EVALUATOR'S HANDBOOK
FOR
ACCREDITATION OF
OPTICIANRY DISPENSING PROGRAMS

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The COA accredits two-year opticianry degree programs and one-year ophthalmic laboratory technology certificate programs. This document contains the process for evaluation of a two-year degree program, but the information for the one-year certificate program is the same.

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PREFACE

The purpose of this handbook is to provide the on-site evaluator with specific information about the on-site evaluation and his/her responsibilities as a representative of the Commission on Opticianry Accreditation. In order to represent the Commission and fulfill your duties as an evaluator, you must be thoroughly familiar with the *Accreditation Guide for Opticianry Dispensing Programs,* which contains the Commission's policies and procedures for the accreditation process. For the most part, the information contained in the Guide is not repeated in this handbook.

The appendix contains detailed information elaborating on specific areas and reference materials the evaluator will need during the evaluation visit, i.e., accreditation classifications, *Essentials*, glossary and questionnaires.

Please provide the Commission's executive director or the Director of Accreditation with any comments and suggestions you may have regarding this handbook so that we may continue to improve its content and usefulness to the evaluator.

Please remember that the program and institution that you will be visiting have spent many hours preparing the Self-Study Report and for the on-site visit. Consideration of their efforts is always productive and appreciated.

The *Evaluator's Checklist* is available on-line at http://coaccreditation.com/Evaluators-Checklist.pdf.

If you have any questions during the on-site visit, be sure to call the Commission's Director of Accreditation at (703) 468-0566, or e-mail director@COAccreditaiton.com. Visit our home page http://www.COAccreditation.com.

GLOSSARY

American Board of Opticianry: The American Board of Opticianry (ABO) is an independent corporation for voluntary certification of dispensing opticians. It administers the National Opticianry Competency Examination (through the Professional Examination Service) for individuals who wish to establish their competency to dispense Rx eyeglasses. The ABO also administers the Master in Ophthalmic Optics Examination, the advanced competency exam, and a site-testing for more experienced opticians (8-6-96).

Application for Accreditation: The application specifies factual information about the program to determine initial eligibility for accreditation. The application is to be completed and returned by the program in accordance with the instructions. The Commission reviews the application. If considered eligible, the program is invited to fulfill the next requirement in the process, the Self- Study Report.

Checklist: the on-site team in evaluating the program uses a checklist. The checklist is based on the *Essentials*.

Compliance: To adhere to the provisions of the *Essentials* to the greatest possible extent.

Course Description: A narrative describing course content in terms of major areas of instruction.

Course Outline: A topic outline listing the major subjects covered to show overall course content.

Curriculum: Curriculum refers to the course of studies suggested in the *Essentials* and leading to the associate degree in ophthalmic dispensing or equivalent.

Degree Program: A degree program culminates in a recognized degree, normally an associate degree, granted by a postsecondary educational institution which meets the eligibility requirements specified in the *Essentials*. The document conferring the degree may be a diploma, certificate, or other appropriate documentation attesting to the completion of the program.

Educational Foundation in Ophthalmic Optics: The Educational Foundation in Ophthalmic Optics (EFOO) solicits, manages, and administers donations. These are then disseminated in the form of grants or loans to opticianry organizations "seeking to further the field of ophthalmic optics." A limited number of loans or grants are made to students in approved opticianry programs.

Essentials: The *Essentials of an Accredited Educational Program for Opticianry Dispensing* - referred to as the *Essentials* - is contained in its entirety in Section III of this Guide. The document specifies the minimum standards to be achieved by an educational program.

Guidelines: Guidelines are explanatory statements that clarify the *Essentials* and are enclosed in parentheses. Guidelines are used to give examples of how *Essentials* may be interpreted to allow for flexibility, yet remain within the framework of the *Essentials.*

In the *Essentials* and Guidelines, the following auxiliary verbs are used:

(1) Must - expresses an imperative need or indispensable item
(2) Should - expresses ethical obligation or propriety
(3) May - expresses freedom or liberty to follow a suggested alternative
(4) Could - suggests an alternative for meeting the intent.

Housing Institution: The institution housing the program is the institution responsible for the effectiveness of the educational program. The institution will publish the credited courses in public documents, receive tuition for enrollment in the program, grant credit and degrees, and in general, carry out the responsibilities specified in the *Essentials*.

Lesson Plan: A document used by the instructor to manage the instructional activity. The lesson plan contains a list of objectives and other instructions or information needed by the instructor for guiding the students in effective attainment of the lesson objectives.

Master Plan: An overall plan that outlines or specifies the objectives and into which the details of other specific plans are fitted, a plan that gives overall guidance.

Mission, Goals and Objectives: Goals refer to those long-range purposes or aims which the institution or program must sustain year after year. Goals define those end results to be achieved. Goals, taken collectively, constitute the mission of the institution or program. Objectives refer to those relatively short-term conditions to be achieved within a given period of time, which is measurable evidence of progress toward achievement of the goals of the institution or program.

National Academy of Opticianry: The National Academy of Opticianry (NAO) is an independent, non-profit educational organization. Its sole objective is to improve the educational qualifications of ophthalmic professionals who serve the public, and it provides these dispensers and technicians with programs and services to meet the educational requirements needed for state licensure and/or certification by the American Board of Opticianry (ABO). The NAO serves no political or commercial interests. It is an individual membership organization offering home study courses, review materials, review courses and seminars.

National Contact Lens Examiners: The National Contact Lens Examiners (NCLE) is an independent corporation that offers a competency examination for contact lens technicians who wish to establish their credentials to serve the public. The NCLE administers the Contact Lens Registry Examination through the Professional Examination Services and is a non-member body governed by a Board of Directors.

National Federation of Opticianry Schools: The National Federation of Opticianry Schools (NFOS) represents formal opticianry education in the United States. Its goals are to: upgrade the standards of opticianry education; facilitate the exchange of teaching methods; achieve uniformity of education in opticianry; and aid other national opticianry organizations in their efforts.

Noncompliance: Failure to comply with the provisions of the *Essentials.*

Objective: A specification of precisely what behavior the student is to exhibit the conditions under which the behavior will be accomplished and the minimum standard of acceptable performance.

Opticians Association of America: The Opticians Association of America (OAA) is the national volunteer trade and political association of retail opticianry. It promotes the business interests of opticians and optical firms in the legislative and regulatory areas and fosters a better public understanding and acceptance of retail dispensing as part of the eyecare delivery system. Virtually all state opticianry associations are affiliated with OAA.

On-Site Evaluators: On-site evaluators are appointed by the Commission to perform the on-site evaluation.

Opticianry: The term opticianry is used in the broad sense to include both ophthalmic dispensing and ophthalmic laboratory technology.

Potential Compliance: Deficiency(s) in meeting the provision(s) of the *Essentials* that the institution/program is capable of correcting within a reasonable period of time.

Professional Development: A process involving systematic growth in a particular field through increased knowledge, expertise and ability. The goal of professional development is to improve proficiency

through education, training and experience. Professionalism is based on sound knowledge and requires a high level of training, both in the classroom and on-the-job. Development is the process of growth and evolution, which is designed to increase a person's potential so professionalism is achieved and improved through the vehicle of development.

Self Study Committee: It is expected that a program will form a self study committee and appoint a highly qualified chairperson. The self study committee *must* have representation from the administration, faculty, students, advisory committee, and other interested and affected groups.

Self Study Report: The Self Study Report is prepared by a program applying for initial accreditation or for reaccreditation. It is a self-evaluation and, as a required part of the accreditation process, provides a unique opportunity to the program for the administration, faculty, students, advisory committee and all affected groups to work together as a cohesive group. They are expected to assess, reaffirm, and build upon existing strengths; identify and correct present weaknesses; and plan for future development. The data gathering is time-consuming but a necessary learning process in the development of a self study. A well-organized program should have most of the necessary data routinely available.

Steps in Building a High Level of Professionalism:

- Maintain a positive attitude
- Establish responsible work habits
- Observe others in the profession and learn from them
- Establish and follow a training plan
- Listen first and then ask questions
- Maintain a positive self-image (appearance, posture, etc.)
- Set positive goals
- Plan and organize work schedules
- Be punctual
- Be organized
- Be self-disciplined
- Learn the language of the profession, i.e., the jargon
- Attend lectures, seminars and workshops in related fields
- When conflicts arise, attack the problem, not the person

Syllabus: A course control document used for course planning, organization, validation and operation. Generally, for every block of instruction within a course, objectives, duration of instruction, support materials and guidance factors are listed.

Section I: OVERVIEW OF THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS

In the United States, no federal government agency such as a ministry of education exists. Our constitution holds that education is the responsibility of the states. The accreditation process has evolved as a voluntary non-governmental process aimed at self-regulation and improvement.

There are two levels of accreditation. They are institutional and program accreditation. Institutional accreditation focuses on the total institution, and program accreditation focuses on the quality of education offered by a particular program. The Commission on Opticianry Accreditation is a programmatic accrediting agency.

The main purposes of accreditation are:

1. To identify programs of study which meet established standards of educational quality (*Essentials*)

2. To identify programs of study which adhere to accepted ethical education practices

3. To improve programs of study by involving administration, faculty and staff in self- evaluation and planning

4. To assist in development of processes to evaluate programs of study

5. To provide reasonable assurance that graduates meet minimum educational standards upon entry into the profession

The fact that an opticianry program is accredited means that the Commission on Opticianry Accreditation has determined that the program offers quality instruction and is in substantial compliance with the *Essentials of an Accredited Educational Program for Opticianry Dispensing* (referred to as the *Essentials* hereafter) as established by the Commission, Appendix 1. The *Essentials* require that a school:

- State its educational objectives clearly and fulfill them satisfactorily

- Provide adequate examination services, encouragement to students, and attention to individual differences

- Have a qualified faculty

- Enroll students who can be expected to benefit from the instruction

- Maintain adequate student services

- Show satisfactory student progress and success

- Be honest in its advertising and promotional materials

- Show financial resources adequate to carry out all obligations to students

- Use a satisfactory tuition refund policy

- Maintain student records properly

- Demonstrate satisfactory ethical practices in operations

The accreditation process will be repeated at intervals as appropriate, but not more than six years.

The accreditation process basically requires the following steps:

1. Self Study Report by the program

2. On-site visit by an evaluation team

3. Accreditation decision by the Commission

SELF-STUDY REPORT

The program begins preparation of the Self Study Report after the Commission approves the application. The preparation of the report may take about twelve months and involves gathering and analyzing pertinent data on all aspects of the program.

