

Essential Functions for Doctor of Optometry Education: Admission and Retention Requirements

INTRODUCTION

The Doctor of Optometry degree is recognized as a broad-based, first professional degree requiring the acquisition of general knowledge in applicable domains of optometry and the basic skills necessary for the practice of optometry. The education of a prospective optometrist requires assimilation of knowledge, acquisition of skills, and development of judgment through patient care experiences in preparation for the independent, professional decision-making required in practice. A student in the doctoral optometry program at Pacific University must 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. These areas are consistent with the [ASCO Functional Guidelines](#). Further, the practice of optometry emphasizes interprofessional collaboration among optometrists and other healthcare and education professionals, the patient, and the patient’s family and caregivers. It is necessary for students in the program to meet minimum essential functions, with or without reasonable accommodation, in order to carry out required activities (including those listed below and in the program materials) and to perform competently, effectively, and safely in supervised patient care experiences throughout the program. This document does not replace the ASCO Functional Guidelines, but is intended to assist candidates in personally evaluating prospects for success in the program by describing essential functions for the Doctor of Optometry at Pacific University College of Optometry.

Observation Abilities

The student must:

- a. Observe demonstrations and visual presentations in lectures, laboratories, and clinics;
- b. Have sufficient motor and sensory function to observe patients accurately and completely at a distance and close at hand, elicit information from them related to diagnostics and treatment;
- c. Visualize and identify anatomic structures; visualize and discriminate findings on imaging studies; discriminate text, numbers, tables, and graphs associated with diagnostic instruments and tests; and accurately monitor equipment and instrument displays and controls, including those of instruments and clinical equipment used for the diagnosis and treatment of patients and/or for the completion of didactic assignments;
- d. See with detectable depth perception and in low-light conditions, distinguish color variations, and discern shades of black and white;

e. Hear, understand, and accurately communicate the information/directions verbally and in writing. Discern sounds related to patient assessment and treatment;

Communication Abilities

The student must:

- a. Communicate effectively with patients, instructors and classmates verbally;
- b. Effectively and efficiently describe patient behavior, test results, and related information;
- c. Communicate clearly, effectively, and sensitively with patients in both oral and written English;
- d. Write and/or type effectively, including making clear and legible notes in patient charts and preparing appropriately written and referenced essays, reports, research and other scholarly papers, patient documentation, and other classroom, laboratory, and clinical written assignments as part of course work and clinical practice;
- e. Read at a level to comprehend curriculum and clinical content in doctoral-level education;
- f. Be computer literate at a level to utilize computers effectively in classroom, laboratory, and clinical education environments, including accessing technology for clinical management (e.g., billing, charting, etc.);
- g. Communicate effectively and efficiently with other members of the healthcare team and the public, in oral, written, and electronic form;
- h. Perceive and demonstrate appropriate non-verbal communication for culture and context; modify communication style to meet the communication needs of patients, caregivers, and other persons served; and convey information accurately with relevance and cultural sensitivity;

Sensory and Motor Coordination Abilities

The student must:

- a. Have sufficient motor function, vision, hearing, touch, and dexterity to integrate and coordinate both gross and fine motor movements, eye-hand coordination, equilibrium, and sensation; execute movements required to provide care of patients; and effectively manage physical conditions in order to prevent impediments to appropriate services;

b. Effectively manipulate equipment and instruments necessary to perform diagnostic tests and treatments, and to work with patient-utilized equipment (e.g., spectacles, contact lenses, low-vision devices, ophthalmic medication, therapy devices, etc.), and efficiently manipulate the diagnostic and treatment environment and materials without violation of diagnostic and treatment protocols and best practices;

c. Sit, bend, and reach while performing daily job functions, function in a structured environment for several hours, sustain necessary physical activity level required in classroom and clinical activities;

d. Respond quickly to provide a safe environment for patients in emergency situations (e.g., fire, choking, etc.).

Intellectual-Conceptual, Integrative and Quantitative Abilities

The student must:

a. Have sufficient intellectual abilities, including comprehension, retention, measurement, evaluation, reasoning, analysis, inference, integration, and synthesis, to meet curricular and clinical demands and the critical skill of problem-solving;

b. Possess sufficient intellectual capacity to collect and analyze complex data and both written and verbal patient history information, in order to interpret patient findings, recognize anomalies, reach logical conclusions, make sound clinical judgments, and make recommendations that improve patient care;

c. Demonstrate the ability to identify complex problems and reach conclusions through reading and comprehension of resource materials, information, and scholarly texts and journals;

d. Comprehend, analyze, and synthesize complex program content, utilize detailed written and verbal instruction to meet curricular and clinical demands, and apply prior learning to new situations;

e. Self-evaluate, identify, and communicate limits of one's own knowledge and skills related to appropriate professional levels and expectations, and identify and utilize resources in order to increase knowledge and skills to appropriate professional levels and expectations.

Behavioral and Social Attributes

The student must:

a. Understand the basis and content of ethics in optometry, conduct his/herself in an ethical manner, and uphold professional ethics in optometry;

- b. Comply with established university and school policies and procedures, and abide by the laws and regulation pertaining to the practice of optometry in the jurisdiction in which professional activities are being conducted;
- c. Maintain accuracy and confidentiality of patient information by protecting medical, personal, academic, financial, or business information, and by respecting professional confidences;
- d. Foster a professional attitude and a positive environment for learning; work both independently and as team member; interact well with individuals, small groups, and large audiences; and establish sufficient rapport and maintain boundaries in order to effectively relate to fellow students, patients, healthcare professionals, clinical supervisors and preceptors, faculty, and staff;
- e. Present a professional appearance and demeanor;
- f. Display mature, sensitive, effective, and culturally appropriate professional relationships;
- g. Possess the interpersonal skills necessary to interact in a positive and professional manner and provide care to all regardless of age, race, ethnicity, origin, physical or mental status, or other condition or status;
- h. Possess the emotional stability to exercise sound judgment and complete all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and treatment of patients; and possess the necessary mechanisms to accept suggestions and criticism and to respond appropriately through modification of behavior;
- i. Organize tasks and set priorities at a sufficient level to complete professional, technical, clinical, and curricular tasks;
- j. Function effectively under stress and adapt to changing and demanding environments while maintaining both professional demeanor and emotional health;
- k. Maintain physical and mental health and self-care to a level that does not to jeopardize the health and safety of self and others in the academic and clinical setting.

UNIVERSITY LEARNING SUPPORT SERVICES

Pacific University provides services and reasonable accommodations to students covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act. Additional information is available via the university's Office of Learning Support Services (LSS) website, www.pacificu.edu/about-us/offices/learning-support-services. A student who requires accommodations is strongly encouraged to contact LSS at 503.352.2194 or

lss@pacificu.edu as soon as a potential service or accommodation is anticipated in order to determine and document the need for services and accommodations. A student who receives accommodations is strongly encouraged to discuss his/her needs with school administration and appropriate faculty and clinical preceptors.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My signature below affirms that I have read and understand the above Essential Functions for Doctoral Optometry Education at Pacific University, including the program-specific information, agree with its content, am committed to the policies expressed therein, am able to perform all of the essential functions needed to satisfactorily complete the requirements for the program, and understand that I may be dismissed from the program should I fail to meet or maintain one or more essential functions during the program despite reasonable accommodation(s) (if recommended by the university's Office of Learning Support Services). I am aware that the school may have additional procedures for students to complete upon admission to the program and will have additional policies and procedures in place for all students to adhere to throughout the program.

Print Name

Sign Name

Date