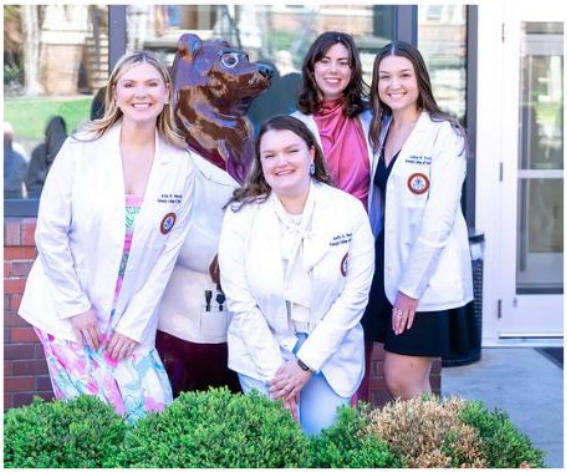
UNIVERSITY OF PIKEVILLE

KENTUCKY COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY







Student Handbook | 2026-2027

Revised July 7, 2026

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Kentucky College of Optometry

ACADEMIC CALENDAR

2026-2027

This table is an overview of the academic year. Day-by-day schedules will be distributed and are subject to change without notice.

Summer 2026	Description
May 11, 2026	Summer Semester Begins (Classes of 2027, 2028)
May 25, 2026	Memorial Day (No Classes or Clinics – Classes of 2027*, 2028)
June 8, 2026	Mini-Summer Semester Begins (Class of 2029)
June 18-20, 2026	Optometry's Meeting – Phoenix, AZ (Classes virtual and Clinics operate normally, no lab)
June 19, 2026	Juneteenth Observance (No Classes or Clinics – Classes of 2027*, 2028, 2029)
July 3, 2026	Independence Day Observance (No Classes or Clinics – Classes of 2027*, 2028, 2029)
July 9-12, 2026	National Optometric Association – St. Louis, MO (Classes and Clinics operate normally)
August 5 & 6, 2026	NBEO Part 1 (Non-Targeted, Classes and Clinics operate normally)
August 7, 2026	Summer Semester Ends (Class of 2027, 2028, 2029)
Fall 2026	**Description**
August 11-14, 2026	1st year Orientation (Class of 2030)
August 17, 2026	Fall Semester Begins (Classes of 2027, 2028,2029, 2030)
September 7, 2026	Labor Day (No Classes or Clinics – Classes of 2027*, 2028, 2029, 2030)
September 30-October 3, 2026	Fall Break – AAO (No Classes or Clinics – Classes of 2027*, 2028, 2029, 2030)
November 25-27, 2026	Thanksgiving Break (No Classes or Clinics – Classes of 2027*, 2028, 2029, 2030)
December 1 & 3, 2026	NBEO Part 2 (Targeted, Class of 2027 no clinic on registered test day)
December 11, 2026	Last day of clinics (Class of 2027 and 2028)
December 14, 2026	Fall Semester Ends (Classes of 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030)
Spring 2027	**Description**
January 6, 2027	Spring Semester Begins (Classes of 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030)
January 18, 2027	Martin Luther King Jr. Day (No Classes or Clinics – Classes of 2027*, 2028, 2029, 2030)
March 3-7, 2027	SECO International – Atlanta, GA (Classes and Clinics operate normally)
March 8-12, 2027	Spring Break (No Classes or Clinics – Classes of 2027*, 2028, 2029, 2030)
March 15-18, 2027	NBEO Part 1 (Targeted – No Classes or Clinics - Class of 2028)
March 20, 2027	White Coat Ceremony – Class of 2029
March 26, 2027	Good Friday (No Classes or Clinics 2027*, 2028, 2029, 2030)
April 6, 2027	Non-targeted Part II and TMOD (classes and clinics operate normally)
April 9, 2027	UPIKE Research Day
April 15-17, 2027	KOA spring conference (2027*, 2028, 2029, 2030 Online Classes ONLY, No Clinics)
April 15-17, 2027	Hillbilly Days (UPIKE Campus closed.)
April 27, 2027	Clinic Orientation (Class of 2029)
April 29, 2027	Externship Orientation (Class of 2028)
April 30, 2027	Spring Semester Ends (Classes of 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030)
May 5-7, 2027	Capstone Graduation Activities (Class of 2027)
May 8, 2027	Health Professions Commencement (Class of 2027)

***Class of 2027 students on 4th year EXTERNAL clinical rotations are subject to the schedule of their clinical sites during those semesters. Students on 4th year INTERNAL clinical rotations will follow the academic calendar during that semester.**

INTRODUCTION

This Student Handbook is intended to provide optometry students with general information on issues relevant to their optometric education at the University of Pikeville-Kentucky College of Optometry (KYCO). All KYCO students are expected to read this document and become familiar with the requirements of the academic program and the policies that govern student academic performance and student conduct. While each KYCO student may work closely with their advisors, administrators, faculty, and staff, students are individually responsible for being aware of the policies and requirements that govern their optometric education program as well as any changes in KYCO policies or programs, and for meeting all academic, professional, and financial responsibilities and requirements of KYCO to earn the O.D. degree. KYCO students should note that they are also subject to University of Pikeville policies and procedures, including the **UPIKE Student Code of Conduct**.

Further, the principles and practices of optometric professionalism are embedded throughout the curriculum, student programs, and policies at KYCO to guide and facilitate the professional development of KYCO students as future optometrists. Any questions concerning KYCO programs and policies should be directed to the KYCO Office of Student Affairs and Academic Excellence.

KYCO reserves the right to make any changes to the content of this document, its programs, courses, schedules, policies, and requirements with or without advance notice upon approval of the KYCO Dean.

OVERVIEW OF KYCO

The Kentucky College of Optometry (KYCO) is the 22nd optometry school in the nation and the first in Kentucky. Our four-year program leverages Kentucky's expanded scope of practice which includes selective laser and peri-ocular surgical procedures. KYCO clinics utilize these expanded treatment options to better care for the underserved peoples of eastern Kentucky. Our cutting-edge facility is equipped with the latest ophthalmic instruments under the expert guidance of our skilled faculty.

Optometry is the independent primary health care profession that specializes in diagnosis and treatment of diseases and disorders of the eye and visual system. Doctors of Optometry (O.D.) are the primary-care doctors of the eye who perform comprehensive examinations on people of all ages to preserve ocular health by prescribing contact lenses, glasses, vision therapy, rehabilitative services for low vision patients and treating diseases such as glaucoma, performing specific surgical procedures, and providing pre- and post-operative care for eye surgery patients. Additionally, the curriculum for the Doctor of Optometry consists of courses such as anatomy, physiology, pathology, and pharmacology that enable Optometrists to often detect critical health issues (diabetes, hypertension, etc.) and refer patients for immediate treatments.

Mission

The Kentucky College of Optometry's mission is to develop leaders in therapeutic optometry through innovative education and a commitment to caring for the underserved.

KYCO Administration

Renée Reeder, O.D., FAAO, FBCLA, FSLS, FIACLE, FNAP
Dean

Jesson Martin, Ph.D.
Associate Dean for Academic Affairs

Janet Summers, O.D.
*Assistant Dean for Clinical Education & Curriculum*Joshua Justice, M.A.
Assistant Dean for Student Affairs & Academic Excellence

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Notice of Nondiscrimination

The University of Pikeville does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, sex, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, age or disabilities in its programs, activities, hiring or the admission of students.

The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies under Title IX, including but not limited to incidents of sexual misconduct as defined by the University's Sexual Misconduct Policy:

Bethany Kingery, J.D., M.B.A.
Title IX Coordinator
Executive Director of Compliance and Legal Affairs
University of Pikeville
Laughlin Cottage
147 Sycamore St.
Pikeville, KY 41501
bethkingery@upike.edu
(606) 218-5344

The following person is designated to handle inquiries regarding other nondiscrimination policies:

Lindsey Wertz
Assistant Vice President of Operations & Human Resources
University of Pikeville
Health Professions Education Building-Human Resources Office
147 Sycamore St.
Pikeville, KY 41501
lindseywertz@upike.edu
(606) 218-5942

If either individual is unavailable, inquiries concerning any nondiscrimination policy may be directed to the other individual.

Inclement Weather Plan

In the event of extreme weather conditions, the University of Pikeville will defer to the Inclement Weather Plan which can be found on the university website. However, we recognize that road conditions vary on isolated mountain roads and hollows. No one should jeopardize their safety on hazardous roads. Notices of the closing of the university will be made over local radio and TV stations, the UPIKE Bear Alert notification system, and notices will be posted on campus should weather conditions require the cancellation of evening classes. Please review the following **inclement weather plan** for more information.

