

THE UNIVERSITY *of* MONTANA WESTERN

Natural Horsemanship Program

About the Program

The University of Montana Western Natural Horsemanship Program is designed to teach students cooperative and non-coercive techniques and methods for working with and training horses.

Because the program's main purpose is to educate the student, not the horse, **the student must have access to a suitable horse** to use in the program. This horse should be able to walk, trot, canter and stop while working within a group of other horses or alone, without bucking, misbehaving or causing safety issues and that can be tied without pulling back.

These horses must be a minimum of three years of age, and only geldings and mares are allowed in the program. Horses of any breed or discipline are welcomed. These horses must also be free of any chronic unsoundness that would prevent them from being able to withstand the necessary workload.

All horses will be evaluated for suitability for each level of instruction at the beginning of each academic semester and in the event that a change in the Natural Horsemanship (NH) program horse must be made because of unforeseen circumstances. In addition, each student is expected to have a minimum level of horse handling and riding abilities prior to acceptance in the program.

This ensures that students receive the most benefits from their experiences in the NH classes. We encourage students who feel they may be lacking in their horse handling and riding skills to apply to UMW for any of the Equine Studies degree options and to take riding lessons locally during their freshman year and then apply to the Natural Horsemanship program for entry during their sophomore year (NH program classes can be completed within three years).

Prior natural horsemanship experience is NOT required for either the student or the horse, and students who do have prior natural horsemanship experience should realize they will start at the same level as those without to ensure the necessary foundation is in place and each student knows the same techniques and methods prior to moving onto the upper levels.

Those students with prior natural horsemanship experience will be challenged to refine their skills during the foundation groundwork, and along with all of the NH students, will learn critical skills and methods, which will be built upon and integrated in upper levels of the program.

Students should realize this program requires a time and financial requirement above and beyond the normal collegiate experience. This commitment includes but is not limited to routine and emergency veterinary and farrier care, required tack and equipment, transportation expenses for the horse to Dillon, proof of required annual vaccinations, Certificate of Veterinary Inspection and brand inspections for incoming out-of-state horses. All students taking Natural Horsemanship or NH classes are charged a program fee, which covers the cost of boarding at the Montana Center for Horsemanship and other course fees. This is a non-refundable fee charged at the start of each semester.

Application Process

Students must apply to UMW and be admitted to the college. The attached supplemental application must be completed after admission but before the start of the fall semester.

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Application Instructions

In addition to completing the attached form (pages two through five) please include the following with your application.

ESSAY ADDRESSING HORSE EXPERIENCE/ACHIEVEMENTS, GOALS & ASPIRATIONS

Write a one- to three-page personal essay including the following information in paragraph format with thought given to sentence structure, grammar, spelling and punctuation:

1. Describe your interest, expectations and goals regarding the University of Montana Western Natural Horsemanship degree program, including any personal or professional aspirations.
2. Include how this Natural Horsemanship degree will integrate with your prior horsemanship experience and your perception of your current horsemanship abilities. While including this information into the essay, try to work in the answers to the following questions:
 - a. How many years have you had the personal responsibility for care of a horse or horses?
 - b. How many years have you owned horses?
 - c. How many years have you ridden or worked with horses and in what capacity?
 - d. Have you received professional instruction or training in the care, management, training, or riding of horses and if so, in what capacity and for how long?
 - e. Do you have any experience with Natural Horsemanship either on your own, through clinics, seminars, etc. and if so, in what capacity and for how long?
 - f. Have you been a member of 4-H, FFA, Pony Club, rodeo or any horseman's club or breed association in any equine-related capacity or competed in any equine discipline?

- g. If yes, please give details as to level and duration of involvement, any achievements obtained, as well as when and where.
- h. The essay must be no longer than 1,500 words and it must be typed in 11 or 12 point font with either single or double spacing. Attach the completed essay to the application.

LETTERS OF REFERENCE

Each student must include three (3) letters of reference (one from a person knowledgeable about his/her academic performance, one from a person knowledgeable about his/her skills with horses and one other letter from a person of the student's choosing) to include with the application.

PERSONAL VIDEO

Each student must include a short video of themselves with their horse to assist us in our application process. Preferably, the video will be of the student with the horse they intend to use in the NH program.

The video should include footage of the student saddling their horse and then riding the horse at a walk, trot (or rack, running walk, etc), canter, and a stop. This does not need to be a professional video, but does need to be of sufficient length and quality to show the student and their horse's current capabilities.

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Personal Data

Full Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone (____) _____ Cell Phone (____) _____

E-mail Address _____

Date of Birth _____

Application Status

Please check the appropriate box regarding your application status at the University of Montana Western (UMW):

- I have applied to UMW and have been accepted to the university.
- I have applied to UMW and still need to submit more application materials (including waiting on transcripts, test scores, etc.).
- I have not yet applied to UMW (Please note: you must be accepted to UMW before you can register for classes.).
- I am a current UMW student in good academic standing.

Academic Achievement

For Freshmen: ACT score _____ / _____
English/Math/Reading/Science/Composite Writing

SAT score _____ / _____
Reading/Math/Writing Overall

High School GPA: _____ Rank in Class/Number in Class: _____ / _____

For Transfer Students: Cumulative GPA from last institution _____

For Current UMW Students: Cumulative GPA _____

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Suitable Horse, Physical, Financial & Transportation Requirements

Each student is required to confirm the following statements (check your response):

The horse I intend to use in the Natural Horsemanship degree program is at least three years of age and is either a mare or a gelding; has no chronic unsoundness that would prevent it from being able to complete the necessary workload in a safe and humane manner; can be safely tied and has no history of pulling back or breaking halters or lead ropes when tied; and can be ridden safely and can walk, trot, canter and stop when ridden either in a group of other horses or alone, without bucking or misbehaving.

Yes No

I have the financial ability to pay for routine and emergency veterinary and farrier bills, as well as tack and equipment required for the program.

Yes No

I have the physical ability to lead my horse at a trot through deep sand for 50 yards; the physical ability to lift a saddle (25-50 pounds) to the height of a horse's back (60-70 inches from the ground); and the physical ability to dismount my horse from either side or to mount my horse from either side rapidly if the situation calls for it.

Yes No

Other Background Information

Please list other extracurricular activities/hobbies you have been involved in and how long you have been involved in that activity. (Add additional information on separate sheets as needed).

Activity/Hobby	Approximate dates
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____

Other Information

Please tell us how you found out about the University of Montana Western Natural Horsemanship degree program.

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Degree Information

I am interested in earning:

Associate of Applied Science in Natural Horsemanship

Bachelor of Science in Natural Horsemanship

Option area: _____

Please Note

Natural Horsemanship classes are sequential and are only offered beginning in the fall term.

Completing the Application

To successfully complete this application you must:

1. Complete this application form.
2. Attach a copy of your high school transcripts or a copy of your transcripts from all colleges previously attended.
Note: You must submit these transcripts with this application even if you have already submitted them to the UMW admissions office or if you are a current UMW student.
3. Attach your completed personal essay to the application.
4. Include the three letters of reference and attach them to this application.
5. Include your personal video.
6. Sign and date the application below.
7. If student is under 18 years of age, then have parents or guardians sign and date the application as well.
8. Return this application and all application materials to:

The University of Montana Western

Office of Admissions

710 South Atlantic

Dillon, Montana 59725

