

Doctorate in Naturopathic Medicine

Technical Standards

Technical Standards for Admission, Promotion, and Graduation

A student of Sonoran University of Health Sciences Doctorate of Naturopathic Medicine (ND) program must possess aptitude, abilities, and skills in all five areas listed below and be able to meet them with or without accommodation. If at any time the candidate can no longer meet these technical standards or requires additional accommodations, the Dean of Students must be notified immediately.

Observation

Students must be able to observe demonstrations, conduct experiments, and tolerate normal odors associated with the basic sciences, including, but not limited to: anatomic dissection of preserved tissues and cadavers, microbiologic cultures, and microscopic studies of microorganisms, and animal and human tissues in normal and pathologic states. A student must be able to observe patients accurately at a reasonable distance and close at hand, noting non-verbal as well as verbal signals. Specific observational requirements include but are not limited to the following abilities: detecting and identifying significant changes in colors of fluids, skin, culture media, and dipstick tests; perceiving with acuity and accurately discriminating findings on x-rays and other imaging tests; efficiently reading written and illustrated material; observing intracellular details through a microscope; observing demonstrations in the classroom, including projected slides, films, videos, and overheads; observing and differentiating changes in body movement; observing anatomic structures; discriminating numbers and patterns associated with diagnostic instruments and tests, such as sphygmomanometers and electrocardiograms; and competently using instruments such as the otoscope, ophthalmoscope, microscope, and stethoscope.

Communication

Students must be able to actively listen and relate effectively and sensitively to patients of all genders, ages, races, lifestyles, sexual orientations, and cultural backgrounds and be able to convey a sense of compassion and empathy. A student must be able to observe and clearly communicate with patients to elicit information; accurately describe changes in mood, activity, and posture; and be able to perceive verbal as well as nonverbal communications. Communication includes speech as well as reading and writing. Medical education presents exceptional challenges in the volume and breadth of required reading and the necessity to impart information to others. Students must be able to communicate quickly and effectively in oral and written English with all members of the health care team. Specific requirements include but are not limited to the following abilities: communicating rapidly and clearly with the medical team during case reports, eliciting a thorough history from patients, and communicating complex findings in appropriate terms to patients and to various members of the health care team. Students must learn to recognize and promptly respond to emotions such as sadness, worry, and agitation, as well as lack of comprehension of physician communication. Each student must be able to read and accurately record observations and plans legibly, efficiently, and accurately in documents such as the patient record. Students must be able to prepare and communicate concise and complete summaries of individual encounters. Students must be able to complete forms manually and on the computer keyboard, according to directions, in a complete and timely fashion.

Sensory and Motor Function

Students must be able to perform a complete physical exam of patients with acuity, accuracy, facility, and human compassion on patients of all genders utilizing palpation, auscultation, percussion, and other diagnostic maneuvers. In general, this requires sufficient ability to observe with acuity and process visual, auditory, exteroceptive (smell, touch, pain, and temperature), and proprioceptive (position, pressure, movement, stereognosis, and vibratory) phenomena accurately, as well as the ability to manipulate patients, medical instruments, and equipment with precision at a fine level of movement. Methods of surgical instruction include practice on living or preserved animal tissues. A student should be able to provide general care and emergency treatment to patients in a timely manner. Examples of such emergency treatment reasonably

required of physicians include responding quickly when called, initiating cardiopulmonary resuscitation, administering intravenous medication, applying pressure to stop bleeding, opening obstructed airways, suturing wounds, and performing basic male and female and other physical maneuvers. Cardiopulmonary resuscitation may require moving an adult patient, repeatedly applying considerable chest pressure, delivering an adequate volume of artificial respiration, and calling for help. A student should be able to learn to perform basic laboratory tests, e.g., urinalysis, completed blood count, and diagnostic and therapeutic procedures, e.g., phlebotomy, acupuncture, minor surgery, and arthrocentesis. Students must be able to measure angles and diameters of various body structures using tape measure and goniometer, measure blood pressure and pulse, and interpret graphs describing biologic relationships. Students must have the strength, coordination, and ability to use the torso and limbs to position themselves and skillfully and successfully perform common naturopathic manual procedures and techniques.

Intellectual, Conceptual, Integrative and Quantitative Abilities

These abilities include measurement, calculation, reasoning, analysis, judgment, and synthesis. The student must also be able to recognize letters and numbers quickly and accurately. Clinical reasoning and problem solving, critical skills demanded of physicians, require all of these intellectual abilities and must be performed quickly, especially in emergency situations. Moreover, the effective physician often must deal with several tasks or problems simultaneously (“multitasking”). Students must be able to identify significant findings from history, physical examination, and laboratory data; provide a reasoned explanation for likely diagnoses; construct a reasoned and cost-effective diagnostic plan; and prescribe medications and therapy, recalling and retaining information in an efficient and timely manner. Students must be able to identify and communicate the limits of their knowledge to others when appropriate. The ability to incorporate new information from peers, teachers, and medical literature in formulating diagnoses and plans is essential. Good judgment in patient assessment, diagnostic, and therapeutic planning is essential.

Behavioral and Social Attributes

Empathy, integrity, honesty, concern for others, good interpersonal skills, interest, and motivation are all required personal qualities. Students must be able to fully utilize their intellectual abilities, exercise good judgment, and promptly complete all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients in all clinical and academic settings. They must be able to develop mature, sensitive, professional, and effective relationships with patients of all genders, ages, races, lifestyles, sexual orientations, and cultural backgrounds, as well as with their families, other health care providers, and with all members of the learning and working community. At times this requires the ability to be aware of and appropriately react to one’s own immediate emotional responses. For example, students must maintain a professional demeanor and be able to function at a high level in the face of personal fatigue, dissatisfied patients and their families, and tired colleagues. Students must be able to develop professional relationships with patients and their families, providing comfort and reassurance when appropriate while protecting patient confidentiality. Students must be able to maintain professional conduct when interacting with patients and the families of patients suffering from catastrophic illness, trauma, and death. Students must possess adequate endurance to tolerate physically taxing workloads and to function effectively under stress. At times, all students are required to work for extended periods, occasionally with rotating shifts. Students must be able to adapt to changing environments, to display flexibility, and learn to function in the face of the uncertainties inherent in the clinical problems of many patients. Students are expected to accept appropriate suggestions and criticism and, if necessary, respond by modifying their behavior.

Student Requirements

A student of Sonoran University must meet the Technical Standards for Sonoran University of Health Sciences for Admission, Promotion, and Graduation and they are required to possess aptitude, abilities, and skills in all the following areas:

1. The emotional health required for the full use of intellectual abilities, the exercise of good judgment, and the prompt and safe completion of all responsibilities; the ability to adapt to change, display flexibility and learn to function in the face of uncertainties and stressful situations; empathy, integrity, concern for others, interpersonal skills, interest, and motivation which will be assessed during the admissions process and throughout their education.
2. The ability to reason, learn and perform independently demonstrating the conceptual, integrative, and quantitative skills that are necessary for critical thinking, problem-solving, measurement, calculation, the ability to comprehend three-dimensional and spatial relationships, diagnosis, and therapeutic applications.
3. The visual, hearing, and communication skills and personal hygiene requisite to professional performance including reading all forms of diagnostic imaging, using microscopes, eliciting, and recording patient histories performing all visual and auscultatory exams, and performing any and all other diagnostic and therapeutic procedures.
4. The strength, coordination, and ability to use the torso and limbs to position oneself and skillfully and successfully perform common naturopathic manual procedures and techniques.
5. The strength, manual dexterity, fine motor skills, tactile perceptiveness, and ability to perform in all laboratory and clinical settings, diagnose and treat human ailments, and maintain the safety and wellbeing of fellow students and patients without posing a threat to themselves.

Evaluation and Implementation of Reasonable Accommodations

Sonoran University is committed to the full and meaningful inclusion of students with disabilities. Students with disabilities should contact the Accessibility Office within the Dean of Students Office to request accommodations. Given the clinical nature of medical education, additional time may be needed to implement accommodations. Timely disclosure and requests by students are essential and encouraged.

Sonoran University Accessibility Office, 2140 E. Broadway Rd., Tempe, AZ 85282

Phone: 480.222.9237

Email: accessibility@sonoran.edu | www.sonoran.edu/student-accommodations/