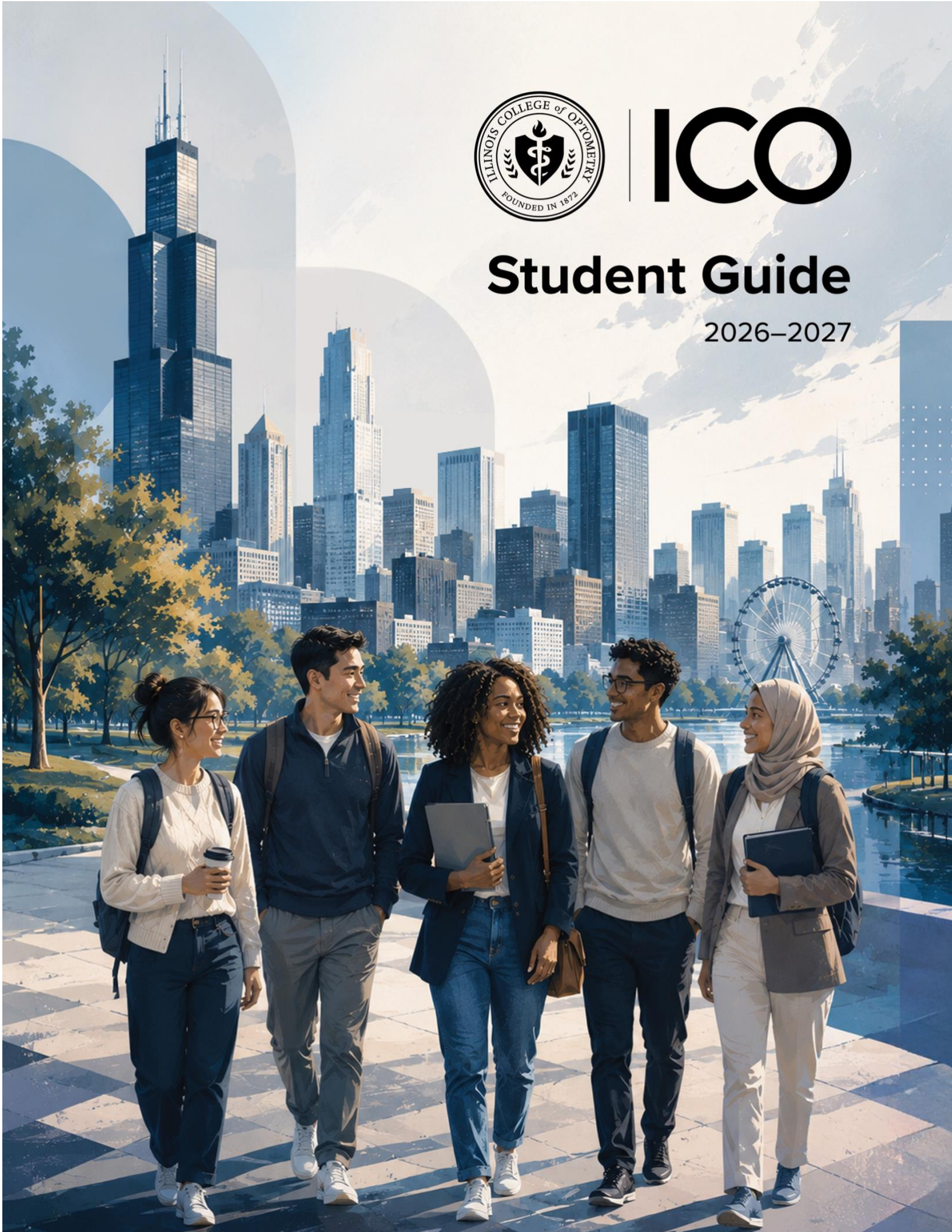




ICO

Student Guide

2026–2027



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Chapter 1 – WHAT IS THE STUDENT GUIDE?

This guide is meant to inform you, as a currently enrolled student, about ICO policies, practices, and organizations, as well as the resources available to you at the College. In accepting the offer of admission and through continued enrollment, you agree to abide by the policies and practices of the College. In accordance with this principle, the college expects that you be familiar with the policies and practices contained in this guide, which pertain to your academic and professional standing at the College.

This guide supersedes all previous ICO Student Guides. Changes to this guide, which may be made at any time deemed appropriate by the College, will be announced via email. The document is available to all students and staff on the College portal - my.ico.edu.

Students will receive official notices, academic-related or otherwise, via your @eyedoc.ico.edu e-mail account. It is your personal responsibility to check your @eyedoc.ico.edu e-mail for information, particularly toward the end of the quarter when final grade and academic status notifications are distributed. Additionally, increasing amounts of information, including access to grades, are available by logging in to your personal accounts on the campus portal at my.ico.edu.

2026-2027 Student Guide Errata and Updates

Any errata and updates that were amended after the initial Student Guide (in the Fall) was posted to the Web will be noted below as they occur.

For questions about the Student Guide, you can contact the Student Affairs Office.

Date, section, and brief description of updates.

General Information

Contact Information by Department or Service Area

[Online directory](#)

Department	Location	Phone	Email
Accommodations/ADA	2721	312-949-7415	BKarmis@ico.edu
Admissions	2700	312-949-7400	Admissions@ico.edu
Advanced Care	2617	312-949-7220	
Alumni Relations	2105	312-949-7429	Alumni@ico.edu
Bookstore	1214	312-949-7470	Bookstore@ico.edu
Business Affairs	1205	312-949-7030	studentaccounts@ico.edu
Career Development	2722	312-949-7083	Careerdev@ico.edu
Cornea & Contact Lens	1560	312-949-7268	
College Operator *	1700	312-949-7000	
Communications	2126	312-949-7412	Communications@ico.edu
Counseling		833-434-1217	UWILL webpage
Development		312-949-7073	Development@ico.edu
Externship Office	2176	312-949-7417	externship@ico.edu
Food Service	IIT		DineOnCampus.com/IIT
		312-949-7405	ICO Student Affairs
IEI - Desk/Appointments	1700	312-225-6200	
Facilities Help Desk		312-949-7610	Facilities@ico.edu
Faculty & Staff by name *		312-949-7000	
Financial Aid	2700	312-949-7445	Finaid@ico.edu
Human Resources	2530	312-949-7043	
Information Systems	C1016	312-949-7500	Support@ico.edu
Library	1100	312-949-7160	icolibrary@ico.edu
Vision Rehabilitation	1530	312-949-7255	
Pediatrics	1500	312-949-7280	
Registrar	2176	312-949-7425	Registrar@ico.edu
Security	2218	312-949-7633	CampusSecurity@ico.edu
Student Affairs	2700		
Work Study Office	2530	312-949-7043	workstudy@ico.edu

*Voice Recognition: will dial directly after you state the individual's name

Contact Information by topic.

We encourage you to contact the Office of Student Affairs as soon as any problem or concern arises that may affect your performance or standing.

All telephone numbers listed in this Student Guide can be reached directly by dialing '312' area code and the prefix **949**. Example: to reach the Student Affairs Office while on campus x7401, if off campus dial 312-949-7401.

Absence notifications -	
Examinations	Fill out the ICO Student Absence App; for further questions email WStone@ico.edu
Classes/Labs	Fill out the ICO Student Absence App; for further questions email your Course Instructor
Clinic Assignments	Fill out the ICO Student Absence App; for further questions email APihos@ico.edu
Academic Assessment	Course Instructor
Athletics	Fitness Coordinator (x7460)
BSVS Degree	Registrar's Office (Registrar@ico.edu)
Building and Grounds	Chief Engineer (x7610)
Career Development	Director of Career Development (x7083)
Class Schedule(s)	Registrar's Office (Registrar@ico.edu)
Clinic Make-up	Registrar's Office (Registrar@ico.edu)
Clinic Schedule(s)	Registrar's Office (Registrar@ico.edu)
Compliance Office	General Questions (x7311) Confidential Hotline (x7225)
Computer Center	Library Staff
Computer Help Desk	IS Support Desk (x7500)
Counseling	UWILL webpage 833-434-1217
Confidential Reporting Hotlines	
HIPPA, privacy, general concerns Title IX – stalking, dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault	Compliance (x7225) Title IX (x7440)
Deferments (Loans)	Financial Aid Coordinator (x7445)
Disability Services for Students	Assistant Dean for Student Success (x7415)
Emergencies	
Immediate (safety, etc.)	Campus Security (x7633)

Personal	Student Affairs (x7415)
Externship	Externship Office (x7126)
FAX Machine	Library (printer)
Federal Work Study Program	Human Resources Coordinator (x7043)
Financial Aid	Financial Aid Coordinator (x7445)
Food Service	https://dineoncampus.com/iit/ico-at-iit or Student Affairs Office (x7405)
Grades	Registrar's Office (Registrar@ico.edu)
Housing	Student Affairs Office (x7405)
ID Card	One Card Office (x7500)
Inclement Weather	312-949-SNOW (x7669)
International Students	Registrar's Office (Registrar@ico.edu)
IS Help Desk	x7500
Learning Resources & Library	Director of Learning Resources (x7160)
Leave of Absence	Asst. Dean for Student Success (x7415)
Loans	Financial Aid Coordinator (x7445)
Lockers	Student Affairs Office (x7405)
Lost and Found	Security (x7633)
Mail	Mailroom (x7087)
Missed Examinations	ICO Student Absence App; further questions WStone@ico.edu
Missed Clinic	ICO Student Absence App; further questions APihos@ico.edu
NBEO	Registrar's Office (x7425)
Newsletter (<i>ICO Insider</i>)	Communications@ico.edu
Notary	Human Resources, Registrar's Office & Library
One Card	One Card Office (x7500)
Organizations and Clubs	Student Affairs Office (x7405)
Parking	Security (x7633)
Personal Concerns	Student Affairs Office (x7415)
Photocopiers & Printers	Located in the library (x7158)

Police	911
Privacy Office / Compliance	x7311
Recreational Facilities	Fitness Coordinator (x7460)
Registration	Registrar's Office (x7425)
Residency Program	Residency Director (x7336)
Room Reservations	
Classes/Labs	Registrar's Office (x7425)
After school hrs./Social Activities	Student Affairs Office (X7405) Room or Facilities Request Form
Rules, Regulations & Policies	Student Guide/Dean of Student Affairs (x7410)
Scholarships	Student Financial Services (x7445)
Security	x7633
Student Payments	Studentaccounts@ico.edu , Business Office (x7039)
Support Desk – Information Systems	x7500
Transcripts	Registrar's Office (x7425)
Tutoring	Assistant Dean for Student Success (x7415)
Veterans Affairs	Registrar's Office (x7425)
Vision Screenings	Community Screening Coordinator (x7103)
Withdrawal from the College	Dean of Student Affairs (x7410)
Work Study	Human Resource Coordinator (x7043)

Food and Drink Guidelines

Aside from examination periods, food and drink are allowed in the Lecture Center and Adams Center. Drinks are permitted in cups or containers with lids (to limit spills). Food and trash must be completely cleaned up and disposed of properly before leaving the area.

During examinations, no food is permitted. Water in a clear container is allowed during examinations. See "Procedures and Guidelines for Exam Administration" for further details.

Student Identification Cards

A photo identification card is issued to all students, faculty, and staff. It must always be displayed while on college property. The front desk staff will check to ensure all students and staff wear their ID badges when they enter the building. If a student or staff member is not wearing a badge and

does not stop at the front desk, Security will be notified. ID cards must also be worn to be served in the IIT dining areas and in the ICO library. Patients, and those with them, will be issued dated visitors tags. Each student should make it their responsibility to assist anyone seen in the halls without a badge. If a suspicious person is observed, please notify Security.

Should you misplace or lose your ID card, you must obtain a temporary ID card from Security, and you will have 72 hours to either locate your card or obtain a replacement. If you are certain your card has been lost or stolen, contact Security immediately so that they can deactivate your card and issue a temporary one. The temporary card will expire at the conclusion of the 72-hour time frame. Please return your temporary I.D. Card to Security. Replacements can be obtained by e-mailing the following address: support@ico.edu or call the I.S. support desk at X7500.

Any visitors to the College are required to sign in at the Front Desk located at the Indiana entrance and obtain a VISITOR badge. Visitors are not allowed to proceed on their own to the office they are visiting. When the visitor leaves, they should be escorted to the front desk to sign out and return the VISITOR badge. Relatives of students and staff should remain in the front desk area. Relatives should not proceed through the building unescorted. Please inform your guests of this procedure.

ID Card & OneCard

OneCard Debit Cards

Debit Card Services are optional. These services allow you to add value to your ID card via the Load Stations located by the Mail/Print Room and Residential Complex as well as on-line.

Account Holder's Liability for Unauthorized Purchases - If an Illinois College of Optometry (ICO) OneCard with a declining balance OneCard Account is lost or stolen, the account holder is responsible for no more than \$50 in unauthorized card purchases **provided the card is reported lost or stolen to the ICO One Card Office within two business days after learning of the loss or theft.** Once the card is reported lost or stolen, the account will be inactivated.

If the account holder fails to notify the ICO Security Office (x7633) within two business days after learning of the loss or theft of the card but does notify the ICO OneCard Office (x7500) within 10 days of a statement transmittal that unauthorized card purchases appear on the statement, the account holder's liability for the unauthorized purchases shall not exceed \$500.00.

If the account holder fails to report an unauthorized card purchase within 30 days of transmittal of a statement, then the account holder's liability for unauthorized purchases may have no dollar limit.

Reporting a Lost or Stolen ICO OneCard - You can report your ICO OneCard lost or stolen 24 hours a day by calling the Security Office at 312-949-7633 (open 24/7). Upon notice of your lost or stolen card, the Security Office will deactivate your ICO OneCard and suspend your account to prevent additional unauthorized use and transactions.

Confidentiality - ICO will disclose information to third parties regarding your account: (1) where it is necessary for completing a purchase or (2) in order to verify the existence and conditions of your account for a merchant or (3) in order to comply with government agency or court orders, or (4) if you give us your written permission.

Shortages and Negative Amounts - Cardholders are responsible for keeping track of the expenditures made with their ICO OneCard. A card reader, point-of-sale terminal, or cashier will not typically approve a transaction attempted when there are insufficient funds in the cardholder's

ICO OneCard account. However, a system malfunction or human error may sometimes result in a debit that exceeds the balance in your account, creating a shortage or negative balance. You understand and agree to be liable for any shortages or negative balance amounts in your ICO OneCard account. If the Illinois College of Optometry bills you for a negative balance, you agree to repay the amount promptly. You also agree that the Illinois College of Optometry may, at its discretion, offset a negative balance against subsequent deposits to any of your Illinois College of Optometry accounts.

Documentation of Transactions - (1) If the point-of-sale terminal is equipped to provide a receipt you will receive a receipt at the time of your purchase. (2) The account holder can view their transactions via the web at <https://www.ico.edu/onecard>.

Liability for Failure to Make Transfers - If ICO does not properly initiate a transfer to or from your account within 3 business days or in the correct amount according to our agreement with you, we will be liable, to the extent permitted by Illinois Law, for your losses or damages. However, there are some exceptions.

We will not be liable for instance:

- If through no fault of ours, you do not have enough money in your account to make a purchase.
- If the point-of-sale terminal was not working properly and you knew about the failure before the purchase.
- If circumstances beyond our control (such as fire or flood) prevent the transfer, despite reasonable precautions that we have taken.

Account Corrections and Error Resolution – Telephone the *ICO OneCard Office* at 312-949-7500 or visit IS Support if your card is not working properly or is having problems depositing money. For account balance issues, contact Business Affairs or write to us at the address below, if you think your statement or receipt is incorrect, no later than 30 days after you become aware of the problem or error. When contacting us: (1) state your name and ID number, (2) explain why you believe there has been an error, (3) tell us the dollar amount of the suspected error.

ICO will explain the results of the investigation within 10 business days from the time when initially contacted. If more time is required, ICO may take up to 45 days to investigate your complaint or question. If ICO decides to do this, it will credit your account within 10 business days for the amount you think is in error, so that you will have the money during the time it takes to complete the investigation. If you are asked by ICO to put your complaint in writing and ICO does not receive it within 10 business days, at its discretion ICO may not credit your account.

Your ID card is not transferable and must be presented upon request to establish official ICO identification. An ICO official may confiscate an invalid ID card. **A lost or abused ID card carries a replacement fee of \$40.**

Upon withdrawal from ICO any remaining funds will be reimbursed to your student account within 30 days. If an outstanding ICO balance exists in your student account, these funds will be applied to these charges first. At graduation students will be given an opportunity to collect funds remaining on their card. Any funds uncollected will be given to the Student Association Scholarship

***By depositing money to your ICO OneCard Account, you are accepting the terms and conditions of this disclosure.**

Here is where you can add money:

- ICO On-line Load Station: <https://www.ico.edu/onecard> (Debit or Credit Card)

Charges:

Your first ICO OneCard is FREE of charge

All Cardholders pay **\$40 for lost or stolen cards.**

There is no cost for a request of a name change or damaged card.

Immunization Requirements

The optometric training program requires classroom, laboratory, and clinical training. Therefore, an ICO student is not only considered a “student” in the traditional definition of a student enrolled in an institution of higher education but also a health care provider. So, as an ICO student you need to consider your obligations, as they pertain to disease control, for yourself and your colleagues but also, more importantly, to your patients. You also need to be prepared to meet your obligation to patients not to be a source of infectious disease in several settings including the Illinois Eye Institute, hospitals, private practices, and other multidisciplinary sites. Therefore, ICO’s requirements for proof of immunity reflect the state’s requirements for college students but also other requirements for health care workers.

In response to state law, the Centers for Disease Control recommendations, OSHA regulations and other related standards, the College requires certain immunizations and tests. Prior to entering ICO, students are required to provide proof of immunity to varicella, measles, mumps, rubella, and a current booster for tetanus/diphtheria/pertussis¹.

Students less than 22 years of age upon matriculation must also have received a single dose of meningococcal vaccine (dose administered between 16 and 22 years of age. Additionally, students are required to document 3 doses of tetanus/diphtheria/pertussis, one dose must be a Tdap, and the most recent must be within the previous 10 years.

Prior to matriculation, students are required to document they are free from active tuberculosis. Additional TB testing may be required in the students’ fourth professional year, depending upon the policies of the externship sites.

The vaccinations for Hepatitis B Virus are recommended prior to entering the program but are required prior to the beginning of the second professional year. Due to the length of time involved in completing this series of vaccinations, it is highly recommended that you complete it before coming to ICO.

The College requires **annual influenza vaccinations** for all students, faculty, and staff. The vaccinations should be administered early within the period of availability. If the College’s Compliance Department is alerted to epidemic influenza outbreak impacting ICO, those students, faculty and staff who decline the influenza vaccination requirement will be subject to daily symptom checks or will be required to remove themselves from classes or work through the duration of the epidemic. Removal from classes/labs/clinic requires making up of missed obligations. Employees should reference the College’s infection control policy for details about how the flu vaccination requirement impacts them.

¹ The Illinois College Immunization Law specifies proof of immunity for measles, mumps, rubella, diphtheria/tetanus and meningococcal virus for students under the age of 22. The College is required by law to officially report compliance. If a student chooses not to complete the Immunization Record by the end of the first quarter that student cannot *by law* register for the next quarter.

As of September 20, 2023, ICO recommends that all employees and students stay up to date on Covid19 vaccinations.

If you have specific questions about required immunizations for students, please contact the Assistant Dean for Student Success. Immunization records for students are stored on the student's individual CastleBranch portal. The student may access them directly.

Lockers

2nd and 3rd floor Lockers in College are for equipment, books and a coat - Generally speaking, first- and second-year students will have lockers on the 3rd floor and third- and fourth-year students will have lockers on the 2nd floor. No personal locks are permitted. When found, they will be cut off and an ICO lock will be put on the locker.

4th year students - a locker will be assigned to you on the 2nd floor close to the clinic entrance. You have access to a locker for the quarter(s) you are in the clinic. You will need to take your items with you for those quarters you are not on campus.

3rd year students - If you already have a locker on the 2nd floor, you need not do anything more. You are staying right where you are.

If you are on the 3rd floor, look for an email with your new locker number and combination on the 2nd floor.

2nd year students - If you have a locker on the 3rd floor, you need not do anything more. You are staying right where you are. If you were on the 2nd floor last year, you will get an email from Debra with your new locker assignment on the 3rd floor. (You will move to the 2nd floor for your 3rd year.)

1st year students - You will be assigned a locker on the 3rd floor.

IF you do not have a locker or do not hear from Debra Albers by the first Monday of September, use this form to indicate your need for a locker.

<https://forms.office.com/r/4CaCR0hx99>

Students will be notified of their locker number and combination.

If you forget your combination, email [Debra Albers](#) or speak to someone in the Security Office. You will need your id before you receive any portion of your locker information (locker number or the combination).

Contact Debra Albers, Director of Student Engagement with any questions about lockers.

Lockers in the Fitness Center shower rooms are available for daily use, with a limited number of permanent lockers that may be reserved only after contacting the Fitness Coordinator.

The College is not responsible for the loss of personal property. Personal belongings and equipment should be identified and covered by personal insurance policies of students or their parents (homeowners). The College reserves the right to inspect lockers when there is a reasonable suspicion of the use or sale by the student of controlled substances or possession of weapons.

Parking on Campus

The Illinois College of Optometry has instituted a comprehensive campus parking policy for all persons utilizing ICO parking lots. The purpose of this policy is to establish reasonable guidelines

and an annual parking rate. Students who have paid for use of the parking facility can gain access by using their Student ID.

No student or College employee is to park in areas designated for patients or the Indiana Avenue circle entrance.

Parking Regulations

Any violation of ICO Parking Regulations may result in towing at the owner's expense and/or a suspension of parking privileges.)

1. The Illinois Eye Institute main outside patient parking lot is for patients only.
2. Parking in circular drive on Indiana Avenue is for **visitors** only.
3. All inside parking is paid.
4. Every car parked in the garage must display an assigned vehicle parking tag on their interior mirror for identification purposes.
5. No overnight parking is allowed on the 4th level during the snow season.
6. The entire second level is reserved for **faculty only**.
7. All cars without the proper identification tags are subject to be towed at the owner's expense.
8. Parking rates effective July 1, 2022, for students are as follows:
 - i. The annual parking rate for 12 months will be \$784.
 - ii. The annual parking rate for 10 months will be \$588. This plan is available for First- and Second-year students only and runs August through May.
 - iii. **Fourth** year student parking rates are based on quarters when on campus. **Fourth year students must identify quarters on campus during registration.** The parking rate is \$196.00 per quarter.
 - iv. Students can have their annual parking fees charged to their student account.
 - v. If a parking tag is lost or stolen, the holder must notify the Security Office immediately. A fee of \$40 will be charged for each replacement. If you intend to enroll in the Parking Plan, please complete the [application form](#). You will need to login to my.ico in order to see the form. Spaces within the garage are limited. Visit the Security Office for any questions.

Parking Policy and Procedures are subject to change upon notification of those utilizing the facilities.

Study Space on Campus

Everyone has their own preference when it comes to 'best study locations.' If you are seeking to vary where you study and are not sure what's available on campus, please take a look at the [Study Spaces On Campus List](#) on SharePoint.

Tuition & Fees

Fall 2026 - Summer 2027 Tuition and Fees

Full-Time Tuition

	per Academic Quarter
1st through 3rd Year Students	\$17,673
4th Year Students	\$13,586
Extended Curriculum Plan (12 or more credit hours)	\$17,673

Part-Time Tuition (per credit)

	per Credit Hour
1st through 3rd Year Students	\$1,473
4th Year Students	\$1,132
Extended Curriculum Plan (less than 12 credit hours)	\$1,473

Fees

Annual Fees

Student Association (billed in Fall to all class years)

Incoming Class	\$265
Returning Class	\$250
Class Dues (Years 1-3)	\$100

Optional Fees

Duplicate Diploma Fee - Small	\$50
Duplicate Diploma Fee - Large	\$75
Proficiency Exam	\$100
Retest (exam & lab assessment)	\$250
Concurrent Remediation Fee	\$200
Make-up Exam Fee (Pre-arranged)	\$175

Make-up Exam Fee (Unexcused)	\$300
Full Year Parking (billed \$196 per quarter)	\$784
Three Quarters Parking (F/W/SP, billed \$196 per quarter)	\$588
Single Quarter	\$196
BSVS Degree	\$250
Tuition Deposit	\$750
Alternate Tuition Deposit	\$750
Waitlist Tuition Deposit	\$750
Deferred - Additional Tuition Deposit	\$750
Residential Complex Deposit	\$200

Library Circulation Fines / Printing Fees

Books (including leisure reading) - 4 weeks, 1 renewal*	Overdue fine: \$1/day
DVDs, laptops, test study guides - 1 week, 1 renewal*	Overdue fine: \$1/day
Bound periodicals, equipment - 1 day, no renewals*	Overdue fine: \$1/day
Reserves, models - 3 hours, no renewals*	Overdue fine: \$1/hour
Black and White Printing / Copying	.08 per page
Color Printing / Copying	.40 per page

*If item is lost, replacement value and a \$25 processing fee will be assessed

Late Fees

If you do not pay your student account balance by the due date, you will be assessed a late payment charge - this applies to any balance over \$200.	\$250
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Fall 2026-Summer 2027 Housing and Meal Plan Rates

Room Rates - Fall 2026 - Summer 2027

<u>Room Type</u>	<u>Monthly</u>	<u>Billed each Quarter</u>
*Single	\$721	\$2,163
*Large Single	\$850	\$2,550
3-bedroom apartment	\$1,185	\$3,555
2-bedroom apartment	\$1,427	\$4,281
1-bedroom apartment	\$1,795	\$5,385

Contract Cancellation \$750

*Those living in a single or large single room are required to purchase the Block460 meal plan.

Meal Plan - Fall 2026 - Spring 2027

460-Swipe Meal Plan

<u>Per Swipe Cost</u>	<u>Monthly</u>	<u>Billed each Fall, Winter, and Spring Quarter</u>
\$15.67	\$801	\$2,402

When Student Account Balances are Due

The due date is the 1st Friday of the quarter. Payments must be received by Business Affairs no later than the tuition due date.

Quarter	Due Date
Fall 2026	August 14, 2026
Winter 2026	November 13, 2026
Spring 2027	February 26, 2027
Summer 2027	May 21, 2027

If you find that you are unable to pay your student account balance by the due date, you may contact the Business Affairs or Financial Aid Office for further assistance. Subsequent charges for equipment purchases are due by the 15th of each month. Current balances are available on the student portal.

All student accounts must be settled in full by the last day of classes each quarter.

Late Payments

If you do not pay your student account balance (those greater than \$200) by the due date, you will be assessed a late payment charge of \$250.

Failure to pay your outstanding balance may result in a hold on your academic records and/or your account being referred to an outside collection agency, which will add additional charges.

Student Payments pending from US Dept of Veterans Affairs

Beginning August 1, 2019, and despite any policy to the contrary, the Illinois College of Optometry will not take any of the four following actions toward any student using U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Post 9/11 G.I. Bill® (Ch. 33) or Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Ch. 31) benefits, while their payment from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs is pending to the educational institution:

- Prevent their enrollment.
- Assess a late penalty fee.
- Require they secure alternative or additional funding.
- Deny their access to any resources (access to classes, libraries, or other institutional facilities) available to other students who have satisfied their tuition and fee bills to the institution.

However, to qualify for this provision, such students may be required to:

- Produce the VA's Certificate of Eligibility by the first day of class.
- Provide written request to be certified.
- Provide additional information needed to properly certify the enrollment as described in other institutional policies (see our VA School Certifying Official for all requirements).

GI Bill® is a registered trademark of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). More information about education benefits offered by VA is available at the official U.S. government Web site at <http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill>.

Chapter 2 – GENERAL ACADEMIC INFORMATION

Academic Policies and Procedures

FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) protects the privacy of the student's educational records, provides students with the right to inspect and review their records, and provides students with the right to challenge the content of their educational records which they

believe to be inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of their privacy and other rights. It is the intention of the Illinois College of Optometry to comply fully with the provisions of FERPA. Requests to inspect your educational records and questions concerning the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act may be directed to the Registrar's Office.

Disclosure of Student Records

Official student records are maintained in the Registrar's Office. We adhere to a policy which permits disclosure of educational records without consent to "school officials" with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the College in an administrative, supervisory, academic, research or support staff position; a person or company with whom the College has contracted; a person serving on the Board of Trustees; or a student serving on an official committee; or authorized representatives of specific government entities. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an educational record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Other persons or organizations given access without consent are those responsible for accrediting the institution, providing the student with financial aid, complying with a judicial court order, and protecting the health and safety of students in an emergency.

Directory Information

Certain information is classified by the Illinois College of Optometry as "directory" information. We may disclose without consent directory information such as student's name, permanent, local and e-mail addresses, telephone numbers, professional year, mailbox number, dates of attendance, class/lab and clinic schedules, digitized image/photograph/video, degrees conferred, honors, awards and scholarships received, unless explicitly directed in writing by the student not to do so.

Periodically, ICO receives requests from various groups, such as state optometric associations and organizations, for names of enrolled students. **Under no circumstances, however, does the College release directory information to the general public.**

Non-Disclosure

Students wishing to opt-out of sharing their FERPA directory information should designate their preferences in the Student Portal under My Profile>My FERPA>Opt In.

Release of Student Academic Records

Students wishing to allow others to view their academic records should designate them within the Student Portal under My Profile>My FERPA>Consent.

Copying Letters of Recommendation and Undergraduate Transcripts

At times, students may request the College to copy and forward letters of recommendation submitted during their admissions application. It is the policy of the College to decline such requests.

Although all pre-professional transcripts are maintained in a student's file, requests for copies of transcripts from other educational institutions are not honored. Students should contact previous institutions for transcripts. In exceptional cases, where another transcript is unattainable or can be

secured only with the greatest difficulty (as in the case of some foreign language institutions), the Registrar's Office may authorize copies to be made and released with the notation "certified copy of a record from the student's file".

International Student Affairs

The Registrar is the "Principal Designated School Official" for all matters relating to international students which includes employment, issuance of I-20 forms, and other required documents.

Veteran Affairs

All matters relating to Veteran Affairs as they apply to students at the College are handled by the Registrar.

Please see the Tuition and Fees section for policy regarding pending payments from the US Dept of Veterans Affairs.

Readmission of Veterans Policy

It is the College's policy to readmit previously enrolled veterans returning from military service. To the extent possible, the veterans will be admitted into the same point of the curriculum from which they departed. Because of the nature of the curriculum, this may require a delay of up to three academic terms.

Academic Standing

The College identifies one of the following academic standings for all students at the conclusion of each academic quarter:

Good Academic Standing: A student who has a passing grade in each course taken during the quarter, a quarterly grade point average of 2.30 or higher, a cumulative grade point average of 2.30 or higher, and no additional stipulations from the Student Promotions Committee.

Good Academic Standing with Stipulation: A student who otherwise qualifies for Good Academic Standing but who is not a full-time student or has other unmet stipulations from the Student Promotions Committee, including extended curriculum plans or unfinished remediation plans.

Academic Probation: A student who has an *F* or *U* final grade in any course taken during the quarter or a quarterly grade point average lower than 2.30.

Academic Jeopardy: A student who has a cumulative grade point average lower than 2.30, or who qualifies for Academic Probation in two consecutive quarters, or who has been identified by the Student Promotions Committee as a student at increased academic risk. Students otherwise qualifying for academic dismissal who are permitted to remain enrolled are typically returned to the program in an Academic Jeopardy status.

A student experiencing academic difficulty for any reason should contact the Assistant Dean for Student Success or the Dean of Student Affairs immediately. (See *Academic Assistance*)

Dean's List / Clinical Dean's List

Students who achieve superior academic performance will be placed on the Dean's List / Clinical Dean's List which is published three weeks after the conclusion of each academic term. Quarterly eligibility for the Dean's List requires full-time enrollment in the first, second, or third professional year, a quarterly grade point average of 3.50 or higher, and no grade below a *B* for courses taken during the quarter. Quarterly eligibility for the Clinical Dean's List requires full-time enrollment in the third or fourth professional year, and *H* grades in all patient care courses taken during the quarter in courses where an *H* represent the highest grade available to students. Students not in Good Academic Standing are ineligible for inclusion on the Dean's List or Clinical Dean's List.

Student Promotions Committee

The Student Promotions Committee (SPC) meets at the conclusion of each academic term or as circumstances require to review the academic standing of each student. The voting members of the SPC include the Associate Dean for Academic Assessment and Records, the Associate Dean for Faculty, the Assistant Dean for Community Based Education and International Programs, the Assistant Dean for Didactic Education, the Assistant Dean for IEI Patient Care Education, the Assistant Dean for Student Success, two Faculty Members at Large, and the highest-ranking student member present. Decisions may only be made by the SPC when a quorum is present. When a quorum is not available, the Dean may appoint one alternate faculty member as a voting member. The SPC Chair is appointed by the Dean, while one student member from the second, third, and fourth professional years is selected by the SPC.

Academic Advancement

For students to be unconditionally advanced to each succeeding academic term, they must be in Good Academic Standing and have all financial obligations to the College satisfied. Students not in Good Academic Standing may be dismissed from the College.

All admissions deficiencies must be completed to the satisfaction of the Dean of Student Affairs prior to a student being permitted to register for the winter quarter of the first professional year.

A student must be in Good Academic Standing with no unmet matriculation requirements to be unconditionally admitted to the final year of professional study.

At the discretion of the SPC, a student not in Good Academic Standing may be allowed to continue in the program but with specific stipulations. Students who fail to meet these stipulations may be dismissed from the College. Examples of possible stipulations may be:

- **Re-Evaluation of Academic Standing:** students may be given an extended time in which to improve their grade point average to a satisfactory level.
- **Retest:** The student may remediate an *F* final course grade by passing an additional comprehensive final examination by the end of the second week of the following quarter (including Summer). The highest final course grade achievable after successfully passing the re-examination is a *D*, and this option includes a \$250 College fee. The student is responsible for all tuition, housing, fees, and other incidental charges incurred during the retest process, regardless of the exam's outcome.
- **Re-Registration:** The student may repeat an entire course or series of courses at a time specified by the Student Promotions Committee. This may or may not involve a delay in the student's anticipated graduation date. The student's new final course grade(s) appears on the transcript along with the original course grade(s). However, only the new course grade(s) will be used in the calculation of the student's cumulative grade point average. This option

includes all College fees and tuition appropriate for the credit hours of the repeated course(s). The determination of continued financial aid eligibility is a separate process that requires that the student is making appropriate progress towards the completion of his/her degree. The student will be billed as a full-time student during academic quarters in which the student is taking 12 or more credit hours. The student will be considered a part-time student with tuition charged per credit hour during academic quarters in which the student is taking 6-11 credit hours. The student will be considered less than a part-time student not eligible for financial aid or loan deferment during academic quarters in which the student is taking less than 6 credit hours.

In most instances, the SPC will request completion of an SPC Student Profile Form, a meeting with the Assistant Dean for Student Success, and a virtual meeting with the Student Promotions before rendering a decision. Subsequent decisions may not require an additional meeting with the Committee. Because College policy specifies that the student must be in Good Academic Standing to be unconditionally advanced to each succeeding academic term, such student correspondence is an opportunity for the student to advocate why the SPC should intervene and allow the student to continue in the program. Students should provide a detailed description of any extenuating circumstances that may have prevented the student from being successful, the steps toward self-help the student have undertaken, and what actions the student wishes the SPC to take to allow the student to return to Good Academic Standing.

