



SUNY Excels 2015 Performance Improvement Plan Attachment 1: Narrative

CAMPUS INFORMATION

Campus:	College of Optometry
President:	David A. Heath, OD, EdM
Chief Academic Officer:	David Troilo, PhD
Chief Financial Officer:	David Bowers, MBA

Section 1: Campus Alignment with SUNY Excels (the framework for the *Power of SUNY 2020*) and SUNY's overall focus on completion.

Overview: The SUNY College of Optometry, founded in 1971, is dedicated to the education of optometrists, to the advancement of eye and vision care through research and graduate education, and to the care of communities through the provision of comprehensive visual health services. The College of Optometry is part of the doctoral-research sector. It does not offer any undergraduate degree programs.

Mission Statement: *The State University of New York College of Optometry excels, innovates and leads in optometry and vision science by:*

- *Developing outstanding optometrists and vision scientists;*
- *Making new discoveries that advance vision science and patient care;*
- *Improving patients' lives by providing exceptional general and specialized optometric care;*
- *Enhancing public health through education and service to a broad range of communities*

The College's doctor of optometry program is one of 21 nationwide, and the only such program in New York State. Over sixty percent of all practicing optometrists in New York are alumni of SUNY Optometry. Several years ago, the College initiated a significant enrollment expansion in its Doctor of Optometry (O.D.) degree program to meet NYS demand for eye care providers into the foreseeable future. The plan, which increases the entering class size from 75 to 100, was formally approved by SUNY Administration in early 2012. Successful completion of the implementation process by the 2018 AY directly supports System-wide completion goals while serving the eye care needs of the people of New York State.

There are currently 384 students (AY 2016 across all programs) attending the College. Approximately ninety-five percent of students are enrolled in the professional degree program although a number of those are in dual-degree programs. The College is exploring the option of adding additional degree programs.

The College also supports a vigorous research program including basic, translational and clinic programs with approximately \$3.22M in extramural activity during FY 2015. The Graduate Vision Research Center supports approximately 16 PhD candidates and 24 MS students each year.

The College's University Eye Center (Article 28 Diagnostic & Treatment Center) provides vital vision care services to the New York City community with approximately 70,000 patient visits per year. An additional 80,000+ patient encounters involve students, residents and faculty providing care through affiliated clinical partners in the community (hospitals, health centers, etc.).

International Programs: The College also has strong international links to China and supports the Power of SUNY 2020's big idea: SUNY and The World. In partnership with the Wenzhou Medical University and the Chinese Government, the college provides international study opportunities for its students, partners in a Center of Excellence in Low Vision & Vision Rehabilitation in Wenzhou, China and hosts a Confucius Institute specializing in health care. The College has more recently begun working with the University of KwaZulu-Natal in Durban, South Africa on practitioner education and this year is piloting an advanced standing program for optometrists and physicians trained abroad.

Alumni/Philanthropy: The College successfully concluded a \$10M campaign, (*The Vision & the Promise*), October 1, 2014. This was the first formal campaign in the history of the College and its success holds promise for the future. The College is currently working to build upon the Campaign's success and improve its annual fundraising operation. We have set a target of doubling the percentage of alumni giving annually by 2020. We anticipate the next major campaign will coincide with the College's 50th Anniversary in 2021.

Strategic Plan & Alignment: The College is guided by its strategic plan, "**2013-2018 Strategic Plan: A Legacy of Leadership**", (http://www.sunyopt.edu/2013_strategic_plan/), which is proactively managed through a comprehensive Institutional Assessment Plan approved in July 2013, (http://www.sunyopt.edu/offices/institutional_research/assessment_plan). (Also included as PDF Attachments 1 & 2.)

The College conducts a major review of its strategic plan every five years, while monitoring progress on a continual basis. The last major review occurred during the 2012-2013 Academic Year with final endorsement by the College Council on June 3, 2013. The College's Strategic Plan contains 11 goals with corresponding objectives: Each goal is explicitly linked to the six big ideas of the **Power of SUNY 2020**. Key elements (among others) of the strategic plan that align with *The Power of SUNY 2020*'s six big ideas and *SUNY Excels* include:

- Increasing enrollment in the Doctor of Optometry degree program to meet eye care workforce needs in New York. (*Healthier New York, The Entrepreneurial Century – Access, Completion, Engagement*)
- Enrolling a highly qualified and diverse student body. (*A Healthier New York - Access, Completion*)
- Making the University Eye Center more accessible to the public within the context of health care reform and expanded educational programming. (*A Healthier New York, A Vibrant Community, The Entrepreneurial Century - Engagement, Completion, Success (applied learning)*)
- Expanding external clinical training opportunities within the health care systems of NYC and beyond. (*Healthier New York – Access, Completion, Engagement*)
- Developing new areas of research that are synergistic with the College's existing research community. (*The Entrepreneurial Century, A Healthier New York – Inquiry, Success, Access*)
- Strengthening and expanding programs that train clinician scientists. (*The Entrepreneurial Century, A Healthier New York – Access, Completion, Success, Inquiry*)
- Creating additional learning opportunities for meaningful campus and civic engagement (*A Vibrant Community, The World, The Entrepreneurial Century – Success, Engagement*)

Assessment: In support of the strategic planning process, the College of Optometry has developed a comprehensive Institutional Assessment Plan. Various assessment strategies are used to track implementation of the strategic plan and monitor College operations. The primary motivation is to identify, obtain, analyze, and use outcomes data for meaningful program improvement. The assessment plan includes a comprehensive listing of metrics collected by the college including key measures linked to the College's Strategic Plan. Many of these

metrics are published on the College's website (http://www.sunyopt.edu/offices/institutional_research/factbook). Within the College's key metrics there are numerous indicators that align with SUNY Excels.

The alignment of the College's Strategic Plan with the Power of SUNY 2020 and SUNY Excels will be readily apparent in Section 2 of this performance plan.

