



# AMERICAN OPTOMETRIC ASSOCIATION

## PROPOSED CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS AMENDMENTS

March 17, 2022

TO: Presidents and Secretaries of all  
Affiliated Associations

Pursuant to the provisions of the Constitution and Bylaws of the American Optometric Association, in such cases made and provided, you are hereby notified that one Proposed amendment as herein set forth, will be moved for adoption at the 125<sup>th</sup> Annual Congress of the American Optometric Association at a time to be fixed during the period of June 16 - 18, 2022, in Chicago, Illinois.

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that at the times fixed for special orders of business during the 125<sup>th</sup> Annual Congress, the foregoing proposed amendments will be acted upon as the House of Delegates determines.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steven T. Reed".

Steven T. Reed, O.D.  
Secretary-Treasurer

BY ORDER OF  
the President

**PROPOSED BYLAWS AMENDMENT  
ARTICLE V, COUNCILS**

**Article V, Section 1 shall be revised to read as follows:**

- 1 A. The Accreditation Council on Optometric Education shall be composed of ~~eleven~~thirteen  
2 (~~11~~13) members, ~~nine~~ eleven (~~9~~11) of whom shall be members of this Association. With respect  
3 to the members of the Council who are members of this Association: ~~Three~~ Four (~~3~~4) members  
4 shall be optometrists of outstanding professional experience who are not compensated  
5 administrators, faculty or consultants of, or affiliated with the governance of any school or  
6 college of optometry and who are not members of a state board of optometric examiners; two (2)  
7 shall be members of the Association of Regulatory Boards of Optometry (“ARBO”) at the time  
8 of their initial appointment; two (2) shall be optometrists associated with optometric educational  
9 ~~institutions~~ programs accredited by the Accreditation Council on Optometric Education; ~~one~~ two  
10 (~~1~~2) shall be an optometrists with expertise in optometric residency education, each of whom is  
11 either a graduate of an accredited residency program, director of an accredited residency program  
12 or a faculty member who is teaching in an accredited residency program; and one (1) shall be  
13 associated with an optometric technician program accredited by the Accreditation Council on  
14 Optometric Education or a graduate of such a program. With respect to the members of the  
15 Council who are optometrists, all must be consultants of the Accreditation Council on  
16 Optometric Education in good standing at the time of their initial appointment. The members of  
17 the Council who are not members of this Association shall be public members who meet the  
18 requirements specified by the agencies that formally recognize the Council as an accrediting  
19 body.  
20
- 21 B. All members of the Accreditation Council on Optometric Education shall be appointed by the  
22 president with the consent of the Board of Trustees. The two (2) ARBO members shall be  
23 appointed from a list of four (4) nominees for each appointment submitted to the president by  
24 ARBO, and the two (2) educator-members and the ~~one~~ two (~~1~~2) residency program-related  
25 members shall be appointed from a list of four (4) nominees for each appointment submitted to  
26 the president by the optometric educational ~~institutions~~ programs accredited by the Accreditation  
27 Council on Optometric Education.  
28
- 29 C. The members of the Council shall be appointed for a term of three (3) years. No person shall  
30 serve more than three (3) consecutive three (3) year terms.  
31
- 32 D. In the event of a vacancy on the Accreditation Council on Optometric Education, the  
33 president, with the consent of the Board of Trustees, shall appoint in accordance with the  
34 provisions of subparagraphs A and B of this section, a successor to complete the unexpired  
35 portion of the term of office. If an educator-member ceases to be associated with an accredited  
36 optometric educational ~~institution~~ program, that position on the Accreditation Council on  
37 Optometric Education shall automatically be deemed vacant.

38 E. The Accreditation Council on Optometric Education shall concern itself with the quality of  
 39 optometric and paraoptometric education including, but not limited to, counseling, advising, and  
 40 acting in matters relating to residency programs, the type and amount of educational training,  
 41 admission requirements, curricula, faculty, equipment, and matters of similar nature. It shall have  
 42 the authority to inspect and accredit schools and colleges of optometry, programs of residency  
 43 optometric education, and programs of paraoptometric education.

- The remainder of the Section shall remain as currently written.
- This amendment will take effect immediately upon approval by the House of Delegates

NOTE:           Wording to be deleted ~~lined out~~.  
                   Wording to be added underscored.

### **EXPLANATION:**

#### (1) Increase Number of Council Members

The work of the ACOE is critical – the public and the profession rely on the ACOE to assure the quality of optometric education, State Boards rely on ACOE accreditation as precondition of granting licensure, and professional optometric degree programs and residency programs rely on ACOE accreditation in order to be eligible for federal funding.

The ACOE is reliant on a dedicated group of volunteers willing to commit their time, energy, and expertise to keep the ACOE functioning. The required commitment of ACOE members is significant and continues to increase. Meaningful drivers of the increase include growth in optometric residency programs and significant time commitment associated with reviewing applications from developing programs.

The ACOE currently accredits 256 residency programs; this compares with 141 in the 2008-2009 residency year, a 182% increase over that period. Every visit to a residency program involves assignment of an OD Council member as a liaison; the liaison must prepare as if he/she were a site visit team member and present the report to Council.

Within the past year (October 2020-October 2021), the Council has dedicated 10 agenda times to address developing OD programs; some submissions were in excess of 2,200 pages in length, consuming countless hours of preparation and Council deliberation time.

The ACOE staff developed a conservative model representing the average time commitment per member associated with Council membership. With two additional members, the per member annual ‘savings’ in workload is estimated at approximately 25 hours. Additional members above two provide diminishing returns.

From a financial perspective, the ACOE Fee increases previously approved, and which are anticipated to enable the ACOE to be self-funding within three years, incorporated the costs associated with the addition of two Council members.

The recommendation to add one (1) practitioner and one (1) educator is to assure balance of perspectives on Council.

(2) Change Wording from “Institution” to “Program”

Another embedded recommendation changes verbiage of “institution” to “program.” The ACOE is a considered a programmatic accreditor and any implication that the ACOE accredits institutions is inaccurate and does not align with the scope of the ACOE’s recognition from the United States Department of Education.

(3) Requirement that Council Members be Active Consultants with ACOE at the Time of Their Appointment.

The ACOE’s active consultant pool currently includes over 340 individuals, and the ACOE’s ongoing training program assures qualified individuals with interest in serving the ACOE are afforded the opportunity to undergo the ACOE’s training program and be assigned to support accreditation site visits. The recommendation is to require new optometrist members of the Council to be chosen from among the pool of active, trained ACOE consultants, who are in good standing at the time of their appointment.

Submitted by: Board of Trustees