveyed to the student by the Director of Student Affairs or his/her designee. An attempt will be made to notify the student, in person, but if this cannot be accomplished in a timely manner, the student may be notified by telephone, UAB e-mail or certified mail. The contact information for the student will be taken from Banner, the university’s student database.

**Repeating a Failed Course**

All didactic and clinical courses for which an F grade is assigned must be repeated successfully in order for a student to progress in the professional program or to receive the O.D. degree.

Based on the coursemaster’s written summary and recommendation to the ARC, a failed course may be repeated by either:

1. enrolling in the course when it is next offered

   Students required to enroll in the course when it is next offered may be given the option to take an adjusted schedule of courses during the year before the failed course is repeated. Courses allowed will be those that do not require the failed course as a prerequisite, and that are deemed by the ARC and/or EC to be in the best interest of the student. Adjusted schedules are not always allowed. When a student is away from the program for a semester or more, additional customized requirements may be recommended by the ARC, including but not limited to repeating courses, auditing
courses, remediation and examination.

or

2. completing a repeat course in place of the original course, which will be completed before the end of the next academic term. A repeat course has a unique course name and number and will have its own course syllabus.

**Didactic Courses:** The requirements of the course may include, but are not limited to: self-study, written assignments, periodic meetings, re-testing, and/or assignments designed to improve understanding of course content.

**Clinic Courses:** In some cases, the coursemaster may recommend a repeat course in place of a failed clinic course. If this is offered, the repeat course may include, but is not limited to: patient care assignments with faculty observation/supervision of specific techniques or conditions, care reviews, written assignments, periodic meetings and/or other activities designed to improve clinical performance.

If the coursemaster offers a repeat course, he/she will usually serve as the coursemaster (or will suggest an appropriate coursemaster to the ARC) and will determine the course requirements, grading and scheduling of the course. Additional provisions may be suggested by the ARC and/or EC, in consultation with the coursemaster who assigned the original F grade. The grading scale used for the repeat course should be identical to that of the course failed. A course syllabus, specific to this course will be provided to the student by the coursemaster. Special courses that are created for these purposes for a specific student will have a unique course number, will be given a new course grade, and extra tuition may be applied. The assigned coursemaster/instructor(s) of repeat courses will provide the course syllabus and regular feedback regarding the student’s performance in the course to the ARC, which will review the performance and make further recommendations, as appropriate. Due to the complexity of an adjusted schedule, a student who has failed a course will not always be eligible to enroll in the next sequential academic term.

When a student successfully repeats a failed course, he or she will receive a grade and course credit for the repeated course, based on the repeat course requirements. The F grade from the course failed will remain on the student’s transcript, and both grades will be used in all grade point average calculations. Repeat courses could significantly delay progression in the program and the graduation date. When a repeat course is failed, the student will receive an F grade while on academic probation and will be subject to dismissal from the program.
Remediation

Internal Remediation
Remediation may occur in a course when an instructor has recognized deficiencies that can be corrected within the term. The coursemaster may design a program, in addition to the original course, in order to address deficiencies.

External Remediation
Based on course failure and/or specifically identified weaknesses, the ARC may recommend that the student be required to enrolled in a special course in order to improve in the area(s) of weakness. Special courses that are created for these purposes will have a unique course number, will be given a new course grade, and extra tuition may be applied. Remedial courses will last at least one term. Due to the complexity of such special programs and schedules, students will not always be eligible to enroll in the next sequential academic term. The need for remedial programs may prevent the student from attending an externship program. Remedial programs or courses cannot take the place of a failed course. If a student who is on academic probation fails a remedial course, he/she will be subject to dismissal from the program.

Remediation programs, including the course requirements and grading scale, will be designed by the ARC, based on the recommendation of the original coursemaster, and will be subject to approval by the EC. Additional provisions to the remediation design may be suggested by the ARC and/or EC, with consultation of the original coursemaster. Any combination of curricular requirements can be used, based on what is in the best interest of the student’s academic progress. The faculty member who is assigned as the coursemaster of the remediation program will determine the scheduling of this activity and will provide a course syllabus specific to this course, based on the recommendations from the ARC.

Didactic Remediation: Remediation may include, but is not limited to: self-study, written assignments, periodic meetings, re-testing, and/or assignments designed to improve understanding of course content.

Clinic Remediation: Remediation may include, but is not limited to patient care assignments, with faculty observation/supervision of specific techniques or conditions, care reviews, written assignments, periodic meetings, and/or other activities designed to improve clinical performance.

The assigned coursemaster/instructor(s) will provide to the ARC the course syllabus and feedback regarding the student’s performance during and/or at the end of the remediation. The ARC will review the performance and make further recommendations as appropriate. Students remediating will remain on academic probation one term longer than when both the remediation plan is successfully completed and the originally failed course is successfully repeated, if applicable. External remediation could significantly delay progression in the program and the graduation date.
Repeating an Academic Year

Students repeating an academic year may be required to repeat all courses in that academic year in which a C grade or less was originally earned, as well as any other courses which the ARC feels are in the best interest of the student. When a student is away from the program for a semester or more, additional customized requirements may be recommended by the ARC, including but not limited to repeating courses, auditing courses, remediation and examination. In the event that a curricular change has created a relocation of a course to a different academic year, efforts will be made to allow the student to take the course at an alternate time. Other curricular recommendations may be made by the ARC. Students required to repeat an academic year will not be enrolled until the beginning of the repeat academic year. The length of academic probation for students repeating an academic year will be determined by the ARC. Repeating an academic year will delay progression in the program and the graduation date.