The Self-Study Report is a major undertaking, which should involve an appropriate proportion of representation from the faculty, student body, administration, advisory committee, and other affected groups.

When completed in accordance with instructions contained in the Commission's publication, *The Accreditation Guide for Opticianry Dispensing Programs*, the report should contain the institution's and program's mission, goals, and learning objectives; organizational structures, practices, and procedures; innovative aspects; and degree of success in meeting its own stated objectives and the *Essentials*.

Copies of the Self-Study Report are forwarded to the Commission office and each member of the evaluation team. Prior to the on-site visit each evaluator will analyze the submitted self study report and compare with the *Essentials* requirements. The team uses this document with the accompanying exhibits during the on-site visit.

ON-SITE VISIT

A mutually convenient date is established for the visit. The team is not limited in size, but normally has three members including a chairperson (usually a Commissioner), a practicing optician (not a Commissioner or associated with the program being evaluated), and an ophthalmic dispensing educator from (or has been employed by within the past five academic years) a Commission accredited program.

The team examines the program's entire operation to verify information in the Self Study Report and gathers additional information as needed. Conferences are held with students, faculty, and the advisory
committee and questionnaires completed as appropriate, Appendix 2. Although primarily a fact-finding process, the visit should stimulate ideas for improvement of the program.

Each team member reports his/her findings to the team chairperson. The reports are confidential, objective and factual. The chairperson in turn develops a formal report to be submitted to the Commission.

The Evaluation Report, Appendix 3, includes a summary of the program's strengths, innovative aspects, recommendations for improvement, degree of success in meeting the program/institution's own stated objectives and areas of compliance, potential compliance and noncompliance with the *Essentials*. It is confined to the presentation of factual findings, and includes a recommendation regarding accreditation, Appendix 4. The report is sent to the Commission by the chairperson within 45 days of the on-site evaluation, and the Commission in turn forwards the report, excluding the team's accreditation recommendation, to the institution's chief executive officer within 90 days of the on-site visit. The institution then has the opportunity to review the Evaluation Report and, if desired, submit to the Commission additional materials relating to the findings and recommendations, within 45 days of receiving the report.

ACCREDITATION DECISION

The Commission decides in a timely manner the accreditation classification of program, (Appendix 4).

The Commission has three courses of action. They are:

- Accredit a new applicant's opticianry program or continue a program's accreditation status
- Accredit or continue accreditation with stipulations that must be met within a stated time period
- Deny or withdraw accreditation

If accreditation is denied or withdrawn, the Commission sends the institution's chief executive officer a statement of the reason(s) for denial by certified mail or United Parcel Service. The institution has the right to appeal the decision. Appeal policies and procedures are contained in the Commission's publication. Accreditation Guide for Opticianry Dispensing Programs and in the *Policy and Procedures Manual.*

AUTHORITY

The authority for the Commission to accredit opticianry educational programs is based on recognition by the United States Department of Education and by the profession.

Section II: ON-SITE EVALUATION PROCESS

A.   Scheduling the Visit

    The dates of the on-site visit are arranged by agreement between the Commission and the institution, normally 90 days in advance of the visit.

B.   Prior to Visit

    1.   Travel and Reimbursement

        Evaluators should contact the team chairperson well in advance of the visit to coordinate travel plans. Travel arrangements can be made through the Commission office, or if making his/her own, he/she is expected to take advantage of any cost reducing plans, e.g., 30 day advance purchase of airline tickets, etc. Expenses are to be submitted to the Commission for reimbursement on the form provided (Appendix 5) within two weeks of the on-site visit.

        Hotel accommodations will be arranged by the program director through the Commission office and each team member will be notified. When possible, hotel accommodations will be billed directly to the institution or the Commission. Each team member will be notified of the billing arrangements prior to the on-site visit.

    2.   Prior to the on-site visit, the Commission will send each evaluator all pertinent materials. They will include:

        - *Evaluator's Handbook
        - Evaluator's Checklist
        - *Accreditation Guide
        - **Last Annual Report
        - Expense Sheet
        - On-site Agenda
        - **Last Evaluation Report
        - Name Badge
        - Faculty, Student, and Advisory Committee Questionnaires (sent to Chairperson)
        - Team Abstracts

        *Sent to those team members who do not already have a copy.
        **If program is seeking reaccreditation

        The team Chairperson has three copies of the Evaluation Report cover sheet that must be signed by each team member before leaving the on-site.

        In preparation for the visit, The Accreditation Guide and Self-Study Report should be studied very closely. Each evaluator should focus attention on whether the program meets the *Essentials*, Appendix 1, by using the Self Study Report in conjunction with the Evaluator's Checklist.

Special attention should be given to the following:

      a.   Mission, Goals, and Learning Objectives
      b.   Resources
      c.   Advisory Committee
      d.   Program Evaluation
      e.   Clinical Experience (on and/or off campus, dispensing & contact lens, where applicable)

C.   During the Visit

The Commission has no rigid schedule to be followed during an on-site visit evaluation. However, the Commission staff, the program director, and the team chairperson will have mutually agreed to a schedule of events, Appendix 6. which will be published by the Commission and forwarded to all team members and the program. The Commission considers each of the following to be important and expects all of them to be included during the visit.

1.   Team Schedule

    a.   <u>Executive Session</u>. An executive session of the team is to be held prior to the first day of the visit. Some of the major issues to be discussed are the agenda, accreditation manuals, Self-Study Report, accreditation classifications and any questions a team member may have. The *Essentials*, Appendix 1, must serve as a guide to assist in program evaluation. The evaluator must define to what extent each Essential is being met (compliance) or to what extent limitations (potential compliance/noncompliance) exist. The *Evaluator's Checklist* is organized so that each section corresponds to each Essential.

    b.   <u>In-Briefing</u>. A conference with the institutional chief executive officer and program director should be held as soon as possible on the first day of the visit to discuss such items as purpose of visit, finances, program relationship to the institution and other subjects or concerns of the institution and/or program. This conference will provide the team procedures of the team. The team should establish a friendly rapport and stress that the visit is being performed to aid the program in improving its educational process.

    c.   <u>Tour</u>. A tour of the teaching facilities will include the library, laboratory, and other pertinent support areas.

    d.   <u>Conference with</u>:

        (1)   Chief executive officer and program director to discuss administrative and admission procedures

(2)   Department chairperson and faculty members with teaching and/or administrative responsibility.

(3)   First and second year students (separately) and others, if appropriate. (At this time, student questionnaires could be completed, appendix 2.)

(4)   Advisory Committee (Questionnaire, Appendix 2)

e.   <u>Executive Session</u>. Before conducting the exit briefing, the team members meet to discuss their findings and recommendations and plan their presentation for the exit briefing. This planned presentation will provide the body of the evaluation report.

f.   <u>Out-Briefing</u>. Following completion of the on-site visit, the team chairperson and team members should meet with the chief executive officer, program director and the ophthalmic staff and faculty to summarize the team's findings, possible recommendations and ask for any comments and clarifications as needed. The team should emphasize the strengths of the program and then discuss any limitations. During this

discussion, the team should point out where the limitations (deficiencies) represent noncompliance with the *Essentials*. The team should make possible recommendations for improvement*, but be certain to differentiate between those areas which represent noncompliance with the *Essentials* and those which represent areas which the team considers to be suggestions for improvement. The members **must not** give any indication as to what accreditation classification will be recommended to the Commission. During these discussions, the team chairperson should give the program officials the opportunity to agree or disagree with the findings and recommendations made by the team. At the conclusion of the out-briefing, the team members should express their appreciation for the hospitality and cooperation extended to them.

In addition to the conferences and meetings with the program officials, the Commission's Evaluation Team is expected to review the following materials and data:

a.   A statement of the aims and objectives of the opticianry educational program as well as the institution as a whole.

b.   Admissions data.

c.   Student performance and other records

d.   Course outlines and other materials describing curriculum content.

e.   Lists of textbooks, laboratory manuals, and other reference materials used by the program.

f.   Quizzes, midterm and final examinations, term papers and special study assignments used.

g.   Selected samples or exhibits of students' work.

h. A list of research projects currently in progress, if any, including names of researchers, faculty supervisors and students.

i. Biographical material on faculty and administrative personnel.

j. Selected financial records.

k. Graduate employment, performance records and other available documentation of the program's self evaluation process.

3. Protocol for Institution and Program Officials

Institution and program officials should not be present with the evaluation team during conferences with faculty members or students. Team members must be able to hold frank discussions with faculty members and students. The program director should be consulted to determine the protocol to be followed during the conference with the chief executive officer, or his/her representative.

4. Protocol for Evaluation Team Members

The guidelines and responsibilities for the evaluation team members have been approved by the Commission and are as follows:

a. Program analysis and review are the primary functions of an evaluation team. During a scheduled visit, members of the evaluation team should neither extend nor accept social invitations from the host institution. Every effort must be made to avoid any situation which could result in a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest. Experience has shown that all available time is needed to carry out effectively the duties of being a team member.

b. Team members are expected to review the Self Study Report, *Essentials,* other pre-evaluation materials and become familiar with the academic and administrative aspects of the institution and program prior to the visit.

c. Team members are expected to be present at the executive session usually held the evening before the scheduled on-site visit and participate throughout the duration of the visit. Late arrivals and early departures reduce the effectiveness and objectivity of the evaluation of the program.

d. Team members **must not** express personal or team opinions regarding the accreditation classification of the program under evaluation. Team members should discuss general findings and possible recommendations during the exit briefing. A decision relative to the accreditation classification of an educational program is made exclusively by the Commission at a regularly scheduled meeting and only after a thorough discussion and in-depth review of the Evaluation Report.

e. Team members should take an active part in conferences and discussions but should refrain from expressing personal observations regarding teaching techniques and educational methodology. The time is better utilized by listening to the program officials' explanation of their philosophy, course content, evaluation proceedings, etc.

f. Team members are expected to review, analyze and discuss all aspects of the program being evaluated in executive sessions. Executive sessions are generally held in the evening proceeding the first day of the visit and at scheduled intervals during the visit. This should enable the team chairperson to obtain a consensus for preparing the Evaluation Report.

g. Each team member must sign and date their checklist and give it to the to the team chairperson before final departure from the on-site visit. The chairperson must submit all checklists, memoranda (where applicable), and questionnaires used during the visit to the Commission office with the Evaluation Report.

h. Each team member is expected to prepare reports on any area assigned by the team chairperson. These reports will be used by the team chairperson in preparing the Evaluation Report.
When the draft of the Evaluation Report is completed, it should be forwarded to the Commission office for review and typing, if necessary.

i. The draft of the Evaluation Report will be sent to the team members for review and comment. Comment sheets (Appendix 9) should be forwarded to the team chairperson within 15 days of its receipt and approval sheets (Appendix 10) should be forwarded to the Commission office. A prompt response by each team member is vital to the preparation of the final report.

j. A team member, usually the chairperson, will be present at the meeting when the Commission reviews the Evaluation Report submitted by the team.