SUNY Expanded Performance & Investment Fund: The College submitted three Phase 1 proposals for support from the SUNY Expanded Investment and Performance Fund. All three were deemed eligible for further consideration. The three proposals are:

- 1) **Developing Innovative Clinical Education Paradigms for Healthcare Reform** - The SUNY College of Optometry is requesting \$2 million in funding from a combination of "SUNY 2020 Round V" and the "Investment and Performance Fund" to pilot a fundamental redesign of its patient care and clinical education program using a 3,000 square foot portion of the University Eye Center's primary care floor. The redesign, while supporting our 30% increase in enrollment, will develop an exemplary patient care unit that will ensure effective and efficient eye care as well as better prepare optometrists for the effective management of chronic diseases through care coordination, team-based interprofessional care and the promotion of wellness. (Excels Links: [Access](#), [Completion](#), [Engagement](#), [Success/Applied Learning](#).)
- 2) **Virtual Reality and Simulation Laboratories** - The intent of this project is to support the College's 30% increase in enrollment/completion in the Doctor of Optometry degree program by increasing the capacity of the clinical education process and assuring in-depth exposure to an array of clinical conditions, including those with broad population health implications. The use of VR technology serves as an effective bridge preparing students for the applied learning experience of the patient care setting and will enhance their technical abilities, knowledge and critical thinking skills. (Excels Links: [Access](#), [Completion](#), [Success/Applied Learning](#))
- 3) **Faculty Position in Cellular/Molecular Ocular Physiology** – this application to the Empire Innovations Program is to obtain assistance in the recruitment of a leading cell and molecular biologist, performing research in ocular physiology, and who will fill a critical and complementary role within our research community. We seek a leader in the field to conduct a funded research program at the College and develop collaborations with our other faculty researchers, including translational and clinical projects with our Clinical Vision Research Center. This position represents a vital step toward meeting our research (Inquiry) goals of increasing sponsored activity at the College, expanding educational opportunity and collaboration through the SUNY Eye Institute and SUNY Networks of Excellence. (Excels Links: [Inquiry](#), [Access](#), [Engagement](#))

Endorsement: The College Council of the SUNY College of Optometry reviewed and endorsed the submission of this plan at its meeting on 16 September 2015.

Section 2: Specific SUNY Excels Priority Areas and Metrics

2.1 Access

Overview: The implementation of the College's 2012 Enrollment Management Plan specifically links to SUNY Excels - Access. The expansion of the professional degree program was based upon a workforce analysis conducted by the College's Center for Vision Care Policy to assure that NYS has an adequate supply of highly qualified eye care providers in the future. The plan's implementation strategy specifically targeted increasing the enrollment of New York residents by expanding and revitalizing our partnerships with other SUNY campuses across the state. Similarly, redesign of our Collegiate Science and Technology Entry Program (C-Step) enhanced our efforts to attract under-served minorities into health care professions generally and optometry specifically. The efforts have increased both the enrollment of New Yorkers and improved our ability to attract a diverse student body. The College will continue the Enrollment Management Plan until it is fully implemented with the class entering in the fall of 2017. Enrolling New York residents and a more diverse student body continue to be priorities.

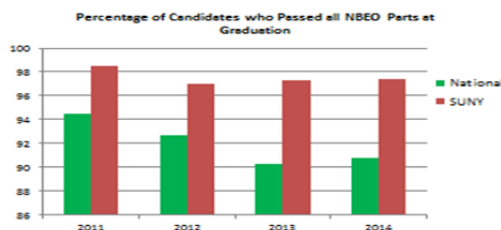
2.1.1 Full Enrollment Picture: The College’s projected enrollment growth starting in AY 2011 (303) going through AY 2020 (399) is on track to achieve a 30% increase. This growth is a result of implementation of the College’s 2012 Enrollment Management Plan. Capital improvement projects have modified the instructional facilities to permit enrollment of 100 new doctor of optometry students per year (up from 75) making our enrollment amongst the highest of any publicly funded optometry college. We are in the process of making needed improvements, structurally and programmatically, within the College’s patient care facility (the University Eye Center) to effectively accommodate the increased class size. The College’s commitment to graduating a sufficient number of practitioners to meet the eye care needs of the State of New York must be balanced by the need to assure all graduates are highly qualified to provide eye care services.

The College of Optometry offers one of the strongest Doctor of Optometry (O.D.) degree programs in the country. In a highly competitive recruitment market the college is expanding its enrollment by 30% while maintaining all quality indicators. This is evidenced by the profile of the entering classes and the performance of our students on national board licensing examinations.

Profile - Entering Fall of:	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007
Entering Class Size	100	98	88	87	79	76	78	76	72
Overall Class GPA	3.50	3.51	3.51	3.53	3.56	3.48	3.50	3.50	3.41
Pre-Req's Class GPA	3.37	3.38	3.33	3.40	3.42	3.35	3.42	3.38	3.35
Total Science Class OAT	346	346	342	347	350	353	366	361	361

The College’s average performance on the Optometry Admissions Test (OAT) has been the second highest in the country (200 – 400 scale; National average of accepted students = 316) while the average entering GPA is among the top five programs (21 programs nationally). Most students enrolling have completed a Pre-Med Bachelor’s degree program. Several students participate in a 3-4 programs through which they are awarded a bachelor’s degree from their undergraduate institution after the successful completion of the first year of the professional optometry program: Nine of these programs are with SUNY campuses.

All optometry students take a three-part national board examination (NBEO) prior to graduation. Passage is required for licensure. SUNY College of Optometry students have been highly successful in passing all parts of the NBEO prior to graduation (97%), well above the national average.



The College’s graduate research program offers M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in Vision Science. The program has become increasingly competitive and there has been recent growth in the number of applications with 28 applications for 2 positions available for the fall of 2015. For AY 16 the College will have 24 MS and 16 Ph.D. degree students. Enrollment in these programs will be largely dictated by continued growth in the College’s research program.