Circumstances that can subject a student to repeating all or part of an academic year include but are not limited to:

- One F grade while on academic probation, regardless of GPA.
- Annual GPA below 2.0 at the end of the summer term.

Dismissal from the Program

A recommendation for dismissal from the program may be made by the ARC if sufficient evidence exists to indicate that a student will not be able to correct past academic deficiencies or to meet the standards described in the document entitled Basic Competency for Entry-Level Optometrist within the time period allowed to complete the professional optometry program. Once a student has been dismissed from the program, readmission to the UAB School of Optometry will not be considered.

Other academic circumstances that can subject a student to dismissal from the professional program include, but are not limited to:

- Two or more F grades in the same term, regardless of GPA or academic probationary status
- One or more F grades received while repeating all or part of an academic year
- A failing grade and subsequent failure of the remediation plan and/or repeated course

Auditing

A student may be recommended for or required to audit one or more courses in addition to repeating a failed course or academic year. Audit Approval Forms, obtained from the Office of Student Affairs, must be completed for each course which was recommended to be audited. A student who is permitted by an instructor to audit a course must officially register for that course through the Banner system and must notify the Director of Student Affairs, the ARC Chair, and the coursemaster/instructor at least 30 days before the course begins. Students who are auditing a course will participate in the same activities and will have the same course requirements as students officially enrolled in the course, unless otherwise specified by the coursemaster, however, he/she will not receive an official grade for the course.
Students are not allowed to audit courses they have not taken previously. Auditing previously taken courses is allowed if recommended or mandated by the Academic Review Committee and approved by the Executive Committee. In special cases, coursemasters have the discretion to allow UAB students or faculty to attend, but not officially audit, portions of a course, provided it does not lead to a diminished academic experience for those who are enrolled and provided that all other students and faculty interested in attending are given equal consideration.

**Academic Status**

**Good Academic Standing:** For a student to be considered in good academic standing at the UAB School of Optometry, he/she must not be on academic probation and must maintain a grade point average of at least 2.0.

**Academic Probation:** Academic probation is a warning to the student that he/she must show substantial improvement to avoid repetition of the year or dismissal from the professional program. While on academic probation, a student will not be allowed to hold leadership positions in his/her class, the school, university or other organizations supported by, or in association with, the UABSO. Participation in any extracurricular activities associated with the UABSO may be limited. This may include, but is not limited to participation in class, school and university activities, state, regional and national organization meetings, conferences and missions trips. Fourth year students are not permitted to participate in externship rotations while on academic probation, unless they are repeating the fourth year and the ARC and EC feel that externships are within the best interest of academic development of the student. This may delay the student’s graduation date. The ARC will recommend the length of the academic probation, based on individual circumstances.

When a student is placed on academic probation, he/she will be assigned a faculty mentor. It is recommended that the student meet periodically with the faculty mentor for the duration of the academic probation. The role of the mentor is to provide encouragement and guidance to the student. The mentor will not be held accountable for the success or failure of the student. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that s/he is meeting all requirements for the successful completion of the professional program.

- **Circumstances resulting in academic probation include, but are not limited to:**
  - One F grade, regardless of GPA
  - GPA below 2.0

**Non-Academic Probation:** Based on university policy, probation can be applied as a result of violations of the UABSO Honor Code and Code of Ethics. Non-Academic Probation is a warning to the student that he/she must maintain an acceptable level of conduct in the UABSO and the university community in order to avoid repetition of a course, a year or dismissal from the professional program. The ARC may recommend probation, remediation, repetition of a course or year or dismissal from the professional program if the student does not, in their judgment, show sufficient promise to justify allowing the student to continue the study of optometry, regardless of the student’s grades. While on non-academic probation, a student will not be allowed to hold leadership positions, or participate in any extracurricular activities.
supported by, or in association with, the UABSO. This may include, but is not limited to participation in class, school and university leadership positions, state, regional and national organization meetings, conferences and missions trips. A student may be judged unacceptable for promotion or be dismissed when the student has displayed repeated lack of professionalism with respect to the management of patients or in interactions with other students, staff, or the faculty. These factors, among others, may be treated equally in importance with other academic standards in that they reflect the developing capacity to deliver a high standard of health service.

Grade Appeal
A student may appeal a grade in a course if he/she feels one of the following applies:

- The grading was not in accordance with published course grading policy
- Inconsistencies were made in application of evaluation standards among students
- An error occurred in determining or assigning the grade
- The grading was arbitrary or capricious
- The grading was affected by illegal discrimination.

The student should seek resolution using the following steps:
1. Clarification should be sought from the coursemaster/instructor in an attempt to resolve the disagreement without further appeal. This step must be completed as soon as possible but no later than 5 days from the date of notice from the coursemaster or the release of the course grade in the BlazerNET/Banner system, whichever is earlier.
2. If the matter is not resolved by consultation with the coursemaster, the student may submit a written appeal to the ARC. This must be accomplished as soon as possible, but no later than 5 days from the date of notice, for consideration. The written appeal must state the basis for the appeal. The ARC will consult with the student and coursemaster/instructor as needed. The ARC will make a decision for or against the appeal, which then will be granted or denied by the Executive Committee.
3. If the EC’s decision is to deny the appeal, the student may make a final, written appeal to the Dean, who will ensure that applicable procedure was followed and that the decision reached is supported by the facts. This appeal must be received by the Dean as soon as possible but no later than 7 days from the date of notice of the decision from the Executive Committee. The Dean will review the matter with the ARC Chair, the coursemaster/instructor, and the student as necessary and will make a decision whether to grant or deny the appeal. The appellant is reminded that an appeal to the Dean is not intended to provide a forum in which to reiterate the same facts or arguments previously considered by the ARC or EC. The appeal is an opportunity to present either a challenge to the procedures followed or to offer newly discovered evidence that could affect the outcome.