Accreditation Statement

Kentucky College of Optometry is part of the University of Pikeville, which was established in 1889 as a small Presbyterian college located in Pikeville, Kentucky. The University of Pikeville is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award associate, baccalaureate, masters, and doctorate degrees. Questions about the accreditation of the University of Pikeville may be directed in writing to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033- 4097, by calling (404) 679-4500, or by using information available on SACSCOC's website (www.sacscoc.org).

The University of Pikeville Kentucky College of Optometry is accredited by the Accreditation Council on Optometric Education (ACOE) 243 N. Lindbergh Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63141—Telephone 314-991-4100. The ACOE is the specialized accrediting body for optometry that provides quality assurances concerning educational preparation of members of the optometric profession.

FERPA Statement

The University of Pikeville's Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) Statement can be found at the following link:
UPIKE-FERPA-POLICY_Update_2024.pdf

University Leadership

The following link outlines the administrative leadership for the University of Pikeville:
http://www.upike.edu/About/executivestaff

Interpretation and Revision

Any question of interpretation or application of the Student Handbook shall be referred to the KYCO Dean and/or their designee. The KYCO Student Handbook shall be reviewed and updated as necessary annually under the direction of the KYCO Dean and their designees. Neither this Handbook nor anything in it is meant to be a contract between the University and its students. The University reserves the right to edit the Student Handbook at any time; any such revisions will be posted to and noted in this online version of the Student Handbook. When revisions require immediate changes to actual policy and/or procedures, students will receive written notification of such changes via University email. Policies and procedures may change due to necessity and/or at the discretion of KYCO Dean or their designee.

STUDENT POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND REQUIREMENTS

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

The University of Pikeville (UPIKE) recognizes the potential of artificial intelligence (AI) to enhance the educational experience even as the university maintains a strong commitment to academic integrity. UPIKE also acknowledges that each discipline and course has unique learning objectives. While AI can enhance certain learning objectives, it may also hinder or limit others. The use of AI by students in course work is therefore left to the discretion of each faculty member. This policy outlines the generally acceptable and prohibited use of AI, but exact course policies are to be determined by the course's instructor of record. Failure to use AI appropriately or in alignment with course expectations may result in consequences under the university's academic integrity policy.

1. Acceptable Use

- AI technologies may be used to support students who may need accommodations. Tools such as speech-to-text and text-to-speech applications, can improve accessibility for students with disabilities, ensuring equitable access to educational resources. These tools may also be used by any student, with the permission of the faculty member.
- AI-driven library systems can assist students in locating research materials, providing recommendations based on their research topics and past searches.
- If AI tools are allowed for assignments, students must disclose the AI tools they have used for drafting and preliminary research purposes in their assignments, ensuring full transparency in their academic work.
- Students, faculty and staff should disclose and verify the use of AI-generated content when used in publications, presentations or performances.
- Students faculty and staff must use AI responsibly and ethically, respecting privacy, intellectual property and integrity.

2. Prohibited Use of AI

- Submitting AI-generated content as one's own work constitutes academic dishonesty.
- AI-generated content cannot be used to bypass the learning process. Students must engage with course materials and develop their critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
- Public generative AI tools must not be used to process any University of Pikeville information or another person's data that is confidential proprietary, sensitive or subject to federal or state regulations (e.g., FERPA, HIPAA) unless privacy and compliance can be ensured.
- All materials used or created with AI must follow copyright laws and university policy. Members of the university community who willfully disregard the copyright policy do so at their own risk and assume all liability.

Attendance & Enrollment

KYCO students are expected to attend all classes, labs, and academic events to fully benefit from the many learning and development opportunities offered. Attendance is required in all first-year courses. For all other second and third year courses, each course syllabus will stipulate the course director's expectations for student attendance. Students are expected to abide by the attendance policies as noted in each course syllabus. Students who are on academic probation or have received an academic warning

are expected to attend all classes for the impacted semester. **Unless otherwise noted in course syllabi or by the instructor, attendance is mandatory for all course activities.**

Excused Absences. Excused absences should be requested in advance from the KYCO Office of Student Affairs and Academic Excellence for exceptional circumstances that may include illness, approved attendance at conferences, and scheduled healthcare visits. Weddings, birthdays, vacations or other non-emergency events are generally not considered excused absences. Students should take every effort when planning personal events, vacations, etc. to ensure they do not conflict with class or clinical exercises. Missed quizzes and incomplete or missed assignments may not be made up without an excused absence. For all clinical assignments, students should request excused absences for required course activities from the Clinical Affairs Office. Absences in excess of three consecutive weeks should go through the leave of absence process. To request an excused absence, please complete the **Excused Absence Request Form**.

Examination Attendance. Students are expected to attend all examinations on the date the examination is scheduled. Under exceptional circumstances (documentation required) students may be permitted to take examinations at a time other than the regularly scheduled examination time. Students whose circumstances support rescheduling must submit an Excused Absence Request Form and must additionally request permission in advance from the KYCO Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.

Leave of Absence. It may be necessary for a student to request a Leave of Absence for personal, professional, academic, or medical reasons. Students seeking a Leave of Absence must submit a **Leave of Absence Request form** which will be reviewed for approval by the KYCO Dean.

To make an informed decision, the KYCO Dean may request additional information from the student, and may request information from Academic Affairs, Clinical Affairs, Student Affairs, the Business Office, and other departments to gather information they feel is relevant to the student's request. By submitting a Leave of Absence Request, the student gives permission to those offices to release information requested by the KYCO Dean.

Students may request a leave of absence for reasons including health, personal/family issues, or financial hardship. Requests for medical leaves require documentation from a physician or licensed medical provider as approved by the KYCO Dean. A written release from the provider is required for the student to return.

Leaves of Absence may be granted for a maximum period of one calendar year. During a Leave of Absence, a student is considered enrolled but not registered for classes. The student must return, withdraw, or be dropped from enrollment at the end of the leave.

- A Leave of Absence -Good Academic Standing is the designation used when a student has no failures at the time the request is granted.
- A Leave of Absence-Not In Good Academic Standing, is the designation used when a student has one or more failed KYCO courses

A Leave of Absence may have a significant impact on student loans, deferment, and tuition, so students must consult with the Financial Aid Office and Business Office prior to the start of the leave. Students

are not eligible for financial aid while on Leave of Absence and are not eligible to register or sit for NBEO board examinations without written permission from the KYCO Dean or their designee.

Students will be withdrawn from all courses in progress at the start of their Leave of Absence. The student's transcript will reflect the start/end dates of the approved Leave of Absence.

Requirements for Students on a Leave of Absence: Students on a Leave of Absence are still considered enrolled and still have responsibilities. These responsibilities will be communicated to the student in writing when their Leave of Absence is approved and will vary depending on the nature of the leave. During a Leave of Absence, the student should note the following:

- Students are still expected to uphold KYCO principles of professionalism and ethics and may be held accountable for behavior that is inconsistent with those standards.
- Students on a LOA may not represent KYCO in any official capacity with industry partners nor should portray themselves as an active KYCO student.
- Students on a LOA should not wear KYCO scrubs or clinical attire in any official capacity or while visiting KYCO/UPIKE Campus.
- Students on a LOA may not attend KYCO courses, presentations or travel for KYCO related events/activities without prior permission from the KYCO Dean or their designee.
- Students on a LOA may be required to complete certain responsibilities in order to return from their LOA (i.e. supplemental work, student development activities, etc.) and are responsible for any costs associated with such activities.

Request to Return from a Leave of Absence: At the end of the Leave of Absence, a student must submit a written request to return, and any required supporting documentation, to the Office of the Dean. Students must notify the Dean that they wish to be enrolled at least two (2) months prior to the start of the semester or as indicated in their LOA approval letter. For example, students granted a Leave of Absence for medical reasons are typically required to submit documentation from their physician indicating that they can continue their education. Students who are granted a Leave of Absence—Not In Good Standing may be required to meet with the Academic Standards Committee before they return to classes.

Students cannot register for classes after a Leave of Absence until all obligations to the University (financial, etc.) are fulfilled.

Administrative Leave: The KYCO Dean may place a student on Administrative Leave when it is determined to be in the best interest of the student to overcome challenges hindering their personal, academic and/or professional success. The Academic Standards Committee, Professional Conduct & Ethics (PC&E) Committee, and/or KYCO Director of Student Affairs and Academic Excellence may recommend students for Administrative Leave. Students placed on Administrative Leave will be notified by the KYCO Dean in writing, including its start date, length, and requirements to return.

