



NABNE®

NORTH AMERICAN BOARD OF NATUROPATHIC EXAMINERS

Ensuring the Professional Qualifications of NDs

FEBRUARY 2020
NPLEX® PART I - BIOMEDICAL SCIENCE
EXAMINATION

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IMPORTANT DATES AND DEADLINES

November 1, 2019

Opening of the period for application to take the **February 2020** NPLEX Examinations

November 30, 2019

Closing of the period for application to take the **February 2020** NPLEX Examinations (After midnight PST on **November 30th**, the online application process will be closed.) Deadline for submission of a *Testing Accommodation Request* form and **all** documentation.

December 19, 2019

Posting of **Registration Status** for the **February 2020** NPLEX Examinations to *User Profiles* on the NABNE website

January 23, 2020

Posting of **Registration Tickets** for the **February 2020** NPLEX Examinations to *User Profiles* on the NABNE website

January 27, 2020

Deadline for submitting notification of cancellation of an **February 2020** NPLEX Examination without having to provide an explanation or supporting documentation

February 4, 2020

Administration of the NPLEX Part I - Biomedical Science Examination

March 23, 2020

Posting of **unofficial February 2020** P/F exam results in online *User Profiles*

March 25, 2020

Mailing of **official** reports of **February 2020** exam results to examinees

April 30, 2020

Deadline for submitting a **Manual Scoring Request** for an examination taken in **February 2020**

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This Bulletin contains information with which all applicants should be familiar. It describes NABNE policies, guidelines and recommendations. **The policies in this Bulletin apply to all applicants who will be taking or retaking any NPLEX examination(s) in February 2020.** (The Bulletin will be updated for subsequent exam administrations.)

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ABOUT NABNE AND NPLEX

NABNE (the North American Board of Naturopathic Examiners) is an independent, nonprofit organization formed as a service to the naturopathic profession and the agencies that license/register naturopathic physicians. NABNE serves regulating bodies by qualifying applicants to take the NPLEX (Naturopathic Physicians Licensing Examinations), administering the examinations, and sending exam results and transcripts to regulatory authorities.

The five-member NABNE Board works with an Advisory Council comprised of representatives of:

- ❑ The Federation of Naturopathic Medicine Regulatory Authorities (FNMRA) representing the State/Provincial naturopathic regulatory authorities
- ❑ The Association of Accredited Naturopathic Medical Colleges (AANMC)
- ❑ The Council of Chief Academic and Clinical Officers (CCACO) representing the nine CNME-approved naturopathic medical programs
- ❑ The Council on Naturopathic Medical Education (CNME)
- ❑ The American Association of Naturopathic Physicians (AANP)
- ❑ The Canadian Association of Naturopathic Doctors (CAND)
- ❑ The naturopathic profession at large

NPLEX (Naturopathic Physicians Licensing Examinations) is an independent, nonprofit organization whose purpose is to prepare valid and reliable Part I Examinations that assess the readiness of students to enter the clinical phase of training, and Part II Examinations that assess the entry-level competence of candidates who plan to become licensed/registered naturopathic physicians. The NPLEX Council of Exam Chairs oversees the exam development process.

NABNE

- Qualifies applicants to take the NPLEX Examinations
- Administers the NPLEX Examinations
- Sends NPLEX exam results to examinees and to regulatory authorities
- Serves as an unbiased repository of NPLEX exam results and sends transcripts to regulatory authorities
- Upon request, manually verifies responses on answer sheets

NPLEX

- Surveys the profession to determine the competencies that an entry-level ND must master
- Publishes the competencies on which examinees will be tested
- Develops the NPLEX Examinations
- Establishes the passing score
- Scores the NPLEX Examinations

THE NPLEX PART I - BIOMEDICAL SCIENCE EXAMINATION

The NPLEX Part I - Biomedical Science Examination may be taken after you have completed all biomedical science coursework at an approved naturopathic medical program (ANMP). The NPLEX Part II - Clinical Science Examinations may be taken after you have passed the NPLEX Part I Examination and have graduated from an ANMP.

ELIGIBILITY TO TAKE THE NPLEX EXAMINATIONS

APPROVED NATUROPATHIC MEDICAL PROGRAMS

To be eligible to take an NPLEX Examination, you must have completed the appropriate academic requirements an **approved naturopathic medical program (ANMP)**^{1,2}. An ANMP is a program that has accreditation or pre-accreditation from the Council on Naturopathic Medical Education (CNME) and offers a minimum four-academic-year, in-residence curriculum in biomedical science and clinical didactic studies, as well as clinical (experiential) training leading to an N.D. degree (United States) or diploma (Canada).

Currently, the following naturopathic medical programs have been approved:

- Bastyr University (BU): Kenmore, Washington
- Bastyr University California (BUC): San Diego, California
- Boucher Institute of Naturopathic Medicine (BINM): New Westminster, British Columbia
- Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine (CCNM): Toronto, Ontario
- National University of Natural Medicine (NUNM): Portland, Oregon
- National University of Health Sciences (NUHS): Lombard, Illinois
- Southwest College of Naturopathic Medicine (SCNM): Tempe, Arizona
- Universidad Ana G. Mendez (UAGM), formerly Universidad del Turabo (UDT): Gurabo, Puerto Rico
- University of Bridgeport College of Naturopathic Medicine (UBCNM): Bridgeport, Connecticut

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

You are eligible to take the NPLEX Part I - Biomedical Science Examination if:

- You have met the biomedical science coursework requirement at an ANMP (i.e., when you have completed anatomy, physiology, biochemistry, genetics, immunology, microbiology, pathology, and all required labs);

AND

- You are currently enrolled in³ or have graduated within the last five (5) years⁴ from an ANMP.

