

Commission on Opticianry Accreditation
Semi Annual Meeting
March 14, 2024
New York, NY and via Zoom
Summary of Major Action and Discussion
(These are not the official minutes of the COA Semi-Annual Meeting)

Commissioners:

Bourque, Lisa, OAA
Buckner, Ledonna, OAA
DeLoach, Deborah, NFOS, via Zoom
Goh, Bryan, NFOS, presiding
Green, Kristina, OAA, via Zoom
Lew, Judy, NAO
Ludovici, Joseph, Public Member, via Zoom
Mercado, Pablo, NAO
Neff, Thomas, NAO

Not present:

Alspaugh, Janet, NAO
Pelkey, Yvonne, OAA

Staff:

Norris, Ellen, Assistant Director of Accreditation, via Zoom, recorder
Weinberger, Jayne, Director of Accreditation

Acronyms:

NAO – National Academy of Opticianry
OAA – Opticians Association of America
NFOS – National Federation of Opticianry Schools

I. Call to Order

A. Goh called the meeting to order at 12:06pm.

II. Conflict of Interest and Agreement of Confidentiality

Weinberger is in possession of all signed forms.

III. Total Quality Leadership (TQL)

Motion made and passed to accept ground rules for the meeting.
Mercado appointed Timekeeper

IV. Previously Approved Minutes of October 4, 2023

Goh called for changes to the October minutes. Motion was made, seconded, and passed to accept the minutes of the October 2023 meeting.

V. Chairperson’s Report

Goh reported that Weinberger had attended the NFOS meeting at Vision Expo West to represent COA. In the fall, there was a visit to SUNY Erie. We will discuss the quorum and changes in Commissioner appointments.

VI. Director of Accreditation Report

The following visits have been completed or are scheduled accordingly:

Fall 2023

1. SUNY Erie

Spring 2024

1. Southwestern Community College
2. Broward College
3. Essex County College

Fall 2024

1. New York City College of Technology
2. Franklin Cummings Tech

Additional items will be discussed as appropriate on the agenda.

VII. Treasurer’s Report

Bourque and Norris presented the financial report. Norris shared the proposed budget for fiscal year 2024-2025, The group discussed “in kind” donations and their impact. The budget will be further discussed and voted on via email ballot later.

VIII. Reaffirmation of Accreditation

SUNY Erie Community College, Williamsville, NY

Goh asked if anyone was associated with SUNY Erie. No one self-identified. The program meets all the requirements of the *Essentials*. A motion was made, seconded, discussed, and passed to grant six years accreditation.

IX. Initial Accreditation

Southwestern Community College, Sylva, NC

Goh asked if anyone had a conflict of interest in discussing Southwestern. No one self-identified. After a discussion of documents, visit, and response, a motion was made, seconded and passed to grant accreditation for 2 years with progress reports required. The status will be reevaluated for compliance with the ability to extend the accreditation as appropriate.

X. Progress Reports

1. Miami Dade College, Miami, FL

The concern of retention prompted a process of advisement and tutoring in Geometric Optics. The graduation rate for last year was up. A motion was made, seconded, discussed, and passed to monitor the situation at the next meeting interval in October.

2. Roane State Community College, Harriman, TN

Goh asked if anyone had a conflict in discussing this program. No one self-identified. The NCLE pass rate was below the required minimum. The faculty established a review class with superior results. A motion was made, seconded, discussed, and passed to accept the report.

3. Connecticut State Community College, Middletown, CT

Goh left the meeting with a conflict of interest. An area of noncompliance related to a private area for the Program Director was discussed. There is a conference room for private discussions. A survey was conducted indicating that meeting privacy is available. A motion was made, seconded, discussed, and passed that an adequate plan is in place.