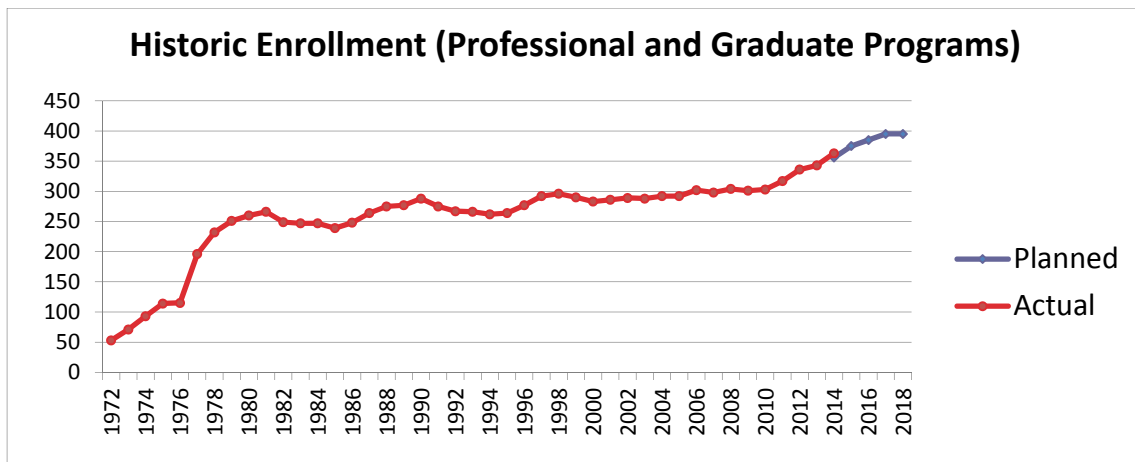


Fig: Overall enrollment of the SUNY College of Optometry since its inception in 1971.

Further growth in the professional OD program beyond what is already planned would not be consistent with the results of the workforce study that justified the current expansion of the program and would require approval from the Accreditation Council on Optometric Education, the optometry program’s specialized accreditation agency.

2.1.2 NYS Residents Served by SUNY: The expanded enrollment of the College of Optometry provides additional opportunities for NYS residents to pursue a career in optometry. The College’s 2012 Enrollment Management Plan specifically considered provider shortage areas in upstate NY in its recruitment strategy and similarly in guiding new graduates as they consider practice opportunities. The College’s recruitment efforts upstate include increased visits and the development of formal inter-campus relationships including an increased focus on 3 – 4 programs with other SUNY institutions. The number of NYS residents enrolled at the College has increased 27% over the past five years (Attachment 2 - Table 4).

2.1.3 Diversity: During the 2014 academic year, the College’s student body profile was 73% female, 43.8% minority (all) and 10.2% underrepresented minority (Attachment 2 - Table 5). According to the SUNY Data Warehouse, among the 64 SUNY campuses, the College of Optometry has the fourth highest representation of minority and international students representing 51.2% of total enrollment. Notably, doctoral-level health professions program have historically had difficulty in increasing the number of enrolled under-represented minority students. While the college has a high level of cultural/ethnic diversity among its students and is well above the average for its sector (doctoral-research – 29.7%), it continues to be challenged in its efforts to increase the number of underrepresented minority students. The College is investing in its diversity efforts. The College receives State support for its C-Step program; has established the position of Director of Minority Recruitment and Enrichment and in recent years expanded student support services with the creation of the College’s Center for Career Development.

2.1.4 Capacity: The College is already using workforce study data to align its enrollment and infrastructure capacity with the supply of and demand for eye care providers in NYS. The ongoing expansion of enrollment will achieve that alignment.

Access Summary – Future Plans & Investment: To increase access the College of Optometry will continue to devote its energy and resources to -

- Completing the expansion of the doctor of optometry program by increasing the entering class size from 75 to 100 (33% increase);
- Increasing the enrollment of underrepresented minorities into the professional degree program;
- Increasing its graduate degree enrollment secondary to expanded research programming; and
- Conducting a study to examine the feasibility and desirability of offering additional degree programs that complement the College’s core mission and supports the System-wide Access and Completion goals.

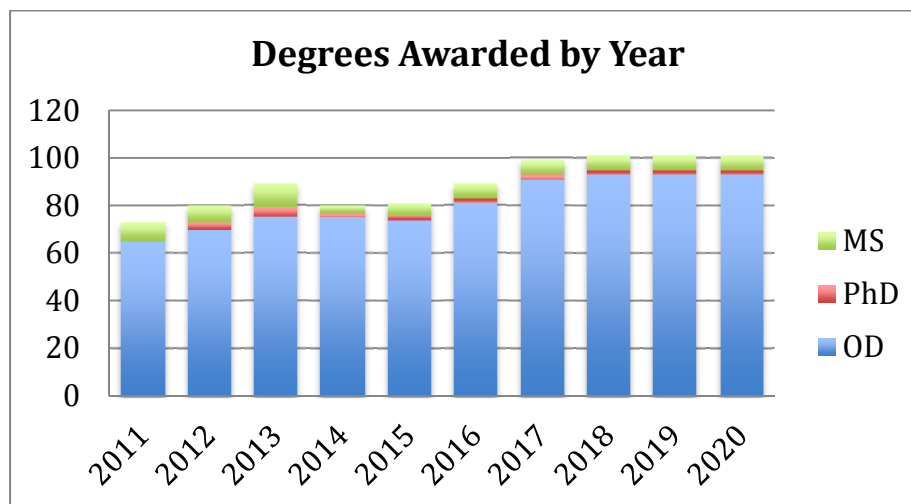
Access Summary - Key Performance Measures:

- Have a total enrollment in degree granting programs of 400 or more by 2020
- Have a diverse student body with minorities (all) representing between 40 – 45% of students.
- Complete a feasibility analysis examining the potential expansion of degree granting programs at the College

2.2 Completion

Overview: Increasing completion may be achieved by expanding enrollment or by improving the percentage of students who complete the program in a timely manner. The College of Optometry’s professional degree programs has a consistently high completion rate (95% +/-). It is unlikely that our completion rate can be improved, thus our commitment to increasing completion is linked to the expansion in enrollment and the potential initiation of new programming.