APPLICATION TO TAKE THE NPLEX EXAMINATIONS

¹ If you graduated from a CNME-approved program before it was accredited, contact NABNE.

² If you have been licensed/registered but did not take the NPLEX, OR if you were licensed/registered prior to 1986 and are planning to be licensed/registered in a different state/province, contact NABNE.

³ If you are on an approved leave of absence from an ANMP, you may, under certain circumstances still be eligible to take the NPLEX Part I - Biomedical Science Examination. If this applies to you, contact NABNE.

⁴ If you graduated more than five (5) years ago, contact NABNE regarding additional eligibility requirements.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The information you provide to NABNE as part of the online application process is confidential and is used only in conjunction with the NPLEX Examinations. All administrative and testing personnel who have access to your personal information observe NABNE's confidentiality policy.

When you apply to take the NPLEX Examinations, you will be asked to provide your entire Social Security Number (SSN) or Social Insurance Number (SIN). Your entire SSN or SIN is used to uniquely identify you in our records only. You will be required to fill in only the last five digits of your SSN or SIN on every answer sheet you complete.

APPLICATION PROCESS

The period for application to take the **February 2020** NPLEX Part I - Biomedical Science Examination is **November 1-30, 2019**. After midnight PST on November 30th, the online application process will be closed. **We recommend that you submit your application well in advance of the deadline.** If you wait until November 30th to apply and you need technical assistance in order to submit your application, NABNE staff might not be available to help you.

You must **submit your application and payment** to take or retake the NPLEX Part I - Biomedical Science Examination **via the links on the dashboard of the *User Profile*** you create in the ***Applicant Portal*** on the NABNE website. **You will be required to create a new online *User Profile* and password every time you apply** to take an NPLEX Examination, regardless of whether you have created one for a previous exam administration.

It is your responsibility to follow the instructions required to complete your application.

Before you begin your application:

- Review the current *Bulletin of Information*** pertaining to the examination(s) you are planning to take.
- Determine the NABNE test site** at which you plan to take the examination(s).
- Have the following items ready:**
 - **Your Social Security (SSN) or Social Insurance Number (SIN).** It is important that you **use the same SSN/SIN you provided on a previous application** so that all of your NPLEX records are linked.
 - **A scanned image of your current government-issued photo identification** (e.g., driver's license, government-issued photo identification card, passport photo page, or passport card). Both the **first** and **last** names on the identification you upload must **exactly** match the first and last names you enter on this application form. You are not required to include your full middle name on the application. The maximum file size of the image you submit should not exceed 1MB.

- If applicable, a **scanned image of the documentation that verifies any official name change** made since the last time you applied to take an NPLEX Examination (e.g., marriage license, name change order, etc.). Both the **first** and **last** names on the current government-issued photo identification you submit with your application must **exactly** match the first and last names on this official document. The file size of the image you submit should not exceed 1MB.
- **Your debit or credit card information.** The payment system accepts Visa and Mastercard only. You must complete your payment at the time of application. **If you leave the application page without completing your payment, you will NOT be able to return to it at a later time. You will need to begin the application process again.**
- ❑ **Create an online *User Profile* and password for the CURRENT exam administration.** Keep a record of your *User Name*, the email address you are using, and the password you create. **You must create a new online *User Profile* and password every time you apply to take an NPLEX Examination**, regardless of whether you have created one for a previous exam administration. **DO NOT create more than one *User Profile* for the same exam administration**, as this will cause problems when it's time to access your *Registration Status* or download your *Registration Ticket*.

When you apply to take the examination(s):

- ❑ **Complete the exam application** using the link located on the dashboard of your *User Profile*.
- ❑ **Enter ALL information required on the online application page.**
- ❑ **Provide the email address where you would like to receive all communication from NABNE** (e.g., an address that is not your school address).
- ❑ **Scan and upload an image of the current government-issued photo identification** you will use to gain admittance to the examination(s) (e.g., driver's license, government-issued identification card, passport photo page, or passport card).
- ❑ If applicable, **scan and upload an image of documentation that verifies any official name change** made since the last time you applied to take an NPLEX Examination (e.g., marriage license, name change order, etc.).
- ❑ **Pay all fees in U.S. Dollars, using a debit or credit card.** The NABNE payment system accepts Visa and MasterCard only. **Payment must be made at the time of application.**
- ❑ **Review your entries for accuracy.** You will not be able to edit, delete, or change the application after you click **SUBMIT**. Report any corrections that must be made to your application by contacting NABNE at info@nabne.org.

After you submit your application:

- ❑ **Check your email for your *Confirmation Receipt*.** If you do not receive your *Confirmation Receipt* immediately, be sure to check your spam folder.
- ❑ **Download the *NPLEX Blueprint & Study Guide*** using the link provided in the email confirmation you receive after you submit your application online.

NABNE FEES

You must submit all applications, as well as requests for study guides, transcripts, and manual scoring, via the NABNE website. All fees must be paid in **U.S. dollars** by a debit or credit card via our secure online payment system. Our payment system accepts Visa and MasterCard **only**.

Non-refundable NPLEX Part I Application & Exam Administration Fee **US\$175**
(Paid with every application to take an NPLEX Part I - Biomedical Science Examination)

NPLEX Part I - Biomedical Science Exam Fee **US\$300**
(Paid with each application to take the NPLEX Part I - Biomedical Science Examination)

Refund Processing Fee **US\$50**
(Assessed when exam fees are refunded)

Manual Scoring Fee - Biomedical Science Examination **US\$40**

Study Guide Fee (Paid to receive a study guide requested outside of the application process) . **US\$5**

REFUNDS

The **Application & Exam Administration Fee** is non-refundable.