Student Bereavement/Funeral Leave. KYCO students who experience the death of an immediate family member or close loved one may request up to three days of bereavement leave to attend funeral services. Students should submit an Excused Absence Request to request bereavement/funeral leave.

Immediate family is defined as spouse or domestic partner, child, stepchild, parent, stepparent, parent-in-law, sibling (including step and half), grandparent, grandchild, sister-in-law, brother-in-law or other person whose relationship is similar.

Student Withdrawal or Dismissal. KYCO strongly encourages students who are considering withdrawing to speak with the KYCO Office of Student Affairs or the KYCO Dean before making any decisions. Students who wish to withdraw or who are dismissed must complete the exit procedure to ensure all required documentation is in order and that all obligations to the University have been met. The exit procedure involves the return of the student's KYCO identification card, return of all equipment received as part of the KYCO Advantage (including iPad, all optometric equipment, and scrubs/white coat), and obtaining required signatures from the Library, Business Office, Financial Aid Office, as well as the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs and the KYCO Director of Student Affairs & Academic Excellence to certify that the student has met and cleared all obligations to the University and KYCO. Return of equipment must be completed within 10 business days of the student's separation from KYCO. The University of Pikeville will withhold all records pertaining to the student's attendance unless the exit procedure is completed, and all required equipment is returned. Students may be subject to additional sanctions in accordance with published University policies and procedures for failing to complete exit procedures and returning equipment.

Criminal Background Check

KYCO requires criminal background checks for all students prior to matriculating to KYCO and prior to the beginning of third- and fourth-year clinical rotations. KYCO will cover the cost of the background check as students matriculate in. Students bear responsibility for the expenses involved with the evaluations prior to clinical rotations. The mechanism for evaluation will be determined by the KYCO Office of Student Affairs and/or the Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs. The KYCO Dean and/or their designee(s) will review any concerning information generated by the report and may refer them for additional review/action to the Professional Conduct and Ethics (PC&E) Committee.

Document Requests

Students may request official documents, such as letters of good standing or requests to be excused from jury duty, from the KYCO Office of Student Affairs. Enrollment verification documents and requests for transcripts should be made to the University of Pikeville Registrar's Office in accordance with their published policies and procedures.

Drug Testing

University of Pikeville policy prohibits the unlawful use, possession, or distribution of drugs and other controlled substances. KYCO requires students to submit four drug tests during their enrollment: a drug screening during new student orientation, prior to the beginning of second-year fall courses, prior to third-year clinical rotations, and prior to the beginning of fourth-year rotations. Tests performed through KYCO are at no-cost. Students are responsible for the expense involved with this testing if it is completed through an outside provider. Positive findings will be reviewed by the KYCO Office of Student Affairs and/or the Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs In some cases, further evaluation by external professional consultants may be required. A positive test result may become grounds for dismissal.

Additional Drug Testing. A student may be directed to complete additional drug testing if the KYCO Dean, PC&E Committee, and/or the KYCO Office of Student Affairs determines there is reasonable suspicion that the student has violated University drug policies. In addition, at times random drug screenings may be performed. In these cases, the testing will be done at no cost to the student.

Employment

Student enrollment at KYCO is a full-time endeavor. Students may not hold any outside employment positions while actively enrolled due to the time commitment required to satisfactorily complete the KYCO curriculum. This policy also applies to unpaid positions (volunteer, etc.) that require significant time commitments.

Identification Badges

Identification badges must always be worn or carried by students while on campus or during off-campus KYCO assignments. Identification badges are the property of the University of Pikeville and must be produced upon request from University officials, including Public Safety personnel. Identification badges are non-transferable and must be surrendered if a student is no longer enrolled. A fee is accessed to replace lost identification badges.

Immunization and Titer Requirements

The mission of KYCO is to provide men and women with an optometric education that emphasizes primary care, encourages research, promotes lifelong scholarly activity, and produces graduates who are committed to serving the healthcare needs of communities in rural Kentucky and other underserved areas. To achieve this mission, the College has affiliation agreements and contracts with several healthcare facilities throughout the region to provide KYCO students with clinical education experiences.

Because of patient contact and potential exposure to infectious material from patients during these clinical experiences, KYCO students have the potential for exposure to (and possible transmission of) vaccine-preventable diseases. Optometry Students are included in the definition of non-paid healthcare personnel (HCP), and therefore included in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Immunization of Healthcare Personnel: Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). It is therefore incumbent on the College, and required by our clinical education partners, that all KYCO students provide documentation of required immunizations and titers prior to matriculation at KYCO and during their KYCO enrollment. This documentation is required to be uploaded into the Verified Credentials website for dissemination to clinical education sites throughout the students' enrollment at KYCO. Students are responsible for all costs associated with meeting this requirement. All immunization/titer requirements must be uploaded prior to a student arriving on campus for first-year orientation.

Please refer to the following chart below for the KYCO requirements, which are based on ACIP Recommendations.

Vaccine	Schedule	Titers	Notes
Hepatitis B	Total of 3 doses. 4 weeks between dose 1 and dose 2; 5 months between dose 2 and 3. Pre-vaccination serologic screening is not indicated	Titers are required to document immunity and should be drawn 1-2 months after 3 dose series to document immunity. In the case of childhood HepB vaccination, student still must have a positive titer prior to matriculating at KYCO.	If no documented immunity, should repeat 3 dose series, and retest for immunity. If still not immune, consult with Clinical Affairs at KYCO (Phone number: (606) 218-5528) for recommendations
Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR)	2 doses SC; > 28 days apart	Titers are not required to document immunity if the 2-dose series was received at the recommended interval.	
Varicella	2 doses SC; 4-8 weeks apart if age 13 or older If has laboratory evidence of Immunity (via positive antibodies), immunization may be waived.	Titers are not required to document immunity if the 2-dose series was received at the recommended interval. Titer is required if the only documentation is a personal history of chicken pox.	Personal history of chicken pox alone is not proof of immunity. Titers are required in that case and if not immune, will be required to undergo immunization with vaccine.
Adult Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis (Tdap)	At least one Tdap prior to matriculation, then Td booster every 10 years	No titers	
Annual Influenza	Must be updated yearly	No titers	
Annual TB test; may do Mantoux skin testing, or blood testing via T-spot or QFT-GIT.	Must be updated yearly; Any positive result, or history of positive results requires a chest radiograph every 3 years (except for BCG vaccinated individuals – see note)	No titers	For those persons who received a BCG vaccine, an Interferon Gamma Release Assay (IGRA) such as T-SPOT-TB or QuantiFERON-TB must performed annually.
COVID-19	Per CDC/FDA recommendations	No titers	Will modify as recommendations evolve.

You may be required to have additional immunizations or testing at clinical placements throughout the duration of your enrollment. The clinical affiliations that the University has with various hospitals, health centers, and Veteran Administration Hospitals require these immunizations and tests before any clinical activity. Please refer to the Externship Manual for additional information.

Exemptions from Immunizations. Exemptions from immunizations for clinical requirements can be made only for certain medical conditions, such as health circumstances that contraindicate immunization, pregnancy, or participation in a current sequence of immunizations or religious exemptions. Students should consult the Health Professions Immunizations and Exemptions policy for more information.

Mandatory Self-Reporting for Criminal Behavior

All accepted and enrolled KYCO students are required to promptly report any criminal charges filed against them to the KYCO Office of Student Affairs in writing within ten calendar days, excluding minor traffic violations, such as parking tickets. Charges that were previously disclosed on the OptomCAS application do not need to be reported again. Violations will be reviewed by the KYCO Office of Student Affairs to consider future implications for licensure, threat to patient safety, and the ability to be a member of the optometric profession. Criminal behavior, or failure to report criminal behavior as required in this section, may be referred to the PC&E Committee for student conduct consideration. Student suspension or dismissal is possible depending on the nature and severity of the criminal offense.

Medical History

Applicants accepted for admission are required to submit medical history and physical examination information from their physician prior to matriculating. This information is generally reported through Verified Credentials.

Medical Insurance

KYCO requires that students maintain personal health insurance for the entire duration of their enrollment and upload proof of health insurance coverage in Verified Credentials for the duration of their time at KYCO. All KYCO students are required to enroll in the KYCO student health insurance plan or obtain a waiver from the KYCO insurance administrator, HSA Consulting, Inc. Information about the student health insurance plan, including enrollment and waiver procedures, is available on the **UPIKE Student Health Insurance Plan** website. Students who fail to enroll in or obtain a waiver for the health insurance plan will be automatically enrolled and their account charged accordingly.

Students are expected to maintain a relationship with a personal healthcare provider and to see to their personal and preventative health. Students are encouraged to contact the KYCO Office of Student Affairs whenever they are having a health-related issue, especially if the issue could affect their academic performance or attendance.