2.2.1 Completion: The College of Optometry anticipates that by 2020 it will have expanded its total completion numbers for the 2015 AY by over 30%.



- **Doctor of Optometry Degree program:** In June 2015, the College awarded 74 Doctor of Optometry degrees. With the full implementation of the Enrollment Management Plan, we anticipate that by 2020 the number of OD degrees will increase 30% to an average of 94 annually.
- **Graduate Research (MS, PhD):** There are currently 16 PhD candidates (FT & PT) and 18 MS student (with an additional 5 – 6 to be admitted mid-year). The MS students are concurrently enrolled in the OD degree program. Over the past 5 years, we have awarded an average of 3 PhD and 5 MS degrees each year.
- **Certificates:** The College of Optometry and Empire State College have entered into an agreement to provide the College’s professional degree students with an opportunity to earn an MBA. The first phase is the *Advanced Graduate Certificate in Optometry Business Management* which may be earned commensurate with the 4-year OD Program. The program began with the 2014 AY. We anticipate that the number of certificate completions by 2020 will be 8 – 10 annually. Students successfully completing the certificate program may then automatically be admitted into Empire State’s *MBA in Health Care Leadership* program.
- **Residency Education:** The College trains 36 Residents per year through the College’s University Eye Center and other affiliated clinical sites, (VAMC, Hospitals, Health Centers, etc.). Optometry residencies are one year in length and residents receive *Certificates of Advanced Competency* upon the successful completion of the program. The number of positions increased from 32 in 2010 to the current 36. We anticipate having 41 training slots by 2020.

2.2.2 Student Achievement / Success (SAM): The SAM program targets undergraduate programs thus the College of Optometry is not a participant. The college does however have multiple measures of success including national licensing exam data, graduating student exit surveys and surveys of alumni six years after graduation.

2.2.3 Graduation Rates/Time to Degree: Approximately 95% of College of Optometry students complete their Doctor of Optometry degree within a five year period. This is not an area in which significant improvement can be achieved.

Completion Summary – Future Plans & Investment: Consistent with its 2013 – 2015 Strategic Plan, the College will substantively contribute to the System-wide Completion goal by -

- Graduating more Doctors of Optometry through the full implementation of the enrollment management plan;
- Achieving enrollment goals (8-10 student per year) in the *Advanced Graduate Certificate in Optometric Business Management*;
- Increasing graduate research enrollments, secondary to expansion of the College’s research programs; and
- Expanding Residency Education Program by 15% through affiliations with external health care entities.

Completion Summary - Key Performance Measures:

- The College will increase the number of degrees granted by 30% by 2020.
- The College will increase the number of certificate programs completed by 15% by 2020.

2.3 Success

Overview: Similarly to “Completion”, we measure most of the variables associated with Success. Importantly, **Applied Learning** in the health professions has always been an integral part of educational program design: 100% of professional degree students participate in a variety patient care settings for well over 2000 hours prior to graduation. All graduate research programs require hands-on research activity as well.

Other examples of some key “Success” measures/programs at Optometry include:

- 95% + 0f those admitted complete their degrees and do it within five years (**Progression**)
- Virtually a 100% employment rate (**Employment**)
- A nearly 0% default rate (**financial literacy**)
- One of the highest performance rates on the national licensing exams in the country. (**Credentials & Learning**)
- International clinical education opportunities (China) and volunteer mission trips to developing countries. (**Multi-cultural**)
- Students provide eye care (under the supervision of licensed practitioners) to a highly racially and ethnically diverse clinical population (**multi-cultural**)
- Hosting a Confucius Institute for Health to encourage Cultural Exchange (**Multi-Cultural**)
- The College collects data on **student engagement** annually through its annual Student Exit Survey.

Student participation in the delivery of **Patient Care (Community Service)**, while being an applied learning strategy, is more critically a central feature of health professions education. The College’s Article 28 patient care unit, the **University Eye Center (UEC)**, is a key strength of the institution and is projected to support 70,000+ patient visits this year in its 42nd St. facility. As one of the largest out-patient eye care facilities in the country, the UEC offers an unparalleled array of services including adult and pediatric primary care, contact lens care for cosmetic and medically necessary indications, refractive surgery, ocular imaging services, specialized ocular disease management clinics, low vision rehabilitation, traumatic brain injury (TBI) vision rehabilitation, vision therapy, vision care services for learning disabled children and adults, along with services for children with special needs (multiple handicapped). The UEC opened its new Sports and Performance Vision Center on June 1, 2015. While the infrastructure of the UEC has been adequate, to accommodate increased enrollment and provide an applied learning experience that reflects the future of eye care, the College will need to invest in major renovations to the UEC facility and acquire significant clinical equipment and information technology upgrades over the next several years.

In addition to the UEC, the College of Optometry has an established **network of over 50 external clinical affiliates (see Engagement)**. With the implementation of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and the NYS DSRIP

program, the College is expanding its collaborations within health care systems in New York and is a participant in several Performing Provider Systems (PPS). The expansion of affiliated sites will 1) increase clinical training opportunities to accommodate increased enrollment, 2) prepare students for an increasingly integrated and team-based health care model, and 3) provide needed eye care services to the NYC community.

The College's commitment to serving the community is strong. Charitable programs include Vision Screenings in NYC schools, community-based institutions/agencies, Homebound Care, provision of Support Groups, an Indigent Patient fund, and community education. Students also volunteer both in New York and through vision care missions to developing countries, while also serving as advocates for health, (Vision Walk, World Vision Day, etc.).