The **Part I - Biomedical Science Exam Fee**, minus a US\$50 *Refund Processing Fee*, **may** be refunded in some circumstances (see *CANCELLATION*, page 8).

NABNE will not refund fees for amounts less than US\$10.

CONFIRMATION OF ELIGIBILITY

When NABNE has all materials required to complete your application and has received a letter of verification⁵ from the registrar at your ANMP, you will be approved to take the examination(s).

- To determine if your application has been approved, log in to your online *User Profile* **after December 19, 2019**.

PRINTING YOUR REGISTRATION TICKET

To be admitted to the examination(s), you will be required to present a printed copy of your *Registration Ticket*.

- To print a copy of your *Registration Ticket*, log in to your online *User Profile* **after January 23, 2020**.

⁵ If NABNE receives written notification from your ANMP verifying that you did **not** complete all required biomedical science coursework, you will not be allowed to take the examination(s) during the current administration. Within thirty (30) days of receipt of this notification from your ANMP, NABNE will issue a **refund of the Exam Fee(s), minus a US\$50 Refund Processing Fee**, to the debit or credit card you used with your application. **The Application & Exam Administration Fee is non-refundable.**

REPORTING AN ADDRESS OR NAME CHANGE

It is your responsibility to ensure that NABNE has your current mailing address and valid information regarding your legal name. Without your current mailing address, NABNE cannot be responsible for ensuring that you receive your exam results in a timely manner. If the first and last names on your current government-issued photo identification do not **exactly** match the first and last names you have provided in your online application or **Name Change Form**, you will not be admitted to take the examination.

If you have had a change of address since the time you submitted your application, you must notify NABNE online using the online **Address Change Form**.

If you have had a legal name change since you last applied to take an NPLEX Examination, you must notify NABNE online using the online **Name Change Form**. When you complete this form, you will be required to scan and upload a copy of:

- Documentation verifying your official name change** (e.g., marriage license, name change order, etc.).
- One piece of your current government-issued photo identification** (e.g., driver's license, government-issued identification card, or passport photo page) issued under your **new** name.

PREPARATION TO TAKE THE NPLEX PART I - BIOMEDICAL SCIENCE EXAMINATION

The NPLEX Part I - Biomedical Science Examination (BSE) is an integrated examination designed to test your knowledge of structure/function (anatomy, physiology, and biochemistry & genetics) and disease/dysfunction (microbiology & immunology and pathology).

The first step in preparing to take the Biomedical Science Examination is to review the official **NPLEX Part I - Biomedical Science Examination: Blueprint and Study Guide**. All exam items are multiple-choice with one correct answer and three distractors; however, the way the questions are asked may take any of several forms.

As part of your NPLEX application, you will receive a free PDF download of the *NPLEX Blueprint & Study Guide* for the Part I - Biomedical Science Examination. The study guide is copyrighted, however, and may not be distributed.

If you are not applying to take the NPLEX Part I Examination, but wish to obtain a PDF of the study guide, you may submit your request and payment via the NABNE website, using the *Study Guide Order Form*.

The *NPLEX Part I Blueprint and Study Guide* is updated each year with information pertaining to both the August and subsequent February NPLEX exam administrations (e.g., August 2019 and February 2020), and may be ordered on or after May 1st. A study guide ordered prior to May 1st of each year will be from the previous NPLEX administration and will not contain updated blueprint changes.

Study guides produced by individuals or organizations who are not affiliated with NPLEX can be useful in preparing to take the examination. NPLEX cannot warrant, however, that the information contained in these materials is representative of the content of the NPLEX Examinations.

CANCELLATION

NABNE does not defer/hold fees or transfer/postpone exam dates.

If you fail to notify NABNE regarding your absence before your exam date, all fees will be forfeited. **Notify NABNE by completing the *Cancellation Form*** found in the *Applicant Portal* on the NABNE website.

If you submit your notice of cancellation ON or BEFORE January 27, 2020:

- You will **not** be required to submit documentation of a reason for your cancellation.
- Your name will be removed from the roster and you will not be admitted to the examination(s).
- You will be issued a refund of the ***Exam Fee(s)*** you paid with your application, minus a US\$50 ***Refund Processing Fee***, within thirty (30) days of notice of cancellation. This partial refund will be made to the same debit or credit card you used with your application. **The *Application & Exam Administration Fee* is non-refundable.**

If you submit your notice of cancellation AFTER January 27, 2020, and you have cancelled due to illness, a death in the family, or inclement weather⁶:

- You **will** be required to submit documentation of a reason for your cancellation (see below) if you wish to receive a partial refund.
- Your name will be removed from the roster and you will not be admitted to the examination(s).
- You will be issued a refund of the ***Exam Fee(s)*** you paid with your application, minus a US\$50 ***Refund Processing Fee***, within thirty (30) days of the date all documentation is received by NABNE (see below). This partial refund will be made to the same debit or credit card you used with your application. **The *Application & Exam Administration Fee* is non-refundable.**

To receive a refund, you must:

- **Notify NABNE regarding your absence by completing and submitting the online *Cancellation Form*** within 24 hours of your exam date, explaining the circumstances that prevent you from taking the examination.
- **Send documentation that verifies the reason for your absence** to NABNE within two (2) weeks after the exam date (e.g., a note from a licensed doctor that verifies your illness or the illness of a family member, a detailed explanation of an emergency, verification of a death in the family, a copy of a web page showing a local weather report or road closures, etc.). Upload a scanned copy of this documentation with your *Cancellation Form* or send it via email to info@nabne.org. You may also fax this documentation to NABNE at 503-452-3943.

