

Strategic Plan 2026-2031

Transforming vision for a better future

Mission

The State University of New York College of Optometry advances eye and health care through leadership in education, research, and service.

Our Vision

Transform eye and vision care as a world leading optometric academic health center.

Institutional Values

- **Leadership:** We develop leaders and scholars through excellence in education, research, and patient care.
- **Innovation:** We foster an environment that promotes creativity and discovery to advance the future of eye care.
- **Inquiry:** We support discovery and understanding through basic, translational, and clinical research and embrace evidence-based practice and lifelong learning.
- **Service:** We enhance public health by making the highest quality patient care accessible to a broad range of communities.
- **Professionalism:** We engage the internal and external college communities with integrity, respect, civil discourse, and transparency.
- **Diversity:** We respect the dignity of all individuals and value their unique cultural traditions and perspectives.

Summary of Strategic Plan Key Points Organized by Themes

EXCELLENCE	INNOVATION	ENGAGEMENT
<i>Provide excellent educational and student support programs</i>	<i>Lead in eye and vision research to drive innovative eye care</i>	<i>Create an inclusive, informed and engaged College community</i>
<i>Be recognized as a world leading optometric academic health center</i>	<i>Provide innovative clinical education</i>	<i>Expand community outreach and access to care</i>
<i>Provide exceptional eye care</i>	<i>Teach the ethical and responsible use of new technologies and AI in optometric education and eye care</i>	<i>Extend the College’s reach to Upstate New York</i>

Goals and Objectives

Professional and Residency Education

1. Be recognized for innovative educational programs that prepare graduates to be leaders and deliver exceptional clinical care

- Strengthen the integration of foundational knowledge with clinical experiences to advance contemporary, evidence-based eye and vision care
- Refine didactic and clinical curricula and value-added academic programs to align with evolving national standards and expanding scope of practice
- Enrich teaching through active learning strategies and technology-enabled instruction
- Develop innovative externship rotations with clearly defined learning objectives and clinical assessments
- Implement assessment strategies that promote deeper integrated learning and exam readiness
- Refine residency programs to enhance leadership and ongoing improvement in standards and training of advanced clinical competencies.
- Offer summer preparatory programs and apply predictive analytics to provide applicants with proactive support
- Maximize the summer between the first and second years with additional learning opportunities to optimize student success
- Ensure the curriculum provides value-added skills that enable them to critically evaluate clinical research, obtain financial and career success, and serve as leaders in the profession and community
- Train students and residents to participate as members of interdisciplinary health care teams and care for diverse patient population.
- Develop competency in the ethical and responsible application of new technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI), in educational programs, research, and patient care
- Ensure the College's reputation as a recognized global leader in optometric education, vision science, and patient care

Student Support

2. Attract academically excellent applicants and provide effective student support programs

- Strengthen the use of a holistic and evidence-informed approach to recruit and admit excellent students with the skills and potential for success.
- Increase the number of institutions participating in the Joint Degree Program that allows students to complete undergraduate and optometric studies in seven academic years.
- Expand marketing efforts that inform and educate undergraduate students about the profession and raise the profile of the College
- Increase access to the professional program through tuition support, cost management and financial education, and additional scholarship funding sources
- Promote and measure the use and effectiveness of resources provided by the Center for Teaching and Learning
- Increase the percentage of professional students who both graduate and become licensed in four years to at least 95%
- Develop and utilize academic momentum metrics to monitor academic progress
- Foster a supportive student environment that promotes belonging, inclusion, civil discourse, academic success, professionalism, and professional readiness
- Enhance career and professional development programs through collaborative co-curricular programs at all levels of training for pre-optometry students, optometry students, residents, and alumni

Research and Graduate Programs

3. Advance basic, translational, and clinical research activity and strengthen our graduate programs to lead in vision research and drive innovation in eye and vision care

- Increase the internal and external visibility of the full range of eye and vision research conducted at the College
- Increase research funding from alternative sources, including federal, state, foundation, industry, and philanthropic partners
- Increase faculty engagement and collaboration in research, with an emphasis on expanding opportunities for clinical faculty to engage in research

- Strengthen graduate program recruitment by improving communication of educational and research opportunities to internal and external applicant pools
- Assess graduate program curricula to ensure engaging and comprehensive research experiences complemented by career development opportunities

Patient Care

4. Provide evidence-based practice and clinical training to deliver outstanding patient-centered care with a commitment to community outreach and access

- Raise the profile and impact of the institution as a recognized academic health center by delivering innovative, high-quality patient care
- Develop and elevate Clinical Centers of Excellence at the University Eye Center by highlighting faculty expertise, research activity, and innovative practices that will draw patients seeking high-quality, leading-edge care
- Develop and sustain research that contributes to the advancement of medical knowledge, new treatments, and diagnostic tools in eye and vision care
- Employ innovative technologies to support and transform the delivery of eye and vision care
- Advance our clinical services through our satellite clinics and referral networks
- Strengthen a culture of continuous improvement in patient safety and clinical excellence
- Expand community outreach programs that address public health needs through increased marketplace analysis, awareness, screening, and access to affordable care

Community and People

5. Foster a vibrant and inclusive community that promotes professional growth, institutional pride, community service, and shared responsibility

- Maintain a community that reflects the diversity of the communities served
- Strengthen a nurturing and supportive community that promotes physical, emotional, and mental wellness
- Advance a culture of inclusion, mutual respect of differences and opinions, and civil discourse

- Expand professional development initiatives with training programs designed to strengthen the expertise of faculty, staff, and administrators while supporting long-term succession planning
- Strengthen a culture of recognition and appreciation that celebrates personal and professional achievements, fostering a sense of community spirit and belonging
- Enhance alumni and retiree engagement with faculty, staff, and students through collaboration and relationship-building initiatives

Infrastructure

6. Build and maintain an efficient and modern infrastructure that optimizes operations and ensures a high-quality environment that supports teaching, patient care, and research

- Create energy-efficient sustainable facilities that support teaching, patient care, research, and other strategic priorities
- Employ systems, tools, and technologies to support and advance the College's position as an academic health center that leads in eye care, research, and education
- Fund, plan, design, and construct innovative, functional and attractive spaces using IT systems that support diverse teaching methods and learning styles, and enhance patient care and research

Institutional Visibility

7. Raise the College's visibility and brand recognition as a premier academic health center

- Develop a consistent brand and informative messaging to enhance internal and external communication channels
- Create outreach initiatives that educate the public on eye health, showcase the College's research efforts, and expand access to affordable eye care
- Increase philanthropic support for College and Foundation priorities leveraging shared connections, best-practice strategies and modern tools