2.3.1 SUNY Advantage: The College places substantial emphasis on enhanced curricular and co-curricular opportunities. Examples include the following:

- Applied learning through the College's patient care facility – The University Eye Center.
- Applied learning opportunities available through the college's affiliated clinical care sites which include medical centers, hospitals, community health centers and other practice settings providing students with a rich array of educational opportunities in eye care.
- The 2011 establishment of our Career Development Center, which supports the preparation and transition of graduates into the professional workforce.
- In conjunction with Empire State, the development of an advanced graduate certificate program in optometric business management that can be completed in conjunction with the OD degree. Credits earned in this program may be directly applied toward a MBA in Healthcare Leadership from SUNY Empire that may be earned pre- or post-graduation.
- A National Institutes of Health T-35 training grant supports the research activities of optometry students through summer stipends and direct research support
- A combined OD-MS program that allows optometry students to earn simultaneously both an OD and MS in vision science

2.3.2 Financial Literacy: The College's student default rate on federal student loans couldn't be lower than it is currently: approximately 0%. Nonetheless, we recognize that student debt will continue to increase and may negatively impact perceived career options. We have been proactive in putting in place programs to mitigate this and maintain as near as possible our current success in this area. Specific examples include:

- The College fully participates in SUNY Smart Track program for financial literacy.
- The Career Development Center that was described previously provides financial management courses for both personal and professional development.
- The advanced graduate certificate and MBA programs in optometric business management that was described previously
- Clinical externship rotations in private practices located throughout the State, which provide possible postgraduate employment opportunities
- Required coursework that covers business aspects of optometric practice and the health care delivery system
- Elective coursework in personal financial planning for the new optometrist

Success Summary – Future Plans and Development: The College intends to maintain its record of excellence in academic and clinical program performance while increasing its educational capacity to accommodate the expanded enrollment. Specific plans related to the System-wide success goal include -

- Investment in the renovation of the University Eye Center and acquisition of new clinical technologies to ensure a) an appropriate applied learning experience for the doctor of optometry degree students; b) increased patient care capacity and quality of care for those served; and c) to provide a platform for the expansion of the clinical research program.
- Investing in the expansion of clinical partnerships (hospitals & health centers) within the health care system of New York and participating as a partner in NYS DSRIP PPS programs;

- Increasing co-curricular opportunities (including programs enhancing financial literacy) offered by the Center for Career Development;
- Expanding of international clinical education opportunities; and
- Enhancing opportunities for student participation in research;

Success Summary – Key Performance Measures:

- Renovation and Capital Investment in the University Eye Center
 - Square footage of clinical space renovated
 - Investment in and acquisition of clinical equipment and technology
 - Investment in and acquisition of clinical equipment and technology
 - Number of patients cared for (measure of clinical capacity and student education)
 - Clinical Research Activity (Indirect measure of impact)
- Expanding the number of clinical affiliations and external student rotations into multi-disciplinary, team-based health care settings
- One hundred percent (100%) of students will continue to have applied learning experiences as integral part of their educational program
- Default rate on federal student loans to maintained at 1% or less
- Student participation rates in activities offered by the Center for Career Development
- Student participation in basic, translational and clinical research

2.4 Inquiry

Overview: The College of Optometry is a doctoral-research center with basic, translational and clinical research programs associated with healthcare. The SUNY Excel priority of Inquiry and its measures and initiatives are a central part of our mission and one to which the College is strongly linked. The College’s strategic plan establishes ambitious goals for our research program and in particular the growth of the Clinical Vision Research Center, which was formally established during the 2012-13 AY. A comparison of the Excel Performance System Worksheet with the College’s own assessment plan indicates that we are currently collecting virtually all of the measures listed. The College prioritizes continued growth in all areas of research as well as seeking opportunities to development Intellectual Property (IP) and technology transfer. Our outcomes data reflect these priorities and provide guidance in planning.

Graduate Research: The College’s PhD and MS programs have undergone significant review and reform in recent years and are highly competitive. In AY 2015, we had 16 PhD students, (up from 8 five-years before) and typically have 8-12 applicants for each open position. We are currently working with Rockefeller University and Weill Cornell Medical College to expand our doctoral program to include collaborative projects in which our students will have opportunities to take courses and carry out parts of their dissertation research at these other two schools and their students at ours. A major goal of this collaboration is to create a multi-institution training program that will be supported by federal funding through the T32 training grant mechanism for doctoral students and post-doctoral trainees.

In recent years our MS program has been focused on granting a combined OD/MS degree to our optometry students as a means of establishing the next generation of clinician-scientists in vision research. We normally have two applicants for each of our MS program slots (6-8 per year depending on advisor/laboratory availability). In AY 2015, we had 24 OD/MS students enrolled over all four years and we expect this number to be stable over the next few years. Growth of these programs depends heavily on the recruitment and retention of active and productive graduate research faculty which is best measured by sponsored program activity.

2.4.1 Total Sponsored Activity: The College has a vital and stable research program that is well positioned for continued growth. Over the past five years the College’s total R & D activity has been relatively stable averaging around \$3.5M per year. In 2015, the College held 16 federal, 15 non-federal and 4 foreign grants. Of those were 12 industry grants. These numbers are notable given the size of our faculty, most of whom are clinical care providers. During the past three years, with increasing competition for federal dollars, the College has diversified its research portfolio by moving into clinical research with the realization of the Clinical Vision Research Center (February, 2013). In only 2.5 years, we have significantly expanded industry support and according to

Association of Schools & Colleges of Optometry (ASCO) 2015 data, the College now ranks first nationally among optometry programs in industry-based research grants with just over \$1M in annual awards. The College, is a founding member of the SUNY Eye Institute, and has also been actively participating in the RF Networks of Excellence. Within the SUNY Brain Network of Excellence we partnered on four awards granted last year with a total campus award of \$380,000.