In the event that a grade appeal is not settled before the beginning of the next academic term, the student should register for the next term and attend all classes until otherwise notified by the Office of Student Affairs.
Academic Status Appeal
If a student believes there is reasonable cause to request an appeal of a decision by the Executive Committee, regarding the status of probation or other required actions, such as remediation, repetition of a course or year, or dismissal from the program, the student must address a written appeal to the Dean, stating the basis for the appeal as soon as possible, but no later than 7 days of the date of the notification of the academic actions. The Dean will review the matter with the ARC Chair, the coursemaster/instructor and the student, as necessary, and will make a decision whether or not to dismiss the appeal. The objective of the Dean in the case of an appeal will be to ensure that applicable process was followed and the decision reached is supported by the facts. The appellant is reminded that an appeal to the Dean is not intended to provide a forum in which to reiterate the same facts or arguments previously considered by the ARC or EC. The appeal is an opportunity to present either a challenge to the procedures followed or to offer newly discovered evidence that could affect the outcome.

In the event that an academic status appeal is not settled before the beginning of the next academic term, the student should register for the next term and attend all classes until otherwise notified by the Office of Student Affairs.

In the event that a UAB School of Optometry Policy differs from that of the university, the School of Optometry policy will be honored.

These guidelines may be revised periodically. In the event that a policy change has occurred during a term within which a grade was issued, or during a year in which an academic status was determined, the academic decisions will be governed by the version of the Academic Policy that is most favorable to the student.

HONOR CODE AND HONOR PLEDGE
The Honor Code:
http://www.uab.edu/optometry/home/images/StudentAffairs/Honor_System.pdf

The Honor Pledge Form:
http://www.uab.edu/optometry/home/images/StudentAffairs/Honor_Pledge_Form.pdf

CLINIC STUDENT MANUAL
The clinic manual contains the clinic policies and procedures and is available on the intranet (campus computers only) at:

http://iweb.opt.uab.edu/clinicmanual
DRESS POLICY

All faculty, staff, residents and interns are in direct contact with, patients, families, physicians, prospective students and the public at large. In such a professional environment, each individual is expected to dress according to the School’s established guidelines. The following dress policy applies at all times when working in public areas of the Henry Peters Building.

- Good grooming is expected of all personnel in every detail. The following are prerequisites to good grooming:
  - Good personal hygiene, regular bathing, and good oral hygiene
  - A clean outfit daily
  - Hair neat, clean and professional
  - Mustaches, beards, goatees and sideburns are acceptable only if they are clean and neatly trimmed. Partially shaven facial hair is not acceptable in a patient care setting
  - Cologne, perfume, after-shave and make-up should be used in moderation

General policy for all faculty/staff/residents/interns:

- Materials for street clothes should be of such quality that undergarments are not visible
- Adequate undergarments should be worn at all times
- Any jewelry or adornment should be minimal and in good taste and should not interfere with or distract from direct patient care or other workplace duties

Employee identification badge or student identification badge provided by the University is required to be worn at all times when on the clinic floor. This enables you to be readily identified. This regulation applies to faculty, staff and interns whether working or visiting in the clinic.

Appropriate attire for clinic faculty/staff/residents/interns:

- Pressed shirt and necktie
- Tops with appropriate necklines
- Full length dress trousers or dress khakis
- Skirt lengths appropriate to the workplace
- Shoes appropriate to the workplace

Inappropriate attire for clinic faculty/staff/residents/interns:

- Strapless, backless, halter or spaghetti-strap tops
- T-shirts with writing
- Jeans
- Sweat suit tops and pants
- Flip flops
- Shorts
REQUIRED INFORMATION FOR USE OF STATE VEHICLES

In order to comply with the requirements set down by UAB’s Office of Risk Management, we must keep a file of information for eligibility to operate UAB cars and vans. This includes a photocopy of your current Driver’s License and a statement of your agreement to abide by UAB guidelines as well as your willingness to allow UABSO Clinic Administration to obtain a motor vehicle report on your driving record. The appropriate form must be completed by anyone who will be driving one of our vehicles prior to actually operating it.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR STUDENT EXAMINATIONS

- Students will be spaced appropriately for the scheduled room. In Volker Hall, this typically means that each student has an empty seat on either side of them.

- Students are to ensure that all books, backpacks, and other materials are on the floor and on occasion students may be asked to place these items at the back of the room against the wall.

- Cell phones should be turned off or in silent mode during the exam, and are prohibited from use during the exam. If a student is expecting an emergency call, he or she should inform the proctor prior to the exam and the proctor may hold the cell phone in the front of the room.

- Students will receive the appropriate number of exams, answer sheets / scantron forms. Any extra exams and forms will be collected at the beginning of the exam.