Medical Professional Liability Insurance: KYCO provides its students medical liability insurance that only covers students when participating in KYCO-approved clinical rotations or activities.

Religious Accommodations

KYCO is committed to providing an academic environment that is respectful of the religious beliefs of its students. As part of this commitment, KYCO will make good faith efforts to provide reasonable religious accommodations to those whose religious beliefs conflict with a KYCO policy, procedure, or other academic requirement, unless such an accommodation would create an undue hardship or would

fundamentally alter the work, program, and/or mission of the University. Students seeking religious accommodation should contact the KYCO Office of Student Affairs.

Student Contact Information and Communication Capability

Students must ensure that they can always receive communications from KYCO. To this end, KYCO students are responsible for ensuring that the KYCO Office of Student Affairs has their current address and phone number(s), and emergency contact information on file Furthermore, KYCO students must maintain the active operation of their University student e-mail accounts and should respond promptly to communications from the University and KYCO administration, faculty, and staff.

Student Conduct

KYCO students are expected to abide by the **UPIKE Code of Conduct**, KYCO Student Handbook and all other institutional policies and procedures. Violations will be handled in accordance with published institutional and KYCO policies and procedures. Refer to the Student Code of Conduct/Student Conduct Process for more information.

Universal Precautions

All KYCO students receive instruction on HIV and on Universal Precautions that address Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC&P) current relevant universal exposure precautions, the post-exposure reporting process, prophylactic treatment of blood-borne pathogens (BBP), and other transmitted diseases, as indicated. Personal protective equipment will be available to students for use in clinic or laboratory settings.

OFFICE OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

The KYCO Office of Student Affairs oversees student issues, services, and policies, assists the administration in interpreting student needs and concerns, and manages a variety of student activities that include the KYCO Student Government Association and student clubs. The KYCO Office of Student Affairs is located on the fourth floor of the Health Professions Building. Phone number: 606-218-5028.

Academic Support Services

KYCO students may consult with the Assistant Director of Educational Support located in the KYCO Office of Student Affairs regarding assistance with study strategies, time management, and test-taking abilities. This individual serves as a resource to both faculty and students to promote the academic success of KYCO students with KYCO courses and NBEO board examinations. ***Please note:*** *KYCO students may always contact the KYCO Office of Student Affairs regarding any academic or non-academic issues that are of concern to a student and that may be impeding student progress.*

Administrator and Faculty Access

KYCO administrators, faculty, and staff maintain an open-door policy with regard to students. All faculty, advisors, and administrators are available for advice and guidance. Students should meet regularly with their faculty and course directors. Appointments are recommended, but not required. Students are also encouraged to visit faculty during posted office hours.

Career Services

Individualized career advising and counseling is available to all KYCO students through the KYCO Office of Student Affairs, Associate Dean for Professional Engagement and all full-time faculty. The UPIKE Office of Career and Professional Development is also available to KYCO students.

Class IT Liaisons

First, second, and third-year classes will have one person from each class designated to assist faculty and/or staff with the appropriate and effective use of all educational technology during class times. The IT Liaison will be trained on all classroom and methods technology applicable to the KYCO curriculum by the IT department and will ensure its proper functioning during class and lab times. The IT Liaison is a paid position with stipend paid one time per semester. Students interested in serving as IT Liaison must apply through the KYCO Office of Student Affairs and may not be on academic probation.

Course Liaisons

First, second, and third-year students in consultation with student affairs select a representative for each course during their academic year. Course Liaisons are responsible for representing student concerns regarding academic matters in each course with the Course Director including:

- Discussing challenges with their fellow classmates to exam items and providing timely e-mail updates to their classmates on the status of those challenges.
- Discussing qualifying challenges with course faculty.
- Discussing with course faculty and/or administration any concerns classmates have regarding the specific course they are assigned.

Liaisons must be KYCO Students who are in good-standing (i.e. not on academic probation).

Lockers

Lockers are provided for KYCO students in the HPE Building on floors 3-5. Lockers will be assigned to students during first-year orientation. All lockers must be registered with the KYCO Office of Student Affairs. Students should remove all personal items from lockers at the end of their enrollment with KYCO.

***General Locker Policies*:**

- All lockers are the property of the University of Pikeville and are for the use of KYCO students and/or others upon approval by the KYCO Office of Student Affairs. Lockers are subject to having locks cut and contents removed without notice. In this situation, items may be retrieved from the KYCO Office of Student Affairs.
- Firearms, flammable solutions, cooking appliances such as crockpots and coffee pots, dangerous and/or illegal materials are prohibited.
- UPIKE/KYCO is not responsible for stored items that are damaged, lost or stolen. Students should never store valuables in their lockers.
- Unauthorized entry into another student's locker is considered a criminal act and is prohibited.
- Should a student suspect their locker has been tampered with, they should report the incident to Public Safety.

Student Assistance & Advocacy

The KYCO Office of Student Affairs strives to support students in all aspects of their lives. Staff are available to assist students with issues, academic or otherwise, connect them with resources, and advocate on their behalf. Students who need assistance or support are strongly encouraged to contact a Student Affairs staff member.

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS & ACTIVITIES GUIDELINES

Guidelines for KYCO Student Organizations

Participation by students in organized co-curricular activities is a valuable part of the total educational program and is encouraged by KYCO. Such activities serve to enhance the educational and professional growth of students by providing leadership experience, self-governance opportunities, peer collaboration, and other valuable experiences. It is expected that co-curricular activities will not conflict with the mission or purposes of the University and/or KYCO, and it is understood that the main purpose of the optometry program is the academic success of students. To be elected or appointed, and to maintain an organizational leadership position in any KYCO student, honorary, service, or national organization, a student must maintain a cumulative grade point average of no less than a 2.75. Students on academic probation may not hold a leadership position of any type or represent KYCO in any official capacity in local, state or national organizations, conferences, or meetings. Furthermore, students with less than a 2.75 cumulative grade point average and/or on academic probation are encouraged to limit extra-curricular involvement, including unnecessary travel, and focus on their academic success. Students who receive unsatisfactory or failing grades on block exams, regardless of cumulative grade point average, may not be granted approved excused absences for travel to conferences and meetings until their grades improve.

Student Government Association

The KYCO Student Government Association (SGA) is the official voice for all KYCO students. The KYCO Office of Student Affairs advises the SGA and serves as its administrative liaison. The SGA is responsible for fostering student professionalism through acting as liaison for the student body, promoting optometry, supporting club and classroom activities, and working to improve the quality of life for all KYCO students. The KYCO Student Government Association Executive Board is composed of the following members: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, AOSA Trustee, one Senator from each class, the Mental Health Chair, and the Diversity Chair.

Student Clubs and Organizations

KYCO promotes an environment in which students can engage academically, professionally, and socially through student-led clubs and organizations to promote learning, growth and development. All KYCO clubs and organizations must be open to all KYCO students. Student clubs and organizations are supported by the KYCO SGA and KYCO Office of Student Affairs.

Requirements of Clubs and Organizations

While typically members share a common purpose, all clubs and organizations must remain open to all KYCO students, regardless of age, race, gender identity, religion, etc. Each club or organization is required to have a minimum of a President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer. Organizations are eligible to have additional officers. Organizations are required to register with the KYCO Student

Government Association and KYCO Office of Student Affairs at the beginning of each academic year.

Recognized clubs and organizations that are in good standing with the KYCO SGA and KYCO Office of Student Affairs are eligible to receive funding, reserve space on campus, and host events. Student clubs and organizations are required to follow all relevant KYCO and institutional policies and procedures to remain in good standing.

Student organizations include, but are not limited to:

- American Optometric Student Association (AOSA)
- American Society of Optometric Surgeons (ASOS)
- American Optometric Association – Political Action Committee (AOA-PAC)
- Beta Sigma Kappa (BSK)
- Cornea Contact Lens Society (CCLS)
- Fellowship of Christian Optometrists (FCO)
- Pikeville Lions Club
- National Optometric Student Association (NOSA)
- Ocular Disease and Low Vision Club
- Optometric Vision Development and Rehabilitation Association Club (OVDRA)
- Private Practice Club (PPC)
- Sports Vision Club
- Student Ambassadors
- Student Chapter of the American Academy of Optometry (SAAO)
- Student State Optometric Associations
- Student Volunteers in Optometric Service to Humanity (SVOSH)

All KYCO students are provided complimentary membership in the American Optometric Student Association (AOSA). Students must sign up and activate this membership.