The team member's presence is expected to explain and elaborate on the report.

k. Team members are expected to treat all information and data regarding an institution under evaluation as confidential. The disclosure of personal or team opinions with respect to the accreditation classification of the institution being evaluated is unauthorized at any time before, during, or after the visit.

l. Evaluation team members will be informed by the executive director as to which documents to destroy and which to return to the Commission.

D.   After the Visit

Evaluation team members will be reimbursed by the Commission for expenses related to the   visit by completing the on-site expense voucher, Appendix 5. Airline, parking, rental car, meal and hotel vouchers must be attached, when applicable. On-site expense vouchers must be submitted within two weeks after the on-site visit.

1.   The Evaluation Report

The written Evaluation Report is a vital document used by the Commission in making an accreditation decision. The report should be as brief and factual as possible, but must contain critical data and documentation on any situation judged as not complying or being in potential compliance with the *Essentials*. Program strengths, recommendations for improvement, innovations, and creative aspects (including remarks about the degree to which the creative and innovative aspects improve the program's overall quality) and areas of compliance, potential compliance or noncompliance, as appropriate, must be cited in the written report. These citations must directly correlate with the specific Essential(s) being addressed. The degree of success the program has achieved in meeting its own and/or the institution's stated objectives must be commented on. The evaluation team must recommend an accreditation classification in the report, Appendix 4. Appendix 3 contains a sample of the required format for the Evaluation Report.

The team chairperson prepares the draft of the Evaluation Report and forwards it to the Commission office for review and typing, if necessary. Copies of the draft are sent to the team members with a comment (Appendix 9) and approval (Appendix 10) sheet. The team member is to review the draft and send any comments directly to the team chairperson on the comment sheet. Once the draft has been reviewed and comments have been sent to the team chairperson, the team members should sign and complete the approval sheet and forward it to the Commission office. After the comments have been received by the team chairperson and any discrepancies corrected, the final Evaluation Report is forwarded by the team chairperson to the Commission office. It is then sent to the institution's chief executive officer by the Commission providing him/her the opportunity to point out any inaccuracies in factual information and to comment on the report and file supplementary

materials relating to the report's findings, if necessary, before it is acted on by the Commission. The report sent to the institution at this time will <u>not</u> contain the team's recommendation regarding accreditation classification.

2.   Post Visit Questionnaire

After the on-site visit has been completed, the Commission will send a questionnaire to the division chairperson and program director of the program. They will be asked to comment on the arrangements for the on-site visit, performance of the evaluation team, and make suggestions for improving the program review process, Appendix 7.

E.   Commission Review and Decision

Upon receipt of the comments from the institution, the Evaluation Report, with the team's recommendation for accreditation classification, Appendix 3, is considered

by the Commission at its next regularly scheduled meeting and a decision made. The Commission expects any Commissioner to withdraw from the consideration of the accreditation classification when either the Commissioner or the Commission feels a conflict of interest may exist.

EVALUATOR'S CHECKLIST

The *Evaluator's Checklist* was prepared for use by members of the on-site evaluation team to assist in determining the program's ability to meet the *Essentials* and in preparing and submitting the Evaluation Report. The team members should utilize the checklist as a working paper in reviewing the Self Study Report and in conducting the on-site evaluation visit.

The team chairperson should utilize the checklist to develop and submit the team Evaluation Report. Findings and substantiation must be included in the Evaluation Report of the site visit and ample space has been provided. The team chairperson and members should sign the first page of the checklist as indicated. Each checklist should be given to the chairperson upon leaving the on-site visit. When the Evaluation Report is submitted to the Commission office, the copies of the checklists should be sent as well.

The program officials may utilize the checklist in preparing the Self Study Report and evaluating their program prior to the on-site evaluation.

The *Evaluator's Checklist* is a separate document and its format is divided into three major sections. Following the specific *Essentials* item is the EVALUATION CRITERIA section and the FINDINGS and SUBSTANTIATION sections. These FINDINGS and SUBSTANTIATION sections require written responses classified, explained, and substantiated. A check of potential compliance or noncompliance <u>must</u> be explained in the FINDINGS and documented in the SUBSTANTIATION sections provided at the end of each *Essential*. Any noteworthy program strengths or innovation should be documented in these sections.

Should any questions arise during the on-site visit that the evaluators are unable to resolve, a call to the Executive Director or Director of Accreditation of the Commission for clarification is appropriate.

The Evaluator's Checklist is available on-line at http://coaccreditation.com/Evaluators-Checklist.pdf

APPENDIX1

Essentials of an Accredited Educational Program for Opticianry is available on-line at

http://coaccreditation.com/essentials-dispensing.pdf

Essentials of an Accredited Educational Program for Ophthalmic Laboratory Technology is available on-line at

http://coaccreditation.com/essentials-laboratory.pdf

APPENDIX 2
Student, Faculty, and Advisory Committee
Questionnaires

Date _____   _____ 1st yr. _____ 2nd yr.

COMMISSION ON OPTICIANRY ACCREDITATION
CONFIDENTIAL
STUDENT EVALUATION OF PROGRAM

_____   _____
        Program   Institution

1. What are your plans after graduation?

_____

2. Has career guidance been given to help formulate these goals?   _____ Yes   _____ No

3. PLEASE EVALUATE THE FOLLOWING:
YES NO

___ ___ a. Is there enough equipment for students to use?

___ ___ b. Is the equipment up-to-date?

___ ___ c. Were the safety rules for the laboratories made known to you?

___ ___ d. Are the safety rules enforced?

___ ___ e. Are there enough supplies available to students working in the laboratories?

___ ___ f. Does the school library contain up-to-date ophthalmic texts, reference books and magazines?

___ ___ g. Is the library open enough hours during the day and evening?

___ ___ h. Were you adequately prepared to begin the clinical practicum portion?

___ ___ i. Are you receiving adequate individual attention by a faculty member during
                laboratory periods?

___ ___ j. Are you receiving sufficient hands-on experience in on-campus dispensing of Eyewear?
___ ___   Contact lenses?

___ ___ k. Are you receiving sufficient hands-on experience in off campus dispensing of Eyewear?
___ ___   Contact lenses?

___ ___ l. Do you know how your instructor determines your grade in each course?

___ ___ m. At the start of each course, do you know what topics will be covered by course
                completion?
___ ___ n. Are you assigned research papers?   How many? _____

YES NO

___ ___ o. Are you aware of licensing requirements of your state?
___ ___   other states?

___ ___ p. Did the school's/program's catalog or any printed material advertising the ophthalmic program describe the program as you have actually found it to be?

___ ___ q. Are the classes normally held as scheduled?

___ ___ r. Is there emergency medical care available when needed?

___ ___ s. Is the faculty available for student guidance and counseling?

___ ___ t. Are job placement services available to students?

___ ___ u. Do you feel that your educational program is preparing you to become a qualified ophthalmic dispenser?

IN YOUR OPINION:

a. What are the greatest strengths of the program?

_____

_____

b. What are the greatest weaknesses of the program?

_____

_____

c. Why did you choose this program?

_____

d. Would you recommend this program to others? _____ Yes _____ No   Why or why not?

_____

_____

THANK YOU!

COMMISSION ON OPTICIANRY ACCREDITATION

FACULTY QUESTIONNAIRE

Date _____ Program _____

Institution _____

YES NO

___ ___ 1. Has the institution established policies governing academic preparation and experience for faculty?

___ ___ 2. Does the institution/program provide for continued education of faculty to develop and maintain professional competency?

___ ___ 3. Is there an existing method of faculty evaluation?

___ ___ 4. Is there appropriate communication between faculty and the advisory committee?

___ ___ 5. Are classrooms conducive to learning with adequate space, desks and creature comforts?

___ ___ 6. Is sufficient faculty office space available?

___ ___ 7. Are laboratory facilities and equipment sufficient for student use to achieve learning objectives?

___ ___ 8. Is adequate laboratory supervision available?

___ ___ 9. Does the library contain up-to-date texts, references and periodicals?

___ ___ 10. Is a list of ophthalmic library materials available to faculty and students?

___ ___ 11. Is there a library acquisitions policy?

___ ___ 12. Is the clinical practicum integrated effectively into the curriculum?

___ ___ 13. Is supervision by the faculty or qualified opticians of the clinical practicum provided?

___ ___ 14. Do the program director and faculty participate in the budget preparation?

___ ___ 15. Are student's withdrawal and refund policies and procedures made known to students?

___ ___ 16. Do clearly stated objectives guide the design of the curriculum?

___ ___ 17. Is the curriculum presented in appropriate sequence?

___ ___ 18. Are course outlines and lesson plans available?

___ ___ 19. Are accurate course descriptions published and available to students and the public?
___ ___ 20. Is there an interval validation of curriculum content, which provides for necessary curriculum changes in a responsive fashion?

___ ___ 21. Is curriculum validation provided through follow-up studies of graduates, including their performance on the ABO and NCLE national certification examinations and state licensure examinations if required?

___ ___ 22. Do findings on such follow-up studies indicate the program is achieving its own stated educational goals?

___ ___ 23. Are admission policies nondiscriminatory?

___ ___ 24. Are admission policies and procedures reviewed, evaluated and validated periodically?

___ ___ 25. Are academic entrance requirements clearly defined?

___ ___ 26. Is emergency medical care available when needed?

___ ___ 27. Does the faculty provide student guidance and counseling as requested or required?

___ ___ 28. Are policies and procedures on unfavorable actions (evaluation, disciplinary actions, dismissal) available to students?

___ ___ 29. Is there an institutional policy safeguarding the privacy of student records?

COMMENTS:

_____

_____

_____

_____

THANK YOU!

COMMISSION ON OPTICIANRY ACCREDITATION

ADVISORY COMMITTEE QUESTIONNAIRE

Institution: _____ Date: _____

Program: _____

<u>Yes</u> <u>No</u>

___ ___ 1. Are opportunities for continuing education of faculty members to develop and maintain their professional competency provided?

