

ND PROGRAM POLICIES

Clinical Education Experience

Clinical experience begins in the first year and continues throughout the program. These experiences include an introduction to clinical practice, clinical practice skills lab, field observation, laboratory posts, medicinary posts, specialty clinics, clinical milestone exams, and clinical clerkships. As students progress through the program, they increasingly gain clinical knowledge and more advanced clinical skills. Students begin their clinical experience in an observational role and then work with standardized patients during clinical practice skills labs and in clinical milestone exams. As they progress through their clinical training and demonstrate competence, they assume a more active role in patient care under the direct supervision of a licensed physician.

Students complete a total of 1,232 contact hours (112 credits) in clinical training, which exceeds the standards set by the CNME. In Sonoran University's clinical experience curriculum, no more than 4 credits may be in field observation. Of the 108 credits of direct patient care, no more than 20 credits may be completed at elective off-site locations. Supervising physicians must hold an active license in the United States or Canada. For a description of the various clinical clerkships and posts, please contact the Off-site Clinical Experience Coordinator. Students are expected to follow current clinical policies and procedures outlined in Sonoran University's Clinical Handbook. This includes maintaining a current CPR certification, TB screening, Hepatitis B information, fingerprint clearance card, and any other health-related information. For more information, see Sonoran University's Clinical Handbook (https://my.scnm.edu/ICS/Campus_Life/Campus_Publications/) and the ND Graduation Requirements (p. 3) tab on this page.

Clinical Graduation Requirements

To complete clinical training and meet graduation requirements for the Doctor of Naturopathic Medicine program of study, a student must:

- Complete 108 credits of clinical clerkships, 4 credits of field observation, 1 credit of lab post, and 1 credit of medicinary/IV post, for a total of 114 credits
- Have 500 patient contacts (at least 225 in a primary capacity), of which 45 can be a simulated encounter, and 56 can be a telemedicine encounter
- Complete the student clinical competencies
- Complete and pass the Clinical Milestone Exams

Clinical Examinations

Students must complete all Clinical Examinations (including the Clinical Practical Exam, Clinic Entry Exam, Objective Structured Clinical Examination, and CLPR Practical Exams) on the dates determined by the Division Director of Clinical Education. These are non-negotiable dates and times. Students granted an excused absence by the course instructor for the original scheduled date/time of the exam will be offered the opportunity to take the exam on the scheduled make-up exam date. See the Clinical Exam Calendar (<https://catalog.sonoran.edu/catalog/doctor-naturopathic-medicine-program/academic-information/#clinicaexamcalendartext>) for dates and additional information. Students who are provided an excused absence for the OSCE exam will be allowed to sit for the missed attempt on the make-up exam date. No additional dates for make-up exams will be provided.

Eligibility for Clinical Clerkships

To be eligible to participate in the Introduction to Clinical Clerkship course (CLTR 7025), students must:

1. Complete all courses in quarter 7 of the academic program (quarter 11 of 5-year track)
2. Provide a current copy of a CPR card, Hepatitis B information, TB screening, MMR information, fingerprint clearance card, and other required health information
3. Pass a mandatory drug test

To be eligible to participate in the Doctor of Naturopathic Medicine clinical training program (CLTR 8000 courses), students must:

1. Complete their 2nd year of academic program (3rd year for 5-year track)
2. Pass the Clinic Entry Exam
3. Take NPLEX I and comply with the existing NPLEX policy
4. Provide a current copy of a CPR card, Hepatitis B information, TB screening, MMR information, fingerprint clearance card, and other required health information
5. Pass a mandatory drug test

All Doctor of Naturopathic Medicine (ND) students, including transfer students, must meet these requirements. Previous enrollment in a clinical training program at another naturopathic college or other medical college does not allow the student to enter Sonoran University's clinical training program without meeting all the above requirements. For additional details/requirements, please refer to the Clinical Handbook (https://my.sonoran.edu/ICS/Campus_Life/Campus_Publications/) available on MySonoran.

Elective Off-Sites

To be eligible to participate in the Doctor of Naturopathic Medicine Elective Off-Site Program at Sonoran University, students must:

1. Meet the eligibility requirements for Clinical Clerkships
2. Pass the Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE)
3. Receive final approval from the Division Director of Clinical Education, which may be based on clinical performance

Field Observation

To be eligible to participate in field observation, students must:

1. Complete quarters 1-3 of the Doctor of Naturopathic Medicine program, including achieving a passing score on the CLPR 5030 Clinical Practice Exam.
2. Pass a mandatory drug test
3. Complete CPR training
4. Complete Hepatitis B information and TB screening

Enrollment

Students are required to adhere to the institutional enrollment policies as well as the enrollment policies and requirements specific to the ND Program. Full-time enrollment is defined as being enrolled for a minimum of 12 credits (didactic and/or clinical). Part-time enrollment is defined as being enrolled for a minimum of 6 credits but less than 12 credits. Sonoran University does not guarantee the length of the program to be less than four calendar years.