Academic Dismissal Appeal

Students not in Good Academic Standing and/or failing to satisfy stipulations made by the SPC may be dismissed from the College. When a student is dismissed as the result of an SPC review, the date of dismissal is noted as the last day of the quarter. As described above, students have an opportunity to share extenuating circumstances to explain their academic performance. The student may request an appeal of the SPC decision in writing to the Vice President / Dean for Academic Affairs within three business days of the notification. The written request for an appeal should explicitly indicate why the extenuating circumstance(s) should be re-evaluated and/or why the level of the SPC's actions did not seem to be supported by the given evidence. The appeal process must not include new information or details previously withheld from the original SPC meeting. A student wishing to present new material not previously in evidence before the SPC should contact the SPC Chair directly. If necessary, the SPC will reconvene to consider the new information.

The Vice President / Dean for Academic Affairs will review the request for an appeal. If the Vice President / Dean for Academic Affairs determines that there are extenuating circumstances to be re-considered and/or that the level of the SPC's actions did not seem to be supported by the given evidence, then an appeal meeting will be scheduled. If the Vice President / Dean for Academic Affairs determines that there are no extenuating circumstances to be re-considered and/or that the level of the SPC's actions were supported by the given evidence, then the request for an appeal is denied, and the original decision of the SPC stands.

Appeal hearings are conducted by the Vice President / Dean for Academic Affairs and the Dean of Student Affairs. The Chair of the SPC will also be present to assess if new information is being presented but will not take part in the decision-making process.

In the interim between the original SPC's decision and the conclusion of the appeal hearing process, the student is in neutral academic standing (actively enrolled, attending classes/labs, participating in clinical duties as assigned, etc.). The student should be aware that an appeal may

result in overturning the SPC's decision to either a more- or less-favorable outcome. Likewise, the appeal may uphold the original SPC's decision. The decision rendered by the Vice President / Dean for Academic Affairs in the appeal process is considered final. If the appeal decision ends with dismissal, the date of dismissal will be the date the appeal decision is rendered (not the original SPC decision date).

Financial Considerations and the Appeal Process

If a student invokes an appeal, they are responsible for all tuition, housing, fees, and other incidental charges incurred during the process of the appeal, regardless of the decision of the appeal.

Student Enrollment Status-Credit Hours

The Illinois College of Optometry defines a quarter credit hour as one hour of weekly classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately 11 weeks for one academic quarter hour of credit.

- **Full-Time:** twelve (12) or more credit hours
- **Half-Time*:** six (6) through eleven (11) credit hours
- **Less than Half-Time*:** less than six (6) credit hours – not eligible for financial aid or loan deferment

**Tuition charged on per credit hour basis*

Attendance & Non-Attendance

Student attendance at all scheduled classes and laboratories is expected and may be required. Attendance of all patient care assignments is required.

Monitoring of Attendance

Student Lecture Attendance Check-in App (1st - 3rd years)

The Student Check-In App should be used by all students Y1-Y3 to log their presence for **each hour** of classes in Rooms 1201/1203 **for the first two instructional weeks of each academic term**. The app must be installed on a cell phone since it uses GPS functionality to verify your location in Room 1201/1203. This app only tracks GPS while open. (The app does NOT track you: it only confirms your location when you open the app and press the check-in button).

For the first two instructional weeks, at the beginning of each class period, while in Room 1201 or 1203, simply open the app, select the correct course, and press the check-in button to log your presence. Students must be present in Room 1201 or 1203 to log their attendance. Courses designated as distance education (such as Dr. Donati's Human Physiology and Pathology courses) are exempt from this attendance requirement. Students do not need to log attendance using the app after the first two weeks. Likewise, there is no need to use the app to log attendance in lab or patient care. (Attendance for those activities is still required, but it is tracked manually outside of the app.)

ICO Student Absences App (All On-campus Students)

All absences (pre-planned or last-minute) from mandatory classes, lectures, exams, laboratories, patient care sessions, and conference/recitation activities must be submitted and approved

through the ICO Student Absences App. This applies to all students Y1-Y3 and to students in Y4 during any on-campus rotations. Absences logged in the app will automatically notify the correct college departments and faculty, so **this replaces the need to email multiple individuals or to send any absence-related emails to the Registrar's Office.** A link to the [ICO Student Absences](#) app is available on the [ICO Current Students SharePoint page](#) at the bottom of the page in the "Important External Links" section. The absence can be logged directly from SharePoint. Students are encouraged to install the Microsoft PowerApp application on their cell phone which permits easy remote logging.

Attendance Policies

Approved Circumstances for Excused Absences

The following is a list of circumstances that, with documentation, will be deemed excused absences from the didactic and clinical programs. It is expected that students will log such absences prior to the start of the missed academic activity. Unless compelling extenuating circumstances prevent the student from logging the absence in time, such absences will be reclassified as unexcused. For examinations, these absences will not incur a fee for the administration of a make-up exam.

1. Personal illness. A statement from a physician that the student was under professional care and unable to attend the mandatory assignment is required.
 - a. Doctor's notes should indicate what dates the student may be absent.
 - b. Doctor's notes provided through telehealth visits should be limited to consultation with the student's managing provider (rather than a provider seeing the student for the first time). Students may be asked to see a provider in person in order to be excused for an absence.
2. A death in the student's immediate family. Documentation regarding proof of services or gathering is required.
3. Failure of means of transportation. Documentation of car repair, towing services, airline flight cancellations, or delay, etc. is required.
4. Family illness. A statement from a physician that a member of the student's immediate family was seriously ill and required the student's presence may be requested.
5. Conflict with a religious holiday. As this is a pre-planned absence, the ICO Student Absences App needs to be filled out at least a month in advance, when possible. A letter from a religious leader may be requested as documentation.
6. Attendance at a professional meeting or student leadership responsibility – Examples: AAO, Optometry's Meeting, ARVO, NOSA, COVD, state association meeting (IOA), or AOA-PAC. As this is a pre-planned absence, the ICO Student Absences App needs to be filled out at least a month in advance. Proof of meeting registration can serve as documentation. Proof of attendance at one hour of continuing education for each clinic session missed is additionally required for Clinical Professional Leave.
 - a. For students to miss an exam for a professional meeting, they must be presenting research at the meeting and not simply attending. Proof of acceptance of presentation will be required.
 - i. Only second- and third-year students will be permitted to miss exams to attend a professional meeting. Exceptions may be permitted in cases of professional advocacy where the College has requested the student to attend the meeting.
 - ii. In order to be approved to miss an exam(s) to attend a meeting, even if the student has had a presentation accepted, the student

must be in Good Academic Standing. Therefore, students on Academic Probation, Academic Jeopardy, or Good Academic Standing with Stipulation should not submit a presentation for consideration to a meeting that will conflict with any exams.

- iii. During periods with multiple exams (e.g., finals week), students should try to limit the number of exams they will miss. Students will be approved to attend the meeting during their presentation, plus a travel day before and after the presentation.

When a student misses three or more attendance-required activities in the same quarter, they will be asked to present more detailed medical documentation regarding their health to the Assistant Dean for Student Success. A determination will be made whether the absences constitute a need for a Leave of Absence or other intervention. Excessive absences without just cause are considered unprofessional conduct and may be brought to the attention of the Professional Conduct and Ethics Committee.

Lecture

Faculty members may take class attendance and utilize this information at their discretion as long as they do so in a consistent manner and if requirements for attendance are announced at the beginning of the academic quarter and are addressed in the course syllabus. **In-person class attendance is required for all students during the first two instructional weeks of each academic term and highly encouraged thereafter.**

Students are responsible for material presented in any lecture. Electronically captured files of the lecture are available for review, though the availability of these is not guaranteed, as in the case of technical difficulties.

Laboratory

Attendance at all laboratory assignments is required unless otherwise specified. If a laboratory session is to be missed, the student should refer to the course syllabus to see how lab absences are handled in that course and reach out to the lab instructor. In most cases, it is the student's responsibility to find another student willing to switch sessions if an absence is anticipated, if possible. We are NOT using the absence app for lab switches (only for clinic switches). The instructor may allow the student to attend a different session without a switch; however, the student should refer to individual course syllabi to identify the procedure they should follow for a course. When a switch is not possible due to an unanticipated absence, the student should fill out the absence app and provide documentation to request an excused absence. Once the student receives an excused absence, the student should contact the course instructor regarding an alternative or make-up assignment.

Examinations and Other Assessments

Students must take all examinations and assessments as scheduled unless they are too ill to participate or have an emergency.

For pre-planned absences, students are expected to fill out the ICO Student Absences App at least **one month prior** to the absence. A fee of \$175 will be assessed to the student's account for the make-up exam in cases with excused reasons beyond those listed above in the Approved Circumstances for Excused Absences section, including to attend a wedding.

An unexcused exam absence (e.g., not filling out the app prior to the exam; oversleeping) will incur a make-up fee charged to the student's account, and possibly a grade penalty. For the first offense a make-up exam will be granted with a fee of \$300. No grade penalty is applied for the first offense. For any subsequent offense, a make-up exam will be granted, but the student will

incur the \$300 fee as well as a grade penalty (65% maximum allowed credit). The \$300 make-up exam fee is intended for unexcused/unplanned missed exams.

To keep courses moving forward for all students, the following examination absence and make-up procedures will be followed:

- A student unable to attend an exam must request an absence through the student absence app (explained above) as soon as it's known that the exam will be missed (this must be done PRIOR to the start of the exam for it to be excused) and provide documentation (as soon as available and within 24 hours of the exam if it's a last-minute absence).
- The make-up exam will automatically be scheduled roughly **two business days** (including Saturday, excluding Sunday) after the original exam. For example:
 - A missed exam on Tuesday will have the make-up on Thursday morning.
 - A missed exam on Friday will have the make-up exam on Monday morning.
 - This may be adjusted if there is a holiday.
- The make-up exam will have the same level of difficulty and format as the original (e.g., roughly the same balance of multiple choice and fill-in-the-blank), but it will be a different exam from the original. Given the limited statistics available for a small number of students taking the make-up exam, bonus or adjusted questions made on the original exam may not necessarily be provided on the make-up exam.
- *No further make-up for this exam will be offered.* If the student cannot take this make-up exam, their grade for this exam will be calculated using their performance on this material on the comprehensive final exam. For example, if Exam 1 and its make-up are missed, the student will not have a grade for Exam 1 until after they take the final exam. Then the instructor will calculate the student's performance for the Exam 1 material on the Final exam to extrapolate their grade for Exam 1. The student may not review the examination that they missed. The grades for Exam 1 and the Final will be posted at the same time.
- This policy will not apply for courses that do not have a comprehensive final exam (courses that have only quarterly exams that are not cumulative, rather than a final exam during finals week). It will also not apply to final exams. Those make-ups will continue to take place during the make-up/break week, *regardless of any travel plans* that the student may have previously made for that week.

Patient Care

Attendance is mandatory at all patient care activities. This includes break weeks, study periods, final exam periods, and quarter break weeks unless otherwise specified. This is true for ALL clinic assignments, including IEI Patient Care, Eyewear Center, Clinical Assistant Program (CAP), Screenings, Clinic Conference, and Observations. Students should consult both the academic and class clinical calendars for clarification regarding required attendance days for all clinical activities. Non-excused absences will not be tolerated and will result in clinical probation. Repeated absences may lead to more serious consequences including academic dismissal.

For an absence to be recognized, students must submit the absence through the ICO Student Absences App. This applies to all students Y1-Y3 and to students in Y4 during any on-campus rotations. The absence will be categorized as excused or non-excused pending the reason for the absence. The absence must be logged PRIOR (other than in extreme emergencies) to the start of the missed activity for consideration of an excused absence. In consideration of the need to continue patient care even in the event of a student absence, it is imperative that the student submit any unplanned absence as soon as they are aware they will be absent. Additionally, appropriate documentation relevant to the cause of the absence must be submitted as soon as possible (within 24 hours of the absence if it's a last-minute absence.) This documentation should

be uploaded directly to the ICO Student Absence App and attached to the appropriate absence request.

All clinic absences (excused and non-excused) MUST be made up, with the only exceptions noted below for a personal day, clinical professional leave, and NBEO leave. It is the student's responsibility to schedule the required clinic make-up. After review and approval by the Assistant Dean for IEI Patient Care Education, the student must schedule a make-up clinic session with the assistance of the Registrar's office. This scheduling process should be initiated by the student with an email to registrar@ico.edu, and the email should clearly state what session was originally missed and needs to be made up. The make-up may be during the academic quarter or during the inter-quarter make-up period depending upon the circumstances and availability of space in the service where the assignment was missed. Confirmation of the scheduled clinic make-up assignment will be sent as an automated email through the ICO Student Absence App.

All sessions missed (switches and other excused absences) must be made up in the patient care service area of the original assignment (either prior to or following an anticipated absence) and within two (2) weeks of the end of the quarter in which they are accrued. Any absences not made up by the end of the quarter in which the absence occurred will result in a grade of incomplete "I" for the quarter until the make-up has been completed. Failure to complete these make-ups by the end of the second week of the following quarter may result in the "I" grade being changed to a grade of unsatisfactory "U".

Late Arrivals to Clinic

On occasion, due to circumstances beyond their control (failure of means of transportation, traffic incident, etc.), students may find that they are not going to arrive at a clinical assignment on time. Regardless of the reason, students should contact their assigned attending faculty and let them know what time they expect to arrive. **Students reporting to an assignment more than 30 minutes late may be given a non-excused absence for that assignment depending upon circumstances.** Students late for an assignment more than once may be referred to the Student Professional Conduct and Ethics Committee by the Assistant Dean for IEI Patient Care Education.

Non-Excused Clinic Absences

The College will immediately place a student on *Clinical Probation* when a non-excused absence from a clinical activity occurs. This includes all IEI Patient Care Services, Eyewear, Clinical Assistant Program, Clinic Conference, Screenings, and Observations. Any additional non-excused absences will automatically result in referral to the Professional Conduct and Ethics Committee for resolution of the issue, including possible disciplinary action. Pending the circumstances of the situation, the student may be suspended from clinical activities and may not be allowed to return to clinical assignments until the issue is resolved.

Clinic Switches

Students are permitted to switch scheduled clinic assignments with another student. Switches will be permitted only between students assigned to the same IEI service. Switches are required because they provide more consistent care in the Illinois Eye Institute and eliminate the need for a make-up session. The Assistant Dean for IEI Patient Care Education may deny a request for a switch if the absence from the scheduled assignment may be detrimental to the student's progress in patient care or if the student has exceeded the switch allotment for the academic term.

Procedure for Requesting a Switch

To request a switch, a student should find a student who is assigned to the same service area and who is willing and able to switch assignments. The ICO Student Absence App should be filled out and *Switch with Another Student* should be chosen as the Absence Type. All appropriate information should be filled out and submitted for approval.

Three-way switches are permitted. To process a three-way switch, the ICO Student Absence App needs two separate submissions. Additionally, both submissions should include details of the switches in the comments in the form of "Student A will be covering Student B in a given session, Student B will be covering Student C in a given session, and Student C will be covering Student A in a given session." **A switch request must be submitted at least ten (10) days in advance, or it may not be approved.**

Allocation of Switches

- **Fourth Year Students:**
Each fourth-year student is allowed four **(4)** "switch" days per quarter.
- **Third Year Students:**
Each third-year student is allowed three **(3)** "switch" days per quarter.
- **Second Year Students:**
Each second-year student is allowed two **(2)** "switch" days per quarter.
- **First Year Students:**
Each first-year student is allowed one **(1)** "switch" day per quarter.

Please note that a "switch" day is considered one calendar day regardless of the number of sessions assigned on that day. **If you have a need to exceed your switches for the quarter, you will have to petition the Assistant Dean for IEI Patient Care Education by email for approval.**

Clinical Professional Leave Days

Students involved in various professional activities may request Clinical Professional Leave from clinical assignments. Clinical Professional Leave may be granted when students are participating in specific activities which may be considered an appropriate alternative to the missed assignment; for this reason, absences categorized as Clinical Professional Leave do not need to be made up. Examples of appropriate professional activities that would be considered for Clinical Professional Leave include but are not limited to AAO, AOA, ARVO, COVD, other national optometric association meetings, state optometric meetings, SVOSH trips, and 4th year residency interviews, etc.

For Clinical Professional Leave to be approved, the following criteria must be met:

1. The event must be deemed an appropriate substitute for the missed assignment.
2. The student must have a history of significant involvement with the sponsoring organization.
3. There must be an acceptable means of verifying the student's attendance at the event.
4. The student's absence must not compromise delivery of patient care in the assigned service area.
5. The student must be in Good Academic Standing.
6. The student previously has not had excessive absences from assignments.
7. A maximum of one Clinical Professional Leave per quarter will be approved for any student.

8. The maximum length of Clinical Professional Leave is one week (7 consecutive calendar days.) It must be taken as one contiguous week (e.g., Sunday through Saturday or Wednesday through Tuesday). If the student wishes to attend more than one week, they must use clinic switches to cover the additional missed clinic assignments.

Procedure for Requesting Clinical Professional Leave

The ICO Student Absence App should be filled out and Clinical Professional Leave should be chosen as the Absence Type. All appropriate information should be filled out and submitted for approval. Requests for Clinical Professional Leave must be submitted a minimum of one month prior to the absence date. Any requests made later than one month prior may not be approved.

Following return from the absence, **the student must upload the proof of attendance and continuing education attendance to the ICO Student Absence App request within five (5) business days.** Failure to submit acceptable proof of attendance will result in the student being required to make up the missed assignment(s).

Requests for Clinical Professional Leave will be considered in the order they are submitted. Therefore, if a significant number of students apply for leave to attend the same event, it is conceivable that some requests will be granted while others may be denied due to staffing considerations. Students are encouraged to apply for Clinical Academic Leave as early as possible if their attendance is required at a particular event. Students who take Clinical Academic Leave are not eligible for a personal day, and students who utilize their personal day are not eligible for Clinical Professional Leave.

NBEO Leave

NBEO Part I

Time off from clinic is granted for the targeted administration of Part I NBEO during the spring of the third professional year. Any clinic sessions missed are excused and do not need to be made up. If a student is taking Part I NBEO at a non-targeted administration for their first attempt, they must notify the Assistant Dean for IEI Patient Care Education via email as well as fill out the ICO Student Absence app. This must be done a minimum of one month prior to the test date or as soon as possible pending confirmation of the test date. If a student is taking Part I NBEO for a second or subsequent attempt, they will be granted an excused absence for the day of the test administration; however, any clinic sessions missed must be made up.

NBEO Part II

Part II NBEO targeted administration is typically scheduled during winter quarter of fourth year. For the first administration of Part II, students are granted off for the day before and the day of the test. Any clinic sessions missed are excused and do not need to be made up for these two days. If a student is taking Part II NBEO at a non-targeted administration for their first attempt, they must notify the Assistant Dean for IEI Patient Care Education via email as well as fill out the ICO Student Absence app. This must be done a minimum of one month prior to the test date or as soon as possible pending confirmation of the test date. If a student is taking Part II NBEO or TMOD for a second or subsequent attempt,

they will be granted an excused absence for the day of the test administration; however, any clinic sessions missed must be made up.

NBEO Part III

Students scheduled for the initial administration of Part III NBEO while on campus are allotted the calendar day prior and the day of the NBEO administration for test and travel time. (If NBEO Part III is scheduled on a Monday, Sunday and Monday are granted off.) Any clinic sessions missed for the first attempt are excused and do not need to be made up. The ICO Student Absence app must be filled out for all clinic sessions being missed for any administration of Part III NBEO. This must be done a minimum of one month prior to the test date or as soon as possible pending confirmation of the test date. If a student is taking Part III NBEO for a second or subsequent attempt, they will be granted an excused absence for the day of the test administration; however, any clinic sessions missed must be made up.

Leave Policies Specifically Applying to 4th Year Student Clinicians ONLY

Personal Days - 4th Year Student Clinicians Only

Each fourth-year student will be permitted to have one personal day during each on-campus quarter. This personal day is an excused absence that does not have to be made up and may be used as a planned personal day or applied retroactively for an excused illness.

The ICO Student Absence App should be filled out and *Personal Day* should be chosen as the Absence Type. All appropriate information should be filled out and submitted for approval. Personal days submitted at least one month before the absence date may be approved, regardless of 4th year reserve schedule coverage. Any personal day requests submitted less than one month prior will be approved pending availability of coverage from the 4th year reserve schedule.

Students who take Clinical Academic Leave are not eligible for a personal day, and students who utilize their personal day are not eligible for Clinical Professional Leave. A maximum of one personal day may be taken each on-campus quarter. For example, if a student has taken the personal day early in the quarter and subsequently misses clinic for an illness, the sessions missed must then be made up.

Short-Term Clinical Leave Policy - 4th Year Student Clinicians Only

Students in the fourth professional year may have need to take a short-term (1-14 calendar days) leave of absence from clinical rotations. All missed sessions during the leave must be made up. In cases where the leave is anticipated, assignments may be made up in advance. Requests for approval of short-term clinical leave should be submitted to the appropriate Assistant Dean. (Assistant Dean for Patient Care Education for on-campus rotations, Assistant Dean for Community Based Education, and International Programs for externships.) Legitimate reasons for short-term leave include but are not limited to personal medical problems or death/serious illness of an immediate family member.

At the discretion of the appropriate Assistant Dean, short-term clinical leave may not be granted to a student who has a history of academic difficulty and will not be granted to any student not in

Good Academic Standing. In addition, approval of the requested leave will be contingent upon the ability to reschedule missed patient care sessions.

Students who require a leave greater than 14 days should pursue a Leave of Absence as described elsewhere in the Student Guide. Students on an approved Short-Term Clinical Leave that are unable to return to their assigned sessions by 14 days will automatically be referred to the Student Promotions Committee for a mandated Leave of Absence.

Externship Attendance

Externs are to follow holiday/vacation schedules as stipulated by each individual externship site unless specified within the External Clinical Rotations calendar published by the College. Therefore, externs do not necessarily follow the same clinic schedule as the Illinois Eye Institute on-campus clinic. For those vacation periods specifically listed on the External Clinical Rotations calendar, externs will be excused from their off-campus, patient care externships. Compensatory days will not be given to students for missing on-campus College recess periods because of an external rotation. Travel/make-up weeks and NBEO Part II (Winter Quarter) are noted on the Academic Calendar sent to all site preceptors. NBEO Part III is scheduled by the student anytime during the fourth professional year. **ALL OTHER ABSENCES, INCLUDING RETAKES OF ANY PART OF NBEO, MUST BE APPROVED THROUGH THE COMMUNITY BASED EDUCATION DEPARTMENT. ANY TIME MISSED FOR A RETAKE MUST BE MADE UP.**

Time-off/absence request forms are available to the student on <https://www.externship.ico.edu/helpful-information>. When foreseeable, students should arrange for absences by contacting their site preceptor several weeks prior to the needed time off. Students are permitted three excused absences during each off-campus rotation that do not have to be made up. These days may be used when the student is sick, for planned personal days, or for planned professional days (interviews/professional meetings). For any additional days required, it is up to the discretion of each site and the Assistant Dean for Community Based Education whether time off will need to be made up, either during the normal workweek or during the break between each rotation. The Assistant Dean for Community Based Education must receive a signed copy of all externship absence requests for it to be considered valid.

Any unexcused absence may result in the student being placed on Clinical Probation. Additional unexcused absences will result in suspension from the externship and referral to the Professional Conduct and Ethics Committee for resolution of the issue, including possible disciplinary action. The student is not permitted to return to the externship assignment until the issue has been resolved.

Humanitarian Volunteer Clinic Trips (revised July 2024)

The academic, cultural, and service benefits of humanitarian volunteer clinic trips are recognized, and as such, students may be excused from clinical assignments to facilitate participation in official ICO-affiliated trips (SVOSH, FCO or other official groups)

Protocol for Humanitarian Volunteer Clinic Trips

1. Any notifications of potential trips or requests for ICO student participation in SVOSH/VOSH/FCO clinic trips reaching ICO should be directed to and received by SVOSH/FCO Faculty Sponsor.
2. The ICO SVOSH/FCO Faculty Sponsor will communicate trip notification to SVOSH/FCO officers as they arrive.

3. SVOSH/FCO officers will review potential trip dates with the ICO Academic calendar. If a trip conflicts with any Quarterly or Final Examinations at ICO, the response will be that ICO students will not be eligible for that trip. SVOSH/FCO officers and students are encouraged to select trip dates coinciding with ICO vacation periods whenever possible, as it is unlikely that a trip during the academic quarter will be approved.
4. If the trip dates do not present any conflicts with the ICO Examination schedule and the SVOSH/FCO Faculty Sponsor and the SVOSH/FCO officers have no other concerns about the trip or its sponsors, the Assistant Dean for Didactic Education and the Assistant Dean for IEI Patient Care Education will be advised of the trip and potential dates for approval based upon the ICO Class/Lab schedule and IEI Clinic schedule
 - a. If the Assistant Dean for Didactic Education and the Assistant Dean for IEI Patient Care Education approve of the potential dates, the SVOSH/FCO officers will then notify SVOSH/FCO membership of an approved trip and seek interested students to sign-up for the trip. ICO students participating in International clinic trips must be in good academic, clinical and disciplinary standing. Students who are on Academic Probation, Academic Jeopardy, Clinical Probation or Disciplinary Probation at the time of the trip are NOT eligible for international clinic trips. SVOSH/FCO Officers should compose a Clinic Trip Roster indicating all approved trips (approved by both SVOSH/FCO Faculty Sponsor and Assistant Dean for Didactic Education and the Assistant Dean for IEI Patient Care Education) including dates of trips, location, sponsoring group and contact person. All students committed to the trip should also be included. The student roster must be submitted to the Associate Dean for Academic Assessment and Records for approval of individual students. **Students who are in good academic standing and approved to participate at the time that the roster is submitted will *not* be permitted to participate in the trip if they fall out of good academic standing prior to departure.**
 - b. The SVOSH/FCO-ICO Clinic Roster should be updated periodically, and copies provided to: SVOSH/FCO Faculty Sponsor, Associate Dean for Academic Assessment and Records, Assistant Dean for Didactic Education, Assistant Dean for IEI Patient Care Education and Senior Director of Compliance, Risk Management & Quality Improvement (Int'l travel insurance).
5. Students signing-up for trips should immediately submit a request for Clinical Academic Leave as detailed under the Patient Care Absence Policies.
6. Students signing-up for trips should immediately see all impacted didactic faculty to make arrangements for any missed classes, laboratories and assignments. In the unlikely event that an examination will be missed, an absence app entry should be submitted 4 weeks in advance to Academic Administration.
7. All students participating in a clinic trip must complete and have on file a "Liability Waiver". ICO students participating in international clinic trips must be in good academic, clinical and disciplinary standing.
8. All students completing SVOSH/FCO clinic trips are asked to submit a brief trip report upon returning to ICO which should include the following information: trip destination, dates, affiliated organization, cost, number of people on trip, number of patients seen, accommodations, any problems encountered, and any suggestions for future students considering trips. This information will be maintained by the SVOSH/FCO Officers and Advisor to provide information to future students considering trips.

Humanitarian Volunteer Clinic Trip Travel/Accident Insurance

Through the Compliance Office, ICO provides each student traveling on a humanitarian clinic trip outside of the US, travel/accident insurance. This insurance pays for emergency/urgent health

care such as hospital and doctor visits for illness or accident, note, it does not cover treatment for pre-existing conditions unless emergent. The insurance provider can also assist in matters such as lost passports, lost luggage, legal troubles such as arrest, kidnap/ransom situations, etc. and for getting our students back to the US in the case of civil unrest, etc. such as immigration assistance, car rental, etc.

SVOSH and FCO provide a list of students going on the trip, and the Compliance Office sends out an insurance card with the international call in number for our travel insurance services and information on what the insurance covers, how to use their resources in finding out the latest security information about your destination city, etc. This typically occurs 7-10 days prior to the trip.

Religious Observation Requests

Student Schedule Adjustments

As a healthcare educational institution, ICO provides care for our patients seven days a week. While on-duty residents and faculty handle emergent issues on Sundays, the IEI does have regular patient care on Saturdays. Students can expect to be scheduled on Saturdays. This can include patient care or didactic examinations (make-ups or final exams).

Students that participate in religious observances that affect every week of their student schedule and who may require a **permanent** adjustment to their quarterly schedules should identify those with the Associate Dean for Academic Assessment and Records within the first week of the fall quarter of the first professional year. A letter must be provided by a religious leader (pastor, priest, rabbi, imam, etc.) indicating the religious affiliation and describing the observance. ICO will make every effort to provide fair and equitable accommodations.

Absences from Classes, Laboratories, Examinations, or Patient Care

Students with religious observances that occasionally conflict with required educational activities throughout the year should request an excused absence using the ICO Student Absences App as described earlier. As soon as students receive their upcoming quarterly schedules, they should check their assigned sessions for any conflicts related to religious observances and log those in the app as soon as possible, preferably at least one month prior.

For religious holidays with uncertain dates, students should log those in the app as “tentative” until the official dates become known, then update the app entry. Students should clearly identify the requested absence reason as a religious observance. The Assistant Dean approving the absence may request documentation supporting the religious observance. Like any other absence, students may remediate their missed educational activity by either switching times with another student or rescheduling the session. Although excused absences may be approved for religious observances themselves, travel days before or after religious observances will **not be approved**.

Military Leave

If a currently enrolled student is called upon to fulfill an obligation to the military, the College will work individually with that student to assist in meeting the student’s obligations. Every effort will be made to facilitate the student’s transition from the program to the military and back into the program. Each situation will be evaluated on an individual basis. The student will, however, be required to fulfill all academic and clinical obligations to progress in the program. Any student

faced with conflicts between their military obligations and their academic or clinical obligations should meet with the Dean of Student Affairs for assistance as early as possible.

Inclement Weather

All students should assume that we are open and operational each scheduled day. In the unlikely event that the College and the Illinois Eye Institute are closed due to inclement weather or other unforeseen reasons, it is each student's responsibility to either: call the ICO Weather Hotline at 312-949-SNOW (7669), check the College's Website or Facebook page for closing information. In any event, each individual needs to determine the road conditions and safety factors in their home locations and decide upon attendance at their own comfort and safety level. If it should become necessary to close ICO and the IEI during regular operating hours due to a storm, flood, snow, power outage, or any unexpected event, the following are three possible scenarios and the policy for each condition that may occur:

A. Severe conditions develop during ICO/IEI operation hours, and the decision is made to close early.

All staff and faculty who are present will be notified of the early closing by their department heads and will in turn notify their classes where appropriate. Signs will also be posted in strategic locations around the campus. The ICO Weather Hotline, the College's Website and Facebook Page will be updated with this information. The College phone system may be used to broadcast the early closing message to all campus phones.

B. Severe conditions in the early morning and ICO and IEI are officially closed for the day.

In the unlikely event of this occurrence, the decision to close will be communicated in the following manner: Appropriate recorded messages will be placed on the telephone system and will be accessible by dialing the ICO Weather Hotline at 312-949-SNOW (7669). In the occurrence of an official closing, students are excused for the day. The College's Website and Facebook Page will be updated with this information. The College phone system may be used to broadcast the closing message to all campus phones.

C. Severe conditions in the early morning and ICO and IEI remain open.

Students who may question whether the College/Illinois Eye Institute is open because of questionable weather should call the ICO Weather Hotline at 312-949-SNOW (7669). Students who are not able to get to ICO/IEI due to weather conditions in their area must notify their faculty of the absence as soon as possible. The College's Website and Facebook Page will be updated with this information. The College phone system may be used to broadcast the message to all campus phones. Please note: There is a possibility that the College could be closed, and the Illinois Eye Institute would remain open. Always check the ICO Weather Hotline at 312-949-SNOW (7669) for updated information.

Short-Term Absences

Short-term absences from mandatory attendance assignments are defined as absences that last 1-14 calendar days. Typically, these absences do not involve a change in student enrollment status and are handled through switches; makeup sessions; personal days; short-term clinical

leave; clinical professional leave; and/or other alternative assignments where applicable. Short-term absences are coordinated by the course coordinators, Registrar's Office, and/or appropriate Assistant Deans.

- For missed lectures, laboratory sessions, or examinations, see Attendance & Non-Attendance section earlier in this chapter.
- For missed patient care sessions, see Attendance & Non-Attendance section earlier in this chapter.

If at any point it appears that a short-term absence is jeopardizing the student's academic performance or may extend beyond 14 calendar days, then the student and/or appropriate Assistant Dean should pursue an official Leave of Absence as described below. Students may only take one short-term leave during an academic year

Leave of Absence

A Leave of Absence (LOA) is defined as an absence that lasts 15-180 calendar days to avail the student the time and resources needed to remediate extenuating circumstances that may be impacting academic performance. Such absences do not negate or remove any final course grades.¹ A course grade of *W* will be given if a LOA prevents a student from completing a course.

To initiate a Leave of Absence, the student should submit a letter requesting a LOA addressed to the Assistant Dean for Student Success. This letter should contain the anticipated start and end dates of the requested LOA and information describing why the LOA is being requested. Supporting documentation from an independent source should be attached whenever possible (e.g., documentation from a medical professional in cases where the student is pursuing a LOA for medical reasons). The Assistant Dean for Student Success is the official designated to maintain student health-protected information. After sufficient documentation has been verified, the Assistant Dean for Student Success will notify the Student Promotions Committee Chair that an LOA letter and sufficient documentation have been received so that the SPC can respond to the LOA request. Unless physically unable, a student requesting a LOA should continue with their academic schedule until they receive a response from the SPC Chair. Because student health-protected documentation is not on file with the SPC, any such information should be sent directly to the Assistant Dean for Student Success. LOA for anticipated future extenuating circumstances should be requested no later than one full academic term prior to the requested LOA start. The College also reserves the right to impose a mandatory LOA under circumstances deemed appropriate by the College. Students who miss **three or more** required-attendance activities within the quarter will be reviewed for the need of a mandatory LOA. Although effort will be made to permit students to return from LOA on the date they specified on their request letter, the College may require students to return on an alternate date; no guarantee is provided that

¹ In cases where an LOA is approved based on supporting documentation showing that the student had an extenuating circumstance that impaired his/her ability to apply for the LOA earlier, the student may petition the SPC to retroactively change the effective start date of the LOA to an earlier date. All course grades after this date would become *W*. Students must request this retroactive change prior to returning from LOA. Such changes in LOA effective start date apply only to final course grades and to the point in the program at which students must return and have no bearing on previous tuition/fees billed or financial aid applied.

students will be able to return at their requested date or to their requested externships or location in the curriculum.

One month prior to the student's anticipated return from the LOA, the student should initiate a similar process as above. The student should submit to the Assistant Dean for Student Success a letter either requesting an LOA extension or requesting intent to return from an LOA, again providing supporting documentation where required from an independent source that recommends either an extension or a return to the program. The Assistant Dean for Student Success will notify the Student Promotions Committee Chair so that the SPC can respond.

A student on a LOA may utilize the Learning Resources Center but will not be allowed to check out materials. In addition, the student must relinquish their Student ID for the duration of the LOA. Consequently, a student on LOA is considered a "visitor" and needs to obtain a visitor badge when they visit the campus.

Any absence greater than 180 calendar days is treated as a withdrawal from the program. Although determined on a case-by-case basis, students who are allowed to return who took an LOA/withdrawal during the first through third professional years will return to the program to restart the professional year in which they left or to re-start the academic term in which they left; students allowed to return who took an LOA/withdrawal during the fourth professional year will return to the program at the start of an academic term to resume their four quarters of patient care.

Students utilizing US federal student loans to pay for education should be aware that returns to the program after 180 days will cause loans to enter repayment effective the date on which the LOA began. Any leave of absence greater than 180 days is a withdrawal from the program according to federal financial aid rules. This means that loans will enter repayment after 180 days and would only be eligible for in-school deferment upon return to the program. Students may need to begin repayment of loans during the LOA or may need to request a temporary forbearance if the student has already utilized the grace period causing the loans to enter immediate repayment.

