



BOUCHER INSTITUTE
of Naturopathic Medicine

Memo

To: Boucher Community; Faculty and Staff

From: Michael Schanz, President

cc: All members

Date: April 20, 2020

Re: Covid -19 Update

Dear Boucher Community members,

We hope this email finds you all well and settling into a new routine. We appreciate your patience, support and feedback as we navigate new waters together. Over the past month members of the Boucher community have worked tirelessly to meet the challenges by quickly moving to remote delivery of the curriculum, and implementing an EMR and Telehealth in the clinic. Everyone has been innovative, dedicated and patient while finding solutions to each new challenge.

Over the next few months, we will be operating in an uncertain climate. We will continue to base our decisions on the best available information at the time while exercising the utmost caution for our Boucher community, and the community at large.

The Campus will remain closed until further notice and community members (staff, faculty, students) are not permitted to attend campus other than in the business of providing an essential service.

Academics:

The academic team is exploring several on-line solutions to enhance remote delivery of the curriculum. These include exam proctoring software (ExamSoft), virtual patient cases and enhanced use of our current platforms eCampus and Orbund. The team will be meeting weekly with the BNSA President to facilitate communication and student input into decision-making.

Students should be aware that use of the ExamSoft remote exam proctoring service will require a **laptop with a functioning camera** in time for May midterm exams. The proctoring service will not support use of iPads or ChromeBooks/notebooks. We expect that all students will have a laptop already as per their Student Enrollment Contract; however, any students who are unable to meet this requirement should contact the Director of Academics affairs regarding special circumstances. Students with approved special circumstances will have the ability to defer remote proctored exams until such time as the school re-opens and they can be proctored on-site.

Now that the Spring term is underway, we will be drafting schedules for Summer and Fall 2020. Given the uncertainty of a return to campus date, we will need to continue to be flexible and responsive. We will be planning for openings in the current Covid-19 restrictions, knowing that these may not last and we will need to change tack again. Part of this planning will depend on social distancing and gathering guidelines from the Provincial Health Officer, as well as our access to masks, gloves, hand sanitizer and other infection control necessities.

The current Covid-19 restrictions have resulted in the decision to cancel the hands-on human dissection lab that usually runs in the first week of July. We simply can't know if international travel will be permitted and, even if it were, the health and safety of students and faculty must be the priority during the pandemic. We will be investigating virtual resources and collaborating with our sister schools re. best practices for developing this competency.

Our primary goals are to ensure the safety of our community while striving to keep students on track in the program. Ultimately, there are no guarantees as there are factors beyond the control of the school. As we develop a plan, we will share it with you as quickly as possible but it may change depending on external forces.

Clinic:

The Clinic team worked around the clock to quickly and effectively implement virtual clinic shifts, electronic medical records and Telehealth. This was no small feat and we are grateful for everyone's patience as staff, students and faculty grappled with training on multiple new software programs. The clinic continues to dispense supplements for patients as an essential service. Dr. Fairman-Young is in frequent contact with our sister schools regarding best practices, virtual cases and initiatives to ensure that our clinic interns can complete their requisite clinic hours, patient contacts and clinic competencies.

Student Services:

We have heard from students that in addition to the usual stress of attending the program, these unusual times have increased that burden. We want to encourage you to utilize the counselling resources available to you at this time.

James Lowe has posted some links to support you and they can be found here:

<https://www.jameslowe.com/binm-resources>

FAQ:

When will we return to campus?

There is no definitive date for return at this point. We are hoping for the potential for gradual return over the summer and into the fall, however this will be dependent on the Provincial Health Officer's orders that are in place.

Will the school year be extended?

We anticipate delivering the majority of the curriculum requirements over the Spring 2020 term. Some outstanding requirements will be completed upon return to campus and you will be notified as to which classes this applies. In these cases, students will receive an IP as their grade until all components are completed.

There will likely be courses offered over the summer term however the dates/courses have not been determined yet. We expect to have a tentative schedule in the next few weeks.

What's happening with the dissection lab?

The one-week intensive lab has been cancelled due to Covid-19 restrictions. The academic team is developing resources to support students in human anatomy and dissection during the summer. There are tentative plans for students who did not attend the dissection lab this year to attend next year's hands-on lab – this will not be confirmed until early 2021.

Will I be able to write NPLEX?

We are on track at this time for students to write their NPLEX-I and II exams in August 2020. All accredited naturopathic colleges are working with NABNE to ensure that students who are on track for completion of requirements will be eligible to sit the exams.

Sincerely,

Boucher Critical Incident Response Team