If you cancel your registration, but re-apply at a later date, you will be required to complete and submit a new application and fees.

⁶ If, once you have begun to take the examination, you are prevented from **completing** it due to illness, a family emergency, or inclement weather, **notify the proctor immediately, then notify NABNE** the same day by submitting the *Cancellation Form*. You will not be admitted to the subsequent section of the examination during the current exam administration, and your exam results from the section you previously took during the current NPLEX administration will be nullified.

NABNE TEST SITES

In **February 2020**, the NPLEX Part II - Clinical Science Examinations will be administered at the following test sites:

WESTERN TEST SITES

AZ	Phoenix, Arizona
BC	Vancouver, British Columbia
CA	San Diego, California
OR	Portland, Oregon
WA	Kirkland, Washington

EASTERN TEST SITES

CT	Trumbull, Connecticut
IL	Glen Ellyn, Illinois
ON	Toronto, Ontario
PR	Gurabo, Puerto Rico

You will find a link to each specific test site location on the NABNE website. **There are different exam schedules for the Eastern and Western test sites.** Be sure you follow the correct exam schedule for the specific test site you have selected.

Fragrance-free Policy

Because the NPLEX Examinations are administered in public facilities, NABNE must comply with the policies of sponsoring institutions, many of which ban the use of scented personal products. **NABNE has adopted a fragrance-free policy at all test sites.** Due to chemical sensitivities of other examinees and testing personnel, we ask that you refrain from using fragrances (such as perfume, after-shave, and cologne), or strongly scented personal products (such as powder, hair spray, hand sanitizers, deodorant, essential oils, etc.) during the days of examination.

Inclement Weather

When you choose a NABNE test site, you acknowledge that inclement weather may prevent you from taking the examinations. If weather could prevent you from getting to the test site from your home, you should consider finding accommodations within walking distance of the test site for the night(s) before the day(s) of the exam administration. If you absolutely must take the examination(s) during the upcoming NPLEX administration, NABNE recommends that you choose a location where inclement weather would be least likely to force closure of a test site.

NABNE makes every attempt to select test sites that are likely to remain open despite inclement weather. However, as NABNE must abide by the sponsoring institution's decisions regarding closure or late opening times, NABNE cannot guarantee that any given test site will be open.

If the weather is so severe that it is questionable whether the test site will be closed by the sponsoring institution or will be open on time, NABNE will post an announcement on the website at www.nabne.org.

NPLEX PART I - BIOMEDICAL SCIENCE EXAM DATES AND SCHEDULES

The Part I - Biomedical Science Examination will be administered two times each year, on the first Tuesday in February and on the first Tuesday in August. In **February 2020**, the NPLEX Part I - Biomedical Science Examination will be administered according to the following dates and schedules. **Be sure to allow sufficient time to arrive at the test site on the day of your examination. You are expected to be at the test site and ready to check in at the BEGINNING of the period for admission, seating, and instructions.**

There are **different exam schedules** for the **Eastern** and **Western** test sites. **Be sure you follow the correct schedule** for the specific test site you have selected.

EASTERN TEST SITES (CT, IL, ON, PR)

Tuesday, February 4, 2020

9:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.	Admission, seating, and instructions
9:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	Biomedical Science Exam Administration - Section 1 <i>(100 exam items, 2½ hours to complete the section)</i>
12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.	Break
1:00 p.m. - 1:15 p.m.	Admission, seating, and instructions
1:15 p.m. - 3:45 p.m.	Biomedical Science Exam Administration - Section 2 <i>(100 exam items, 2½ hours to complete the section)</i>

WESTERN TEST SITES (AZ, BC, CA, OR, WA)

Tuesday, February 4, 2020

8:00 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.	Admission, seating, and instructions
8:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.	Biomedical Science Exam Administration - Section 1 <i>(100 exam items, 2½ hours to complete the section)</i>
11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	Break
12:00 p.m. - 12:15 p.m.	Admission, seating, and instructions
12:15 p.m. - 2:45 p.m.	Biomedical Science Exam Administration - Section 2 <i>(100 exam items, 2½ hours to complete the section)</i>

NABNE OBLIGATION TO ADMINISTER EXAMINATIONS

NABNE shall not be held responsible if the NPLEX Examination(s) cannot be administered due to any circumstances beyond the control of NABNE that would make it inadvisable, illegal, or impossible to administer the examination(s) at the pre-determined time or on the pre-determined date. These circumstances include, but are not limited to: inclement weather, floods, earthquakes, fires, other natural disasters, power failures, strikes, curtailment of transportation systems, epidemics, accidents, explosions, riots or civil disorder, terrorism, acts of war or other national emergencies, or if the test site at the sponsoring institution is closed or compromised. If any of these events occur, your only recourse will be to take the examination(s) at the next regularly scheduled administration.

ADMITTANCE TO THE EXAMINATIONS

Before you leave home to go to the test site, be sure you have your **current government-issued photo identification** (e.g., driver's license, government-issued identification card, or passport), and a printed copy of your **Registration Ticket**.

Refrain from the use of fragrances (including essential oils) or strongly scented personal products on the day(s) of the examination(s). If you use noticeably scented products, the proctor may refuse to admit you to the testing room.

You must be at the test site and ready to check in at the beginning of the admission time indicated on the exam schedule. Your prompt arrival will ensure that you have time to check in, be seated, and hear instructions before the testing period begins. If you arrive late (after all examinees have been seated and the testing room door is closed), you will not be admitted to take the current or subsequent section of the examination, your results from a section you took earlier in the current administration will be nullified, and you will forfeit all exam fees.