Refund Policy, Requirements for Withdrawal and Return of Title IV Financial Aid

Withdrawal from Professional Studies

To withdraw from the College a student must:

- Provide a written request to the Dean of Student Affairs
- Satisfy all obligations to the College

Students considering withdrawal are advised to first meet with the Dean of Student Affairs to discuss reasons for withdrawal. The student seeking withdrawal or separation for ICO will go through a separation interview with the Dean of Student Affairs or the Assistant Dean for Student Success. Through this interview the student will be made aware of all financial and other obligations. The Registrar's Office will be notified upon completion of the separation interview. No diploma, certification of academic standing or transcript of credits will be released while a student has unmet obligations to the College, unless the withdrawal is due to a hardship appeal. Refunds of tuition fees and room charges are based on published College policy and practice.

Students are entitled to a refund based on the "most fair and equitable" refund policy as defined by the Higher Education Amendments of 1992. Refunds for all students will be provided based

upon the policy generating the greatest of either the institutional, federal, or pro-rata credit amount. The charges will be based upon the federal return of Title IV funds calculation that looks at the percentage of the enrollment period completed through the 60% point of the term.

Credit Balance Refunds - Refund checks are issued to students when excess funds exist on their accounts after crediting Title IV funds. Refunds will be issued as soon as possible but no later than fourteen (14) days after: (1) the date of the first day of class, (2) the date the credit balance occurs, or (3) the date the student rescinds authorization to hold a credit balance.

Payment of Prior Year Charges - In general, ICO does not apply current aid funds to prior year balances. A student may request in writing to use the current year credits to cover prior year charges that are less than \$100.00.

Request to Transfer

The Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry (ASCO) discourages transfer of students from one institution to another. However, in certain instances, a transfer may be deemed necessary for reasons disclosed by the student. To request a transfer from ICO to another optometry institution, the student should first meet with the Dean of Student Affairs, well in advance of the anticipated transfer date to discuss the student's situation and to receive counsel on the procedures to be followed, as recommended by ASCO. The Dean of Student Affairs will provide a letter to the institution to which the student is applying for transfer, indicating the College has been advised of the student's current enrollment status. The student must sign a release approving any additional information to be provided on the student's behalf.

The College policy for transfer of credit for transfer students entering ICO is to consider the content, clock hours, and credit from the previous institution. Because optometry school curricula are largely individual, the decision about transfer credit is made on an individual basis by the Registrar in consultation with the Vice President / Dean for Academic Affairs.

Refunds/Repayments

If a student withdraws from classes, he/she may be entitled to receive money back which had been paid to the College. ICO may be able to refund all or a portion of the tuition, fees, housing costs, etc. the student paid. If the tuition, fees, housing costs, etc. were paid with financial aid dollars, then all or a portion of the student's refund must be returned to the student aid programs from which the money was awarded according to the mandates of the "Return of Title IV Aid Requirements." A student who received credit balance refund to assist with living expenses and then withdraws, drops out, or is expelled, may be required to repay money to the aid programs from which the money was awarded, unless the funds were borrowed under the student loan programs. Funds for living expenses that derive from federal student loans are repaid according to the terms of the promissory note. ICO has designed the following policies and procedures to ensure proper accountability when a student leaves the College.

Refund Policy for all Students.

- When a student withdraws on or after the first day of class during a quarter and has received (or is eligible to receive) federal student aid, a refund calculation is performed according to the "Return of Title IV Aid Requirements."

- The refund policy reflects the standards of the school's accrediting agency and State law.
- The date used to calculate the refund is determined as follows:
 1. In the case of a student who officially withdraws, the date of the withdrawal.
 2. In the case of a student who unofficially withdraws, the drop out date which is the last recorded date of class attendance as documented by the institution. The Registrar's Office is responsible for determining and documenting the last day of attendance.
 3. In the case of a student who is expelled, the date of the expulsion.

Refund Policy for Financial Aid Recipients

Institutions are required to have a fair and equitable refund policy for students who receive financial aid. Students receiving financial assistance are subject to an additional refund analysis.

Refund Policy for Title IV Recipients

Upon a student's complete withdrawal from a term or program, ICO will calculate the percentage of aid and charges earned by the student and the percentage of aid required to be returned to the federal financial aid program. For Title IV refunds, ICO will identify those students as those who have received a Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan and/or Graduate Plus Loan since Federal Work Study (FWS) funds are considered earned by the student as compensation for work completed and is not subject to a refund calculation.

For each term, ICO calculates the percentage earned as the number of days of the term completed divided by the total number of days in the term. Breaks of five or more consecutive calendar days are excluded from the calculation. This refund calculation applies when a student withdraws or ceases attendance before completing 60% of the term.

Particular break periods that occur throughout the year are:

- Academy Week (typically in October/November- Fall or Winter Quarter)
- AOA/AOSA (typically in June—Summer quarter)
- Thanksgiving Break (November—Winter quarter)
- Holiday Break (in December- early January- Winter quarter)

ICO will also calculate the amount of aid that has not been earned and must be returned to the program by calculating the days remaining in the term divided by the number of enrollment days in the term.

ICO institutional charges that are subject to the refund calculation include tuition and mandatory fees and housing charges in the residential complex for those who have a housing contract in effect at the time of withdrawal.

Per federal formula, ICO will return unearned aid that must be refunded to the programs in the following order, as soon as possible but not later than 45 days from the determination of withdrawal or cessation of enrollment:

1. Direct Unsubsidized Loan
2. Direct Grad Plus Loan
3. Federal Health Professions Student Loan

In cases where the calculation indicates that a student has received loan funds in excess of what they have earned based on enrollment, those excess funds will be subject to repayment according to the terms of the promissory note governing the funds. Since ICO students are not eligible to receive Federal Title IV grants, only loans are subject to repayment for unearned aid.

Any credit balance that results from a refund calculation will be disbursed within 14 days after the R2T4 (Withdrawal/Return of Title IV Funds) calculation.

Post Withdrawal Disbursement

If the amount of aid awarded to the student that has been disbursed is less than the amount of the aid earned, ICO will calculate a post-withdrawal disbursement. The student will be informed, within the allowed 30-day period after withdrawal, that the funds are available for direct disbursement to the student and can be processed upon the request of the student within that 30-day timespan.

Refund Policy for Institutional Fund Recipients

ICO follows the same procedure for institutional funding.

Distribution of Refund Policies

ICO's refund and repayment policies are disseminated to students in the Student Guide and are available in the Consumer Information section on ICO.EDU. Students may receive additional information by making an appointment with an Aid Administrator.

R2T4 (Withdrawal/Return of Title IV Funds)

If a student withdraws prior to the 60% portion of the term, the Business Office performs the R2T4 calculation utilizing Campus Nexus Student (Anthology) refund calculation tool. The Financial Aid Office verifies the calculation. The Business Office initiates any required return of funds and notifies the Financial Aid Office of the return of funds.

Adjustment to tuition and fee charges are made based on the time period in which the student withdrew and the reason for withdrawal. Tuition may be prorated based on the R2T4 calculation of percentage earned or may be reversed due to extenuating circumstances beyond the student's control.

In cases of dismissal, the Financial Aid and Business Offices are notified of the decision and begin the R2T4 process. The calculation is processed the same as a withdrawal. Students who elect and are approved for a Leave of Absence have 180 days in which to return. Failure to return to the academic program within the 180 prompts an R2T4 calculation based on the student's last date of attendance.

Physical or Financial Hardship Withdrawal Policy

Consistent with the Illinois Student Debt Assistance Act, this policy establishes processes and procedures to assist students in limiting their student debt when a physical or financial hardship requires the student to withdraw from Illinois College of Optometry (ICO) after the 100% tuition add/drop deadline has passed, as well as implementing requirements of the Act as it pertains to access to student transcripts. This policy should be read in conjunction with other College policies related to student financial aid and student accounts.

Official and Unofficial Transcripts

Pursuant to and in compliance with the Act, ICO will not refuse to provide an unofficial transcript to a current or former student on the grounds that the student owes a debt; (ii) condition the provision of an unofficial transcript on the payment of a debt, other than a fee charged to provide the transcript; or (iii) charge a higher fee for obtaining an unofficial transcript or provide less favorable treatment of a request for an unofficial transcript because a current or former student owes a debt.

For official transcripts, ICO (i) will provide an official transcript of a current or former student to a current or potential employer, even if the current or former student owes a debt to ICO; (ii) will not condition the provision of an official transcript to a current or potential employer on the payment of a debt, other than a fee charged to provide the transcript; and (iii) will not charge a higher fee for transferring an official transcript to a current or potential employer or provide less favorable treatment for such a request because a current or former student owes a debt.

If a hold has been placed on a student's transcript for reasons other than a debt owed, the student must contact the appropriate department to resolve the hold.

Physical or Financial Hardship Withdrawal Request

A student may apply for a hardship withdrawal from their academic enrollment at ICO due to an unforeseeable and documented circumstance that occurs after the 100% tuition refund deadline of end of the first week of a term, which had a significant impact on the student's ability to continue in their course of study and be successful. Examples of a physical or financial hardship include: (i) serious injury or illness; (ii) chronic illness; (iii) a serious medical issue of a family member (spouse or partner, child, parent or guardian, grandparent, or sibling) for which the student is a part-time or full-time caretaker of that family member; (iv) a mental health condition of the student; (v) a sudden or consistent lack of transportation that prohibits a student's presence in class; or (vi) a significant, non-elective cost of living increase for the student.

To request a hardship withdrawal under this policy, the student must submit an appeal letter to the Dean of Student Affairs requesting the Hardship withdrawal and submit supporting documentation of the physical/financial hardship evidencing the significant physical or financial hardship prior to the end of the term/semester in which they intend to withdraw.

Hardship withdrawal submissions will be reviewed by the Dean of Student Affairs. Students will be considered for a full or partial refund of the original tuition, fee, and any other charges for the term of the withdrawal. Outcomes will be based on the information submitted along with ICO records including but not limited to enrollment, financial aid, and billing which will be made available to the Dean of Student Affairs. Students will receive communication regarding the review outcome or any requests for further information within two weeks of submission.

As a general rule, students are not eligible for hardship withdrawals if they have completed all course requirements (e.g., attended the final exam or submitted the final project/paper/portfolio). If a hardship appeal is granted, a student receiving US Federal Student loans will have the portion that paid for the reduced tuition returned to the loan, any stipend received for living expenses from federal student loans will enter repayment per the promissory note requirements.

A student granted a hardship appeal will have their tuition and fees for the term retroactively cancelled. The date of withdrawal will be based upon the last date of attendance for the student. A “W” grade would be assigned to the class per academic policy.

A student who files or attempts to file a fraudulent application for a withdrawal under this policy in order to avoid a failing grade or disciplinary action may be considered in violation of the Code Conduct and would be subject to disciplinary action accordingly.

Bachelor of Science in Visual Science Degree

The Bachelor of Science in Visual Science (BSVS) degree is available only to those students who entered ICO without a bachelor's degree. However, the BSVS Degree is not a terminal degree and does not connote graduation from the Illinois College of Optometry. The degree is only awarded with the Doctor of Optometry degree at Commencement, and it requires an application available from the Registrar's Office. All the following are required to be eligible for the BSVS degree:

- Confirmation that an undergraduate bachelor's degree has not yet been earned.
- Satisfactory completion of all the ICO Admissions course requirements.
- Satisfactory completion of the ICO second professional year courses.
- 6 SEM or 9 QTR of “B” or better outside credits of Humanities (in addition to what was required by ICO Admissions).
- 6 SEM or 9 QTR of “B” or better outside credit of Social Studies (in addition to what was required by ICO Admissions).
- 6 SEM or 9 QTR or “B” or better outside credit of Human-Related Biological Sciences (in addition to what was required by ICO Admissions).
- An ICO student in Good Academic Standing both at the time of BSVS application and Commencement.
- Confirmation that the Doctor of Optometry degree has not been awarded yet.
- Payment of the \$250 baccalaureate fee.

Applications for the BSVS degree are accepted whenever the student has completed all the above requirements. Students are encouraged to submit the application no later than two quarters prior to Commencement if they wish the BSVS degree to be designated in the commencement program. Earlier application is encouraged as it will enable a review of academic records to provide guidance and counseling to ensure that all requirements have or will be completed by the deadline.

Doctor of Optometry Graduation Requirements

A candidate for the degree of Doctor of Optometry from the College must have:

1. Completed all didactic and patient care requirements with satisfactory performance.
2. Achieved a passing grade in each course and a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of at least 2.30.
3. Complied with the rules and regulations of the Illinois College of Optometry. This includes the release of all NBEO exam scores to the College.
4. Returned all College-owned equipment and supplies assigned to the student, including library materials, mailbox key, and Residential Complex keys.
5. Satisfied all financial obligations to the College.

Graduation with Honors

ICO recognizes *Graduation with Honors* for the following categories:

Cumulative GPA	Designation
3.50 - 3.74	Cum Laude
3.75 - 3.89	Magna Cum Laude
3.90 - 4.0	Summa Cum Laude

Students who have met the grade point average qualifications for Honors, but who have had to repeat a clinic rotation will not be considered as graduating with Honors. In addition, students repeating coursework or participating in an extended curriculum plan are ineligible for Valedictorian and Salutatorian.

Clinical Methods and Procedures Skills Enhancement

The laboratory coordinators of each of the optometry courses monitor the progress of each student within the given Clinical Methods and Procedures lab. A student's course grade is determined by whatever grading methods are established in the given course syllabus. Unsatisfactory performance on a given CMP Assessment may or may not invoke involvement by the Student Promotions Committee (SPC) depending on the final course grade.

All students, regardless of overall Assessment performance, must pass each of the skills listed below with a normalized score designated in the course syllabus for that skill.

Case History	Phorias/Vergences
Near Cover Test/NPC	Accommodation Testing
Pupils	Biomicroscopy
EOMs	Tonometry
Confrontation Visual Field	Gonioscopy
Lensometry	Fundus Biomicroscopy
Retinoscopy / Distance Subjective Refraction	Binocular Indirect
	Ophthalmoscopy

For students that have one or more deficient skills, the laboratory coordinator re-administers a laboratory assessment comprised of at least the deficient skills. This re-administration may take place during the normal time or during the first few weeks after all the assessments are completed for that course. Students enrolled in POP 162.4 may take their assessment re-administration the fall following summer break. The first week of the fall quarter shall be used for practice, with practical re-administration taking place during the second (and third, if need be) week. Other than students specifically denied didactic or patient care activity by the SPC, students re-take their deficient skill laboratory assessments concurrent with their normally scheduled didactic and clinical activities. In the case of students participating in patient care sessions, the appropriate Service Chiefs/Educational Coordinators are also notified and specify what interventions may be necessary in the student-preceptor relationship while the student is in the process of re-taking his/her assessment.

Students who successfully pass all their re-takes for each skill meet the course and clinic entrance requirements. Students who are not successful on a re-test are enrolled in a formal remediation course.

Formal remediation is coordinated by the appropriate laboratory coordinator. Again, other than students who are specifically denied didactic or patient care activity by the SPC or Assistant Dean for Patient Education, students are enrolled in remediation concurrent with their normally scheduled activities. As above, in the case of students participating in patient care sessions, the appropriate Service Chief / Educational Coordinator is also notified and specifies what interventions may be necessary in the student-preceptor relationship while the student is in remediation.

The remediation course is assigned a POP course number that is posted to the transcript as a *Satisfactory* or *Unsatisfactory* upon completion of the remedial course. The laboratory coordinator develops the remediation course and develops the activities and assignments that take place during the remediation. Although the remediation course is assigned a weekly meeting time, it is left to the discretion of the laboratory coordinator to determine how or if this time is utilized. Whether a formal component of the remediation course or not, it is expected that students also make use of open laboratory time to practice deficient skills. All remediation courses end with a re-assessment of at least the deficient skills and applicable fees apply. Students who successfully complete all the remediation course requirements and pass all their remediation skill re-takes, earn a *Satisfactory* grade for the remediation course. Students who have not completed the requirements of the course earn an *Unsatisfactory* grade for the remediation course and are referred to the SPC.

Clinic Entrance Requirements

Students may begin unrestricted direct patient care activities only after successfully completing all Clinical Methods and Procedures courses within the curriculum. Students who have outstanding make-ups in any clinical activity will not be permitted to begin direct patient care until the make-ups have been completed.

At the completion of the second professional year, the Assistant Dean for IEI Patient Care Education and the Primary Optometric Practice Curriculum Coordinator review the performance of each student in the Clinical Methods and Procedures course sequence, paying attention to each student's performance on the laboratory assessments.

Based on this review, one of the following recommendations may result:

- Direct patient care activity without stipulation
- Probationary direct patient care activity with specified concurrent remediation
- Denial of direct patient care activity pending successful completion of specified remediation

Probationary and remediation periods shall not extend for a period beyond six (6) weeks before reconsideration by the Student Promotion Committee (SPC).

Students with probationary status will be notified by the Assistant Dean for IEI Patient Care Education, no later than the first week of the third professional year. Students who are denied direct patient care activity will be notified by the Student Promotions Committee (SPC).

Students may appeal the decision of the Assistant Dean by notifying, in writing, the Academic Dean within three (3) days of the date of notification. During any appeal process, the decision of the SPC is suspended until the appeal is reviewed and finalized by the Associate Dean.

Academic Assistance

Any student having academic difficulty in a course should seek immediate assistance. The student may seek help by meeting with the:

- Course instructor to discuss the problem.
- Appropriate Curriculum Coordinator.
- Assistant Dean for Didactic Education.
- Dean of Student Affairs.
- Assistant Dean for Student Success.

In the fall quarter of each academic year, students will receive lists of any required texts and equipment for each academic year, and these can also be found in course syllabi. Other lists of materials that are recommended, but optional, will also be distributed by faculty. A summary equipment list is provided for students in this guide.

ICO's Matthews Bookstore makes every effort to make available for purchase the essential instructional materials and equipment for all years of professional study. A complete line of ophthalmic equipment from the major manufacturers is available to the student purchaser through ICO's Matthews Bookstore at substantial savings compared to the regular list price. Prior to the start of each quarter, a current listing of all known and required equipment and texts will be distributed to students for pre-ordering. Taking advantage of this "Pre-Order" will ensure the best available price for the item through ICO's Matthews Bookstore, as well as delivery of the text or equipment at the beginning of the quarter.

Another advantage to equipment purchased through the Matthews Bookstore is that it can be serviced through Bookstore personnel. Equipment not purchased through ICO's Matthews Bookstore group discount cannot be serviced by Bookstore personnel.

Any student purchasing used ophthalmic equipment or equipment from sources other than the ICO's Matthews Bookstore should secure approval from the faculty member in whose class the equipment will be utilized.

Please note that this list is cumulative. Students are expected to retain and maintain this equipment throughout their ICO career.

Equipment & Supplies List 2025-26

First Professional Year

Needed By First Day of:	Name	Requirements - No Substitutions
Year 1 Fall Quarter	Updated Glasses (#)	Must have current prescription eyewear (no more than 2 years old)
	Accommodative Fixation Targets	one red stick (256300) and one black stick (731011) (Good-Lite items specified)
	Detailed Fixation Sticks	Set of 4 includes 2 pediatric and 2 adult (542055) (Good-Lite items specified)
	Carrying Case	For transporting equipment to laboratories and clinical assignments. Should allow easy removal of all equipment so that it may be placed in or on the desk provided in each examination room.
	Diagnostic Set (*)	Ophthalmoscope, Retinoscope (with MEM Cards), and Transilluminator
	P.D. Ruler	
	Penlight	
	Prism Bar, Horizontal (*)	
	Stereotest with Polaroid Glasses	Randot
	Color Vision Test with Amsler Grid	Richmond HRR
	Audience Response License (#)	Turning Point (students start with a 3 yr subscription provided)
	Eye Patch	Elastic
	Multiple Pin-Hole Spectacle Occluder	
	Near Acuity Card	ICO Version
	Occluder/Maddox Rod	Double End Occluder - Black & Red Maddox (BC 207)
	Tape Measure, Metric	At least 1 meter in length.
	Clinical Scrubs (#)	Class of 2029 (teal) ** color varies by class year
	Skiascopy Bars	
	Trial Frame (*)	Fully adjustable
	Trial Lens Set (*)	Must include a stenopaic slit, red lens, at least one +0.37 D trial lens, and a full set of prisms.

	Trial Lens Holder	8-Well
	Sphygmomanometer (*)	With multiple cuff sizes (a minimum of small adult, regular adult, and large adult).
	Stethoscope (*)	Must have a bell and a diaphragm.
Year 1 Spring Quarter	Modified Thorington Card	With attachment to transilluminator
	Accommodative Rock Cards	Complete Set
	Suppression Control Strips	Polaroid Bar Reader
	Worth 4 Dot Flashlight	(1 D size battery included)
	Near Rotochart	Reichert Card

Second Professional Year

Needed by First Day of:	Name	Requirements - No Substitutions
Year 2 Fall Quarter	Binocular Indirect Ophthalmoscope with Teaching Mirror (*)	Spectacle mounted type is only acceptable if it has an adjustable PD and light source.
	BIO Condensing Lens (*)	+20 D, 52 mm diameter glass
	Biomicroscopy Lens (*)	Double Aspheric Condensing Lens (60 D / 78 D / 90 D), Volk Superfield Lens, Digital High Mag, Digital Wide Field, or equivalent lens.
	Marking Pen, Water Soluble for Antireflection Coating	Staedler Lumocolor Permanent in Red or Black
	Screwdriver	Optical size
	Lens Cleaning Cloth	Microfiber
	Gonioscopy 3-mirror Lens (*)	Must have flange
	Gonioscopy 4-mirror Lens (*)	
	Tonometry Probe	Haag Streit. Must be imprinted with "HS" near base of probe. (PROVIDED for the CLASS of 2028 by Haag Streit)
	Scleral Depressor	Pencil type specified
Year 2 Spring Quarter	Stereo viewer	For use at ~40-60 cm working distance
	GP Lenses – fitting set ***	

Third Professional Year

Needed by First Day of:	Name	Requirements - No Substitutions
Year 3 - Summer	Lea Acuity Chart	Near only.
	Trial Frame, Pediatric Size	

(#) These items are not available through the ICO bookstore. Personal eyewear and scrubs are personal purchases. The online audience response license will be provided to students by the academic program.

(*) Denotes items which may be group-purchased by the class in cooperation with the Bookstore Manager. Such group purchases allow students to obtain equipment at the lowest cost per item. Equipment NOT denoted as an item which may be group purchased may be purchased at the Matthews Bookstore at ICO.

(**) Each class year will have a designated color for their Clinical Scrubs. Class of 2029 is TEAL, Class of 2028 is CEIL BLUE, 2027 is GRAY (light or medium – no dark or charcoal), Class of 2026 is ROYAL BLUE

(***) The GP Contact Lenses fitting set is ordered by the lab faculty coordinator and will be billed to the students' accounts in the quarter corresponding to the course/laboratory.

Grading and Evaluation

The following is the official College grading scale. In special circumstances, faculty members may seek approval from academic administration to use an alternate grading scale, so students should refer to each course syllabus for more details.

ICO Grading Scale

Grade	Percentage	Grade	Percentage	Grade	Percentage
A	≥ 93.000	B-	= 80.000-82.999	D+	= 67.000-69.999
A-	= 90.000-92.999	C+	= 77.000-79.999	D	= 65.000-66.999
B+	= 87.000-89.999	C	= 73.000-76.999	F	≤ 64.999
B	= 83.000-86.999	C-	= 70.000-72.999		

At ICO, final course grades are calculated exactly as earned according to the grading scale. Grades will **not** be rounded under any circumstances.

Grades issued by the Illinois College of Optometry are:

Grade Quality Points Description

A	4.0 Excellent	B-	2.7
A-	3.7	C+	2.3 Satisfactory
B+	3.3	C	2.0
B	3.0 Above Satisfactory	C-	1.7

D+	1.3	S	Satisfactory
D	1.0 Minimum Passing	U	Unsatisfactory
F	0.0 Failure	W	Withdrawn
I	Incomplete	AS	Advanced Standing
IP	In Progress	AU	Audit
H	Honors*	NC	No Credit

*Applicable only to specifically identified courses.

The grades *I*, *IP*, *H*, *S*, *U*, *W*, *AS*, *AU*, and *NC* are not used for calculation of the student's grade point average. For final grades that do contribute to the student's grade point average, in the case of retaken courses, all grades will remain on the academic transcript but only the most recent course grade will be included in the student's grade point average.

Special Grade Descriptions

I = Course work is not complete. An incomplete grade is issued only when requirements specified in the course syllabus are not completed. An incomplete grade must be removed by the end of the second week of the following quarter (including Summer), or it will automatically be changed to an *F* or *U*. Under extenuating circumstances, and only with the approval of the appropriate Assistant Dean or Student Promotions Committee, this time period may be extended up to one (1) year from the date the *I* grade is given. If an extension is granted, the *I* grade is temporarily replaced by an *IP* grade.

W = Authorized withdrawal from course prior to completing all course requirements.

AS = Advanced standing indicates that the student has been exempted from taking a course, as determined by the appropriate Assistant Dean, by virtue of having passed an equivalent course with a grade of *B* or above at another institution or having successfully passed a proficiency examination on this course work at ICO.

AU = An *AU* grade is awarded after successful completion of an audit course. Audit courses receive no academic transcript credit, nor is there any tuition assessed for the course. Students are not responsible for exams, assignments/homework, or optional course activities, but they do have full access to the course materials and must attend any required class activities such as labs or recitations and submit any required assessments within the course such as quizzes even though such activities do not contribute to a final course grade. Students may request the course instructor to take course exams for formative feedback.

Grade Reports

The Registrar's Office does not provide any grade reports to students. Students may access their grades through Brightspace, Meditrek, and the student portal.

Grade Notifications

Students are expected to monitor their in-progress and final grades in Brightspace and Meditrek throughout the academic term.

Since the ability to continue in the program requires a quarterly and cumulative grade point average of 2.30 or higher, a grade below that level is considered **unsatisfactory** (C and below).

A student who earns a failing final course grade (*F* or *U*) must remediate that failing grade to continue in the program. The opportunity to remediate a failing grade, and the plan for how that may be accomplished, is granted/determined by the Student Promotions Committee.

Instructors must submit final course/clinic grades to the Registrar's Office within three (3) College working days of the administration of their final examination or last day of patient care.

If a student believes a grade has been assigned in error, they must notify the appropriate instructor within five (5) business days of the grade being posted in Brightspace or Meditrek. If the student does not receive a response from the instructor, then the student must contact the appropriate Assistant Dean. In the event the Assistant Dean is unable to respond, the Associate Dean for Academic Assessment and Records should be consulted and ultimately the Vice President and Dean for Academic Affairs. The instructor will verify the accuracy of the grade and must submit any grade changes to the Registrar's Office within five (5) business days of being notified of the error.

In addition to Brightspace, Meditrek, and the student portal, students may receive official notices, academic-related or otherwise, via the student's @eyedoc.ico.edu email account and/or their on-campus mailbox. It is the student's personal responsibility to check these communication sources for information, particularly toward the end of the quarter when final grade and academic status notifications are distributed.

Students are responsible for obtaining grade notification in accordance with the above timetable. It is the student's responsibility to be available to receive grades in a timely manner, including at the end of spring quarter prior to summer vacation or any of the vacation periods, and prior to leaving for externship rotations. This is of utmost importance as student academic standing, promotion, and graduation may be significantly affected by delay on the student's part in procuring notice.

The Student Promotions Committee will meet as soon as possible at the conclusion of each quarter to review student statuses. Students requesting reconsideration of an SPC decision should be available to meet regardless of indicated student vacation dates.

Requesting an Academic Transcript

Current Students

An academic transcript fee of \$75 is added to fourth-year student accounts to cover the cost of transcripts. Transcript requests can be submitted from the [Request of Records](#) link on the Registrar's Office SharePoint page.

Alumni

Alumni transcript requests can be submitted from the main ICO webpage at <https://www.ico.edu/alumni>.

Exemption from a Required Course (Advanced Standing)

ICO students who wish for exemption from a required course by virtue of having taken and passed (with a grade of B or higher) a similar course prior to entering ICO must submit a written petition to the Dean of Student Affairs. The petition must include an official transcript from the institution indicating credits earned, a complete course description, a copy of the institution's course listing catalog, and a course syllabus. The petition, indicating all courses for which Advanced Standing are requested, and all supporting documents must be received by the Dean of Student Affairs at least one month prior to the start of the First-Year classes.

The petition is considered and acted upon by the Vice President / Dean for Academic Affairs, in consultation with the Assistant Dean for Didactic Education and the course instructor. If the student meets the qualifications to test for exemption, they must pass a qualifying proficiency exam before the end of the first (1st) week of the quarter. Students are required to attend the course pending outcome of the exemption exam. Students must be in Good Academic Standing at the time of the exam.

Proficiency Exam

A proficiency examination is required if a student wishes to gain exemption from a required course or lab. The content of the examination is determined by the course or lab instructor but will be based on the ICO course or lab outline. The proficiency exam must be passed with a score of 77.000% or higher. A student who fails the qualifying exam with a score below C+ is not given a second opportunity. No official credit from ICO is given for the exempted course or lab. This procedure carries a fee of \$150 which will be billed to the student's account by the Business Affairs Office.

The result of the qualifying exam will be transmitted to the Dean of Student Affairs by the end of the second (2nd) week of the quarter. A passing grade for the qualifying exam is reflected in the transcript by the symbol AS (Advanced Standing) indicating exemption by qualifying exam. No official credit from ICO is given for the exempted course.

Course Evaluation

All students are **strongly** encouraged to complete course evaluations each quarter.

Students' evaluation of their courses, instructors, and clinical experiences are instrumental in maintaining the quality of the professional program. Instructors and their evaluators all appreciate the constructive comments that students make on these evaluations.

Student evaluations are handled in a confidential manner. All course and laboratory evaluations are completed online through an independent third-party (Meditrek). While ICO will know if

students have completed the evaluations, there is no way to associate an evaluation with a student, per agreement with Meditrek. Statistical information analyzing students' responses, along with the compiled comments, is available to the appropriate faculty member and administrators.

The Assistant Deans share the evaluation results and comments with the Associate Dean for Faculty and the Vice President / Dean for Academic Affairs. These evaluations become part of a faculty member's portfolio and are also used in the yearly evaluation and when considering promotion of a faculty member.

Procedures and Guidelines for Test Administration

Tests and exams at ICO are considered to be secure documents, and students must abide by the College's Assessment Integrity Policy (Chapter 5 of this Student Guide).

In order to know whether your device will meet the device compatibility requirements please reference the most current guidelines on the ExamSoft website. The examination device used must meet the requirements for exams with the features ExamID and ExamMonitor enabled.

(Beginning 2026/2027 Academic Year) For students Class of 2030 and forward, the device used for Exemplify must have a privacy screen attached over the entire screen area that reduces the viewing angle to no more than ± 30 degrees. These can be purchased from a wide variety of vendors, and students are welcome to choose the size and style that fits their particular device as long as it uses the standard viewing angle of no more than ± 30 degrees. Permanent screens tend to hold up better than the removable versions and are widely compatible with touchscreens and writing accessories.

All ICO Examinations will be given via ExamSoft.

- Make sure your device is charged the night before an exam.
- Prior to entering the lecture center, make sure to silence your keyboard sounds on your device.
- Make sure you have at least 1 Gig free on your device prior to downloading your exams.
- Exams should be uploaded immediately after finishing the exam or there may be a delay in grading your exam.
- Your device should have the latest version of Exemplify. UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED, PLEASE REFRAIN FROM UPGRADING your operating system until we know that Exemplify is fully compatible with the new OS. For example, do small updates (e.g., from OS 17.1 to 17.2), but do NOT upgrade to a new OS (e.g., from 17 to 18) until ExamSoft has indicated that this upgrade works with Exemplify.
- All students must be properly connected to ICO Wi-Fi. Students should be certain to work with IS Support ahead of time if struggling to connect. A Wi-Fi connection must be in place to start the exam and to upload the exam.
- If you plan to use a wireless keyboard or mouse, these devices must be connected successfully PRIOR to starting Exemplify.

- All exams should be downloaded to your device 24 hours before the exam. Students that wait to download the exam the morning of the exam risk losing exam time while they wait for downloads.

Arrival and Starting Times for Examinations

- Students are expected to arrive 15 minutes prior to the scheduled examination start time to ensure timely entry into the exam room. Students may enter the testing area 10 minutes prior to the start time, and the password will be displayed.
- Exams begin at the exact scheduled start time (i.e., not ten minutes after the hour), and end at the scheduled end time.
- If you arrive late to the exam, you will receive only the remaining time of the testing period, unless you have a documentable extenuating circumstance that may allow you additional time (please contact the Assistant Dean for Didactic Education in this event). If you arrive after the midway point (8:25am for a quarterly exam, one hour after the start time for a final exam) you will be unable to begin the exam.

Clothing, Food, and Beverages

- Students may not wear hats or hoods to examinations. The only headwear that is permitted are religious head coverings.
- Students may wear a sweater or sweatshirt with pockets to their seats if the lecture center is cold. However, all pockets should be empty. Coats and jackets are not permitted.
- Water is permitted during exams but must be in a clear container with no labels. No other beverages or food are permitted.

Questions during an Examination

- No verbal student questions regarding exam content will be answered during an examination.
- If you have comments regarding an exam item or feedback for the instructor, those should be typed in the question feedback area which is available on each question screen.

Seating

- You may enter the exam room 10 minutes prior to the start time (7:50 a.m. for quarterly exams).
- If desired, ask the in-room proctor for a piece of scratch paper.
 - Only one sheet will be given at the beginning of the exam. If you fill this page, you may ask for another by raising your hand during the exam. All pieces of scratch paper (even if blank) need to be turned in at the end of the exam.
- Sit in the assigned seat you were emailed, which will also be available for your reference outside the Lecture Center.
- There is to be no talking among students once they enter the Lecture Center.

Personal Belongings

- All belongings should be left in 1202, your locker, or your car. There should not be belongings left in the hallways or common areas, as this is a fire hazard.
- Backpacks, books, bags, purses, coats, hats, food, beverages other than water, headphones, calculators, notebooks, clinic equipment, cellular telephones, smart watches, other wearable technology, and any other non-approved materials are not permitted to be in a student's possession during an examination.
- Cellular telephones are not permitted in the lecture center. If there is an urgency that requires a student to be available by telephone during the testing period, special accommodations may be granted by the Assistant Dean for Didactic Education.
 - If placed in 1202, cellular phones should be SILENCED and all alarms turned off to avoid distracting students testing.
- At the examination seat, the student may have in his or her possession ONLY the following items: electronic device running Exemplify, a pencil/pen, the provided scratch paper, and a clear water bottle.

Starting/taking the Examination

- Once seated, the student should immediately perform ExamID certification and enter the password displayed on the lecture screens. At this time, your device will be locked down.
- Read any pre-test notices but stop at the screen with the red stop sign.
- You may click "Start Exam" only when the proctor instructs you to begin.
- You may not review electronic notes or write anything on your scratch paper once seated. This also includes the time after your examination is submitted. Students may not review electronic notes until after leaving the Lecture Center.
- You must start the exam when told to begin by the proctor. Only once your device is locked down by Exemplify may you write on the scratch paper provided. You must keep scratch paper flat on the table. If you do not use your scratch paper, do not write your name on it (so that it can be re-used). If you write on the paper, then put your name on it prior to turning it in.
- Throughout the exam, sit facing the front of the Lecture Center and keep your device's screen pointed directly at you, parallel with the desk it sits on. Do not angle your computer screen to the side, to avoid allowing others to view it.

Ending The Examination

- You have 50 minutes to complete the examination (120 minutes for final exams). No student will be permitted to continue using Exemplify or writing on the scratch paper after the proctor calls "time." This includes writing a comment to the instructor. Any student continuing after time has been called will be reported to the Professional Conduct and Ethics Committee for unprofessional conduct.
- If you arrive late to the exam, you may still have time left showing on your screen when the proctor calls "time." You still need to stop testing, unless you were given special permission by the floating proctor to receive additional time (granted only in approved extenuating situations, not simply for a late arrival).
- Exemplify will automatically give you a 5-minute warning. You may add more alerts to the system if you desire.