New Student Organizations

The growth of co-curricular activities on campus is an important aspect to creating a vibrant campus community. Students interested in creating or establishing a new student organization, must first meet with the KYCO Office of Student Affairs. New student organizations should have a written bylaws/charter, have at a minimum 5 interested student members, a faculty member willing to serve as the advisor, and must seek recognition through a vote of the KYCO SGA. The KYCO Office of Student Affairs can guide students through this process.

Donations, Sponsorships & Solicitation

No student or student organization may directly solicit donations, presentations or sponsorships from any individual, company, organization or industry. All requests for donations, presentations or sponsorships must be submitted to, and approved by, the KYCO Office of Student Affairs and the Office of Advancement.

Event Planning Process

All student club and organization meetings, activities, and events, whether on or off campus, must be approved by the KYCO Office of Student Activities in advance. Club leaders are responsible for submitting an event planning form for all activities to the KYCO Office of Student Activities at least two weeks in advance. Special activities and events that require additional planning, venue reservation, and/or catering are recommended to be booked at least 30 days in advance. The KYCO Office of Student Affairs is available to help clubs and organizations with event planning, including making reservations, making catering orders and purchases.

Mail for Student Organizations

Official student organizations may have mail addressed to them sent to the following address:

Kentucky College of Optometry
Office of Student Affairs
c/o STUDENT ORGANIZATION NAME
147 Sycamore Street
Pikeville, KY 41501

The organization will be notified the Office of Student Affairs of received mail.

Organizational Accounts/Fundraising

No student organizations may have an external checking account. All KYCO student organizations funds are managed by the KYCO Office of Student Affairs through the University's business office. Officially recognized student organizations may be assigned budget lines within the KYCO Office of Student Affairs budget.

All club and organization fundraisers, whether on or off campus, must be approved at least two weeks in advance by the KYCO Office of Student Affairs by submitting an Event Planning form. Students may not use personal cash applications (Venmo, PayPal, etc.) to conduct business. Student organizations may work with the KYCO Office of Student Affairs and the Office of Advancement to create online payment options which accept credit card and cash application purchases and are PCI compliant.

Student Travel and Funding Policies

KYCO supports student travel to optometry meetings across the country to promote development, camaraderie, and education. The following conditions must be met for any funding to occur. No student on Academic Probation or on a Leave of Absence will be allowed to travel for or represent KYCO. All requests for absences must be submitted 30 days prior to any travel to the KYCO Office of Student Affairs. In your request, include which conference you are attending. All receipts for reimbursement must be submitted within 30 days of return to KYCO.

Guidelines:

- Travel assistance is available to the President & Vice-President of official KYCO clubs unless specified below and approved by the faculty.
- The maximum reimbursement unless otherwise noted is $750.

- Students who are not officers of the student affiliate or are not presenting at a meeting must submit requests for funding six weeks prior to the meeting. There will be no more than 2 students guaranteed funding assistance per meeting, although some may choose to attend events completely at their own expense with approved absences.
- Student travel funds are not guaranteed and are based on the University's budget. When the student travel funds are spent, they are gone for the fiscal year (July 1st – June 30th), regardless of whether the travel has occurred.
- Unless otherwise approved by the Dean, students may only be excused for one professional leave per year. Prior approval for absences must be sought prior to making travel arrangements.
- Travel funds will only be reimbursed after providing properly documented receipts.
- For most student travel, the dollar amount will be capped to a maximum reimbursement.
- Funds will not be reimbursed for entertainment or any alcoholic beverages.
- Reimbursement for food is $60 each day with receipts.

The following meetings may be supported annually (as funding allows):

American Academy of Optometry Convention:
- KYCO Club President: Up to $750 reimbursement with receipts
- KYCO Club Vice-President: Up to $750 reimbursement with receipts
- Students with first author accepted posters: Up to $750 reimbursement with receipts

Optometry's Meeting (American Optometric Association):
- KYCO AOSA Trustee: Up to $750 reimbursement with receipts (no duplicate charges for items paid for by AOSA)
- KYCO AOSA Trustee-Elect: Up to $750 reimbursement with receipts (no duplicate charges for items paid for by AOSA)
- Students with first author accepted posters: Up to $750 reimbursement with receipts

National Optometric Students Association (NOSA):
- KYCO NOSA President: Up to $750 reimbursement with receipts
- KYCO NOSA Vice-President: Up to $750 reimbursement with receipts

Southeast Council of Optometry Convention (SECO):
- The SECO student representative is supported by SECO

Kentucky Optometric Association Convention (KOA) Lexington Meeting:
- KYCO KOA Liaison: Up to $500 reimbursement with receipts

Other meetings that may also be considered when students are presenting
- Global Specialty Lens Symposium
- Heart of America
- VOSH

Travel Reimbursement Policy

When traveling for approved University business, a student may be reimbursed for reasonable and necessary out-of-pocket expenses incurred in accordance with the University's Travel Expense

Guidelines. Student travel expenses incurred, as a representative of the University of Pikeville, will be reimbursed in accordance with the following guidelines and unless otherwise noted, per the travel amounts listed for student conferences as published in the KYCO Student Handbook.

Students are expected to utilize the most economical methods of transportation and lodging available. Questions concerning acceptable, reimbursable expenses should be directed to the Office of Student Affairs. All expenses to be reimbursed must be submitted on an expense reimbursement form and approved by the Office of Student Affairs and/or the appropriate University official. Detailed receipts to substantiate expenses must be attached to the expense report.

- **Air Travel**: The most reasonable air travel arrangements must be sought. Only economy rates are acceptable.
- **Automobile Travel**: When it is necessary to travel by automobile for University related business, the preferred method of travel is to utilize a University owned-vehicle or to work with Student Affairs to rent a vehicle. All drivers traveling on university business must be on the approved university driver's list. Seat belts must be used at all times in all vehicles. Smoking in university or rental vehicles is prohibited. The use of cell phone is permitted only when the user is not driving. Students are strongly encouraged to be safely parked before accepting or placing calls.
- **Hotel Reservations**: Hotel reservations are limited to a reasonably priced room at the hotel where the conference is being held. If this is not possible, use a comparable facility located nearby. Reimbursement for the hotel will be for the single-room rate only. Personal expenses, such as movie rental fees or health spa charges, are not reimbursable.
- **Meals**: Meals are reimbursed up to a maximum of $60 per day. Each meal must be accompanied by a receipt for reimbursement. Extraordinary circumstances which may cause this expense to exceed $60 per day, must be documented by a receipt and approved by Student Affairs.
- **Local taxi or shuttle service/Ride Shares**: Local taxi or shuttle service is authorized only when travel is to and from airport/train stations or to and from conference sites. Receipts for such services must be obtained whenever possible.
- **Documentation**: You must submit documentation to support all expenses for which you are requesting reimbursement, including conference registration and activity charges, hotel charges, restaurants and other facilities. If your meals are included in your hotel bill, list the meals and hotel charges separately on the expenditure form.
- **Reimbursement requests**: Reimbursement requests must be submitted to Student Affairs within 5 working days of completing the trip and incurring the expense. Student Affairs will then review the request and submit it to the Business Office for processing.

Use of University Facilities

KYCO student organizations are permitted to use University facilities on a pre-arranged basis provided that these arrangements do not conflict with other scheduled University or KYCO activities or established policies. All facilities should be left clean and in good condition at the conclusion of a club or organization event. Facility reservations are managed through the Midas system and also require an event planning form.

Use of University Logos/Branding

The University and KYCO logos are important components of the institution's visual identity. As such, there are policies and guidelines in place dictating how they can be used. A club/organization must contact the KYCO Office of Student Affairs, who will initiate approval with the University's Marketing &

Communication office, before using any University or KYCO name/logos so that all applicable policies and guidelines are followed. All club and organization t-shirts must be approved through the Office of Student Affairs and should include the KYCO logo on the front of the t-shirt. Contact Student Affairs for more information.

Volunteer Services

The University and KYCO encourages students to participate in volunteer activities and organizations. Participation in volunteer activities should be scheduled outside of class and clinical assignments. However, should the occasion arise that a valid volunteer activity/service conflicts with class or clinic, the participating student/group must complete and submit an excused absence form to the KYCO Office of Student Affairs. Completed forms must include signed approval from all course/lab/clinical instructor(s) at least five days prior (or in compliance with Clinic absence notification requirements) to participating in the volunteer activity. Students are responsible for all make-up coursework, lecture notes, and/or lab/clinical assignments. Students will not be permitted to be absent from classes, labs, or clinic without having obtained an approved absence form. Students on academic probation are not allowed to participate in volunteer services.

