



Council on Optometric Practitioner Education

Criteria for COPE Qualification of Continuing Education

Revised June 2010

New: *Standards for Commercial Support
of Continuing Education*

ARBO

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*A Service of the
Association of Regulatory
Boards of Optometry*



Association of Regulatory Boards of Optometry, Inc.

Association of Regulatory Boards of Optometry, Inc.

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June 2010

Dear Continuing Education Instructor:

The Council on Optometric Practitioner Education (COPE) was developed by the Association of Regulatory Boards of Optometry (ARBO) to simplify the approval process of continuing education (CE) courses for optometric licensing boards. While COPE's main purpose is to assist our member boards in the review and approval process for optometric CE necessary for license renewal, this system also benefits instructors and CE administrators/providers as well.

Sponsors of optometric CE can save a great deal of time by offering courses that are already COPE Qualified. COPE-Accredited programs attract the attention of more doctors seeking CE for license renewal because of the extensive acceptance of COPE Accredited courses by optometric licensing boards. Once your courses are COPE Qualified, they will be more attractive to planners of CE programs who can search the list of COPE-Qualified courses on ARBO's website.

All the information you need to submit your course for review is in this handbook. Please read all the information provided BEFORE beginning the application as this will expedite the process. Gaining COPE course accreditation is a simple three-step process. First, you must submit your course(s) for COPE Qualification (your COPE Course Qualification remains in effect for three years.) Next, a COPE-Approved Administrator/Provider submits an Event for their meeting with a list of courses that will be presented. Finally, the Event is approved by COPE and the COPE-Qualified Courses become COPE-Accredited Courses and can be promoted as such.

We would like to thank you for your participation in this valuable program. Your involvement with COPE ensures high-quality continuing education for optometrists, and also helps ARBO in our mission to represent and assist member licensing boards in regulating the practice of optometry for the public welfare.

Should you need further information about COPE, or if you need help in completing your application, please call ARBO at (704) 970-2710 or email to arbo@arbo.org. For more information on Administrator/Provider event submission, see the *Information for Administrator Approval and Instructions for COPE Event Submission* handbook.

Sincerely,

The Council on Optometric Practitioner Education





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Optometric continuing education (CE) is the primary method used by optometric regulatory boards to promote the continuing competence of licensed optometrists. There are a variety of formats by which each optometry licensing board approves CE courses, disseminates course information, records course attendance, and retrieves practitioner data on course completion. One jurisdiction’s licensing board duplicates much of the work done by another jurisdiction’s licensing board, and many boards approve the same CE courses every year.

The **Council on Optometric Practitioner Education® (COPE®)**, a national clearinghouse for all CE courses of a national, regional, statewide, or local scope, was created by the Association of Regulatory Boards of Optometry (ARBO) to remove these duplicative efforts by licensing boards, instructors, and program administrators. COPE is a member benefit of ARBO, which currently represents 50 US optometry boards, 4 US territories/jurisdictions, and 8 Canadian optometry boards.

COPE's mission is to: *Assist member boards in the accreditation and monitoring of optometric continuing education to enhance optometric competence for the protection of the public.*

To create this national clearinghouse, participating optometric licensing boards have agreed upon standards for administration of continuing education courses, and a standard course submission, qualification and accreditation process.

COPE STANDARDS FOR COMMERCIAL SUPPORT OVERVIEW

As of January 1, 2010, COPE has implemented new Standards for Commercial Support (SCS) of continuing education. Instructors and Administrators/Providers of COPE-Accredited CE must agree to abide by the following standards regarding commercial support. (See the full standards on pages 20-22.)

1. COPE-Accredited CE must be identified, developed and presented free from the control of a commercial interest.
2. Every person in a position to impact the content of COPE-Accredited CE must disclose all relevant financial relationships to the COPE-Approved Administrator/Provider and to the Learners.
3. In order for a CE event to be COPE Approved, all commercial support must be in the form of an educational grant or letter of agreement between the COPE Approved Administrator/Provider and Corporate Supporter. Electronic signatures are accepted.
4. There must be a clear separation of any type of product, service, and instrument or device promotion with COPE-Accredited Courses. These activities, such as commercial exhibits and advertisements must be physically separated from and not interfere with COPE-Accredited Courses.
5. All COPE-Accredited Courses cannot promote specific proprietary business interests and must give balanced coverage to treatment options.
6. To maintain transparency, financial relationships with commercial interests of any persons in a position to impact or control the educational content must be disclosed to the learners. This includes instructors and planning committee members.

COPE REQUIREMENTS FOR COURSE QUALIFICATION

COPE has established the following criteria to match those required by participating jurisdiction licensing boards. This assures that once qualified, your course(s) will be eligible for accreditation. Once accredited, they will be acceptable to all participating licensing boards for CE credit towards license renewal. If your course is accepted by COPE, it is considered “COPE Qualified” for a period of 36 months and will not need to be reviewed again regardless of how many times you may present it during that period. **Note:** Courses are not considered **COPE Accredited** until an Event is submitted by an Approved COPE Administrator/Provider and approved by COPE.

I. Courses:

- A. A course must be an organized program of learning that will contribute to the advancement and enhancement of professional competency and scientific knowledge in the practice of optometry, and be designed to reflect the educational needs of optometrists.
- B. A course must have scientific and educational integrity and must contain customary and generally accepted optometric and medical practices.
- C. A course must have an outline which demonstrates consistency with the course description and reflects the course content (see page 11 for guidelines.)
- D. A course handout/outline must be provided to all participants. The outline must be the same as the one submitted for COPE accreditation. If the original outline is updated, a copy must be provided to both ARBO and the event administrator.
- E. A course must be taught in a manner appropriate to the educational content, objectives and purpose of the program, and must allow suitable time to be effectively presented to the audience.
- F. Disclosure of financial/proprietary interests:
 - 1) Instructors and administrators/providers must disclose any financial interest or other relationship with a manufacturer, vendor, or distributor of any commercial products or services related to the practice of optometry.
 - 2) Courses presented on behalf of a commercial/proprietary entity, which specifically promotes one or more products of that company, will not be approved.
 - 3) Commercial/proprietary entities must have no influence or control over course development or presentation.
- G. Courses cannot be retroactively qualified/accredited by COPE.

II. Instructional Hours:

- A. The minimum credit for any COPE Qualified Course is one hour. Additional credits must be in half- or one-hour increments.
- C. One hour of CE credit equals a minimum of 50 minutes of instructional time.

III. Instructor(s):

- A. Instructor(s) must have the necessary qualifications, training and/or experience to present the course. With the exception of courses categorized as Practice Management, Principal Instructors must hold a minimum of a doctorate-level degree (O.D., M.D., Ph.D., D.O., J.D., D.D.S., D.C., Pharm.D., LL.D., D.Ed., D.Sc., etc.) or its international equivalent. Salaried faculties at accredited schools or colleges of optometry at a level of at least Assistant Professor, are exempt from this requirement.
- B. All instructors, including adjunct/assistant instructors, must provide a current Curriculum Vita.
- C. The Instructor should submit the course information to COPE. A COPE-Approved Administrator/Provider may submit the course on behalf of the instructor, but the instructor must acknowledge the submission and COPE requirements (see page 14). Under no circumstances can any company with a commercial interest submit a course for COPE accreditation.
- D. All payments and reimbursements to the instructor must come directly from the COPE-Approved Administrator/Provider. Supporters cannot supplement nor provide any financial incentives to speak on COPE Accredited Courses.
- E. Under no circumstances can an Instructor serve as both the Administrator/Provider and Instructor for a COPE Accredited CE Course or Event at the same time.
- F. Instructors should not seek COPE accreditation if the presentation is for the purpose of promoting products, services, instruments or devices.
- G. Instructors will assure educational materials such as slides, abstracts and outlines will not include any advertising or product group message. Instructors will ensure balanced and transparent coverage of therapeutic and treatment options, and must disclose off-label or experimental information.
- H. Instructors may have assistance in the development of a course, including the creation of handouts, slides and objectives, though not from a commercial interest.
- I. Instructors will disclose all relevant financial relationships with any commercial interest when submitting courses for COPE accreditation. Should no relevant financial relationships exist, this must be disclosed.
- J. Instructors will include a disclosure slide at the beginning of each presentation disclosing: (see page 14)
 - 1) That the instructor developed the course material and information independently or if the instructor had assistance. The disclosure must include who provided the assistance.
 - 2) The instructor developed the course material independent from any influence of commercial interest.
 - 3) Any personal conflicts of interest have been resolved.
 - 4) Any financial relationship with a commercial interest. Should no relevant financial relationships exist, this must be disclosed.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COURSE SUBMISSION

Please follow these step-by-step instructions when submitting your course for COPE qualification. If you have any questions, contact ARBO at 704-970-2710.

