



ACORN School
of Herbal Medicine

Clinical Residency & Roundtable

Student Handbook
2022-23



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School Information

The ACORN School of Herbal Medicine (referred to as ACORN) offers education in medical herbalism, clinical nutrition, basic physiology, field botany, herbal pharmacy, and other aspects of natural health. Our faculty members are certified herbalists with professional clinical experience and strong backgrounds in clinical nutrition. Our programs are not accredited by any educational agency in the State of California.

ACORN is affiliated with the North American Institute of Medical Herbalism (referred to as NAIMH). ACORN teaches the curriculum created by Paul Bergner, Medical Herbalist and Clinical Nutritionist for NAIMH. Paul founded NAIMH in 2003, and from 2003 until 2012, NAIMH was approved and Regulated by the Colorado Department of Higher Education, Private Occupational School Board. In July 2012 NAIMH relocated to Portland, Oregon. Oregon does not regulate this type of school, but NAIMH has kept and maintain the coursework approved by Colorado. NAIMH is not academically accredited, and students are not eligible for federal government loans. Each ACORN instructor has completed courses with NAIMH, under the instruction of Paul Bergner.

ACORN is owned solely by Heather Luna Keasbey, CCH, CN.

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Our classroom is now online. All classes are held online using video conferencing technology.



Work with the forces of Nature to establish a better quality of life for modern living



Our Philosophy

In the practice of herbalism, we seek to treat the whole person, not the disease. In doing so herbalists employ healing methods intended to increase vitality and support the natural forces within us to restore balance on all levels. Our educational programs emphasize Vitalist principals in which to elevate the quality of life to facilitate deeper and more meaningful relationships with ourselves, our bodies, our community and to the Earth. We offer both a traditional and clinical platform from which to launch herbal practitioners into the life long journey. Using herbs as a way of life is an art. We support the creative process of self-care as a means to offer our services to others.

Our Vision

We invite you to participate in paving the way for a cultural shift in healing the landscape of the human being. As herbalists we employ healing methods that support Nature's innate ability to flourish. On this journey we learn to work with the forces of Nature. We seek to establish a better quality of life in modern living, knowing that health and wellness are not limited to what is perceived in physical form, but must be addressed at all levels of our being. This approach to personalized health care fosters an enriched human experience which directly affects the well-being of our relationships, our communities, and our culture.

Understanding Vitalism

"Vitalism in healing is a clinical strategy based on the principle that Life, Nature, and the Great Spirit from which they arise are fully present in all the tissues of the body, and also in the psyche, the spiritual heart, and the soul, sustaining life and health, providing momentum for personal evolution on all levels, and for the fulfillment of the highest purpose in social and spiritual life. Vitalist practitioners employ clinical strategies and methods which support this life power through encouragement of nourishment, digestion, rest, and appropriate activity, identification of purpose in personal life, connection with nature, an active spiritual life, identification and removal of obstacles to cure on all levels, and avoidance of methods which suppress or distort life processes. The Vitalist incorporates all aspects of science, especially physiology and pathophysiology, but equally values knowledge from traditional herbalism, empirical observation, instinct and intuition, and is not confined to the narrow materialistic world view that dominates much of modern science, medicine, and social life." – Paul Bergner



A.C.O.R.N.

Academic Community Of Radical Nature-cure

In order to practice herbalism effectively one must turn towards Nature as the original instructor. Working with plants is working with the forces of Nature. Nature Cure is a healing modality as old as humanity itself. Our contemporary expression of it originated in the mid-1800s. Practitioners used whole food diets, restoration of the circadian rhythm, bathing in healing waters, movement in the fresh clean air, and the skilled application of herbs. This was practiced while spending ample time in natural landscapes and wild places. They found these methods to be curative of many conditions. It is from this tradition that modern naturopathic medicine was developed. In order to facilitate a cure, we must unpack the habits of modern lifestyle and restore the balance of Nature's original instructions in human life. It is our mission to resurrect these principles in the practice of western herbalism today.

We are a learning community and each of us comes to this calling with something to offer. We learn directly from experience, from our own and from each other. Every student on this path has the ability to become a teacher for ourselves, for those we serve, and for one another. The unique effects of herbs on one individual offer experience for all of us in the setting of shared community learning.

