The Midwestern University Chicago College of Optometry is constantly striving to search for, develop, and share more resources for our affiliated external site preceptors to help them with both the education of our students and to support their professional growth. From free admission to on-site continuing education, to access to our library materials we will continue to add resources and provide guidance to our affiliated clinics.

The Optometry Education Initiative (www.optometryinitiative.org) is a website that was introduced at the ASCO Externship Directors SIG. This project compiled a collection of challenging (COPE approved) patient case studies designed to provide supplemental education to optometry students and their preceptors. The goal is to reinforce the education students receive in school and test their skills in a safe environment with challenging patient cases covering a variety of ophthalmic diseases and conditions.

Also of note, a particularly helpful item is the Optometry Preceptor Training module (oped.healthcourse.com/cms/node/223230). Current feedback has been very positive from new and experienced preceptors alike. I would encourage any of your clinicians in the office who work with students to complete the module.

Not all externship sites are the same. Not all experiential education sites are set up to have official grand rounds format presentations, research opportunities, and other educational activities that supplement their clinical experiences. To that end, this resource can be used as an educational tool with your students to help guide them and work on their decision-making ability.

As we continue to grow and build our Optometry program, the Midwestern University Chicago College of Optometry will continue to search for and share additional tools that will help you and the students you teach.
Kathleen H. Goeppinger, Ph.D., President and Chief Executive Officer of Midwestern University, announced the promotion of Melissa Suckow, O.D., FAAO, to Dean of the Chicago College of Optometry (CCO). Dr. Suckow joined Midwestern University in 2015 and has served as CCO’s Associate Dean of Academic Affairs.

"Dr. Suckow brings a wealth of experience to her role at Midwestern University," Dr. Goeppinger said. "Shortly after joining the University, she was appointed Chair of the Student Promotion and Graduation Committee, led policy discussions with the faculty, and produced the Uniform Course Policies document that is in use today."

Dr. Suckow earned a Doctor of Optometry degree and completed a residency in pediatric optometry/binocular vision at the New England College of Optometry, where she was then appointed as a full-time Assistant Professor. While there, she served as the Clinical Director at Seamark Vision Clinic and the Cotting School, which serves children with special needs in Massachusetts. After relocating to Illinois, Dr. Suckow served for several years as an optometrist for the Chicago Public Schools’ Health Kids, Healthy Minds Enhanced Vision Program. In 2011, she joined the clinical faculty of the Illinois College of Optometry and was a preceptor for third- and fourth-year students on rotation at the Illinois Eye Institute at Princeton School.

As Dean of the Chicago College of Optometry, Dr. Suckow will provide guidance and leadership for the College, which welcomed its inaugural class in the fall of 2017. CCO students earn a Doctor of Optometry (O.D.) degree following an intensive four-year program where they learn to diagnose, treat, and manage injuries and diseases of the eye and visual system.

Our recently unveiled preclinical laboratory includes a total of 30 examination lanes, two instructor lanes with state of the art audio visual equipment, and three National Board-style testing rooms. Each lane is outfitted with an additional computer monitor connected to the instructor lane to provide students with unparalleled ability to see and hear clinical demonstrations, techniques, and findings. When the instructor lane is not in use, students can utilize the additional computer monitor to display their notes, laboratory instructions, or any other digital media that can assist them while developing their clinical techniques.

NEW LABORATORY SPACES UNVEILED AT CHICAGO COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY

In addition to our preclinic area, CCO students have access to multipurpose optometry laboratory spaces that are used for Geometric Optics and Ophthalmic Optics hands-on instruction. These spaces, where delivery of significant portion of the didactic instruction during the first two professional years occurs, is equipped with technologically advanced audiovisual systems. At CCO, we are truly committed to providing the best educational resources for the success of our students, first during their didactic and clinical training, and in the future as optometrists.