

In the broader global context of optometric education, the Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry (ASCO) and its members are often asked for curricular assistance, new school planning, faculty exchanges and materials to expand optometric education to areas of the world where optometry is in various stages of development. The International Optometric Education (IOE) committee of ASCO works on the relationships, projects and policies related to international education and the global promotion of the profession.

The committee is charged with maintaining current information about international educational, clinical, research and exchange programs and relationships that are supported by ASCO members. Each fall, the committee surveys the member institutions to review the types of projects and programs with which they are involved. In line with expanding standards in international service-learning, this year's survey included questions for the first time about humanitarian service missions to other countries. The November 2013 survey is available to members by request.

The IOE committee works closely with members through ASCO's International Optometric Educators Special Interest Group (SIG) to explore ways to assist, coordinate, promote, advance and disseminate optometric education and training to schools and colleges in other nations. In 2013-2014, the SIG created a database of schools in Latin America with the intent to understand their status and issues.

As an affiliate member of the World Council of Optometry (WCO), ASCO fosters relationships with other organizations to ensure coordination of efforts, principles and standards related to optometric education around the world. Several ASCO member institutions are also affiliate members of the WCO. Recently, the WCO education committee produced a guide to help schools, colleges and universities in the developing world to start or upgrade their programs. [Click here](#) to learn more about the guide.

If there is a critical challenge in global optometric education, the committee is charged with researching the issue and recommending a position or action to address that challenge. Dr. Andrés Pagán (IAUPR) is the 2014-2015 Chair of the committee. Members are: Dr. Ronald Richardson (RSO), Dr. Janet Leasher (NOVA), Dr. Tracy Matchinski (ICO), Dr. Jeffrey Perotti (IUSO) and Dr. Stanley Woo (SCCOMBKU). Dr. Hector Santiago (IAUPR) serves as the International Optometric Educators SIG's liaison to the committee. LaShawn Sidbury is the ASCO point person for the committee, as the manager of programs and meetings. She can be contacted at lsidbury@opted.org.