You will be admitted to the examination only if you have been approved to take the examination and are in possession of a printed *Registration Ticket*. To gain admittance to each section of the Part I - Biomedical Science Examination, you will be required to present a **printed copy of your Registration Ticket** and one piece of your **current government-issued photo identification**. The **first** and **last** names on your photo identification must **exactly** match the first and last names on your *Registration Ticket*. Because you are not required to include your middle name on the application, it will not appear on your *Registration Ticket*.

You should keep your Registration Ticket and photo identification with you at all times during the testing period. You will need to refer to your *Registration Ticket* when filling in the identification information on every answer sheet you complete.

TESTING PROCEDURE

The Part I - Biomedical Science Examination will be administered in two sections, according to the *PART I - BIOMEDICAL SCIENCE EXAM SCHEDULES*, on page 10. You will be allowed 2½ hours (150 minutes) to complete each 100-item section.

Before the testing period begins, you will receive an answer sheet and exam booklet, and will be given instructions by the proctor. **You must not open the exam booklet until you are instructed by the proctor to do so.**

After the testing period begins, the proctor will write the beginning time and the ending time on the white board. In addition, the proctor will verbally announce when there are 60, 30, 15, 5, and 1 minute(s) remaining in the testing period⁷. Pay attention to the announcements and manage your time accordingly, as **you will not be allowed to transfer answers from the test booklet to your answer sheet after the proctor has announced the end of the testing period.**

⁷ If you choose to wear earplugs, it is your responsibility to track the time remaining in the testing period.

During the testing period, you will be permitted to leave the room only if you are accompanied by a proctor. Before you leave the room for **any** reason, you will be required to turn in all exam materials to a proctor. It is important to remember that you will **not** be given extra time to make up for time lost due to breaks you take during the testing period.

To avoid common errors associated with completing the exam answer sheet, you should keep these guidelines in mind:

- Use only the #2 pencil provided by NABNE.**
- Complete all personal identification sections of the answer sheet using information EXACTLY as it appears on your *Registration Ticket*.** Complete this information correctly and consistently on every answer sheet to ensure that your results are attributed to you.
- Fill in the bubbles darkly and completely.** A mark that is too light or fills only part of the bubble may be interpreted by the optical mark reader as unanswered, and you might not be given credit for your intended answer.
- Record ALL your answers on the answer sheet.** You may write in your exam booklet, but you will be given credit for **only** those answers you have recorded on your answer sheet. Exam booklets are shredded immediately after they are returned to NABNE.
- Make sure you have marked your answer for each item on the correct line of your answer sheet.** For example, marking the answer for item #4 in a bubble on the line designated for item #5 will cause all your remaining answers to be marked on the incorrect line.
- Erase all stray marks or smudges on your answer sheet.**
- Do not fold or bend the answer sheet.**

Some of the items will be very challenging. You do not need to answer every item correctly to pass. While you should have no trouble completing the entire examination in the time allotted, some exam items will require more time to answer than others, and spending too much time on one item may cause you to feel pressured to speed through the rest. **The penalty for an unanswered item is the same as that for an incorrect response.** When you encounter an item for which you do not know the answer with certainty, try to eliminate some of the response alternatives. If, after eliminating one or two of the response alternatives, the correct answer is still not apparent, mark your best guess from among the remaining choices and return to the item later if time allows.

At the end of the testing period, you will be instructed to close your exam booklet and put down your pencil. After the proctor has announced the end of the testing period, **you will not be permitted to mark additional responses on your answer sheet.**

After you have completed the examination, you will be allowed to leave the room when the proctor has verified that you have turned in your answer sheet and exam booklet, and have signed and dated the *Affirmation of Compliance*.

NABNE TESTING REGULATIONS

NABNE testing regulations require that you:

- ❑ **Keep your *Registration Ticket* with you at all times during the testing period.** You will be permitted to take into the testing room **only**:
 - Your *Registration Ticket*
 - One piece of your current government-issued photo identification (e.g., driver's license, government-issued identification, passport photo page, or passport card)
 - A non-alcoholic beverage in a closed (non-breakable) container
 - Reading glasses
 - One pair of foam earplugs

You will be required to show all items to a proctor before you will be allowed to enter the testing room.

- ❑ **Leave ALL other personal belongings in the designated area outside of the testing room.** Turn off all electronic devices (e.g., cell phones, pagers, etc.) and leave them in the designated area outside the testing room before you check in for the examination. You will not be allowed access to your personal belongings, and will not be permitted to use any communication device at any time during the testing period. NABNE testing personnel will ensure that your belongings are secure during the testing period **only**.

If you are found to be in possession of any of the following items during the testing period, either inside or outside of the testing room, you could be dismissed from the examination:

- Electronic devices, including cell/mobile phones, listening devices (e.g., ear pieces, headphones, etc.), pagers, PDAs, laptop computers, electronic tablets, MP3 players, calculators, digital watches, recording or filming devices, radios, etc.
- Books, notes, study materials, scratch paper
- Backpacks, handbags, briefcases, wallets
- Outerwear⁸ (e.g., coats, jackets, gloves)
- Headwear (e.g., hats, caps, hoods, except those worn for religious purposes)
- Sunglasses, visors
- Tissue, writing instruments, erasers, or pencil sharpeners; these will be provided by NABNE.

You will not be allowed to bring food inside the testing room. If you need to eat, take medications, or have access to medical supplies during the testing period, you must leave these items with a proctor at the registration table when you check in for an examination. These items must be clearly labeled with your first and last name before you leave them with a proctor.