- No student who has completed an examination can leave his/her Lecture Center seat during the first half of the stated test period (25 min, 60 min for finals). When you do leave after completing the exam, do so quietly so as not to disturb students still taking the exam!

Exiting the Examination Room

- Before leaving, students must show the in-room proctor the test submit “green” screen to show that they have uploaded their ExamSoft test.
- All scratch paper must also be turned into the proctor as the student leaves the Lecture Center. Any student departing the Lecture Center with their scratch paper will be referred to the Professional Conduct and Ethics Committee, and he/she may suffer a grade penalty.
- Students should not gather in the hallways or in 1202 after an exam. Students should quietly collect their belongings and leave the area in consideration of those students still taking the exam.

Suspected Cheating

- If a proctor observes cheating or other unprofessional conduct or suspicious actions by a student during an examination, the proctor may take one or more of the following actions: warn the student, move the student to a different seat, notify the Registrar for a future change in seating, or notify the Professional Conduct and Ethics Committee for possible hearing.
- If a student is found to be in possession of a cell phone, electronic device other than the device used for the exam (for example, a smart watch), or a “cheat sheet” of any kind, the student will receive a grade of zero on the exam. The student will also be referred to the Professional Conduct and Ethics Committee for possible hearing.

Final Exams

The final examination period is declared by the academic calendar. Students should assume that there will be a final examination on the last day of the Finals period (including Saturdays) as identified in the calendar, regardless of the number of Final Exams anticipated. Prior travel arrangements will not be an acceptable excuse for missing an examination during finals week.

Make-Up Examination

Please see the Attendance & Non-Attendance section (Chapter 2, Pg. 27 of this Student Guide) for information regarding make-up examinations.

Late Arrival / Missing Examination

Students arriving late but before the halfway mark will enter the Test Center and use the remaining time of the test period. No additional time will be granted unless the student can prove an extenuating circumstance to the Assistant Dean for Didactic Education.

Students arriving after the halfway mark should report to the proctor outside the exam room. If no students have left the test center the student may be instructed to enter and utilize the remaining time. If students have left the test center the late arriving student will be directed to the Assistant Dean for Didactic Education for determination of when the student will take the exam and if a fee will be assessed.

If the student notified the Assistant Dean for Didactic Education of late arrival due to a documentable extenuating circumstances ahead of time, the student may (at the discretion of the Assistant Dean for Didactic Education) be given the full time to take the exam in the Academic Administration area with no penalty or may need to schedule a make-up exam with no penalty.

If the student misses the exam entirely and cannot provide supporting documentation/evidence for an excused absence, or the student did not fill out the Absences App prior to the exam, then it is deemed unexcused. For the first offense a make-up exam will be granted with a fee of \$300. No grade penalty is applied for the first offense. For any subsequent offense, a make-up exam will be granted but the student will incur \$300 fee as well as a grade penalty (65% maximum allowed credit). The \$300 make-up exam fee is intended for unexcused/unplanned missed exams.

Open Laboratory Use

Lab spaces that are not being used for instruction are available for student use as follows:

Eyelabs: Key card access to Eyelabs is available between 7:00 a.m. and 12:00 a.m. seven days per week when the labs are not otherwise being used for scheduled educational activities. Doors to the Eyelabs are not to be propped open, and **all students are expected to swipe upon entering** during non-classroom activities.

Non-Eyelabs: If there is demand, and the instructor approves, the academic program will also work to allow students or groups of students to reserve non-Eyelabs spaces on the third floor **with appropriate room reservation requests**. The hours of availability will still be between 7:00 a.m. and 12:00 a.m. Use could include study groups, open lab reviews (approved by the instructor), and organizational meetings.

For All Open Laboratory Use: Students are expected to use the facilities with respect and care. This includes responsible behavior and **clean up**. Rooms found to be disrupted, dirty, or disorganized may cause accessibility to be revoked.

In instances where individuals or organizations use college facilities or equipment to produce items or provide services for monetary compensation, they must also receive written permission from the Dean of Student Affairs.

Illinois College of Optometry Library *(section updated June 2026)*

The Illinois College of Optometry Library was founded in 1955. The ICO Library currently employs 3 full-time, experienced medical librarians, 1 library coordinator, and 1 library assistant, (all of whom have master's degrees in library and information science) to assist students with research, homework, interlibrary loans, and their studies. 30+ student workers are also available to help.

ICO Library team members are here to help you succeed at ICO!

Library website: www.library.ico.edu

Library email: icolibrary@ico.edu

Library telephone: [312-949-7160](tel:312-949-7160)

Instructions on how to access and search the catalog of our extensive resources are available in the ICO Library brochure located at the circulation desk, or by contacting an ICO Library team member.

Library Hours (Subject to Change)

During the Fall, Winter, and Spring Quarters, the ICO Library is open on Monday-Sunday from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. On exam days, the library opens at 7 a.m. Holiday, Summer Term, and Break Week hours vary. Hours are posted on the television by the library entrance, on the library's website, and may vary according to the College schedule.

Library Collections

Physical Collections

The ICO Library provides access to its physical collections on the first and second floors of the library for ICO student use. These contain approximately 14,000+ physical books, equipment, 8 physical journals, and many bound archival bound journals.

Digital Collections

On and off campus digital access to thousands of e-books and e-journals, streaming videos, the ICO Library catalog, and databases are available 24/7 to our students from the library website via the student portal. Please be sure to sign in.

Digital Library Catalog (PRIMO) and VisionCite

The ICO Library's digital catalog provides access to most of the library's digital holdings, and to the ICO Library's **VisionCite** proprietary journal citation database. The catalog can be accessed by clicking the "Library" tab on the student portal:

Microforms and Archives

The library maintains a collection of 3,073 microforms, as well as an archival book collection for access to older research material.

Library Databases

Included in the Library's databases, most of which also provide *mobile access*, are listed below. Many are now offering AI features,

[Access Medicine](#)

A resource that features leading medical content includes the last editions of leading medical textbooks, a differential diagnosis tool, practice guidelines, self-assessment exam prep. for residents, algorithms, case studies, customizable patient information, an integrated drug database and extensive multimedia library, downloadable images, and much more!

[Acland's Video Atlas of Human Anatomy](#)

Video atlas images are direct video recordings of real human anatomic specimens. For students who do not have access to dissection facilities, Acland's provides an

appreciation of the real human body and a direct understanding of the mechanics of body movement.

[American Academy of Ophthalmology \(AAO\) eBook Collection](#)

A collection of authoritative e-book titles essential for the professional interests and lifelong learning of ophthalmologists.

[Bates' Visual Guide](#)

Bates' Visual Guide delivers head-to-toe and systems-based physical examination techniques. The series offers careful attention to clinical accuracy, as well as a range of profiled patient types.

[Business Education in Video](#)

Business Education in Video features executive interviews, corporate training videos, case studies, "how to" features, and documentary films that focus on all aspects of the global business environment. This is a great resource for students who plan to go into private practice.

[CINAHL with Full Text](#)

CINAHL with Full Text provides **full text access to top allied health literature**. This database covers a wide range of topics including biomedicine, alternative/complementary medicine, consumer health and 17 allied health disciplines. The full-text resource features publications and access to health care books, dissertations, selected conference proceedings, standards of practice, audiovisuals, book chapters and more. It provides an easy-to-use interface with basic and advanced search features and searchable cited references.

[ClinicalTrials.gov](#)

Registry and results database of federally and privately supported clinical trials conducted in the United States and around the world, ClinicalTrials.gov gives information about a clinical trial's purpose, who may participate, locations, and summary results, many of which have not been published in the research literature.

[Cochrane Library Suite](#)

The Cochrane Library contains reliable up-to-date **information about the effectiveness of health care interventions**. Its databases include: The Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials (CENTRAL), Cochrane Clinical Answers, and The Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews (CDSR). A bibliography: The Cochrane Methodology Register (CMR) is also included in the collection.

[Diversity & Ethnic Studies Collection](#)

This groundbreaking collection includes more than 5,500 high-quality e-books on the topic of diversity, equity, and inclusion from more than 230 publishers including Choice Outstanding Academic Titles and DRM-free selections.

[EBSCOhost eBook Collection](#)

A wide variety of e-books are available on the following topics: Business and Economics, Education, Engineering and Technology, Health and Medicine, Psychology, and Reference.

[FLIPSTER](#)

A next-generation digital magazine distribution service that allows users to access some favorite popular magazines from a variety of publishers via the ICO Library. Accessible via a web browser or custom app made specifically for various devices, users can download those magazines to which the library subscribes to read offline, anytime, anywhere.

[**Healthcare Knowledge Management eBook Collection**](#)

EBSCO's e-book collection focuses on a wide range of subject material related to healthcare knowledge management. Big data; EHR; healthcare data management and information systems; informatics; leading change in healthcare organizations; mobile health; Six Sigma; and tele-health are all ideas that are available to research and explore.

[**ICO Yearbooks and Class Composites-Digitized**](#)

Many digitized editions of ICO yearbooks from the 1930's to the present in addition to graduating class composite photos are available for public viewing.

[**Low Vision: The Reference**](#)

A bibliographic database, Low Vision currently contains over **11,900 references on low vision**.

[**Mango Languages**](#)

Want to learn a language? An online language learning application that combines everyday conversation skills, Mango provides simple language and culture learning for over 70 languages.

[**Medical Database-Proquest**](#)

This database is a comprehensive collection of e-books and journals covering clinical and biomedical literature. Access to some **ophthalmology and optometry titles** is provided.

[**MedLinePlus**](#)

MedlinePlus is the National Institutes of Health (NIH) web site for patients and their families and friends. Produced by the National Library of Medicine, (NLM), it presents **information about diseases, conditions, and wellness issues**, in language that can be well understood.

[**OVID**](#)

Search and discover current full-text medical e-journals and e-books, as well as bibliographic information. Manage your search results and research documents all within the OvidSP platform.

[**Palace Project**](#)

Thousands of **fiction and non-fiction e-books, and audio books** are available for your use that can be downloaded to your tablet, computer, or other mobile devices!

[**PubMed and PubMed Central**](#)

PubMed and PubMed Central comprise over 27 million citations for biomedical literature from MEDLINE, life-science journals, and online books.

[**R2 Digital Library**](#)

The R2 Digital Library is an eBook platform for health science collections featuring a comprehensive selection of **medical and health-related e-books**. Many of your textbooks are on the library course reserve list and are available for use by students via the R2 library platform.

[Small Business Reference Center](#)

Small Business Reference Center supports entrepreneurs and small business owners with a variety of online resources including full-text business periodicals, many top consumer small business reference books, as well as tools to address many small business topics. It includes business videos, a help and advice section, and details on how to create business plans.

[STAT! Ref eBook Collection](#)

STAT!Ref, the premier healthcare e-source, offers editions of invaluable health-sciences reference texts.

[UpToDate](#)

More than 1.7 million clinicians in 190+ countries rely on UpToDate® to make the best care decisions and stay abreast of contemporary standards in the workflow and on-the-go. UpToDate is the only resource associated with improved patient outcomes and hospital performance, and studies show that clinicians who use UpToDate change their decisions 30 percent of the time.

[VisionCite](#)

VisionCite is a journal article citation database which contains close to **500,000 journal citations**. This ICO produced and maintained proprietary database provides access to vision science articles, many of which are not indexed by PubMed; *VisionCite* is intended to be used in conjunction with PubMed. The ICO Library adds approximately 12,000 citations annually.

Library Services

Reference, interlibrary loan, document delivery services, and AI and research assistance are available from the Library to all ICO students. The library can help you with locating articles, emailing you .pdfs of article requests, citation help, and with your writing, posters, and publications. If you cannot find the information you need, have unanswered questions, or need material that you cannot locate in the ICO Library, please ask a librarian. There is also a booking module available on the library's website to schedule time and services with a library team member. We are always here to assist you!

Circulating Material

ALWAYS bring your ICO ID card with you to borrow ANY library material!

The ICO Library loans books, periodicals, equipment, calculators, headphones, laptops, lenses, as well as skull, brain, and eye models. Reserve textbooks are available (some are also digital). Physical reserves can be checked out until the end of the day. See the ICO Library website for the updated circulation times that material can be checked out.

How to Avoid Library Fines

- Return your material on time!

- 1 renewal per checkout with the exception of reserves:
 - Use the online catalog or the self-checkout stations.
 - Call the Library during posted hours at **312-949-7160**
 - E-mail icolibrary@ico.edu; remember to include your name and ID #
 - Use the self-checkout stations located on both floors of the library.
 - Reserve materials and items “on hold” for others may not be renewed.

Library Policies

Library policies can be accessed by clicking the “Library” tab on the student portal.

Copyright, Fair Use and Citing Sources

Copyright law is dynamic. Older guidelines are always subject to revision and new guidelines will gradually win acceptance. As new or revised guidelines are introduced, ICO will review their applicability and revise them on our website as applicable. The need for educational resources never justifies violating copyright laws.

- ICO staff and students may not copy books, e-books, or entire journals in order to avoid the purchase of books, reprints, music, periodicals, software, or media.
- ICO staff may not be directed by higher authorities to make illegal copies.
- ICO staff and students may not make copies of copyrighted originals owned by other schools, unless expressed written permission to do so is granted.
- A student may not be directed to violate copyright laws on behalf of faculty.

See the “Copyright” section on the library website for additional information on copyright and fair use: “About Us/Policies/Copyright Information.”

Citing Copyrighted Sources: Respecting the Rights of Authors

ICO staff and students are reminded to credit the sources and display the copyright notice and copyright ownership information as it is shown in the original source. This includes all works incorporated as part of the educational multimedia projects they prepare, including those prepared for **Fair Use**. Please be sure to appropriately credit your sources. If you need help with your citations, please see a librarian.

Food and Drinks

Food and drink are both permitted in the library, but drinks must have lids. Please remember to be considerate and to clean up after yourself so that others don’t have to!

Library Computers

Library computers are available in cooperation with the Information Systems Department. The library provides PC computers available for student use. These computers are available during posted library hours and can be used to send material to the library printers. Academic use of computers takes priority over personal computer use. Library computers are equipped with MS

Office, internet, access to the library catalog and our digital resources, and practice management software. Library staff members cannot re-set passwords. If problems arise, students may dial x7500 for assistance from the IS Department.

Library Copiers/Printers/Fax/Scanners

The printers on both floors of the library can be used to copy, print, fax and/or scan.

Computer printing is only available by using a student card provided by the IS Department.

Library Study Rooms

Four 2nd Floor Group Study Rooms may be reserved. Reservations for these rooms can be made by signing the sheet on the door of the study room. Reservations cannot be made for more than two hours at a time for a maximum period of four hours a day.

Student Library Employment

The ICO Library employs many federal work-study students throughout the school year and summer students to work in the library. Positions will be posted as they become available. Students must be in good academic standing, and must maintain a good attendance record to work, and continue to work, in the library.

Wireless in the Library

Both floors of the library have wireless access points, as does the library courtyard (open May-November). Your computer will need to have the most up-to-date operating system updates and virus protection in order to access ICO wireless access. See the IS Department to set up wireless on your personal devices; students may dial x7500 for assistance.

**The library staff is here to help you succeed, so please.
don't hesitate to ask us for assistance!**

Library website: www.library.ico.edu

Library email: icolibrary@ico.edu

Library telephone: [312-949-7160](tel:312-949-7160)

National Board of Examiners in Optometry (NBEO)

(We make all efforts to have accurate information about NBEO in this guide, however; NBEO information is subject to change, and students should consult Optometry.org for the most current information possible.)

Overview

The purpose of Parts I (Applied Basic Science) and II (Patient Assessment and Management) of the NBEO examination is to test cognitive skills deemed necessary for optometric practice. Part I of the NBEO is administered two times yearly in March and August. Part II is administered twice (December, and the following April). Part III (Patient Encounters and Performance Skills) is administered at the NCCTO testing center in Charlotte, NC from August through July.

Registration and Applications are available through NBEO's website at www.optometry.org

Prior to each exam administration, ICO must provide certification to NBEO of which students are eligible to participate. Unless otherwise stipulated as ineligible by a letter from the Academic Program, students of all academic statuses are eligible to take the exam if they fulfill the requirements set forth by NBEO.

Part III is offered by the NBEO as an alternative and in some cases as an addition to certain state board practical exams. It addresses case analysis, critical thinking, and essential skills evaluation in a simulated-live patient encounter

All ICO students are required to release their NBEO exam scores to the College. The results of student performance on the NBEO examinations are invaluable in the College's development and assessment of its professional program. This release is a requirement for graduation. During the online registration of each part of NBEO, it is imperative that each student authorizes scores to be released to ICO. This also includes NBEO administrators post-graduation.

Students who re-take any part of the NBEO exams are required to make-up any missed clinical assignments.

NBEO Requirements (Calculators, Electronic Aids, and Drawing Instruments)

Please see the NBEO website (optometry.org) for information regarding what you cannot bring with you into the Pearson Vue test center for NBEO administration.

Student Note-Taking Service

Note-Taking Service (NTS) is a “for the students, by the students” program allowing the student to actively participate and engage their mind during class, rather than spending all their time trying to annotate the copious amount of presented material.

Students automatically have access to NTS as a portion of their Student Association membership benefits. All NTS notes are provided electronically. NTS notes are the product of other students and are generally accurate; however, errors do occur. The accuracy and content of the notes is not reviewed by the faculty. **Under no circumstance will an error or omission in the notes be considered as a valid excuse for inadequate student performance.** NTS notes are NOT a substitute for class attendance or participation.

Chapter 3 – CLINICAL EDUCATION INFORMATION

Attendance, Absences, Leaves & Personal Days

Student attendance is mandatory at all patient care activities. Please see *Attendance & Non-attendance* section in Chapter 2 of this Student Guide for specific policies.

Fourth Year Clinic Rotations

The general format of the fourth-year clinic rotation system is:

- Four quarters of successful clinical rotations with a minimum of 80 credit hours total
- At least two of these quarters should be Externships.

At least one of these quarters is on campus at IEI with clinical sessions assigned throughout a variety of different specialty clinics.

Clinic Conduct & Evaluations

Each clinician is expected to behave ethically and professionally. Although the College is confident that students generally will aspire to the highest standards, there are forms of misconduct that will result in clinical probation and/or referral to the Professional Conduct and Ethics Committee for consideration of disciplinary action or SPC for consideration of clinical performance. These forms of misconduct include but are not limited to:

1. Two or more non-excused absences.
2. Clinical probation during any two or more quarters.
3. Falsifying information in the patient record or willfully misrepresenting patient examination information to the attending faculty.
4. Examination of, telephone contact with, or consultation with any Illinois Eye Institute patient without the direct supervision or consent of a supervising staff doctor.
5. Examination (to any degree) of any person not registered and appointed as a patient in the Illinois Eye Institute.
6. Canceling the appointment of any patient without the approval of a staff doctor.
7. Recopying any part of a patient record without the attending staff's consent.

It is important to note that it is illegal for any student employed in a health care setting to allow the public to perceive them as a doctor. This constitutes practicing without a license and is subject to criminal prosecution by the respective state.

Clinic Dress Code

It is important that every person representing the Illinois Eye Institute maintains a professional appearance. For all IEI activities, student clinicians are expected to adhere to the following standards:

1. Clean, matching color, wrinkle-free medical scrub top, and pants should be worn for all patient care activities.
2. Scrub colors are assigned based on expected graduation year.
 - a. Class of 2026 – royal blue
 - b. Class of 2027 – light gray

c. Class of 2028 – ceil blue

d. Class of 2029 – aqua/teal

Students that switch to a curriculum plan that changes their graduation year should expect to adopt an updated scrub color.

3. Closed-toe shoes must be worn for all patient care activities. Clean athletic shoes, closed-back clogs, or other comfort-style shoes are recommended. No boots (winter, Ugg-type, or otherwise), slippers, or backless shoes (including Crocs) are permitted. Socks must be worn.

4. Students may wear appropriately sized matching or neutral color (blue, black, gray) scrub jackets, polar fleeces, or quarter-zips. No hooded, oversized, undersized, or cropped styles are permitted. Sweatshirts are not permitted. No large print or brand logos should be displayed. Solid color, long-sleeved, under scrub tops are permitted.

5. ICO supports reasonable self-expression through use of jewelry and visible tattoos provided they align with professional standards.

- Jewelry should be conservative and appropriate for the workplace, ensuring it does not interfere with your duties.
- Piercings must be discreet, not distracting, and appropriate for a professional environment in number and style.
- Tattoos or body art must be discreet and not distracting. Symbols or images that could be considered offensive or inappropriate for the workplace (slanderous, obscene, profane, violent, or demeaning of others) are discouraged and must be covered at all times while on campus or engaged in official college activities.

6. Appropriate adherence to professional personal hygiene standards is essential. This includes but is not limited to neatly groomed hair, facial hair, and fingernails. Additionally, care should be taken to minimize strong odors, including fragrances and body odor.

7. Students must visibly display an ICO ID badge at all times while on campus.

The above standard of dress applies for all Illinois Eye Institute activities. This includes direct patient care, observation of patient care, optical services, and when you are present in your service area completing records. Any student not meeting the above guidelines may be given a warning by an attending doctor or the Assistant Dean for IEI Patient Care Education. Repeat violations of the dress code policy may result in referral to and action by the Professional Conduct and Ethics Committee.

Community-Based Education

Fourth Year Externship Program

The externship program supports the mission of the Illinois College of Optometry; to develop highly qualified clinical optometrists through excellence in optometric education.

Externship opportunities during the fourth professional year afford students exciting experiences in primary care, ocular disease, pediatrics, contact lenses, and low vision rehabilitation in a variety of clinical settings including private practices, hospitals, schools of optometry, Veterans Affairs Medical Centers (VAMC), and military bases, both nationally and internationally.

All fourth-year students stay at the College's home clinic, the Illinois Eye Institute, for one quarter, while rotating at external sites for the remaining three quarters: a Specialty 1 (Primary Care); a Specialty 2 (Ocular Disease; this includes OD/MD, IHS, hospital-based, or VA); and a Specialty 4, which would be a selection from either Specialty 1, Specialty 2, or a Specialty 3 (Pediatrics, Binocular Vision/Advanced Contact Lens/Vision Rehabilitation). Chicago-only students may be placed in IEI affiliated rotations (i.e., The Rosenbloom Center for Vision and Aging, Chicago Public Schools, etc.) for one quarter.

Site Selection: Site selections take place during the fall quarter of the third professional year. A dedicated externship website, www.externship.ico.edu, allows the student to review all available sites which are searchable in various ways: location (by region or state), facility type, specialty, housing availability, number of students accepted per quarter, need for a car etc.

All selections are made online, on pre-determined dates and times that have been approved by the Class representatives. All students will be randomly assigned buckets to determine the order in which their rotations take place for Summer/Fall/Winter/Spring (i.e., Bucket A: IEI/ Specialty 1/ Specialty 2/Specialty 4; Bucket B: Specialty 1/IEI/Specialty 2/Specialty 4, etc.) and will have the opportunity to make switches with their classmates prior to the start of selections. Students will be assigned a priority number, 1-4, for each quarter which determines when they make their site selections. At the conclusion of selections, the students will have the opportunity to make switches, either to an open site or with a classmate, upon approval by the Assistant Dean for Community Based Education.

Clinical Conduct

While on externship students are expected to adhere to the rules and regulations stipulated by the individual externship facilities. Students are expected to meet critical standards of clinical performance within individual facility operations. Failure to do so can result in dismissal from the externship, with reassignment to the Illinois Eye Institute or elsewhere as determined by the Assistant Dean for Community Based Education and/or the Student Promotions Committee. If a student is identified at or before midterm of being in danger of failing the rotation, the Externship Education Coordinator will contact the student for either in person or remote enhancement. If the student successfully passes the clinical requirements for that quarter, the student can progress to the next quarter, as assigned. If the student does not complete this quarter with a Satisfactory grade, the student is subject to review by the Student Promotions Committee. The SPC will determine whether the student will be allowed to repeat the quarter or be dismissed from the program.

Externship Attendance

Please reference the Attendance & Non-Attendance Policy in Chapter 2 of this Student Guide. It delineates policy regarding externship specific attendance.

Externship Housing

Students will be responsible for securing and maintaining a place of residence while attending out-of-town clinical externship rotations. Although certain externship facilities do provide housing at either no cost or subsidized cost, this cannot be expected in most situations. In instances where lodging is not provided by the externship facility, externs will be expected to make arrangements for lodging in advance of the assigned clinical rotation. While we do encourage preceptors to assist in the housing search as much as is possible, the student is ultimately responsible. Where housing has been arranged by externship facilities, lodging may be quite

variable regarding distance from the clinic, cost to the student, and furnishings. In situations where lodging has been arranged, the College is not responsible for the extern's personal belongings in the event of fire, theft, etc. Externs will be expected to follow any and all rules set forth by the providing facility. Refusal to obey guidelines or neglect of properties provided by an externship facility is grounds for immediate dismissal from an externship clinical rotation.

Forwarding of mail (excluding magazines) is available to the students if they are located more than ten miles from the College. The change of address form is available on the externship page.

Student Employment and Externships

Due to the potential for confusion as to the role of optometrists-in-training and technicians, work study students within a site affiliated with the College as a community-based education facility may not be eligible to be assigned to that site as an externship. Additionally, students may not be paid for assigned patient care activities by the facility during their externship rotation. Students can accept housing, travel, and meal stipends as long as the Assistant Dean for Community Based Education is made aware of these arrangements so that it is determined that these stipends are fair and equitable to all students assigned to that facility. Violation of this policy may result in referral to the Professional Conduct and Ethics Committee.

Externship Grading

Students on externship are evaluated on an ongoing basis. If students are not meeting performance objectives, the Assistant Dean for Community-Based Education will be notified by the site, and the College will determine appropriate next steps which could include students being discharged from their externships. If a student is discharged due to professionalism concerns, the student will be referred to the Professional Ethics and Conduct Committee. If a student is discharged due to clinical performance concerns, the student will be referred to the Student Promotion Committee.

Students discharged from an externship site by the end of the academic term's second instructional week may be offered an opportunity to return to the IEI to complete the quarter for externship credit. The final evaluations would be determined by the students' IEI performance. The unanticipated return of students to IEI requires that sufficient space is available and that an equivalent patient care schedule can be assembled. If IEI cannot accommodate the students' return, students may need to take a leave of absence and resume IEI the following academic term.

Students discharged from an externship site after the end of the academic term's second instructional week will receive a W externship grade, be placed on an enhancement plan, and be required to return to the IEI. In such cases, the student will repeat the quarter for credit after successfully completing all other rotations. There is no refund of tuition for a discharged quarter, and the student is responsible for any additional tuition charges related to performance failure.

In order to progress to the next term of externship, students must complete each quarter with a satisfactory grade from their preceptor. A portion of this grade is proper and timely completion of Meditrek logs and evaluations of the site and the preceptor(s). The Assistant Dean for Community Based Education is responsible for finalizing all grades.

If an ICO student receives a final grade of unsatisfactory for the quarter, the student will not be permitted to proceed to their next externship site. The Assistant Dean for Community Based Education will review all materials and determine if the grade should be overturned based on

extenuating circumstances or upheld. If upheld, the student must meet with the Student Promotions Committee, who will determine the subsequent course of action. Externship assignments are only provided to students in good academic standing.

All questions regarding the externship program should be directed to the Assistant Dean for Community Based Education at x 7417.

Clinic Evaluations, Enhancement & Remediation

The College believes it must maintain an environment of academic excellence and integrity in both the classroom and clinical settings. In accordance with this objective, the following policies and procedures are applied in the evaluation of student performance in the clinical setting.

Students assigned to clinical rotations are evaluated by various criteria. These criteria include, but are not limited to:

- Clinical Skills
- Clinical Analysis & Judgement
- Communication & Professionalism

These objectives are evaluated through a combination of the following methods:

- Direct observation of patient encounters
- Review of patient records
- Collective evaluation by attending staff.
- Case discussion with the student
- Conference participation
- Written examinations

Each on-campus patient care session will necessitate the generation of a student evaluation. It is the student's responsibility to generate the evaluation by utilizing Meditrek to appropriately log all patients examined or observed in a clinic session. Policies within an individual service, which indicate specific student responsibility in the evaluation process, must be followed.

Students will have the chance to schedule a mid-quarter review meeting with a service faculty member. Student strengths and weaknesses will be discussed, along with any recommended remediation plan. A written summary will be available to the student through Meditrek. Any student who is not performing at a passing level or is in danger of not passing as evidenced by performance at the mid-quarter, will also be referred to the appropriate Education Coordinator. Upon notification of unsatisfactory progress, the student should communicate with the appropriate Educational Coordinator immediately to discuss deficient areas and to develop plans for enhancement.

Students will receive official communication via the student's @eyedoc.ico.edu e-mail account. It is the student's personal responsibility to check this communication source for information, particularly toward the end of the quarter when final grade and academic status notifications are distributed. Additionally, increasing amounts of information, including access to grades, are available by logging-in to student's personal accounts on the campus Brightspace portal at <https://learn.ico.edu/d2l/login>

An unsatisfactory Final Evaluation may still result without such notice, as in the situation where a student's performance during the second half of the quarter has fallen below the minimally acceptable level. It is important for students to remember that expectations of their clinical performance increase continuously as they progress through the clinical program. For example, a student's performance, which may have been considered minimally satisfactory at a mid-quarter evaluation, could, if not improved, be assessed as unsatisfactory later in the same quarter and conceivably lead to failure of a clinic rotation. Upon notification of an unsatisfactory Final Evaluation, pending the SPC process, a student is required to enroll in clinical enhancement. The student should communicate with the appropriate Educational Coordinator immediately to discuss plans for remediation.

The Educational Coordinator is available to facilitate the implementation of enhancement and remediation recommendations. It is ultimately the student's responsibility to seek faculty assistance to remediate deficiencies. Recommendations for enhancement may include, but are not limited to:

- Clinical tutorials
- Case discussion groups
- Patient care observations
- Assigned readings.

A student performing at an unsatisfactory or borderline level may be required to perform a patient examination under direct observation of attending faculty in order to demonstrate clinical competency. If a student is judged to be clinically incompetent, to the point where patient welfare may be in jeopardy, that student will be removed from patient care and referred to the Assistant Dean for IEI Patient Care Education, or Assistant Dean for Community Based Education. It will be at the discretion of the Assistant Dean, in consultation with the Dean or their designates, to determine whether the student may continue with clinical activities.

At the end of the quarterly rotation, a Final Evaluation is completed for each student. These evaluations are based on the collective judgment of the attending faculty assigned to the student's clinical area. The student's Final Evaluation will be calculated using information as collected in the manner described above. The student's performance, in each area, will be rated by the faculty, based on collective experience with student performance in the professional program.

Skill levels for a given item within the overall evaluation are categorized as follows:

- **Honors** - The student's skill is above the expected for his/her current level in the clinical program. The student combines competence with confidence and independence.
- **Satisfactory** - The student demonstrates skill at the expected level of performance for his/her current level in the clinical program and with the consistency expected for the current level.
- **Unsatisfactory** - The student's skill or cognition level is not acceptable for the current level of the clinical program.

IEI Health Emergency Response

Purpose: To provide any person experiencing a serious health emergency while in the institution the best chance, to the level of our ability and resources, of limiting disability and avoiding death.

Policy: The procedure outlined provides a clear protocol for life support response to health emergency situations such as heart attack, respiratory arrest, etc. and should be followed as appropriate for the situation.

Procedure for Health Emergency Response during Normal Operating Hours:

The most senior staff (e.g., faculty) or security personnel will oversee the scene/incident.

1. The first individual who has assessed, according to their level of CPR training, that a person requires emergency response care should call out “Code Blue” loudly until another staff member, optometry student, or resident, etc. responds. The first person on-site should initiate life support procedure (CPR).
2. The “responder” should go to the nearest phone and dial 911 to activate the ACLS (Advanced Cardiac Life Support) system. *This will automatically alert the security office.* The security personnel will respond to the scene. The security personnel will either go to the entrance to guide the paramedic response team to the site or select another person to go to the entrance for this purpose.
3. The “responder” should retrieve the nearest auto defibrillator unit at this point. If another responder is available, this can be done at the same time 911 is being called. These units can be found in/near the Illinois Eye Institute. One is in the first-floor corridor near the utility elevator (near the stairwell and double fire doors.) The other unit is in the corridor on the second floor near the utility elevator, the stairwell, and the fire double doors across from the Human Resources office. The third unit is across the hall from the Gym/Fitness Center. An alarm will sound as you open the wall case, do not try to silence the alarm or close the case. There is also a defibrillator unit across the hall from the gym entrance. **Please note that the AED should only be used if the person is not breathing.**
4. The auto defibrillator unit should be used as indicated by the instructions. NOTE: the auto defibrillator should not be used on children less than eight years old or weighing less than 55 pounds.
5. The most senior person in charge of the scene will remain until the ACLS team (e.g., paramedics) has arrived. This person should inquire as to which hospital the patient will be transferred.
6. The most senior person in charge of the scene should file an incident report with the security office as soon as is appropriate. The Chief of Security will forward the report to the Senior Director for Compliance, Risk Management and Quality Improvement and any other appropriate personnel which may include the Dean of Student Affairs or the Vice President and Dean for Academic Affairs. A disaster drill/response evaluation form may be used to evaluate the procedure/response to a health emergency in order to constantly improve the institution’s readiness to properly handle future situations.

Procedure for Health Emergency Response after Normal Operating Hours

1. The individual who has first contact with the person appearing to require emergency assistance will evaluate that person according to their level of training, such as CPR, should call out “Code Blue” loudly.
2. If any other person responds, the procedure should occur in the same manner as previously outlined for normal operating hours.

3. If no other person responds, 911 should be called and then CPR initiated. The security office will be automatically notified of the room location and will respond to the scene.
4. If the auto defibrillator is within proximity, the person administering CPR should retrieve it. Otherwise, the responding security personnel will retrieve the unit.
5. The procedure should occur in the same manner as previously outlined for normal operating hours.

Equipment Monitoring and Maintenance

The auto defibrillator will be monitored daily (for the presence of the illuminated “red X”) by the Biomedical Engineering and/or Security personnel. The Biomedical Engineering personnel will inspect the auto defibrillator twice a year and replace batteries, etc.

The Biomedical Engineering personnel should be notified after the unit is utilized in order to restock the auto defibrillator’s pc card, pads, gloves, etc.

Narcan / Naloxone

ICO stocks Naloxone, brand name Narcan, in the event of an opioid drug overdose of individual on campus. Narcan is stocked in the Security Office, the Urgent Care Service in the IEI and in the Residential Complex. Staff have been trained on the administration of Narcan, and each Narcan medication has easy-to-follow instructions on how to use. Opioid overdose should be handled as a Health Emergency, and 911 should be called.

IEI Power Outage Policy

Patient Care: Student clinicians and/or attending staff should remain in examination rooms with their patients until they can be escorted with a light source to the naturally lit parts of the building. The attending staff will take charge and ensure that each exam room is clear, using emergency lighting, flashlights, or light sticks to guide patients to a naturally lit area. These areas are the main waiting room on the first floor and the area near the elevators on the second floor.

The decision of whether to suspend patient care should be made by the most senior patient care administrator present in the facility at the time of the power outage. Since most power outages are short-lived, it is advisable to wait at least 45 minutes to an hour before discharging patients, support staff, students, or attending staff unless conditions such as external weather, internal temperatures, or compounding conditions occur.