- Announcements will be made concerning the remaining time left to complete the exam at appropriate intervals, such as 30 minutes, 15 minutes, and 5 minutes.

- At the end of the allotted time period, the proctor will collect all examinations and answer sheets / scantron forms.

- The proctor will report any suspected academic misconduct to the course master as soon as possible after the examination.
WHAT IS A “SECURED EXAM?”
Adam Gordon, O.D.

The Student Affairs Office has observed increasing confusion and controversy over the definition of a secured exam. Because of misunderstandings between students and faculty, we feel it necessary to clarify the expectations for student and faculty regarding these exams.

- A secured exam is a testing instrument that is not released to the class.
- Since well-written and validated test questions are difficult to generate, instructors may wish to use a secured exam.
- The intent is that some or all of the test questions may be reused on a continuing basis.
- The instructor should clearly indicate if secured exams are used in the course syllabus and/or on the exam itself.
- As with all exams, the instructor has an obligation to allow students to review their performance on a secured exam.
- This review of the exam may be accomplished in class, individually, or both.

Students must understand that the content of a secured exam must not be acquired, copied or distributed without the instructor’s expressed permission. Doing so is a direct violation of the UABSO Honor Code (Section II. A.) which governs the actions and responsibilities of students enrolled in the School of Optometry.

GRADE POSTING AND GRADE DISTRIBUTION POLICY
University of Alabama at Birmingham—Office of the Provost
February 8, 2005

Posting grades or any other display of grades must comply with the following conditions:

1. Grades must never be posted in a format that would publicly reveal the identity of individual grade recipients.

2. Lists or grades for any work in classes or course sections with fewer than eight students must neither be publicly posted nor in any other way be made publicly available.
Grade Distributions for Final Course Grades
Upon written requests, a final class (or course section) grade distribution (for example, total number of A’s, B’s, C’s, etc.) will be made available for any class or course section with a final enrollment of eight or more students. However, grade distribution data must not be made available in any instance in which it would be possible to identify individual grade recipients.

Approved by the Provost, Eli Capilouto
February 8, 2005
Signed copy in Dean’s Office

SCANNTRON GRADING SYSTEM

The School of Optometry uses a scantron system to automatically grade your tests. We know that all of you have taken these types of tests in the past and are familiar with how to “bubble-in” your answers.

However, in order to ensure that there are no unnecessary delays in posting of grades because of incorrect or missing information, please take a moment to review these instructions before your first optometry exam.

Note: The Basic Health Science courses taken with the dental students may have different procedures. Please pay attention to the instructions from the professor prior to the test.

SCHOOL OF OPTOMETRY SCANTRON GUIDELINES

- Be sure to include your name, date, course name and instructor.

- Please remember to pencil in your entire 8-digit student number including those starting with a zero on all scantron forms! Example: B00123456—DO NOT INCLUDE THE “B”.

- DO NOT use your Social Security Number! It is private and confidential information.

- DO NOT mark the back of the form (side 2) unless your instructor tells you to do so.

- DON’T get carried away with the size of the bubbles...if they are marked outside the circle, the system won’t read them.

- DON’T make the marks too dark—this also creates a problem for the scantron to read.

- Finally, be sure to use a # 2 pencil. The system will not read ink or any color.
MANDATORY COURSE AND INSTRUCTOR EVALUATIONS

Course and Instructor Evaluations are mandatory and must be submitted by each student at the school before final exams begin. This is a requirement for all didactic and clinic courses.

You will receive notification via your official UABSO e-mail address (uab.edu) that the evaluations are available for you to fill out at the web address indicated in the e-mail. You will have access to course and instructor evaluations about 1 week before your final exam for each course. You will fill out one course evaluation for each course. You will also fill out one instructor evaluation for each instructor who lectured during a course. So, for one course you may have 2-12 evaluations depending on the number of lecturers in a particular course. There will be a drop box to select clinical instructor evaluations for non-didactic courses.

ISSUES THAT MAY ARISE
If you have access to evaluations for a class in which you were not registered, please do not complete or submit these evaluations. Please notify Student Affairs and give us the course name so we can keep a record of the error and remove your name from the list of students who did not submit all of their evaluations.
If you do not have access to all of your evaluations, notify Student Affairs of the issue.
If you receive an e-mail notifying you of outstanding evaluations and feel that you have submitted them all please, inform the sender.

DUE DATES
Please submit your evaluations on or before the due date listed on your evaluations. If you do not submit your evaluations by the due date, you will not receive a grade for the class. If your evaluations are overdue, you will be contacted by phone and asked to submit your evaluations immediately. Please don’t procrastinate!

CONFIDENTIALITY
We cannot trace evaluations from the submitter. This computer program gives you total confidentiality. Because of this we cannot retract an evaluation after it is submitted. So please insure you verify the instructor name on each form prior to submission.

MANDATORY
Why are course evaluations mandatory? The school and the dean are dedicated to giving you, the student a voice. They are also used as a tool to adjust the curriculum, etc.

COMMENT BOX ON EVALUATIONS
Each evaluation has a place for comments and we welcome specific positive and negative comments. Please use the utmost professionalism when writing comments.
POLICY ON ELECTIVES

Overview

Electives are non-mandatory courses designed to provide additional learning and experience for optometry students. Electives may be didactic, laboratory, clinical or research courses (or in combination) designed by faculty and must be approved by the curriculum committee, executive committee and Dean. Because of scheduling complexities and the limitations of resources and time, not all electives can be offered to every student. All students at the UAB School of Optometry are required to complete a minimum of one elective during their time at the School. As interest, faculty resources and schedules permit, students may elect to complete several electives.