- ❑ **Present your *Registration Ticket* and current government-issued photo identification to a proctor to gain admittance to each section of the examination.**
- ❑ **Enter the testing room immediately after you check in for the examination.** Once you have checked in and have entered the testing room, you will not be allowed to leave without the permission of the proctor. You should use the restroom **before** you check in.

⁸ You will be allowed to keep a sweater or light jacket with you in case the room temperature changes.

- ❑ **Follow all testing regulations set forth in this *Bulletin*, as well as all instructions given by the proctor(s).** A violation of any such regulation or instruction regarding any part of the examination process may result in dismissal from the current and/or any subsequent section(s) of the examination. Other sanctions may also be imposed, including but not limited to invalidation of exam results, forfeiture of exam fees, preclusion from taking future NPLEX Examinations, and/or notification of legitimately interested entities (e.g., your naturopathic medical school, the Federation of Naturopathic Medicine Regulatory Authorities, etc.).
- ❑ **Read, sign, and date the *Affirmation of Compliance* on the back cover of your exam booklet prior to the beginning of each examination.** NABNE will not release exam results without having a signed and dated *Affirmation of Compliance* on file for each section/examination you take.
- ❑ **Return all exam materials to a proctor before you leave the testing room at any time.** When you have finished the examination, you will be allowed to leave the room only when the proctor has verified that you have turned in your answer sheet and exam booklet, and have signed and dated the *Affirmation of Compliance*.

IRREGULAR BEHAVIOR

Irregular behavior refers to violations or attempted violations of the rules regarding any part of the examination process. This includes, but is not limited to:

- ❑ **Violations before the testing period:**
 - Accessing unauthorized study materials
 - Providing false information on the application
 - Providing false admittance information

If, in advance of the exam administration, you know that organized or widespread cheating is occurring (e.g., an illegal study guide containing actual exam items is circulating), or is going to occur (e.g., examinees plan to exchange information during the examination), you should contact NABNE immediately.

- ❑ **Violations during the testing period:**
 - Impersonating an examinee or engaging an impersonator
 - Possessing unauthorized items in the testing room or accessing them during a break
 - Failing to adhere to a proctor's instructions or requests
 - Communicating with other examinees during the testing period
 - Copying or allowing answers to be copied by another examinee during the testing period
 - Accessing written notes or electronic information during the testing period
 - Reproducing exam content manually or electronically
 - Taking exam materials from the testing room at any time before, during, or after the testing period

If you have knowledge that any of any of these violations are occurring during the exam administration, you should notify the head proctor immediately.

❑ **Violations after the testing period:**

- Reproducing exam items, by any means, including reconstruction from memory
- Communicating about exam items and/or answers with other examinees, potential examinees, or formal or informal test preparation groups
- Altering exam results or transcripts

If, after the exam administration, you have reason to believe that there has been such a violation, you should contact NABNE immediately.

CONSEQUENCES OF IRREGULAR BEHAVIOR

If evidence is found of a breach in the security of exam materials before an exam administration, and such evidence suggests that the behavior is organized and/or may involve a number of examinees, NABNE reserves the right to cancel the test administration. If evidence is found of a breach in the security of exam materials after an exam administration, and such evidence suggests that the behavior was organized and/or may have involved a number of examinees, NABNE reserves the right to nullify the exam results of some or all examinees.

If violations are observed during the exam administration, the head proctor will report them to NABNE, and an investigation will ensue. If it is determined that there is sufficient evidence of irregular behavior, the violator will be advised of the nature of the evidence and will be given an opportunity to respond in writing. If exam results have not been reported previously, they will be withheld during any further investigation or review, and the violator may not be permitted to take subsequent examinations until a final decision regarding irregular behavior has been made.

If, upon review of the available information, it is determined that irregular behavior has occurred, the violator's exam results may be invalidated, s/he may be prohibited from taking NPLEX Examinations in the future, special administrative procedures may be implemented for any future examinations, and/or notice regarding the determination and the sanctions imposed may be provided to legitimately interested entities, including all transcript recipients.

If the irregular behavior involves the unauthorized reproduction and/or distribution of exam materials, or the dissemination of specific exam content, NABNE may pursue every legal means available to protect copyrighted materials.

The actions described above do not preclude NABNE from seeking legal redress against the violator.

NPLEX PASSING STANDARDS

The NPLEX Part I - Biomedical Science Examination (BSE) is a single, integrated examination that is designed to test your knowledge of biological structure/function and disease/dysfunction. To pass the examination, you must be able to demonstrate concurrent⁹ competence in both **general** exam areas (GEAs)¹⁰: **Structure/Function** and **Disease/Dysfunction**.

REPORTING OF EXAM RESULTS

Approximately six (6) weeks after the exam administration, your **unofficial** exam result (Pass/Fail only) will be posted to the dashboard of your online *User Profile*. You will be notified by email when your result can be viewed online. An official hard copy of your exam result will be sent to you by regular mail within the next week.

NABNE has made every attempt to ensure that the exam result(s) posted online are correct; however, because implementation of this feature requires manual transfer of data (which introduces the possibility of human error), **NABNE cannot guarantee that the information posted online is accurate**. NABNE suggests that you **do not** make any decisions based on these results.

The **official** report of your Part I - Biomedical Science exam results you receive in the mail will provide information regarding your overall passing status, and will include a visual scale that illustrates your performance in each of the two **general** exam areas, relative to the minimum percentage of items you must correctly answer to pass that **general** exam area.

