



SUBJECT OUTLINE

Subject Name:

Naturopathic Philosophy

Subject Code:

NATP111

SECTION 1 – GENERAL INFORMATION

Award/s:

Bachelor of Complementary Medicine

Total Course Credit Points:

48

Level:

1st Year

Duration:

1 Semester

Subject is:

Core

Subject Credit Points:

2

Student Workload:

No. timetabled hours per week:
3

No. personal study hours per week:
2

Total hours per week:
5

Delivery Mode*:

☐ On campus

☒ Online / Digital

☐ Blended

☐ Intensive

Weekly Session^ Format/s - 1 session per week:

☒ eLearning modules:

Lectures: Narrated PowerPoint presentations

Tutorials: can include asynchronous tutor moderated discussion forum and activities, learning journal activities or other web-based resources

*All modes are supported by the online learning management system which will include subject documents such as handouts, readings and assessment guides.

^A 'session' is made up of 3 hours of timetabled / online study time per week unless otherwise specified. Each subject has a set number of sessions as outlined above.

Study Pattern:

☒ Full Time

☒ Part Time

Pre-requisites:

Nil

Co-requisites:

Nil

SECTION 2 – ACADEMIC DETAILS

Subject Rationale

This subject introduces philosophy, principles of practice and theories that underlie Naturopathic medicine. Students identify, rationalise, and validate Naturopathic medicine based on western philosophy and unique codified naturopathic principles of practice. Understanding develops through an overview of philosophical thought and an exploration of the ways philosophy forms the foundation of the healthcare professions, with a specific focus on contemporary Naturopathic medicine. Through critical questioning and discussion, students engage in



exploration of the principles and key concepts of Naturopathic medicine that derive from philosophical thought, and recognise how these relate to Naturopathic practice. This subject provides foundational knowledge for the informed study and practice of Naturopathic medicine and develops recognition of healthcare discipline philosophical commonality and difference and the unique characteristics that define naturopathic practice.

Learning Outcomes

1. Identify the branches of Western philosophy and knowledge and determine the ways these inform healthcare generally and Naturopathic practice specifically.
2. Discuss the Naturopathic view of illness and healing as a dynamic process within a rational philosophical framework through application of the principles of naturopathic practice and naturopathic theory.
3. Explain the six primary Naturopathic case management principles and explore the clinical application of these within the concept of the Therapeutic Order.
4. Describe the philosophical basis of knowledge applied by Naturopathic medicine and relate this to clinical reasoning and ethical/values-based behaviour.
5. Discuss the role of Naturopathic medicine within contemporary healthcare service delivery from a philosophical perspective.

Assessment Tasks

Type	Learning Outcomes Assessed	Session Content Delivered	Week Due	Weighting
Discussion Forum Posts (150 words each)	1-5	1-6	2. 6	20%
Essay (template) (750 words)	1-3	1-7	8	35%
Written assessment (1000 words)	2-5	1-13	13	45%

All written assessments and online quizzes are due at 11:55 p.m. and submitted through the LMS.

Pass Requirements

To achieve a passing grade in this subject, students must:

- have a cumulative mark of at least 50%, and
- have submitted all assessment items with a value greater than 15%.



Prescribed Readings:

Hechtman, L. (2012). *Clinical naturopathic medicine*. Churchill Livingstone. [Chapter 1: *Naturopathic philosophy* (p. 2-13), [ebook available](#)]

Lindlahr, H. (2010). *Nature cure*. Hardpress Publishing. [[ebook available](#)]

Lloyd, I. (2009). *The energetics of health: A naturopathic assessment*. Churchill Livingstone. [Chapter 3: *Naturopathic medicine* (p. 30-54), [ebook available](#)]

These readings are made available through the course

Recommended Readings:

Barcan, R. (2011). *Complementary and alternative medicine: Bodies, therapies, senses*. Berg. [[ebook available](#)]

Driesch, H. (1914). *The history and theory of vitalism* (C. K. Ogden, Trans.). Macmillan. <https://archive.org/details/cu31924003039330/page/n5>

Kirchfield, F., & Boyle, W. (2005). *Nature doctors: Pioneers in naturopathic medicine* (2nd ed.). NCNM Press.