We hope to expand our portfolio of federal and industry grants further in the coming years. Our priorities include:

- Obtain a federal T32 training grant in order to expand our PhD program and to fund additional postdoctoral fellows in our laboratories.
- Secure additional R01 and R21 federal grants by initially providing internal funding of pilot projects through the College's Schnurmacher Institute for Eye Research as well as through funding by the RF Networks of Excellence.
- Hire at least one new full-time researcher faculty member within the next year who is capable of securing external federal funding (We will seek Empire Innovation Funds to attract and recruit a leader in cell and molecular biology of ocular physiology.)
- Expand our portfolio of industry funding for clinical trials within the Clinical Vision Research Center (CVRC).

We will continue to track our research activity through publications, grants awarded, sponsored research funding, and total research expenditures. We will compare our activity to other optometry and other vision research programs in the nation directly and on a per faculty basis. We will track the increase in funding as compared to our prior levels as well as national trends at other institutions.

In 2015-16 we plan are conducting an international search for a research faculty with interest in the cell and molecular biology of ocular physiology and disease. We have requested funding through the SUNY Expanded Investment and Performance Fund, specifically from the Empire Innovation program, to assist in our recruitment efforts.

2.4.2 Student hands-on research, entrepreneurship, etc.: A primary goal of our graduate programs is to engage students in original, cutting-edge research to advance vision science, the profession of optometry, and vision care. The graduate programs form the main mechanism for hands-on research for students. Currently, our mechanisms for providing strong emphasis on applied, hands-on learning through research include:

- A National Institutes of Health T-35 training grant that supports the research activities of optometry students through summer stipends and direct research support
- A combined OD-MS program that allows optometry students to earn simultaneously both an OD and MS in vision science
- We have a first-of-its-kind graduate-residency program where a new optometrist may get residency training while pursuing an MS or PhD degree in a related area of translational or clinical research.
- In addition, we are developing an Honors Research program in which dedicated optometry students will have the opportunity to carry out hands-on Research, but will not include the rigorous course load part of the MS program. The focus of this new program will be to expose more of our optometry students to scientific methods, research techniques, and problem solving strategies that will be useful in their future careers as they practice evidence-based medical eye care.

2.4.3 Scholarship, Discovery and Innovation: Our campus emphasizes the use of metrics to assess the success of our research programs so as to correct deficits and expand on successful strategies. The Key Metrics (among others) tracked by the College to monitor its progress in this area include:

- Total current sponsored research awards (\$5,506,261)
- Annual Research Expenditures (\$3,222,881 FY 2015)
- Number of peer-reviewed publications (46 in 2014-15 academic year)
- Number of peer-reviewed published abstracts (46 in 2014-15 academic year)

Inquiry – Future Plans and Development: The College has expanded its translational and clinical research capabilities over the last several years resulting more diverse sources of extra-mural funding and partnerships with industry. The College intends to continue its commitment as a research center by expanding its basic science, translational and clinical research programs by -

- Recruiting new basic and clinical research faculty who complement our current strengths in the vision and neurosciences;
- Expanding our portfolio of industry funding for clinical trials;
- Increasing collaboration both internally and externally;
- Expanding extramural funding for the support of graduate students and post-doctoral fellows; and
- Working collaborative with other NYC programs to develop a multi-institutional training program.

Inquiry – Key Performance Measures

- Total sponsored research activity with a projected goal of \$4.25M annually by 2020.
- Number of faculty with extramural research support.
- Number of students and post-docs supported by extramural funding sources.
- Number of publications in peer reviewed journals
- Number of published peer-reviewed abstracts
- Student participation in research projects (research degree & professional degree students)

2.5 Engagement

Overview: While the College of Optometry is one of the smaller campuses within the SUNY System its health care mission requires a high level of engagement with the New York City community and beyond.

The College of Optometry may have its greatest impact on the NYC community through its patient care facility, the University Eye Center, and its network of affiliated health care entities. Our students, residents and faculty provide support for approximately 150,000 patient visits per year. Of those, 70,000+ occur within the UEC on 42nd St., while the balance is provided at external affiliates (53 total) which include Veteran’s Administration Medical Centers (14), community hospitals (3), military hospitals (5), community health centers (4), referral centers (5), private practices (17) and hospitals abroad (2 - China, India).

Through its professional degree and residency programs, the College is the major educator of eye-care providers in New York State. With 60% of all optometrists in NYS being SUNY graduates, the College’s contribution to the NYS healthcare workforce is significant.

2.5.1 START-UP New York and beyond: The SUNY College of Optometry is located in a 298,000 sq. ft. facility located on 42nd St. in NYC. There is no space currently available on campus for Start-Up NY although the recent designation of 200,000 sq. ft. in the Farley Post Office building in NYC opens up some limited opportunity for participation. Due to initial program restrictions on the participation of NYC institutions and the distance of currently available space, the College has not developed a campus plan for participation in the program at this time. However, when the opportunity has arisen the College has made its business partners aware of the opportunity and will consider partnerships with other Start-Up NY campuses should business interests that align with Optometry’s mission emerge.

Partners for Patient Care: Beyond Start-up New York, the College of Optometry is actively engaged with numerous health care entities in NY and with the ophthalmic industry nationally and internationally. The College has affiliations throughout the NY metropolitan area based upon service contracts and/or educational MOUs through which faculty, residents and/or students provide patient care at these sites. There are a total of 53 affiliations providing over 250 fulltime 3-month clinical rotations (applied learning) for students each year. With the increasing enrollment and the need to provide students with inter-professional clinical care experience the College has invested in and expects the number of these opportunities with the health care systems in NYC to grow over the next several years.

Our commitment extends well beyond NYC and in an effort to increase the supply of optometrists Upstate, the College has also begun to develop affiliations further north. At this time, we have developed clinical training opportunities for our students in Buffalo, Rochester (2), Syracuse (2), New Paltz, and Somers and we are monitoring post-graduate career paths as well.

