



OPHTHALMIC TECHNOLOGY FAQ'S

Visit us at www.mercycollege.edu/continuing-education/short-term-certificate-programs/ophthalmic-assistant/

How long will it take me to complete this program?

This credit certificate program is designed in a two semester format, which allows the student to complete the required 17/18* credit hours in one year. *One credit computer course required if computer assessment not passed.

What is my schedule going to be?

Classes are set up in a Monday/Thursday format to allow students to schedule work and outside interests more easily. The first semester, classes meet on Monday's from 1:30p.m.to 5:30 p.m. and Thursday from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. for the first eight weeks of the semester, and Mondays from 1:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. and Thursday from 4:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. the second eight weeks of the semester. The format will change second semester to daytime/ full-time Monday thru Friday for the required Clinical Practicum.

What does the coursework consist of?

In the first semester, students will take Ocular Medical Terminology and Anatomy and Physiology, Introduction to Ophthalmic Technology, Ophthalmic Lab I and II, and Ocular Diseases. Students may also be required to take Introduction to Keyboarding and Computers if a computer assessment is not passed.

In the second semester, students will take the Ophthalmic Capstone and 495 hours of Clinical Practicum.

What is a typical day at work for Ophthalmic Assistants?

- Taking patient medical histories
- Instructing patients about medications, tests, and procedures
- Performing various vision and diagnostic tests
- Assisting ophthalmologists/ optometrists with patient procedures
- Coordinating patient scheduling
- Supervising and training other ophthalmic assistants

Where are clinicals available?

Clinicals will primarily take place in area eye care facilities including ophthalmology/ optometry offices and clinics during normal daytime business hours.

What certification exam does this program prepare me for?

Completion of the Ophthalmic Technology Certificate program prepares the student for the COA (Certified Ophthalmic Assistant) exam. The Joint Commission on Allied Health Personnel in Ophthalmology (JCAHPO) offers the exam.



MORE FAQ'S...

When and where is this exam offered?

The Joint Commission on Allied Health Personnel in Ophthalmology (JCAHPO) offers the exam at computerized testing centers across the country, including the Toledo area.

Upon completion of course work, students must submit an application within 12 months of completing a CoA-OMP accredited Clinical Ophthalmic Assistant program to JCAHPO for permission to take the exam.

Once the application is accepted, the student will be assigned a 90-day eligibility period and must schedule and take the examination during this period. This eligibility period, along with information on how to schedule your exam, is provided in a confirmation letter after the application is accepted. Currently the exam fee is \$300 but is subject to change.

What is the job market outlook for Certified Ophthalmic Assistants?

There is currently a significant shortage of qualified ophthalmic assistants, technicians, and technologists in the U.S. The job outlook is favorable for graduating COA's as the job market expects a 7% increase between now and 2016.

How much do Certified Ophthalmic Assistants earn and what are the opportunities for advancement?

The average starting salary is \$12-14 per hour or \$25,000- \$29,000 per year with the opportunity to earn more with experience and additional training and certification. Assistants are eligible to take the Certified Ophthalmic Technician exam after one year of professional experience in the field and earn an increase in salary.