We cultivate a ferocious appetite for learning with in-depth study and rigor in our academic work. In defense of Nature's ability to heal, we take a radical stand against those dominant medical practices that suppress life's innate healing processes. We are the resistance against the distorted views of suppression which are known to cause harm and illness.

We have come to call our school the Academic Community of Radical Nature-cure

Servants of Life

Lovers of Trees

Humble nuts of the mighty Oak

A.C.O.R.N.





Core Faculty Members

Paul Bergner, Medical Herbalist, Clinical Nutritionist

Founder of North American Institute of Medical Herbalism

Primary instructor – Paul is the creator of our course curriculum; he is the voice on all audio teachings and it is his work in Western herbalism that we will primarily study.

Paul Bergner has studied and practiced natural medicine since 1973, with formal studies in naturopathy, medical herbalism, clinical nutrition, traditional Chinese medicine, Ayurvedic medicine, flower essences, yoga therapy, and bodywork, including undergraduate studies in pre-medicine and psychology, and 50 semester hours of doctoral level medical studies at National College of Naturopathic Medicine. He has edited the Medical Herbalism journal since its founding in 1989, and has written seven books on medical herbalism, nutrition, Chinese medicine, ethnobotany, and naturopathic medicine. He has also edited periodicals on clinical nutrition and naturopathic medicine.

Paul directed the clinical herbalism programs at Rocky Mountain Center for Botanical Studies and the NAIMH for eighteen years, training more than 230 certified clinical herbalists in an 1100+ hour education that culminates in an eight-month internship program. He is currently on the regular and clinical faculties of the Colorado School for Clinical Herbalism in Boulder, CO, and the School for Traditional Western Herbalism in Portland, OR. He has been adjunct faculty in nutrition at Naropa University, visiting faculty in nutrition and pathophysiology at the Tai Sophia Institute, and nutrition faculty at the Seven Bowls School of Nutrition. In addition to directing the NAIMH, he teaches herbal Materia medica and therapeutics, clinical nutrition, basic medical sciences, clinical skills, medical history and philosophy, and nature studies.



Heather Luna, Clinical Herbalist, Clinical Nutritionist

Founder & Director of the ACORN School of Herbal Medicine

Co-instructor, administrative director, student advocate

A Clinical Herbalist, Clinical Nutritionist, and resident of Nevada County since her teens, Heather Luna is a graduate of the John Woolman School, the Rocky Mountain Center for Botanical Studies, and the North American Institute of Medical Herbalism. Her teachings are rooted in both medical and folk herbalism. Her passion for Nature has guided her in a practice of herbs, nutrition, bodywork, and the body/mind/spirit phenomenon for the past 20 years.

Trained in various Western and Earth Centered traditions, Heather's understanding of herbal medicine is drawn from the wisdom of the Earth and the knowledge passed down from herbal teachers before. Heather weaves the spiritual and scientific aspects of herbalism into a wealth of information that is steeped in wisdom. Private sessions with Heather offer appropriate guidance in herbal and nutritional counseling, specific dietary programs, coaching through food allergies, connecting with plant and animal allies, therapeutic and uterine massage, vaginal steams, foot bathing, flower essences, relaxation techniques, plant brushings, bee venom therapy and a wide variety of custom herbal preparations.

Heather teaches full time at the ACORN School, manages and runs the Medicine Garden at a local farm in Nevada City and operates the school's Free Clinic Online. She has instructed classes in Western Herbalism in the Sierra Foothills for more than a decade. A lifelong student, mother, beekeeper, massage therapist, and plant medicine whisperer, Heather hunts inspiration and cooks it up in service to inspire others. Her free time is spent gathering plants, making herbal medicines, walking in the woods, enjoying the Yuba River, and spending time with her amazing daughter and her dog. Heather specializes in teaching how to properly "self-care" and nourish oneself to good health through herbs, nutrition, rest, bodywork and the art of simple living close to nature.





Clinical Residency & Roundtable Program

Program Overview

Our **Clinical Residency & Roundtable Program** is our third-year program that brings our students full circle in their herbal journey. All of the rigorous study our students have completed in the first-year program *Footprints in Medical Herbalism* and our second-year program *Advanced Herbalism in the Vitalist Tradition* have brought them to the precipice of becoming a fully trained Clinical Herbalist.

