

Externship Site Expectations

The primary objective of the fourth year student Externship Program at Western University of Health Sciences College of Optometry (WUCO) is to assure that our students graduate with the highest level of broad-based clinical competency, and the skills necessary to practice optometry in an inter-professional environment and deliver patient care with the utmost humanistic values. In order to achieve this goal we expect our externship sites and preceptors to:

1. Provide excellent clinical learning opportunities for every fourth year student, along with sufficient supervision*.
2. Embrace a genuine interest in teaching. Engage students in challenging educational dialogue. Provide the appropriate learning environment for students to excel and for weaker students to improve and progress.
3. Ensure a robust hands-on clinical experience, allowing students to participate in direct patient care and management decisions. This usually requires a dedicated exam lane for the student to work independently.
4. Provide students access to appropriate technology in order to meet the accepted standards of patient care.
5. Provide student externs with ongoing performance feedback, along with formal midterm and final evaluations.
6. Communicate with the Coordinator of Externship Clinical Education or the Manager of Clinical Programs at WUCO about underperforming students, attendance policy or infractions, students lacking expected levels of professionalism or humanism, or any other areas of concern.
7. Conduct business and patient care in an ethical and professional manner, and autonomously, without interference from Western University.

*Please inform us if the student will be supervised a significant portion of the time by another preceptor. We expect that a student will have a minimum average of 6-8 patient encounters daily

While integrating student externs into a practice should be a very positive and rewarding experience, we understand that there may be some uncertainties and apprehension. We expect that there will be some questions and concerns, and we are available to help. Preceptors will be provided with an Externship Preceptor's Manual, ongoing guidance and access to resources available from the College, support for designing learning objectives and plans for weak students, feedback from the college based upon student reviews of site and preceptor*.

*This may include feedback from site visits conducted by WUCO faculty from time to time