___ ___ 2. Does the Advisory Committee meet at sufficient intervals to achieve its goals?

___ ___ 3. Is there appropriate communication between the faculty and the Advisory Committee?

___ ___ 4. Have the goals and functions of the Advisory Committee been established?

___ ___ 5. Is there student representation on the Advisory Committee?

___ ___ 6. Is an agenda distributed in advance of each Advisory Committee meeting?

___ ___ 7. Are minutes of the Advisory Committee meetings recorded and maintained?

___ ___ 8. Are laboratory facilities and equipment sufficient for the number of students enrolled in the program?

___ ___ 9. Are classrooms conducive to learning with adequate space, desks, and comfort?

___ ___ 10. Does the library contain up-to-date texts, references, and periodicals?

___ ___ 11. Does a program to obtain new library acquisitions exist?

___ ___ 12. Does the clinical practicum include sufficient practice of procedures?

___ ___ 13. Is program advertising appropriate and does it accurately reflect the program?

___ ___ 14. Are course outlines and lesson plans available?

___ ___ 15. Are course descriptions published, publicly available, and accurate?

___ ___ 16. Is curriculum evaluation provided through follow-up studies of graduates, including their performance on the American Board of Opticianry's national certification examination and state licensure examinations?

___ ___ 17. Do findings on such follow-up studies indicate the program is achieving its own stated educational goals and objectives?

18. How do you as an advisory committee member contribute to this program?

_____

_____

_____

19. What do you feel are the weaknesses of the program?

_____

_____

_____

_____

20. What do you feel are the strengths of the program?

_____

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COMMENTS:

_____

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THANK YOU!

APPENDIX 3

Sample Outline and Evaluation Report

This appendix contains the information relative to preparing the Evaluation Report. Each Essential must be commented on in the report as to whether the program is in compliance, potential compliance, or noncompliance. Findings of potential compliance or noncompliance must be substantiated in each instance. Your Evaluators Checklist should be your reference as you prepare the Evaluation Report. The strengths, innovations of the program and recommendations for improvement should be commented on in each *Essential* as appropriate.

The summary must include comments regarding program strengths, areas needing improvement, including specific areas, if any, where the institution or program may not be in compliance with the *Essentials*.

The team's recommendation to the Commission regarding accreditation classification should be the concluding item in the paper and submitted on a separate sheet of paper.

To assist you in preparing the Evaluation Report, an outline of the Evaluation Report and a sample report are included in this section.

OUTLINE OF THE EVALUATION REPORT

INTRODUCTION

The introduction must include information regarding:

- Dates of the Visit
- Names of Team Members and Chairperson
- Name and Address of the Institution and Program
- Purpose of the Visit
- Names and Titles of Observer(s)
- Discussion of In-Briefing to Include Names and Titles of Attendees

Essentials

I.   SPONSORSHIP

A.   Discuss general background of institution, including institutional accreditation, size and enrollment of institution, institutional organization, etc.

B.   Discuss general background of program, including type of institutional base, date established, total number of opticianry student graduates, number of students currently enrolled in the program.

Specify whether the institution and program are in compliance, potential compliance or noncompliance with this Essential.

II.   MISSION, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

A.   Mission
B.   Goals
C.   Objectives

D.	Review

Briefly state the program's mission, goals and objectives, and comment on their appropriateness; whether they are being fulfilled; and the process for their review.

Specify whether the institution and program are in compliance, potential compliance or noncompliance with this Essential or any of its subsections. A finding of potential compliance or noncompliance must be substantiated.

Comment also on any strengths, innovations, areas needing improvement, and suggested means of improvement (recommendations.)

III.	CURRICULUM

A.	 Structured Curriculum
B.	Assignment of Appropriate Instructional Materials
C.	Classroom Presentations, Discussions, and Demonstrations
D	Examinations, Tests and Evaluations
E.	Supervised and Documented Laboratory Experience
F.	Supervised and Documented Clinical Experience
G.	Graduate Competencies

Discuss each subsection in terms of how each complements the curriculum as a whole, and contributes to producing a competent graduate and achieving the program's goals. This is probably one of the most likely areas for innovations. Special attention should be given to clinical experience.

Specify whether the program is in compliance, potential compliance or noncompliance with this *Essential* or any of its subsections. A finding of potential compliance or noncompliance must be substantiated. Comment also on any strengths, innovations, areas needing improvement, and suggested means of improvement (recommendations).

IV.	RESOURCES

A.	Program Director
B.	Instructional Staff
C.	Financial
D.	Facilities (General, Equipment and Supplies, Library, Records)
E.	Instructional Resources
F.	Advisory Committee

Discuss each of the above subsections and how each contributes to or detracts from the overall program effectiveness. This is another likely area for innovations. The Evaluator's Checklist provides specifics for in-depth discussions of this Essential. The data on the questionnaire administered to students, faculty and advisory committee members will also be particularly valuable.

Specify whether the program is in compliance, potential compliance or noncompliance with this Essential or any of its subsections. A finding of potential compliance or noncompliance must be substantiated. Comment also on any strengths, innovations, areas needing improvement, and suggested means of improvement (recommendations).

V. STUDENTS

    A.   Program Description
    B.   Admission
    C.   Health Service
    D.   Guidance and Counseling
    E.   Appeal Procedures

Student interviews and questionnaires will provide meaningful data in your evaluation of the program's compliance with this Essential.

Specify whether the program is in compliance, potential compliance or noncompliance with this Essential or any of its subsections. A finding of potential compliance or noncompliance must be substantiated. Comment also on any strengths, innovations, areas needing improvement, and suggested means of improvement (recommendations).

VI. OPERATIONAL POLICIES

    A.   Announcements and Advertising
    B.   Costs, Credit and Degree Information
    C.   Student Withdrawal and Refunds
    D.   Student Clinical Practice
    E.   Nondiscriminatory Practices

Administration, student, faculty and advisory committee interviews and questionnaires can be most helpful in evaluating compliance with this Essential.

Specify whether the program is in compliance, potential compliance or noncompliance with this Essential or any of its subsections. A finding of potential compliance or noncompliance must be substantiated. Comment also on any strengths, innovations, areas needing improvement, and suggested means of improvement (recommendations).

VII. CONTINUING PROGRAM EVALUATION

    A.   Periodic Self Evaluation
    B.   Results

This Essential relates closely to Essential II, and the data should be used by the program to evaluate whether or not it is achieving its stated goals and objectives. The Evaluator's Checklist should provide sufficient specific information for the discussion in this section. These data must be based on objective data obtained by such methods as graduate questionnaires, ABO, NCLE, and state licensure test results. Subjective opinions of program staff and faculty are not acceptable.
Specify whether the program is in compliance, potential compliance or noncompliance with this Essential or any of its subsections. A finding of potential compliance or noncompliance must be substantiated. Comment also on any strengths, innovations, areas needing improvement, and suggested means of improvement (recommendations.)

Summary and Recommendations

Strengths

List the institution's and program's strengths as reflected in the text of this report.

Innovations

List the innovations, if any, and how they have affected the program's quality.

Recommendations (Areas needing and suggested means for improvement)

List your general recommendations, which would improve the program's quality.

Areas of Potential Compliance

List and discuss the areas of potential compliance with recommendations for improvement. Note the specific *Essential* being addressed at the end of narrative for each item.

Areas of Noncompliance

List and discuss areas of noncompliance with recommendations for improvement. Note the specific "Essential" being addressed at the end of narrative for each item.

Team Accreditation Recommendation **(on separate page)**

===

SAMPLE EVALUATION REPORT

An on-site evaluation visit to the *[name of program]* offered at *[name of institution], [city], [state]* was conducted on *[dates of on-site visit]*. *[Team chairperson's name]*, Chairperson; Professor *[educator team member's name]*; and *[opticianry team member's name]* represented the Commission on Opticianry Accreditation in conducting an on-site evaluation of the program for reaccreditation. The *[name of program]* at *[name of institution]* was initially accredited by the Commission in *[year]*. *[Name of observer]* accompanied the site team as an unofficial team member.

In attendance at the in briefing on the morning of *[date]* were *[names of CEO, division head, program director,*

I.   SPONSORSHIP

A.   ***[Name of institution]*** is situated in *[city]*, *[state]* approximately 25 miles south of ***[closest major in [name of county]* County*. *[Name of institution]* is one of three community colleges in the *[name of school district]*, and its primary service area is the southern portion of *[name of county or service area]*. *[Name]* College is fully accredited by the *[regional accrediting agency]*, which is affiliated with the federation of Regional Accrediting Commissions of Higher Education. The college is also approved by the Office of the Chancellor of the Community Colleges and Veterans Administration.

The college has a 131-acre campus, and a combined evening and daytime enrollment of approximately 7,000 students. Education in liberal arts and career-oriented programs is offered. The college grants Associate in Arts and Associate in Science degrees, along with several programs certificate programs. *[Name of institution]* also offers many non-credit courses, and seems to have a strong commitment to community service and personal enrichment offerings.

STRENGTH: The institution's commitment to the community is to be commended.

B.   The *[name of program]* was established in the fall of *[year]*, with monies provided by a VEA Grant, and has *[name of institution]* as its institutional base.

The institution and program are in full compliance with this section of the *Essentials*.

II.   MISSION, GOALS AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The institutional mission and goals of the *[name of district]* County Community College District Master Plan are clearly stated in the college catalog.

A.   *Mission*

"The *[name of district]* County Community College District, recognized each individual's right to education, is committed to leadership in providing quality education with its community to:

- identify and respond to the educational needs of the community;
- provided an environment which enables students to understand their social responsibilities and realize their individual potential;
- encourage the pursuit of lifelong learning in a changing world; and
- maintain a climate of academic freedom in which a variety of viewpoints may be shared

B.   *Goals*

To fulfill its mission, *[name of district]* County Community College District has established the following goals. In pursuit of these goals, the overriding concern of the District will be maintenance of quality even at the expense of scope of service. The *[name of district]* County Community College District shall:

- provide varied general educational opportunities which acquaint students with the broad outlines of human knowledge and experience;

- provide lower-division transfer programs which prepare students for continued education in four-year colleges and universities;

- offer occupational education and training programs directed toward career development, in cooperation with business, industry, labor and public service agencies;

- offer developmental/remedial education to enable students to develop those basic skills essential to successful completion of college goals;

- identify and meet community needs not otherwise served by college credit courses by offering self-supporting Community Service classes and activities;

- provide a program of student services to assist students in attaining their educational and career goals; and

- actively support a program of affirmative action for under represented groups in recruitment and personnel employment.

Goals of the individual program are stated as follows in a correspondence from *[program director]* to Linda Mc Enery at the Commission office, dated *[date]*.