IEI General Protocol & Policies

In a setting such as the Illinois Eye Institute it is essential for all individuals involved in the provision of patient care to maintain the highest levels of professionalism. All activities within the Illinois Eye Institute patient care and public areas must be performed in a manner which bespeaks respect for the individual patient. Only activities which are related to Institute functions are permitted in the Illinois Eye Institute patient care and public areas. Breaches of these standards will result in disciplinary action. Without exception, these standards of conduct apply to all faculty, students and support staff.

Illinois Eye Institute Policies

The Illinois Eye Institute maintains published policies in the Illinois Eye Institute Policy and Procedure Manual. Each faculty member and care provider, support staff and service have access to all Illinois Eye Institute Policies. Policies addressing general information, patient rights and organizational ethics, assessment of patients, care of patients, education of patients and families, continuum of care, performance improvement, environment of care, information management, infection control, patient financial/operations, miscellaneous can be found in the manual. The IEI Policy Manual, credentialing and privileging policy manual, clinical practice guidelines, and compliance program documents can be found on SharePoint.

Adams Center for Clinical Learning

Because the Adams Center is housed within the Illinois Eye Institute, it is always accessible to patients and visitors to the College. For this reason, it is necessary for all individuals who use the facility to present themselves in a professional manner. Students using the Adams Center should not be traveling through patient care areas unless they are in professional or clinic scrubs.

Smoking

Smoking and the use of electronic vaping devices is not permitted in any area of the Illinois Eye Institute (IEI) or within 15 feet of its entrances by patients, students, faculty, or staff. Students, faculty, and staff are expected to support the Smoke-Free Campus Policy.

Food and Drink

In order to maintain an appearance of dignity and purposeful activity in rendering patient care, and in order to maintain cleanliness in a healthcare facility, the Illinois Eye Institute has adopted the following Food and Drink Policy:

Food and drink are not brought into nor consumed in any area of the IEI. These areas include:

- Examination Rooms
- Conference Rooms (where students and faculty meet to discuss active patient care)
- Reception and waiting areas.
- Corridors and stairways
- Preliminary testing, examination, and special procedures areas
- Adams Center (with exceptions for special events and after-hours activities)
- Optical service and dispensing areas
- Records room.
- Any business area which patients or visitors may enter without prior announcement.

Food wrappers, boxed meals, or beverage containers are not to be in evidence in the above areas at any time. Water bottles (capped/covered) are permitted in the conference rooms. Students are permitted to “step out” of IEI in order to have a snack/break during long days. Permission from supervising faculty must be obtained first.

The possession or use of alcoholic beverages anywhere in the clinical facilities is strictly prohibited. Any student reporting to clinic under the influence of alcohol is subject to clinical probation.

Patient Rights & Responsibilities

The College believes that patients are entitled to the highest quality of health care possible. Please take special note of the many ways that this entitlement applies to the operation of the Illinois Eye Institute.

Patient Rights

Each patient has the right to:

- Quality health care
- Receive a copy of this patient right and responsibilities policy.
- Considerate and respectful care from all personnel of the Illinois Eye Institute
- Confidentiality and privacy concerning medical care, communications, records and related information, as provided by law and consistent with the needs of the involved providers to share information and monitor the quality of care; exceptions may include suspected abuse, public health hazards and other instances when reporting is permitted or required by law.
- Be fully informed of any experimental, research or educational projects that may be used in treatment, and to allow or refuse any such projects at any time without penalty.
- Receive a prompt, considerate response to any question, complaint or request for service that is within the Illinois Eye Institute's ability, purpose, and duty to deliver.
- Present a compliment or complaint to the Illinois Eye Institute and receive a response about any aspect of the patient's care or treatment; presentation of a complaint will not compromise the patient's access to care or the quality of future service.
- Be informed of the diagnosis, treatment and prognosis in easily understood language; make decisions about the patient's plan of care, including the refusal of the treatment and be informed of the consequences of these decisions.
- An explanation about fees and payment plans, regardless of their source of payment.
- Have someone the patient chooses to help make decisions about the patient's care, with the understanding that the Illinois Eye Institute will honor this choice to the extent allowed by law.
- Know the name and professional status of the person(s) providing care and know if the Illinois Eye Institute has relationships with outside parties that could influence treatment and care of the patient; these relationships may be with educational institutions, other health care providers, or insurers.
- Expect the Illinois Eye Institute to be a safe environment.
- Have access to an eye doctor on call 24 hours a day.
- Review the records pertaining to the patient's eye care at the Illinois Eye Institute, and to have the information explained or interpreted as necessary, except when restricted by law.

- Expect reasonable continuity of care.

The patient will be requested to provide the Illinois Eye Institute with a written consent to diagnosis and treatment. The patient has the right to receive information about procedures, treatment, risks and alternatives before giving consent.

Patient Responsibilities

Each patient has the responsibility to:

- Participate actively in your health care and ask questions of health care providers and staff when an examination technique, diagnosis or prescribed treatment is not understood.
- Provide your health care provider with accurate information about medical history and other matters related to your health such as past illnesses, hospitalizations and medications.
- Keep appointment times and if it is not possible to do so, cancel appointments at least 24 hours in advance.
- Satisfy the financial obligations to the Illinois Eye Institute promptly; this responsibility includes asking questions concerning financial obligations, providing information necessary for insurance processing, and arranging for payment plans.
- Follow the treatment plan prescribed and notify the health care provider of any changes in health status.
- Be considerate and respectful of other patients and Illinois Eye Institute personnel and see that your companions are considerate as well.
- Observe Illinois Eye Institute policies and the rights of its personnel and other patients.

Patient Caregiver Identification

Purpose: To assure that patients are informed as to who is delivering their care.

Goal: Every patient served in the Illinois Eye Institute knows the name of their caregiver and the professional and educational level of that person.

Nomenclature: No member of the staff should refer to an optometry student as a "young doctor" or "doctor in training". This terminology may make it unclear to the patient as to who is providing their care and their educational background.

Optometric students should introduce themselves to the patient as "optometry student" or "student clinician" and explain to the patient that their care will be supervised by an attending staff. Other staff should introduce themselves to the patient by name and identify themselves as attending staff.

Identification: All caregivers in the IEI should have their identification tag displayed so that their name can be read, and their picture always visible.

Attire: Optometric students should wear a consultation jacket when delivering patient care. When dealing with patients that are children or those who are stressed by the appearance of a lab coat, it is permissible to remove the coat or jacket, but the identification tag should still be displayed. Students should refer to the "Clinic Attire and Presentation" policy in the IEI Manual

Chapter 4 – Support Services

Alumni Association

The Illinois College of Optometry Alumni Association maintains an active network of over 8,000 alumni throughout the world. Its mission is to foster current and future alumni relations in support of the mission of the College. The Alumni Association is led by the Alumni Council, a group of several volunteers (approximately 12 alumni and 2 students) who have volunteered to serve the College. Meeting twice per year, with conference calls in between, the Alumni Council plans and implements programs and services to serve the needs of alumni and future alumni.

The Alumni Council has initiated an Alumni Association Scholarship to help offset the financial burden 4th year students face upon graduating and to acknowledge the student's service to ICO and intentions to continue service to ICO as an alumnus. Additionally, an Alumni Ambassador Program was developed to increase outreach and engagement among alumni and build relationships with prospective and current students for networking, shadowing, and recruitment purposes.

Each ICO student automatically becomes a member of the Alumni Association upon graduating, playing a vital role in keeping our alma mater and profession strong. By graduating from ICO, you join the largest constituency of alumni of any school or college of optometry in the world and inherit a strong commitment to excellence in optometric clinical education.

Throughout the year, there are several alumni events that are planned and executed through the Alumni Development Office. ICO students are always invited and encouraged to attend alumni events, which are nearly always free of charge.

If you are interested in learning more about the Alumni Association or the Alumni Development Office, please email alumni@ico.edu.

Bookstore

The bookstore is located in Room 1214. Required textbooks, supplies, and ophthalmic equipment may be purchased at the Matthews ICO Bookstore. The Bookstore Manager has knowledge of student book and equipment needs and will be at the service of all students throughout the academic year.

In addition to professional texts and equipment, the bookstore offers items such as clothing, school supplies, snacks, gifts, cards, etc. are available. Suggestions for items to be stocked in the bookstore are welcomed by the Bookstore Manager. Bookstore hours are as follows:

Monday - Friday 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Business Affairs

Student Payments are due on the first Friday of each quarter. There is a grace period thru the Friday of that next week. You can view and pay your bill using the ICO Student Portal. If you are making a payment by check, it should be payable to : Illinois College of Optometry. Payments should be sent/or taken to the Business Affairs Office, which is on the first floor, across from 1200 (the Lecture Center).

For your convenience there is a 24-hour ATM in the President's Circle Lounge.

Career Development

The Office of Career Development is committed to providing exceptional programs and services which facilitate lifelong career management experiences to students, residents, and alumni. Such services include individual and group counseling sessions regarding topics of career guidance and development, CV and cover letter review, interview preparation, professional networking skills, career search assistance and business-related seminars and workshops. Provide support to develop and maintain lasting relationships between students, alumni, practitioners and employers. Students may enhance their knowledge of business aspects of optometry by networking with alumni and practitioners through the Practice Opportunities Symposium, Capstone Program as well as other events throughout the year.

In addition, the Office of Career Development provides the Practice Opportunities Listing, exclusively for ICO students, residents and alumni. This on-line service provides the ability to search among professional opportunities available throughout the U.S. and Canada. As a result, new career opportunities are posted on a regular basis and range from part-time, full-time and fill-in positions to practices for sale. Due to ICO's exceptional didactic clinical education, alumni often seek to hire or transition their practices to graduates of their alma mater.

The Office of Career Development is in Office 2722 on the 2nd floor of the main building. Feel free to contact careerdev@ico.edu or 312-949-7083.

Counseling and Enrichment

UWILL is a multifaceted program for ICO student wellness. It includes 24/7 support and counseling via 833-434-1217 and <https://app.uwill.com/>, sponsored subscription to the mindfulness app called Head Space, a lot of information available through <https://app.uwill.com/>.

Questions about any UWILL resource can be directed to the Asst. Dean for Student Success or the Dean of Student Affairs.

Student Success and Academic Enrichment Services

As an ICO student, you have access to faculty who are leaders in the profession. As a graduate student, you want to make sure that you avail yourself of your faculty's office hours, review sessions, etc. One of the best ways to be successful in the program is to take advantage of the accessibility of our faculty in working with you before you find yourself facing academic difficulty.

From time to time, you will encounter courses and labs that are a struggle. Your first-line resource for students experiencing academic difficulty is the course instructor. The Student Success Center coordinates and provides assistance for students to augment the assistance provided by faculty members. The academic enrichment services include, but are not limited to, review sessions, tutoring, academic advising and individual or group sessions on topics such as study skills enhancement and time management.

Tutoring - individual and staffed / drop-in tutoring services are available. Upper classmen who have done well in the course and have been reviewed by faculty are available to provide one-on-one and group assistance. Students should check the Student Success Center page or stop by the Student Success Center (room 2721) to arrange for tutoring. Students having trouble with patient care should contact their Clinic Preceptor to arrange for tutorial help.

Academic Coaching – a program that bridges both academic and psychosocial needs of students. Staffed by a dedicated team of upper-class students, the program matches interested students with a coach. The coaches provide support in the form of tactical techniques related to

note taking, time management, learning strategies, as well as social support. Interested students are invited to drop an email to AcademicCoaching@ico.edu.

ICO Connects – this program pairs small groups of first year students with a faculty member. The ICO Connects Mentor meets with the students several times each quarter to catalyze networking, provide support, and offer real-time resources to enhance academic success.

Academic Advising - some students who experience academic difficulty may require assistance above and beyond review sessions and tutoring. These students may meet with the Assistant Dean for Student Success for evaluation and the provision of necessary assistance.

Special Topic Sessions - group and individual sessions are offered to enhance students' learning experience. Topics will include stress management, study skills enhancement and time management. Group sessions will be advertised on the bulletin boards and in the "*ICO Insider*." Individual sessions may be arranged by contacting the Assistant Dean for Student Success.

Communications

Bulletin Boards

Bulletin boards are a means for communication among students, faculty, staff and administration. They are also in public view as the campus experiences many visitors from outside the ICO family. This policy is designed to promote a means for communication while, at the same time providing "ground rules" to ensure individual communications are efficient, non-offensive, and do not compromise the perceived professionalism of our school, students, or the profession. The policy is also designed to allow those people interested in viewing specific items to seek out those items when needed and not be constantly bombarded with repetitive information or notices which may be of no interest to an individual.

Anyone at ICO may use bulletin boards to communicate with others if that communication meets the following guidelines. Observation of the following rules is necessary:

1. Notices are to be mounted only on appropriate bulletin boards utilizing thumb tacks or push pins (not staples).
2. Signs should not extend beyond the rim of the bulletin board.
3. Serving alcohol should only be mentioned on signs posted on the bulletin boards in the President's Circle Lounge or mailbox area.
4. Anyone mounting signs should write their box number in the lower right corner with the date the sign was posted.
5. Signs without a box number, placed in an inappropriate area, expired or not meeting the above criteria will be removed.
6. Individuals mounting signs are responsible for removal of their sign within 24 hours following the date of an event or when it is no longer appropriate.
7. College administration reserves the right to remove items from the bulletin boards in preparation for special events. Items are subject to removal 30 days after posting.
8. Questions regarding bulletin board usage should be directed to the Student Affairs Office.

Publications, Publicity, Advertising

The Director of Marketing and Communications serves as advisor for the College publications including *ICO Insider* (bi-weekly e-newsletter).

Editorial freedom of student publications or yearbooks shall be governed by the following guidelines:

1. Students shall be guided by the canons of responsible journalism, such as the avoidance of libel, indecency, undocumented allegations, attacks on personal integrity and the techniques of harassment and innuendo.
2. Student publications should explicitly state on the editorial page that the opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the College or Student Body.
3. The publishing staff of the publication must be listed on the masthead.

The following situations require the prior permissions of the Director of Marketing and Communications.

1. Any invitation to attend the campus, or to attend any student function, made to any speaker, or any reporter, photographer, or cameraman from the news media or from any off-campus publication.
2. A student permitting himself to appear in commercial advertising which identifies the College or its facilities.
3. Students publishing any paper or other publication bearing the name of the College or purporting to be sanctioned by the College.

ICO Insider

The ***ICO Insider*** is the e-newsletter for the Illinois College of Optometry and the Illinois Eye Institute. Please submit any news, photos, or anything else you think would be of interest to students, faculty and staff using the following submission guidelines.

***ICO Insider* Submission Guidelines**

1. The newsletter is published bi-weekly.
2. Please send submissions to communications@ico.edu and include "*ICO Insider* Submission" in the subject line.
3. Please check previous newsletters to make sure the item you are submitting has not already been published.
4. Please feel free to send links to news articles, columns or blogs that mention you or that you have written, or that mention ICO.
5. For awards, honors, and accomplishments, please include the person's full name, reason for being honored or acknowledged; year of graduation (for current students), and job title (for staff & faculty).
6. Please consider sharing your photos from ICO events or activities!

Financial Aid

Federal Student Financial Aid

Federal student financial aid, which includes student loans and work study, provides assistance for students enrolled at least half the time. It helps to cover school expenses, including tuition and fees, room and board, books and supplies, and transportation.

Applying for Federal Financial Aid

1. Complete the **FAFSA** (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). Beginning each October 1st, you will be able to apply for the upcoming award year. You will be allowed to use your already completed tax data to file this FAFSA (This is called prior-prior year.) You will need an FSA ID to sign the FAFSA and subsequent loan promissory notes. You can obtain the FSA ID at <https://fsaid.ed.gov/>
2. Our FAFSA school code is 001689. There is no charge for completing your FAFSA. Be sure the site that you are using to complete your FAFSA is Studentaid.gov.
3. You should save all records and all other materials used in completing the application because you may need them later if your application is selected for verification by the Department of Education. We recommend using the IRS Data Retrieval Tool to complete your FAFSA and pre-populate it with your IRS tax info. This saves you time in the verification process later.
4. The Financial Aid Office will review your FAFSA and prepare an award notice outlining the amount of aid (from all sources) that we will offer you. Once completed, you will be able to view your financial aid award on the student portal at portal.ico.edu.

Deadlines for Applying

Apply as soon **AFTER October 1st** of each year as possible. This helps ensure that we can get your award letter to you as early as possible. You can't apply before this date. The FAFSA will now be using your prior-prior year tax return, so it should be easier to file using real tax data. For 2026-27, you will be using 2024 tax return data, which were to have been filed in April 2024. You only need to apply once for each school year. You must reapply for federal aid every year.

Eligibility requirements for federal financial aid

To receive aid from the federal student aid programs, you must meet all the following **criteria**:

- have financial need, except for some loan programs,
- be enrolled at least half-time or accepted for enrollment as a regular student working toward a degree,
- be a U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen.
- have a valid Social Security Number. If you don't have a Social Security Number, you can find out more about applying for one at www.ssa.gov
- maintain satisfactory academic progress.
- sign a statement on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) certifying that:
 - You will use federal student aid only for educational purposes.

- You are not in default on a federal student loan, and you do not owe money back on a federal student grant.
- register with the Selective Service, if required.
 - if you are a male 18 through 25 years of age and you have not yet registered with Selective Service, you can give the Selective Service permission to register you by checking a box on the FAFSA. You can also register through the Internet at www.sss.gov

Satisfactory Academic Progress for Federal Student Financial Aid

This policy is separate from the ICO academic progress policy program requirements and affects only eligibility for financial aid, and not the ability to continue to be enrolled at the College.

Federal regulations require that all students receiving federal Title IV financial aid make satisfactory academic progress towards the completion of the degree program. The requirements set forth for financial aid eligibility must meet the federal requirements and be at least as strict, if not more, than the student's academic program.

As of May 22, 2017 (the start of Summer 2017), ICO's financial aid office is implementing the following policy to ensure that we are in compliance with the updated federal regulations and that all of our students who are receiving federal financial aid are making appropriate progress towards the completion of the degree.

SAP Policy

Students receiving federal student financial aid must maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.30 at the end of each professional year and complete the degree requirements within six academic years, not exceeding 414.75 credit hours attempted. In addition, students must satisfy all academic requirements to progress academically within the program.

Evaluation of Progress

The Financial Aid Office will monitor the satisfactory academic progress of all financial aid recipients at the end of each Spring quarter in order to authorize eligibility for the next year. At each review period, the Financial Aid Office will review the student's cumulative GPA and pace of progression to degree completion to ensure that the student is on track to complete the program within the maximum timeframe.

However, at any point in the year, should the SPC review of the student result in the dismissal of the student, eligibility for financial aid is immediately terminated. Should the student appeal the SPC's dismissal decision and be granted an additional term, the student will still have to complete a separate financial aid appeal. Being reinstated for enrollment at the College by the SPC does not reinstate eligibility for federal student financial aid.

Academic Progress: Cumulative GPA

The financial aid office will review financial aid applicants/recipient's Cumulative GPAs to ensure that they are in keeping with the 2.30 standard of the College. Any student failing to maintain a minimum 2.30 Cumulative GPA will have their financial aid eligibility suspended. Students will be notified via their "eyedoc" email account.

A student may appeal the suspension of their financial aid by presenting an appeal letter and documentation of extenuating circumstances to the financial aid office. This decision and appeal is related to financial aid eligibility only and is independent of any decision made by the SPC and academic program.

Academic Progress: Maximum Timeframe

As ICO students are enrolled full-time in a cohort-based curriculum, students are expected to complete the program within four academic years. Given the manner in which courses are offered, a student must complete fall courses within a given fall quarter; otherwise, those courses will generally not be offered until the following fall. In light of this, there are times when the academic program may allow the student to restart the program or repeat a portion of the program in the following year.

All students must complete the OD program within 150% of the number of credit hours attempted required to complete their degree (414.75 credit hours) and within a six-year span. This means that each quarter enrolled, the student must successfully complete 67% of their attempted hours. At any point where the student is mathematically incapable of completing the program within the 150% timeframe, aid will be suspended. The student may submit a letter of appeal and an academic plan to the financial aid office for consideration.

The pace at which the student completes the program is defined as the number of hours earned divided by the number of hours attempted.

Electives (which are not required by the curriculum) are not included in the maximum timeframe calculation as they can only be taken in addition to the standard curriculum and with the approval of the Registrar.

As of July 1, 2026, the One Big Beautiful Bill Act has capped federal aid eligibility at 4 years of enrollment. Students who do not complete all degree requirements within the 4 academic years lose federal aid eligibility automatically. Students can apply for private educational loans for periods that exceed the four academic years. ICO will work with the private educational lender of your choosing. Each year we will make available a list of lenders previously used by our students to assist with the selection process, however, this list is not exhaustive or restrictive in any manner. The financial aid office will support each student working with the lender of the student's choice.

Incompletes/Withdrawals/Repeated Courses/Transfer Credits

All courses receiving an incomplete or withdrawal grade will be counted as hours attempted toward the maximum program time frame. Transfer credits will be counted as attempted and earned hours towards the maximum time frame. Repeated courses will count in the hours attempted calculation. The financial aid office will continue to use the cumulative GPA as calculated by the Office of the Registrar.

Appeals for Extenuating Circumstances

Recognizing that there can exist health or personal circumstances can affect academic performance, the financial aid office will take these into consideration in reviewing a student's compliance with our Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy. Some of the situations that we will consider include a serious personal or family illness or injury, a death in the family, personal job loss or family financial difficulties that exacerbate other stressors, a new medical or mental health diagnosis, or a learning disability. Within the context of the appeal, the student will need

to identify and document the grounds for appeal and identify the steps that they are taking to remedy the situation such as an academic plan, medical or psychological treatment and support, a temporary leave of absence or other manner of moving towards successful mitigation of the prior circumstances.

Cumulative GPA

If a student has had their financial aid suspended due to a failure to meet the minimum GPA standards, a written and signed appeal must be submitted to the Financial Aid Office before further financial aid can be considered. The letter must explain the extenuating circumstances that have caused the decline in the cumulative GPA and give indication of what steps have been taken to ensure that those factors have been mitigated for future terms. In addition, the student must supply an academic plan, authorized by their academic program, outlining the steps required to remediate the grade point average and identify how progress can be measured at the end of each quarter, if it will take more than one quarter to reach the 2.30 cumulative GPA requirement.

In the event that the return to good standing will take longer than one quarter, the academic plan must outline the requirements that the student must meet by the end of each quarter. The academic plan must be satisfied by the end of one academic year. If the student fails to meet the terms of the academic plan, they are ineligible for further financial aid.

These appeals must be reviewed and approved by the financial aid office before further federal financial aid can be received.

Maximum Timeframe

If a student has had their financial aid suspended due to exceeding the maximum timeframe standard, a written and signed appeal must be submitted to the Financial Aid Office before further financial aid can be considered. The letter must explain the extenuating circumstances that have caused the need to extend the program in either time or number of hours and also give indication of what steps have been taken to ensure that those factors have been mitigated for future terms.

In addition, the student must supply an academic plan, authorized by their academic program, outlining the remaining coursework required and the schedule in which it must be completed.

These appeals must be reviewed and approved by the financial aid office before further federal financial aid can be received.

As of July 1, 2026, the One Big Beautiful Bill Act has capped federal aid eligibility at 4 years of enrollment. Students who do not complete all degree requirements within the 4 academic years lose federal aid eligibility automatically. Students can apply for private educational loans for periods that exceed the four academic years.

SPC Actions Taken Before the End of Spring Quarter

Since the SPC reviews continued eligibility to enroll in the program, should the SPC dismiss a student from the program at any time, financial aid eligibility automatically terminates at the time of the dismissal.

In cases where the student appeals the SPC decision, and the SPC appeal is granted, the student must still appeal to the financial aid office for continued eligibility. The student must document any extenuating circumstances and how they have been mitigated. The financial aid office will review the appeal and make a determination about the financial aid status, independent of the SPC decision. The financial aid office would use the SPC action plan as the requirements necessary to maintain financial aid should the financial aid office find cause to grant the appeal. Failure to meet the SPC terms at the end of the financial aid appeal quarter results in immediate suspension of eligibility for continued aid until the student returns to good academic standing in the program. The student is responsible for all tuition and fees incurred should they enroll while on financial aid suspension. These must be paid in full each quarter where financial aid is suspended.

If the SPC dismisses the student with the option to return in a future term, financial aid eligibility terminates with the dismissal. The student must still appeal to the financial aid office for continued eligibility. The student must document any extenuating circumstances and how they have been mitigated. The financial aid office will review the appeal and make a determination about the financial aid status, independent of the SPC decision. The financial aid office would use the SPC action plan as the requirements necessary to maintain financial aid should the financial aid office find cause to grant the appeal. Failure to meet the SPC terms at the end of the financial aid appeal quarter results in immediate suspension of eligibility for continued aid until the student returns to good academic standing in the program. The student is responsible for all tuition and fees incurred should they enroll while on financial aid suspension. These must be paid in full each quarter where financial aid is suspended.

As of July 1, 2026, the One Big Beautiful Bill Act has capped federal aid eligibility at 4 years of enrollment. Students who do not complete all degree requirements within the 4 academic years lose federal aid eligibility automatically. Students can apply for private educational loans for periods that exceed the four academic years.

Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Statuses

Good Standing: The student is meeting both the 2.30 cumulative GPA requirement at the end of Spring quarter and is on track to complete the program within the allowable time frame.

Probation: The student has been granted an appeal of their satisfactory academic progress and is working on the agreed upon remediation plan. The student will be evaluated each quarter based upon the terms of the academic plan. If the student meets the requirements of the academic plan, they will continue to be eligible for financial aid. If the student fails to meet the requirements of the plan, further financial aid will be suspended. An appeal is required before further financial aid can be considered.

Suspension: The student has been dismissed by the SPC; has failed to meet the SPC action plan during a financial aid appeal quarter; or has failed SAP review by the financial aid office when either their cumulative GPA fall below 2.30 at the end of Spring or the student not able to mathematically complete the program within the required timeframe. An appeal is required before further financial aid can be considered. In the event that aid has been suspended after a prior financial aid appeal, a return to good academic standing is required before further aid can be considered, regardless of the SPC decisions. The student is responsible for all tuition and fees during a suspension of financial aid eligibility and must satisfy their financial obligations with the College prior to the end of the enrolled quarter.

Federal Student Aid Programs

Federal Work-Study (FWS)

The FWS Program provides jobs for students, in good academic standing who demonstrate financial need, allowing them to earn money to help pay education expenses. The program encourages community service work and work related to your course of study.

Your FWS wages are \$15 per hour. Your total FWS award depends on your level of need, and the funding level of the school.

The amount you earn can't exceed your total FWS award. In order to receive work study, you must be making satisfactory academic progress toward your degree. Federal funds are used for a portion of the student's salary. The matching portion is paid by the College.

FWS job descriptions for available positions are typically posted on **the SharePoint** website. The Work-study Program Administrator will hire all eligible students prior to their being allowed to work. Once a student finds a FWS job, all hiring paperwork needs to be processed **before the student may start working**. The paperwork includes Work Study Authorization Form; an I-9 Form complete with proper identification (identification must be original documents; photocopies are not acceptable); Federal W-4; and Illinois IL W-4. All forms can be found on **the SharePoint site** or obtained from the Work Study Office (Room 2530). Students may not work during scheduled class/lab/clinic hours.

Work-study students will need to complete an electronic timecard twice a month and submit the timecard by 5pm of the 16th and/or the first day of the month. The total hours worked in all positions combined may not exceed 15 hours a week while school is in session. The total hours worked in all positions combined may not exceed 28 hours a week during break weeks or summer (summer maximum applies only to new 2nd professional year students not enrolled in summer coursework). Students will be paid on the 15th of the month for the hours they worked on the 16th through the end of the previous month and on the last day of the month for the hours worked on the 1st through the 15th.

If timecards are not completed on time, the student must obtain a gold paper timesheet from either the Work Study Office or the Business Affairs Office. The student needs to complete the paper timesheet with the missing hours, and have it signed by the supervisor before submitting it to the Business Affairs Office.

Please contact the work-study office via email at workstudy@ico.edu if you have any questions. The work-study office is located in the Human Resource Department.

Health Professions Student Loans (HPSL)

As one of the Health and Human Services funding programs, HPSLs are available to full-time students attending participating schools who demonstrate family financial need. These are subsidized loans with a five percent interest rate, and these loans are subsidized—the government pays the interest during periods of eligible enrollment, grace, or eligible deferment.

To apply, you need to complete both the FAFSA and the ICO HPSL application form each year. Please note that parental information is used only to determine HPSL eligibility; it does not influence your eligibility for any other financial aid program.

HPSL loans generally have a 12-month grace period available upon graduation and up to 10 years to repay the loan if it is not included in a Direct Loan Consolidation. The interest rate is 5% and is subsidized while in school full-time.

Direct Unsubsidized Loans

As a graduate student, you are no longer eligible for Federal Direct Subsidized loans, instead your loans will come from the Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loans. An **unsubsidized** loan is not restricted to federal financial need, and therefore can be used to pay for what the FAFSA will determine as your estimated family contribution (EFC). You apply for eligibility for the loan via FAFSA and creditworthiness is not required. You'll be charged simple interest from the time the loan is disbursed until it is paid in full. If you allow the interest to accumulate, it will be **capitalized as the loan enters repayment** -that is, the interest will be added to the principal amount of your loan and additional interest will be based upon the higher amount.

The interest rate on your loan is variable percent for the Unsubsidized Direct Loan, set annually on July 1 each year for the life of that year's loans. As a result, you may have different interest rates for each year of your loan and those rates will apply to the individual loan for the life of the loan.

Continuing professional students, you can borrow up to \$40,500 each nine-month academic period and \$47,167 for each 12-month academic period under the Direct Unsubsidized Loan program.

Beginning July 1, 2026 the One Big Beautiful Bill Act stipulates that students entering the professional optometry program are eligible for \$50,000 in Federal Direct Unsubsidized loans for a total of \$200,000 borrowed over the 4 years of the program.

NOTE: The amounts given above are the maximum yearly amounts you can borrow. You may receive less than these yearly maximum amounts if you receive other financial aid that is used to cover a portion of your cost of attendance.

Generally, the total debt you can have outstanding from Direct Loan Subsidized and Unsubsidized loans combined is \$224,000 as a continuing professional student (only \$23,000 of this amount may be in undergraduate subsidized loans). For students enrolling Fall 2026 and beyond, the lifetime limit is \$200,000 and includes any prior graduate borrowing.

Direct Graduate PLUS Loans (for Class of 2027-2029 only)

This is an unsubsidized federal student loan that can be used to cover portions of your cost of attendance not able to be covered by the other financial aid sources. Interest accrues while in school and unpaid interest capitalizes upon repayment (similar to Direct Unsubsidized Loans). The interest rate is set annually on July 1st and is fixed for the life of that loan, until it is repaid. The origination fee may change based on sequestration rules established by the US Congress.

For Class of 2030: The One Big Beautiful Bill Act eliminates the Graduate Plus Loan program for students beginning their program after July 1, 2026. Additional student loan funding is available via private education loan lenders. ICO provides the FastChoice tool to assist in comparing private lenders, based on ones used previously by ICO students. However, the list is not exhaustive nor restrictive. The financial aid office will work with any lender the student selects.

Receiving Your Direct Loans

For a Direct Loan, ICO will originate your Direct Loans with the Department of Education and request disbursement of funds to coordinate with the start of each quarter of your enrollment. When ICO receives these funds, they will be credited to your student billing account and will be used first to pay any institutional charges, or other charges you have authorized to be placed on your account. Any funds in excess of your charges will be given to you as a credit balance refund via EFT, if you have elected direct deposit, or via paper check that will be placed in your campus mailbox. We highly recommend that you use direct deposit, to the bank account of your choosing, which ensures you have the quickest access to your funds. In general, credit balances are timed to be available in the first days of the quarter. First year, first quarter students will have their credit balances processed during the first week of class to ensure that we can verify actual enrollment in the program.

Federal student loans can only be received during periods of actual enrollment. Therefore, first year students cannot receive funds before the first day of class, nor during the summer between first and second year due to lack of enrollment in the program.

Grace Period

After you graduate, leave school, or drop below half-time enrollment, you generally have six months before you begin repayment on the loans you used at ICO. This is called a "grace period."

If you took time off before coming to ICO, or had a "gap year," your non-ICO loans may enter immediate repayment should you drop below half-time or cease enrollment at ICO for any reason. A leave of absence that will exceed 180 days will also prompt loans to enter repayment as of the date of the start of the leave.

During the grace period on a subsidized loan, you don't have to pay any principal, and no interest will be charged.

Note: If you received a Direct Subsidized Loan that was first disbursed between July 1, 2012, and July 1, 2014, you will be responsible for paying any interest that accrues during your grace period. If you choose not to pay the interest that accrues during your grace period, the interest will be added to your *principal* balance.

During the grace period on an unsubsidized loan, you don't have to pay any principal, but interest will be charged. You can either pay the interest or it will be capitalized.

After you leave school or drop below half-time enrollment, you'll receive information about repayment and will be notified by your loan servicer of the date repayment begins. However, you are responsible for beginning repayment on time, even if you don't receive this information. Failing to make payments on your loan may have a negative effect on your credit rating.

Understanding the Repayment Options

Understanding the repayment options for your federal student loans can go a long way toward building a solid financial future.

For more information on repayment plans, visit **studentaid.gov**.

Fellowship and Awards Committee

This committee selects students to be honored with various, whether due to academic, clinical achievement or service to the College. Membership of this committee consists of the Dean of

Student Affairs (Chair), three or four faculty selected at large, and one student representative from the Student Association. In addition, various members of the College may be called upon to serve as resources for selected issues.

International Student Eligibility for Financial Aid at ICO

International students who are permanent residents of the US should complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA); these forms are available online at fafsa.gov.

If you are not a Permanent Resident of the United States of America but are able to obtain a credit-worthy co-signer for student loans who is a U.S. citizen or Permanent Resident, there are some private bank loan programs for which you may be eligible. The terms of these educational loans are quite competitive, and the loans can cover a large portion of your educational expenses at ICO.

Many Canadian students are eligible for federal (Canada Student Loan) and provincial loans; the application process begins with forms provided by your home province (e.g., British Columbia Student Assistance Program). Because those programs may vary by province, and fall outside our area of experience, you will need to contact the appropriate administrative office (e.g., Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology) to pursue these loan programs.

If a Canadian student is not a Permanent Resident of the United States of America and is unable to obtain a credit-worthy co-signer who is a U.S. citizen or Permanent Resident, funding must be sought through Canadian sources to assist you with your educational expenses. You will want to make sure that you take into consideration the full four-year cost of your program, and factor in how applicable exchange rates may affect your financing plans.

You can also find more information on financing a U.S. education at www.edupass.org.

Facilities/Room Reservations & Master Calendar

Anyone wishing to use a room for a one-time event, or a reoccurring event needs to complete the Facilities Request form online <https://forms.office.com/r/dfstWJxaut>. Once the form is submitted, it is reviewed to ensure there are no scheduling conflicts and all departments impacted by the request are available to support the event (campus security, facilities, development, IT Support, etc.). The person reserving the space(s) will get notification that their event was approved or rejected. It is important to complete the request form at least 14 days in advance of the event. Requests with less notification time will be approved as room and personnel to support the event are available. The Office of Student Affairs maintains an "all-campus" master calendar of events and activities of the College community.

The College reserves the right to deny any person or organization access to current students on the ICO campus.

Current student "Directory Information" can be provided upon request and in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. (FERPA)

- A request to address faculty should be directed to the Vice President and Dean for Academic Affairs.
- A request to address employees should be directed to the Human Resources Office.
- A request to address Alumni should be directed to the Director of Alumni Development.

Facilities at the College are available for use by student groups without a fee. However, the intended use must be consistent with the objectives of the College. The proposed program or event must not interfere with or restrict the normal operation and function of the educational program at the College. Since the purpose of the College is education, requests for academic or instructional programs will have priority over social events. The use of college facilities by students must be approved by the Assistant Dean for Student Success (or designate). The College seeks neither to promote nor discourage involvement of individuals or groups in religious activity. Student groups having a religious orientation may apply for the use of college facilities through the Student Affairs Office.