1. Go to the ARBO website at www.arbo.org. Click on COPE and then click on Instructors-Submit Courses (gray box).
2. Enter the Principal Instructor's *OE TRACKER* number where indicated. If unknown, use the search function provided. When the correct individual is located, click "Use This Instructor" button to continue. *If Principal Instructor is not a licensed optometrist, scroll down and use the Non-Optometrist Instructors search function. If the individual is not found in the database, contact ARBO at 704-970-2710 to have the instructor added.*
3. **Submitter Information:** A COPE Approved Administrator/Provider may submit the course on behalf of the instructor and the submitter must upload a dated and signed statement from the instructor when submitting the course. Under no circumstances can any employee or consultant of a commercial interest submit a course for COPE accreditation. If someone other than the principal instructor is submitting the application, enter the contact information in the appropriate fields. The submitter will receive email notifications as the application moves through the process. **Note:** Submitter contact information must be provided; do not leave blank.
4. The fields for the Principal Instructor (name, address, phone, etc.) are pre-populated with information from the instructor's *OE TRACKER* record. *If this information is not correct, contact ARBO at 704-970-2710 to have it changed.*
5. List the names and degrees of any **Co-Instructors** who participate in the presentation of the course. A **Co-Instructor** is an individual who, in conjunction with a Principal Instructor, may assist and participate in the presentation of a course, but also has the necessary qualifications to give the course independently of the Principal Instructor should the Principal Instructor be unavailable due to extenuating circumstances.

IMPORTANT: Instructors must file for independent COPE Qualification for a course that may, or is desired to be, presented separately by both the Principal and Co-Instructor.

6. List the names and degrees of any **Adjunct/Assistant Instructors** who participate in the presentation of the course. An **Adjunct Instructor** is an individual whose main function is to support the Principal Instructor with the presentation or preparation of a course. An Adjunct Instructor may assist with the presentation of a course, however, the Principal Instructor must be responsible for presenting the majority of the course and an Adjunct Instructor cannot, under any circumstance, present a course in the absence of, the Principal Instructor.
7. The title must adequately describe the course and must be as it will appear in all future programs. Note: *When approved, your course will be COPE-Qualified for 3 years and may be given multiple times during that time. Because course titles cannot be changed once approved, it is recommended that you do not "date" a course (for example: Glaucoma 2010).*
8. The course description is a brief statement of what the instructor(s) intends to present, summarizing the course in 35 words or less, which is suitable for publishing.
9. Briefly state the course objectives. These must be different than the course description and note the learning outcomes of the course.
10. Disclosure of Financial or Proprietary Interests: You must disclose on the application any direct financial or proprietary interests you may have in any of the companies, products, pharmaceuticals or services you may have mentioned, or intend to mention, in your presentation. You must also disclose if you provide for-profit support of any kind, are a paid consultant to, an employee of, or serve as an officer on the board of any companies mentioned in your presentation. Should your course be qualified, this information must also be disclosed at the beginning of your presentation to your audience in a clear and unambiguous manner, both verbally, and included in your written course handout/outline (see page 14-15 for samples).
11. Course Category: While a course may pertain to several course categories, there is usually one major topic which will cover most of the time and discussion, and which will best match one of the categories. Identify **one** category which best describes the educational experience provided by your course. Please do not use General Optometry unless no other category applies. (See page 7-8 for category definitions.)

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COURSE SUBMISSION-*Continued*

12. Course Presentation: The presentation indicates how the course material will be presented. Courses may be presented by more than one method. Indicate the amount of time that will be allotted for each method during the course (use decimal format). The presentation must match the actual event (i.e. a course submitted as live cannot be held as a webinar). See course presentation definitions page 8.
13. Check whether or not the course is CEE (Continuing Education with Examination) and, if so, select the appropriate sponsoring school/institution and the method of test distribution. (See CEE Policy on page 10.)
14. Indicate whether or not the course is Distance Learning/Multimedia and, if so, select the appropriate sponsoring school/institution and the method of test distribution. (See Distance Learning/Multimedia Policy on Page 9.)
15. Indicate the appropriate Course Format (see page 9 for Course Format Definitions).
16. The application fees will automatically be calculated based on your selections and payment will be made in a following window.
17. Following on-screen upload instructions, upload a complete copy of the instructor(s) CV(s), the outline of the course (see pages 11-12), any required tests, answer keys, statement from sponsoring institution for CEE or Distance Learning/Multimedia courses, published articles, and a copy of the instructor's acknowledgement of the submission if submitter is someone other than the instructor.
18. You will then be taken to Confirmation/Secure Payment Gateway. Review information provided and, if everything is correct, continue to scroll down the screen. If you need to make corrections on the application, click the back button of your browser, correct the errors/omissions and resubmit the course.
19. Enter credit card information and click the Pay Course Fees button, or, if the course is sponsored by an ASCO institution enter the ASCO code in the appropriate field, or you have been pre-approved by ARBO to be invoiced, enter the processing code provided by ARBO, and click the Submit Invoice Course or Submit ASCO Course button as appropriate.
20. As the application moves through the process, you will receive email notifications of the status. Notification of action on your course application will follow within 4-6 weeks of submission. If your course is accepted by COPE, it is considered "COPE Qualified for a period of 36 months. Note: Courses are not "COPE Accredited" until an Event has been submitted, by an approved COPE Administrator/Provider.

IMPORTANT: If the instructor updates the course content within the 3-year approval period, an updated outline/PowerPoint must be submitted to ARBO and the event administrator/provider.

FEES

The Application Fee is \$55 for the first hour of instruction for each course submitted, and \$45 for each additional hour. Each half-hour increment counts as 1 hour. Thus, if your course is 1 hour, the fee is \$55; if your course is 1.5 hours, or 2 hours, the fee is \$100; if your course is 3 hours, the fee is \$145; and so on. (**Note: minimum length accepted is 1 hour.**) Sometimes a course must be submitted late. COPE will attempt to qualify a course as expeditiously as possible. However, to reduce the qualification time to less than 30 days, an Urgent Processing Fee of \$105 for each course is added to the Application Fee. Under no circumstances will COPE accept a course for qualification with a review time of less than 14 days.

REFUND POLICY

In the event an application for course qualification is not accepted by COPE, no fees will be refunded.

COURSE CATEGORY DEFINITIONS

A. CLINICAL OPTOMETRY

Contact Lenses (CL): All aspects of contact lens applications.

Functional Vision/Pediatrics (FV): Those portions of optometric practice that deal with visual processing and neuro-optometric rehabilitation, including sports vision, binocular vision, and visual training or vision development courses.

General Optometry (GO): Any study in the area of the eye and vision care, which constitutes eye and vision research, or examination, diagnosis and treatment of anomalies of the human eye and visual system. For the purposes of these categories “General Optometry” excludes any other category enumerated here.

Low Vision/Vision Impairment & Rehabilitation (LV): All aspects of low vision devices, care and therapy.

B. OCULAR DISEASE

Glaucoma (GL): The study of the etiology, clinical pathophysiology, diagnosis, treatment, management, and the outcomes of therapeutic regimens.