Logan, A. C., Goldenberg, J. Z., Guiltinan, J., Seely, D., & Katz, D. L. (2018). *North American naturopathic medicine in the 21st century: Time for a seventh guiding principle—Scientia Critica*. *Explore*, 14(5), 367-372. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.explore.2018.03.009>

Reiss, J. & Ankeny, R. A. (2016). Philosophy of medicine. In E. N. Zalta (Ed.). *The Stanford encyclopedia of philosophy* (Summer ed.). <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2016/entries/medicine/>

Warburton, N. (2013). *Philosophy: The basics* (5th ed.). Routledge. [[ebook available](#)]

Subject Content		
Week	Lectures	Tutorials
1.	Understanding philosophy as a discipline <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Define philosophy and understand how philosophers think ➤ Introduce the distinct branches of philosophy ➤ A brief history of Western philosophy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊗ Greece – Aristotle and Plato ⊗ Religious philosophy ⊗ Eastern philosophical influences on Western thought ⊗ The Enlightenment ⊗ Naturphilosophie within German Romanticism and its importance for Naturopathic medicine ⊗ Contemporary philosophy in Western society 	Discussion topic may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What effect does the mind-body split (dualism) have on the way humans see themselves? How does a monistic perspective differ? ➤ Your concept of life philosophy and how does this affect the way you live your life?



	<p>Philosophies of healthcare knowledge in practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What is healthcare knowledge? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊙ Philosophies of the body <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Monism and dualism ➤ Balance and homeostasis ➤ Illness as meaning-making ➤ Bodily typologies and constitutions ➤ The body as machine-like ⊙ Philosophy of disease classification <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The philosophy of epidemiology ➤ Population health ➤ Evidence-based medicine ➤ Evidence-based practice ➤ Practice-based evidence ➤ Narrative medicine ⊙ Philosophy of Naturopathy 	
2.	<p>The use of reasoning within healthcare delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Formal and informal logic ➤ Reasoning methods in the clinical setting – the art and science of healthcare <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊙ Practical reasoning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Logic shared across a community ➤ Ends served by the means ➤ Experientiality informing reason ➤ Context driving reasoning ➤ Reasoning conscious of multivariate causality ➤ Controlled environments inform reason ➤ Reasoning focusing on isolated causes ➤ Logical fallacies and their relevance ➤ Naturopathic medicine and the use of logic within clinical reasoning ➤ Contextualised individualisation of therapeutic interventions 	<p>Assessed discussion topic may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What does the naturo in Naturopath mean? ➤ The appropriateness of reductionist and mechanistic philosophy within naturopathic medicine. ➤ Experiential learning: sensing the 'energy body' (guided exercise).



