



SUNY College of Optometry Interview Guide





Dear Applicant,

Welcome to the SUNY College of Optometry!

It is a great pleasure to welcome you to our campus, whether in person or virtually, for the final stage of the admissions process - the interview. By being here you have demonstrated that you have the academic qualifications that are essential for success in SUNY Optometry's rigorous academic and clinical training. You might appreciate knowing that only 30% of our applicant pool is invited for an admissions interview and you are among this highly selective group.

The purpose of the interview is threefold:

- 1- An opportunity for the Admissions Committee to get to know you better, including your explorations of the field of optometry, non-academic achievements and assess your leadership and communication skills;
- 2- An opportunity for you to get to know us better (yes, ask questions!);
- 3- An opportunity to learn more about and experience how SUNY Optometry might be the best fit for you.

Below are some insights on the format of the interview that you may find helpful:

- The interview will be conducted by two members of the Admissions Committee, which is comprised of faculty and staff members;
- The interview is conducted "open file", which means the interviewers will have the opportunity to review your entire application before interviewing you. They might ask clarifying questions about your academic records and other information mentioned in your file;
- The interview is conversational in nature and conducted in a relaxed atmosphere. There will be no tricky questions or "grilling;"
- After interviewing all candidates on that day, the committee members will make a recommendation to the director of admissions. They can recommend to: accept, provisionally accept (in the event there are any pending pre-requisites), place application on hold, or deny admission. You can expect to receive the Admissions Committee's decision within 1-2 weeks from your interview date, which will be communicated in writing via email;

Now that you know what is ahead of you, take a deep breath. Relax. We understand that you might be excited yet nervous about the interview. Remember that you have done your homework – you worked hard to secure promising grades during college, you explored the profession and got involved in different activities making you a well-rounded applicant. Now is your time to share those experiences with the Admissions Committee.

I wish you all the best and good luck in the interview.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christian Alberto".

Christian Alberto, EdD

Director, Admissions & Enrollment Management

1. Virtual Interview Day Overview

What to Expect

9:45 AM EST - Check in (Zoom)

9:50 AM EST - Welcome Presentation

Your virtual interview day starts with a welcome presentation led by an admissions staff member. The presentation will provide important information about the [College](#), the day's agenda and schedule, an opportunity to ask questions, and equally important, help calm your nerves!

Candidates will then be assigned to groups of two based on interview timing, and each group will cycle through the following concurrent sessions in different orders. The small groups are intended to provide individualized support and information throughout the day.

10:30 AM – 12:00 PM EST - Interview (2 concurrent sessions, 30-minute intervals)

SUNY Optometry conducts a panel style interview. Accordingly, candidates will interview with two faculty members all of whom have read your entire application (open file review process) prior to the interview. The interview will be conversational based. The goal of the interview is for the faculty to learn more about your interest in optometry, background and experiences, and potential as a SUNY Optometry student.

10:30 AM – 12:00 PM EST – Student Life – On Campus

Get an inside look at what it's like to be a student at SUNY Optometry. Through casual conversations with current students, you'll learn about campus life, involvement in student organizations, the clinical experience, academic support, and how students build community within the College. The conversation is not a part of the interview and is meant to answer any questions you may have and highlight how SUNY may be the perfect match for you.

10:30 AM – 12:00 PM EST – Student Life – Off Campus

Discover what makes our locations, New York City and Syracuse, exciting and dynamic places to call home during your time as a student. A current student will share firsthand insights on navigating life outside of campus, finding your home and/or community, exploring neighborhoods, managing a budget, balancing academics and personal life, getting around with public transportation, and more.

12:00 PM EST – Snack Break

12:15 PM EST – Virtual Campus Tour (NYC campus)

12:45 PM EST – Financial Aid

Our Financial Aid Director meets with interviewees to provide an overview of the [financial aid process](#), and potential scholarship opportunities.

1:00 – 1:15 PM Exploring Your Campus Options

Learn about [SUNY Optometry's expansion to Syracuse](#) and what this exciting new campus option offers prospective students. Our Director of Student Affairs & Recruitment will highlight the unique academic, clinical, and community opportunities available, including our partnership with SUNY Upstate Medical University.

1:15 – 1:30 PM Conclusion of the day

At the end of your interview day, a member of our admissions staff will review the day with you and discuss next steps, including, when you can expect to hear back regarding your application status.





2. In-Person Interview Day Overview

What to Expect



9:30 AM - Check in (Campus lobby)

Upon arriving on campus ([address and directions](#)), please check in with campus security who will issue you and your guest(s), a one-day campus ID card. Soon after arriving, a member of the admissions staff will come to the lobby and greet you to officially begin your interview day.