Priorities. The needs of the professional curriculum must be fulfilled before any electives may be scheduled. Electives shall not be considered for any student during regularly scheduled class time.

Graduation Requirement of One Elective. To complete requirements for graduation, each student is required to complete at least one elective.

Grading. All grades for elective courses shall be Pass/Fail and therefore will not count in the calculation of a student’s GPA. A failing grade shall be placed on a student’s transcript for not satisfactorily completing an elective. The customary university withdrawal process shall govern requests to drop any elective course. After 25% of a term, no withdrawal is permitted. Courses in the graduate program will provide grades according to the rules of the graduate school. Elective courses being substituted for clinic courses will use the customary clinic grading scale.

Substituting Electives for Professional Course Work. On rare occasions with prior permission from the Director of the Professional Program and Dean, optometry students who are concurrently enrolled in the graduate program may substitute an elective for a course in the professional curriculum. Ordinarily for this to occur, a review and positive recommendation from the curriculum committee to the Director and Dean must be completed.

Elective and Externship Options for Graduate Students enrolled in the O.D./M.S. Program. Students enrolled in the O.D./M.S. program may use their graduate enrollment as their compulsory elective. Approval in this case should be obtained through the Director of the Graduate Program in collaboration with the student’s M.S. Advisor. The Director of the Graduate Program will inform the Director of the Professional Program that the student has chosen M.S. research as their elective. All O.D./M.S. graduate students have the option to use one of their Fourth Year Professional Program Externships to conduct M.S. level thesis research. This information will be provided to the student by the Director of the Graduate Program at the time of the student’s enrollment in the O.D./M.S. program. If a student elects to use an Externship to conduct M.S. level thesis research, the student must obtain approval from the Director of the Graduate Program. Upon approval, the Director of the Graduate Program will notify the Director of the Professional Program of the student’s Externship choice.
EXTERNALSHIP PROGRAMS

During the last year at UAB students spend two terms and can apply for a merit externship based on certain criteria, in an externship setting outside the school. Choices include the offices of optometrist or ophthalmologist, co-management referral centers, hospitals (e.g., Veteran’s Administration, Indian Health, Military), rural health centers, or other settings conducive to hands-on training. The purpose of this Externship Program is to provide UAB students with direct clinical experience in the diagnosis, treatment and management of ocular disease, as well as the pre-operative and post-operative care of patients. Also, depending on the site, experience may be gained in specialty areas of optometry (such as contact lenses, low vision, pediatric and binocular vision, sports vision), and in the co-management of patients.

To assure that all students receive a diversified clinical experience, it is recommended that one of the externships is hospital-based or multidisciplinary-type environments, while the other(s) are in private practice (optometry, ophthalmology, or mixed). The latter rotation allows students to gain administrative experience along with participating in clinical observation and patient care. Practice management skills (i.e., coding of diagnoses and procedures, learning about practice administration, understanding the legal influences on practice) is considered to be a secondary goal of the Externship Program, and students are expected to add to their knowledge by observing and contributing to the operation of private or co-management practices as permitted by preceptors. In selecting externship sites, students are encouraged to consider personal benefits that may accrue, in addition to the program objectives, particularly in sites which may offer long-term opportunities for employment after graduation from UAB.

There are currently four mandatory sites that must be staffed by UAB externs every term. Three of these sites are hospital based: the Birmingham Veteran’s Administration Medical Center, which requires four externs per term, the Tuscaloosa Veteran’s Administration Medical Center, which requires two externs per term, and the Tuskegee/Montgomery Veteran’s Administration Medical Centers, which require one extern per term. The fourth site is a co-management center, VisionAmerica Birmingham, which requires one extern per term. One additional student per site (four per term) are designated as alternates for these sites each term but will staff the sites only if an assigned extern is unable or ineligible to participate.

All other sites are optional. The selection of optional sites is left to students, who may choose from a roster of approved sites that is in excess of over 100 practices, clinics, centers, and institutions, in every southeastern state and across the nation. Students are also permitted to select a site not on the roster if the site meets the criteria of the program and is approved by the Director. The selection process for the sites begins in the summer of the second professional year.

Dr. Leo Semes, Director of the Externship Program
Ms. Cynthia Perry, Program Coordinator
Dr. Lester Caplan, Program Consultant

* This is subject to change during the academic year.
PARTICIPATION IN THE UABSO DOCTORAL CONVOCATION AND HOODING CEREMONY

On occasion, a fourth year optometry student may not be able to complete all graduation requirements in the expected time period, and therefore graduation is delayed. Upon successful completion of the required courses, passage of Parts I and II of the National Board Exam, and fulfillment of all other obligations to the University, a student will officially graduate from the School of Optometry.

In addition to the official UAB graduation, the School of Optometry conducts a Doctoral Convocation and Hooding Ceremony, which is a more meaningful celebration of the completion of the professional program. This event is only for optometry graduates with their family and friends in attendance. The graduates are presented with their academic hoods and diplomas. Members of the class are recognized and special honors and awards bestowed.