Workforce development and entrepreneurship: Virtually all graduates are employed or working for themselves shortly after graduation. Many will ultimately establish their own practices throughout NYS and employ secretarial, technical and professional personnel. Our graduates also contribute to the economic vitality of the state by providing eye care that mitigates disability and increases worker productivity. Both the professional program and extracurricular activities endeavor to support the development of entrepreneurial skills. Examples include the following:

- Curricular courses in health care management and financial planning
- The Career Development Center programming (described previously)
- Advanced graduate certificate and MBA programs in Healthcare Leadership (described previously)
- Clinical rotations in private optometric practices located throughout New York

2.5.2 Alumni/Philanthropic Support: The College successfully concluded a \$10M campaign on October 1, 2014. The Office of Institutional Advancement is now developing plans for the next several years to build on the success of the campaign, to expand our foundation for giving and to organize operations in anticipation of a major gift campaign beginning in 2020 to celebrate the College's 50th Anniversary in 2021.

Over the life of the Campaign (2010 – 2014), the level of annual giving increased from \$.9M to \$1.5M. While the campaign was successful and annual giving has increased, the percentage of alumni giving has not (Attachment 2 - Table 18). The Alumni Association of the College is currently a separate 501C(3). To improve communication and coordination with the alumni, the College and the Alumni Association have agreed to undertake a restructuring process that will bring the Alumni Association within the College's affiliated foundation, the Optometric Center of New York (OCNY). With the re-organization, the College will be setting a goal to increase the percentage of alumni giving from 6.1% to 15% by 2020 (100%) and its overall annual support level to \$1.8M (20% increase). We also monitor alumni participation in CME and alumni events.

2.5.3 Civic Engagement: Civic (Community) engagement for College of Optometry students is an integral component of the professional degree program (through its UEC and affiliated patient care programs), but it is also encouraged through non-academic programming. In addition to clinical education programs (described previously), students have the opportunity to participate in 20 or more distinct professional student organizations at the College. Serving a variety of interests, leadership in student organizations require students to become more conversant in the contemporary discourse of the day and to lead movements that will impact the profession of optometry and improve the lives of patients. Students are also encouraged to participate as advocates for the development of the profession and patient access to eye care. Various campus-based organizations support these endeavors, and the College has seen an increase in the participation rate over a five-year period.

The College conducts an annual exit survey of graduating students which includes student participation in voluntary community and civic engagement. The College's Career Development Center which serves to coordinate co-curricular programming on campus also monitors activities and participation levels. AY 2015 exit survey respondents reported that 77% participated in professional organizations, 60% provided care for the Special Olympics, 35% provided care internationally by participating in mission trips in developing nations and approximately 55% volunteered their time to provide care to underserved communities in the NYC area.

The College has a history with a strong commitment to public service and this legacy serves to define the College's sense of community and values. In addition to student exit surveys, the College's department of Student Affairs and International Programs has operationalized elements of civic engagement that can be easily collected by student leaders and recorded by college staff members.

2.5.4 Economic Impact: Optometry has not made a specific effort to assess its economic impact but plans to do so in the next year or two. For the College of Optometry, the challenge will be to develop models that account for the impact of the care provided to the community. In health care, the economic analysis needs to consider not only the impact of the health care entity (the University Eye Center) and the directly associated activity, but also the change in the productivity of the patient as a member of the society that results from the care provided. As eye care providers serve a significant role in the early diagnosis of systemic disease (e.g. diabetes), in providing patient education and assuring compliance in patients with chronic disease, the health care cost savings may also factor into the equation. The College's role as a partner with the PPS structure of the NYS Medicaid redesign (DSRIP) effort will also need to be considered.

As mentioned previously, essentially all graduates of the Doctor of Optometry program are practicing or employed shortly after graduation. Our alumni surveys (conducted with each class six years after graduation) and national data point to strong employment prospects and incomes for optometrists. Most recently, a survey of those students graduating in 2009, we found 60.5% of respondents reported now working in New York State. Approximately 20% were in a solo or group practice with an equity interest, 40% were independent contractors in optometry or ophthalmology practices, while the balance were employed in hospital, health centers, academic and/or commercial settings.

Engagement Summary – Future Plans and Development: Graduates of the College of Optometry will continue to contribute to the economic vitality of New York through entrepreneurial activities that improve the health and productivity of its citizens. Future plans include -

- Expansion of partnerships with external clinical affiliates to increase educational opportunities for our students and expand access to care for the citizens of New York;
- Development and maturation of the new advanced graduate certificate and MBA programs in optometric business management conducted collaboratively with Empire State College;
- Expansion of activities and events sponsored by the Career Development Center, and;
- Re-alignment of the Alumni Association within the College's affiliated foundation (OCNY) to improve messaging and expand alumni engagement and annual giving.

Engagement Summary – Key Performance Measures: Alumni surveys, despite their limitations, are probably the best source of data.

- The number of patients cared for by students, residents and faculty.
- Career placement after graduation will continue to be at or about 100%.
- Income of graduates (Anticipated at graduation and six years out)
- Career satisfaction rating six years after graduation
- Economic Impact Analysis will be developed and completed every 5 years
- Percent of Alumni Giving will double by 2020 to at least 15%
- Annual giving to increase 20% to \$1.8M by 2020

Section 3: Conclusion and Expected Impact on your Campus.

The State University of New York College of Optometry, while being a small highly specialized, doctoral-research campus, plays a vital role within New York State's health care community. As the source of approximately 60% of eye care providers in the State, the College's efforts to increase the number of the highly qualified Doctors of Optometry graduated each year will be critical given changes in population demographics, an increasing demand for vision care and increasing prevalence of systemic diseases with ocular manifestations.

The following is a summary of this Performance Plan's key goals and performance measures. Those measures which most directly align with SUNY Excels' metrics are highlighted by the **red text**.

