

**Southern College of Optometry**  
Memphis, Tennessee  
**Quality Enhancement Plan Executive Summary**



The Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) at Southern College of Optometry is **focus** | *Facilitating Optometric Curriculum Using Service*. The over-arching goal of **focus** is to enhance student learning through service activities. This will be achieved through the incorporation and assessment of formal service-learning components in the optometric curriculum that will occur on campus, in the Memphis community, and throughout the region and Western Hemisphere.

The **focus** program was developed using an assessment-driven process in which all administration, faculty, and staff participated. The bulk of the creative process was performed by a committee with representation from faculty, staff (in clinical and student services), administration, and the Board of Trustees.

The student learning outcomes of the **focus** program will be:

- To identify resources for assessing and addressing community visual health needs.
- To demonstrate cultural competence in a healthcare setting when discussing medical history, current health problems, and care recommendations with patients from varied cultural and socio-economic backgrounds.
- To explain the role of service in the career of and community expectation for the optometric professional.

Student experiences in **focus** will occur throughout the four years of their professional degree program. These experiences will include presentations by community service leaders, a course on service-learning and local public

health issues given in a workshop format, community and school-based vision screenings, and eye and vision examinations given to indigent and uninsured individuals throughout Tennessee and in Central America. A defining activity in **focus** every academic term during the five-year course of the program will be the Saturday Service Experience – a full-service vision, eye, and health examination event offered at The Eye Center, SCO's on-campus clinical facility. This event will serve individuals who have been identified by partnering community organizations as at risk for not receiving healthcare services through any other means.

Assessments of student learning outcomes will be cross-sectional and longitudinal, and will include direct and indirect modalities. Students will be asked to reflect and report upon their experiences after completing each service event. They will be surveyed on their confidence with service and public health-related concepts. Current alumni will be asked to respond to the same survey instruments, which will establish a baseline measure for the student learning outcomes. There will be examination items in several courses related to the **focus** student learning outcomes.

“Fostering a personal commitment to service” is a major component of SCO's mission. The **focus** program has been designed not only to fulfill this aspect of SCO's mission, but also to enhance the graduate's effectiveness as a healthcare professional.