FINANCIAL AID & TUITION

Please refer to KYCO Catalog for information regarding these topics:

- General FA information
- Scholarships and Grants
- Military Health Professions Scholarship Program
- Debt Counseling
- Loans
- Federal Direct Loans
- Alternative Loans
- Federal Loan Eligibility Requirement - Satisfactory Academic Progress
- SAP Progressions
- How to regain financial aid eligibility:
- Student's Right to Appeal a SAP Suspension
- Return of Title IV Funds

Tuition and Fees

Tuition for the Kentucky College of Optometry will be $49,950 for the 2026-2027 year. The cost of attending a four-year Doctor of Optometry program varies greatly from school to school. For KYCO, the cost of attending is inclusive of many benefits not provided at other institutions such as optometric equipment, iPad, and electronic textbooks, all part of the KYCO Advantage.

Tuition is billed by semester. Tuition payments are due the first week of each term unless special payment arrangements have been made with the University of Pikeville Business Office. Tuition payments for

students with financial aid are processed by the University of Pikeville Business Office.

Tuition is subject to change annually. The University reserves the right to change the tuition and fees schedule without advance notice and to make such changes applicable to current and future students.

FEES

Matriculation Fee (Deposit) A nonrefundable deposit of $1,000 is payable to KYCO after a student is accepted to confirm their placement in the entering class. This fee is then credited toward payment of tuition upon enrollment.

Transcript Fee The University of Pikeville charges a fee for each transcript requested. Please allow up to two business days for all methods of processing.
• eTranscript processing: $10 per copy
• Paper Transcript – Pick-Up: $10 per copy (all copies picked up will be stamped "Issued to Student")
• Standard Domestic Mail: $12 per copy ($10 copy fee plus $2 standard mail fee) • International Mail: $13 per copy ($10 copy fee plus $3 standard mail fee)
• Expedited processing:
FedEx Overnight Domestic: $35 ($10 copy fee plus $25 overnight fees)
FedEx International Priority: $50 ($10 copy fee plus $40 international fees)
FedEx Rush Delivery: Additional rates based on the destination of credentials.

Insurance Fee All KYCO/KYCOM students are required to have health insurance while enrolled at the university. UPIKE offers insurance for those students that do not have a qualifying health insurance plan. The fee for the insurance will be added to every student's account each term and will be removed if the student provides documentation to the third-party insurance company that they have an active plan that qualifies. The fees are as follows:

- Continuing Students - $5,660 – Fall Semester $2,853.00, Spring Semester $2,807
- Incoming students - $4,931.00 – Fall Semester $2124.00, Spring Semester $2,807

KYCO Advantage

It is important that students enter on a level playing field, where those who are admitted with few financial resources have the same educational opportunities as those with greater resources. To achieve this goal, KYCO provides entering students with all required ophthalmic and medical equipment, an iPad, as well as all required texts. KYCO provides membership dues for all students to the American Optometric Student Association (AOSA), and the Kentucky Optometric Association (KOA). Additionally, the KYCO Student Advantage includes an NBEO preparation program. Students are responsible for all equipment provided as part of the KYCO Advantage. Lost or stolen items will not be replaced by KYCO. All equipment is provided only for the sole use of KYCO students throughout the four-year program. Ownership of equipment transfers to the student upon graduation. If a student is dismissed or withdraws from the program, they are required to return all ophthalmic, medical, and technical equipment provided

to them as part of the KYCO Advantage to the KYCO Office of Student Affairs. Upon termination of student status, all memberships included in the KYCO Advantage shall be inactivated.

In addition, *KYCO will reimburse students for NBEO ABS Part 1 if they successfully pass the exam on their first attempt. ABS Part 1 reimbursement will happen during your 4th year. This is based on when the results of exams are received.*

Tuition Refunds

Tuition is billed per semester for enrolled students. No part of the tuition fee will be refunded to a student who withdraws for any reason after the fourth week of the beginning of an academic semester for first-year, second-year, third-year, or fourth-year professional students. For first-year students, the first week of the academic calendar consists of the required orientation program.

A withdrawal is defined as a student dropping down to zero hours in a given semester. It will be strongly encouraged that students who are receiving financial assistance meet with the Office of Financial Aid before withdrawing or taking a Leave of Absence to discuss the financial consequences.

A tuition fee refund, if applicable, requires prior written notification of withdrawal from the institution. A request for withdrawal requires completion of a form that is initiated in the KYCO Office of Student Affairs and is reviewed and signed off by other support offices on campus. This request must be received before the close of business during the week in which the refund is requested and the Business Office notified. The tuition fee refund shall be prorated as follows:

- 100 percent during the first week of an academic semester;
- 75 percent during the second week of an academic semester;
- 50 percent during the third week of an academic semester; and
- 25 percent during the fourth week of an academic semester.

No course, clerkship, or rotation will be credited toward promotion, graduation, or subsequent credit if a student has not paid the required tuition and fees, including any additional tuition incurred by repeating any portion of the regular program.

The Board of Trustees of the University of Pikeville reserves the right to change the schedule of tuition and fees, without advance notice, and to make such changes applicable to present as well as future students of KYCO, and to establish additional fees or charges for special services whenever, in their opinion, such actions are deemed advisable. All inquiries concerning the above policies and all requests for refunds should be directed to the University of Pikeville Business Office and KYCO Office of Student Affairs.

CAMPUS RESOURCES & UNIVERSITY SERVICES

Dining Facilities

Campus dining facilities are open to students and their guests and accept cash, credit, and debit cards. KYCO students have the option to purchase a meal plan to use at campus dining facilities. The dining services department is capable of meeting most special diets. However, students with special dietary

needs are encouraged to consult with dining services management before purchasing a meal plan. Please visit the **Dining Services website** for more information.

Fitness Center

The UPIKE Fitness Center is a health, recreational, and social facility geared towards exercise, health, and physical activities. Membership at the Fitness Center is open to all UPIKE students, faculty and staff. The facility is conveniently located on Hambley Boulevard, directly across the street from the HPE Building, below the parking garage. The Fitness Center offers aerobic and strength training equipment and an area for pre- and post-workout stretching. It also provides Fitness on Demand which allows individuals to watch workouts similar to P90x and Beach Body. Campus Community members will need their ID card to sign in and out of the Fitness Center. Additionally, students have access to a membership at the local Pikeville YMCA. Students must provide their student ID in order to claim their membership.

Housing

Students are responsible for securing their own housing. Admissions and/or the KYCO Office of Student Affairs can provide students with information regarding local rentals and real estate. The **Office of Residence Life** also provides housing options for graduate and professional students, but spaces are limited.

Information Technology

KYCO students are provided with an iPad and have access to other technology to facilitate their engagement with the curriculum. Technical assistance concerning iPads, student email, software, and web-based course programs may be obtained from the **University's Information Technology** staff. Assistance may be requested by phoning (606) 218-5300, and/or emailing: helpdesk@upike.edu.

Library

The Frank M. Allara Library welcomes all UPIKE students, faculty, and staff, as well as members of the community. Librarians and staff are available to assist with questions, textbooks, database searches, general computer assistance, and instruction on library resources and research.

The library provides access to a wide variety of resources in both print and electronic formats. Most optometric resources are available online, and the library maintains a collection of health sciences print materials on the third floor. Interlibrary loan services are available if you need items not owned by the library. The ground floor of the library houses a 24-hour study space, including a room dedicated to health science students. Group and individual study spaces are located throughout the library.

The library's first floor is the social hub of the building. On this floor, you can check out books and other materials, use the computer lab, browse magazines and journals, grab a free cup of coffee, or curl up in a bean bag chair with a best-selling novel. This floor is also the home to the library makerspace, which features a 3D printer, a Cricut cutting machine, a poster printer, and a button maker—all available for student use.

KYCO textbooks are available at no charge at the following link:
https://libguides.library.upike.edu/KYCOtextbooks

Mother's Room
The University provides a designated Mother's Room for faculty, staff, students and visitors in need of private space to express milk or nurse. These rooms are located on the mezzanine floor of the Coal Building and the fourth floor of the Health Professions Education Building (HPE). The rooms lock from the inside, have electrical outlets, refrigerators and provide comfortable seating.

Parking

Students, faculty, and staff may park at no cost in the public parking garage on Hambley Boulevard directly across from the Health Professions Education Building. Student parking on campus is limited and is by permit only. Parking is not permitted in spaces reserved for patient clinical services. Violators will be ticketed. Unpaid tickets will be charged to the student's account. Parking ticket appeals must follow the appeals procedures specified by the UPIKE Public Safety Department. The University is not responsible for damages to any vehicles parked on campus. Requests for handicapped parking permits are made to the UPIKE Public Safety Department.

