



The SUNY College of Optometry is a leader in education, research, and patient care, and we are immensely proud of the work we do every day to improve the lives of New Yorkers. We offer the Doctor of Optometry degree as well as MS and PhD degrees in vision science, conduct a robust program of basic, translational, and clinical research, and have one of the largest outpatient eye and vision care clinics in the country with 65 affiliated clinical training sites.

Our exceptional body of work includes research that has led to life-changing discoveries in patient care and vision science for both children and adults. This work follows in the footsteps of Nobel Prize-winning research and has contributed to critical advancements in the treatment of glaucoma, traumatic brain injury, vision rehabilitation, myopia, and retinal disease among other ailments that affect millions of people around the globe.

As in all healthcare fields, many areas of vision research critical to improving care and preventing degenerative and blinding diseases cannot be fully explored without the use of animal models. Indeed, advances in medical care and the development of new drugs, treatments, and surgeries would be impossible without the responsible use of laboratory animals. Our researchers use animal models only when no other appropriate means are available precisely because this research is so critical to the advancement of science and healthcare.

Our animal use program requires the responsible search for alternatives to animal use whenever possible. However, many questions about how the visual system works, or how diseases that affect the eye and vision may be treated, cannot be answered with alternatives to the use of animals. Currently, even the most sophisticated non-animal methodologies or simulations cannot fully reflect the complicated interactions among cells, tissues, and organs that occur in living beings. Our work in visual neuroscience actually contributes to the future development of simulation models as alternatives to the use of animals for research.

We take our responsibilities for the humane care and use of animals in research very seriously and adhere to the highest standards of animal treatment, taking every measure to avoid distress and pain for our animals. These standards are not only our moral obligation, but also follow strict requirements established for all biomedical healthcare research institutions receiving federal grant funds, with oversight from the National Institutes of Health, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the College's federally mandated and supervised Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee, the bylaws and principles set by the Board of Trustees for all campuses of the State University of New York, and all applicable laws in New York State.

Everyone who enters into any healthcare field does so with an interest in helping people live more fulfilling and healthy lives. The SUNY College of Optometry shares that conviction, and we are proud of the work we do to serve thousands of patients and the millions who benefit from advances in care and treatment that we are helping to make.