"Goal-To educate the student to be professional in actions and thought; to be able to make judgments and decisions within the legal scope of Opticianry."
[Program Director's name] further states:

"to fulfill this goal, we believe the curriculum should:

I.   Impart the knowledge and develop the thought processes necessary to perform the tasks of the profession. This encompasses what is presently being done and what might conceivably be the practices of the future.

II.   Develop sufficient skills and vocabulary to enable the student to assimilate new information so that he/she may treat education as a lifelong process.

III.   Impart an understanding of the development of science and the opticianry profession."

While institutional goals seem appropriate, the program's goals as stated by Professor *[program director's name]* seem slightly vague. From discussions with students, it was the feeling of the site team that student goals included, in this order, passing the NCLE, passing the State registry (in order to eventually maintain their own optical establishment in the state of *[name of state]*, "getting a job" - many already had higher degrees in other less saleable occupations; career change at midlife; and lastly, getting a degree. While most students stated they would more than likely get the degree, the occupational education and the above stated goals predominated. The site team feels there are several good reasons for this, among them is, the lack of a requirement of a degree in Ophthalmic Dispensing in order to practice opticianry in

[name of state] does require successfully passing the NCLE in order to fit contact lenses in the State and this explains the value placed on this goal by the students.

It would seem appropriate that Professor *[program director's name]* reevaluate his/her stated goals and attempt to bring them more closely aligned with the stated goals of the student body. Interestingly enough, however, the goals of the students seem to be adequately met even if not clearly stated by the program itself. In fact, this seems to be more a problem of abstract rather than concrete goals. This comment is in no way meant to imply that student goals are not being met by the program, but rather that program goals as stated might benefit by revision.

POTENTIAL COMPLIANCE: The Essentials mandate that program goals be clearly stated. Through interviews with the students, it appears that the goals of the program are not clear and would benefit the students and the program with revision. [Essential II B]

C.   *Objectives*

The institution does not state specific objectives in its catalog; however, its mission and goals are very clearly stated and very detailed. Current objectives seem very tied to solving financial difficulties caused in college level education in *[name of state]* in general as a result of the passage of *[law]*. This will be covered in more detail under finances.

[Program Director] states no specific program objectives. This might be an appropriate area for inclusion of some of the above information the site team gleaned from the student body. *[Program Director]*'s objectives are limited in the same way by financial considerations as are the objectives of the entire educational facility.

***POTENTIAL COMPLIANCE: The program has no specific objectives in written form, which is a requirement of the Essentials. The on-site evaluation team recommends that the student handbook might be an appropriate place for these once they are completed.* [*Essential* II C]**

D.   *Review*

There appears to be no formal review of goals, and since stated goals of the program are so abstract, a formal review plan or some way of measuring results would be almost impossible to institute. However, if we consider the stated goals of the student body, *[Program Director]* does send out surveys, gather information on student's progress in the industry, attempt to keep track of their performance on examinations such as the ABO and NCLE examinations. He also seems to have a very heavy, if informal network of communication with the optical community in *[state]*.

POTENTIAL COMPLIANCE: A process for reviewing the program goals and objectives must be established once they are formally written and published. [Essential II D]

The program and institution were found to be substantially compliant with section II A of the Essentials. The program was found to be in potential compliance with sections II B-D of the Essentials.

III.   **CURRICULUM**

A.   *Structured Curriculum*

The program is designed to be four semesters in length. Although evening instruction has been offered in prior years, it is not currently offered.

There is a syllabus, which contains course descriptions for a structured curriculum. The syllabus describes competencies and student learning objectives.

The content required by the *Essentials* is contained in the curriculum with the possible exception of Business Management and Salesmanship which is not covered in a separate course, but is included in the description of OPTH 472 Ophthalmic Dispensing Techniques II. This is a 3-5 credit course at the instructor's discretion. The catalog list 2 lab hours and 2 lecture hours per week. The program also has a structured externship program the first year, which carries 4-8 credits. During this externship program some business management and salesmanship are to be covered. The externship program has some weaknesses, which will be discussed later in this report. Considering the other material, which must be covered in OPTH 472, it is doubtful that there is sufficient time to cover business management and salesmanship adequately. Externship coverage would be spotty at best and not controlled in any way. It is the feeling of the on-site evaluation team that a separate course should be added for this most important subject. To its credit, however, the required curriculum does include a one-credit course on Microcomputers for the Health Sciences.

RECOMMENDATION: The on-site evaluation team recommends that a separate course on Business Management and Salesmanship be added to the curriculum.

The graduation requirements of the college more than satisfy the general education course requirements of the *Essentials*.

The curriculum is presented in a manner slightly different than has been observed in other optical teaching facilities, in that as much practical information is given first as is at all possible. The reasons for doing this have been to help students get meaningful employment for the externship program, and to allow them to progress further in their technical classes such as mathematics, before confusing and difficult lens formulas etc. are presented in lecture form. First semester students were fabricating eyeglasses when the site team visited. This system is popular with the students and seems to work well. If this system has a fault it is that upon finding acceptable employment based on rudimentary practical skills, a few students may not complete the program in order to acquire the technical information. While this may slightly affect the attrition rate, it did not appear to be a major problem.

INNOVATION: The on-site evaluation team would like to congratulate this program on its innovative approach to course sequencing to maintain student interest and bolster employment opportunities.

Another plus of the program was the presentation of a significant amount of surfacing theory and whenever possible field trips to nearby manufacturing facilities, etc. The site team felt this gave a well-rounded education to the student.

STRENGTH: The strength of the curriculum lies in the innovative approach of giving the student immediate hands-on practical experience in "making glasses." This seems to elevate greatly their interest in the program and to make the presentation of technical material easier for them to absorb when presented. It also makes it possible for them to seek employment early in their academic career.

B.   *Assignment of Appropriate Instructional Materials*

Instructional materials and textbooks were appropriate for the students. In addition to textbooks, there was a heavy reliance on handouts, particularly in the contact lens area. These handouts seemed to be of very high quality. The availability in the immediate laboratory area of the *[name of library]* added immeasurably to the quality of information available to the student who wished to research a subject on his own.

C.   *Classroom Presentations, Discussions and Demonstrations*

The on-site evaluation team found the students quite enthusiastic and involved during classroom instruction, which we were given ample, time to observe. The team also took additional time to talk informally with students and the students seemed generally satisfied and interested in their studies. Classes were informal with a great deal of student participation.

D.   *Examinations, Tests and Evaluations*

The students' progress is monitored through examinations, tests and evaluations, which seem useful and appropriate. Students seemed to be kept apprised of their progress and of any problems and were given help as necessary. *[Program Director]* seemed to be very involved with the students on an individual basis and very interested in giving them all possible help and counseling.

E.   *Supervised and Documented Laboratory Experience*

The laboratory experience available to the students of this program is adequate for the program. Most equipment is state-of-the-art and maintenance is regularly schedule by the students under instructor supervision. Safety procedures are clearly indicated on wall charts at the site of each piece of equipment and usage of safety glasses is closely monitored by the instructor. The on-site evaluation team felt this experience is more than adequate with regard to the *Essentials*.

F.   *Supervised and Documented Clinical Experience*

The only on-campus clinical experience involved fitting only eyewear on specially designed mannequins configured to represent specific fitting problems, such as the Oriental bridge, etc. We were also told that they were instructed to fit one another. Fitting one another would be the only time on-campus when they would actually be working with a live human head.

It is the intention of the program to cover clinical experience off-campus during the externship. This program, however, has some deficiencies too large to ignore. In order to gather information on the externship program the team talked to *[Program Director]*, the students themselves, and examined the form that the employer must complete at the end of the student's externship.
It should also be noted that although *[state]* allows opticians to dispense contact lenses, no provision is made in either the internship or externship for the student to have any practical experience in this area.

RECOMMENDATION: *The on-site evaluation team strongly recommends the inclusion of practical experience with contact lens dispensing within the clinical experience of the student.*

The *strength* in the externship program is that there are ample jobs available to the students, given the proximity of the college to *[city]*, and given *[Program Director]*'s good communications with the optical community. The problems are lack of

supervision and lack of consistency in what the students are learning. Because this externship carries credit, the program relies heavily on this training to complete their students' course of education. It allows them to deal effectively with the financial constrictions, which will be discussed more fully under finances, and maintain an on-going program with one full-time director/instructor and some part-time instructors. The workload on *[Program Director]* is such that there is no way he can find time to inspect personally employment locations and whether instruction is being given to students on this externship with any consistency or plan. Students complained to the team that because they represent inexpensive help, they are sometimes given duties that are not instructional or even optically related. It should be pointed out, however, that some were extremely pleased with their off-campus experience and intended to remain with the firms employing them.

Because of *[Program Director]*'s heavy workload, it is his practice to send out another instructor in some other field such as Geography to check out each student location. The site team found this situation unacceptable. It was also felt that the form being filled out by the employer was only being done once at the end of the externship and did not represent adequate record keeping. In the area of the externship the team feels it is necessary for the employment sites to be inspected by *[Program Director]* or some other optically related personnel for this check to be meaningful. The team further felt that an initial agreement should be signed by the employer and the student given a basic outline of instruction and experience which was to be covered during their employment, and that very short weekly forms checking on the student's progress should be filled in and returned to the college. The student could complete these forms stating what they had learned and secure the employer's signature.

It is necessary to point out that the above deficiency is not in any way construed to be something *[Program Director]* can resolve on his own. His workload does not allow for the necessary time to follow through on the above suggestions. The problem is related to the financial constrictions of the college itself and will have to be solved by better funding to allow more time for *[Program Director]* to devote to the administrative duties that accompany his title of Program Director.

NONCOMPLIANCE: The area of noncompliance, serious enough to represent a major deficiency, is in the externship program. The off-campus clinical experience, which in the view of the team represents the only practical "hands-on" experience of the program, is not sufficiently well structured or competency based to insure an educationally valid learning experience and practice of basic procedures as required by the Essentials. There is no supervision by ophthalmic personnel. This deficiency is only increased by the fact that the externship represents 4-8 of the total credits in the occupational portion of the program. [Essential III F]

G.   *Graduate Competencies*

The competencies are provided for in the curriculum.

The program was found to be in substantial compliance with sections III A-E and III G, and in noncompliance with section III F, of the *Essentials*.

IV   **RESOURCES**

A.   *Program Director/Instructor*

[Program Director] is serving as full-time Program Director as well as the only full-time instructor in the *[name of program]*. *[Program Director]* has a Bachelor of Professional Studies in Opticianry from *[name of college, state]*. He holds a New York optician's license, is Charter Certified by the ABO, holds a Master in Ophthalmic Optics and is certified by the NCLE. He has 26 years dispensing experience and meets all other requirements of the *Essentials*. *[Program Director]* is obviously devoted to his students and in his relationship with them, far exceeds the average role of a program director.

STRENGTH: The seemingly untiring devotion and dedication of **[Program Director]** *to the program and the students is to be highly commended.*

B.   *Instructional Staff*

[Program Director] supplements his teaching with the use of four to five part-time instructors. All part-time instructors must be certified by the State of *[state]* to teach at *[name of institution]*. The State of *[state]* has high standards for certification of part-time instructors thus, insuring that all part-time instructors will be in compliance with the *Essentials*.

One of the problems in securing part-time instructors according to *[Program Director***]** has been that the state requirements are high, but the pay scale is not as generous as might be desirable for the qualifications required. This makes part-time instructors sometimes hard to find.

The entire staff showed interest, enthusiasm and a high level of dedication to maintain a high-quality program. However, the instructional staff has to be considered "bare bones" minimum. In order to insure continued quality in the program some method of providing **[Program Director]** more time to dedicate to the administrative duties of his program directorship must be found. It would seem to the site team that the only way to do this is to budget additional instructor hours for the program.

The program is, of course, subject to all the problems of an essentially one-man program. What if something happened to *[Program Director]*? The team covered this subject in great depth at the out-briefing, and was essentially satisfied that, although it would be a difficult problem, it could be overcome. Finding an individual with the qualifications necessary to obtain *[state]* teaching credentials would take time, but the State, under such extraordinary circumstances would allow a one-year grace period. The curriculum seemed adequately documented to provide for reasonably continuous instruction in such an emergency. The availability of *[previous Program Director]*, the previous program director, as an Advisory Board Member, would also be invaluable in an emergency. The team was reasonably satisfied that there was as much security of continuity as is possible in one-man programs.

All of the above problems relate directly to the financial difficulties the school and the entire higher education system in the State have been experiencing. This is covered in detail in part C below.

NONCOMPLIANCE: It is the feeling of the site team that the Program Director does not have sufficient time available to administer the program, and that the current teaching staff is inadequate for the long-term continuation of a quality program. Recognizing the lack of control that the program, the division and the college have over the matter of funding, this is a difficult area of noncompliance to cite. It is the feeling of the site team that additional instructional time

must be budgeted to allow [Program Director] the opportunity to act as a Program Director. [*Essential* IV B1]

    C.   *Financial*

The financial problems experienced in the *[name of program]* were explained to the team in detail at the in-briefing by the Division Director, *[name]. [Name of Director]* demonstrated great interest in the program and great dedication to maintaining a high-quality opticianry program. He briefed the team on the reasons for the Program Director's heavy load and outlined what, if anything, was or could be done to alleviate the situation.

The program was established by *[name]* in the fall of *[year]* with monies provided by a VEA Grant. *[Name of founder]* ran the program alone for the academic year *[year - year]*. In *[year, instructors name]* was hired as an instructor. The grant also provided money for secretarial support. The VEA Grant covered the first two years of operation. During that period of time it was possible for the program to acquire necessary accreditation.

The State of *[name of state]* has a strong commitment to free higher education for its residents. The maximum cost of the *[name of program]* to a *[state]* resident is $50.00 per semester, which is a registration fee rather than tuition. In the past, one-half of all property taxes collected in the state went to education. However, in the spring semester of *[year]*, the voters of *[state]* passed *[law]*, which, by limiting the amount of property tax collected, adversely affected the funding of community colleges in the entire state. Teaching salaries for new instructors were reduced at this time and several changes were made to the original *[name of program]*, including the addition of two credits of independent study and the reduction of class hours in several other areas.

By the spring of *[year]*, budget problems became severe and it was necessary for the *[name of district]* district to make cuts in course offerings for the *[academic year]* school year. To avoid seniority and tenure problems by cutting members of the general teaching staff, it was expedient to the district to make cuts in self-contained programs, such as the *[name of program]*. At this point a full-time instructor was cut from the *[name of program]*.

In the past the division had continued to receive some VEA Grant money which was used for part-time instructors *[Division head]* has been generous in the budgeting of the majority of this part-time instruction money to the *[name of program]*. With part-time instruction and with *[program director]* 's dedication, the program has continued with class size limited to 30 students each year. *[Program director]* has stated he prefers approximately 24 students and this is usually reduced by attrition to 18, placing total enrollment in the one year program at approximately 42. This student/teacher ratio does not allow for a high level of supervision during laboratory classes, although by dividing between laboratory and lecture portions of the class, *[program director]* has been able to keep the matter more or less in hand.

This year VEA Grants have been discontinued and replaced by other programs, which tie the grant money to need as high unemployment areas or low income areas. *[Institution]* cannot qualify for money on either of these criterions.

[Institution] does not charge tuition for college-level study. The latest plan for funding educational needs is the *[state]* Lottery, the first drawing of which was held while the site team was in *[state]*.

All profits from the lottery are earmarked for education. All individuals with whom the team discussed this matter seemed highly optimistic that, when the money flows down to the school/district level, budgeting will improve and there will be money to affect changes in the program. No one knows how much money will be available and when it will be available but great faith has been placed on it being able to correct some of the problems the financial crunch has caused the *[name of program]*. We can only hope it will do for their school system what they intend.

STRENGTH: A strength is the straightforward and very sensible approach to funding problems displayed by [division director]. [Division Director]'s interest in the program and dedication to its continuance were obvious to the team.

D.   *Facilities*

1.   General

Classroom space and laboratory space, while compact was very adaptable with the laboratory and lecture classroom being joined, allowing maximum supervision within the two rooms. Seating arrangements seemed a bit too flexible, and it is necessary to clear seating from one end of the classroom to make room for fitting equipment to do frame fitting work with the mannequins and for students to fit each other. This compact space did not, however seem to disturb any of the instructors or the students. The laboratory was large and well equipped.

2.   Equipment and Supplies

There was ample equipment available for the present student load and supplies seemed to be adequate. Most of the equipment was state-of-the-art and consisted of a variety of types which would acquaint students with more than one "kind" of any equipment from lensometers to edgers. One member of the team felt quite strongly that the equipment maintenance was a real part of teaching opticianry and expressed his praise at the "in-house" maintenance procedures.

3.   Library

The availability of the *[name of library]*, which is housed in a small room adjacent to the classroom, is an advantage of irreplaceable value. Students are allowed access to the library with supervision. There is also an additional library, which includes many optical textbooks, etc., on campus.

STRENGTH: Another strength is the [name of library]. This is a resource which is not duplicated anywhere.

4.   Records

Satisfactory records are maintained as required by the *Essentials.* The team was particularly impressed with the computerization of student records

allowing immediate access. Student rights in regards to privacy are spelled out in the college catalog.

    5.   Instructional Resources

Multimedia and audiovisual materials are available and meet requirements of the *Essentials*. In addition, well-equipped microcomputer laboratories are available for student use.

    6.   Advisory Committee

The site team was afforded the opportunity to meet most of the advisory committee at a group breakfast on *[date]* and a group luncheon on *[date]*. The advisory committee consisted of a good cross section of the optical community with representatives from manufacturing, local opticianry, ophthalmology, contact lens practitioners and manufacturers, and from the student body. On both occasions the site team was allowed to have considerable conversation with advisory committee members and they seemed informed and interested in the program. The self-study contains copies of correspondence to the advisory committee. *[Program director]* showed us other very recent communications, most in the form of short newsletter type format that demonstrated as use of the advisory committee. The presence of *[name]* on the advisory committee seems to be a great help to the program. *[Program director]* also seems to be a networking type person, who often informally calls different members of the committee for input, advice, and to keep a finger on the pulse of the local optical community. The self-study contains a copy of the goals of the advisory committee.

STRENGTH: The enthusiasm for the students and the program held by the Advisory Committee is a considerable strength.

The program was found to be in substantial compliance with section IV of the *Essentials*.

V. **<u>STUDENTS</u>**

    A.   *Program Description*

An accurate description of the program, course content, objectives, as well as other required information is published in the catalog.

    B.   *Admissions*

Admissions are made in accordance with the institution's policies, which are defined, published and nondiscriminatory. It is clearly stated in the catalog that students must apply separately, and in addition to normal application procedures, to the Division of Basic and Applied Science. According to *[program director]*, he reviews all applicants for appropriate mathematics and scientific background and suitability to the program. He makes suggestions and gives counseling and advice as to the probability of their success in the program. Most students respond to this advice.

The school has an open admissions policy and a student will not be turned away from the program based on probable aptitude unless the program has more applicants than it has space to accept. In that case students would be accepted according to demonstrated abilities in mathematics and science.

C.   *Health Services*

The health services offered by *[name of institution]* meet the needs of the students.

D.   *Guidance and Counseling*

[Program Director], as previously stated, maintains a caring and highly personalized relationship with his students, offering them guidance and advice during the course of their academic careers at *[name of institution]*. In addition, the college maintains an Office of Special Programs and Services, which offers any help students may need. The college additionally maintains an Office of Counseling, whose staff seeks to create an atmosphere of caring, helping, and providing information to help the student become independent and confident in decision making.

D.   *Appeal Procedures*

Appeal procedures are clearly outlined in the college catalog.

The program was found to be in substantial compliance with section V of the *Essentials*.

VI.   **OPERATIONAL POLICIES**

A.   *Announcements and Advertising*

All published materials were accurate in content.

B.   *Costs, Credit and Degree Information*

This information is accurately stated and published in the catalog.

C.   *Student Withdrawal and Refunds*

This information is published in the catalog. Although there is no tuition charge for *[state]* residents, there is a withdrawal fee.

D.   *Clinical Practice*

There is no clinical practice in operation on campus. Difficulties with the off-campus externship have been previously covered under curriculum.

E.   *Nondiscriminatory Practices*

Policies and practices are nondiscriminatory as outline in the college catalog and as observed by the on-site evaluation team. The highly varied student body was testimony to nondiscriminatory policies.

The program was found to be in substantial compliance with sections V A-C and V E of the *Essentials*. Although no noncompliance is shown here for section V D, the noncompliance in this area was noted earlier in this report.

VII.   **CONTINUING PROGRAM EVALUATION**

A.   *Periodic Self Examination*

There was evidence that ***[program director]*** sends out graduate surveys, collects data on graduates, analyzes recruitment policies, seeks input from his advisory committee and keeps a close pulse on the optical community in general. However, most formal periodic self-evaluation gets lost due to the funding problems of the college and the program. Without additional administrative time, useful self-evaluation is not possible and therefore missions, goals and objectives cannot be re-evaluated and changes in the program, but rather the result of under-staffing due to budgetary constraints.