XI. Annual Reports

1. Broward College, Coconut Creek, FL

Goh asked if anyone had a conflict of interest in discussing the program. No one self-identified. The graduation rate fell below the COA benchmark. The rate dropped post-COVID. A retention specialist will be hired, early alerts have been implemented, and there is additional peer mentoring and faculty intervention. A motion was made, seconded, discussed, and passed to accept the report with a progress report due in 6 months.

2. Camden County College, Blackwood, NJ

Goh asked if anyone had a conflict in discussing this program. No one self-identified. After a discussion a motion to accept the report was made, seconded, discussed and passed unanimously.

3. College of Southern Nevada, Las Vegas, NV

Goh asked if anyone had a conflict in discussing this program. No one self-identified. The college website does not have the current statistics, and the statistics on the website should be shown in a more readable format. A motion was made to postpone acceptance of the report until the statistics are updated on the program website to include the required cohorts and published in proper format.

4. Franklin Cummings Tech, Boston, MA

Goh asked if anyone had a conflict in discussing this program. Bourque left the room. The college is breaking ground for a new state-of-the-art building. A motion was made, seconded, discussed, and passed unanimously to accept the report.

5. Hillsborough Community College, Tampa, FL

Goh asked if anyone had a conflict in discussing this program. Neff and Lew left the room. A motion was made, seconded, discussed, and passed to accept the report.

6. New York City College of Technology, Brooklyn, NY

Goh asked if anyone had a conflict of interest in discussing the program. Weinberger left the room. A motion was made, seconded, discussed, and passed to accept the report.

7. Ogeechee Technical College, Statesboro, GA

Goh asked if anyone had a conflict of interest in discussing this program. DeLoach left the room. A motion was made to accept the report adding the recommendation to have more than one student on the board in case one cannot attend. The motion was seconded, discussed, and passed unanimously.

8. Raritan Valley Community College, Somerville, NJ

Goh asked if anyone had a conflict of interest in discussing this program. No one self-identified. Goh explained that there was a change in program director and that the new director is recreating some resources. A recommendation was made that the report be moved to the fall reporting cycle to allow for more time. The motion was seconded, discussed, and passed unanimously.

9. SUNY Erie Community College, Williamsville, NY.

Goh asked if anyone had a conflict of interest in discussing this program. No one self-identified. The report was statistics-only. The program director is retiring. A motion was made to accept the report. The motion was seconded, discussed, and passed unanimously.

XII. Old Business

A. Committee Reports

1. Evaluator’s Workshop and Sample Self Study

The Evaluator’s Workshop is completed but the sample self-study report is still pending. It is postponed until the completion of the *Essentials* review.

2. By Laws

It was explained that a new optical “super-group” was potentially being formed. The NFOS, OAA, ABO, and NCLE will be included. This may follow the upcoming Vision Expo.

A discussion of the constitution of a quorum ensued.

3. Strategic Planning

An updated plan is posted on the COA website.

4. *Essentials* Review

Goh indicated that more members were needed for the committee. A suggestion followed to combine the committee with the Evaluators’ Workshop group. Additional members volunteered. A list of questions was posed to the group including those about succession planning, ABO certification for preceptors, and consideration of the dedicated office space requirement for program director.

XIII. New Business

Y. Pelkey has resigned her position as commissioner. A motion was made to accept the resignation of Ms. Pelkey. It was seconded, discussed, and passed unanimously.

Weinberger thanked T. Neff for his service and for the help he offered when she came on as Director of Accreditation.

The fall meeting of commissioners will be conducted virtually. A tentative date of October 17, 2024 was scheduled but would be confirmed when new commissioners are in place. Next year's spring meeting might coincide with Vision Expo or be held elsewhere.

Other New Business

- a. A motion to upgrade QuickBooks to a 3-user license was made, seconded, discussed, and passed.
- b. COA is paying a great deal for its phone service. More research will be done.
- c. A discussion of other methods of doing payroll was under discussion. The methods are being investigated and considered.
- d. COA needs an accountant for its two-year review. Weinberger will investigate.

XIV. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:02 pm Eastern.