Students may not exceed the predetermined number of clinical clerkships as outlined in the Clinical Handbook without the approval of the Academic Policy and Progress Committee (APPC). Students are not allowed to attend, nor will credit be awarded for, courses/lab sections or clerkships for which they are not registered.

Adding and Dropping Courses and Clinic Clerkships

Academic Courses

Sonoran University programs of study are track programs. Students on the 4-year track seeking to move to the 5-year track must contact the Academic Advising Office to evaluate their request. In addition to the Institutional requirements for adding and dropping courses, schedule changes requested after the start of a quarter must also adhere to the following:

- Intensive courses may be added up until the first day of class but may not be dropped after the course has begun (some exceptions may apply). Tuition paid for intensive courses will not be refunded after the course has begun.
- Selectives may be added or dropped only during the add/drop period unless otherwise noted.

Clinical Clerkships

Clinical clerkships do not follow the same add/drop policy as didactic courses noted above; clinical students must refer to the Clinical Handbook regarding the policy for adding and dropping clerkships (see Add/Drop Refund Policy).

An add/drop fee will be charged for any clerkship changes after the clinic add/drop period has ended (see Tuition and Fees). Students who withdraw from a clinical clerkship may be required to attend Clinical Skills Development Sessions.

Class Schedules

Current schedules and information for the Doctor of Naturopathic Medicine program are posted online on MySonoran. Once a schedule is released, changes will be made only in the event of extreme circumstances.

Concurrent Enrollment for Naturopathic Doctorate Students

Sonoran University offers a pathway that allows current ND students to complete the requirements for a Master's degree (MSCN or MSNBL) while they are completing the ND degree. This creates an opportunity for our ND students to graduate with both an MS degree and an ND degree upon completion of their ND program.

Application Timeline

Students in Sonoran University's 4-year program of study (ND4) and 5-year (ND5) are eligible to apply through the Admissions Office as early as quarter 5 (ND4) and quarter 9 (ND5) for admission to the MSCN program and as early as quarter 6 (ND4) and quarter 11 (ND5) for admission to the MSNBL program. Students are eligible to enroll as early as quarter 9 (ND4) or quarter 13 (ND5) for the MSCN program and quarter 11 (ND4), and quarter 15 (ND5) for the MSNBL. Once an ND student is admitted to the MS degree program, the following pre-matriculation concurrent enrollment requirements must be met.

Concurrent Enrollment Eligibility Requirements (CEER)

1. Official confirmation from the Dean of Students verifying good citizenship (i.e., no Code of Professional Conduct violations).

2. Achieve a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.5 in the quarter immediately preceding concurrent enrollment.
3. Pass the Clinic Entry Exam Q7 (ND4) or Q11 (ND5).
4. Official documentation on file with the Registrar's Office confirming NPLEX Part I pass.
5. Full-time enrollment in the two quarters immediately preceding matriculation to demonstrate the ability to handle the academic course load.
6. Recommendation Letter from the Dean of the College of Naturopathic Medicine. The Dean's review/recommendation will take into consideration:
 - a. Input from the Associate Dean of Clinical Education on clinical performance
 - b. Input from Academic Advising on the student's potential for success
7. Successful in-person or virtual interview with the Dean of the College of Naturopathic Medicine if deemed necessary.

ND students will be allowed to matriculate into the MS program for one quarter conditionally until confirmation that all CEERs have been met. Students who fail to meet the CEERs will not be allowed to register for their second quarter of the MS program and will be counseled to defer MS enrollment until a time when all requirements are met, or the student may be administratively withdrawn from the MS program. Any deviation in the start date for concurrent enrollment will impact graduation dates. Therefore, the student should not expect to earn both the ND and MS degrees at the same time.

Concurrently enrolled ND students must continue to meet all concurrent enrollment requirements outlined within the institutional policies section of the catalog and maintain satisfactory academic progress requirements in each program. Concurrently enrolled ND students are also required to pass all clinical rotations while in clinical training.

Intensive Courses

An intensive course is offered in a shortened time period. Intensives may be scheduled as a 5-day format or over a weekend, with classes beginning Friday evening and continuing Saturday and Sunday. Every effort is made to minimize the scheduling of required weekend intensives.