Examples: Any course with major emphasis on diagnosis, treatment, and/or surgical and medical management of glaucoma (i.e., trabeculectomy, laser surgery for glaucoma).

Peri-Operative Management of Ophthalmic Surgery (PO): The study and clinical training of any ophthalmic surgical procedure of the anterior segment and adnexa (not to include any procedures covered in other categories).

Examples: Includes all aspects of pre- and post-operative management of ocular surgery care (excluding Refractive Surgery), i.e., cataract, lid surgery/procedures, strabismus surgery, keratoplasty, etc.

Refractive Surgery Management (RS): Instruction and/or clinical training in refractive or photorefractive technologies, which may include Peri-operative Patient Management: Counseling and evaluation for indications or contra-indications in patient selection, including recognition of associated complications and course of action in analysis and treatment.

Examples: Courses related specifically to management of PRK, RK and LASIK patients; corneal refractive surgery, etc.

Treatment & Management of Ocular Disease: Anterior Segment (AS): The study of the etiology, clinical pathophysiology, diagnosis, treatment, management, and outcomes of therapeutic regimens for anomalies of the anterior segment of the human eye.

Examples: Keratitis, anterior uveitis, conjunctivitis, blepharitis, lid anomalies, foreign body removal, etc.

Treatment & Management of Ocular Disease: Posterior Segment (PS): The study of the etiology, clinical pathophysiology, diagnosis, treatment, management, and outcomes of therapeutic regimens for anomalies of the posterior segment of the human eye.

Examples: Degenerative, infective, and vascular diseases of the retina/choroid/sclera and optic nerve, inclusive of all aspects of surgical care involving the posterior segment of the eye, i.e., retinopathies, neuropathies, retinal laser surgery, retinal detachment surgery, etc.

C. RELATED SYSTEMIC DISEASE

Neuro-Optometry (NO): The study of the etiology, clinical evaluation, diagnosis, treatment and management of disease and disorders of the nervous system, both systemically and as it relates directly to the eye and visual system.

Examples: Includes all aspects of nervous system conditions involving the brain, cranial nerves, spinal cord, peripheral nerves, and corresponding muscles, i.e., multiple sclerosis, pituitary tumor, brain trauma, Myasthenia Gravis, papilledema, Horner’s Syndrome, etc.

Oral Pharmaceuticals (OP): The study of the etiology, clinical evaluation, diagnosis and treatment of ocular disease using the appropriate indications, prescription utilization, and follow-up assessment of the oral medications used for ocular therapy.

Pharmacology (PH): The study of the interaction of chemical agents with biological systems.

Examples: Toxicology; adverse effects of systemic drugs; adverse effects of ocular drugs; control of ocular pain. Any courses related to medications and how they affect the various tissues or their mechanism of actions.

Principles of Diagnosis (PD): The study of the art and science of the process of determining the nature and circumstances of a diseased condition with emphasis on the biological and clinical procedures utilized in medical examination and disease differentiation, and underlying clinical pathophysiology, e.g., corneal topography, visual fields (unless specific to glaucoma); laboratory testing and imaging; fluorescein angiography; gonioscopy.

continued on page 8

COURSE CATEGORY DEFINITIONS—Continued

Systemic/Ocular Disease (SD): The study of the relationship of any anomaly of normal function of the human body and the possible manifestation of such as signs and/or symptoms in the eye or visual system.

Examples: General study of diabetes, HIV/AIDS, thyroid disease, etc., along with their ocular manifestations. Vascular diseases both systemic and ocular.

D. OPTOMETRIC BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Ethics/Jurisprudence (JP): The study of the body of law in the practice of optometry and its relationship to the Medicolegal system.

Examples: Any courses related to the rules and practice acts for optometry, or addressing medicolegal issues related to patient treatment, and liability concerns and issues.

Practice Management (PM): The study of management of the **business** affairs of optometric practice. *This includes the concepts of managed care and operations management, courses designed to help market practices, to educate office staff, to improve billing efficiency and coding skills, to improve clinical recordkeeping and to enhance fiscal efficiency. This does not include courses that are intended for personal enhancement or investment prowess.*

COURSE PRESENTATION DEFINITIONS

The continuing education course presentation and the format by which the presentation is made are aspects of CE that must be identified for many optometry licensing boards as part of the approval of courses for license renewal. While these descriptions may not cover all possible presentations or formats (as defined by COPE), they can be used to provide the information required by licensing boards.

CORRESPONDENCE: The presentation of clinical cases or information related to professional eye care solely in a written (printed/typeset), or electronically recorded format. See DISTANCE LEARNING / MULTI-MEDIA POLICY on page 9.

GRAND ROUNDS: A presentation of clinical cases involving actual patient encounters, and the discussion of the diagnosis and treatment of that particular patient condition.

INTERACTIVE/WORKSHOP: A laboratory that emphasizes the demonstration and application of hands-on techniques and skills in optometric procedures and instrumentation.

INTERNET/ONLINE: The presentation of clinical cases or information related to professional eye care delivered solely via the Internet. See DISTANCE LEARNING / MULTI-MEDIA POLICY on page 9.

LECTURE: A discourse given before an audience for the purposes of instruction in an area of study with one or more instructors.

PANEL: A discourse in a given area of study, presented by usually three or more simultaneous instructors.

POSTERS: The presentation of a poster at a scientific meeting. Authors must be present with the leading author meeting the COPE criteria (i.e. O.D., Ph.D., R.Ph., M.D.). 50 minutes of attendance is one hour of credit.

SYMPOSIA/SCIENTIFIC LECTURES: A presentation usually by multiple persons on numerous topics, each presented in a short time frame.

CURRICULUM VITAE (CV)

A CV is a detailed chronological history of a person's educational and teaching experience, and professional accomplishments, which qualifies the instructor to teach the course (NOT a biographical sketch). You **MUST** submit a current CV with your application for course review. The minimum information that must be provided should include:

- Name
- Office/work address, phone and fax numbers
- Education (degree/certification, institution, year degree awarded)
- Professional accomplishments/experience (appointments, publications, area(s) of expertise, prior lectures)
- Professional affiliations/societies
- Optometric/medical licensure information from the state(s) where you hold a current license to practice

COURSE FORMAT DEFINITIONS

FORMAT DEFINITIONS

- A. **LIVE:** A live format is when the instructor is in the same room with the participants, even if other formats are used as audiovisual aids for teaching the course. The instructor is face-to-face with the audience and can touch the participants.
1. **CE:** There is no post-course test.
 2. **CEE (Continuing Education with Examination):** There is a post-course test. **Important:** See CEE Policy, page 10.
- B. **DISTANCE LEARNING/MULTIMEDIA:** The course instructor is not physically present. **Important:** See Distance Learning/Multimedia Policy below.
1. **Interactive:**
 - a. **Webinar:** Web-based seminar that (unlike a webcast) allows for interaction between audience and instructor.
 - b. **Satellite:** The course is delivered by satellite TV to downlink receiver sites. The one-way video broadcast can be made interactive through the use of telephones and fax machines and time is provided for participants to ask questions via phone or fax.
 - c. **Teleconference/Videoconference:** Interactive course between participants at two or more sites using computer networks to share audio and video data; may involve an electronic whiteboard to share software applications.
 2. **Non-Interactive:**
 - a. **Video:** The course is taught via video from a non-interactive videotape or DVD.
 - b. **Audio:** The course is taught via audio from an audiotape or audio CD.
 - c. **DVD/CD-ROM:** The course is taught from a computer disc at the learner's personal computer.
 - d. **Satellite:** The course is delivered by satellite TV to downlink receiver sites. The one-way video broadcast can be made interactive through the use of telephones and fax machines and time is provided for participants to ask questions via phone or fax.
 - e. **Internet/Online:** The course is available on the Internet/World Wide Web with print and graphics.
 - f. **Webcast:** Live or delayed audiovisual course that is broadcast one way on the Internet to an audience.
 - g. **Podcast:** Syndicated Web content downloadable by subscribers to an iPod, PDA, cell phone, or computer.
 - h. **Written/Correspondence:** The course is taught via printed media such as manuscripts, journals, or magazines. The instructor who is responsible for the course educates the participants by written means only.