9:40 AM - Welcome Presentation

Your interview day starts with a welcome presentation led by an admissions staff member. The presentation will provide important information about the [College](#), the day's agenda and schedule, an opportunity to ask questions, and equally important, help calm your nerves!

10:30 AM – 12:00 PM - Interview (2 concurrent sessions, 30-minute intervals)

SUNY Optometry conducts a panel style interview. Accordingly, you will interview with two faculty members all of whom have read your entire application (open file review process) prior to the interview. The interview will be conversational based. The goal of the interview is for the faculty to learn more about your interest in optometry, background and experiences, and potential as a SUNY Optometry student.

10:30 AM – 12:00 PM – Student Life – On Campus

Get an inside look at what it's like to be a student at SUNY Optometry. Through casual conversations with current students, you'll learn about campus life, involvement in student organizations, the clinical experience, academic support, and how students build community within the College. The conversation is not a part of the interview and is meant to answer any questions you may have and highlight how SUNY may be the perfect match for you.

10:30 AM – 12:00 PM – Student Life – Off Campus

Discover what makes our locations, New York City and Syracuse, exciting and dynamic places to call home during your time as a student. A current student will share firsthand insights on navigating life outside of campus, finding your home and/or community, exploring neighborhoods, managing a budget, balancing academics and personal life, getting around with public transportation, and more.

12:00 PM – Lunch & 12:45 PM - Campus Tour

We provide lunch and a small snack for interviewees and their guests. We offer vegetarian and kosher options. During the campus tour, you will have the opportunity to meet and get to know the SUNY Optometry Dean and/or current students. They will serve as your guide and resource.



1:15 PM – Financial Aid

Our Financial Aid Director meets with interviewees to provide an overview of the [financial aid process](#), and potential scholarship opportunities.

1:30 PM - Exploring Your Campus Options

Learn about [SUNY Optometry's expansion to Syracuse](#) and what this exciting new campus option offers prospective students. Our Director of Student Affairs & Recruitment will highlight the unique academic, clinical, and community opportunities available, including our partnership with SUNY Upstate Medical University.

1:45 – 2:00 PM Conclusion of the day

At the end of your interview day, a member of our admissions staff will review the day with you and discuss next steps, including, when you can expect to hear back regarding your application status.



3. Interview Day Tips

How to Prepare



Before Interview Day:

- We encourage you to visit our [SUNY Optometry's Viewbook](#), which has a plethora of information about our student life, graduate degree options, and a detailed look into our University Eye Center. The more you know about our College, the better prepared you'll be for the overall Interview Day.
- Consider a mock interview with your College's Career or Advising center(s). While being nervous during your interview is expected and understandable, you'll want to ensure you're prepared to communicate your thoughts clearly and effectively. The more practice you have at interviewing, the better prepared you'll be.
- Know the ins and outs of your application. With our open file format, anything on your application may pique the interest of your interviewers. You'll want to be able to provide further detail and insight on all aspects of your application.
- Get a good night's rest the night before. Interview Day, while exciting, will be a long and comprehensive day. You'll want to be well rested and energized for the big day.

On Virtual Interview Day:

- Please sign into the zoom at 9:40 AM EST. Virtual Interview Day is a professional environment, so we ask that students still dress in professional interview attire.
- To the extent possible, we ask all candidates to find a quiet space, free of distractions and background noises.
- We ask all students to review [ZOOM system requirements](#) prior to interview day.
 - A laptop is the preferred and most secure system, if possible.
 - Candidates should ensure they have secure internet connection with appropriate bandwidths.
 - If new to ZOOM, consider [testing the system](#) prior to interview day.

On In-Person Interview Day:

- Arrive to the campus early! The day officially begins at 9:40 am and we ask you to arrive at 9:30 AM. This will create a buffer zone should you experience any issues on the subway or hit a traffic jam if you are arriving via Taxi or Uber/Lyft.
 - You may want to download the [MTA app](#), which provides up-to-date information on subway travel times and possible delays.
- Feel free to bring luggage with you if you need to catch a flight, bus, or train following the interview as we have a safe place to store it.
- Try to come as relaxed as possible to your interview day; the conversational interview is simply for us to learn more about you and so you can learn more about the College!
- Should you have any questions or concerns prior to your interview, feel free to contact us at admissions@sunyopt.edu.