B.   *Results*

Rather than incorporating conclusions of various self evaluation methods to plan the program's future direction, most changes in the program over the past few years have been out of the necessity of budget cuts rather than the result of decisions for self-improvement. Some changes that have been made as a result of budget cuts have been good for the program and have worked well. But achieving these improvements was the byproduct of rather that the cause of change.

POTENTIAL COMPLIANCE: Program evaluation and considerations for changes and improvements in the program are borderline. In time, if the situation is not corrected, this may move from potential compliance to noncompliance and adversely affect the quality of the program. [Essential VII]

[Program Director] has done an outstanding job of maintaining the present level of program quality under such adverse conditions.

SUMMARY

STRENGTHS

1.   The institution's commitment to the community is to be commended.

2.   The strength of the curriculum lies in the innovative approach of giving the student immediate hands-on practical experience in "making glasses." This seems to elevate greatly their interest in the program and to make the presentation of technical material easier for them to absorb when presented. It also makes it possible for them to seek employment early in their academic career.

3.   The seemingly untiring devotion and dedication of ***[Program Director]*** to the program and the students is to be highly recommended.

4.   A strength is the straightforward and very sensible approach to funding problems displayed by [division director]. [Division Director]'s interest in the program and dedication to its continuance were obvious to the team.

5.	Another strength is the [name of library]. This is a resource which is not duplicated anywhere.

6.	The enthusiasm for the students and the program held by the Advisory Committee is a considerable strength.

INNOVATIONS

1.	The on-site evaluation team would like to congratulate this program on its innovative approach to course sequencing to maintain student interest and bolster employment opportunities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1.	The on-site evaluation team recommends that a separate course on Business Management and Salesmanship be added to the curriculum.

2.	The on-site evaluation team strongly recommends the inclusion of practical experience with contact lens dispensing within the clinical experience of the student.

AREAS OF POTENTIAL COMPLIANCE

1.	**The *Essentials* mandate that program goals be clearly stated. Through interviews with the students, it appears that the goals of the program are not clear and would benefit the students and the program with revision. [*Essenti*al II B]**

2.	**The program has no specific objectives in written form, which is a requirement of the *Essentials*. The on-site evaluation team recommends that the student handbook might be an appropriate place for these once they are completed. [*Essential* II C]**

3.	**A process for reviewing the program goals and objectives must be established once they are formally written and published. [*Essential* II D]**

4.	**Program evaluation and considerations for changes and improvements in the program are borderline. In time, if the situation is not corrected, this may move from potential compliance to noncompliance and adversely affect the quality of the program. [*Essential* VII]**

AREAS OF NONCOMPLIANCE

1.	**The area of noncompliance, serious enough to represent a major deficiency, is in the externship program. The off-campus clinical experience, which in the view of the team represents the only practical "hands-on" experience of the program, is not sufficiently well structured or competency based to insure an educationally valid learning experience and practice of basic procedures as required by the *Essentials*. *There is no supervision by ophthalmic personnel.* This deficiency is only increased by the fact that the externship represents 4-8 of the total credits in the occupational portion of the program. *[Essential* III F]**

2.	**It is the feeling of the site team that the Program Director does not have sufficient time available to administer the program, and that the current teaching staff is inadequate for the long-term continuation of a quality program. Recognizing the lack of control that the program, the division and the college**

have over the matter of funding, this is a difficult area of noncompliance to cite. It is the feeling of the site team that additional instructional time must be provided.

(THIS INFORMATION GOES ON A TOTAL SEPARATE PAGE)

TEAM RECOMMENDATION

The on-site evaluation team that conducted the initial accreditation on-site visit at the Opticianry Dispensing program at *[name of institution]* recommend that this program be granted a *two-year conditional accreditation with a progress report yearly to address all areas of potential and noncompliance.*

EVALUATION REPORT

Of the

OPHTHALMIC DISPENSING PROGRAM

At

_____

(Name of institution)

_____

(Dates of On Site visit)

PREPARED AND SUBMITTED BY:

TEAM CHAIRPERSON

_____

Signature

_____

Name (typed or printed)

TEAM MEMBERS

_____

Signature

_____

Name (typed or printed)

_____

Signature

_____

Name (typed or printed)

APPENDIX 4
ACCREDITATION CLASSIFICATIONS

The Commission extends accreditation to opticianry programs for periods of time no long than six (6) years. When the Commission takes action with respect to the accreditation of a program, it will designate the length of time for which accreditation has been granted. The Commission will conduct the next on-site evaluation at the end of the period for which accreditation has been granted.

When the Commission recommends a reduced duration of accreditation for a program with one or more areas of noncompliance that are believed to be readily correctable, it may require a Progress Report by a specific date. In such instances, the Commission may inform the chief executive officer of the institution that, based on the documented correction of the areas of noncompliance, the accreditation award may be extended to the four year maximum duration without requiring a new Self-Study Report and site visit.

The usual sequence for the accreditation process is:

Application for Accreditation
Self-Study Report
On-site visit by Commission Representatives
Review of Evaluation Report by Commission
Decision by Commission
Written notification of the decision sent to institution's chief executive officer

---

The Commission on Opticianry Accreditation uses four classifications of accreditation:

- **Accreditation**
- **Conditional Accreditation**
- **Provisional Accreditation**
- **Non-Accreditation**

Any opticianry program granted one of the first three classifications is considered to be an "accredited" program as long as the classification is in effect for that program. If an accredited program (i.e., first three categories) has its accreditation withdrawn or revoked, the program will be so informed in writing by the Commission and be notified of the right to appeal.

CLASSIFICATIONS

Accreditation

Accreditation is a classification granted to an educational program indicating that the program is considered to be in substantial compliance with the *Essentials*.

For a program that is in substantial compliance with the *Essentials*, except for one or more specific areas of noncompliance that are considered to be readily correctable, the program will be required to achieve compliance and submit written evidence of the action to correct these areas.

The institution is provided recommendations regarding the program's noncompliance and may be given a specific length of time (usually no more than one year) to provide evidence in a Progress Report of the action to correct these areas. A program may be recommended for Provisional Status if,

in the judgment of the Commission, the Progress Report does not satisfactorily document implementation of the recommendations.

Conditional Accreditation

Conditional accreditation may be granted to a program, which is applying for *initial* accreditation. This action is taken if the Self-Study Report and the Evaluation Report of the on-site evaluators indicate the program has one or more areas of noncompliance that are considered to be readily correctable.

The Commission may require periodic Progress Reports. An on-site evaluation may be conducted before removal of the conditional classification is considered. Failure by the program to show evidence of compliance with the *Essentials* within the specified time period will normally result in the withdrawal of this classification. Conditional accreditation will normally not extend beyond two years.

Provisional Accreditation

Provisional accreditation may be granted to a program, which is presently accredited. This classification is granted to a program which has one or more area of noncompliance of such magnitude that appear to threaten the capability of the program to provide an acceptable educational experience for the student, and if not corrected, the withdrawal of the program's accreditation may result. Provisional accreditation normally will not extend beyond two years.

The Commission will provide the institution with a statement identifying each program characteristic, which is judged to be in noncompliance with the accreditation standard. Specific guidance regarding methods of fulfilling the requirements and a deadline for achieving compliance with the standard will be provided.

A letter of notification to place the program on provisional status will be sent by United Parcel Service or certified mail to the chief executive officer of the institution.

The Commission may require periodic Progress Reports. An on-site evaluation is usually conducted before the removal of the provisional status is considered. Failure by the program to show evidence of compliance with the standards within the specified time period will normally result in the withdrawal of accreditation.

Non-Accreditation

A program is not accredited if the Self-Study Report and Evaluation Report of the on-site evaluators indicate the program does not fulfill one or more of the requirements specified in the *Essentials* and provides little or no evidence that these areas of noncompliance can be readily corrected.

This recommendation is made if the Commission judges that the program characteristics which fail to comply with the *Essentials* are vital to the success of the program in offering acceptable learning experiences to the students and that the program will be unable to fulfill the requirements in the immediate future.

The chief executive officer of the institution is provided with a written statement of each program characteristic, which demonstrates inadequate compliance with the *Essentials*, as well as with specific guidance regarding possible methods of establishing compliance. The letter of notification of action will be sent by United Parcel Service or certified mail to the chief executive officer, who is notified of

the appeals procedures relative to this accreditation decision. The institution may appeal in writing through established procedures or may reapply for accreditation as a new applicant at a later date.

REACCREDITATION

Accreditation carries a predetermined time limitation, usually six (6) years. However, accreditation status does not lapse if an on-site visit does not occur within that time period. Once an accreditation status has been granted, it can be changed only after appropriate due process. It remains the duty of the Commission to schedule site visitation, conduct an appropriate evaluation of each program, and decide on an accreditation classification.

EXPENSE REPORT AND APPLICATION FOR REIMBURSEMENT

(see other side for instructions)

Submitted by: Name _____

             Address _____

             City _____State _____ Zip _____

For expenses incurred on: Date _____

                          Location _____

                          Function _____

Summary of Expenses:

    Economy Airfare (attach copy of ticket or receipt) $ _____

    Ground Transportation $ _____

    Hotel Accommodations (attach receipt/bill) $ _____

    Meals (attach receipts) $ _____

    Other (please explain) _____

    _____

    _____

    _____ $ _____

                     TOTAL $ _____

≈≈

Office Use Only

    Payment authorized by: _____

    To be charged against the following account(s) _____

    Date _____ Check # _____

EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT POLICY

The Commission policies set forth when members will be reimbursed for travel expenses.
It is the policy of the Commission to reimburse for such travel expenses on the basis of necessary and actual expenditures involved. It is hoped that those traveling for the Commission will use the same care in incurring expenses that would be used if traveling at personal expense.

INSTRUCTIONS

1.   Submit this expense report as soon as possible at the conclusion of travel or after expense is incurred.   (Please, no later than 30 days.)

      TO: Commission on Opticianry Accreditation
                       PO Box 592
                       Canton, NY 13617

2.   Please attach receipts for all hotel, plane or train expenses, as well as receipts for other expenses.

3.   When traveling on business for the Commission, the following expenses are eligible for reimbursement:

      A.   Single room rate and tax
      B.   Transportation (Taxi, private automobile, rented automobile)
   When automobile transportation is used, reimbursement is in keeping with Federal government allowance per mile (0.55 for 2012), parking and tolls**. Total reimbursement for private automobile travel will not exceed round-trip coach airfare.** The Commission will not be responsible for traffic fines.

      Rented Automobile

            Rental automobile costs are reimbursed when:

            * Lower cost transportation is not available.
            * Two or more members are traveling together to and from the meeting location.
            * Commercial travel is not available to and from the meeting location or its usage would
                    result in a greater expense.
             * Use of the rental car in accordance with no preceding guidelines is documented in the
                    expense voucher.

      C. Breakfast, lunch and dinner

      D. Any expenses as authorized by the Chairperson or Executive Director.

      E. Airline travel (coach only). All individuals traveling for the Commission are urged to   take
                    advantage of any cost reducing fares; i.e., Supersaver

      F. Gratuities

4.   Expenses which are not reimbursable include alcoholic beverage costs, valet services, or in-room movies.

5.   All invoices, receipts, or bills must accompany this expense sheet.

APPENDIX 6

AGENDA FOR OPHTHALMIC EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM ON SITE EVALUATION VISIT

First Day

I.   8:30 - 9:00a.m.   In-Briefing: To include Dean of Division, Ophthalmic Program Director, Chief Executive Officer of institution (if possible).

II.   9:00 - 10:30a.m.   Discussion of *Self Study Report:* To include Program Director and Faculty.

III.   10:30a.m. - 11:30a.m.   Observation of Eyewear Clinic and Contact Lens Clinic.*

IV.   11:30a.m. - 1:00p.m.   Lunch with Program Director and Faculty.

V.   1:00p.m. - 3:00p.m.   Tour of ophthalmic program facilities: To include laboratory (one must be in
session), lecture rooms, and time allowed for one full lecture class.

VI.   3:oo p.m. - 4:30p.m.   Conference with first year students: To include 75% of first year class, if possible.

Second Day

VI.   8:30a.m. - 9:30a.m.   Tour of learning resource center: To include library, audiovisual and other communication media.

VII.   9:30a.m. - 10:30a.m.   Observation of Eyewear Clinic or Contact Lens Clinic.*

VIII.   10:30a.m. - 12:00p.m.   Advisory Committee conference.

IX.   12:00p.m. - 1:30p.m.   Lunch with Administration and Advisory Committee.

X.   1:30p.m. - 2:30p.m.   Administration conference: To include Dean of Division, Chief Executive Officer of institution (if possible), and any other administration staff deemed pertinent.

XI.   2:30p.m. - 4:00p.m.   Conference with second year students: To include 75% of second year class if
possible.

Third Day

XII.   8:30a.m. - 10:00a.m.   Faculty conference.

XIII.   10:00a.m. - 2:00p.m.   Executive Session of On Site Team and lunch.

XIV.   2:00p.m. - 3:00p.m.   Out Briefing: To include Dean, Program Director, Faculty, Advisory Committee, Student Representatives, and Chief Executive Officer, if possible.

*There are two times scheduled to allow for programs having both eyewear and contact lens programs.

NOTE: Agenda sequence may be adjusted (excluding items I, II, XIV, & XV) to cause minimum disruption to class schedule.

APPENDIX 7
COMMISSION ON OPTICIANRY ACCREDITATION

<u>ON-SITE EVALUATION VISIT QUESTIONNAIRE</u>

Institution Name: _____

Program Name: _____

Program Address: _____

_____

Date of Visit: _____

Please circle the number which best describes your response to each statement below with respect to of the Commission on Opticianry Accreditation. The numbers correspond to the following values:

1 Excellent   2 Good   3 Satisfactory   4 Fair   5 Poor

****

1. The Commission's instructions for preparing the Self Study Report were:
   1 2 3 4 5
   Comment:

2. The communication of the Commission staff with the program before the on-site evaluation was:
   1 2 3 4 5
   Comment:

3. The evaluators' knowledge of the program through their study of the Self Study Report was:
   1 2 3 4 5
   Comment:

4. The evaluators' knowledge of the Commission's *Essentials*, policies and procedures was:
   1 2 3 4 5
   Comment:

5. The evaluators' objectivity and fairness in applying the *Essentials* was:
   1 2 3 4 5
   Comment:

6. The evaluators' interaction with the administration during the visit was:
   1 2 3 4 5
   Comment:

7. The evaluators' interaction with the faculty during the visit was:
   1   2 3 4 5
   Comment:

8.   The evaluators' interaction with the students during the visit was:
      1 2 3 4 5
         Comment:

9.   The exit briefing conducted by the on-site evaluation team was:
      1 2 3 4 5
         Comment:

10.   The clarity of the report of the findings during the exit briefing was:
      1 2 3 4 5
         Comment:

11.   In its value to the ophthalmic educational program, rate these aspects of the accreditation review process:

      self-study process
      1 2 3 4 5

      self study report
       1   2   3   4   5

      site visit
      1 2 3 4 5
         Comment:

12.   In your judgment, the effectiveness of the overall Commission accreditation process is:
      1 2 3 4 5
      Comment:

13.   Please suggest improvements for the accreditation process.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____   _____
                  Name (Please type or print)   date

_____   _____
            Title   Telephone

_____
            Signature

Thank you for your response to this On-Site Evaluation Questionnaire. Please return it in the enclosed envelope.
Should you have any questions about this form, call the Commission office or write to either the Executive
Director or the Director of Accreditation.

APPENDIX 8

Evaluator's Responsibilities

SIZE OF TEAM AND VISIT DURATION

The Commission pursues its public assurance responsibility with primary reliance on the on-site evaluation. This visit to the site of the program must be conducted in a professional manner. Team members' ability to evaluate and report must not be compromised by economic pressures. Thus, the number of team members, usually three, may vary depending on the size of the program and other circumstances involved.

The amount of time available for the site visit is as important as the size of the team to an effective evaluation. Thus, the length of the visit, usually three days, may vary in relation to the program involved.

Program officials are encouraged to discuss team size and visit length with the executive director or director of accreditation of the Commission during the planning of the visit. The Commission will consider suggestions made by the program officials.

The team chairperson, in conjunction with the Commission's staff and the program's officials, is responsible for the implementation of the guidelines for the efficiency of the site visit. Circumstances may exist or arise in programs to cause variation from the general guidelines used for planning purposes.

TEAM SELECTION, QUALIFICATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All persons who serve as evaluators are selected in accordance with nondiscriminatory practices on the basis of relevant experience and training. In choosing a team, the Commission has a working pool of qualified ophthalmic professionals and ophthalmic general educators, and tailors the team to the needs of the program being evaluated. Each team will have at least one member who is neither a Commissioner, nor an administrative staff member. In addition, each team will include one evaluator who is (or has been within the last five years) a full-time instructor/professor at a COA accredited program. At least one member will be a Commissioner, or a recently retired Commissioner, who will normally act as chairperson. On-site evaluation teams are usually composed of three members, including a chairperson. The list of proposed names is sent to the chief executive officer and program director allowing sufficient time for review and comment with respect to any perceived conflict of interest. If no objection is raised, the visit will proceed as scheduled.

All evaluators are responsible for studying the *Essentials* and the *Self Study Report* beforehand in order to be prepared for the visit. They are expected to conduct an impartial and objective evaluation. All information obtained while serving as an evaluator, including discussions, is considered privileged information and is regarded by the Commission as strictly confidential.

PROTOCOL FOR INSTITUTIOS AND PROGRAM OFFICIALS

To ensure open discussions, institution and program officials should not be present when the on-site evaluation team conducts conferences with faculty, advisory committee members and students.

In order to avoid any situation which might be considered as suggesting a conflict of interest, no invitations for social functions should be extended to or accepted by evaluators during the visit.

OBSERVERS

It is the policy of the Commission to participate whenever feasible in joint on-site evaluations with representatives of the state department of education or regional accrediting agency representatives. At the request

of the institution, the Commission will invite said organizations to appoint a representative to accompany the on-site evaluation team during the entire course of the visit. Such representatives advise and consult with the Commission's evaluators and participate fully in the team's activities.

As part of the Commission's on-site evaluation training program, qualified observers may accompany the on-site team to learn about the on-site evaluation process. Such individuals are present only as observers of the process. Expenses incurred by observers will not be charged to the institution.

MEETINGS AND MATERIALS REQUIRED

The on-site evaluation enables the team to:

- Observe the program operating in its own setting

- Confirm the information in the *Self Study Report*

- Review supplementary material

- Promote communication among all levels of personnel involved

The visiting team requires time to meet as a committee at the beginning and conclusion of the visit, but otherwise has no rigid schedule for the balance of the visit. The team may either stay together as a unit during the visit, or proceed individually to review various aspects of the program.

The following outline provides a general format of the on-site evaluation.

I.   Evening before visit - Planning session for the team members to review among themselves the agenda and the *Self Study Report*

     Day 1   - In-briefing of chief executive officer. Discussion of *Self Study Report* with program director and faculty members.

     Day 2   - Conferences and observation.

     Day 3   - Executive session of COA evaluation team members. Out-briefing of dean, program director faculty, advisory committee, and chief executive officer, if possible.

II.   After consultation with the chairperson of the visiting team, the program director should schedule the remainder of the visit to include the following types of activities:

- Classroom visitations (one must be in session)

- Tour of learning resource centers (library, audio-visual)

- Student conferences (both 1st year and 2nd year – at least 75% of each representative class, if possible)

- Faculty conference

- Administrative conference

- Tour of program facilities (laboratories, clinics, lecture rooms)

- Laboratories and clinics in session

III.   Listed are some of the records and documents the program should have available for review by the evaluators to substantiate and supplement the self study document:

- Mission, goals, and learning objectives statement

- Course outlines and examples of lesson plans

- Annual Report of the work of the department

- Student work accomplishments

- Admissions, attendance, achievement, and evaluation records

- Advisory Committee minutes

- Catalog

- Curriculum outlines

- Samples of examinations and tests

- External and internal studies of students' performance (including graduates) which determine if the program is achieving the program's/institution's own stated educational goal

APPENDIX 9
COMMENT SHEET

ADDITIONS/DELETIONS SUGGESTED FOR FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

INSTITUTION:

PROGRAM:

DATE OF ON SITE:

COMMENTS:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____   _____

Signature of Team Member   Date

APPENDIX 10
APPROVAL SHEET
FOR
COA ON-SITE EVALUATION REPORT

INSTITUTION:

PROGRAM:
DATE OF ON-SITE VISIT:

TEAM CHAIRPERSON:

TEAM MEMBERS:

I, _____, have reviewed the draft of the Evaluation Report for the above institution, and with the addition/deletion of the information below, find the report to be an accurate account of the on-site evaluation team's findings during the on-site visit conducted on the above date.

---   --
Signature of On-Site Team Member   Date

ADDITIONS/DELETIONS SUGGESTED FOR FINAL EVALUATION REPORT