If a fourth year student encounters circumstances that delay their official graduation, the student may still participate in the Doctoral Convocation and Hooding Ceremony if the following conditions are met:

1. All didactic (classroom) courses are completed and passed;
2. Parts I and II of the National Board examination administered by the National Board of Examiners in Optometry (NBEO) have been passed; and
3. all other University requirements and obligations have been completed.
FUNCTIONAL GUIDELINES FOR DIDACTIC AND CLINICAL OPTOMETRIC EDUCATION

To provide guidance to those considering optometry as a profession, the Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry (ASCO) has established functional guidelines for optometric education. The ability to meet these guidelines, along with other criteria established by individual optometric institutions, is necessary for graduation from an optometric professional degree program.

One of the missions of each school and college of optometry is to produce graduates fully qualified to provide quality comprehensive eye care services to the public. To fulfill this mission, each institution must ensure that students demonstrate satisfactory knowledge and skill in the provision of optometric care. Admission committees, therefore, consider a candidate’s capacity to function effectively in the academic and clinical environments, as well as a candidate’s academic qualifications and personal attributes.

The functional guidelines in optometric education require that the candidate/student possess appropriate abilities in the following areas: 1) observation; 2) communication; 3) sensory and motor coordination; 4) intellectual–conceptual, integrative and quantitative abilities; and 5) behavioral and social attributes. Each of these areas is described in this document. In any case where a student’s abilities in one of these areas are compromised, he or she must demonstrate alternative means and/or abilities to meet the functional requirements. It is expected that seeking and using such alternative means and/or abilities shall be the responsibility of the student. Upon receipt of the appropriate documentation, the school or college will be expected to provide reasonable assistance and accommodation to the student.

Observation Abilities
The student must be able to acquire a defined level of required knowledge as presented through lectures, laboratories, demonstrations, patient interaction and self-study. Acquiring this body of information necessitates the functional use of visual, auditory and somatic sensation enhanced by the functional use of other sensory modalities.

Examples of these observational skills in which accurate information needs to be extracted in an efficient manner include:

Visual Abilities: (as they relate to such things as visual acuity, color vision and binocularity):
• Visualizing and reading information from papers, films, slides, video and computer displays
• Observing optical, anatomic, physiologic and pharmacologic demonstrations and experiments
• Discriminating microscopic images of tissue and microorganisms
• Observing a patient and noting non-verbal signs
• Discriminating numbers, images, and patterns associated with diagnostic tests and instruments
• Visualizing specific ocular tissues in order to discern three-dimensional relationships, depth and color changes

Auditory Abilities:
• Understanding verbal presentations in lecture, laboratory and patient settings
• Recognizing and interpreting various sounds associated with laboratory experiments as well as diagnostic and therapeutic procedures

Tactile Abilities:
• Palpating the eye and related areas to determine the integrity of the underlying structures
• Palpating and feeling certain cardiovascular pulses

Communication Abilities
The student must be able to communicate effectively, efficiently and sensitively with patients and their families, peers, staff, instructors and other members of the health care team. The student must be able to demonstrate established communication skills using traditional and alternative means.

Examples of required communications skills include:
• Relating effectively and sensitively to patients, conveying compassion and empathy
• Perceiving verbal and non-verbal communication such as sadness, worry, agitation and lack of comprehension from patients
• Eliciting information from patients and observing changes in mood and activity
• Communicating quickly, effectively and efficiently in oral and written English with patients and other members of the health care team
• Reading and legibly recording observations, test results and management plans accurately
• Completing assignments, patient records and correspondence accurately and in a timely manner

Sensory and Motor Coordination Abilities
Students must possess the sensory and motor skills necessary to perform an eye examination, including emergency care. In general, this requires sufficient exteroception sense (touch, pain, temperature), proprioceptive sense (position, pressure, movement, stereognosis, and vibratory) and fine motor function (significant coordination and manual dexterity using arms, wrists, hands and fingers).

Examples of skill required include but are not limited to:
• Instillation of ocular pharmaceutical agents
• Insertion, removal and manipulation of contact lenses
• Assessment of blood pressure and pulse
• Removal of foreign objects from the cornea
• Simultaneous manipulation of lenses, instruments and therapeutic agents and devices
• Reasonable facility of movement
• Injections into the eye, lids or limbs
Intellectual-Conceptual, Integrative and Quantitative Abilities

Problem solving, a most critical skill, is essential for optometric students and must be performed quickly, especially in emergency situations. In order to be an effective problem solver, the student must be able to accurately and efficiently utilize such abilities as measurement, calculation, reasoning, analysis, judgment, investigation, memory, numerical recognition and synthesis.

Examples of these abilities include being able to:

• Determine appropriate questions to be asked and clinical tests to be performed
• Identify and analyze significant findings from history, examination, and other test data
• Demonstrate good judgment and provide a reasonable assessment, diagnosis and management of patients
• Retain, recall and obtain information in an efficient manner
• Identify and communicate the limits of one’s knowledge and skill

Behavioral and Social Attributes

The student must possess the necessary behavioral and social attributes for the study and practice of optometry.