This Program is based on the Roundtable clinical format. Students will attend the ACORN School's monthly Free Clinic as interns to run complete private intake and follow up sessions with actual clients. Interns will write up each case and submit it to the faculty and student body for review and collaborative feedback. While each clinician may only see one client a month, they will gain the experience and insight of every case that comes through our clinic.

Consecutively interns will attend one roundtable meeting each week for teachings and discussion of topics that arise in clinical practice. Roundtable meetings create a sacred space to share the challenges, insights, and moments of celebration of working in a clinic. Come to these ready to be your most authentic self.

Hours

The Clinical Program is a total of 483.5 hours.

- Client face time – 160
- Case Analysis – 190
- Case Review – 90
- Roundtable – 43.5

Prerequisites

This program has a prerequisite requirement of a minimum of 300 hours of training in Foundational Herbalism, plus a minimum of 300 hours of the Advanced training in Vitalist Herbalism. It is not enough to simply have 600 hours of total schooling in herbal medicine for entrance into our Residency Program. Students **MUST** be fluent in Vitalist Therapeutics. If you are not certain that your previous training qualifies you for our Clinical Program, please contact the school to inquire.



General Enrollment Information

Application & Deposit Due Date: 8/29/22

- Prospective students must fill out an application for enrollment.
- You must have previous herbal education & training to apply (see Prerequisites).
- There is a non-refundable \$50 application fee.
- Once applications are accepted there is a deposit required to hold your place in the program.
- You must be 18 years of age or older to attend classes.

How Class Works

1st Day of Class: September 12, 2022 ~ Last Day of Class: May 22, 2023

Mondays 3:00 – 4:30 pm PST

This program is held completely Online

- Roundtable meetings are held weekly via Zoom.
- Interns will perform thorough Client Intakes (average 2 hours) and Follow-up Sessions (1 hour).
- These appointments are virtual (Zoom), allowing us to work with clients all over the country.
- Each client case will be reviewed by Paul Bergner & Heather Luna.
- Student clinicians will submit written cases with a complete analysis breakdown for community review.
- Faculty and community feedback will be given on your clinic cases via Google docs.
 - **HOMEWORK:** All case write ups and clinic handouts must be turned in as a Google Doc file and shared via our Google Drive "Roundtable" folder. Case work submitted in other formats (Word, Pages, PDF, etc) will NOT be graded, reviewed or receive feedback.

Tuition

Total \$2900

1. **Deposit of \$500 is due on or before 8/29/22** - the deposit counts towards your total tuition
2. **Tuition Balance \$2400**
 - Payment in full is due on or before 10/4/2022
 - OR make monthly payments with our ACORN Payment Plan: Once your deposit has been paid, you will have 8 monthly payments of \$300, see the payment schedule below. Custom payments plans are available upon request, please contact ACORN directly.

ACORN Payment Plan

Payments are due on the 1st Tuesday of the month, see the schedule below. Our payment plan helps make the monthly payment affordable. Custom payment schedules can be made to meet your financial needs

8/29/22	10/4/22	11/1/22	12/6/22	1/3/23	2/7/23	3/7/23	4/4/23	5/2/23
\$500 Deposit due	\$300 Tuition Payment #1	\$300 Tuition Payment #2	\$300 Tuition Payment #3	\$300 Tuition Payment #4	\$300 Tuition Payment #5	\$300 Tuition Payment #6	\$300 Tuition Payment #7	\$300 Tuition Payment #8





Clinic Policy for Student Interns

- If for any reason a student clinician does not want to work with a particular client, they may decline the session and inform faculty of their decision.
- Student clinicians are required to show expressed interest and compassion for the clients they do choose to work with.
- Client confidentiality must be maintained and all case records scrubbed for peer review.
- Student clinicians are required to follow through with each client they commit to. This means complete a case write up and communicate with the client after each session via phone or email to discuss treatment plan options and establish connection for future follow up visits.
- Each client must receive a written treatment plan containing all necessary instructions once a protocol has been agreed upon by both the client and the clinician.
- All Herbal Formulas must be rendered through the school pharmacy. To dispense a remedy or formula to a client send an email to the school with a request to fill the order.
- Student Clinicians must attend weekly Roundtable meetings. No more than 3 absences may be permitted in order to graduate.
- All clinic cases shared within the group must be read by each clinic intern and provide proof that they have done so. This is the standard of community learning.

