We have over 100 externship sites around the world. Students do not have to spend all their time in St. Louis; you may choose to remain in the greater St. Louis area. You are allowed to establish/create one “elective” rotation on your own with the approval of the Director of Externships.

You will do six 8-week rotations (two in the summer, two in the fall, and two in the spring) of your fourth year. These six rotations allow you to learn from six different doctors in various practice settings. Our externship curriculum requires the following rotations types:

- UMSL (see note 1),
- “Intern” (see note 2)
- Ocular Disease (pathology and disease management)
- Multi-disciplinary/Institutional (often at hospitals, or other similar locations)
- Two specialty practices (one may be your elective site; see note 3).

NOTE 1: UMSL rotation consists of three parts: 1) contact lenses, 2) pediatrics/binocular vision, when students take our mobile examination vehicle to provide eyecare to area school children at their schools, and 3) ocular disease management. If you are allowed to opt-out of this rotation (weaker students may not be able to opt out of this rotation, allowing our faculty to do some remediation of your clinical skills early in your fourth year), you must replace this with an approved Contact Lens rotation and an approved Peds/BV site. While this may take place in St. Louis or Missouri, there are several practices outside our state in which this has been approved (see Australia, FL, CA for example).

NOTE 2: The “Intern” site is the only rotation which you may not opt-out of completing. This rotation allows our faculty a chance to grade you as a fourth year clinician. We have several locations in St. Louis you can choose from, including a “Community Services” rotation in which you will provide eye and vision care to underserved St. Louis area residents.

NOTE 3: Our specialty locations include contact lenses, pediatrics/binocular vision, geriatrics, low vision, ocular disease/pathology management and treatment, surgical care (pre- and post-surgical), rehabilitation, sports vision, and family practice/primary care.