International Students

International students attending Sonoran University on an I-20 must maintain full-time enrollment at all times unless otherwise following the articulated program of study. All exceptions require approval from the Dean of Students. Please direct any questions regarding international student status to the Dean of Students Office.

Satisfactory Academic Progress Completion of Program

The ND program is designed to be completed in four calendar years or 15 academic quarters (five calendar years or 19 academic quarters for the 5-year track). Students who deviate from the standard academic program will extend the length of the program. Satisfactory academic progress in the ND program is defined as passing all program requirements within the maximum timeframe of one and one-half (1.5) times the length of the longest published program in which they are enrolled, from the initial date of matriculation and including any and all leaves of absence and periods of withdrawal followed by re-activation. Generally, this is between 6–7.5 years.

- Credits transferred from an approved institution count toward the minimum academic requirements to be completed at the end of each academic year (see Minimum Academic Requirements below) and count toward the maximum completion time for financial aid.
- Students must earn a minimum number of credits per quarter (see Minimum Academic Requirements below).
- Students must make satisfactory progress toward the completion of their degree at Sonoran University to be eligible for most financial aid programs.
- The Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy for the ND program includes meeting cumulative GPA requirement, minimum academic credits earned per term, and maximum timeframe for completion.
- Students who fail to make satisfactory academic progress for their prescribed program of study in any term will be advanced an academic warning level.

Cumulative GPA Requirement

Students in the ND program must maintain a cumulative GPA of at least 2.1.

Minimum Academic Requirements

The following table illustrates the minimum number of credit hours required to be completed (total credits earned) at the end of each academic year for the Doctor of Naturopathic Medicine program.

4-year Track

Academic Year	Total Credits Earned
1	65
2	130
3	195
4	260
5	325
6	390

5-year Track

Academic Year	Total Credits Earned
1	32
2	70
3	126
4	182
5	238
6	294
7	350
7.5	390

NPLEX Examinations

The licensing of naturopathic physicians to practice medicine is a function of an individual state or province. States and provinces that license naturopathic physicians recognize the North American Board of Naturopathic Examiners (NABNE), which certifies candidates as eligible to register for the licensing exam that is administered as the Naturopathic Physicians Licensure Examination (NPLEX). It is the student's responsibility to be familiar with NABNE and NPLEX policies and procedures.

Sonoran University considers the NPLEX Parts I and II to be significant measures of professional achievement toward becoming a naturopathic physician. Student performance on the NPLEX provides the faculty and administration an external measurement of the level of understanding students have in a broad number of subject areas. This performance offers Sonoran University important information on curricular content and teaching methodologies. Student scores also provide Sonoran University and the patients they see with a level of assurance that they can perform with basic competency as student physicians. To qualify for the NPLEX Part I, students must have satisfactorily completed all basic science coursework, including GNMD 6044 General Medical Diagnosis IV, be currently enrolled or on an approved leave of absence, and be certified by the Registrar's Office as eligible to sit for the exam.

NPLEX Part I

Students are required to take NPLEX Part I to be eligible to participate in the Doctor of Naturopathic Medicine clinical training program. Students must take the NPLEX Part I at the first offering of the exam immediately following their 7th quarter in the 4-year Program of Study (POS) and 11th quarter in the 5-year POS or completion of the basic science courses, including GNMD 6044, whichever comes first. Students who do not pass NPLEX Part I must retake the exam at the next offering. Students who do not take NPLEX I at the next offering will be dropped from the following quarter's clinical clerkships and may not be allowed to continue in clinical clerkships until they have taken NPLEX I. To register for future clinical clerkships, all students must submit the examination results from NABNE to the Registrar's Office each time it is taken.

Appeals to any part of this process follow the published Sonoran University complaint procedures. This policy applies to all ND students, including professional transfer students.

NPLEX Part II

Passing the NPLEX Part II examination is not a graduation requirement of Sonoran University, but it is required to become licensed. Students should be aware that NABNE may modify its policies and procedures at any time. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of NABNE/NPLEX policies and procedures.

ND Graduation Requirements

In addition to the University Graduation Requirements, (<https://catalog.sonoran.edu/catalog/university-policies/graduation/>) candidates for the Doctor of Naturopathic Medicine degree must complete all clinical training requirements, including:

- 108 clinical clerkship credits
- 4 field observation credits
- 1 credit from a lab post
- 1 credit from Medicinary/IV post
- 500 patient contacts (at least 225 primary).
- Satisfactory completion of required student clinical competencies
- Successful completion of all clinical milestone exams