



September 27, 2022

Daniel Seitz, JD, EdD, Executive Director
P.O. Box 178
Great Barrington, MA. 01230

Dear Dr. Seitz,

As requested by the CNME Board of Directors, enclosed you will find the follow up focused report with information on the following:

- Comparative information on the 2021 first-year online and residential cohorts in regard to educational outcomes for the first year of the ND program;
- Comparative information on any significant differences between the two cohorts in such areas as the attrition rate, need for academic support, and satisfaction with the program; and
- An overall assessment of benefits, drawbacks and success of this delivery approach in comparison to NUNM's residential approach.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Mark Johnson
Director of Institutional Effectiveness



September 27, 2022

Below is the September Progress Report regarding NUNM's 2021 ND first-year online approved substantive change report. This report outlines the two required areas of comparative data, educational outcomes, and an overall assessment of benefits, drawbacks and success of this delivery approach compared to NUNM's residential approach as outlined in the approval letter dated February 8, 2021. The report will address the three questions required by CNME and then will conclude with overall information about the ND year-one online program to date.

1. Comparative information on the first-year online and residential cohorts in regard to educational outcomes for the first year of the ND program.

The below grades account for a total of 14 students in the entire ND1 cohort last year who received failing grades, representing a total pass rate of 79% (14/67) for all students in the first year. Of students who failed, 8 were residential (81% pass rate) and 6 were online students (75% pass rate). Of the 14 students who failed, one residential student failed two courses, while the other 7 failed one course placing them on academic probation. Of the 14 students who failed, one online student failed two courses, while the other 5 failed one course placing them on academic probation.

Overall, our online students passed their courses at a similar rate as their residential peers. Below is a chart that outlines the counters of an "F" or "D" grade per course rates per cohort. Additionally, two online students were put on warning status for receiving 2 or more grades of C (one of which was for a non-ND course), while one residential student received warning status. As more students failed clinical anatomy than other courses, Dr. Baltazar, Dean of the College of Naturopathic Medicine, and Dr. Fowler, Director of Instructional Design and Technology, met with the course director of clinical anatomy to discuss student success and to navigate and refine various student learning activities to accomplish the course objectives. Additionally, Dr. Baltazar met with the online faculty and our instructional designers monthly to discuss, as needed, student outcomes and it was a way for faculty to share course design strategies.



Course #	Course Name	Online Failures (n=24)	Residential Failures (n= 43)
BAS5110	Structure and Function I	0	2
BAS5110L	Structure and Function I Lab	0	1
BAS5111L	Clinical Anatomy I Lab	2	4
PHL5113	Intro to Medical Systems	0	1
BAS5120L	Structure and Function II Lab	2	0
BAS5120T	Structure and Function II Tutorial	0	1
BAS5121L	Clinical Anatomy II Lab	4	0
BAS5130	Structure and Function III	0	1

Upon review of the above statistics, our online students only failed online lab courses, while our residential students were not successful in all the aspects of their block courses (lecture, lab and tutorial). One difference in failure rates may be attributed to the fact that clinical anatomy lab is delivered differently for each of our cohorts. For our residential cohort their clinical anatomy labs I (Fall term) and II (Winter term) contain a virtual cadaveric lab concurrently with hands-on anatomic models in addition to surface palpation. Clinical Anatomy I and II for our online students consists of the virtual cadaveric program (without the synchronist hands-on opportunity). Online students receive access to the hands-on anatomic models and complete surface palpation during the summer intensive, the summer after the completion of their first year. Therefore, the pass rates differences may be due to the layout of the program and the inability for online students to complete hands-on activities to support the assimilation of this material. Additionally, at a recent open student forum, students provided feedback that clinical anatomy was their most difficult course noting that they would have liked more visualization tools and they needed to use more external materials to supplement their learning. They also noted that surface palpation was beneficial only when they were participating in-person. One student commented that they don't feel confident about anatomy as they felt it was the most difficult of all topics to learn online. Observation of any on-going future trends will be noted.

2. Comparative information on any significant differences between the two cohorts in such areas as the attrition rate, need for academic support, and satisfaction with the program.

In the fall 2021, NUNM had a total of 67 naturopathic medical students matriculate into the first year. Of the 67 students, 24 enrolled in the online track, which is approximately 36% of the



first-year cohort. During the 2021-22 academic year, we had 4 online students that took a leave of absence or withdrew from NUNM (17%). Reasons for these leaves include career change, transferring universities, and personal/family health matters. During the 2021-22 academic year, we had 2 residential students that took a leave of absence or withdrew from NUNM (6%). Reasons for these leaves include career change and personal/family health matters. While the percentage of students that took a leave of absences/withdrew from the university was greater in our online cohort compared to our residential cohort, the reasons for leaving were similar.

	Online cohort	Residential cohort
Total number of students	24	43
# of students withdrew/leave of absence	4	2
Attrition rate	17%	5%

In the 2021-22 academic year, 7 total first-year students have registered with accommodation services, representing 10% (7/67) of the first-year student population. Of these 7 students, 2 were students in our online program (8%) and 5 were students in our residential program (12%). Both of our online students acquired accommodations prior to or at the start of the ND program as they had completed or were enrolled in another NUNM program. For our residential students, they all established accommodation services during their first year.

In the 2021-22 academic year, 29 total first-year students utilized NUNM’s peer mentorship program, representing 43% (29/67) of the first-year student population. Of these 29 students, 9 students were in our online program (9/24=37.5%) and 20 were in our residential program (20/43=46.5%). NUNM’s peer mentorship program matches first year students with current 2+ year student mentors to offer peer support and ease the transition to life at NUNM. At our recent open student forum, some of our students from this first cohort of online students volunteered to attend one of the new first year online cohort’s synchronous classes to introduce themselves, answer questions, and to provide support as this new cohort begins first year online. Also during our recent open student forum, many of our online students in our first cohort were interested in being peer mentors for our current first-year online students.



	Online cohort	Residential cohort
Total number of students	24	43
Students requesting academic accommodations	2	5
Percentage of students requesting academic accommodations	8%	12%
Students utilizing NUNM's mentorship program	9	20
Percentage of students accessing NUNM's mentorship program	37.5%	46.5%

Our recent student satisfaction survey, which is based on a Likert scale of responses that are averaged by applying a 4 (very satisfied), a 3 (satisfied), a 2 (dissatisfied), and a 1 (very dissatisfied), then averaged over the group to scale the responses, indicated that online students (n=4) are satisfied with their overall NUNM experience (Likert scale = 3.5). In comparison to our residential cohort (n=12) who responded with a Likert scale of 2.75. We are aware of the limitations that are imposed by the cohort size of online students who responded to the student satisfaction survey. At our recent open student forum (n=6), students voiced their satisfaction with the online program. One student stated that if they had the opportunity, they would do their first year online again. They felt completing the first year online gave them flexibility and a better work-life balance. They additionally felt prepared to enter their 2nd year and currently feel just as prepared for their second year.

Below is information from our recent student satisfaction survey with a total of 16 students responding, 4 from our online program and 12 from our residential program. Overall, our online students, in each of the listed categories, reported satisfaction in the various aspects of their education at NUNM with Likert scales ranging from 3 to 3.75. In comparison, the Likert score of our residential cohort's satisfaction with the various aspects of their education at NUNM ranged from 2.33 to 3.25. In the 2021-22 academic year, students were still impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. It is hard to state if the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic from policies to educational delivery were reflected in and were a reason for the significant differences in student satisfaction, as the online cohort was overall less effected by COVID-19 related issues (masking requirements, vaccination requirements, isolation/quarantine requirements).

Student satisfaction with their overall experience at NUNM	Online (n=4)	Residential (n=12)
Very dissatisfied	0	1
Dissatisfied	0	2
Satisfied	2	8
Very satisfied	2	1
Mean	3.5	2.75

Online (n=4)	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean
Instructors are interested in helping students grow in more than just academic areas	3	1	0	0	3.75
Instructors genuinely care about student learning	3	1	0	0	3.75
I'm satisfied with opportunities for group projects and other peer collaboration	2	2	0	0	3.5
I'm satisfied with opportunities to link theory and practice	2	2	0	0	3.5
I'm satisfied with the experience of using Moodle	2	2	0	0	3.5
I'm satisfied with the accessibility of the ND dean	2	2	0	0	3.5
I'm satisfied with the use of technology by instructors in my courses	2	2	0	0	3.5
Syllabi clearly convey course expectations	2	2	0	0	3.5
The classes I've taken match their descriptions in the catalog	2	2	0	0	3.5
The instructors demonstrate the ability to effectively measure and assess the students on their performance	2	2	0	0	3.5
The instructors facilitate student learning by utilizing teaching methods that are both current and appropriate to the course	2	2	0	0	3.5
The training I've received to date has met my expectations	2	2	0	0	3.5
I'm satisfied with instructor availability outside of the class to support my learning	2	1	1	0	3.25
The training materials (texts, workbooks, handouts, etc.) used in my program are current or appropriate for the degree program	1	3	0	0	3.25
I'm satisfied with tutorials/seminars as a way of learning	1	2	1	0	3

Residential (n=12)	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean
Instructors genuinely care about student learning	5	6	0	1	3.25
Instructors are interested in helping students grow in more than just academic areas	5	5	1	1	3.17
I'm satisfied with the experience of using Moodle	4	6	1	1	3.08
I'm satisfied with the accessibility of the ND dean	3	7	2	0	3.08
I'm satisfied with opportunities for group projects and other peer collaboration	3	7	1	1	3
I'm satisfied with instructor availability outside of the class to support my learning	3	7	1	1	3
Syllabi clearly convey course expectations	3	7	1	1	3
The classes I've taken match their descriptions in the catalog	3	7	1	1	3
I'm satisfied with opportunities to link theory and practice	3	5	3	1	2.83
I'm satisfied with tutorials/seminars as a way of learning	3	6	1	2	2.83
The instructors demonstrate the ability to effectively measure and assess the students on their performance	2	7	2	1	2.83
The instructors facilitate student learning by utilizing teaching methods that are both current and appropriate to the course	4	4	2	2	2.83
The training materials (texts, workbooks, handouts, etc.) used in my program are current or appropriate for the degree program	3	4	2	2	2.73
The training I've received to date has met my expectations	1	6	3	2	2.5
I'm satisfied with the use of technology by instructors in my courses	2	3	4	3	2.33

3. An overall assessment of benefits, drawbacks and success of this delivery approach in comparison to NUNM's residential approach.

NUNM has found the above information helpful in analyzing our first year of online education in the ND program. As stated in our initial focused report, there are several benefits found by implementing this change. The first positive impact was on ND recruitment and enrollment. The addition of our first year online track increased enrollment by almost 40%. NUNM's ND program has not had the number of first year students enrolled in the ND program since 2017-18, which is attributed to the addition of the online track. Also, as noted in our initial focused report, our first



year online cohort was more diverse than our residential cohort. For example, 37.3% of the online track are students of color, while only 23.3% of the residential cohort are students of color. Diversifying the NUNM community has substantial benefits not only to our immediate community but to the ND profession. Offering the first year online made the program more accessible to students who otherwise would not be able to complete the program. From a recent open student forum, one student commented that they would not have been able to matriculate in the program if it wasn't offered online. While the credit load for our online track is comparable to our residential track, the amount of hours required of online students to participate in synchronous activities is significantly less than that of our residential students. On average, online students spend 4-6 hours per week in required, synchronous classes, as opposed to our residential

students that spend 25-30 hours per week in required, synchronous classes. As noted in our recent open student forum, students felt this scheduling provided them with more control of and flexibility in their schedules and provided them with a better work-life balance.

As mentioned above, the online track offers students greater flexibility in their schedules. From our recent student forum, one student indicated that the student success in the online program is dependent on the motivation of the individual. They mentioned that due to the flexibility of the program, without self-motivation, one could easily get behind on their coursework. As mentioned earlier in this report, online students felt clinical anatomy was difficult to learn in an online platform. The design of the curriculum in which the surface palpation portion of the clinical anatomy lab course was postponed until the summer hands-on, practical intensive, might have contributed to a lack of assimilation of this material. Further observation of trends will be noted. Online students do not have the experience of sitting in a classroom with a faculty member proctoring their exam, nor filling out a scantron. These are important aspects of test taking that will be important for their future success on NPLEX exams. Comparative information on these cohorts after NPLEX I will provide further information.

Based on the student satisfaction study, our online students are satisfied with their overall NUNM experience more so than our residential students. The program offers flexibility and a greater work-life balance. August 2022 this cohort of students transitioned to Portland to join our physical



campus and to complete their summer, hands-on practical intensive. An orientation was provided to them the morning of their first classes and the morale and energy of these students was high. They have successfully transitioned into their second year and report that they feel just as prepared entering their 2nd year classes as students in the residential cohort. Further benchmarks of success such as pass rate of 2nd year courses and NPLEX I will provide us with further comparative information about this program.