

# ND ACADEMIC INFORMATION

## ND Academic Overview

The Doctor of Naturopathic Medicine Program at Sonoran University is a cohort-based program that follows a prescribed track. All academic credit is computed in quarter hours (see Credit Equivalence section below). All students are guided by the curriculum as outlined in their prescribed program of study. Students are pre-registered for core courses, including labs and clinical clerkships. Students may not deviate from their prescribed program of study. Sonoran University reserves the right to make curriculum changes that are applicable to all students, if necessary.

Students are admitted to either a 4- or 5-year track program. The 4-year track offers students a traditional path to graduation. The 5-year track offers support for students who may want more time to complete the basic and pre-clinical sciences by distributing the first year of basic sciences and pre-clinical medicine courses across two years. The remaining 3 years of both the 4- and 5-year tracks of the ND curriculum are the same. Students who are not making satisfactory academic progress on the 4-year track may be transitioned into the 5-year track. Students cannot move to the 5-year track after completion of year 1 of the 4-year track. In addition, students cannot move back to the 4-year track after starting the 5-year track without approval from the Academic Policy and Progress Committee (APPC) (<https://catalog.sonoran.edu/catalog/university-policies/enrollment-policies/>).

If a student stays on track with the program, taking all courses as they are offered in sequence, students can expect to graduate within 15 consecutive quarters, or four calendar years, if on the 4-year track (or 19 consecutive quarters, or five calendar years, if on the 5-year track). After matriculation, approval by APPC is required for track changes. For a detailed list of required courses, see the Doctor of Naturopathic Medicine Program of Study (<https://catalog.sonoran.edu/catalog/doctor-naturopathic-medicine-program/programs-study/>).

## Academic Coursework

The Doctor of Naturopathic Medicine program has been developed to ensure that students have the opportunity to build a strong foundation and to demonstrate competency in each major naturopathic modality, including acupuncture and Chinese medicine, botanical medicine, homeopathy, mind-body medicine, physical medicine, environmental medicine, pharmacology, and nutrition. Laboratory courses include dissection of cadavers, physical exams, palpation, manipulation, acupuncture, hydrotherapy, microbiology, histology, preparation of herbal medicines, and the use of simulation models. Didactic courses include traditional and adult learning classroom teaching methods, group projects, and experiential coursework.

## Selectives

Sonoran University offers selectives, or required electives, in the naturopathic medical degree program as part of the core curriculum. Selectives are advertised prior to registration, and an enrollment of ten students is required before most selectives will be offered, see Adding and Dropping Courses (<https://catalog.sonoran.edu/catalog/university-policies/registration-policies/>). Students will register for selectives online during the published registration timeframe. For a list of potential selectives, please see the Selective Course Descriptions (<https://catalog.sonoran.edu/>

[catalog/doctor-naturopathic-medicine-program/course-descriptions/#selectivestext](#)).

## Course Format and Requirements

The Doctor of Naturopathic Medicine program consists of 246.5 didactic credits (2,831.5 didactic contact hours) and 43.5 clinical credits (1,578.5 clinical contact hours). The format of the program is primarily on campus. Full-time enrollment is defined as being enrolled for a minimum of 12 credits. Part-time enrollment is defined as being enrolled for a minimum of 6 credits but less than 12 credits.

## Credit Equivalence

Courses are reported in quarter credit hours according to the following values:

- Didactic: 1 credit = 11 contact hours per quarter
- Laboratory: 1 credit = 11 contact hours per quarter
- Clinical Clerkships: 1 credit = 11 contact hours per quarter

## Honors Tracks

The Honors Tracks are the first of their kind in the field of Naturopathic Medical Education. These competitive year-long focused areas of clinical study increase students' knowledge, skills, confidence, and post-graduate opportunities. All Honors Tracks have core learning components, additional selective scholarship, and experiential components. Each Honors Track has its own specific proficiencies and patient contact requirements. In addition, all Honors Track students take a year-long advanced topic selective in their area of study, where they learn to critically appraise evidence-based medical research under the guidance of faculty mentors. To be considered for Honors Tracks, students must apply after entering the clinical training component of their program and have a student record free of any academic dishonesty warnings and/or Code of Conduct violations of any kind. Successful completion of an Honors Track is recognized with a certificate, notation on the student's transcript, and at graduation.

