

NEW ACADEMIC SCHEDULE AT BINM

The Boucher Institute of Naturopathic Medicine will be introducing a new academic schedule beginning in the 2009-2010 academic year. Since the institute's inception in 2000, the schedule has followed a fairly traditional post-secondary structure, with three terms per year, each approximately three months in duration followed by a summer break from the end of June to mid-September. The new look will maintain the three term organization but start earlier and finish later than past schedules, thus shortening the summer break. The total number of academic weeks will stay roughly equal to past schedules, and an additional break will be added to both the winter and spring terms.

The changes will not be fully introduced until the 2010-2011 academic year, as BINM has chosen to maintain the scheduled 2009-2010 start date of September 14th. The earlier start date in August will take effect the following year. Please find below both the 2009-2010 academic schedule and an explanation for the change from the Dean of Academics, Dr. David Scotten.

Sincerely,

Mark Williams
Director of Admissions and Alumni Relations

The Boucher Institute of Naturopathic Medicine takes prides in the delivery of a curriculum that serves the mission and purpose of the institute, namely "to produce competent, successful naturopathic physicians" as its primary outcome. To this end, a stiff curricular rigor must be maintained. The content is voluminous, and is continuously added to, while the responsibilities and roles of naturopathic medicine in the health care of Canadians also continue to grow. While it is the obligation of the school to assure the students meet the mission to become safe and effective doctors, we still wish them to arrive on the other side of the experience physically and emotionally intact, satisfied with their educational experience, and excited to embark on their clinical careers. Currently, we find that students are not heading into the summer break, nor embarking on their professional careers, with the expected and desired, mindset and spirit.

Negotiating the Boucher curriculum is stressful, challenging and in many cases deprives students of the ability to maintain a love for learning. Additionally, the voluminous workload negatively impacts many students' overall sense of wellness, decreases retention, has led to dissatisfaction with the process, and puts pressure on their relationships with partners, family and friends. The poorer marks that result rob them of a sense of accomplishment in spite of the fact they have done an amazing job on an extremely heavy amount of material. Unfortunately, reducing our expectations is not an option, given the responsibilities of a naturopathic physician.

We rely on consistent student feedback to guide change and development of all facets of our education. This occurs formally in surveys or during structured student advising interviews, and informally by observing student interactions and class participation or preparation, or in spontaneous or private conversations. Recently we have proposed potential changes in the delivery of the material with more breaks in a term. This allows the student to integrate learning and catch up, or just relax, without the pressure of the relentless addition of new material. To accommodate the added breaks entails expanding the length of the terms at the expense of the summer break. Additionally, the shorter summer break should aid students' ability to retain the knowledge, and better utilize the experience, acquired in the previous sessions, and enable them to more smoothly transition into the next academic year. All feedback methods referred to above have been applied, and overwhelmingly the students are in favor of such a change.

There is an overall consensus from all members of the Boucher community who offered an opinion that this change would go a long way towards reducing the strain and enhancing the quality of the learning and experience of being a Boucher student. We are always working to remain cognizant of students' needs, and attempt to facilitate their learning and quality of the experience they receive while with us. We are hopeful this change will help alleviate this significant issue.

Sincerely,

Dr. David Scotten, ND
Dean of Academics



2009-2010 Academic Schedule
Four Year Doctor of Naturopathic Medicine

Fall Term

Start date: Monday, September 14, 2009

End date: Friday, December 18, 2009

Total academic weeks: 14

Statutory holidays during term: 2

- Thanksgiving Day - Monday, October 12
- Remembrance Day - Wednesday, November 11

Term Break

December 19, 2009 to January 3, 2010 (16 days)

Winter Term

Start date: Monday, January 4, 2010

End date: Thursday, April 1, 2010

Total academic weeks: 12

Statutory holidays during term: 0

Term Breaks

February 13, 2010 to February 21, 2010 (9 days)

April 2, 2010 to April 11, 2010 (10 days)

Spring Term

Start date: Monday, April 12, 2010

End date: Friday, July 9, 2010

Total academic weeks: 12

Statutory holidays during term: 1

- Canada Day - Thursday, July 1

Term Breaks

May 22, 2010 to May 30, 2010 (9 days)

July 10, 2010 to August 8, 2010 (30 days)

IMPORTANT:

Please note the **2010-2011 Academic Year** is scheduled to **start** on: August 9, 2010

Convocation is scheduled for July 3, 2010