Requests for use of facilities by student groups should be received by the Student Affairs Office **no less than fourteen (14) days prior to the date of the proposed event**. For those programs or events requiring special preparation, requests should be submitted much earlier.

Room reservation forms must be submitted according to the following guidelines:

Lecture Center – Requests for use of lecture facilities are vitally important to be submitted well in advance in order to ensure availability of rooms. Academic schedules and room assignments may change at any time and therefore must be cleared in advance. Moveable room dividers in the Lecture Center may only be altered by the ICO Facilities Department. The dividers are heavy and awkward and must be moved and secured properly for safety. **DO NOT ATTEMPT TO MOVE LECTURE CENTER WALLS/PARTITIONS UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES. Facilities must be notified in advance – no exceptions.**

Library – Four study rooms on the library's second floor may be booked by either contacting the Library Circulation desk, booking the room online, or by using the sign-up sheet posted outside of the room(s). Students are limited to booking one room for 4 hours per day during library hours. These rooms are closed for use when there are exams going on and when the library is closed. It is highly suggested that the rooms are used for parties of 2 or more.

Please submit requests well in advance to the Library Director to reserve some other Library facilities.

Eye Institute - Requests to use Clinic Facilities are to be submitted to the Chief of Staff. Students may not utilize IEI examination rooms for unsupervised practice.

Fitness Center - Events involving the gymnasium complex will be cleared with the Fitness Coordinator.

Other Campus Facilities - Requests for use of all other campus facilities are to be submitted to the Student Affairs Office.

Student groups using campus facilities will ensure that upon completion of the activity, such facilities and College property affected will be restored to the same condition as prior to the event. This will include, but is not limited to, clean up, replacement or rearranged furniture and removal of all announcements.

Outside Request - The outside request use of the lecture center or other facilities of the Illinois College of Optometry by any organization or group which is not affiliated with the College must be approved by the Office of Human Resources (x7076). This approval must be secured a minimum of thirty days prior to the meeting of the organization. Arrangements must be made to cover the costs incidental to the use of these facilities, such as janitorial services, electric, heating or cooling, security staff and other expenses that may accrue for opening the College

for such a meeting. This also applies to student organizations requesting the use of college facilities for outside organizations, groups and speakers. *The Illinois College of Optometry reserves the right to deny the use of any of its facilities to any group or organization at any time.*

Vendors/Outside Organizations Speaking to Students

The College has a responsibility to provide students with the latest information that will assist them in becoming excellent health care practitioners. The primary means for assuring this is through classroom lectures, laboratories, conferences and direct patient care supervised activities. The responsibility for determining who conveys information to students during scheduled classroom lectures, in conjunction with required course times, laboratories, conferences related to courses and/or patient care activities is the responsibility of the course instructor (lead instructor) or Suite Chief under the ultimate direction of the Assistant Deans and Vice President and Dean for Academic Affairs.

Periodically, the College is contacted by individuals, companies, association representatives, etc., that have an interest in addressing students, marketing a product or services, or simply conveying information that may be of interest to students.

The College, when deemed appropriate, will try to provide a reasonable and best suited forum to cooperate with the interests of outside representatives as long as their interests can provide a demonstrated benefit to ICO students, staff, faculty, or alumni. Companies and organizations currently supporting the mission of the College and participating through established channels (i.e., Bookstore, Equipment Expo, etc.) will be given priority.

The entry point for all outside requests to provide information or address students directly should first be routed through the Student Affairs Office. The Dean of Student Affairs (with appropriate counsel) will determine if and how the request will provide a direct benefit to current ICO students and provide guidance and direction on how to best structure a presentation of the information to students.

Available options may include (but are not limited to):

- Participation in an ICO sponsored program (Practice Opportunities Symposium, Commencement Capstone Program, Equipment Exhibition, etc.)
- A presentation sponsored by a Student Association recognized club or organization.
- A presentation with an individual class - arranged with assistance by Class Representatives
- Direct mail to current students' on-campus mailboxes
- Marketing table to address passers-by.
- Providing a private or jointly sponsored (after-hours) lecture or program.
- Student Newsletter announcement/article
- Bulletin Board posting

The College will determine any associated costs to the College, which will become the responsibility of the person/organization submitting the request.

Fitness Center & Recreational Programs

As a student at ICO, we want you to work hard but also play hard. The ICO Fitness Center & Gym are great resources for all students to stay healthy and keep stress at bay. A full-sized gymnasium, locker rooms and a multipurpose fitness center make it easy for you to exercise in many ways while at ICO. The fitness center features treadmills, elliptical trainers, a

stair master, and rower along with an assortment of strength training and stretching equipment. To make your workouts more enjoyable, the Fitness Center maintains three flat screen televisions and Bluetooth stereo.

Fitness Coordinator: ICO retains a full-time Fitness Professional, nationally certified by the American Council on Exercise (ACE) and the National Strength and Conditioning Association (NSCA). The Fitness Coordinator provides, free of charge, a variety of one-on-one fitness assessment and guided workout services.

The Fitness Coordinator can design and help you implement an individualized exercise program targeted toward your goals. Please email osimpson@ico.edu to set up an appointment.

Group Fitness Classes: If group workouts are more your style, you'll be happy to know that group exercise classes are available, free of charge, to all students. Class formats may include Pilates, yoga, boot camp, dance, indoor cycling, and strength training. Class schedules change on a monthly basis.

Fitness and Health Programming: Of course, there's more to health than exercise alone. To help make sure you stay well, the Fitness Coordinator provides a variety of wellness programs, emphasizing the importance of developing smart eating and exercise habits and implementing a healthy lifestyle. With these goals in mind, the Fitness Coordinator offers a variety of education programs including bulletin boards focusing on different aspects of health; nutritious snack breaks or stress relief during final exam periods; health and wellness special events, and opportunities to participate in local fitness events.

Intramurals: Athletes can find a home at ICO. The ICO Fitness Center runs a variety of intramural sports. Recent intramural leagues have played ping pong, basketball, volleyball, and badminton. The ICO Fitness Center can provide equipment to student-organized sports groups. Students wishing to start their own sports team, whether for intramural or extramural play, can be sure that the Fitness Center will assist in any way possible.

Gym Guest Policy

1. ICO students are welcome to bring (1) guest to use the Fitness Center and Gym, provided the following requirements are met:
2. Guests must sign in on the Guest Log Sheet in the Fitness Center binder and at the front desk with security.
3. Guests must sign a waiver to use any fitness center/gym equipment (1 per academic year located in the Security office)
4. Guests must always be accompanied by ICO student/staff while at ICO.
5. Guests must follow all Fitness Center policies and replace any equipment after use.
6. Guest is the responsibility of the ICO student/staff who signs them into the Fitness Center.
7. Only 1 guest is allowed per student at a time.
8. Guests must not be in the ICO fitness facilities any later than 4 PM on any weekday or weekend.
9. Please contact the Fitness Coordinator with any questions or concerns at OSimpson@ico.edu 312-949-7460

Keep up-to-date with the latest fitness and wellness offerings here at ICO and across the Chicagoland area by checking out the [Fitness Center's webpage](#).

Waiver and Release of Liability

The use of the ICO Fitness Center is voluntary. All individuals who utilize the Fitness Center are required to sign a waiver and release of liability form, prior to the use of the facility. You can find this form online on my.ico in the Fitness Center section.

This waiver form reminds individuals that all fitness activities have inherent risks and engaging in fitness activities is done at your own discretion. ICO is not liable for any incidents that may arise in conjunction with your voluntary usage of the Fitness Center facilities and/or equipment. Please carefully read through the waiver and release before signing it.

Food Service

ICO is partnering with our neighbors at Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT) for our food service needs. Beginning with the first day of Fall Quarter, Monday, August 11th, we will have access to IIT's facility within the McCormick Tribune Campus Center (MTCC) located right underneath the Green Line tracks on 33rd Street in between Wabash and State. The entrance is one block away from ICO's southwest gate and is approximately a three-minute walk door-to-door.

Use the following link to find out more information. <https://dineoncampus.com/iit/ico-at-iit>

Who Can get a Meal Plan?

On-campus ICO residents who live in the suite style rooms (1st – 3rd floors) are automatically enrolled in the Block 460 Meal Plan (for the full academic year) since they do not have a kitchen. Students living in RC apartments, off campus housing or are 4th year externs may choose to enroll in a meal plan.

How Does the Meal Plan Work?

Just swipe and eat! With the Block 460 Meal Plan, your ICO ID works just like a debit card. The Block 460 Meal Plan is comprised of two blocks of 230-meal swipes, 23 meal exchanges and 75 Bonus Points. When swiped, the Meal Swipe/Exchange or Bonus Points are automatically deducted from the plan. The first block of 230 meal swipes/23 meal exchanges/75 bonus points are available from August 9, 2026 – December 12, 2026. The second block of 230 meal swipes/23 meal exchanges/75 bonus points are available from January 5, 2027 – May 8, 2027.

There is no roll over value from session to session. Left over or unused meal swipes/meal exchanges/bonus points from the August – December session do not roll over to the next session.

Can I let other people use my ID to get meals?

Meal plan participants are NOT permitted to loan their ID card to another person. The meal plan is not transferable.

What if I run out of Meal Swipes or Bonus Points?

You can add more Bonus Points to your account if you start to run low at any point in the increments of \$25. Bonus Points and meal exchanges are available / accepted at all Illinois Tech Dining Locations, including The Commons Dining Hall. To learn how to add Bonus Points, visit [DineOnCampus.com/iit](https://dineoncampus.com/iit). Additional Meal Swipes cannot be added.

Do Meal Plans Roll Over?

There is no roll over value from session to session. Left over or unused meal swipes/meal exchanges/bonus points from the August – December session do not roll over to the next session.

Where Do I Check My Balance?

Illinois Tech Dining cashiers can let you know your balance after a transaction.

How Do I Pay for a Meal Plan?

Those students having a meal plan will see the charge on their student account.

Don't forget to discover so much more about your dining options including times, menus, and locations. <https://dineoncampus.com/iit/ico-at-iit>

Housing

Residential Complex

The Residential Complex is available for on-campus student housing. All College policies and regulations apply. The use of the College Residential Complex by guests must be in accordance with the provisions of the housing contract and current RC Manual. You can find the RC Manual on Housing Page. If a student group/organization is seeking to use common space in the RC, the Resident Assistants must be notified in advance.

Off-Campus Housing Information

Information about off-campus housing is available in the [ICO Off Campus Housing Guide \(2025 ed.\)](#).

Information Systems Support

ICO's Information Systems (IS) Support team is here to assist with technology-related issues. You can reach us through:

- **Phone:** 312-949-7500
- **Email:** Support@ico.edu
- **In-Person:** Help Desk Suite, Crouch Hall #1016

In-Person Hours:

- Monday – Wednesday: 7:00 AM – 7:00 PM
- Thursday – Friday: 7:00 AM – 5:00 PM
- Saturday: 7:00 AM – 1:00 PM

The support line and email are staffed during these hours. For after-hours emergencies, call the support line and leave a message. *Emergencies are issues impacting multiple users and/or systems. Non-emergency requests will be addressed the next business day.*

Security Reminder

IS Support will **never** ask for your password via email. Please do not share your passwords.

Systems We Support

- Wi-Fi networks
- OneCard ID system
- Microsoft Office 365 / Outlook
- User accounts and password resets
- NextGen (EHR) and Forum (PACS)
- Brightspace LMS
- Examsoft
- Turning Point response system
- Mediasite lecture capture and streaming system
- College-owned desktops, laptops, and VDI systems
- Printers and multi-function copiers
- AV systems
- Campus phone system

If you have an IS or IT problem and are unsure who to contact, reach out to IS Support via email, phone, or in person. Our team will assist or refer you as needed.

Mailroom Services

The mailroom and student mailboxes are located in the President's Circle Lounge, beneath the library. The mailroom handles all mail for the College. Contact: x7085 or x7087.

Mailbox Information

Each new student receives a mailbox during orientation. All student mail (excluding parcels), as well as messages from faculty and administration, will be placed in these mailboxes. Use your assigned mailbox key to access your mail. While mailroom staff can assist in retrieving mail, students are strongly encouraged to use their assigned mailbox keys to access their mail independently. If you lose your key, pay \$5 at the College Cashier and bring your receipt to the mailroom. We will request a replacement key on your behalf and will assist in checking your mailbox until your new key is ready.

Package Notifications & Pickup

Packages too large for your mailbox will be held in the mailroom. You will receive a pink slip in your mailbox when a package is ready. Bring the pink slip to the mailroom to claim your package. You will be required to sign and date the slip upon receiving your package.

Mailroom Hours

Monday–Friday: 9:00 AM – 4:30 PM Closed on weekends.

Incoming Mail

Mail is delivered Monday through Friday and is typically placed in student mailboxes by 11:00 AM.

Outgoing Mail/Packages

Bring outgoing mail to the mailroom before 2:00 PM for same-day processing. Postage must be paid at the time of mailing, and we only accept cash payments for outgoing mail or packages. The mailroom provides most USPS services and UPS shipping. FedEx is not available, but staff can direct you to the nearest location. We also accept outgoing return service packages for UPS and USPS (no QR code return labels accepted); all return packages must have a valid UPS or USPS return label.

Shipping Guidelines

Students are responsible for packaging and labeling. Materials are available in the mailroom. For UPS issues (e.g., damage or loss), staff will help file a claim.

Official Communication

Assignments, official notices, and other important documents are regularly placed in your campus mailbox. You should also check your @eyedoc.ico.edu email frequently, as grades, academic status updates, and other communications are sent there—especially at the end of each quarter. Additional information is available through portal.ico.edu and SharePoint.

Privacy Reminder All mail, whether incoming or outgoing, is private and must be treated as such—even by student employees handling mail.

Proper Address Format for Deliveries

Use the following format for all mail and packages:

Your Name 1st Year Student (optional once mailbox number is known)
3241 S. Michigan Ave. #Your Mailbox Number (example: #456)
Chicago, IL 60616

Do not use “Box #” — this can cause delays with companies like Amazon, which may confuse it with a U.S. Post Office Box.

Do not send mail or packages to the RC or Indiana Ave. addresses — those are not staffed for deliveries. Indiana Ave. is ONLY for food delivery.

Package Delivery Instructions

To help ensure proper delivery, especially from Amazon and similar services, include the following instructions at checkout:

“Deliver all packages to Receiving Dock on 33rd Street (Ring Bell).”

Delivery Hours: Monday–Friday: 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM Saturday–Sunday: Closed

Deliveries attempted outside of these hours will not be accepted.

Note: Occasionally, independent drivers (e.g., from Amazon) do not follow our delivery procedures and may leave packages outside. This is beyond our control, but the mailroom staff will do their best to assist you in locating or retrieving your package.

Additional Information:

Amazon Deliveries & Security Codes

Amazon sometimes uses a security code system to improve the accuracy and security of deliveries. This code is typically required when:

- The delivery option specifies "hand it to the recipient"
- The item is of high value
- The delivery location has a history of package theft or mis delivery
- There have been previous issues with deliveries to the address

When a code is required, it will be sent to you via email or appear in your Amazon order details. Do not share this code via text or email unless you are standing directly in front of the delivery driver. Sharing the code prematurely or remotely can lead to dishonest delivery confirmations, where the package is marked “delivered” but is never actually received.

If you're unable to meet the driver in person, you may forward the security code to mailroom@ico.edu. The mailroom staff will then be able to assist in receiving the package on your behalf.

Understanding Amazon Delivery Methods

Amazon uses multiple carriers to fulfill orders, and delivery behavior varies by method:

- Amazon Delivery Trucks & UPS: These typically align closely with delivery notifications. Packages generally arrive on time and are placed at the correct location.
- USPS: Packages sent via USPS are first delivered to the local post office. Even if tracking shows “Delivered...left in mailroom,” that often means it’s at the post office, not ICO. Our internal courier picks up USPS mail once per day around 9:15 AM, Monday through Friday. If your package doesn’t arrive in that morning delivery, it usually comes the next day. Please allow 2–3 days from the “delivered” notification to account for unforeseen delays.
- Independent Drivers (including Amazon Flex): These deliveries are the least predictable. Drivers sometimes ignore instructions or fail to properly follow posted signage. Packages may be left in incorrect areas or marked “delivered” prematurely. Unfortunately, ICO staff have no direct control over these deliveries.

In the event of a problem, the most effective solution is to contact Amazon customer service directly via phone or live chat and explain the situation. Since you are the customer, Amazon will only work directly with you to resolve the issue.

Security

The College Security Office is staffed with active off-duty or retired Chicago Police Department officers who have had considerable experience in law enforcement. Security officers are on duty 24 hours a day every day of the year. Closed circuit TV monitors are used for surveillance of parking lots and the surrounding College property.

The Security officers have instructions to check identification of anyone on campus whenever necessary. Since Security officers may not recognize everyone, it is important that each student always wears his/her college ID badge. This will save time and trouble for all concerned and avoid possible embarrassment. If you are requested to present your identification, please cooperate with the officer because they are functioning in his/her capacity for your welfare and safety.

Persons carrying packages out of the building may be challenged. The Security officers have instructions to contact the administrative offices for clearance on packages or boxes going out of the building to prevent disappearance of personal articles and school equipment.

Public access to the campus is restricted to two (2) controlled entrances: the College/business entrance on Indiana Avenue and the Illinois Eye Institute entrance on Michigan Avenue. When a receptionist is not present, entrance to the campus is gained by:

- Access card (ID) which is issued to all students, staff, and faculty.
- Admittance by a Campus Safety Officer

The following are some suggestions of ways to reduce the possibilities of personal loss:

- Keep important items locked in a secure place.
- Keep car doors locked, windows rolled up, and items in cars not visible from the outside.
- Do not leave clinic equipment unattended and do not leave purses, jewelry, money, etc. on desks, in the library, in the washrooms, or in the fitness center/locker rooms.
- Personal items (unless properly secured) should not be left overnight at the College.
- Be aware of your surroundings.
- The possession, storage or use of any firearm or other weapon on campus is strictly prohibited.
- Under extraordinary circumstances, it may be necessary for the College to conduct a reasonable search of a student's locker, RC room or other campus facilities.

For your welfare and protection, anything, or anyone of a suspicious nature on the College premises should immediately be reported to Campus Security (x7633) or a member of the ICO or IEI Administration or a faculty member. In the Residential Complex, report anything suspicious to Security or a Resident Assistant. Students should not hesitate to call College Security or the city police (via 911) when the occasion seems to warrant this action. In such cases, give full information and follow instructions given.

Campus Security and Fire Safety Report

Infractions, crimes and other information must be documented according to the Uniform Crimes Reporting System (UCR) as dictated by law. Statistics and records of all campus safety activities are compiled monthly and forwarded to the College administration in a timely manner.

The annual ICO Campus Security and Fire Safety Report is available online and printed copies are available from the Student Affairs Office.

ICO Student Courtesy Escort Van

From dusk until 12:15 am, students can request shuttle transportation within our service boundaries, seven days a week:

- West to Halsted
- East to Martin Luther King Drive
- North to Roosevelt
- South to 35th Street

Students need to contact Security (x7633) to request transportation within the service boundaries. Each student must swipe their ID card prior to entering the van.

Student Health

Healthcare Options

There are several healthcare clinics located near ICO:.

- Rush South Loop Convenient Care
- South Loop Immediate Care
- Michigan Avenue Immediate Care
- Walgreen's at 35th Street and Martin Luther King Drive has an Advocate Clinic.

The clinics listed are not endorsed by the College, nor should one assume the clinics provide care without charge.

Health Insurance

The Illinois College of Optometry strongly recommends that each student maintain a quality accident and health insurance policy. Students should investigate whether they are still covered by health insurance policies of their parents. With recent changes to health care, a student's eligibility under parents' plans has been expanded.

Chapter 5 – Policies & Regulations

Assessment Integrity Policy

Unless otherwise specified, all exams, quizzes, lab practical items or patient information, lab quizzes, and other assessment items/questions are the sole and confidential property of the Illinois College of Optometry. The following acts or omissions, whether committed before, during, or after any ICO assessment, are considered academic dishonesty:

- Receipt, acceptance, possession, access/exposure to ICO assessment items/questions, in whole or in part, for any purpose whatsoever. Assessment items/questions may only be viewed while taking the assessment administration itself or during the supervised review of an assessment by a course instructor or approved delegate.
- Copying, reproducing, reconstructing (whether by memory or otherwise), or compiling ICO assessment items/questions or other assessment materials, in whole or in part, for any purpose whatsoever.
- Publication, sharing, distribution, disclosure, or discussion of ICO assessment items/questions or other assessment materials, whether in whole or in part, for any purpose whatsoever.
- Attempting or offering to do any of the above-described acts.
- Failure to promptly report to ICO any of the above-described conduct or suspected conduct.

Receipt, acceptance, acquisition, exposure, review, use, copying, reproduction, reconstruction, compilation, publication, sharing, distribution, disclosure, or discussion of ICO assessment items/questions or other assessment materials is prohibited regardless of how it occurs. This includes, but is not limited to, whether written or oral, in-person or electronic, intranet, chat room, message board, social media, lectures, class notes, exam review course materials, Brightspace, ExamSoft, Mediasite, emails, text messages, pictures, mechanical, or other means. This includes personal use of assessment items/questions or materials, use by other students, or the purchase/sale/exchange of such items/questions or materials.

In addition, any cheating, collaboration, or other improper conduct during an assessment administration or in connection with an assessment is prohibited and is considered academic dishonesty. This includes, but is not limited to, any of the following:

- Copying answers from another student.
- Permitting another student to copy answers.
- Communicating with any other person for the purpose of giving or receiving any prohibited assistance.
- Engaging in any other conduct contrary to the requirement that a student must pass the assessment based on the student's own merit and without improper assistance or unfair advantage.
- Taking an assessment administration while impersonating another student.
- Permitting or requesting an impersonator take an assessment administration on a student's behalf.
- Possessing or having access to prohibited materials or property whether on your person or located at your seat.

- Removing assessment materials or scratch papers from the proctored environment.
- Attempting to circumnavigate any of the security features of ExamSoft, assigned exam seating, or any of the College's technology infrastructure. This includes sharing password/login information or accessing unencrypted assessment items/questions outside of the proctored environment.
- Leaving the proctored environment without showing an assessment submission screen to the proctor.

Any violations of this Assessment Integrity Policy are referred to the College's Professional Conduct and Ethics Committee.

Use of Generative AI in the Classroom and Laboratory (Nov. 2025)

This policy applied to all ICO students, in all courses, laboratories and student assignments at ICO, both on campus and external.

Purpose and Scope

This policy outlines the responsible and ethical use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools (e.g., Co-Pilot, ChatGPT, Gemini, Claude, Bard) by optometry students in classroom and laboratory settings. It aims to support learning while maintaining academic integrity, professionalism, and the standards of optometric education.

The Illinois College of Optometry (ICO) recognizes the positive applications that AI has generated. AI-based tools can empower individuals and offer support in academic endeavors. AI is a valuable supplementary asset for fostering creativity and understanding complex topics.

Many assignments in the optometry program are designed so the process of completing the work is as important as the final product. This is particularly evident in critical thinking tasks, where the act of completing the assignment plays a vital role in clarifying thoughts, fostering reflective practice, and nurturing foundational skills like critical reasoning and analysis crucial to optometric practice. Given the benefits and downsides, students must be very careful about how and when to use AI. However, it is crucial to integrate AI into a balanced educational approach that values human expertise, critical thinking, and hands-on experience.

Definitions

Generative AI: Large language models (LLMs) or other AI systems capable of producing text, recommendations, or analysis based on user prompts.

Clinical Use: Any application of AI that informs diagnosis, management, documentation, communication, or decision-making in patient care.

Educational Use: Use of AI for self-directed learning, case simulation, or literature review without influencing real-time patient care.

Permitted Uses of Generative AI

Students may use generative AI tools in the following ways:

- To supplement understanding of course content, including:
- Generating study questions or flashcards.
- Clarifying complex medical topics or terminology.
- To explore clinical case scenarios for deeper engagement and discussion.
- To assist in personal learning plans (e.g., explaining foundational sciences or clinical decision frameworks).
- To receive feedback on self-drafted materials (e.g., asking for suggestions on improving a personal essay, provided the original work is student-generated).
- In designated assignments where faculty have explicitly authorized or encouraged the use of AI tools.

Prohibited Uses of Generative AI

Students may not use generative AI tools for the following:

- To complete or generate any graded assignments, reports, reflections, lab notes, or exams unless specifically authorized.
- To impersonate another person or misrepresent the source of work (e.g., submitting AI-generated content as one's own).
- To fabricate references, data, or clinical information.
- To bypass critical thinking or problem-solving expectations (e.g., relying on AI for diagnostic answers or decision-making without personal reasoning).
- To access or generate patient-identifiable data, even hypothetically, in a way that could risk confidentiality.
- During lab work or clinical simulations where human interaction, decision-making, or procedural skills are being assessed.

Responsibilities of Students

- Students must acknowledge any use of generative AI tools in their submitted work where applicable.
- Students are responsible for verifying the accuracy and reliability of AI-generated content.
- Students must report unintentional AI involvement if discovered after submission.
- Students must follow the college's academic integrity code, HIPAA, and professional conduct policies when using AI tools.
- Materials entered into AI may become accessible to third parties. Students may not copy and insert ICO curricular material (e.g., lecture slides, laboratory guides, outlines and other provided curricular resources) directly into generative AI or similar tools without obtaining prior approval from ICO faculty. Students must ensure that the use of these tools complies with copyright and intellectual property laws.
- While the use of AI in patient care (within Illinois Eye Institute) is covered by a separate policy, as a brief reminder:
- Students are prohibited from generating patient care notes using external AI applications. At this time, there are no internal AI applications (e.g., within the NextGen

EHR) that are approved for use. Protected health information (PHI) should never be entered into an external generative AI tool.

Syllabus Guidance for Faculty

Faculty may include the following language in their course syllabi, for both didactic and clinical courses:

Use of Generative AI in This Course

- Students are responsible for following all institutional AI policies (classroom/laboratory, clinical, research).
- Students are responsible for verifying the accuracy and reliability of AI-generated content.
- Students may use generative AI tools such as ChatGPT only for personal study, such as summarizing content, generating study guides, or clarifying difficult concepts.
- Do not use AI to complete any assignments, lab reports, quizzes, assessments or patient records unless explicitly permitted.
- Submitting AI-generated work as your own constitutes academic dishonesty and plagiarism and such action can be referred to the Professional Conduct and Ethics Committee
- No Protected Health Information (PHI) may be input into AI tools under any circumstances. There are no approved AI tools within ICO/IEI for use with PHI
- Any permitted use of generative AI tools must be acknowledged in the submission with a brief description (e.g., “Used ChatGPT to summarize key points from lecture on nephrology.”).
- AI tools are not substitutes for critical thinking, professional communication, or interpersonal learning activities central to optometric education.
- Alleged violations of this policy may result in referral to ICO’s Professional Conduct and Ethics Committee.

Generative AI Use within the Illinois Eye Institute by individuals engaged in patient care related activities. (Nov. 2025)

This policy applies to All Providers (students, residents, faculty) and any IEI Support Staff (CSA, Optician, Coordinators, etc.) within the Illinois Eye Institute (and all affiliated sites)

Purpose and Scope

This policy establishes guidelines for the appropriate use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Bard, Claude, Med-PaLM) by all Providers and Support Staff during or related to patient clinical care. The intent is to support educational innovation while maintaining patient safety, privacy, professionalism, and regulatory compliance.

Definitions

- Generative AI: Large language models (LLMs) or other AI systems capable of producing text, recommendations, or analysis based on user prompts.
- Clinical Use: Any application of AI that informs diagnosis, management, documentation, communication, or decision-making in patient care.
- Educational Use: Use of AI for self-directed learning, case simulation, or literature review without influencing real-time patient care.

Prohibited Uses

The following uses of generative AI tools are strictly prohibited in the clinical setting and applies to ALL PROVIDERS:

Entering or Uploading Any Patient-Identifiable Information

No PHI (Protected Health Information) may be input into AI tools under any circumstances. At this time there are no approved AI tools within IEI/ICO that can be utilized along with PHI.

PHI Includes the following (among other items): Names, street address, city, zip code), DOB, Social Security numbers, medical record numbers, Full face photographic images, Any other unique identifying number, or characteristic

Any photography of patient medical records and diagnostic testing results is also prohibited.

Direct Communication with Patients Using AI-Generated Content

Providers and Support Staff may not use AI to generate or script conversations, emails, or educational handouts without faculty or supervisor review.

Use of Unvetted Public AI Tools

Providers must not use public AI tools (e.g., OpenAI ChatGPT, Google Gemini) in any clinical workflow unless approved by institutional IT and data security teams.

The following prohibitions also apply to Student clinicians

Documentation in the Medical Record

AI-generated notes, summaries, or letters may NOT be submitted to the EHR by students or used as clinical documentation without signature and approval from the licensed Provider for that specific patient encounter

Unsupervised Diagnostic or Treatment Recommendations

Students must not use AI outputs to influence diagnostic or therapeutic decisions without direct approval by supervising clinicians.

Note: the use of AI tools on a personal device (cell phone, tablet) within the IEI adds an additional layer of concern for violating HIPAA and Privacy Regulations. While the use of personal devices is not strictly prohibited, extra caution should be exercised at all times.

Permitted Uses

Student interns and other clinical providers may use generative AI tools in the following educational or preparatory contexts:

Clinical Reasoning Practice

- Using AI to brainstorm differential diagnoses or clinical questions for discussion.
- Using AI to explore various differential diagnoses and treatment plans.

Note: all results MUST be closely scrutinized and validated. The licensed clinician is fully responsible for clinical decisions.

Literature Review and Grand Rounds Case Presentations

Summarizing evidence or guidelines after the clinical encounter, provided patient identifiers are not disclosed.

Drafting Communication

Preparing drafts of patient education materials or notes for faculty review only, and NOT entered directly into the EHR or shared with patients.

Reflection or Learning Enhancement

Generating explanations of disease processes or management pathways as part of learning journals or reflections.

Setting and Use

Use of AI (assistance with chart note summary/generation, diagnosis, or treatment plans) should be disclosed to the patient. The specific use should be explained to the patient. Assurances that PHI is not being entered into the AI tool should be explained to the patient.

Photos and any PHI must not be uploaded.

Professionalism and Accountability

Transparency: Disclosure to the patient regarding the use of AI tools is generally appropriate and often ethically necessary when AI tools have a material impact on patient care (Diagnosis and Treatment Decisions):

- Diagnostic interpretation § (e.g., OCT analysis)

- Risk stratification or triage § (e.g., predicting glaucoma progression or myopia progression)

Students and Support Staff must disclose and inform any use of AI in clinical preparation to supervising faculty or Coordinators.

Supervision: All AI-influenced materials must be reviewed and approved by attending or supervising clinicians prior to patient use.

Enforcement and Compliance

Violations of this policy may result in:

Disciplinary review by one or more of the following:

- Professional Conduct and Ethics Committee, Dean of Students
- Professional Standards Board, Chief of Staff
- Human Resources, Department Head
- Institutional reporting where required

Policy Review and Updates

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner, as needed, as AI technologies and regulatory standards evolve.

AI Use for Research Related Activities (Nov. 2025)

Purpose

This policy outlines the responsible and ethical use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools (e.g., Co-Pilot, ChatGPT, Gemini, Claude, Bard, etc.) by optometry students and faculty in the research setting (clinic, laboratory, research center, etc.). It aims to support research activities that may involve the use of AI tools in various aspects and applications. An overarching goal of this document is to provide some broad, high-level principles, and not to envision or list all types of potential of AI use and abuse. These guidelines can help to maintain academic integrity, professionalism, patient privacy and the standards of research in healthcare.

The Illinois College of Optometry (ICO) recognizes the positive applications that AI has generated. AI-based tools can empower individuals and offer support in academic endeavors. AI is a valuable supplementary asset for fostering creativity and understanding complex topics. Also, AI is a rapidly evolving field in medicine and research. It is expected that frequent changes in practice (and thus policy) will occur in the near future. All ICO students, staff, and faculty who participate in research are expected to stay aware of these changes and when necessary, bring up questions of policy and application to the Associate Dean for Research, the ICO IRB and the ICO Dean for further opinion and guidance.

Core Principles

- Beneficence & Non-Maleficence – AI applications must aim to improve patient outcomes and public health while avoiding harm.
- Respect for Persons – Maintain dignity, autonomy, and informed decision-making for all research participants.
- Justice & Equity – Ensure fair access to AI benefits and avoid systems that exacerbate health disparities.
- Accountability – Researchers remain responsible for the design, deployment, and interpretation of AI systems.

Data Governance & Privacy

- Data Minimization – Collect only the data necessary for the stated research purpose.
- Privacy Compliance – Follow all applicable privacy laws (HIPAA, FERPA, GDPR, etc.) when handling identifiable patient data.
- Secure Storage & Transfer – Use encrypted channels and secure servers for data handling.
- De-identification – Apply robust anonymization or pseudonymization before AI model training.
- Transparency in Data Sources – Document the provenance, quality, and representativeness of datasets.

Algorithmic Transparency & Documentation

- Explainability – Use interpretable AI methods when possible, or provide sufficient model documentation for black-box systems.
- Model Provenance – Document algorithm design, training data, validation methods, and known limitations.
- Version Control – Maintain version histories for AI models to support reproducibility.
- Disclosure of AI Use – Clearly state when AI tools are used for data analysis, interpretation, or decision support in publications and presentations. When appropriate, inform research subjects when AI tools are used. Include any potential use of AI on study consent forms.

Bias & Fairness

- Bias Assessment – Evaluate training and test datasets for demographic representativeness.

- Fairness Audits – Regularly check models for disparate performance across subgroups.
- Mitigation Strategies – Implement corrective measures if bias is detected.

Human Oversight & Responsibility

- Human-in-the-Loop – AI should augment, not replace, expert human judgment in healthcare research.
- Validation – Ensure AI outputs are reviewed and validated by qualified professionals before clinical translation.
- Error Handling – Establish protocols for identifying and addressing erroneous AI outputs.

Informed Consent in AI-Related Use in Research

- Clarity – Inform participants when their data will be used in any AI activities related to research.
- Risks & Benefits – Clearly outline potential benefits, risks, and limitations of AI use in the study.
- Withdrawal Rights – Allow participants to withdraw their data from AI research when feasible.

Publication & Dissemination Ethics

- Reproducibility – Share code, data (where legally permissible and following the institution's data-sharing policies), and methods to support verification.
- Conflict of Interest Disclosure – Declare any financial or commercial relationships with AI developers.
- Responsible Communication – Avoid overstating AI capabilities in scientific and public communications.

Continuous Monitoring & Improvement

- Post-Deployment Monitoring – If AI tools move into clinical use, track real-world performance and safety.
- Ongoing Training – Update models with new, high-quality, and representative data.
- Ethics Review – Seek periodic ethics board or IRB review for long-term AI research projects.

Sample Ethical Statement for a Research Protocol

This study incorporates artificial intelligence for data analysis and predictive modeling. All AI methods will be developed and validated in compliance with applicable data protection laws and institutional review board requirements. Participant data will be de-identified prior to AI processing. Researchers will document AI algorithms, training data sources, performance metrics, and known limitations. AI outputs will be reviewed by qualified human experts before use in study publications or conclusions. The research team affirms its commitment to fairness, transparency, and accountability in AI development and application.

Functional Guidelines for Didactic and Clinical Optometric Education

To provide guidance to those considering optometry as a profession, the Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry (ASCO) has established functional guidelines for optometric education. The ability to meet these guidelines, along with other criteria established by individual optometric institutions, is necessary for graduation from an optometric professional degree program. Note that there may be additional criteria established by State, Provincial, or Federal regulators for licensure as an optometrist.