Physical, Behavioral Healthcare, and Counseling Services

Health Services. Starting July 1, 2026, UPIKE will have a small clinic on campus being staffed by a nurse practitioner and a medical assistant for student health needs. Pikeville Medical Center (PMC) is approximately five minutes from campus. The PMC network contains a wide array of healthcare providers available to students. PMC's Emergency Department is available 24/7 for urgent medical and mental health needs. The costs of care are the responsibility of the student.

Students are required to keep their Emergency Contacts on file with the KYCO Office of Student Affairs so that appropriate parties may be contacted in the event of a student emergency.

THRIVE Counseling Center. The University of Pikeville **THRIVE Counseling Center** offers students free, confidential mental health services by licensed mental health providers and is located directly off the Benefactor Plaza in the Record Memorial Building or Coal Building Room 515. The THRIVE Center can be contacted at **counseling@upike.edu**, **glennahenson@upike.edu**, or **micahmusic@upike.edu** .

BetterMynd. BetterMynd is a fully online mental health support system that provides 24/7 crisis line. A key feature is the virtual counseling options of 50 minutes. Their counselors have a minimum Master's-level education, are 40% BIPOC, have experience working with college students, and specialize in working with marginalized identities, adjustment challenges, and various treatable disorders. A third key feature is tele-psychiatry, in which students can gain access within 24 hours to a psychiatrist or psychiatric nurse practitioner to help with medications and further treatment plans. BetterMynd is free for all students.

Spiritual Life

Spirituality is encouraged and supported in its various forms on campus. Students are encouraged to participate in spiritual life through various activities such as worship services, sacred scripture studies, juma prayer and community service projects. The university chapel (Record 603) is available to studetns 24/7. Also, KYCO students are given the opportunity to participate in faith-based organizations such as the Fellowship of Christian Optometrists or partnering with Muslim Student Doctor Association as well as campus and community faith-based organizations.

The UPIKE Chaplain/Instructor of Religious Studies, Rob Musick (**robertmusick@upike.edu**) is available for individual support and spiritual direction, to help facilitate worship services, or to help with spiritual needs and resources.

Student Lounge

KYCO provides its students with a lounge. This area is located on the second floor of the HPE Building and is explicitly designated (with rare exceptions) for Health Professions Students. The lounge has a variety of seating areas, along with refrigerators, microwaves, coffee machines, a TV, and a billiards/air hockey table. It is a student's responsibility to clean up after their use in the student lounge, including washing any dishes and disposing of any food.

With support from the KYCO Office of Student Affairs and the KYCO SGA, a food pantry is provided in the student lounge which offers a limited selection of quick serve, non-perishable food items.

Study Space

Group and individual study spaces are available 24 hours per day, 7 days per week to KYCO students in the Allara library, the HPE Building, the Coal Building, and at other University campus locations and may be reserved online using the **UPIKE Room Reservation System**.. Students are required to adhere to the **Study Room Reservation Guidelines**. 5th floor HPE study rooms are specifically reserved for KYCO students.

SAFETY INFORMATION

The University of Pikeville and KYCO strive to promote a safe and secure environment to ensure the safety and well-being of the campus community. The University of Pikeville Public Safety Department is dedicated to providing a safe, protected, and organized environment. The safety of UPIKE students, faculty, staff and visitors is of primary importance. The University of Pikeville Public Safety Department seeks participation by all members of the UPIKE community in its efforts.

As a service organization, the department offers a full range of security resources, including preventative patrols (24 hours), criminal investigations, crime prevention, facilities security, special event services and parking management and enforcement.

Public Safety also serves the UPIKE community by providing safety analysis for the campus, hazard inspections, and safety escorts while on campus or on adjacent property. The Public Safety Department

strives to ensure the safety of our university family by offering several interactive teaching sessions related to safety and security for students, faculty and staff.

The Public Safety Department is available 24/7 and may be reached at (606) 477-0262 or (606) 218-5940.

AlertAware Emergency Notification System

All students, staff, and faculty members of the University of Pikeville are urged to subscribe to the AlertAware service. The University of Pikeville has partnered with AlertAware to offer an emergency notification system. AlertAware is capable of sending users text, push notifications, and email messages. The University of Pikeville will only send messages related to emergencies. KYCO students are strongly encouraged to subscribe to the AlertAware Emergency Notification System.

Clery Act Information

The Clery Act is a federal statute requiring all colleges and universities participating in federal student aid programs to publish an annual security report that accurately discloses campus crime statistics and security information. This report is available on the **UPIKE website**.

Sexual Assault Prevention

The University of Pikeville is committed to providing a supportive learning environment and fostering safe, healthy relationships among our students. As such, the institution and members of our community will not tolerate the offenses of dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking. The University's Title IX Coordinator leads the efforts to prevent and address sex discrimination, including all forms of gender-based violence and harassment. Our mission is a safe environment for all students, faculty, staff, and visitors. Title IX prohibits all forms of sex discrimination, including sexual harassment, sexual violence, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, and retaliation against individuals reporting sex discrimination.

More information about the University's Title IX policy can be found at **www.upike.edu/title-ix** .

Students and employees who have experienced sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking should report incidents to the University of Pikeville Title IX Coordinator, Bethany Kingery, J.D., Executive Director of Compliance and Legal Affairs. Her email and phone contact information are **bethkingery@upike.edu** and 606-218-5344.

STUDENT PROFESSIONALISM AND ETHICS

KYCO Professionalism and Ethics Policy

The purpose of the KYCO Professionalism and Ethics Policy is to promote the development of professional maturity and to maintain an atmosphere of professionalism that is required of a healthcare facility and clinical teaching institution. These policies are to be upheld and maintained whenever a student is on university premises, during official University activities, and whenever a student is representing KYCO or the University. Students are required to conduct themselves in accordance with the Professionalism and Ethics Policy at all times.

Student classroom, laboratory, clinical, non-academic behaviors will be observed in the following areas: *civility, respect, professional etiquette, and ethics.* Additionally, other institutional rules and guidelines apply as applicable, as do all city, state, and federal laws. It is the responsibility of each KYCO student to become aware of and informed of these policies. Members of the Kentucky College of Optometry and University of Pikeville community are responsible for monitoring, maintaining, and enforcing professionalism and ethics. Failure to report professionalism and ethics violations is also a violation of policy.

Violations of the Professionalism and Ethics Policy are reported to the KYCO Office of Student Affairs and subsequently are addressed by the appropriate conduct board(s). Students found responsible for unethical or unprofessional conduct will be subject to sanctions that may range from disciplinary warning, reprimands, probation, or dismissal from KYCO.

Unprofessional conduct is defined as *any direct violation of the conduct policies outlined herein, as well as activities that may cast the student, individual, patient, University, College, or the profession of Optometry in an unfavorable light.* Although it is not possible to fully outline all potential modes of misconduct and/or inappropriate behavior, unprofessional conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following: *illegal or unethical activity; violation(s) of the 'AOA Code of Ethics'; academic dishonesty; referring to a professional without using appropriate title; negligence; poor patient care; disregarding clinical guidelines and/or 'Patient Bill of Rights', poor classroom or clinical etiquette; disrespectful behavior or language toward patients, faculty/staff, or fellow students; failure to maintain and/or respond to official communication, misuse or abuse of social media.* Additional specific standards expected for patient care are outlined in the KYCO Clinic Manual.

American Optometric Association Code of Ethics

KYCO follows the Code of Ethics approved by the American Optometric Association in 1944. It shall be the ideal, the resolve, and the duty of the members of the American Optometric Association:

- To keep the visual welfare of the patient uppermost at all times.
- To promote in every possible way, the collaboration with this Association, better care of the visual needs of humankind.
- To continuously enhance their education and technical proficiency to the end that their patients shall receive the benefits of all acknowledged improvements in visual care.
- To see that no person shall lack visual care, regardless of their financial status.
- To advise the patient whenever consultation with an optometric colleague or reference to another health professional seems advisable.
- To hold in professional confidence all information concerning a patient and to use such data only for the benefit of the patient.
- To conduct themselves as exemplary citizens.
- To maintain their offices and their practices in keeping with professional standards.
- To promote and maintain cordial and unselfish relationships with members of their own profession and of other professions for the exchange of information to the advantage of humanity.

Dress Code

KYCO students must maintain an appearance that demonstrates respect, trust, and credibility. The reasons for appropriate attire and hygiene are rooted in infection control, communication, and cultural sensitivity. This prepares the student for their role as a professional health care provider. Patient trust and confidence in their health care provider are essential for successful treatment experiences and outcomes. The message communicated by the provider by their dress and appearance plays a fundamental role in establishing trust and confidence. Students should consider the cultural sensitivities of their potential patients and present themselves in a manner that makes patients feel comfortable and garners respect and trust.