4. Transportation and Lodging

Visiting New York City

Possible hotel accommodations:

[Hilton Garden Inn New York - Times Square Central](#)

[136 W 42nd St, New York City, NY 10036-7803](#)
(855) 618-4697

- Located in world-famous Times Square
- Walking distance to all of Midtown's major attractions (Broadway, Bryant Park, Madison Square Garden)
- Morning coffee/tea
- 4-minute walk to SUNY Optometry

[Hilton Garden Inn New York/West 35th Street](#) [63 West 35th Street, New York City, NY 10001-2202](#)

(855) 618-4697

- Walking distance to Madison Square Garden, Times Square, Herald Square
- Close to all major public transportation options
- Newly renovated rooms
- 10-minute walk to SUNY Optometry

[Hampton Inn Manhattan-35th St Empire State Building](#)

[59 W. 35th Street, New York City, NY 10001-2202](#)
(855) 605-0317

- One block from the Empire State Building
- Complimentary hot breakfast/to-go breakfast bag
- Fitness Center
- 10-minute walk

[Homewood Suites by Hilton New York/Midtown Manhattan Times Square-South, NY](#)

[312 West 37th Street, New York City, NY 10018-4208](#)
(855) 605-0320

- Complimentary hot breakfast
- On-site convenience store
- One block from Times Square
- 15-minute walk to SUNY Optometry

Public Transit Options from the Airports to SUNY Optometry:

From JFK (1h 15 min)

- Take the AirTrain JFK Red 5 stops to Jamaica Station.
- Walk to Sutphin Blvd-Archer Av – JFK Station and take the **E (towards World Trade Center)** 3 stops to Forest Hills – 71 Av.
- Transfer to the **F (towards Coney Island – Stillwell Av)** 7 stops to 42nd St-Bryant Park Station.
- 3-minute walk to SUNY Optometry.

From LGA (55 min)

- Take the Q70-SBS (towards Roosevelt Av via 74 St Broadway) 3 stops to Roosevelt Av/74 St.

- Walk to Jackson Heights – Roosevelt Avenue Station and take the **F (towards Kings Hwy)** 6 stops to 42 St-Bryant Park Station.
- 3-minute walk to SUNY Optometry.

From Newark Liberty International Airport (55 min)

- Take the Newark Airport Express shuttle heading into Manhattan from Terminal B (towards Grand Central Station) 3 stops to Bryant Park.
- 1-minute walk to SUNY Optometry.



5. Meet Our Team

We All Welcome You

MEET THE STUDENT AFFAIRS & DEIB TEAM



GUI ALBERI, PHD
VP FOR STUDENT AFFAIRS & ENGAGEMENT

- STUDENT LIFE
- PEER MENTORING
- ADVISING
- SUPPORT FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS
- CLUBS AND ORGS
- INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS



VITO CAVALLARO
AVP STUDENT AFFAIRS & DIRECTOR OF FINANCIAL AID

- FINANCIAL AID
- DEBT MANAGEMENT
- COLLEGE WORK-STUDY
- IN-STATE RESIDENCY
- SCHOLARSHIPS AND AWARDS
- HOUSING
- TUTORING
- CLUBS AND ORGS



BRIDGET TULLY
ASSISTANT TO THE VPSA

- SUPPORT TO DIRECTOR OF DEIB AND REGISTRAR
- OFFICE SUPPORT



DEBORAH WANG, OD
DIRECTOR OF CAREER DEVELOPMENT

- CAREER COUNSELING
- RESUME/CV REVIEW
- LETTER OF INTENT REVIEW
- RESIDENCY MOCK INTERVIEWS
- EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT REVIEW
- CSTEP
- SUNY TRISES



CHRISTIAN ALBERTO, EDD
DIRECTOR OF ADMISSIONS AND MARKETING

- ADMISSIONS
- ORIENTATION
- BIG SIBLINGS PROGRAM
- ADVISING



JOY HAREWOOD, OD
CHIEF DIVERSITY OFFICER DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION & BELONGING



SARAH DIDIER
OFFICE MANAGER

- INSTRUMENTS
- OFFICE SUPPORT



KARISSA SWORSKI
ASSIST. DIRECTOR OF ADMISSIONS

- ADMISSIONS COUNSELING
- STUDENT SUPPORT
- INTERNATIONAL VISITORS



AARON KNIGHTON
DIRECTOR OF STUDENT AFFAIRS AND RECRUITMENT

- STUDENT RECRUITMENT
- STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES @ UPSTATE
- STUDENT LIFE & ENGAGEMENT @ UPSTATE



JENNIFER HUE, OD
ASST. CLINICAL PROFESSOR & INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS COORDINATOR

- ADVANCED STANDING STUDENTS
- INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS



JACKIE MARTINEZ
REGISTRAR

- ACADEMIC CALENDAR
- ENROLLMENT VERIFICATION
- JURY DUTY DEFERMENT
- ROOM RESERVATIONS



JACQUELYN HUNT, LCSW
MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELOR CENTER FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

- INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING
- GROUP COUNSELING
- COORDINATION OF MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES



JESSE PEREZ
INTERNSHIP AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH ASSOCIATE

- CSTEP PROGRAM SUPPORT
- SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH
- SHADOWING PROGRAM FACILITATION
- CAREER DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT