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⦿ Holistic and teleological prioritisation ⦿ Emphasising the inter-relational physical/mental/ emotional/spiritual /socio-cultural/existential body ⦿ Unique causal factors within a nexus of interconnection ⦿ Appropriateness of reductionism and mechanism 	
3.	<p>Naturopathic medicine philosophy in practice – principles and theories</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Naturopathic framework of health and disease <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⦿ Nature cure ⦿ Determinants of health ⦿ Model of progression of disease and restoration of health ⦿ Acute and chronic illness ⦿ Suppression and healing ⦿ Hering's Law of Cure 	<p>Discussion topic may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Solastalgia and its relevance to Naturopathic medicine ➤ How might the Healing Power of Nature be explained to others?
4.	<p>Naturopathic medicine philosophy in practice – guiding principles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Primary guiding principles <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. First do no harm 2. Vis medicatrix naturae 3. Holism 4. Tolle causum 5. Docere 6. Prevention <p>Naturopathic medicine philosophy in practice – clinical principles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Therapeutic Order as a clinical guide to action <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish the conditions for health 2. Stimulate the vis medicatrix naturae 3. Address weakened systems or organs 4. Correct structural integrity 5. Address pathology using natural products 6. Address pathology using synthetic products 7. Remove pathology 	<p>Discussion topic may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Critical consciousness as a principle in naturopathy. ➤ The Naturopathic guiding principles.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Therapeutic Order is flexible according to clinical presentation 	
5.	<p>Naturopathic Medicine in Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Vis Medicatrix Naturae – The Healing Power of Nature ➤ Relationship of spirituality to the concept of the Vis Medicatrix Naturae ➤ Connection to/love of nature, working in sync with nature ➤ NDD – Nature Deficit Disorder ➤ Modern energy medicine <p>Process of Disease and Healing – The Vis in Action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Naturopathic definition of disease ➤ Acute vs. chronic disease ➤ Symptoms as expressions of the illness ➤ Acute inflammatory process & the body's innate intelligence ➤ Schematic of the process of disease and healing ➤ Removing obstacles to cure/disturbing factors ➤ Hering's Principles of Cure ➤ Healing Reactions/Discharge vs. Disease Crisis 	<p>Discussion topic may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Personal experiences of vis medicatrix naturae. ➤ Case review and discussion on vitalism and the therapeutic order in relation to treatment outcomes.
6.	<p><i>Primum Non Nocere</i> – First Do No Harm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Hippocratic history ➤ Concept of the least force intervention ➤ Spectrum of therapeutic force ➤ First Do Nothing as a corollary ➤ Distinguishing suppression, palliation and cure/elimination ➤ Restorative practices as least force interventions <p>The Guiding principle 'First Do No Harm'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Establish the conditions for health ➤ Stimulate self-healing mechanisms 	<p>Assessed discussion topic may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Innate healing capacities. ➤ <i>Primum Non Nocere</i> in the context of traditional and contemporary understanding.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Support weakened or damaged systems or organs ➤ Address structural integrity 	
7.	<p>Tolle Totem – Treat the Whole Person</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Treating the person vs. fighting disease ➤ Individualised view of disease ➤ Analysis and Synthesis ➤ Complexity and variability ➤ The role of context/systems in holism ➤ Biopsychosocialspiritual context/approach ➤ Overview of Integral Theory ➤ Role of spirituality in medicine and healing <p>Constitutional Medicine – Treating the Whole Person in Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ “Constitution” defined ➤ Overview of the constitutional systems of homeopathy ➤ Identification of patterns: physical, mental, emotional 	<p>Discussion topics may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Discuss holism and <i>Tolle Totem</i>. ➤ Case review and discussion on the progression of disease and restoration of health in the context of <i>Tolle Totem</i>. ➤ The concept of disease suppression.
<p>NON-TEACHING WEEK (note that make-up classes may be scheduled in this week)</p> <p>Online students – The non-teaching week falls between Weeks 7 and 8</p>		
8.	<p>Tolle Causam – Treat the Cause</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Definition of the principle ➤ Unity of Disease (Lindlahr) ➤ Terrain, miasm and temperament vs. pathogen ➤ How does one thing cause another? ➤ Is it possible to truly ‘know’ a cause? ➤ Downward causality and emergence ➤ Upward causality and reductionism ➤ Dispositionalism ➤ Toxaemia – sources of toxicity <p>Treating the Causes of Illness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ History and practice of hygiene and Nature Cure ➤ Primary and secondary causes of disease 	<p>Discussion topic may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ How naturopathic medicine provides Telos in its understanding of causality? ➤ The concept of causation of ill health.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Emunctorology 	
9.	<p>Docere – Naturopath as Teacher</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Definition of the principle ➤ The patient/practitioner relationship ➤ Horizontal & vertical vectors implicit within a patient/practitioner relationship ➤ Distribution of power within a clinical setting ➤ Empowerment ➤ Patient centred practice: key concepts ➤ Role of the naturopath as guide ➤ Therapeutic presence ➤ Self-development as a practitioner/wounded healer ➤ Self-reflection <p>The therapeutic relationship as medicine</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Intention and healing ➤ Walking the talk—role modelling ➤ Rapport building ➤ Interactive Skills ➤ Unconditional Presence ➤ Healthy boundaries ➤ Listening without judgment ➤ Verbal and non-verbal communication ➤ The patient as a modality - the Placebo Effect ➤ Psychoneuroimmunology 	<p>Discussion topic may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The role of the therapeutic relationship. ➤ The concept of the wounded healer in the practitioner-patient relationship. Experiential exercise.
10.	<p>Preventare — Prevention</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Definition of the principle ➤ Health promotion ➤ Health during pre-conception, conception and pregnancy ➤ Health in childhood and adolescence ➤ Lifestyle behaviours ➤ Risk factors ➤ Engagement and adherence 	<p>Discussion topic may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ How do you reason the healthcare you personally use? ➤ How Naturopathic medicine ethically appraises a good or bad outcome. ➤ The levels of prevention in the context of treatment strategies. Experiential learning: sensing the 'energy body' (guided exercise).



	Prevention of disease <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Sustainable (economic/environmental)/restorative health care—a vision ➤ Social determinants of health ➤ Creating a healthy world ➤ Human impact on the environment ➤ Impact of the environment on humans ➤ The Gaia hypothesis and health—whole systems ➤ “Metaflammation” and climate change – the link ➤ Consequences of global population growth 	
11.	Therapeutic techniques in Naturopathy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Nature as inherently therapeutic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Nutrition ➤ Plant medicine ➤ Water ➤ Touch ➤ Movement ➤ Breath ➤ Meditation ➤ Homoeopathy 	Discussion topic may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The naturopathic guiding principles overlap with integrative practice considerations. ➤ Patient usage of naturopathy and other healthcare options in contemporary Australia. ➤ Experiential treatment exercise: breath awareness and Movement
12.	Naturopathic medicine philosophy within contemporary healthcare service delivery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Democracy, capitalism, neoliberalism, and socialism ➤ Philosophy of state healthcare funding ➤ Philosophy of private healthcare insurance ➤ Professional dominance and power in healthcare policymaking and service delivery ➤ Naturopathic medicine interaction with political healthcare philosophies Naturopathic medicine and public healthcare policy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Philosophical profile of Naturopathic medicine users 	Discussion topic may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Motivating factors that attract patients to utilize naturopathy. ➤ Limitations of naturopathy to understand scope of practice. ➤ Naturopathic treatment modality exploration



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Naturopathic medicine use as cultural and political identity ➤ Naturopathic medicine as a public healthcare service delivery to all sectors of society ➤ Naturopathic practitioners as primary healthcare providers ➤ Naturopathic medicine service provision as healthcare of affluence ➤ Naturopathic medicine service provision in poor and underserved communities ➤ Philosophical concerns in healthcare policymaking ➤ Types of knowledge legitimated by healthcare policymakers ➤ Naturopathic medicine presence within healthcare policymaking 	
13.	<p>Naturopathic medicine and philosophical scepticism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Common sceptical arguments against Naturopathic medicine philosophy ➤ Counter-arguments to scepticism of Naturopathic medicine philosophy <p>Communicating Naturopathic medicine philosophy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Role as academically rigorous CAM philosophers ➤ Role as philosophical ambassadors for Naturopathic medicine in healthcare ➤ Disseminating Naturopathic medicine philosophy 	<p>Discussion topic may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Naturopathy in the context of science and pseudoscience. ➤ Synthesis of learning from this subject
14-15.	<p>Non-Teaching Week/Practical Examination Weeks 1 & 2</p> <p>Note that make-up classes may be scheduled in these weeks</p>	
16-17.	<p>Final Examination Weeks 1 & 2</p> <p>There is no final exam for this subject</p>	