## ND Program Learning Outcomes

Students are expected to demonstrate the following knowledge, skills, and attitudes upon completion of the Doctor of Naturopathic Medicine program:

1. A commitment to the principles of naturopathic medicine
2. Knowledge of basic medical sciences
3. Clinical knowledge, skills, and attitudes in the care and treatment of patients:
  - a. Diagnose health conditions based on the collection, analysis, and interpretation of patient data
  - b. Develop treatment plans and management strategies for health conditions utilizing therapeutic modalities
  - c. Devise strategies for disease prevention and wellness for self and for patients
4. A commitment to ethics and professionalism:
  - a. Demonstrate the ability to achieve professional success
  - b. Demonstrate professional honesty and integrity
5. Skills for scholarship and lifelong learning

## Learning Support

### Basic Sciences Skill Development

The Basic Sciences Skill Development (BSSD) courses (BSSD 5014 and BSSD 5024) include small-group remediation with integrating content from all basic science subject areas. Content specific to the attending students will be integrated throughout the quarter, including collaboration with didactic faculty, DDC tutors, and the Learning Specialist. Students who do not pass one or more Anatomy, Biochemistry, or Physiology courses will be required to complete the corresponding BSSD course. Attendance of all weeks is mandatory and will be recorded. Students at risk of not passing Anatomy, Biochemistry, or Physiology may be referred to BSSD or required to complete other remediation plans.

### Directed Skill Development Laboratory

The Directed Skill Development Laboratory (DSDL) supports and advances Sonoran University students' safe and effective clinical skills development through directed laboratory learning experiences. The DSDL supports the development of the professional standards necessary for students to become competent and effective naturopathic physicians. The DSDL laboratories are usually conducted outside of regularly scheduled classroom and laboratory periods.

Students are only allowed to participate in active skill development in the modalities for which they have successfully passed the specific course(s) and laboratory(ies) related to each specific modality. Modalities include osseous manipulation, acupuncture needling, infusion, injection, and phlebotomy. Students are expected to sign into and out of the DSDL and to complete appropriate liability waiver forms. As they become eligible, all Sonoran University students are encouraged to take advantage of the DSDL.

### Clinical Skills Development Lab

The Clinical Skills Development Lab (CSDL) is offered to students to support and advance clinical skills development in conjunction with physical diagnosis, clinical assessment, and clinical sciences courses. Before entering the clinic, students can develop and practice their clinical skills in the CSDL using simulation models representing numerous body systems, including pulmonary, cardiac, genitourinary, gynecology, and pediatrics. The lab offers an opportunity for faculty to refer students for remediation or additional practice in developing specific clinical skills. The CSDL is conducted outside regularly scheduled classroom hours.

### Clinical Skills Development Session

The Clinical Skills Development Session (CSDS) course is designed to develop clinical students in case-taking, case analysis, charting, differential diagnosis, diagnostic work-up, treatment plan, and patient interaction. The CSDS also allows students to prepare for the clinical milestone exams, an opportunity for clinical faculty to refer students for remediation. Students may opt to self-enroll in CSDS and should contact the Clinical Coordinator for more information.

### Learning Skills Development Session

The Learning Skills Development Session (LSDS) is offered to students to support and enhance academic performance and professional development at Sonoran University. Students work with a Learning Specialist to identify areas of needed support and participate in individual or group sessions to learn, practice, and integrate new strategies into their learning process. Although individual needs are identified, common areas addressed are time management, test anxiety, test performance, study skills, study/NPLEX planning, and professionalism. LSDS is open to all

students by appointment or walk-in. However, students may be referred by faculty, staff, or administration when a need is identified, including failure of course exam(s).

## Post-graduate Medical Education Program

Post-graduate medical education (PGME), also known as Residency, is an important part of graduates training. These programs train future leaders of the profession and offer graduates the opportunity to gain a wide range of clinical experiences. Sonoran University oversees PGME programs both onsite and at external private clinics. Recognized as a PMGE sponsor by the Council on Naturopathic Medical Education (CNME), Sonoran staff ensure that all residency programs adhere to the standards set forth by the council.

The Association of Accredited Naturopathic Medical Colleges (<https://aanmc.org/naturopathic-residencies/>) oversees the application and placement of residents. To be eligible for a residency position, a naturopathic physician must have graduated from a CNME-approved program and be licensed to practice medicine in that state. Upon completion of any of Sonoran University's PGME programs, resident graduates will receive a certificate of completion from the CNME.