ACCESS

Future Plans & Investment: To increase access the College of Optometry will continue to devote its energy and resources to -

- Completing the expansion of the doctor of optometry by increasing the entering class size from 75 to 100 (33% increase);
- Increasing the enrollment of underrepresented minorities into the professional degree program;
- Increasing its graduate degree enrollment secondary to expanded research programming; and
- Conduct a study to examine the feasibility and desirability of offering additional degree programs that complement the College's core mission and supports the System-wide Completion goal.

Key Performance Measures:

- Have a total enrollment in degree granting programs of 400 or more by 2020
- Have a diverse student body with minorities (all) representing between 40 – 45% of students
- Complete a feasibility analysis examining the potential expansion of degree granting programs at the College

COMPLETION

Future Plans & Investment: Consistent with its 2013 – 2018 Strategic Plan, the College will substantively contribute to the System-wide Completion goal by -

- Graduating 30% more Doctors of Optometry through the full implementation of the enrollment management plan;
- Achieving enrollment goals (8-10 students per year) in the *Advanced Graduate Certificate in Optometric Business Management* (collaboration with Empire State); and
- Expanding Residency Education Program by 15% through affiliations with external health care entities.

Key Performance Measures:

- The College will increase the number of degrees granted by 30% by 2020.
- The College will increase the number of certificate programs completed by 15% by 2020.

SUCCESS

Future Plans and Development: The College intends to maintain its record of excellence in academic and clinical program performance while increasing its educational capacity to accommodate the expanded enrollment. Specific plans related to the System-wide success goal include -

- Investment in the renovation of the University Eye Center and acquisition of new clinical technologies to ensure a) an appropriate applied learning experience for the doctor of optometry degree students; b) increased patient care capacity and quality of care for those served; and c) to provide a platform for the expansion of the clinical research program;
- Investing in the expansion of clinical partnerships (hospitals & health centers) within the health care system of New York and by participating as a partner in NYS DSRIP PPS programs;
- Increasing co-curricular opportunities (including programs enhancing financial literacy) offered by the Center for Career Development;
- Expanding international clinical education opportunities; and
- Enhancing opportunities for student participation in research;

Key Performance Measures:

- Renovation and Capital Investment in the University Eye Center
 - Sq. Ft. Project Completion
 - Investment in and acquisition of clinical equipment and technology
 - Number of patients cared for (measure of clinical capacity and student education)
 - Clinical Research Activity (Indirect measure of impact)
- Expanding the number of clinical affiliations and external student rotations into multi-disciplinary, team-based health care settings
- One hundred percent (100%) of students will continue to have applied learning experiences as integral part of their educational program
- Default rate on federal student loans to be maintained at 1% or less
- Student participation in activities offered by the Center for Career Development
- Student participation in basic, translational and clinical research

INQUIRY

Future Plans and Development: The College has expanded its translational and clinical research

capabilities over the last several years resulting in more diverse sources of extra-mural funding and partnerships with industry. The College intends to continue its commitment as a research center by expanding its basic science, translational and clinical research programs by -

- Recruiting new basic and clinical research faculty who complement our current strengths in the vision and neurosciences;
- Expanding our portfolio of industry funding for clinical trials;
- Increasing collaboration both internally and externally;
- Expanding extramural funding for the support of graduate students and post-doctoral fellows; and
- Working collaboratively with other NYC programs to develop a multi-institutional training program.

Key Performance Measures

- Total sponsored research activity with a projected goal of \$4.25M annually by 2020.
- Number of faculty with extramural research support.
- Number of students and post-docs supported by extramural funding sources.
- Number of publications in peer reviewed journals
- Number of peer-reviewed published abstracts
- Student participation in research projects (research degree and professional degree students)

ENGAGEMENT

Future Plans and Development: Graduates of the College of Optometry will continue to contribute to the economic vitality of New York through entrepreneurial activities that improve the health and productivity of its citizens. Future plans include -

- Expansion of partnerships with external clinical affiliates to increase educational opportunities for our students and expand access to care for the citizens of New York;
- Development and maturation of its new advanced graduate certificate and MBA programs in optometric business management conducted in partnership with Empire State College;
- Expansion of activities and events sponsored by the Career Development Center; and
- Re-alignment of the Alumni Association within the College's affiliated foundation (OCNY) to improve messaging and expand alumni annual giving.

Key Performance Measures: Alumni surveys, despite their limitations, are probably the best source of data.

- The number of patients cared for by students, residents and faculty (UEC & clinical affiliates)
- The number and educational capacity of external clinical affiliates
- Career placement after graduation will continue to be at or about 100%.
- Income of graduates (Anticipated at graduation and six years out)
- Career satisfaction rating six years after graduation
- Economic Impact Analysis will be developed and completed every 5 years
- Percent of Alumni Giving will double by 2020 to at least 12.2%
- Annual giving to increase 20% to \$1.8M by 2020

Summary - Impact: The College's *Strategic Plan 2013 – 2018: A Legacy of Leadership* is in strong alignment with the Power of SUNY 2020 and SUNY Excels as evidenced in this College of Optometry Performance Improvement Plan (PIP). The implementation of the College's Enrollment Management Plan, in particular, is directly contributing to the University's Access and Completion goals through a 30% expansion in the number of graduates. Perhaps most critically, the successful implementation of the plan will insure the State of New York will have a highly qualified eye care workforce into the foreseeable future.

The College's PIP and the associated three proposals now being submitted for Phase 2 consideration by the SUNY Expanded and Investment Fund identifies clear goals and key metrics, along with critical investment strategies. Through a targeted and strategic investment in our educational, research and service (patient care) missions, the SUNY College of Optometry will maintain its leadership position in optometry and vision science while expanding its positive impact on health and the quality of life for the people of New York State.

Appendices:

1. SUNY College of Optometry Strategic Plan 2013 – 2018: *A Legacy of Leadership*
2. SUNY College of Optometry Institutional Assessment Plan