In general, students must adhere to the following standards:

- KYCO provides 4 sets (Cherokee wine tops and bottoms) of logo scrubs for students upon their matriculation into the program. For the non-clinical environment, including lectures, laboratory programs, and other required events, students are expected to wear these scrubs.

- Students needing to order additional scrubs should work with the Office of Student Affairs and are not permitted to order other scrub brands or have the KYCO seal placed on any other scrubs without the permission of the Office of Student Affairs.

- In lieu of the scrub top, students may wear an official KYCO organization branded shirt. All organizational shirts must be approved through the Office of Student Affairs prior to ordering and must meet KYCO branding guideline.

- **Please note**: T-shirts are *not* appropriate attire for the 5th floor of the HPE building which houses the KYCO Clinic and the Dean's office. This includes classrooms, labs, study rooms, and meetings held on that floor.

- Shoes: Clean, comfortable shoes, such as athletic shoes are acceptable in clinic. Shoes should be closed toe and have low, flat heels. Open-toed shoes, sandals and flip-flops are not considered professional attire and are not to be worn in clinic.

- Clothing should be neat, clean, of an appropriate size and fit for the clinical setting, and which allows for an appropriate range of motion

- Good personal hygiene and the maintenance of oral health is expected. Students should keep their hair and fingernails maintained and well-groomed so as not to interfere with their work or present risk of injury to other students or patients. A hair covering or beard net may be required in certain clinical settings to uphold infection control. Further, students should avoid wearing strong scents (perfumes, cologne, etc.).

- Jewelry and Body Modifications

    a. Jewelry should be conservative and appropriate for the classroom/laboratory setting, ensuring it does not interfere with your duties.
    b. Facial and visible body piercings are generally not allowed, except for a single nose stud (up to 2.5 mm) on the side of the nostril.
    c. Visible body modifications, such as tongue bifurcation, unnatural shaping of teeth or ears, scarification, and modifications intended for body suspension (e.g., hooks), are not permitted.

d. Earrings, ear artwork, ear cartilage piercings, and ear gauges are acceptable. Gauges must be 12.7 mm or smaller; larger gauges should be covered while at work.

- Tattoos and Branding
  KYCO supports reasonable self-expression through tattoos and branding, provided they align with professional standards. However, tattoos and brands that could be considered offensive or inappropriate for the workplace are not allowed. This includes, but is not limited to, those that:

  a. Represent extremist philosophies, divisive political opinions, depicting violence, or controversial organizations or activities.
  b. Are offensive to modesty, decency, propriety, or professionalism.
  c. Promote messages that demean or degrade others based on gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or national origin.
  d. Are located on the head, face, or neck (above the T-shirt line), with the exception of modestly applied permanent makeup tattoos for eyebrows and eyeliner.

  All tattoos and brands that fall under these prohibited categories must be covered while at KYCO.

- For Optometry School after hours (5pm or later, excluding the 5th floor) in non-clinical areas of the UPIKE campus, students are asked to use professional discretion. Professional discretion means that you should maintain a dress that is representative of your status as a professional school student.

- KYCO retains the right to require students to dress professionally when special events are taking place. Students dressing inappropriately may be sent home with an unexcused absence. Repeated violations about student dress and appearance may be referred to the Director of Student Affairs and Academic Excellence (non-clinical) or Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs (clinical).

- **For clinical environments, students must consult the KYCO Clinic Manual for dress requirements.**

Social Media Expectations and Professionalism

KYCO students are expected to adhere to standards of professionalism and abide by applicable laws, policies, and rules that govern privacy and the dissemination of protected information (e.g., HIPAA). Video documentation of clinical and/or educational events without prior consent is prohibited.

When using social media and other internet sites that involve postings, comments, and images, students are expected to refrain from posting protected information, disparaging others, or otherwise conducting themselves in a way that could reasonably be perceived as unethical or unprofessional. Care should be taken when expressing opinions, especially online. Students are encouraged to clearly state that their viewpoints are their own and do not necessarily represent the views of KYCO or others when expressing opinions, particularly about medical or healthcare issues.

Further, cyber stalking and similarly inappropriate online activity can be viewed as forms of harassment. KYCO students should be mindful of the fact that social media and other internet sites are never completely secure; what is posted can be seen by many, including prospective residency programs and future employers. Online activity is subject to the KYCO Student Handbook and the UPIKE Code of Conduct.

Social media conduct that is contrary to this policy may result in disciplinary action (up to and including dismissal from KYCO) and in some instances, legal action, if postings violate applicable laws.

Email Etiquette

KYCO students must adhere to institutional email and technology policies as stated in the UPIKE Code of Conduct. Do not state anything in email that should not or could not be stated publicly. Once a message has been sent, control over it is lost. It may be forwarded to others or displayed in a newsgroup or other public forum or printed and disseminated without the author's knowledge or consent. Abusive or insensitive language in an email is inappropriate use of computing resources. Use of electronic means to send or post fraudulent, harassing, obscene, indecent, profane, intimidating, or unlawful messages is prohibited. Always use UPIKE email when corresponding with faculty and staff. Your UPIKE email is the official means of communication between you and KYCO. It is your responsibility to check, read, and respond to official communication in your UPIKE email account daily.

When replying to an email thread, consider whether your response needs to be sent to the entire thread or just the sender. Be cautious when replying to emails using reply all, as your response will go to all parties who received the original email.

REPORTING STUDENT GRIEVANCES

Student Grievances

Students who feel that they have been wrongfully treated by a member of the university community in violation of University policy or community standards, may submit a grievance to a designated university official by completing the Academic and Non-Academic Issues Compliant Form. Students may submit a complaint/grievance without fear of retaliation. Retaliation of any student for submitting a complaint/grievance is a violation of University policy and will not be tolerated.

A student's grievance concerning a faculty member will be forwarded to the Dean responsible for the staff member's department. If the concern is regarding the Dean of the department, these concerns will be reviewed by the Executive Vice President and Chief Strategy Officer. A grievance concerning another student's behavior will be reviewed by the KYCO Director of Student Affairs in the undergraduate program. Complaints about KYCO students will be reviewed by the KYCO Director of Student Affairs and Academic Excellence. Complaints regarding KYCOM students will be reviewed by the KYCOM Director of Student Affairs. After a grievance is received, a response to the grievance will be issued within five business days unless an extension is reasonably needed, in which case the office responsible for responding to the grievance will provide the parties with notice of the need for an extension and a new date by which a response will be issued.

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT AND ETHICS COMMITTEE

When a student, faculty member, staff member, or patient believes that a violation of ethics or unprofessional behavior has occurred, they will submit the complaint to the KYCO Office of Student Affairs using the Academic and Non-Academic Issues Compliant Form. All claims of sexual misconduct must be addressed in accordance with the University's Title IX policy. Some concerns may be handled by

the KYCO Director of Student Affairs & Academic Excellence, other complaints may be forwarded to the Professional Conduct and Ethics Committee (PCEC). The PCEC is composed of KYCOM, KYCO, and TCDM faculty members, with the Colleges' Directors of Student Affairs and the appropriate administrators serving as ex-officio members. The committee may request input from appropriate parties as theneed arises.

CLINICAL EDUCATION

The KYCO curriculum is planned to provide students with a sequential clinical educational experience throughout the program. The didactic and clinical laboratory instruction begins in the first semester of the first year and continues throughout all four years. All courses, including basic science courses, integrate and emphasize clinical applications. At the beginning of the second year, students will participate in supervised vision screening activities and other pre-clinical activities designed to prepare the student for future clinical experiences. The second semester of the second year, students will undergo instruction in integrated clinical problem-based learning where they will gain experience in the diagnosis, treatment, and management of patients. Throughout the third year, students will participate in direct supervised clinical experiences in the examination, diagnosis, treatment, and management of patients at KYCO clinical facilities. For information pertaining to clinicals, students should refer to the KYCO Student Clinical Manual.

Clinical Externships

During the fourth year, students are assigned to three clinical externships at KYCO approved sites. Placement details are provided by the KYCO Office of Clinical Affairs. The externship program is designed to broaden and enhance the students' diagnostic, treatment, and management of ocular and visual conditions. Clinical experiences in primary care and specialty care private practices, multi-disciplinary tertiary care centers, VA medical centers, and hospital-based facilities will be available. Participation with Doctors of Optometry and other professionals in comprehensive patient care shall be emphasized. Case presentations, evidence-based research on clinical conditions and ongoing enhancement of examination skill proficiency constitutes an important component of this clinical experience. Additional information is available in the *Externship Manual.*