IMPORTANT: Failure to comply with Clinic Policy will result in dismissal from the program.



School Policies

Postponement of Start Date

If the Clinical Program has a postponement of its starting date, due to unforeseen circumstances, all students will be notified immediately via phone, text or email. A new date will be set as soon as possible.

School Closures & Holidays

ACORN may choose to close due to personal illness or an unforeseen circumstance. If this happens students will be notified as soon as possible by phone, text or email. See our Calendar for all breaks and closures.

Classes are not held on the following national holidays:

- New Year's Eve & New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving & the following Friday
- Christmas Eve & Christmas Day

Entrance Requirements

- Previous herbal training/education is a prerequisite for being accepted into the Clinical Program. Acceptance is determined based on experience, training, empathy in working with clients, and the ability to cooperate in our community learning environment. Previous training, experience, or education from another institution will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.
- The school does not discriminate based on disability, race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, transgender status, marital status, national origin, or ancestry.
- Prospective students must have a High School diploma or equivalency to be accepted for enrollment. Students also must be 18 years of age or older to be accepted.
- All students must complete an application and any applicable entrance exams specific to the program they wish to attend.
- Completion of a program does not guarantee a certificate. ACORN will consider attendance record, completion of assignments, behavior and skill level when issuing a certificate.

Enrollment

Prospective students may enroll at any time until the first day of a program. Late enrollments will be accepted at the discretion of ACORN.

Requirements to Earn Certificate

- 1) **Attendance:** You must attend all online classes.
- 2) **Tardiness:** You must attend class on time.
- 3) **Homework:** You must complete ALL assigned coursework to earn a certificate, no exceptions.

Attendance & Tardiness

Students are expected to arrive on time for class with proper materials and all assignments completed. An overall attendance rate of at least 90% is required to pass the Clinical Program. The student may be put on



probation, with written notice, if attendance requirements are not being met during a course. Instructors may request your withdrawal from a course or program if absences or tardiness are excessive.

Absences

- **Excused Absences**

- Students are allowed 3 Excused Absences from Roundtable meetings. Make up hours may be gained by watching the recorded class time and submitting written reflection notes to earn attendance hours. Only 3 roundtable meetings may be made up this way. Any further absences will be treated as Unexcused and a loss of credit hours will result. Student Clinicians must be prepared to attend free clinics, weekly client intakes and follow-ups.
- If you are sick, ill or unable to attend class for any reason you are required to do the following in order to have an Excused Absence:
 1. Notify ACORN via phone or email no later than 24 hours before class. List your reason(s) for missing class and when you expect to return.
 2. Turn in all homework due for the class by the due date. If this is not possible you must contact your instructor to discuss this.
 3. Contact the Director to schedule a make-up class, and request the zoom recording to watch. You will not receive credit for a make-up class unless you submit a copy of your notes as evidence.

- **Unexcused Absence**

- If you miss class and do not have an Excused Absence, you will lose credit for those classes. Excessive Unexcused Absences will result in poor attendance record that will prevent the student from earning their Certificates.
- 3 Unexcused Absences constitute a meeting with the Director and a written probation. Specific terms will be determined by the Director at the time of the meeting.

- **Tardiness:**

- Students arriving late for 3 classes will be docked one full day of class, which may, at the school's discretion, be made up with a special assignment.
- Excessive tardiness will constitute a meeting with the Director and a written probation. Specific terms will be determined by the Director at the time of the meeting.

- **Leave of Absence:**

- Students who are unable to continue classes for medical reasons or severe personal problems will be required to take a leave of absence until they are able to return to class. There are no fees due to this type of absence. The Director will require proper documentation to grant this request.

Incomplete & Late Assignments

- All homework assignments must be completed by their due date in order to participate in the next class. If an assignment is not turned in by the due date the student will lose attendance credits for the class that it was assigned for. This is imperative to keep up with the pace of the classes. Each assignment prepares you for the next class.
- Assignments turned in late will be accepted with a late fee of \$25 per assignment and a scheduled make-up class at the rate of \$50/hour.