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

The functional guidelines in optometric education require that the candidate/student possess appropriate abilities in the following areas: 1) observation 2) communication 3) sensory and motor coordination 4) intellectual: conceptual, integrative, and quantitative abilities and 5) behavioral and social attributes. Each of these areas is described in this document. Applicants are encouraged to connect with the individual institutions' accessibility services offices to learn about the process for requesting accommodation at each institution.

1) OBSERVATION ABILITIES

The student must be able to acquire a defined level of required knowledge as presented through lectures, laboratories, demonstrations, patient interaction and self-study. Acquiring this body of information necessitates the functional use of visual, auditory and somatic sensation enhanced by the functional use of other sensory modalities. Examples of these observational skills in which accurate information needs to be extracted in an efficient manner include:

a. Audio/Visual:

- Reading and interpreting information from presentations, papers, slides, video, and live demonstrations.
- Discriminating numbers, images and patterns associated with diagnostic tests and instruments, including microscopic images of tissue in order to discern three-dimensional relationships, depth, and color changes.

b. Tactile Abilities:

- Palpating the eye and related areas to determine the integrity of the underlying structures.

2) COMMUNICATION ABILITIES

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

- Relating effectively and sensitively to patients, conveying compassion and empathy
- Perceiving verbal and non-verbal communication such as sadness, worry, agitation, and lack of comprehension from patients
- Eliciting information from patients and observing changes in mood and activity
- Communicating quickly, effectively, and efficiently in English in person and in writing with patients and other members of the health care team
- Reading and recording observations, test results, and management plans accurately, in addition to completing assignments, patient records and correspondence accurately and in a timely manner

3) SENSORY AND MOTOR COORDINATION ABILITIES

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

Examples of skill required include but are not limited to:

- Instillation of ocular pharmaceutical agents
- Insertion, removal, and manipulation of contact lenses
- Assessment of blood pressure and pulse
- Perform minor surgical procedures such as the removal of foreign objects from the cornea
- Simultaneous manipulation of lenses, instruments and therapeutic agents and devices
- Reasonable facility of movement
- Injections into the eye, lids, or limbs

4) INTELLECTUAL-CONCEPTUAL, INTEGRATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE ABILITIES

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

- Determine appropriate questions to be asked and clinical tests to be performed

- Identify and analyze significant findings from history, examination, and other test data
- Demonstrate good judgment and provide a reasonable assessment, diagnosis, and management of patients
- Retain, recall, and obtain information in an efficient manner
- Identify and communicate the limits of one's knowledge and skill

5) BEHAVIORAL AND SOCIAL ATTRIBUTES

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

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

Candidates with questions or concerns about how their own conditions or disabilities might affect their ability to meet these functional guidelines are encouraged to meet with an optometry institution counselor prior to submitting an application.

First Approved by the ASCO Board of Directors on March 20, 1998

Revised and Approved: March 31, 2009

Revised and Approved: June 14, 2022

Americans with Disabilities Act Compliance & Functional Guidelines

The Illinois College of Optometry is committed to providing a supportive and accessible educational environment for students with disabilities. The College recognizes its legal and ethical responsibilities to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504). The College will provide reasonable and appropriate accommodation for qualified students for whom a disability substantially limits one or more major life activities. Inquiries about and requests for accommodation should be made to the Assistant Dean for Student Success.

It is the student's responsibility to request accommodation by completing the Request for Accommodation form and provide documentation of his or her disability. The College has established guidelines to assist students in obtaining the appropriate documentation.

Student Accommodations / Disability Services - Documentation Guidelines

ICO requires students to provide the following documentation by a licensed professional before providing accommodations:

- diagnosis of condition
- definition of the functional limitations the student will experience in an academic and/or clinical environment.
- recommendation for reasonable accommodations

Such documentation assists the Student Success Center in providing the most appropriate and reasonable accommodation and support.

The documentation provided by the student is considered confidential in accordance with the [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#).

In order to assist the student, the following information is provided by disability type(s).

Psychological Conditions

Students must provide recent documentation prepared by a licensed mental health professional detailing the current diagnosis of a disabling condition and the impact that such a condition will have on the student's academic activities. This documentation should address:

- Current diagnosis that meets DSM-5 criteria or otherwise demonstrates functional impact.
- Clear evidence and documentation indicating relevant symptoms across multiple settings, which may include impact on academic, social, or vocational functioning.

In lieu of the above documentation, licensed mental health professionals can access and complete our Verification of Psychological Disability form on the student's behalf.

Medical or Physical Conditions

Students with medical or physical conditions must provide documentation of the condition and the resulting functional limitations. Such documentation must be prepared by a qualified professional and should be up to date. The professional who prepares this documentation should include the following information:

- Documentation of current diagnosis that demonstrates functional impact.
- Clear evidence and documentation indicating relevant symptoms, which may include impact on academic, social, or vocational functioning.
- History, severity, and approximate duration of disorder
- Additional recommendations that may assist SDS in determining appropriate accommodations.

In lieu of the above documentation, licensed medical professionals can access and complete our Verification of Physical Disability form on the student's behalf.

Learning Disabilities

Typical documentation for learning disabilities should include an educational or psychological evaluation report that was completed using adult norms. Current documentation is always

required so we can best determine reasonable accommodation and support. Diagnostic reports should be completed by qualified professionals, and it is preferred that they include the following minimum requirements:

- A clear explanation of the diagnosis and/or functional impacts, which may include previously utilized accommodations or interventions (and their effectiveness)
- Scores from the tests administered.
- Recommendations and rationale for reasonable academic and/or clinical accommodations

Attention Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder

Student Disability Services is in the best position to assist with determination of accommodations and services when students requesting accommodations for ADHD submit documents containing the following information:

- Documentation of current diagnosis that meet DSM-5 criteria or otherwise demonstrates functional impact.
- Clear evidence and documentation indicating relevant symptoms across multiple settings, which may include impact on academic, social, or vocational functioning.

In lieu of the above documentation, licensed mental health professionals can access and complete our Verification of ADHD form on the student's behalf.

Autism Spectrum Disorder

Students with autism spectrum disorder must provide recent documentation prepared by a licensed mental health professional detailing the current diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder and the impact that this condition will have on the student's daily activities. This documentation should address:

- Current diagnosis that meets DSM-5 criteria or otherwise demonstrates functional impact.
- Clear evidence and documentation indicating relevant symptoms across multiple settings, which may include impact on academic, social, or vocational functioning.

In lieu of the above documentation, licensed mental health professionals can access and complete our Verification of Autism Spectrum Disorder form on the student's behalf.

ADA Accommodations for NBEO

(We make all efforts to have accurate information about NBEO in this guide, however; NBEO information is subject to change and students should consult Optometry.org for the most current information possible.)

In accordance with their guidelines, the National Board will provide reasonable accommodation for all qualified candidates for any NBEO examinations. Disabilities are more readily accommodated for NBEO written examinations. Part III CSE candidates with disabilities are accommodated when it is possible to do so without sacrificing the integrity and purpose of the Clinical Skills Examination, which by its very essence is a TIMED SKILLS ASSESSMENT. A

diagnosis of **ADA-eligible** or **non-ADA-type** impairment by itself is not sufficient to warrant testing accommodations. There must also be compelling evidence that there is a substantial limitation in a major life activity when compared with the average person in the general population. The need for test accommodation must be adequately justified in all cases.

In addition, the Board requires you to submit documentation prior to each exam and there is no guarantee you will automatically receive special accommodation for each exam. Up-to-date information can be obtained on the NBEO webpage that addresses testing accommodations.

Service and Emotional Support Animals

In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), and the Fair Housing Act (FHA), Illinois College of Optometry seeks to accommodate persons with disabilities requiring the assistance of a qualified service or therapy animal. Students should make requests regarding service or therapy animals to the Assistant Dean for Student Success, Illinois College of Optometry, at least 30 days prior to the start of the academic year for which the request is being made. Determinations will be made on a case-by-case basis, and in accordance with applicable laws and regulations, whether such an animal is a reasonable accommodation on campus. Where it is not readily apparent if an animal is a service animal as defined by ADA, or an assistance animal under the FHA, ICO's will require sufficient documentation to determine whether the animal qualifies. This process may include additional conversations between the College and the requesting student.

Definitions: Service Animal

Under ADA, a public accommodation shall modify policies, practices, or procedures to permit the use of **service animals** by an individual with a disability. ADA defines a service animal as a dog individually trained to work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. Other species of animals, whether trained or untrained, are not considered service animals (with the exception of miniature horses). The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the handler's disability. Examples of work or tasks include but are not limited to assisting individuals who are blind or have low vision with navigation and other tasks, alerting individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to the presence of people or sounds, pulling a wheelchair, assisting during a seizure, alerting to the presence of allergens, and preventing or interrupting impulsive or destructive behaviors.

Documentation and Inquiries regarding Service Animals: The College can make the following inquiries to determine whether an animal qualifies as a service animal:

- Is the animal required because of a disability?
- What work or tasks has the animal been trained to perform?

When it is not readily apparent the individual has a disability or an animal is a service animal, the College will require the student to submit documentation from the treating health care provider (appropriately certified) with the following information in order to decide:

- The individual has a disability for which the animal is necessary.
- how the animal assists the person, including whether the animal has undergone any training
- the relationship between the disability and the assistance the animal provides.

Responsibilities of the Student with the Service Animal: The service animal must be under the control of its handler. A harness, leash, or other tether must be used unless the handler is unable because of the disability to use a harness, leash, or other tether, or if the use of a harness, leash, or other tether interferes with the service animal's safe, effective performance of the work or task. In such cases, the service animal must remain under the student's control, such as voice control.

The student must provide care and supervision of the service animal. The College is not responsible for the animals' care or supervision. All students are responsible to clean up after and properly dispose of their animal's feces while on campus.

The animal must not be placed in a location blocking access for others.

It is the handler's responsibility to ensure that the service animal is in good health, clean, free of fleas and ticks, and is always in compliance with all City of Chicago and State of Illinois laws and requirements associated with licensing, vaccinations, and other health regulations.

Exceptions: Illinois College of Optometry may ask a student with a disability to remove a service animal from the premises if the animal is out of control and the student does not take effective action to control it, or if the animal is not housebroken. If Illinois College of Optometry properly excludes a service animal, it must give the student the opportunity to obtain goods, services, and accommodations without having the service animal on college property.

Definition: Therapy/Emotional Support Animal - While only service animals are recognized under the Rehabilitation Act and ADA, the FHA provides for a broader range of therapy or emotional support animals in campus housing (the RC). A "therapy" or "emotional support" animal is an animal whose role is to provide companionship, affection, security, calming influence, emotional support, or otherwise function as part of a regimen of psychological treatment. Federal law does not give therapy animals access to the campus as a whole. While a college or university may be required to reasonably accommodate a therapy animal in a residence hall or campus apartment, the institution is not required to allow that student to bring the animal to other areas or buildings on campus unless the animal also qualifies as service animal under ADA and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Documentation and Inquiries regarding Therapy Animals: Students requesting a therapy animal as a reasonable accommodation under FHA should submit documentation from the treating health care provider with the following information so the college can decide. This documentation must contain the following information:

1. the person has a disability
2. the animal is necessary to afford the person with a disability equal opportunity to use and enjoy the dwelling, and
3. there is an identifiable relationship or nexus between the disability and the assistance the animal provides.

Responsibilities of the Student with the Therapy Animal - As with service animals, the student is responsible for the care and supervision of the therapy animal. The college is not responsible for the animals' care or supervision. The student is responsible for cleaning up after and properly disposing of their animal's feces while on campus. It is the student's responsibility to ensure the animal is in good health, clean, free of fleas and ticks, and is at all times in compliance with all City of Chicago and State of Illinois laws and requirements associated with licensing, vaccinations, and other health regulations.

Exceptions: Illinois College of Optometry may ask an individual with a disability to remove a therapy animal from the premises if the animal is out of control and the handler does not take effective action to control it, or if the animal is not housebroken. If Illinois College of Optometry properly excludes a service animal, it must give the individual with the disability the opportunity to obtain goods, services, and accommodations without having the service animal on college property.

Alcohol, Drug Free, Non-Smoking, & Firearms

Use of Alcohol on Campus

Use of alcohol at social events sponsored by student groups on campus is prohibited without the advance written approval of the Dean of Student Affairs. This approval may be requested by completing the Facilities Request Form. It is the responsibility of the student group(s) to assure that the use of alcohol at any student function is both responsible and consistent with ICO standards of safety and professionalism.

The use of alcohol is restricted to those individuals of legal age according to school policy and after obtaining appropriate authorization. Any violation of this policy will be dealt with immediately in a manner prescribed by law and/or by college policy.

Non-Smoking Policy

The Illinois College of Optometry is an institution devoted to educating people as health professionals. Accordingly, the College is a smoke-free campus. Smoking is not permitted in any part of the College, Illinois Eye Institute or Residential Complex. All smoking materials must be extinguished prior to entering the College, the Illinois Eye Institute, and the Residential Complex. Ash containers are provided at major entrances.

In order to comply with the City of Chicago Ordinance, ICO's policy is as follows:

1. Smoking is not allowed in any of our garages, except for the top deck of the parking structure, at least 15 feet from the door. A "smoker outpost" is placed in the designated smoking area of the top deck only.
2. Smoking is not allowed in the courtyard between buildings.
3. Smoking is not allowed within 15 feet of any of our entrances.

(Smoking to include the use of electronic smoking/vaping devices)

Drug-Free Campus/Workplace Policy

The Illinois College of Optometry affirms its commitment to a drug-free campus. For information about the dangers of drug abuse visit the National Institute of Health's drug abuse webpage. Drug related issues are detrimental for ICO students in both personal and professional ways. There are specific policy violations that can impact a student's enrollment, eligibility for financial aid, as well as future ability to be fully licensed.

The College prohibits the manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance by students, including those employed by the College, on the premises of the College and at any of its auxiliary clinical sites. Any violation of this policy is to be dealt with immediately in the manner prescribed by law. Each student agrees to:

- Abide by the terms of the above policy on prohibition of controlled substances.

- Notify the Dean of Student Affairs within 5 days of any conviction under any criminal drug statute for a violation occurring during enrollment at the College (including auxiliary clinical sites). Appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, will be taken against a student who has experienced such a conviction.
- The College reserves the right to conduct searches of any student's locker or on-campus residence when there is a reasonable suspicion of the use or sale by the student of controlled substances at any time, or the consumption of alcoholic beverages while engaged in academic or clinical activities.

Suspension of Eligibility for Drug-Related Offenses

In general, a student who has been convicted of any offense under any Federal or State law involving the possession or sale of a controlled substance shall not be eligible to receive any grant, loan, or work assistance under this title during the period beginning on the date of such conviction and ending after the interval specified as follows:

If convicted of an offense involving:

a) The possession of a controlled substance:

- First Offense - 1 Year of ineligibility
- Second Offense - 2 years of ineligibility
- Third Offense - Indefinite ineligibility

b) The sale of a controlled substance:

- First Offense - 2 years of ineligibility
- Second Offense - Indefinite ineligibility

Rehabilitation - A student whose eligibility has been suspended may resume eligibility before the end of the ineligibility period determined under such paragraph if:

- The student satisfactorily completes a drug rehabilitation program.
- The rehab program above includes two unannounced drug tests.
- The conviction is reversed, set aside, or otherwise rendered nugatory.

If you have any questions pertaining to the Federal Drug Violation penalties, you may contact the Department of Education at 1-800-433-3243.

Possession of Firearms

The possession, storing or carrying of firearms and/or other weapons deemed illegal by statute are prohibited on campus. Illinois continues to expressly prohibit the carrying of firearms on college campuses (including those concealed carry weapons permit holders). This prohibition was reinforced again in 2013 with Public Act 098-0063.

Anti-Harassment Policy and Procedure

Harassment Prohibited. The Illinois College of Optometry fully supports the right of all people on its campus, including students, staff, faculty and visitors, to be free of harassment based on age, race, gender, skin tone, marital status, sexual orientation, religion, national origin or disability. (Harassment on the basis of any other protected status is prohibited as provided under relevant federal, state and local laws.)

However, this policy is designed not only to comply with our legal obligation, but also to create a more positive educational experience for all concerned. The appropriate resolution of any concern raised under the policy will therefore rest with ICO's administrative judgment concerning the appropriate means to prevent harassment and create a more positive environment.

Definition. Harassment may take different forms. One specific form of sexual harassment is the unwanted demand for sexual favors. Other examples of harassment would include sexually suggestive gestures or comments; derogatory statements regarding a person's sex, race, disability, religion, age, or sexual orientation; jokes of a racial or ethnic nature; sexually explicit gestures or pictures; and unwanted physical contact, including touching and pinching. Any questions about whether a situation is in violation of this policy should be directed to the Title IX Coordinator and/or the Dean of Student Affairs, and questionable conduct should be avoided until your obligations are clarified. The Title IX Coordinator is the Senior Director of Compliance, Risk Management and Quality Improvement | Compliance Officer | Privacy Officer and is responsible for enforcement of ICO's anti-harassment efforts and response.

Sexual Harassment. It is against ICO policy for any staff or faculty member, student, or visitor (male or female), to harass any other person by:

- Making unwelcome sexual advances or requesting sexual favors a requirement for any type of grade, assignment, course participation, or scholastic award, etc. or to threaten adverse consequences for rejecting such unwelcome sexual conduct.
- Engaging in unwanted verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, which has the effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment for another person, whether such an effect was intended.

We expect everyone on our premises to behave in an appropriate manner for our academic environment, and not just to avoid the most extreme, unlawful actions. Therefore, some types of conduct which may be acceptable in an informal social setting would not be considered acceptable at ICO. For example, sexually explicit pictures and/or conversations may be appropriate in private with consenting individuals, but not in public. On the other hand, sexual harassment does not include occasional compliments or voluntary relationship(s) between students or others.

Whatever form it takes - verbal, non-verbal or physical - all types of prohibited harassment are insulting and demeaning, and such conduct will not be tolerated in connection with your education here or on our campus generally. All students, faculty, staff, and visitors of Illinois College of Optometry are expected to comply with this policy. We will continue appropriate preventative measures to prevent harassment and, if it does occur, take appropriate remedial measures to ensure it does not happen again.

Enforcement Procedure. If you observe conduct which you feel is prohibited by this policy or feel you have been a target of such harassment, you should clearly state your position, and any reasonable objections you make should be respected. If not, you should report the matter immediately to the Dean of Student Affairs or the Title IX Coordinator orally or in writing or to the

Chairperson of the Professional Conduct and Ethics Committee. Delay in raising concerns often leads to more difficult situations, and we encourage you not to delay if you have concerns about harassment.

You may contact your professor or Chair or Dean. They are responsible for bringing such concerns to the attention of the Dean of Student Affairs or Chairperson of the Professional Conduct and Ethics Committee.

ICO will investigate the facts in as timely and discrete a manner as possible. The investigation may be done through the Professional Conduct and Ethics Committee otherwise, depending on the circumstances. We may consult with outside experts to help gather the relevant facts, and normally will confer with the people involved and any named or apparent witnesses. No one will be subject to retaliation for bringing good faith concerns to our attention or for assisting in an investigation. All students, staff, faculty and visitors will be expected and required to cooperate truthfully and completely in this process.

Consequences. If the investigation reveals that harassment has occurred, we will take action to stop the harassment promptly and to prevent it from happening again. Depending upon the seriousness of the misconduct and the surrounding circumstances, including whether the conduct was intentional and/or repeated, the consequences of violating this policy may include dismissal from the College, suspension, disciplinary probation, or other appropriate action in the judgment of the Professional Conduct and Ethics Committee or the Dean of Student Affairs.

Campus Conduct Policy

Illinois College of Optometry is committed to maintaining a safe and healthy educational and employment environment that is free from discrimination, harassment and any conduct that prohibits conduct which prevents free academic interaction and opportunities, or which creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive study or work environment.

The ICO Campus Conduct policy addresses all forms of misconduct. Recent US Department of Education regulations specify Title IV recipient institutions (those participating in Federal Financial Aid programs, and this includes ICO) implement a prescribed process for the investigation and resolution of Title IX related complaints of misconduct. Please visit the policy at the following link/web page: Campus Conduct policy (<https://www.ico.edu/campus-conduct-policy-and-title-ix>)

Computers and Networks

The Illinois College of Optometry (ICO) provides a wide variety of computing and networking resources to all qualified members of the College community. Access to computers, computing systems and networks owned by ICO imposes certain responsibilities and obligations on the user. The user is then subject to policies and codes, and local, state, and federal laws. All users of these resources must comply with specific policies and guidelines governing their use and act responsibly while using shared computing and network resources including wireless. The purpose of this policy is to promote the efficient, ethical, and lawful use of the ICO's computer and network resources.

This policy applies to all users of ICO computing and network resources, whether initiated from a computer and/or network device located on or off campus; it applies to students, employees, contractors, vendors, etc.

Individuals using computer resources belonging to ICO must act in a responsible manner, in compliance with local, state, and federal law and College policies, and with respect for the rights

of others using a shared resource. The right of free expression and academic inquiry is tempered by the rights of others to privacy; freedom from intimidation or harassment; protection of intellectual property; ownership of data; and security of information.

Violations of this policy are subject to sanctions prescribed in, but not limited to, the following: Employee manual; IEI Policy and Procedures Manual; Student Guide; Business Affairs Office Policy and Procedure Manual or any other ICO policy.

The specific usage guidelines that follow are not intended to be comprehensive, but rather to establish and clarify the intent of this policy. Situations not defined here will inevitably arise, and they should be interpreted according to the spirit of this policy.

Each person using the ICO's computer and network resources should:

1. Take no actions that violate any ICO or IEI code of conduct, ethics policy, or law. In the event of a conflict between policies, the more restrictive use policy shall govern.

2. Use security measures to protect the integrity of information, data, and systems. Users shall protect their computer systems and accounts by using strong passwords, not tampering with anti-virus software, and keeping such software, as well as the operating system and application security patches, up to date. Users are responsible for safeguarding their identification codes and passwords, and for using them only as authorized. Examples of misuse include using a computer account and/or obtaining a password that you are not authorized to use, using the campus network to gain unauthorized access to any information or computer system, and using a "sniffer" or other methods in an attempt to "crack" passwords.

3. Clearly and accurately identify oneself in electronic communications. Do not misrepresent yourself or forge anyone's identity. Concealing or masking the identity of electronic communications such as altering the source of an e-mail message by making it appear as if the message was sent by someone else is a violation of this policy.

4. Use computer and network resources efficiently. Computing resources are finite and must be shared. Users may use the ICO's computer and network resources for incidental personal purposes, provided that such use does not (a) unreasonably interfere with the use of computing and network resources by other users, or with the ICO's operation of computing and network resources; (b) interfere with the user's employment or other obligations to ICO; or (c) violate this policy or other applicable policy or law. The College retains the right to set priorities on use of the system, and to limit recreational or personal uses when such uses could reasonably be expected to cause, directly or indirectly, strain on any computing facilities, or to interfere with research, instructional or administrative computing requirements, or to violate applicable policies or laws. You may not establish a server, personal or private network or wireless service. Examples of inappropriate use include circumventing the editor or moderator to post messages to private (closed) listservs, sending "chain letters" engaging in pyramid schemes, excessive personal audio or video streaming or engaging in unauthorized peer-to-peer file sharing. Sending "spam," defined as unsolicited "junk" e-mail sent to large numbers of people to promote products or services or inappropriate promotional or commercial postings to discussion groups or bulletin boards, is not permitted. Using e-mail to solicit for personal gain is not permitted.

5. Do not harass or intimidate or use computer and network resources for unlawful acts. ICO, in general, cannot and does not wish to be the arbiter of content maintained, distributed, or displayed by users of the ICO's computing and network resources. For example, the ICO, in general, cannot protect users from receiving e-mail they may find offensive. Using ICO computers or network resources for illegal activities, however, is strictly prohibited. Unlawful use of ICO computers and network resources can expose the individual user and ICO to damages

claims, or potential criminal liability. Unlawful uses may include, but are not limited to: harassment and intimidation of individuals on the basis of race, sex, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation or disability; obscenity; child pornography; threats; theft; attempting unauthorized access to data; attempting to breach security measures on any electronic communications software or system; attempting to intercept electronic communication transmissions without proper authority; and violation of intellectual property or defamation laws. Do not use computer systems to send, post, or display slanderous or defamatory messages, text, graphics, or images. By using ICO's computer and network services, each user accepts the responsibility to become informed about, and to comply with, all applicable laws and policies.

6. The use of computer resources and networks is for legitimate academic or administrative purposes. Incidental personal use is permissible to the extent that it does not violate other provisions of this policy, interfere with the performance of employee's duties, or interfere with the education of students or the care of patients at the IEI. Use of your computer account or the network for commercial activities that are not approved by appropriate supervisory personnel consistent with applicable policy or for personal financial gain (except as permitted under applicable academic policies and approved) is prohibited. Examples of prohibited uses include using your computer account for engaging in unauthorized consulting services, software development, advertising products/services, and/or other private commercial activity.

7. Respect copyright and intellectual-property rights. Users must adhere to the U.S. Copyright Act. Any form of original expression fixed in a tangible medium is subject to copyright, even if there is no copyright notice. Examples include music, movies, graphics, text, photographs, artwork, and software, distributed in any media -- including on-line. The use of copyrighted work (such as copying, downloading, file sharing, distribution, public performance, etc.) requires either (a) the copyright owner's permission, or (b) an exemption under the Copyright Act. The law also makes it unlawful to circumvent technological measures used by copyright owners to protect their works. Copyright infringement exposes the user, and possibly ICO, to heavy fines and potential criminal liability. Therefore, without limitation of other possible sanctions, ICO may refuse, suspend and/or terminate computer and network access, with respect to any user who violates the copyright law, or who uses ICO computer or network resources contrary to the terms of ICO software or database license agreements.

United States Copyright Office (<http://www.loc.gov/copyright>)
Copyright and Fair Use (<http://fairuse.stanford.edu/>)

8. Respect ICO property. Misuse of ICO property includes, but is not limited to, theft or damage of equipment or software, knowingly running or installing computer viruses or password cracking programs, attempting to circumvent installed data protection methods that are designed and constructed to provide secure data and information, or in any way attempting to interfere with the physical computer network/hardware, or attempting to degrade the performance or integrity of any campus network or computer system.

9. Make only appropriate use of data to which you have access. Authorized ICO personnel (e.g., system, network, and database administrators, among others) may have access to data beyond what is generally available. Privileged access to data may only be used in a way consistent with applicable laws, ICO policies, and accepted standards of professional conduct. Those who have access to databases that include personal information shall respect individual privacy and confidentiality, consistent with applicable laws (including but not limited to HIPPA), and ICO policies regarding the collection, use, and disclosure of personal information. However, users should be aware that state laws and ICO policies, guidelines and regulations may prevent

the protection of certain aspects of individual privacy. Both the nature of electronic communications and the public character of the ICO's business make certain uses less private than users may anticipate. For example, in certain circumstances, ICO may permit the inspection, monitoring or disclosure of e-mail, consistent with applicable laws such as the PATRIOT Act, etc.

10. Respect and adhere to other departmental/college/Internet Service Provider's acceptable use policies. When using an ICO computer system and/or network to connect to a non-ICO system or network, adhere to the prevailing policies governing that system or network. This does not in any way release your obligation to abide by the established policies governing the use of ICO computer systems and networks.

Recourse for Misuse and/or Non-Compliance

The policies in this document include action steps to be taken to determine whether an individual has, in fact, misused ICO computing and/or network resources. Protections of the rights of individuals accused of policy violations afforded by those policies also apply.

Users who misuse ICO computing and network resources or who fail to comply with the ICO usage policies, regulations and guidelines are subject to one or more of the following consequences:

- Temporary deactivation of computer/network access
- Permanent deactivation of computer/network access
- Disciplinary actions taken by the department head, Student Affairs Office, etc. up to and including expulsion or termination of employment.
- Subpoena of data files
- Legal prosecution under applicable Federal and State laws
- Possible penalties under the law, including fines and imprisonment.
- Restitution to ICO of any costs or fines

Violations, complaints, and questions should be reported to the ICO Information Systems Security Officer at x7512 or Director of Compliance and Quality Improvement at x7311.

Use of the ICO LMS

The Illinois College of Optometry provides a Learning Management System (LMS) primarily for the use of registered students. The URL for these resources is: <https://learn.ico.edu>

The purpose of these systems is to give students access to their personal and academic information from on-campus or off-campus locations. Use of an internet browser is needed for this access.

All students will have a login id and user password. This login is necessary to access personal, biographical, academic and financial information. As with any personal data, your id and password should not be shared with anyone.

As a student, you have the right to access data provided by ICO. The content you access is owned by the creator of such content. You do not have a right to distribute or describe this content as your own.

While we strive to maintain 24 X7 access to these systems, periodic shutdowns, scheduled or not, may occur at any time. We will try to provide advance warning whenever possible of system downtime.

Uses of the LMS not specifically stated here are governed by the Acceptable use of Computers and Networks Policy.

Concerns & Record of Student Complaints

The Student Association President and Class Representatives meet regularly with the Dean of Student Affairs to discuss student concerns. Individual problems of a personal nature should also be brought to the Dean of Student Affairs or the Assistant Dean for Student Success.

Students who are having trouble in a course, a patient care activity or who feel that they have a valid concern over the evaluation of their performance in a particular course or patient care activity are to follow the following protocol:

1. Arrange a meeting to discuss the concern with the instructor(s) responsible for the specific performance assessment.
2. Subsequent to this discussion, if the student is dissatisfied with the resolution, they may appeal the action by:
 - a. If the concern pertains to a course, the student should meet with the Assistant Dean for Didactic Education who may elect to include the course instructor(s) in the discussion in order to facilitate resolution of the individual student's concern. In the event the situation is still unresolved, the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs should be consulted.
 - b. If the concern pertains to a patient care activity, the student should arrange a meeting with the Service Chief or Educational Coordinator in the involved clinical area. If the student is dissatisfied with the outcome of this meeting, they should schedule a meeting with the Assistant Dean for IEL Patient Care Education. The student should understand that at each level the faculty administrator may at his/her discretion elect to include in meetings those faculty members who have already attempted to resolve the student's specific concern.
3. If the student is dissatisfied with the resolution, they may appeal the action by arranging a meeting with the Vice President and Dean for Academic Affairs. The student must understand that, as at the previous levels, the appropriate faculty members or administrators may be consulted and/or included in the process by the Vice President and Dean for Academic Affairs. Students who have concerns over an assessment of their performance in academic or patient care activities who consult the Dean of Student Affairs or other College officials will be advised to follow the protocol as outlined above.

Any form of retaliation against individual students or groups who report complaints or participate in investigations is a violation of College policy. The College will respond promptly to reports of retaliation and may take disciplinary action as appropriate. Retaliation includes any adverse action, intimidation, threat, coercion, or discrimination intended to interfere with rights protected by College policy or applicable laws, or in response to an individual's participation in a complaint or investigation process.

Institutional Record of Student Complaints

In compliance with federal regulations, the Accreditation Council on Optometric Education (ACOE) and upon recommendation of the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), a "Student Complaint Log" has been established and maintained in the Office of the Dean of Student Affairs. Any student submitting a complaint in writing to the attention of the Office of the President, Vice President and Dean for Academic Affairs and/or Dean of Student Affairs will have their complaint entered into this log and preserved for review by the Higher Learning Commission Accreditation Team. The log has been set up to protect the identity of the individual making the complaint as well as other individuals involved in the facts of the complaint.

In order to be entered into the "Student Complaint Log," the student must complete the following:

1. The complaint must be addressed to either the Office of the President, Vice President and Dean for Academic Affairs and/or Dean of Student Affairs
2. The complaint must be signed by the student.
3. The student must indicate in writing in the complaint that they wish for it to be included within this "Student Complaint Log."

In order to track a complaint, the following information will be entered into the log:

1. the date the complaint was first formally submitted to an appropriate officer of the College (e.g., President of the College, Vice President and Dean for Academic Affairs, Dean of Student Affairs)
2. the nature of the complaint (e.g., grade dispute, harassment, etc.)
3. steps taken by the institution to resolve the complaint.
4. the institution's final decision regarding the complaint, including any referral to outside agencies.
5. any other external actions initiated by the student to resolve the complaint, if known to the institution (e.g., lawsuit, EEOC investigation, etc.)

In order to maintain privacy, any request to view the log by accrediting bodies will require that all names contained within logged complaints be masked prior to inspection of the log by the accrediting body. No actual documents relating to a complaint will be shared with an accrediting body without the express permission of the complainant.

The Dean of Student Affairs reserves the right to record a complaint received by other means, however, the College is only required to act upon complaints submitted through our formal procedure above.

Copyright Guidelines

What is Copyright?

Copyright is a form of protection provided by the laws of the United States to the authors or creators of "original works of authorship fixed in a tangible medium of expression." Works of authorship include literary, musical, and dramatic works; pictorial, graphic, sculptural, and architectural works; motion pictures and other audiovisual works and sound recordings. Materials used in connection with courses taught at ICO may be subject to copyright protection.

Fair Use

The basis of the Fair Use doctrine rests on the assumption of good faith. There are 4 considerations of good faith listed below which are used to determine whether material can be copied **or whether printed material, motion picture media, illustrations, or photographs** can be used legally.

Consider:

- The purpose and character of the use.
- The nature of copyrighted work.
- The amount to be reproduced.
- The economic effect of use on the potential market value of the copyrighted work.

Guidelines for Printed Material

The Fair Use guidelines for printed material allow students to make a single copy of an item for scholarly research, for teaching purposes, or for preparation to teach a course. In addition, one copy of an item may be made per student if it is used only once and by only one teacher. The copy may be reused only if written permission is received from the publisher. Tests of brevity, spontaneity, cumulative effect, and classroom use should be considered in determining Fair Use. Fair Use does not apply to consumable materials such as: worksheets, standardized tests, and lab manuals that students enter data into, etc., as consumable materials are protected. These consumable materials are *excluded* from **Fair Use**, *may not be copied and need to be purchased*.

All copies should include a notice of copyright, or sources should be cited if ICO owns or licenses the content.

Guidelines for Use of Electronic and Audiovisual Material

Electronic and Internet Use, Copying and Downloads

Material published to, and downloaded from, the Internet is usually protected by copyright laws and is subject to the same **Fair Use** guidelines as other copyrightable works. The following guidelines should be followed:

- Anything posted on the Internet **should be** considered published and under copyright protection.
- A posting may be copyrighted, even if a copyright notice is NOT included in the posting.
- In like manner, **you may not post** a previously published article, poem, etc. on a bulletin or web page without citing it. This constitutes publishing a previously copyrighted work without permission.
- To share an electronic resource for clubs or other reasons, it is legal to send the link to the item in an email. It is not legal to attach the document and send it to multiple email accounts without permission of the copyright owner or without citing it if ICO owns or licenses the content.

- Knowingly writing, copying, coding, compiling, storing, deliberately transmitting, or transferring malicious software codes to include viruses, worms, and macro viruses that may damage hardware or software by sending it over the Internet is against the law.
- Recorded lectures which may contain copyrighted material are only for the use of students enrolled in the associated course for purposes associated with that course and may not be retained or further disseminated.”
- Movies and videos are copyrighted and should not be downloaded without paying the copyright fee. An exception is if ICO has purchased or licensed that content.

Digital Images

Examples of digital images include the following:

- Images that represent a particular pixel or part of the image.
- Graphics are encoded equations and/or algorithms which represent lines and curves.