DISTANCE LEARNING/MULTIMEDIA POLICY

IMPORTANT NOTE: Distance Learning/Multimedia courses *do not* qualify as CEE Courses. **Only live lectures qualify as CEE courses.**

A course qualifies as Distance Learning/Multimedia if it is presented in any of the following formats:

- Satellite
- Webinar
- Webcast
- Recorded/Written
- Video
- Audio
- DVD/CD
- Podcast
- Written/Correspondence
- Internet/Online

Courses presented for COPE review under any of the Distance Learning/Multimedia formats must comply with the following requirements:

- A. Courses must be at least one hour in duration and must include a post-course test to verify learning.
- B. Post-course tests must be sponsored by an accredited school of optometry, medicine, pharmacy or osteopathy. (See page 10.)
- C. Tests must be in **multiple-choice question (MCQ)** format and should conform to the National Board of Examiners in Optometry's (NBEO) *Item Writer's Manual*.
- D. Post-course tests must require a score of at least 70% in order for a certificate of completion to be issued.
- E. Post-course tests must include at least ten questions for each hour of credit.
- F. The post-course test and answer key must be uploaded with the application materials to COPE.
- G. Tests may accompany a course as part of the delivery mechanism (i.e., an internet-based course may allow test candidates to take the test online; or a correspondence course may include the test in the same publication as the article, etc.)

CONTINUING EDUCATION WITH EXAMINATION (CEE) POLICY

(Formerly known as Transcript Quality (TQ) or Institutional Certified CE.)

Courses presented to COPE for qualification as Continuing Education with Examination (CEE) courses must include a post-course test to verify learning and comply with the following criteria:

- A. Courses must be at least 2 hours in duration; only ‘live’ courses are eligible for CEE credit.
- B. Courses must be sponsored by an accredited school of optometry, medicine, pharmacy or osteopathy; a statement must be provided certifying that the institution will assume responsibility for the related assessment. The name and address of the sponsoring institution must be prominently displayed on the documentation of post-course test results sent to each participant. See sample statement below.
- C. Post-course tests must be in **multiple-choice question (MCQ)** format and should conform to the National Board of Examiners in Optometry’s (NBEO) *Item Writer’s Manual*. Visit www.optometry.org for a copy of the manual, or visit the COPE downloads page to find a link to the manual. In general, multiple-choice questions should incorporate a simple stem that poses a question, or forms an incomplete statement (which is completed by the selected answer), and provides four or five options from which the test candidate will select one answer.
- D. Test candidates must receive a score of at least 70% or better in order for a certificate of completion to be issued.
- E. Tests must include at least (10 questions for each hour of credit. The number of test questions should be rounded up for courses of partial duration (i.e., a 2.5 hour course must provide 30 test questions, etc.).
- F. Instructors who submit CEE courses acknowledge that course attendees are not prepped on test questions or guided on test content areas during course instruction. Furthermore, instructors must make no reference to test questions in the course outline, or in any other course handout.
- G. If the post-course test is given on-site, it must be administered in an atmosphere of educational integrity. If not tested on-site, the test must be mailed directly to the attendee after the completion of the course who must then complete it and return it to the sponsoring school for evaluation. Tests may not be removed from the course site by candidates.
- H. A printed copy of the post-course test and answer key must be included with the course application (confidentiality of any test submitted to COPE will be maintained).

When developing post-course tests, instructors should note the following (this is a brief overview of test preparation and does not replace a thorough review of the NBEO’s *Item Writer’s Manual*):

- The scope of the test should address the material in the course outline and correspond with content areas.
- Item options (answer choices) should be based on prior knowledge or knowledge taught in course.
- Instructors should undertake a simple post-test analysis of the results to determine if there are any flawed items (i.e., items that, due to low or erratic scores, are revealed as ambiguous, confusing or inaccurate) and remove them from future tests. The scoring for a test where items are flawed and removed should be recalibrated accordingly.
- Scores should be expressed as a percentage in all cases.
- Instructors should identify relative importance in course outline, and item distribution should match emphases.

SAMPLE STATEMENT FOR ACCREDITED INSTITUTIONS SPONSORING CONTINUING EDUCATION WITH EXAMINATION (CEE) COURSES

(Printed on Official Letterhead)

December 1, 200X

Council on Optometric Practitioner Education (COPE)
200 South College Street., Suite 1630
Charlotte, NC 28202

This letter confirms that ABC College of Optometry is responsible for the testing and grading of the post-course test for the courses listed below, scheduled for the XYZ Annual Meeting, January 5-6, 200X, in Atlanta, GA. ABC College of Optometry will provide each participant with documentation

Course Title	Instructor(s)
Effective Use of TPAs in Contact Lens Practice	John Smith, OD
Contact Lens Management of Irregular Astigmatism: Video Grand Rounds	Tim Roth, OD Terry Maine, OD
Advanced Contact Lens Applications: Reversed Geometry Lenses	Phil Bartleby, OD

Sincerely,
Emily Provost, O.D.
Dean

WHY DOES COPE REQUIRE A COURSE OUTLINE?

The outline enables course reviewers to evaluate the course content and organization of your presentation and is the most critical component of your application. Course outlines should conform to the following:

- The outline should constitute 1.5—2 pages per hour of presentation.
- The first page of the outline should include each instructor's name, address and phone number or email address and a clearly identified course title.
- The outline should be in sufficient detail so as to permit either the participant or an observer the ability to clearly follow along throughout the presentation. An outline can be considered sufficiently detailed if an observer is able to enter the presentation and after 5-10 minutes be able to identify where the presenter is in the outline. There should be enough detail in the outline such that course participants may use the document as a reference tool subsequent to the lecture.
- General reading references that guide course participants in further exploration of the presentation topic are strongly encouraged.
- If your presentation features a post-course test, the course outline should identify the relative importance of key issues, and test question distribution should match these emphases. However, your outline should not carry direct references to test questions, or similar markers, that inordinately alert course participants to test questions.
- PowerPoint presentations are acceptable as course outlines. However, a sequence of images is not sufficient. Text notes are required and are necessary to permit a participant the ability to follow the presentation and reference it after the conclusion of the course. *A minimum of 10 slides per lecture hour is required.*

SAMPLE COURSE OUTLINE

PRESCRIBING DISTANCE TELESCOPES FOR LOW VISION PATIENTS IN YOUR PRIMARY CARE PRACTICE

Jane Doe, O.D.
123 Main Street
Someplace City, CA 95959
Tel: (700) 555-1212
lowvisiondoctor@123key.com

Course Description:

This course presents a template for the primary care practitioner on how to prescribe basic telescopic devices for low vision patients. Common stock telescopes, data and information needed from the patient are discussed and case histories presented.

Course Learning Objectives:

- To recognize who may benefit from using a telescope.
- To review the principles and types of telescopes.
- To understand how to determine the beginning magnification for a telescope.
- To review the instructional sequence for use of stock telescopes.
- To review the verification of simple stock telescopes.
- To know when to refer for more extensive low vision care.

Outline

- I. Who can benefit from telescopic devices?
 - A. Distance tasks (primary use)
 1. Seeing the chalkboard
 2. Overhead menus at fast food restaurants
 3. Bus signs
 4. Identification of individuals at a distance
 5. Watching plays, movies
 6. Seeing television
 - B. Intermediate tasks (secondary use)
 1. Computer use
 2. Arm's length tasks, e.g. card playing
 3. Seeing countertops
- II. Types of simple telescopes
 - A. Galilean systems
 - B. Keplerian systems

SAMPLE COURSE OUTLINE-*Continued*

Properties of telescopes:

- A. The exit pupil and field of view
- B. The exit pupil and brightness
- C. Determination of the telescope type
- D. Verification of telescopic magnification (exit pupil method)

IV. Prescribing for distance tasks

- A. Determination of proper magnification for specified distance task
- B. Monocular vs. binocular

V. Instruction in the use of telescopic systems for distance tasks

- A. Stationary user and stationary object (spotting)
- B. Stationary user and moving object (tracking)
- C. Moving user and stationary object
- D. Moving user and moving target

V. Case studies

A. A 14 year old male with albinism has nystagmus, is light sensitive and currently wears single vision distance glasses, which he reports only “help a bit.” He cannot read the notes on the blackboard at school. Your refraction is:

R. +4.00 — 2.25 x 180 VA 10/80 L. +3.00 — 3.00 x 170 VA 10/80

1. He does not want to wear “anything that sticks out of his glasses.” He likes to watch soccer matches at the stadium also.
2. What specific tasks does the patient want to do?
3. What are the best corrected acuities?
4. What magnification should you start with?
5. How will the nystagmus affect the use of the telescope?
6. Should he wear his glasses when using the telescope?
7. How will wearing his glasses affect his field of view?
8. What options are available?
9. What about his light sensitivity?

B. A 56 year old retired medical laboratory technician was diagnosed with beginning macular degeneration 7 years ago. She likes to play keno at the casinos but finds it very difficult to see the numbers on the overhead keno boards. She does not wear any glasses for distance and her acuities are: R. 10/40; L. 10/80.

1. What is the task needing to be accomplished?
2. What are her acuities?
3. How will the light in the surrounding area affect the selection of the scope?

C. A 65 year old African American woman with glaucoma has a hard time seeing concerts from her seat in the theater. Best correction and acuities are:

R. +1.00-0.50x095 VA 10/160 L. +0.50-0.50x080 VA 10/200

She has found her 2x opera glasses to be inadequate.

1. Can you help her with this level of vision?
2. How would her glaucoma medications affect her using a telescope?
3. What is the disadvantage of giving her a high powered system?

D. A 69 year old man with significant cataracts does not want to have cataract surgery. He loves to fly radio controlled model airplanes but is finding it extremely difficult to see the planes in the air. His acuities are not improved with any standard correction. R. 20/100; L. 20/100

1. Does the patient need his hands free?
2. One eye or two?
3. How will a higher powered system affect his ability to track the planes?

E. A friend (with no visual impairment) wants to see his son play football. Many of the games are played at night, but several are during the day as well. He has seen ads for binoculars and is trying to decide whether he should buy a 4x12 binocular; a 6x15 binocular; a 7x50 binocular or a 10x20 “extra wide field” system. Can you give him any advice?

PROVISIONALLY-APPROVED APPLICATIONS

In the event your application is returned with provisional approval, you will be provided an opportunity to modify the application in such a manner that it can be approved. This may include circumstances such as an outline that is not sufficiently detailed, incorrect category selection, etc.

REJECTED APPLICATIONS—APPEAL PROCESS

In the event your application is rejected, there are two steps that may be followed:

1. In writing, request the application be forwarded for a second review by a different reviewer.
2. If the application is rejected a second time, you may, in writing, appeal the decision to the COPE Committee. You should include information on why you feel the application should be approved.

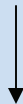
IMPORTANT

The course application review process is anonymous. The reviewer of any specific application for course qualification is never identified to the instructor or submitter of the application.

I·M·P·O·R·T·A·N·T *When is a course considered COPE Accredited?*

A course is considered accredited by COPE after a 3-step process:

1. The course instructor submits a course for COPE qualification on the ARBO website, attaching a course outline, CV, and application fee. The course is reviewed by ARBO and, if it meets COPE's course criteria, is declared a *COPE-Qualified Course*.



COPE Qualified Course

2. A COPE-Approved Administrator/Provider submits an Event for COPE approval on the ARBO website identifying the date and location of an upcoming event (e.g. meeting, conference, etc.) and provides the COPE ID numbers for the courses scheduled for presentation.



COPE Approved Event

3. COPE-Qualified Courses presented at an Event (e.g. meeting, conference, etc.) organized by a COPE-Approved Administrator/Provider are then considered **COPE Accredited** by all participating Boards of Optometry.



COPE Accredited Course

Verification: ARBO posts all relevant COPE-Accredited event and course information on the ARBO website at www.arbo.org, where it is available for participating licensing boards to access. The licensing boards verify credit certificates distributed to course participants against information posted on ARBO's website.

COPE-Qualified Course + COPE-Approved Event = COPE-Accredited Course

SAMPLE COMMERCIAL DISCLOSURE SLIDE

COPE offers this document as a sample for use in disclosing relevant financial relationships. With modification it can be used for lecturers, authors and members of planning committees. The commercial disclosure slide must be at the beginning of each presentation.

NOTE: *COPE CE Instructors are not required or expected to use this document; it only serves as an example of elements that should be included in the disclosure to participants.*

COMMERCIAL DISCLOSURE SLIDE:

- The content of this COPE Accredited CE activity was prepared independently by [INSERT NAME] without input from members of the ophthalmic community.
- The content of this COPE Accredited CE activity was prepared with assistance from [INSERT NAME].
- Disclosure information for instructor:
 - * [INSERT NAME] is affiliated with [INSERT COMMERCIAL INTEREST NAME] as a [INSERT RELATIONSHIP, i.e., consultant, speaker, etc.]
 - * [INSERT NAME] has no direct financial or proprietary interest in any companies, products or services mentioned in this presentation. [OR DISCLOSE DETAILS]
 - * [INSERT NAME] has/has not received commercial support from [INSERT COMMERCIAL INTEREST NAME] in the form of [INSERT].
- Disclosure information for persons(s) assisting instructor with content:
 - * [INSERT NAME OF PERSON WHO ASSISTED] is affiliated with [INSERT COMMERCIAL INTEREST NAME] as a [INSERT RELATIONSHIP, i.e., consultant, speaker, etc.]
 - * [INSERT NAME] has no direct financial or proprietary interest in any companies, products or services mentioned in this presentation. [OR DISCLOSE DETAILS]
 - * [INSERT NAME] has/has not received commercial support from [INSERT COMMERCIAL INTEREST NAME] in the form of [INSERT].
- The content and format of this course is presented without commercial bias and does not claim superiority of any commercial product or service.
OR
- The content and format of this COPE Accredited CE activity may reflect commercial bias and may claim or imply superiority of a particular commercial product or service.

INSTRUCTOR COURSE SUBMISSION ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

If a COPE-Approved Administrator/Provider is submitting a course on behalf of the instructor, the instructor must acknowledge the submission and the Administrator/Provider must attach the signed acknowledgement when submitting the course.

SAMPLE INSTRUCTOR ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I, [INSERT NAME] acknowledge that this course, [INSERT COURSE TITLE], meets all the COPE requirements. I give my approval for [INSERT SUBMITTER NAME of ORGANIZATION NAME] to submit this course for COPE qualification on my behalf.

Instructor Signature and Date

SAMPLE FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE

COPE offers this document as a sample for COPE CE Instructors to use for disclosing financial relationship information. All elements of this form must be included with the course submission. It can also be used by CE Administrators/Providers who submit a course on behalf of an instructor. **NOTE: COPE CE Instructors are not required or expected to use this document; it only serves as an example.**

Disclosure of Relevant Financial Relationships

Name: [INSERT NAME]
 Activity Title: [INSERT COPE ACCREDITED CE ACTIVITY NAME]
 Content of Activity: [INSERT SUMMARY OF CONTENT]
 Date of Activity: [INSERT DATE OF ACTIVITY]

First, list the names of proprietary entities producing health care goods or services, consumed by, or used on patients, with the exemption of non-profit or government organizations and non-health care related companies with which you or your spouse/partner have, or have had, a relevant financial relationship within the past 12 months. For this purpose we consider the relevant financial relationships of your spouse or partner that you are aware of to be yours.

Second, describe what you or your spouse/partner received (ex. Salary, honorarium, etc.). [COPE CE ADMINISTRATOR/PROVIDER NAME] does not want to know how much you received.

Third, describe your role:

Commercial Interest	Nature of Relevant Financial Relationship (include all that apply)	
	What was Received?	For What Role?
Example: Company X	Honorarium	Speaker

I do not have any relevant financial relationships with any commercial interests.

My signature on this document confirms all of the following:

- I have read and will comply with the COPE requirements for course qualification. I further agree to notify COPE in writing should any information provided, including financial/proprietary information, change at any time during the three year qualification period of this course.
- I agree that I will keep my presentation free from commercial interest or bias. I will maintain independent control over the content of my presentation, so that it is balanced, objective, presented with scientific rigor and not be for the purpose of promoting products, equipment, etc. (Therefore, my presentation should not be perceived by attendees as a commercial.) I further agree that I will not change the basic content of my presentation following approval.
- I agree to disclose to the audience the existence of any significant financial/professional relationships with the manufacturer(s) of any commercial product(s) and/or the provider(s) of any commercial service(s) discussed in the educational presentation. (Said relationships can include such things as grant/research support, employment, consulting and/or speakers bureau arrangements, major stock ownership, etc.) I will disclose any of these relationships, whether or not there is direct commercial support for the CE activity. This disclosure is made to provide the audience the information on which they can make judgments as to a presenter's objectivity.
- I agree to disclose the attendees; a) when products or procedures being discussed are off label, unlabeled, experimental, and/or investigational (not FDA approved); b) any limitations on the information that is presented, such as data that are preliminary or that represent ongoing research, interim analyses, and/or unsupported opinion.
- I agree I have an ethical responsibility to make appropriate decisions related to my presentation, and all issues involving financial remuneration. (Considerations in this regard could include kickback schemes or multiple remunerations for a single event.)

Signature : _____

Date: _____

COPE INVESTIGATIVE PROCESS

COPE has a process for investigating complaints about courses or events that do not comply with COPE's policies. The following is a summary of the steps involved in COPE's investigative process.

Submission of Complaints

1. Complaints must be submitted in writing to ARBO within 3 months of the activity prompting the complaint.
2. Complaints can refer to a course and/or an event.
3. To trigger investigation, the complaint must claim non-compliance with an active COPE policy.
4. Complaints must include contact information of the person making the complaint; this information will be protected and confidential, except as may be required by legal process.

Complaint Review

1. When received, ARBO staff will alert the COPE Committee Leadership.
2. Staff and committee designee will determine whether complaint is worthy of investigation and what additional information is required for review.
3. Follow-up correspondence regarding decision will be sent to person who filed complaint.

Investigation Due Diligence and Review

1. Staff will contact the Administrator/Provider requesting copies of all course and event attendee evaluations, and attendee list with contact information.
2. Staff may contact the Administrator/Provider requesting additional information and/or documentation.
3. Staff may contact the Instructor requesting additional information and/or documentation.
4. Staff may contact Course and Event Attendees requesting additional information and/or documentation.
5. Staff may contact Corporate Sponsors requesting additional information and/or documentation.
6. Response from Administrators/Providers and Instructors must be received by ARBO within 30 days of the request.
7. COPE Committee Leadership will review documentation and information submitted.

Investigation Findings and Notice

1. The Instructor and/or Administrator/Provider may be found in compliance or not in compliance for the activity reviewed.
2. Notice will be sent to the Instructor and/or Administrator/Provider with an explanation.
3. Should the Administrator/Provider and/or instructor be found not in compliance, COPE may require the Instructor or Administrator/Provider to submit documentation of corrective action within thirty days of receipt of the notice, or rescind the Instructor or Administrator/Provider's ability to produce COPE courses and events.
4. COPE Committee Leadership will review corrective action documentation to ensure it is adequate to address the issue. If it does not adequately describe or document compliance it will not be accepted.

Investigation Outcomes

1. If the Instructor or Administrator/Provider does not respond within the designated timeframe, their ability to present COPE-accredited courses and events will be rescinded.
2. Documentation of investigations and findings will be maintained in the ARBO office and made available to the COPE Committee and considered should there be additional complaints or future investigations.
3. Once a decision is made, notice of investigation outcomes will be sent to the Instructor or Administrator/Provider within 10 days. Possible outcomes include:
 - a. No violation found.
 - b. Minor violation found such that the Instructor or Administrator/Provider may continue their role with COPE pending an agreement to remediate any concerns/processes.
 - c. Significant violation which may warrant revocation of ability to continue as an Instructor or Administrator/Provider.
4. ARBO reserves the right to provide some information about the COPE Investigation Process to State/Jurisdiction Licensing Boards which may include, but is not limited to, the facts and circumstances involved in the complaint and investigation, the name of the Instructor and/or Administrator/Provider involved, the names of the commercial supporters, and the findings.

Appeal Process

1. If you disagree with the findings of the COPE Committee's investigation, you may, in writing, appeal the decision and request a review of the information by the COPE Peer Review Committee. You should include information on why you feel you should be able to continue as a COPE Instructor or Administrator/Provider.
2. If you disagree with the findings of the Peer Review Committee, you may, in writing, appeal the decision to the ARBO Board of Directors. You should include information on why you feel you should be able to continue as a COPE Instructor or Administrator/Provider.

GLOSSARY OF COPE TERMS

ARBO

The Association of Regulatory Boards of Optometry (ARBO) is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit association of regulatory boards of optometry. ARBO's mission is to represent and assist member licensing agencies in regulating the practice of optometry for the public welfare. ARBO created COPE in 1995 as a service to its member boards; COPE is entirely administered from ARBO's administrative offices.

Commercial Interest

A commercial interest is any entity producing, marketing, re-selling, or distributing health care goods or services consumed by, or used on, patients. Providers of clinical service directly to patients are not considered commercial interest. A commercial interest is not eligible to become an approved COPE Administrator/Provider and cannot control the educational content for COPE Approved CE. Under this definition, the following types of organizations are eligible for become approved COPE Administrators/Providers and free to control the content of COPE Approved CE:

- 501C Non-profit organizations (Note: 501C organizations are screened for eligibility. Those that advocate for commercial interests as a 501C organization are not eligible to become COPE Approved Administrators/Providers. They cannot serve in the role of joint sponsor, but can be a commercial supporter.)
- Government organizations
- Non-health care related companies
- Liability insurance providers
- Health insurance providers
- Group optometric or medical practices
- For-profit hospitals
- For-profit rehabilitation centers
- For-profit nursing homes
- Blood banks
- Diagnostic laboratories

Conflict of Interest

Circumstances create a conflict of interest when an individual has an opportunity to affect CE content about products or services of a commercial interest with which he/she has a financial relationship.

COPE considers 'CE content about products or services of a commercial interest' to include content about specific agents/devices, but not necessarily about the class of agents/devices, and not necessarily content about the whole disease class in which those agents/devices are used.

COPE

The Council on Optometric Practitioner Education (COPE), a member benefit and program of the Association of Regulatory Boards of Optometry (ARBO). The mission of COPE is to:

- accredit continuing optometric education courses on behalf of state boards on a national basis;
- reduce duplication of effort by state boards;
- create a uniform method of recording continuing education courses on a national basis;
- be the clearinghouse for information about continuing education programs and courses utilized by licensed optometrists to fulfill their continuing education requirements for license renewal; and
- encourage program sponsors to offer high quality CE in appropriate settings with adequate administrative structure

COPE Accredited CE

Continuing education activities that consist of COPE Qualified Courses produced and delivered by COPE Approved Administrators/Providers within COPE Qualified Events.

COPE Approved Administrator/Provider

The organization, group, or entity assuming overall responsibility for program planning, promotion, on-site administration, and financial management of CE events. CE Administrators/Providers must submit an application, agree to abide by COPE rules and regulations and meet specific requirements to become COPE Approved Administrators/Providers.

GLOSSARY OF COPE TERMS...continued

COPE Qualified Course

Courses meeting the requirements of COPE as determined by the COPE Reviewer Process. Qualification of courses is awarded for a term of three (3) years from the date the statement of qualification is issued by COPE. Renewal of Qualification must occur prior to the conclusion of the qualification period. Courses which are designated COPE Qualified have not met full accreditation until given at a COPE Approved Event. Only when a Course is fully accredited will there be guaranteed acceptance to participating licensing boards as CE for maintenance of licensure.

COPE Approved Event

Events produced by COPE Approved Administrators/Providers meeting the requirements of COPE as determined by the COPE Event Review Process. COPE Approved Events must be submitted for COPE Qualified Courses to be accredited by COPE.

Corporate Supporter

Any proprietary entity providing educational grants to CE Administrators/Providers.

Course

A structured, educational event specifically designed to impart new knowledge, shared experiences or factual evidence, which is used maintain the level of optometric competence consistent with the statutory requirements of a given state law defining optometry.

Course Category

Each *COPE Qualified Course* is categorized into a generalized content areas developed by COPE to meet the CE requirements for practitioner re-licensure of participating boards of optometry. The instructor, according to the major emphasis of the course content, categorizes each course. Courses may be reallocated to a different content area by COPE during the review process, or at any point subsequent to its acceptance. All COPE Accredited Courses appearing in promotional materials or programs must carry the COPE logo, course ID#, course category and event ID#. The same information must also appear on the documentation provided to course attendees for boards of optometry to use when verifying CE credit for license renewal.

Course Demographics

Key course information critical to the categorization, processing, and review of a course submitted to COPE. Much of this information is entered into a database and is made available to state boards of optometry (attendance and course authentication), program administrators/providers (future program planning), and general practitioners (future CE program attendance planning).

Course Description

This is a brief statement of what the instructor(s) intends to present. It is a thumbnail sketch summarizing the course in 35 words or less, which is suitable for publishing.

Course Format

The method used to physically teach a course (i.e., Live, Video, Audio, DVD/CD-ROM, Satellite, Written, or Internet/Online).

Course Number

Each course is given a unique identification number when it becomes COPE Qualified. If the course is discontinued after Qualification for any reason, the number is not used for another course. The number consists of up to five digits followed by two letters, which indicates the content area for the course, i.e., 5344-PH, where 'PH' indicates the course content area as Pharmacology. When such a Qualified course becomes COPE Accredited, (i.e., it is being presented by a COPE Approved Administrator/Provider within a COPE Qualified Event), this number can be used in promotional materials (with the COPE symbol) for reference purposes. All documentation provided to a doctor for submission to a licensing board, such as a certificate of attendance slip, must include both the COPE Course and Event Numbers. This is necessary as state boards require the numbers when the course documentation is submitted to authenticate the course with COPE records; only then will states award CE credit for license renewal.

Course Outline

A Course Outline is a basic guide to the key learning elements contained in a course. Usually laid out in bullet format, a Course Outline should be in sufficient detail so as to permit either the participant or an observer the ability to clearly follow along throughout the presentation. An outline can be considered sufficiently detailed if an observer is able to enter the presentation and after 5 or 10 minutes be able to locate where in the outline the presenter is. As a rough guide, a 1-½ to 2 page outline is typical for a one-hour course.

Course Presentation

The method used to present the information in a course, (i.e., Lecture, Interactive/Workshop, Panel, Symposia/Scientific Lectures, Grand Rounds, Correspondence, Poster, or Internet/Online). More than one presentation method can be used in a course.

Credit Hour

One (1) hour of CE credit is based on 50 minutes of instructional time. COPE only accepts for review courses of at least one (1) in duration. Additional increments of credit are in 0.5 hours, where 0.5 hour of credit is based on 25 minutes of instructional time. For example, 1.5 hours of credit = a minimum of 75 minutes of instruction; 2.0 hours of credit = a minimum of 100 minutes of instruction, etc.

Curriculum Vitae

A CV is a detailed chronological history of a person's educational and teaching experience, and professional accomplishments which qualifies the instructor to teach the course (not a biographical sketch).

Event Number

Each event is given a unique identification number when it becomes COPE Approved. If the event is discontinued after qualification for any reason, the number is not used for another course. All documentation provided to a doctor for submission to a licensing board, such as a certificate of attendance slip, must include both the COPE Course and Event Numbers.

Instructors

1. **Instructor.** The person (or persons) who actually teach the course, and who assumes responsibility for the educational content and method of presentation of the course.
2. **Principal Instructor.** The principal instructor is considered by COPE as the key individual identified with the course, and is the individual who submits the course material to COPE for review and receives all correspondence regarding its disposition. With the exception of courses categorized as Practice Management, Principal Instructors must hold a minimum of a doctorate-level degree (O.D., M.D., Ph.D., D.O., J.D., D.D.S., D.C., Pharm.D., LL.D., D., Ed., D.Sc., etc.) or its international equivalent.
3. **Co-Instructor.** A co-instructor is an individual who, in conjunction with a principal instructor, may assist and participate in the presentation of a course, but also has the necessary qualifications to give the course independently of the principal instructor should the principal instructor be unavailable due to extenuating circumstances.
4. **Adjunct Instructor.** An Adjunct Instructor is an individual whose main function is to support the Principal Instructor with the presentation or preparation of a course. An Adjunct Instructor may assist with the presentation of a course, however, the Principal Instructor must be responsible for presenting the majority of the course and an Adjunct Instructor cannot, under any circumstance, present a course in the absence of, the Principal Instructor.

Open Access

COPE Accredited CE must be open to all optometrists. COPE Approved Administrators must ensure this by the following:

- No efforts shall be made to exclude any learners.
- Commercial interests cannot invite or select learners, or generate invitation lists.
- Public notice of COPE Approved Events is required.
- If attendance is limited by space requirements, this must be included in all invitations and public notices, with a first come, first served policy.
- Non-members or affiliated parties of a COPE Approved Administrator/Provider must be able to attend the COPE Accredited CE event. Administrators/Providers may adjust the registration fees in a reasonable manner to accommodate them.

Relevant Financial Relationships

Financial relationships are those relationships in which the individual benefits by receiving a salary, royalty, intellectual property rights, consulting fee, honoraria, ownership interest (e.g. stocks, stock options or other ownership interest excluding diversified mutual funds), or other financial benefit. Financial benefits are usually associated with roles such as employment, management position, independent contractor (including contracted research), consulting, speaking and teaching, membership of advisory committees or review panels, board membership, and other activities from which remuneration is received or expected. COPE considers relationships of the person involved in the CE activity to include financial relationships of a spouse or partner.

With respect to personal financial relationships, ‘contracted research’ includes research funding where the institution gets the grant and manages the funds and the person is the principal or named investigator on the grant.

With respect to financial relationships with commercial interests, when a person divests themselves of a relationship it is immediately not relevant to conflicts of interest but it must be disclosed to the learners for 12 months.

Reviewer

A COPE recognized and state board-endorsed optometrist or a faculty at an optometric school or college who has volunteered to review courses for qualification and has completed the COPE Reviewer Training Modules successfully. Reviewers serve indefinitely but must periodically re-certify to continue as a COPE Reviewer. They are not compensated for their service. Reviewers are required to examine in detail the course materials submitted to COPE, determine if it is in compliance with the *Criteria for Course Qualification*, and, where necessary, provide appropriate guidance for modification or adjustment.

Urgent Course Approval

The standard processing time for course processing is 30 days upon receipt at the COPE office. An additional fee is required for courses submitted under the 30-day requirement, with a request for urgent processing. In any event no course will be accepted with request for review in less than 14 days.

COPE STANDARDS FOR COMMERCIAL SUPPORT

Standard 1: Independence

COPE Accredited CE must be identified, developed and presented free from the control of a commercial interest.

1. A “commercial interest” is defined as any proprietary entity producing, marketing, re-selling, or distributing health care goods or services consumed by, or used on, patients. Providers of clinical service directly to patients are not considered commercial interest. Non-profit or government organizations and non-health care related companies are not considered commercial interests.
2. COPE Approved Administrators/Providers must ensure that any decisions regarding content, format, speaker selection and evaluation are made without any influence from or control of a commercial interest. COPE Approved Administrators/Providers should develop curriculum based on identification of CE needs with determination of educational objectives.
3. Instructors of COPE Accredited CE must develop course material and information independent from any influence from commercial interest.
4. Under no circumstances can a commercial interest produce or deliver COPE Accredited CE or take the role of non-accredited partner in a joint sponsorship relationship.

Standard 2: Resolution of Personal Conflicts of Interest

Every person in a position to impact the content of COPE Accredited CE must disclose all relevant financial relationships to the COPE Approved Administrator/Provider and to the Learners.

1. The COPE Approved Administrator/Provider must be able to show that everyone who is in a position to control the content of an educational activity has disclosed all relevant financial relationships with any commercial interest.
2. Relevant financial relationships are financial relationships in any amount occurring within the past 12 months that create a conflict of interest.
3. An individual who refuses to disclose relevant financial relationships will be disqualified from being a planning committee member, a COPE Accredited CE instructor or an author of CE, and cannot have control of, or responsibility for, the development, management, presentation or evaluation of the COPE Accredited CE.
4. COPE Approved Administrators/Providers must have implemented a mechanism to identify and resolve all conflicts of interest prior to the education activity being delivered to the learners.

Standard 3: Appropriate Use of Commercial Support

In order for a CE event to be COPE accredited, all commercial support must be in the form of an educational grant or letter of agreement between the COPE Approved Administrator/Provider and the Corporate Supporter.

1. The COPE Approved Administrator/Provider must make all decisions regarding the disposition and disbursement of commercial support.
2. The COPE Approved Administrator/Provider cannot be required by a commercial interest to accept advice or services concerning instructors, authors, or participants, evaluation methods or other education matters, including content, from a commercial interest as conditions of contributing funds or services.
3. All commercial support associated with COPE Accredited CE must be given with the full knowledge and approval of the COPE Approved Administrator/Provider.
4. The terms, conditions, and purposes of the commercial support must be documented in a written agreement, such as a letter of agreement or educational grant, between the commercial supporter that includes the COPE Accredited Administrator/Provider and its educational partner(s). The agreement must include the COPE Accredited Administrator/Provider, even if the support is given directly to the COPE Accredited Administrator's/Provider's educational partner or a joint sponsor.
5. The written agreement must specify the commercial interest that is the source of commercial support.
6. Both the commercial supporter and the COPE Accredited Administrator/Provider must sign the written agreement between the commercial supporter and the COPE Accredited Administrator/Provider. (Electronic signature is acceptable.)
7. The COPE Approved Administrator/Provider must have written policies and procedures governing honoraria and reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses for planners and instructors.
8. The COPE Approved Administrator/Provider, the joint sponsor, or designated educational partner must pay directly any instructor honoraria or reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses in compliance with the COPE Approved Administrator's/Provider's written policies and procedures.

9. No other payment shall be given to the director of the activity, planning committee members, instructors or authors, joint sponsor, or any others involved with the supported activity.
10. If instructors are listed on the agenda as facilitating or conducting a presentation or session, but participate in the remainder of the COPE Accredited CE as a learner, their expenses can be reimbursed and honoraria can be paid for their instructor role only.
11. Social events or meals at COPE Accredited CE events cannot compete with or take precedence over the educational courses.
12. The COPE Approved Administrator/Provider may not use commercial support to pay for travel, lodging, honoraria, or personal expenses for non-instructor participants of a COPE accredited event. The COPE Approved Administrator/Provider may use commercial support to pay for travel, lodging, honoraria, or personal expenses for bona fide employees and volunteers of the COPE Approved Administrator/Provider, joint sponsor or educational partner.
13. In the event of an audit, the COPE Approved Administrator/Provider must be able to produce accurate documentation, if requested, detailing the receipt and expenditure of the commercial support.
14. All financial support must be directed through the COPE Approved Administrator/Provider; under no circumstances can the supporter provide any person with influence over the content of the COPE accredited course or event with any financial incentives or direct reimbursement.

Standard 4: Appropriate Management of Associated Commercial Promotion

There must be a clear separation of any type of product, service, and instrument or device promotion with COPE Accredited Courses. These activities, such as commercial exhibits and advertisements must be physically separated from and not interfere with COPE Accredited Courses.

1. Arrangements for commercial exhibits or advertisements cannot influence planning or interfere with the presentation, nor can they be a condition of the provision of commercial support for COPE Accredited CE.
2. Product-promotion material or product-specific advertisement of any type is prohibited in or during COPE Accredited Courses. The juxtaposition of editorial and advertising material on the same products or subjects must be avoided. Live (staffed exhibits, presentations) or enduring (printed or electronic advertisements) promotional activities must be kept separate from COPE Accredited Courses.
 - a. For print, advertisements and promotional materials will not be interleaved within the pages of the CE content. Advertisements and promotional materials may face the first or last pages of printed CE content as long as these materials are not related to the CE content they face and are not paid for by the commercial supporters of the COPE Accredited CE.
 - b. For computer based, advertisements and promotional materials will not be visible on the screen at the same time as the CE content and not interleaved between computer 'windows' or screens of the CE content.
 - c. For audio and video recording, advertisements and promotional materials will not be included within the CE. There will be no 'commercial breaks.'
 - d. For live, face-to-face CE, advertisements and promotional materials cannot be displayed or distributed in the educational space immediately before, during or after a CE event. COPE Approved Administrators/Providers cannot allow representatives of commercial interests to engage in sales or promotional activities while in the space or place of the CE course.
3. Educational materials that are a part of COPE Accredited CE, such as slides, abstracts and handouts, cannot contain any advertising or product-group message.
4. Print or electronic information distributed about the non-CE elements of a COPE Approved Event that are not directly related to the transfer of education to the learner, such as schedules and content descriptions, may include product-promotion material or product-specific advertisement .
5. COPE Approved Administrators/Providers cannot use a commercial interest as the agent providing COPE Accredited CE to learners, e.g., distribution of self-study CE activities or arranging for electronic access to COPE Accredited Courses .

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Standard 5: Content and Format without Commercial Bias

All COPE Accredited Courses cannot deliver specific proprietary business interests and must give balanced coverage to treatment options.

1. The content or format of a COPE Accredited Course or its related materials must promote improvements or quality in healthcare and not a specific proprietary business interest of a commercial interest.
2. Presentations must give a balanced view of therapeutic options. Use of generic names will contribute to this impartiality. If the COPE Accredited Course includes trade names, where available, trade names from several companies should be used, not just trade names from a single company.
3. Instructors may have assistance in the development of a course, including the creation of handouts, slides and objectives, though not from a commercial interest. Any ghostwriting activity must be included in the disclosure to the CE Administrator/Provider and learners .

Standard 6: Disclosures Relevant to Potential Commercial Bias

To maintain transparency, financial relationships with commercial interests of any persons in a position to impact or control the educational content must be disclosed to the learners. This includes instructors and planning committee members.

1. An individual must disclose to learners any relevant financial relationship(s), to include the following information:
 - a. The name of the individual;
 - b. The name of the commercial interest(s); and,
 - c. The nature of the relationship the person has with each commercial interest.
2. For an individual with no relevant financial relationship(s) the learners must be informed that no relevant financial relationship(s) exist.
3. Instructors must disclose ghostwriting activities .
4. The source of all support from commercial interests must be disclosed to learners. When commercial support is ‘in kind’ the nature of the support must be disclosed to learners.
5. ‘Disclosure’ must never include the use of a trade name or product-group message.
6. COPE Approved Administrators/Providers must disclose the above information to learners prior to the beginning of the educational activity.