- ❑ **Comprehensive Mastery** indicates, with either a **P** (Pass) or **F** (Fail) designation, whether or not you have passed the NPLEX Part I - Biomedical Science Examination. You have passed the NPLEX Part I - Biomedical Science Examination when you have achieved a **P** (Pass) in both of the two **general** exam areas:
 - **Structure/Function**, which reflects the result you achieved on the exam items that pertain to anatomy, biochemistry & genetics, and physiology
 - **Disease/Dysfunction**, which reflects the result you achieved on the exam items that pertain to microbiology & immunology and pathology

If you fail the examination, your report will also provide a visual scale that illustrates the strength of your performance in each of the five **specific** exam areas relative to your performance in the other **specific** exam areas.

⁹ You must pass both **general** exam areas within the **same** exam administration in order to pass the examination (e.g., passing one **general** exam area in one administration and the other in another exam administration, does not constitute a passing result).

¹⁰ You have passed the Part I - Biomedical Science Examination when you have correctly answered at least the number of questions that NPLEX subject matter experts (licensed/registered N.D.s) have determined are required to demonstrate competence in each of the two **general** exam areas (NPLEX uses a modified Angoff method to set the passing score).

Exam results are the property of the examinee. NABNE serves as an unbiased repository of those results. To avoid possible misinterpretation and to protect your privacy, **exam results will not be reported to you by telephone, fax, or email.**

RE-EXAMINATION POLICIES

If you do not pass either or both of the two **general exam areas** (Structure/Function or Disease/Dysfunction), you will be required to retake the entire Part I - Biomedical Science Examination¹¹.

MANUAL SCORING REQUESTS

Every answer sheet used for an NPLEX Examination is scanned by a state-of-the-art optical mark reader, and errors are reviewed by the scanning operator. The possibility of a scanning error is negligible. However, you may request a manual scoring from the most recent exam administration to verify that the answers you marked on your answer sheet(s) correctly match the answers recorded by the scanner. You will be notified of the results of this manual scoring; however, you will **not** receive additional information regarding your exam results (e.g., numerical scores, specific questions answered incorrectly, etc.).

If you would like to receive a manual scoring of an examination you take in **February 2020**, you must submit your request and payment online **no later than April 30, 2020**. The *Manual Scoring Fee* of **US\$40** must be paid using a debit or credit card.

TRANSCRIPTS

When you are ready to take the NPLEX Part II - Clinical Science Examinations, it will be your responsibility to request that NABNE send a transcript of your NPLEX Part I exam results to the regulatory authority of the jurisdiction in which you plan to practice. This request may be made at the time you apply to take the NPLEX Part II - Clinical Science Examinations.

¹¹ **If you graduated more than five (5) years ago**, contact NABNE regarding additional eligibility requirements.

ISSUES AND APPEALS

Because NPLEX uses an extensive post-test analysis process (including statistical analysis of individual items), the exam results sent to you reflect changes made after post-test analysis of items that did not perform as expected. Consequently, **NABNE does not change exam results.**

If you wish to appeal a **policy** decision, you must submit your appeal to NABNE in writing, addressed to the Executive Director of NABNE. Your appeal will be presented to the NABNE Board. The Board will make every effort to respond to you with a decision within six (6) weeks of receipt of your appeal.

NABNE - Appeals

Suite 119, #321
9220 SW Barbur Blvd.
Portland, OR 97219
Attn: Executive Director

COURTESY ACCOMMODATIONS

If you have a temporary limitation (e.g., a fractured arm or leg, advanced pregnancy, etc.) that does not rise to the level of a functional disability, NABNE will work with you and the testing facility to provide physical arrangements to meet your needs. These types of limitations do not require extensive evaluation by a specialist because they require only modification of a **physical** component of the testing environment; however, you may be required to submit a note from your physician or other professional. You must submit a ***Courtesy Accommodations Request Form*** to NABNE, **no later than 2 weeks prior to the exam date**. If you have not requested the accommodations at least 2 weeks prior to the exam date, the testing facility is under no obligation to accommodate your request. Write to NABNE at testingaccommodations@nabne.org to receive a copy of the *Courtesy Accommodations Request Form*.

TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS FOR A PHYSICAL OR COGNITIVE DISABILITY

NABNE grants accommodations to examinees who provide sufficient evidence that they have a disability that can/must be accommodated, so that all examinees have an equal opportunity to demonstrate the knowledge being tested. Granting accommodations to an examinee who does **not** have a disability, as defined below, could provide an advantage that other examinees have not received, compromising the fairness of the exam process.

To have your request for testing accommodations considered for the **February 2020** exam administration, you must register to take an NPLEX Examination, and NABNE must receive, **no later than November 30, 2019**, your completed ***Testing Accommodations Request Packet***, including complete documentation establishing that:

- You are an individual with a disability;
- Testing accommodations are necessary to address the functional limitation(s) related to the disability;

AND

- The requested testing accommodations are reasonable and appropriate for the established disability.

NABNE is under no obligation to provide the same accommodations as those provided by your current approved naturopathic medical program (ANMP).

Definitions

A **disability** is a physical, cognitive, or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of an individual's major life activities.

A **reasonable accommodation** is an adjustment to or modification of standard testing conditions which addresses the functional limitation(s) in the testing context that is (are) related to an examinee's disability. Although each case will be considered on its own merits, an accommodation will, in general, be considered to be **unreasonable** if it:

- Gives an undue advantage to the examinee who receives the accommodation;
- Compromises the validity of the examination;
- Fundamentally alters the measurement of the knowledge, skill, or ability that the examination is intended to test;
- Compromises the security of the examination; and/or
- Imposes an undue hardship on NABNE.

Initial Testing Accommodation Request

NABNE will make a final determination regarding the provision of accommodations only in reference to the upcoming exam administration, and only for applicants who are currently registered and have submitted timely and complete requests for accommodations.