Digital images of previously copyrighted visual materials may be used as follows:

ICO Students

- Students may use digital images in an academic course assignment such as a term paper, thesis or in fulfillment of graduation requirements. Citations and/or attributions are needed.
- Students may publicly display their academic work incorporating images in courses in which they are enrolled and during formal critiques at a non-profit educational institution. Citations and/or attributions are needed.
- Students may retain their academic work in their personal portfolios for later uses such as college/university, graduate school and/or employment applications.

Software

Computer programs are also protected under intellectual property copyright laws. The following guidelines should be followed by ICO students:

- Non-network software **must not** be installed on networks.
- Software should NOT be lent to others, especially for illegal duplication or personal use.
- Programs **are not** to be installed on multiple computers unless expressly authorized by the license.
- The unauthorized duplication of software constitutes copyright infringement regardless of whether it is done for sale, for free distribution or for the copier's personal use, and it is NOT permitted.
- Computer programs **do not** fall within the protection of **Fair Use** guidelines since the need to copy the entire program **would not** pass the brevity test.

Multimedia Presentations

ICO students have certain **Fair Use** rights when they create multimedia projects as part of a systematic learning activity. Please note that these rights only apply to the use of materials that have been *lawfully acquired to begin with*, (purchased or licensed by ICO or permission has been given), and only to projects that incorporate original material, such as notes or commentary.

DVDs/CDs/Videotapes

Copyrighted, prerecorded DVDs, CDs, and videotapes **may be used** for educational purposes, provided a performance meets **all** the following criteria:

- A **legal** copy of the program is used.
- The performance must take place in a classroom in a not-for-profit educational institution.
- It is shown for instruction.
- It is used as part of a face-to-face teaching activity.
- It is used for instruction and **not** as a reward, entertainment, nor extracurricular activity.

Sound Recordings

All forms of copyrighted sound recordings, (records, cassettes, soundtracks, and CDs), are subject to the same criteria as other forms of audiovisual materials. ICO Staff may take advantage of the educational exceptions to the public performance regulations. The following must be considered:

- You must be using the recording in a face-to-face classroom instructional situation, led by a teacher or student using a **legally acquired** sound recording.
- Sound recordings **may not** be duplicated, even for archival purposes, unless they have been **purchased with duplication rights**.
- **Additional** copyright clearance requests must be submitted for the music, the lyrics and the performance for use in school situations.
- Transferring a sound recording from one format to another is prohibited (i.e., making a cassette from a CD).
- Downloading music without payment of a copyright or licensing fee is illegal.

Public Domain Works and Other Works Not Protected by Copyright

Copyright extends to "original works of authorship" that are embodied in some fixed form. This could mean anything from a photograph to a lesson plan to a digital image stored on a computer's hard drive. At the same time, there are some items that are **not** covered by copyright protection. Copyright protection does not extend to the following:

- Works such as improvisational speeches and choreographic works that have not been fixed in a tangible form of expression.
- Titles, names, short phrases, and slogans; familiar symbols or designs; mere variations of typographic ornamentation, lettering, or coloring; listings of ingredients or contents.
- Ideas, procedures, methods, systems, processes, concepts, principles, discoveries or devices. NOTE: A description, explanation or illustration of any of these might still be copyrightable.
- Works that consist **entirely** of information that is common property and contain no original authorship (i.e., standard calendars or height and weight charts).
- Works created by the United States Government.
- "Public Domain" works for which copyright protection has expired. Today, copyright protection is expired on works that were published prior to the year 1923.

- “Public Domain” protection also lasts for the life of the author plus 70 years; or for anonymous or pseudonymous works, the shorter of 95 years from publication, or 120 years from creation. For works published before 1978, copyright protection lasted 28 years and could generally be extended to a total of 75 years, an extension which has since been made automatic for many works and increased to 95 years as well. Since 2003, unpublished works of authors who died 70 years before will enter the public domain.

Creative Commons

Creative Commons is a vehicle that allows copyright holders to share their works. It is not a substitute for copyright, but rather, is a licensing model that works in tandem with existing copyright laws. Creative Commons was developed to facilitate the exchange and sharing of ideas and creative content without the need to directly seek the copyright holder's permission to do so. When copyright holders identify their works as part of the Creative Commons network, they are relinquishing part of their right to their works while reserving others.

There are six possible ways in which a copyright holder can release some of their rights to their works while reserving others. The common denominator between all licenses is the provision of credit to the original copyright holder. The Creative Commons logo is displayed in works that use any of the Creative Commons licenses.

Citing Copyrighted Sources

Respect the Rights of the Authors!

ICO students are reminded to cite their sources and display the copyright notice and copyright ownership information (if applicable) as it is shown in the original source. This includes all works incorporated as part of the educational multimedia projects they prepare, including those prepared for **Fair Use**. In order to appropriately credit the source, ICO students must do the following:

- Adequately identify (cite) the source of the work, giving full bibliographic description when available, including author, title, publisher, and place of publication. ICO uses the APA format.
- Copyright ownership information should include the copyright notice, year of the first publication and name of the copyright holder.
- The credit and copyright notice information may be combined and shown in a separate section of any educational multimedia project.
- Images incorporated into a project **must** be cited or have the copyright notice and the name of the creator of the image incorporated **into** the image when available.
- Credit and copyright notice information is considered "incorporated" if it is attached to the image file and appears on the screen when the image is viewed.

When and How to Obtain Permission

By weighing the four (4) factors of the **Fair Use** guidelines, (see “Fair Use” section above) ICO students may be able to determine use exceeding the limitations. If there is any question of infringement, **OBTAIN PERMISSION!** In some cases, the publisher may require a fee or

royalties. In these instances, ICO students should consult with their direct supervisors/division heads or with Library staff members.

Summary

1. The need for educational resources never justifies violating copyright laws.
2. ICO students **may not** copy or download in order to avoid the purchase of books, reprints, music, periodicals, software or media, etc.
3. ICO students **may not** be directed to make illegal copies or to violate copyright laws on behalf of a faculty member or higher authorities.
4. ICO students **may not** make copies of copyrighted originals owned by other schools, unless expressed written permission to do so is granted.
5. Copyright law is not static. Older guidelines are always subject to revision and new guidelines will gradually win acceptance. As new or revised guidelines are introduced, ICO will review their applicability, revise this section of the Student Guide as needed, and inform its administrators, faculty, staff, and students of any changes.

Penalties for Copyright Infringement

Summary of Civil and Criminal Penalties for Violation of Federal copyright Laws

Copyright infringement is the act of exercising, without permission or legal authority, one or more of the exclusive rights granted to the copyright owner under section 106 of the Copyright Act (Title 17 of the United States Code). These rights include the right to reproduce or distribute copyrighted work. In the file-sharing context, downloading or uploading substantial parts of a copyrighted work without authority constitutes an infringement. Penalties for copyright infringement include civil and criminal penalties. In general, anyone found liable for civil copyright infringement may be ordered to pay either actual damages or “statutory” damages affixed or not less than \$750 and not more than \$30,000 per work infringed. For “willful” infringement, a court may award up to \$150,000 per work infringed. A court can, in its discretion, also assess costs and attorney’s fees. For details, see Title 17, United States Code, Sections 504, 505.

Willful copyright infringement can also result in criminal penalties, including imprisonment of up to five years and fines of up to \$250,000 per offense. For more information, please see the website of the U.S. Copyright Office at www.copyright.gov.

Discount for Optometric Care

	Professional Fees	Glasses	Contacts
ICO Employees, ICO Students, Current and Emeritus Board Members	Waived***	40% reduction**	10% reduction**
Spouse and Children of the above group	Waived***	40% reduction**	10% reduction**

Other Family Members* of employees, Current and Emeritus Board Members	40% reduction***	20% reduction**	10% reduction**
Other Family Members* of ICO Students	Waived***	20% reduction**	10% reduction**
All Other Relatives	No Reduction	No Reduction	No Reduction

* Other families include parents, parents-in-law, brothers, sisters, grandparents and grandchildren.

** Reduction is not available with coupons, discounted items, sale items, promotional offers, or insurance programs.

The purchase of eyeglasses and contact lenses requires a non-refundable deposit of 50% of the total cost of the materials prior to the materials being ordered. The balance is due in full prior to the release of any materials.

Employees have the option of payroll repayment over a maximum of 6 pay periods. Students may apply the charges to their student account. This is processed by the completion of an authorization form that is available from the cashier window in the IEI.

Please note there are independent care providers working within the Illinois Eye Institute (for instance, the Ophthalmologists in the Advanced Ophthalmic Care Service). The professional fees for their services are not necessarily waived or reduced for ICO and IEI affiliated staff, students, board members, or family members. The billing policies for these providers should be explained to all patients as appointments are set.

***Vision or Medical insurance plans we accept will be billed. Non covered charges or absence of insurance will be waived or reduced as indicated.

Dress Code

When in the main College building, students should dress in a manner becoming a professional student. Each student is expected to observe good taste in the choice of clothing worn and to practice habits of hygiene, neatness, and good grooming. ICO supports reasonable self-expression through use of jewelry and visible tattoos provided they align with professional standards.

- Jewelry should be conservative and appropriate for the workplace, ensuring it does not interfere with your duties.
- Piercings must be discreet, not distracting, and appropriate for a professional environment in number and style.
- Tattoos or body art must be discreet and not distracting. Symbols or images that could be considered offensive or inappropriate for the workplace (slanderous, obscene, profane, violent, or demeaning of others) are discouraged and must be covered at all times while on campus or engaged in official college activities.

Faculty may refuse admittance to classroom, laboratory or clinical sessions to any student deemed inappropriately dressed or groomed. A specific dress code is required in clinic. At no time and under no circumstances are students permitted in clinical areas without proper attire. Students should review the "Clinic Attire and Presentation: policy located in the IEI Manual.

Educational Contact Lens Program

- The program is designed to enhance the fitting experience of student clinicians and residents.
- Educational contact lens fittings may only be scheduled during student patient care sessions.
- The program runs from June 1st to April 1st each year. Fittings are not accepted past April 1st. All orders must be placed by April 15th to be considered for a given academic year.
- Students may place one order of soft and/or one order of rigid lenses each academic year. The lens choices will be based on the patient's needs and both ICO and individual company policies as listed below. The maximum soft lens supply is one box per eye.
- Participants must undergo an annual fitting and an evaluation of the latest options for their refractive status and ocular physiology. A different product from a different manufacturer must be evaluated each year. Participation is voluntary and lens selection is at the discretion of the examining intern and attending.
- Educational lenses are non-transferable, non-returnable, and non-refundable.
- There is a \$20 processing fee to participate. There is a \$100 fee for specialty contact lenses (orthokeratology, scleral lenses, hybrid lenses).
- An additional \$8 charge will be added if lenses need to be mailed to students.
- All educational lens orders are subject to the approval of the CCCE Chief or his/her designate.
- Orders are processed weekly, and participants should allow 3 weeks for delivery. This program may be modified or revoked at any time.

Emergencies

To place an emergency call, dial 911 from any campus phone. All campus phones provide emergency information to the local 911 Emergency Center as well as the ICO Security Office. This provides faster response times to the calling location and access for emergency personnel to secured areas of the campus. Personal cell phones should only be used if you are unable to access a campus phone. The Officer will complete an incident report which will be filed in the Security Office and forwarded to the Dean of Student Affairs.

An injured individual is to decide whether they would like an ambulance to be called. If they are unconscious, then Campus Security will arrange for an ambulance. College employees may not drive a student, patient or staff member to a doctor or hospital.

Emergency Notification Technology

The Illinois College of Optometry utilizes mass notification technology which can send out a message via email, text and/or multiple phone contacts to all students, faculty, and staff of the College in the event of an emergency. Additionally, the College's phone system can be activated to immediately broadcast audible and visual text messages to all phones throughout the campus. ICO maintains pre-written emergency notification messages for multiple possible scenarios. We are also able to customize a message as needed before sending. These processes can be initiated with a single phone call to the Senior Director for Compliance, Risk Management and Quality Improvement and/or the Security Department. Additionally, these processes can be initiated by using a mobile device application.

The Senior Director for Compliance, Risk Management and Quality Improvement and/or the Security Department are notified of an event requiring the use of mass notification technology. Anyone can contact the Campus Security office to notify of a possible emergent situation. Campus Security will verify the situation and respond accordingly, which may or may not include contacting the Senior Director for Compliance, Risk Management and Quality Improvement to trigger the mass notification system. Additionally, Campus Security will notify the Chicago Police and/or Fire Departments to enlist professional emergency service assistance and alert other members of the greater community.

The emergency notification system is tested twice annually. Each test includes a sent message and a tracking mechanism to identify who may have been missed and how long messages take to be delivered. We work with the vendor to enhance the service when issues are identified.

Titles of individuals involved in emergency preparedness and response:

- Director of Campus Security
- Director of Facilities
- Senior Director for Compliance, Risk Management and Quality Improvement

ICO Missing Student Policy

Each ICO student residing on or off campus may identify to the College an individual to be contacted by the College if the student is determined to be missing, in accordance with this policy.

A student is determined to be missing when a report comes to the attention of the College and the College determines the report to be credible. College officials receiving a missing person's report relating to a student are required to notify ICO Campus Security immediately to investigate and determine that a student who is the subject of a missing report has been missing for more than 24 hours and has not returned to campus. If such a determination is made, the College will notify appropriate law enforcement agencies not later than 24 hours after the time a student is determined to be missing or immediately if circumstances of criminality or safety are determined to be involved.

Within 24 hours of a determination that a student is missing, the Dean of Student Affairs will notify that student's emergency contact as provided to the Registrar.

ICO policies are subject to revision without prior notice and when mandated by the Federal Higher Education Opportunity Act, Section 485(j) [20 U.S.C. 1092j] as it pertains to missing person procedures.

Policy for Response to Fire and Explosions/Evacuation

Purpose - To provide a safe environment for patients, students, staff, and others and to decrease the chance of injury or loss of life in the case of fire or explosion.

What to do in case of fire and/or explosion - A fire is considered to be any uncontrolled flame and/or smoke. When in doubt, respond as if a fire exists. "R A C E R" is the acronym used to represent the fire plan and describe the response to fire, smoke or activation of the fire alarm.

R = Rescue - rescue people from fire/smoke

A = Alarm - pull the nearest fire alarm

C = Contain - close the fire doors in order to contain the fire/smoke

E = Extinguish - extinguish the fire if you are near the point of origin and it is safe to try to do so

R = Relocate - relocate people out of the building through the nearest exit

Notification of a fire or explosion may be by sounding of the fire alarm or by the announcement of "code red" over the campus phone loudspeaker system. If an employee is in the building when the alarm code is activated, they should follow the RACER and department specific plans where applicable. Every person should familiarize themselves with the nearest exit. You should assume that you will not be returning to the area, so take your purse, keys, coat, or other necessary items only if they are easily accessible and will not interfere with your abilities to leave the building quickly. The senior level person present should take the responsibility of ensuring all patients, students or employees in the area leave the building (e.g., the professor in the classroom or laboratory, the attending doctor in an examination area). Every effort should be made to close doors, especially fire doors, as the last person leaves. Never use the elevators. The Chicago Fire Department will assist in removing patients or staff unable to use the stairs to leave the building. Every employee should follow any directions issued by fire department officials. Only if time permits and it appears safe to do so, search isolated areas such as restrooms.

The Security Office will serve as the communication center during a fire alarm. The Security Officer on duty should remain at the entrance of the building to guide fire officials to the site of the fire and/or explosion.

If smoke and/or heat conditions are encountered while evacuating, remember to stay low to the floor and exit by the nearest door. In the event of a major fire, evacuation may have to be delayed until the fire is brought under control and/or extinguished. If this situation exists, remain calm and shield yourself from the fire. If you are unable to escape, stuff clothing, rags, etc. in or around all cracks to help keep the smoke from entering the room you are in. It is most important to try and notify someone of your location. If the telephone is out of service, try to get someone's attention by yelling or making noise. Above all, REMAIN CALM until help arrives.

EVAC –Chairs are located on the 2nd floor in the North and South stairways.

Wheelchair bound or people with limited mobility on the upper floors should be moved to areas of relative safety within the building. These safe areas would be places away from the fire and smoke, areas separated by fire walls or fire doors and areas that facilitate rescue such as areas with windows. People should not be moved to any areas that may impede the evacuation of other people from the building. These areas include:

- Outside the Security Office for fire in the IEI
- Near the north elevator on the stairwell platform in the IEI for fire in the College building
- The north or south stairwell platforms on the third floor whichever is farthest from the fire.
- The east or west stairwell platform of the first, second or third floors of the Crouch Family Alumni Hall (formerly the Brady Hall), whichever is farthest from the fire.

A member of the staff, either faculty, security or facility personnel, should inform the rescue personnel of the location of these persons.

No one should re-enter the building unless directed to do so by the Security Officer on duty. The Security Officer on duty will only allow re-entry on the orders of the Chicago Fire Department personnel in charge.

Fire Extinguishers

Fire extinguishers are provided, in accordance with NFPA 10 and City Code, throughout the institution. In order to ensure that extinguishers function properly, they are regularly inspected and receive regular maintenance. Fire extinguishers should be used by employees to extinguish a fire only if they feel it is safe to do so.

Defibrillator

Automatic External Defibrillators (AED) are in the hallway on both the 1st and 2nd floor just west of the elevator, as well as in the hallway adjacent to the gym. Opening the AED case sounds an alarm in order to help bring assistance to the area. If you hear the alarm, please notify Security if they are not already on scene.

Policy for Response to Bomb Threats

What to do in case of a bomb threat - If you receive a threat of violence against the institution or yourself, either verbal or written, contact the Security Officer on duty immediately. Take every threat seriously.

The Security Office will serve as the communications center in case of a bomb threat. The Chicago Police and Fire departments will be notified. The Security Officer will make the decision whether to evacuate the building. Notification of an evacuation order will be delivered through the emergency notification system as well as using a "Code Red" announcement on the PA system and/or by the fire alarm. The protocol for responding to fire/explosion should then be followed.

Policy for the Response to a Spill or Leak of Hazardous Substances

Purpose - To reduce the risk of injury or loss of life in the case of leaking or spilling hazardous substances.

What to do in case of a leak or spill - If you are present when there is a spill or leak of a substance that may be harmful, you should contact the Security Office immediately.

The Security Office will be the communications center in case of a spill or leak. The Security Officer will notify the appropriate external agencies and internal departments which may include the Chicago Police, Chicago Fire departments, campus facilities staff, etc. The Security Officer on duty will, with the advice of facilities personnel or emergency personnel, make the decision whether to evacuate the building.

Notification of an evacuation order will be made through the emergency notification system as well as by an announcement of "Code Red" on the PA system and/or by the fire alarm. The protocol for responding to fire/explosion should then be followed.

Employment

The academic demands of the optometric curriculum require that a student carefully consider whether they should accept concurrent employment. When the student is unsure of the proper decision, they should discuss the matter with the Dean of Student Affairs or a faculty member, even in the instances where students have demonstrated their capacity to meet academic standards. However, the College recognizes that many students work to finance their education and will assist them when possible. Information about off-campus employment is maintained by the Director of Career Development.

It is important to note that it is illegal for any student employed in a health care setting to allow the public to perceive them as a doctor. This constitutes practicing without a license and is subject to criminal prosecution by the respective state.

Some students have looked to private clinical practice settings for employment prior to graduation. The College does not discourage this practice provided such employment does not interfere in any way with the student's classroom or clinical performance.

Students should be aware that the following practices are not only illegal and could result in charges brought against them, but also could prevent the student from obtaining state licensure in the future:

1. Holding oneself out as an optometrist, being called "doctor" in a clinical setting, or suggesting that the student has a license to practice optometry.
2. Engaging in any act which is defined as the practice of optometry without the direct supervision (i.e., actual presence) of a licensed practitioner.

Any student who is found to be engaging in the above activities will be reported to the proper authorities, along with the practitioner involved. Students will also be referred to the Professional Conduct and Ethics Committee for disciplinary action.

Any patient care assignment, whether it is associated with an academic course or a clinical rotation, must be conducted either at IEI or a specified IEI satellite site.

Fund Raising

Solicitation of funds for any purpose by student organizations may be done only with permission granted through the fund-raising process that is initiated through ICO's Student Association. The treasurer (or other executive board member) of the organization seeking to fund raise, should interact with the College's Development Office and Student Association to begin the approval process.

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide each student organization with the freedom to engage in traditional fund-raising activities without impinging upon the ability of other College organizations to also raise funds without subjecting the campus community to a constant barrage of sales or fund-raising efforts. **Organizations considering solicitation of contact lens related industries, or companies doing business with the College, must receive permission from the Chief of Cornea/Contact Lens Specialty Service.**

Student organizations, individual students, and outside organizations must obtain permission from the Student Association, and the appropriate class representatives, in order to make presentations to a class.

ICO Symbols & Use of Name

No student organization or individual student may use the College name, logo, seal or other identifying marks or symbols in any sales, fund raising, or other activities without prior written approval of the Office of Communications. Organizations or individuals who wish to use such materials should apply to the Dean of Student Affairs and supply all available information concerning the proposed use. Any fundraising or other activity should obtain approval first before requesting approval of the use of the College name, logo or identifying mark or symbol.

Professional Conduct

Patient care, in all modalities, necessitates professionalism. Professionalism refers to the multitude of ways a person conducts themselves and reflects a person's character. Through the academic and clinical aspects of ICO's curriculum students will learn about and will have experiences that encourage further development of professionalism as a healthcare provider.

The College expects that students will come to the program with a strong foundation for the basic constructs of professionalism. Though students are developing nuanced understanding of professionalism through the program, the College always holds students responsible to conduct themselves in a professional manner, whether they are on or off campus. While enrolled at ICO, each student is regarded as a representative of ICO.

The foundational expectations for student conduct include integrity in academic endeavors (test taking, completion of homework/assignments, writing, etc.), ethical actions and decision-making in-patient care, and respectful behaviors both on and off the ICO campus. Examples of breaches of conduct would be activities such as cheating, plagiarism, misconduct in patient care, unlawful or destructive behavior in general, unethical, or unprofessional communications such as bullying through social media, etc. Unprofessional conduct would also include action by a student to cause or attempt to cause another individual to engage in unethical conduct.

Reporting - Exceptional Professional Conduct or Unprofessional Conduct

Professional Conduct of ICO students is reviewed by the Professional Conduct and Ethics Committee (PCEC). The PCEC is composed of a minimum of three faculty members and two students (one second and one third year). The faculty are appointed by the Vice President and Dean for Academic Affairs and the student members are recommended through the Office of Student Affairs and approved by the Chair of the PCEC.

The PCEC reviews all reports related to professionalism. Any individual may make a report either of Exceptional Professional Conduct or Unprofessional Conduct to the PCEC. All reports should be made using either the [ICO Professionalism Reporting form](#).

Exceptional Professional Conduct reports also made using the [ICO Professionalism Reporting form](#), can identify students who demonstrate through a specific incident(s) conduct or behaviors that are above and beyond expected. The PCEC welcomes reports of positive conduct and when substantiated will ensure appropriate acknowledgement.

The PCEC will act swiftly on reports of unprofessional conduct. Examples of unprofessional conduct include, but are not limited to:

1. Breaches of patient trust and confidentiality, such as violation of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1997 (HIPAA)
2. Cheating, plagiarism, and/or unauthorized use of materials in academic or pre-clinical exercises or examinations
3. Unauthorized use of lecture and laboratory materials, lecture capture recordings or any materials deemed the intellectual property or copyrighted material of a faculty member or fellow student.
4. Misrepresentations, distortions or omissions in data or reports in research
5. Abuse, misrepresentations and other improper conduct in relation to patients or colleagues in clinical training and/or treatment settings.
6. Repeated failure to meet assigned obligations in professional and clinical training programs.
7. Other misconduct, misrepresentations, or failures involving personal conduct which give rise to doubts about the integrity of the student in meeting the overall obligations of a professional optometric career.
8. Violation of the Anti-Harassment Policy and or Campus Conduct Policy will be handled by the Behavior Intervention Team but may be referred to the PCEC.

Depending upon the nature, severity and setting of the unprofessional conduct, immediate action and notification should be made to the student (when appropriate), or if not possible or practical, brought to the proctor, course instructor, clinical faculty, Service Chief, Educational Coordinator, or Department Head. The report of unprofessional conduct should be made by using the [ICO Professionalism Reporting form](#).

The PCEC will investigate written reports, determine whether findings necessitate a full meeting, conduct the meeting with students and recommend an official response. Official responses will vary based upon the findings and include probationary sanctions or disciplinary actions. Examples of PCEC response to unprofessional conduct complaints can include restorative assignments, suspension or in most egregious instances, dismissal from the program.

The Chair of the PCEC will notify the Assistant Dean for Student Success of the Committee's findings and recommendations at the conclusion of the Committee's work with the report. The Assistant Dean for Student Success takes the PCEC recommendations into consideration, reviews any previous student disciplinary issues, and renders the final decision. The decision will be communicated to the student in a letter. The student will be directed to schedule a meeting to discuss the decision with the Assistant Dean for Student Success.

Appeal Process for Unprofessional Conduct Sanctions

A student receiving notification of Unprofessional Conduct decision has three business days from the date of the sanctioning letter to request an appeal of the decision.

Potential grounds for an appeal would include:

- Additional evidence was not available at the time of the initial meeting with the PCEC but is now.

- Procedural errors in the meeting with the PCEC
- The sanction or discipline seems out of proportion to the alleged offense.

An appeal requires a letter be written and submitted to the Dean of Student Affairs (DSA) indicating the exact nature of the appeal and providing all supporting information. The DSA will objectively conduct a review of the appeal, determine whether the appeal has merit and necessitates a meeting with the student or others. It is the DSA's prerogative to determine whether others should be included in the appeal review. Appeal hearings are conducted by the DSA and the Vice President / Dean for Academic Affairs. The Chair of the PCEC will also be present to assess if new information is being presented, but they will not take part in the decision-making process.

In the appeal process, the DSA may uphold, modify or overturn the original decision. The student should be aware that the DSA has the authority to render a disciplinary decision that is more or less severe than the original decision. The appeal decision rendered by the DSA is considered final.

General Student Misconduct

Student misconduct that is not relating to class, laboratory, or clinical activity and that does not involve a Title IX complaint may initially be addressed by the Dean of Student Affairs (DSA). Examples might include but are not limited to behavior issues in the RC, general misconduct off-campus, or personal conduct that reflects poorly on the College and/or the profession. The DSA may investigate the incident of misconduct and may confer with the Chair of the PCEC. In cases not requiring PCEC attention, the DSA may address the matter and handle administratively. The DSA may meet with and interview the students involved as well as any others that might be able to provide information about the matter. The DSA may impose discipline as indicated. The DSA may, after initial investigation, defer the incident of misconduct to the College's Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT). The BIT adjudication process and potential appeals will be handled similar to Title IX complaints.

Research Misconduct

In order to safeguard the integrity of scholarly work, comply with legal and funding requirements, and ensure allegations are addressed promptly, consistently, and fairly ICO has a [Policy for Responding to Allegations of Research Misconduct](#). This policy protects students, faculty, and the institution by establishing transparent procedures that uphold due process, accountability, and public trust in academic research. The policy may be referenced at this link:

<https://icoedu.sharepoint.com/:b:/g/IQBT4ZS-->

[Se5QoRzD36QfcpFAVmNqkXEFf4M0j0CgZcwwhs?e=h2DoGj](https://icoedu.sharepoint.com/:b:/g/IQBT4ZS--Se5QoRzD36QfcpFAVmNqkXEFf4M0j0CgZcwwhs?e=h2DoGj)

Student Board of Government and Organizations

Student Association	
	State Clubs:
Board of Directors:	Wisconsin
President	
President-Elect	
Secretary	

Treasurer	
Class Representatives (8)	ICO Clubs and Organizations
Immediate Past President (Ex-officio)	ABLE (All Bonding through Life and Eyes)
	AAO Student Chapter
Departments:	American Optometric Student Association – (AOSA)
Director of Health and Community Service	<i>American Public Health Association</i>
AOSA Trustee	<i>Armed Forces Optometric Society - AFOS</i>
AOSA Trustee-Elect	Black Student Union
	Canadian Association of Optometry Students
Director of Student Note Service	College of Visual Development - COVD
Director-Elect of Student Note Service	Concussion Legacy Foundation
Resident Complex Head Resident Assistant	<i>Collegiate/Education Society of the IL Optometric Association – (CESIOA)</i>
	Contact Lens Society - CLS
	Council on Ethics and Advancement of Professionalism
	Fellowship of Christian Optometrists - FCO
	ICO Leo Club
	ICOPro
	Low Vision Rehabilitation Club
	Multicultural Association
	Muslim Student Association
Societies:	National Optometric Student Association - NOSA
Beta Sigma Kappa	NORA – Neuro-Optometric Rehabilitation Association Student Group
Gold Key Honor Society	Ocular Nutrition Society
Tomb and Key Honor Society	Optometric Extension Program
	Personal Finance Club
	Private Practice Club
	Queer Eye
	<i>Running Club</i>
	Student Illinois Optometric Association
	Spanish Optometric Club
	Sports Legacy Institute Community Educators - SLICE
	*Student Volunteers in Optometric Service to Humanity - SVOSH

*This is a voluntary organization not under supervision of ICO.

Student Association

The Dean of Student Affairs (or his designee) supervises the activities of the Student Association (SA) and all other student organizations. Student Organizations are described on the College's website.

SA Membership

All students at ICO are automatically members of the SA. Functioning in cooperation with the College Administration, the SA considers matters concerning student welfare and governs a wide variety of student activities and publications. It makes recommendations regarding the general welfare of students, supervises class elections and all matters involving a vote of the entire student body. SA supervises and guides class officers in the administration of their duties and promotes lecture programs and social and athletic activities for the entire student body. It also serves as a liaison between students and the College through the Dean of Student Affairs.

SA Elections

The SA President is elected by school wide balloting and acts as the official representative of the student body on all matters. The Board of Directors includes representatives from every class and officers elected to perform specific functions. The President may also appoint qualified leaders from the student body to serve on committees.

Under the supervision of the SA, elections for class officers are held in the late Spring each year for the officers to serve the next academic year. Officers of the first-year class are elected early in the Fall quarter. They must obtain a simple majority of the votes to retain their positions.

Academic Requirements for Officers

A grade point average of 3.0 or higher is required of all students to run for SA office and at least 2.67 to remain in any class or SA office. Also, a student may not run for or hold student office while on academic or disciplinary probation. If either occurs, the student will be suspended as an officer and the SA President will appoint an interim replacement. The suspended officer may resume the duties only with the permission of the Dean of Student Affairs, and only after the original reason for suspension has been corrected.

General Information

Meetings of the SA are held on a regular basis. Any student may attend such meetings, except those meetings called for closed executive session. Members of the College Administration may be invited to attend special meetings of the Student Association. Minutes of the SA meetings are posted in the student lounge and copies are distributed to each Association member, the Dean of Student Affairs, the Academic Dean, and the College President.

Each class representative is responsible for communication between class members and the SA. It is the class representative's duty to present specific class matters to the Association. The Class Representatives are to call regular class meetings to make announcements and to discuss class concerns. Representatives are also expected to use the *ICO Insider* Student Newsletter as a vehicle for announcements and concerns. Please keep in mind the deadline for articles to be submitted is printed on the front page of the current *ICO Insider*.

Class Dues

The ICO Student Association has determined that class dues should be billed directly to student accounts as a convenience to the students. 1st, 2nd, and 3rd year students will automatically be assessed a \$100 class dues fee (in the Fall Quarter) which will go directly to each class's

account. The quarterly dues will be applied each academic year through the Third Professional Year.

Student Organization Financial Accounts

The Illinois College of Optometry acts as a banking agent, without cost, for student organizations of the College. This removes most of the banking responsibilities from one or two individuals of the organization and possible misappropriation of organizational funds. Also, it allows the organizations to establish and maintain accounts without going off campus. The College will maintain the accounts, provide bookkeeping statements, and assist organizations with the setup of their accounts and books. The students will maintain control over the funds and authorize disbursements. All contributions to a student organization must be processed through the ICO Development Office.

Set-up:

1. All cash receipts and disbursements of student organizations at ICO are to be made through the College's Business Affairs Office. Student organizations are NOT to maintain any other bank accounts separately.
2. Students handling financial transactions must be the treasurer of the organization. (The official listing of organization reps is maintained in Student Affairs)

Receipts:

1. All proceeds from any sponsored activity must be reported to the ICO Development Office.
2. All proceeds from organizational activities (i.e., fund raising, dues, etc.) MUST be deposited in the organization's account with the College.
3. All deposits are to be brought to the Business Affairs Office and given directly to the College Cashier. The deposits must be clearly marked using the Student Organization Deposit Form. Also, an itemized listing of all checks included in the deposit must be attached.
4. All checks must be made payable to the Illinois College of Optometry, or must be endorsed by an officer of the organization by printing the following endorsement on the back of the checks:

Pay to the order of:
Illinois College of Optometry
Signature of Officer
Title of Officer
5. Receipts for the deposits will be forwarded to the organization's officer designated to receive the reports of the account.
6. For internal student fundraisers, the organization must complete the required request for permission to solicit student funds form. This form includes the reservation for checking out the iPad credit card swipers and one-card swiper. In addition, each student organization has been provided a web page for online collections.

Disbursements:

1. All disbursements require the proper signature(s) as designated on the Student Organization Signature/Authorization form. No disbursements (except as noted below) will be made unless the proper signature(s) authorizes the disbursement.
2. The College reserves the right for immediate withdrawal of any funds due directly to the College. These withdrawals include, but are not limited to, such items as photocopier and printing fees, postage, food service, and bookstore charges. The withdrawals will be charged directly against the organization's account.
3. A Check Requisition form (blank forms located on the my.ico.edu website) must be completed for all disbursements that do not have a vendor invoice. The proper approvals as indicated on the Student Organization Signature/Authorization form must be signed and the organization's account number must be on the requisition or invoice, before the disbursement will be honored. The approved Check Requisition/Invoice must be given to the College's Accounts Payable Coordinator with all payment support or receipts attached. Disbursements will be made by check. All disbursements must be accompanied by receipts or similar documents supporting the amount of disbursement. Reimbursements to students or employees of the College also must have supporting documentation. For disbursements of compensation, see below.
4. The check based on the approved Check Requisition/Invoice will be written with the next College check run. No checks will be written at a different time.
5. Monthly printouts will be available to the organization treasurer upon request. This printout will contain all the month's activities. Any disputes must be brought to the attention of the College's Accountant.
6. **ALL** disbursements for compensation to students or employees of the College will be paid via the College semi-monthly payroll. All required payroll documents **MUST** be completed prior to the payment. All compensation payments will be subject to withholding per federal and state regulations. Any questions concerning this paragraph should be brought to the Business Affairs Office.

Other Policies:

1. The officers of the student organization are held **personally** responsible for any overdrafts or outstanding bills not covered by the funds held by the College. Disbursements will be withheld if an organization's account does not contain the funds needed to make the disbursement. Short-term advances can be negotiated with the Senior Director of Finance to cover disbursements at times of short cash flow.
2. Per College policy, all returned checks will be charged back to the organization's account, with a service fee of \$35.00. The check will be forwarded to the treasurer of the organization. The College will **NOT** act as a collection agent.
3. Any questions on the above items should be brought to the Senior Director of Finance.

Termination of Organization

Upon the termination of a student organization, or upon the graduation of a class organization, the College will disburse any remaining funds based on the current Student Organization Signature/Authorization form. If there is no activity in a student organization's account for one year, the College reserves the right to consider the organization terminated and to disburse any

remaining funds per the latest Student Organization Signature/Authorization form. If the information on the Student Organization Signature/Authorization form for the deposition of funds upon termination of the organization is not possible, the funds will be transferred to the Student Association Scholarship Fund.

Honorarium / Gifts

It is considered inappropriate for any appointed or elected student to accept honoraria or gifts from any vendor or outside organization engaging in business with the College or students in order to directly or indirectly influence student or College.