

We are all extremely busy during our academic year, which in modern optometric education is the exact same number of months as the calendar year (plus a few more if you are tenure-track!). In the midst of our normal activities, we are often invited to participate in outside meetings, which require doing our homework (preparation), spending time away from the office and giving up evenings and weekends on behalf of service to the profession. It is natural to reflect on the use of our time away from our institutions and ask whether it was rewarding. I had the good fortune of answering “yes” to that question several times this fall semester. Two of those times, the agenda centered on accreditation standards.

In September, the COPE Advisory Committee, newly established by ARBO, met in San Antonio, Texas. This group includes representatives from ARBO, AOA, AAO, ACOE and ASCO, along with CE lecturers. I encountered a group of hardworking minds dedicated to improving CE outcomes, expanding the types of settings and topics that qualify as meaningful learning opportunities, and developing a process for accreditation of providers. The committee members provided detailed feedback and ideas and highlighted areas of concern; all agreed to reconvene in early 2015 to continue the discussion.

The next opportunity to discuss standards and assessment of learning outcomes was during the ACOE-hosted Optometric Degree Standards Invitational Conference in St. Louis, Mo., in October. Once again, I was truly impressed with our colleagues in optometric education, who suggested ideas that may be challenging to achieve but are the right thing to do. I heard it reinforced that assessment



*Dr. Jennifer Coyle, ASCO President*

should be ongoing, rigorous and consistent. In fact, at both meetings there was outward support for increasing standards in ways that show dedication to the future of the profession of optometry and improved outcomes for learners at all stages of their careers.

I wish all of you Happy New Year and a year of engaged learning, achievement of your goals, quality outcomes — and yes — more time!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jennifer Coyle". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned to the left of a vertical line.

**Jennifer Coyle, OD, MS, FAAO**

**President**

**Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry**