COPE issued a call for public comment regarding changes to COPE policies in October 2014. There were 88 responses to the call for comment. COPE would like to thank those who commented. The COPE Committee reviewed the responses at their March 1, 2015 meeting and made recommendations to the ARBO Board of Directors who approved the following changes at their April 11, 2015 Board meeting. The COPE policy changes will be reported to the ARBO’s Member Boards at the ARBO Annual Meeting June 21-23, 2015. The changes will be effective July 1, 2015.

I. **Instructor Qualification** – The policy for instructor qualification will be amended to include non-doctorate level instructors who have expertise gained through specific training or experience. The expertise will have to be demonstrated in their CV. The CV must provide clear evidence that they are qualified to teach the course.

II. **Distance Learning Policy** – The distance learning policy regarding sponsoring the post-course test will continue to allow schools of medicine, pharmacy and osteopathy to sponsor the test in addition to schools of optometry. The distance learning policy will be modified to specify that the sponsoring school will be responsible for ensuring that the test and answer key are valid and that the grading process is objective. The school must ensure the administration and grading of the test is unbiased, if they are not grading the test themselves. This will allow COPE Administrators to do computer-based testing if the school has reviewed their grading process and can assure that it is not biased.

III. **Credit Hours** – The COPE policy on credit hours will be modified to allow credit to be granted for courses less than one hour in length.
   - 0.25 hours/units, corresponding to 15 minutes of instructional time
   - 0.50 hours/units, corresponding to 25 minutes of instructional time
   - 1.0 hours/units, corresponding to 50 minutes of instructional time

   **NOTE:** Some responses questioned the necessity of a 15-minute course. Courses with smaller increment hours are being utilized in other healthcare professions and by moving forward with smaller increments, COPE is allowing for more creativity in courses. Initially, shorter courses will most likely only be used for distance learning.