- All late work must be turned in at once with the late fee(s) in order to receive credit.
- All assignments must be completed in order to earn a certificate.
- **If incomplete assignments are not resolved within 7 days after the last day of the Clinical Program, a certificate will not be awarded.** In order to earn your certificates, all missing and incomplete assignments must be turned in, late fees paid, and a reinstatement fee of \$100 paid to grade and determine if certification criteria has been met.

Progress Reports & Grades

Clinical Program students will have all their client work reviewed by faculty and feedback will be given on each case. Faculty feedback on student case work will be counted as periodic progress reports. Grades on any other assignments, quizzes and exams will be noted by faculty.

Conduct Policy

All students are expected to act maturely and are required to respect other students and faculty members. We are tolerant of all peoples and expect as much from any student attending our school.

Dismissal

Any student may be dismissed for violations of school policy, as specified in this Student Handbook. A student also may be withdrawn from classes by ACORN if he or she does not prepare sufficiently, neglects assignments, or makes unsatisfactory progress. The Director, after consultation with all parties involved, makes the final decision.

The Director may temporarily suspend a student whose conduct is disruptive or unacceptable to the academic setting. After appropriate counseling, students who demonstrate a genuine desire to learn and comply with the school standards of conduct may be allowed to resume attendance. The Director will review each case and decide upon re-admittance.

Student Complaints

Student complaints of any nature should be brought to the attention of the school Director in order to be resolved. The Director has the final say on all disputes.

Payment Policy

All payments are expected to be made by the due date given. Payments not received on time are subject to Late Fees, and students may be prohibited to attend class until payment has been made.

Late Tuition Payments

- Payment is considered late on the second day after the due date (there is a one-day grace period to submit payment). ACORN charges a Late Fee for tuition payments received after this time.

Late Fees for Late Payments

- A late payment fee is assessed at \$10.00 per day until the payment is made. Late fees will be due at the same time as the past due payment.

Credit Card Declined or Bad Checks Written

- If the credit card provided declines or if the check written for tuition comes back as insufficient funds, the student will be given notice immediately and will have 48 hours to provide payment before Late Fees are assessed and further action is taken.



Bad Check Fees

- In addition to Late Fees, there will be a one-time bad check fee of \$25.00 that will be added to the payment due. After two Bad Checks written to ACORN, we will decline that form of payment and require a Credit Card moving forward.

Financial Hardship

- If you experience a financial hardship that prevents you from making tuition payments, please contact the Director as soon as you know you cannot make your next payment. The Director can hear your case and try to work out a reasonable arrangement to keep you enrolled.

Refund Policy / Disenrollment

- **Withdrawal from the Clinical Program:**
 - If you decide not to attend the Clinical Program after you have paid your deposit and signed the Enrollment Agreement, please send your *request to withdraw* in writing (letter or email) to ACORN, Attn: Heather Luna.
 - The deposit of \$300 is non-refundable.
 - Tuition paid for classes not attended is refundable, see below.
- **Monthly Payments:**
 - Monthly tuition payments made to ACORN for classes attended are non-refundable.
 - If you pay in advance several months and need to withdraw from the Clinical Program, you will be refunded for any pre-paid months starting from the next month's billing cycle.
- **Paid in Full:**
 - If you have paid for the Clinical Program in full and wish to withdraw, you will be refunded from the next month's billing cycle until the end of the program. For example, if you withdraw in December, you will receive January through May tuition.
- **Classes Attended:** No refunds are given for classes attended.

Placement Assistance

ACORN does not offer employment placement assistance to graduates. We make no guarantee, expressed or implied, of future employment.

Certificate Earned

Completion of the *Clinical Residency & Roundtable* program earns the student a certificate from the ACORN School of Herbal Medicine – for completion of 483.5 total hours.





Clinical Residency & Roundtable Program

School Calendar 2022-23

Mondays 3:00 pm – 4:30 pm PST

September 2022						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

October 2022						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

November 2022						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

December 2022						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

January 2023						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

February 2023						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28				

March 2023						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

April 2023						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

May 2023						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

	1 st Day of School
	Regular School Days
	No School
	Last Day of School