If you intend to request testing accommodations, you should obtain the **current NABNE Testing Accommodations Request Packet** for the upcoming exam administration by writing to testingaccommodations@nabne.org. Please specify in your email the type of disability your requested accommodations are intended to address (cognitive/developmental/psychological or physical/sensory). If NABNE has not received your testing accommodations request with **complete documentation by the end of the application period**, your request will not be evaluated in time for the upcoming exam administration. It is not NABNE's responsibility to follow up to obtain missing documentation. If all required documentation is not received by the end of the application period, you will be given the option of either taking the examination without the requested accommodations, or cancelling your application and forfeiting all of your application fees and part of your exam fees.

To request testing accommodations and ensure that your request will be evaluated in time for the upcoming NPLEX administration, it is your responsibility¹² to:

- Complete the *NABNE Testing Accommodations Request Form*.**
- Prepare and submit a personal statement describing the nature of your disability** and how the testing accommodations being requested will address your functional limitations (e.g., how your cognitive disability affects your ability to take a multiple-choice examination, why your physical disability requires that you receive extra testing time, etc.).

¹² If the documentation submitted by the deadline is not sufficient to establish that the applicant has a disability for which testing accommodations are warranted, it is not NABNE's responsibility to follow up and obtain the required information.

- Have a professional** who is qualified to assess your particular disability¹³ send **current**¹⁴ documentation **directly to NABNE**¹⁵ in the form of an **evaluation report** that includes:
 - **A description of the nature of the condition**, which should include:
 - A verbal description, or a specific diagnosis¹⁶ such as a DSM or ICD code.
 - An **explanation of how the condition or diagnosis was determined**, which should include:
 - A **history** of the disability with a review of **objective** information (e.g., school performance before accommodations were granted, reports by former teachers or family members etc.).
 - Appropriate **psycho-educational test scores**¹⁷ **and/or physical findings**.
 - Interpretation** of test scores and/or physical findings.
 - A **clinical summary**, integrating history and results of psycho-educational testing and/or objective physical examination.
 - **A description of your CURRENT functional limitations** in the context of taking a multiple-choice examination.
 - Proof of the **evaluator’s qualifications** (e.g., the evaluator’s credential, licensure status, membership in an applicable professional regulatory body, speciality, etc). Relevant instructions and forms for the evaluator are included in the **NABNE Testing Accommodations Request Packet**.
- Register to take an NPLEX Examination.**
- Ensure that all accommodations request documents are received by NABNE no later than November 30, 2019.**

¹³ For example, cognitive/developmental/psychological disorders will be appropriately evaluated by a neuropsychologist.

¹⁴ “Current” depends on the nature of the disability. For cognitive/developmental/psychological disorders, if comprehensive psycho-educational testing was not completed within the last three to five (3-5) years, a qualified professional should administer and report an alternative **objective** measure of the applicant’s **current** functioning. Applicants who have a disability that is unlikely to change (e.g., visual impairment) **might** not be required to submit documentation that is current within the last few years. If your documentation is more than 3 years old, ask NABNE if a new evaluation is required.

¹⁵ The report must be sent directly from the evaluator to NABNE. NABNE will not accept evaluation reports sent by the applicant.

¹⁶ A diagnosis (e.g., DSM or ICD code) is not required, but because it is a shorthand for describing a condition, it can substitute for a lengthy verbal discussion.

¹⁷ Most people who take an entire battery of neuropsychological tests will demonstrate relative strengths and weaknesses and/or limitations in one or more areas. While scores on such tests provide useful supporting documentation when an individual is claiming a cognitive disorder, a few low scores are insufficient, in and of themselves, to establish the existence of a disability.

Your testing accommodations request and all required documentation for the upcoming exam administration should be sent to:

NABNE - Testing Accommodations Request
Suite 119, #321
9220 SW Barbur Blvd.
Portland, Oregon 97219-5434
testingaccommodations@nabne.org

To ensure that your request will be evaluated in time for the February 2020 exam administration, all documentation must be received by NABNE no later than November 30, 2019.

A request for testing accommodations may be *denied* if NABNE determines that:

- Your evaluator was not qualified to make the assessment.
- An adequate description of your condition was not provided by your evaluator.
- The information provided in the documentation furnished by your evaluator is:
 - Not adequate to substantiate the claimed disability and/or the claimed functional limitation(s).

AND/OR

- Not consistent with, or not adequate to substantiate a claim that the limitation(s) is (are) significant in the context of taking a multiple-choice examination.
- The specific testing accommodation(s) you have requested is(are) not reasonable or appropriate to the functional limitation(s) related to your disability.

Notice of Determination

Approximately 4 weeks prior to the scheduled exam date, you will be contacted via letter and/or email with the decision regarding your request. If your request is granted, you will be sent a letter documenting the accommodations you will be provided; you will need to sign and return this document to NABNE. If your request is denied, you will be given an explanation for the decision; your options will be to take the examination(s) without the requested accommodations, or to cancel your application and forfeit all application fees and part of your exam fees.

Subsequent Testing Accommodations Requests

An applicant who has been granted testing accommodations in the past will not **automatically** be granted the same accommodations for a subsequent exam administration. To request testing accommodations for subsequent exam administrations, you must submit a new ***Testing Accommodations Request Form*** every time you apply to take the NPLEX. Although new documentation from a disability specialist **might** not be required, you are responsible for ensuring that the documentation NABNE has on file meets the requirements outlined earlier. Contact NABNE **in advance of the application deadline for the upcoming exam administration** to determine if additional documentation is required.

If your previous request for accommodations was denied, for a future exam administration you may resubmit an accommodations request that includes **additional information**. However, further documentation will not change the outcome if the information provided in the new report is inconsistent with the claimed disability or relevant functional limitations.