



January 26, 2022

Sent via email: Dean.barcelow@gmail.com

Dr. Dean Barcelow
President
Vermont Optometric Association
124 E Main St #1,
Newport, VT 05855

Dear Dr. Barcelow:

Thank you for your recent inquiry into the education and training incorporated into the curricula at the 23 schools and colleges of optometry around the country.

As you know, our organization is the national organization representing all 23 schools and colleges of optometry in the United States. ASCO's mission is to advance and support optometric education and research to enhance the health and well-being of the public. Founded in 1941 and headquartered in Rockville, Maryland, we are committed to achieving excellence in optometric education and to helping our member institutions prepare well-qualified graduates for entrance into the profession of optometry.

We recently conducted a survey of all of the deans or presidents of these 23 institutions, and found that 100% of these institutions include advanced procedures in their curricula. This survey supports our position statement on *Optometry Graduates Clinical Competencies* (copy attached).

We hope you will find the results of this survey both informative and helpful.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "KK Nichols".

Kelly K. Nichols, OD, MPH, PhD, FAAO
ASCO President
and
Dean
University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Optometry
Birmingham, Alabama

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dawn M. Mancuso".

Dawn M. Mancuso, MAM, CAE, FASAE
ASCO Executive Vice President & CEO

Encl.



ASSOCIATION of
SCHOOLS *and* COLLEGES
of OPTOMETRY

POSITION PAPER

Optometry Graduates' Clinical Competencies

Approved, ASCO Board of Directors, 11/15/21

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

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

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