Examples of such attributes include:

• Satisfactory emotional health required for full utilization of one’s intellectual ability
• High ethical standards and integrity
• An empathy with patients and concern for their welfare
• Commitment to the optometric profession and its standards
• Effective interpersonal relationships with patients, peers and instructors
• Professional demeanor
• Effective functioning under varying degrees of stress and workload
• Adaptability to changing environments and uncertainties
• Positive acceptance of suggestions and constructive criticism

Candidates with questions or concerns about how their own conditions or disabilities might affect their ability to meet these functional guidelines are encouraged to meet with an optometry school counselor prior to submitting an application.
Approved by the ASCO Board of Directors on March 20, 1998
Revised: March 31, 2009

Student identifies need to instructor

Student identifies need to Disability Support Services

Disability Support Services (DDS):
- Obtains appropriate documentation
- Determines acceptability
- Maintains confidential records
- Consults with faculty
- Suggests reasonable academic accommodations
- Issues letters of accommodation to student
- Provides conflict resolution process for faculty

Student provides DSS accommodation letter to Director of Student affairs, who convenes Optometry Functional Standards Advisory Committee (FSAC)

Optometry FSAC:
- Reviews DSS information
- Evaluates nature/impact of disability on clinical performance & patient care
- Consults with student and others to determine appropriate academic and clinical accommodations
- Communicates recommendations to Dean

Dean provides final, written decision to Director of Student Affairs

If authorized by Dean, Director of Student Affairs will implement accommodations in conjunction with faculty. For clinical accommodations, Director of Student Affairs will communicate with CEVS coursmaster, Chief of Staff, Clinical Service Directors, VA, Externship Director, and others

If reasonable accommodations are not deemed possible, the students will be dismissed from the program.
BASIC COMPETENCY FOR ENTRY-LEVEL OPTOMETRISTS
Curriculum Committee
School of Optometry, The University of Alabama at Birmingham

Introduction
The fundamental goal of the School of Optometry of the University of Alabama at Birmingham is to educate men and women as optometrists to serve the primary vision and eye care needs of the public. This document represents the consensus of the curriculum committee of the basic attributes and learning objectives necessary in achieving this goal. An appropriate curriculum is derived from these attributes via these learning objectives.

These individuals must be capable of independent optometric practice and demonstrate the following:

- knowledge of basic biomedical, behavioral and clinical sciences, especially as it relates to vision and the eye;
- cognitive and motor skills; and,
- professional and ethical values.

The goals and learning objectives listed below will be modified to meet the evolving needs of the profession. The curriculum must reflect the frequency and criticality of the conditions that the optometrist will encounter. An expanded list of conditions is included in Appendix 1. A partial list of conditions contained in many of the basic competencies described below is included in Appendix 2.

Knowledge & Skill
Knowledge is understanding a given area. The entry-level optometrist must be knowledgeable of basic biomedical, behavioral and clinical sciences, especially as it relates to vision. Skill is ability, proficiency or expertise in using knowledge to perform within a certain context. The entry-level optometrist must have appropriate cognitive and motor skills in the prevention, diagnosis, treatment and management of clinical conditions within the scope of optometric practice.

The entry-level Optometrist must understand and have skill in the prevention, diagnosis, treatment and management of:

1. systemic conditions and processes which relate to vision
   1.1. the normal structure and function of the body and each of its organ systems emphasizing their relationship to vision
   1.1.1. (e.g., anatomy, histology, neuroscience, biochemistry, physiology, microbiology, immunology, pharmacology and molecular biology and genetics).
   1.2. the altered structure and function of the body and each of its organ systems emphasizing their relationship to vision
1.2.1. (e.g., genetic, developmental, metabolic, toxic, microbiologic, auto-immune, neoplastic, degenerative and traumatic disorders, pathology and pathophysiology).

1.3. Systemic conditions which relate to vision

1.3.1. (e.g., general health, the neurological system, the musculoskeletal system, skin and hair, head and neck, hematopoietic system, immunologic system, cardiovascular system, renal and urogenital system, gastrointestinal system, liver and biliary tract, endocrine and metabolic system, reproductive system, respiratory system, nutrition, psychosocial illness, infectious diseases and congenital and hereditary conditions).

2. **Ocular conditions and processes**

2.1. The normal structure and function of the eye and the visual system

2.1.1. (e.g., anatomy of the eye, ocular adnexa and visual pathway, ocular physiology and biochemistry and neuro-physiology).

2.2. The development of the eye and the visual system

2.2.1. (e.g., embryology and development of the eye, ocular adnexa and visual pathways).

2.3. The altered structure and function of the eye, ocular adnexa and the visual system

2.3.1. (e.g., ametropia, presbyopia and accommodative anomalies, strabismus and oculo-motor anomalies and ocular disease and trauma (including genetic, developmental, metabolic, toxic, microbiologic, auto-immune, neoplastic, degenerative and traumatic disorders)).

2.4. Ocular disease conditions and trauma

2.4.1. (e.g., the orbit, adnexa, lacrimal system; cornea and external disease; glaucoma; lens, cataract and refractive surgery; uveitis; sclera and episclera; retina and vitreous; and, neuro-ophthalmic disorders).

3. **Optics and lens systems and their application to vision**

3.1. Optics and lens systems and their application to vision

3.1.1. (e.g., geometrical optics, physical optics, ophthalmic optics, quantum optics (lasers and fluorescence) and visual optics).
3.2. refractive conditions

3.2.1. (e.g., ametropia, myopia, hyperopia, astigmatism and combinations thereof; anisometropia, presbyopia, aphakia, pseudophakia, aniseikonia and low vision).

3.3 anomalies of vision using spectacles

3.3.1 (e.g., single vision, multifocals (bifocals, trifocals, progressive & occupational lenses), coatings, tints, prism, slab-off, adds, photochromics, materials (glass, plastic, polycarbonate, high index), dress and safety lenses, ANSI standards, center and edge thickness, effectivity, design (base curve, sagittal depth)).

4. anomalies of vision using contact lenses.

4.1. anomalies of vision using contact lenses

4.1.1. (e.g., rigid and soft lenses for spherical and/or cylindrical correction)

5. sensory and motor processes of vision

5.1 the sensation of the external world by the visual system

5.1.1. (e.g., visual perception & binocular vision).

5.2. motor processes of the visual system

5.2.1. (e.g., accommodation, ocular motility and control systems).

5.3. accommodative conditions

5.3.1. (e.g., anomalies of accommodation and accommodative vergence).

5.4. anomalies of binocular vision and strabismus

5.4.1. (e.g., sensory and/or integrative anomalies such as amblyopia, eccentric fixation, suppression, and anomalous correspondence).

5.5. disorders of eye movement

5.5.1. (e.g., nystagmus and related conditions).
5.6. perceptual conditions as they relate to vision

5.6.1. (e.g., anomalies of child development, anomalies of the aging adult, anomalies secondary to acquired neurological impairment and anomalies of color vision).

6. public health, ethical, legal and administrative issues as applied to optometry

6.1. public health issues as applied to Optometry

6.1.1. (e.g., health care systems and administration, health care policy).

6.2. ethical issues as applied to Optometry

6.2.1. (e.g., standards of professional ethics).

6.3 legal and administrative issues as applied to Optometry

6.3.1. (e.g., licensure and governmental regulation of Optometry; patient records, confidentiality of patient information, professional liability and visual disability and practice management issues and techniques).

6.4. principles of human behavior

6.4.1. (e.g., psychology and human development).

6.5. scientific methodology especially as applied to vision and its assessment

6.5.1. (e.g., formation of hypotheses and their logical conclusions, collection of data and statistics and their application to clinical practice).

6.6. the epidemiology of systemic and ocular conditions, particularly risk factors for conditions within the scope of practice

6.6.1. (e.g., epidemiology, bio-statistics and the contributions of non-biological factors in poor health such as economic, psychological, social and cultural factors).

6.7. environmental and occupational conditions

6.7.1. (e.g., environmental vision, lighting and visibility).
7. **issues concerning clinical care of patients**

7.1. the examination of patients

7.1.1. (e.g., patient case history and communication; visual acuity and other preliminary tests; blood pressure measurement; retinoscopy; refraction; heterophoria testing such as von Graefe phorometry and Maddox rod; accommodation testing; vergence testing; cover test evaluation; pupil testing; biomicroscopy; tonometry; occlusion (amblyopia and pressure patches); instillation of ophthalmic medications and other pharmaceutical agents; evaluating ophthalmic materials, binocular indirect ophthalmoscopy; fundus lens evaluation, gonioscopy, contact lens insertion, removal and evaluation; visual fields; ophthalmic imaging and photography; insertion and removal of lacrimal implants; ultrasound; and laboratory testing).

7.2. evaluating clinical data

7.2.1. (e.g., visual recognition and interpretation of clinical signs of ametropia, oculomotor neuropathology and strabismus; and, ocular disease and trauma).

7.3. rendering patient care decisions

7.3.1. (e.g., patient management (case history and clinical findings, diagnosis, treatment and management and prognosis and follow-up), and, patient education).

7.4. effectively communicating, both orally and in writing, with patients, their families and other health professionals, as appropriate, in the care of the patient and the performance of their responsibilities including the use of new technology to gather knowledge and manage information and, the use of that understanding in making decisions about health care and optometric practice.

**Professional and Ethical Values**

Professional and ethical values describe qualities necessary for the full and appropriate application of knowledge and skills to the scope of optometric practice.

The entry-level optometrist must demonstrate appropriate:

8. **personal professional and ethical values**
8.1. (i.e., be an advocate for the visual welfare of patients and the public; be committed to life-long learning and to improving knowledge, skills and professionalism; recognize limitations of ability and knowledge; respect the confidentiality of patient information; maintain practices and records in accordance with professional standards).

9. values towards people

9.1. (i.e., respect the inalienable rights of all people and render care independent of a patient’s economic status).

10. community-related values

10.1. (i.e., be committed to organizations benefiting optometry and the visual welfare of the public and recognize the value of other professions and work in harmony with them to serve the patient’s best interest at all times).

Conclusion
Defining the goals and objectives of optometric education is extraordinarily important. This curriculum will provide the entry-level optometrist with appropriate knowledge and skill in every core area. This document will be successful when it achieves a clear definition of attributes to define Basic Competency for Entry-level Optometrists.
UAB STUDENT HANDBOOK

Please note that the complete UAB Student Handbook can be found on the University website at http://main.uab.edu/sites/apply/accepted/handbook. The following list is a sample of the topics contained in the UAB Student Handbook. Please refer to the website for complete and updated information.

UA BlazerID
CampusCard
Campus Recreation
Campus Ministry Association
Center for Counseling and Wellness
Check Cashing
Computer Services
Conference Rooms
Copying
Disability Support Services
Housing
Information Center
International Scholar and Student Services
Libraries
Notary Public
Parking
Police Department
Student Organization Support
Student Dental Health
Student Health Care
UAB Escort Service
UAB Safe Zone
Veterans Affairs
Voter Registration
Women's Center