

# Ophthalmic Assistant Proficiency Certificate

**Description:** This program of study prepares students to become ophthalmic assistants who will work under the supervision of optometrists or ophthalmologists to provide patient care by performing many different eye- and vision-related clinical functions. Ophthalmic assistants take patient histories, perform the pre-testing and follow-up eye and vision examinations, provide patient education, and perform basic front office duties such as telephone triage and medical billing and coding.

Upon graduation, ophthalmic assistants may work in optometry practices, ophthalmology practices; optical dispensaries; optical laboratories; health care and optical equipment businesses; lens, frame or contact lens companies; and pharmaceutical companies.

The program courses are offered at the College's Northwest Regional Center with clinical experiences at The Eye Institute of Salus University and on-site in the OPH laboratory.

## Student Learning Outcomes:

Upon completion of the Ophthalmic Assistant Proficiency Certificate, students will be able to:

- Communicate and collaborate effectively as part of an interdisciplinary health care team.
- Apply an understanding of relevant scientific and mathematical concepts to ophthalmic care.
- Demonstrate the ability to solve problems and think critically.
- Display professional and ethical behaviors in the health care environment.

**Program Entry Requirements:** Admission into the Ophthalmic Assistant Program is selective, competitive, and requires potential students to fulfill all admission requirements of the College. Applications submitted from **October 1<sup>st</sup> until March 1<sup>st</sup>** will receive priority in the Allied Health pre-entrance testing and review process.

Students must meet the following minimum requirements before applying to the Ophthalmic Assistant Program:

- High school diploma or GED documentation
- Demonstration of readiness for [ENGL 101](#) and [FNMT 118](#) as determined by the College's placement tests, or by successfully completing developmental coursework
- Minimum grade point average of 2.50
- A composite score of 64 on the Kaplan health care exam

Applicants must be at least 18 years of age by the start of the Ophthalmic Assistant clinical experience.

Students new to the College can begin the application process by first [applying](#) to the College. Transcript evaluation and completion of a placement test (or test waiver) is required.

Current College students can begin the application process by visiting the Division of Math, Science and Health Careers in Room W1-1. Applicants must:

- Complete and sign an application form
- Submit official copies of supporting documents (e.g., official transcripts)

Applicants who complete and meet the aforementioned requirements will be eligible to continue in the admissions process and will be contacted, in writing, concerning the scheduling of an admissions interview with the Program Director (or designee). A scheduled interview does not guarantee admission.

### **Conditions for Acceptance**

All applicants are notified in writing regarding the admissions decision. All offers of acceptance are contingent upon successful completion of the following:

1. Acknowledgement of Core Performance Standards for Health Care Career Programs and physical demand analysis.
2. Completion of Criminal Background Check
  - Conviction of serious and/or violent crimes results in denial of admission into the OPH Program.
3. Completion of Child Abuse Clearance
  - Any record results in denial of admission into the OPH Program.
4. Completion of Drug Screening
  - A positive screening results in denial of admission into the OPH Program.

Additional conditions for Program commencement include:

- Documentation of a complete physical examination, including required laboratory tests. All health information is kept confidential. Students will have direct contact with patients, and have the responsibility to maintain very high standards of health practice.
- Documentation of up to date immunizations prior to clinical assignment. Additional immunizations (e.g., influenza) may be necessary.
- Documentation of current health insurance coverage, which must be maintained throughout the Program.
- Attendance at scheduled Program orientation prior to entry.
- Purchase of OPH student uniform.

**Disciplinary Action:** Involvement in any incident which resulted in disciplinary action against a student at the Community College of Philadelphia or any post-secondary institution is considered in the admissions process. The Ophthalmic Assistant Program reserves the right to deny admission to any applicant who has a documented history of violating College rules and/or regulations or who has been previously suspended or expelled from the College or any other post-secondary educational institution.

**Reconsideration:** An applicant who believes that an error of fact has been made in terms of the information provided to the decision-making committee can request reconsideration by the committee. This request must be made in writing within 10 days from the date of the letter

notifying the applicant of the decision. The reconsideration should address what the applicant considers to be errors of fact. Following reconsideration by the decision-making committee, the applicant can appeal the committee's decision to the Vice President for Academic and Student Success, whose decision is final.

Any official change or the initiation of any governmental proceeding affecting the information revealed by the required criminal or child abuse background check must be reported immediately to the OPH Program Director.

### **Dismissal from the Program**

The OPH program reserves the right to dismiss any student:

- who fails to observe the regulations of the College and its clinical affiliates,
- whose general conduct is detrimental to the College and its clinical affiliates, and/or
- who does not meet the scholastic requirements of the Ophthalmic Assistant Program. A student who receives a grade of "D" or lower in any course will be dismissed from the program.

**Readmission Policy:** The OPH program is intended to be completed in one semester beginning in September and/or January of each year. In order to progress through the program, students must complete all curriculum courses with a grade of "C" or better and maintain a GPA of 2.5 or higher. Eligible students seeking program readmission must do so within twelve (12) months of program separation. Program readmission is not guaranteed and is dependent upon program capacity and availability. A student must be eligible for readmission according to the College standards. Students who request to be considered for program readmission must meet the current admissions criteria and requirements at the time the request for readmission is placed. Readmitted students must follow the curriculum requirements at the time of their return to the program. A student may only be readmitted to the program once.

### **Eligible Students**

- Students who withdraw from the OPH program in good academic standing (grade "C" or better in all completed curriculum courses and GPA of 2.5 or higher)
- Students who are dismissed from the OPH program due to a grade "D" or lower in any academic course, with a GPA at time of readmission request of 2.5 or higher

### **Ineligible Students**

- Students who are dismissed from the OPH program due to a grade "D" or lower in the clinical course
- Students who are dismissed from the OPH program due to inappropriate conduct and/or violations of the College's academic integrity policy, clinical code of conduct, moral/ethical standards, professional standards, performance standards or accreditation standards

### **Process for Readmission Consideration**

In order to be considered for program readmission, the applicant must:

- Meet all current admission guidelines.
- Submit a written request to the OPH Program Director. Request must be received at least three (3) months prior to the expected date of enrollment.
- Successfully complete a comprehensive written exam as scheduled by the OPH Program Director. The exam content will include current material from courses which the student previously completed with a grade "C" or better.
- Successfully demonstrate clinical competence through simulation testing as scheduled by the OPH Program Director. Competency procedures will be selected based on the course(s) the student has successfully completed with a grade "C" or better.

The results of the written exam and competency testing, as well as the student's prior academic and clinical progress, will be evaluated by faculty to determine the student's potential for success in the Program.

**Program of Study and Graduation Requirements:**

- OPH students must follow the curriculum sequence according to courses listed in the semester.
- Students in the OPH curriculum may be dropped at any time if, in the opinion of the Faculty and Program Director, such students are not suited to be Ophthalmic Assistants.
- Students whose attitude and behavior are considered unprofessional may be dropped from the curriculum, pending a review by the Faculty, Program Director and Department Head of Allied Health.
- Students may not continue in the OPH curriculum with a grade of "D" or below in any OPH course.

**Graduation Requirements:** To earn a certificate of completion of the program, students must earn a "C" grade or better in each of the courses listed below.

**Course Sequence (no changes)**