Birthwise Midwifery School

PRESENTS THE:

Midwifery Assistant Certificate Program

2018 CATALOG
During my time in the birth world, I’ve heard more than one person with a passion for birth wish that there was a profession that was “more than a doula, but not quite a midwife.” The sentiment often seems to stem from an interest to be deeply invested in holistic maternity care while avoiding some of the heavier, more difficult aspects of providing primary care. This desire to serve is also mirrored in the needs of birthing women. Holistic maternity care isn’t just about prenatal and postpartum appointments and home and birth center births—it’s about preconcept and childbirth education; celebration and honoring of pregnancy/birth/new parenthood; help and support for primary care providers during birth; and deep and undivided attention and support for women during the postpartum period. In short, it’s about more than simply what a midwife or other primary maternity care provider often has time, space, and energy to provide. This holistic expanse needs another professional to help fill it, and I think that professional is the Midwifery Assistant. As a trained and capable second set of hands at a birth, and as a provider of adjunct maternity care services like Childbirth Education, postpartum support and Placental Encapsulation (and so much more!) Midwifery Assistants are poised to be the next in-demand profession. I am excited that Birthwise Midwifery School is offering this training, which is truly unlike any other. Not a class—not a weekend workshop—this rigorous and thorough certificate training program prepares students to be confident, competent, capable providers of much-needed services both to overextended midwives and to birthing women in search of a more well-rounded experience in the childbearing year.

—Abby Hall Luca, CPM
Program Director
A 16-month, low-residency program in the heart of Maine’s Lake Region…

Birthwise Midwifery School’s Midwifery Assistant Certificate Program is designed to accommodate students who would like to receive in-person training from a renowned educational institution while remaining in their home communities for clinical practice. To this end, we’ve designed our program to be a low-residency training with an orientation week and three 2-week academic sessions spread over a period of 16 months.

**Program Structure**

At the beginning of each session, students come to Bridgton, Maine to attend an intensive 2 weeks of class at the school. (Please see the following page for a schedule of classes). At the completion of the in-class portion of the session, students will return home to work in Clinical Assistantships with midwives in their local areas. Through the Assistantship, students will have the opportunity to train as birth assistants, one of the many skill sets they will acquire as part of the program. After successful completion of all academic and clinical requirements, students will be granted certificates as Midwifery Assistants.

**The Clinical Assistantship**

Prior to beginning the program, accepted students should begin talking to local area midwives and beginning to identify possible preceptors for their clinical training. Starting in the second session and continuing throughout the remainder of the program, students will be required to work with out-of-hospital midwifery preceptors attending a specified number of births, prenatal visits, and postpartum visits. The Clinical Assistantship gives students the opportunity to develop skills learned at Birthwise, and its requirements must be met in order for a student to graduate.

**Graduation Requirements**

In order to successfully complete the program, students must:

- Attend each academic session in its entirety
- Pass each class, test, and skills exam with an 80 or above
- Document supervised attendance as a Midwifery Assistant at 20 births
- Document supervised attendance as a Midwifery Assistant at 15 prenatal visits
- Document supervised attendance as a Midwifery Assistant at 40 postpartum visits.
- Complete all required documentation and clinical evaluation forms
- Complete approved Labor and Postpartum Doula Trainings
- Attend 12 hours of Childbirth Education as an observer or assistant
- Teach (or co-teach, at least 50%) a series of Childbirth Education Classes
- Complete a Fertility Awareness Project
- Complete a Placental Medicine Project
- Complete a Birth Arts Project
- Document 6 hours shadowing a lactation counselor or consultant
- Pay all outstanding tuition and fees.
## Schedule of Classes:

### Orientation
**July 23-27, 2018**
- Orientation
- Overview of the Human Body I
- Medical Terminology
- Introduction to Assistantship

### Session One
**October 22-November 2, 2018**
- Normal Pregnancy
- Normal Physiologic Birth
- Professionalism I
- Placenta Medicine
- Overview of the Human Body II
- Fertility Awareness Training
- Assisting with Normal and Complicated Birth
- Professionalism II
- Teaching Childbirth Ed I
- Clinical Assistantship I

### Session Two
**February 18-March 1, 2019**
- Pregnancy Care and Complications
- The Postpartum Period
- Professionalism III

### Session Three
**June 17-28, 2019**
- Whole Foods Nutrition for the Childbearing Year
- Lactation and Breastfeeding
- Teaching Childbirth Ed II
- Belly Casting and Placenta Art
- Clinical Assistantship IV
- Testing and Scenario Evaluations
- Birth Center Administration
- Professionalism IV

*Birth Doula Workshop, Postpartum Doula Workshop, Neonatal Resuscitation Workshop, and Basic Life Support will take place during one of the three main sessions—dates TBA.

**Doula workshops are not included in tuition and may be taken when offered at Birthwise or in student’s home community. Documented previous completion of these workshops waives this requirement.
About Birthwise:

Birthwise Midwifery School is a small private institution founded in 1994 in Bridgton, Maine. Over the past 24 years, the school has evolved into a comprehensive three-year training program for Certified Professional Midwives (CPMs), and in 2017, Birthwise began offering the Midwifery Assistant Certificate Program in addition to its midwifery offerings.

The school is located in the beautiful lakes region of southwestern Maine, one hour west of Portland and ¼ hour east of North Conway and the White Mountains of New Hampshire.

Our facility is an historic brick colonial house consisting of classroom and clinical space, offices, a library, a kitchen, and a common area for students. An attached wing contains a freestanding birth center, The Birth House. The Birthwise Community Clinic, our student-midwife-run clinic, operates out of The Birth House.

Bridgton is a small New England village that has much to offer the outdoor enthusiast and has many other advantages of small-town life.
The adult learning model: Self-motivated preparation, theoretical learning, and acquisition of hands-on skill...

Class Preparation

The foundation of the adult learning model is self-motivated preparation by the student. Rather than simply showing up to class ready to encounter material for the first time via lecture, the expectation at Birthwise is that students will attend academic course sessions having already completed all readings and assignments laid out in class syllabi and that they will come to class prepared to engage in deeper discussion about, and hands-on application of, the material presented in class. Courses may require that any of the following be completed before class: textbook or online readings, study guides, presentations, hands-on projects, or journaling.

In-Class Theoretical Learning

Each of the program’s six academic sessions begins with a one- or two-week series of on-campus courses at Birthwise. Courses are taught by credentialed, knowledgeable faculty, and they set high academic standards for students. Class time is spent integrating, applying, clarifying, and discussing the material that students encountered at home during class preparation. Days are long, so students are expected to come to class fully prepared so that evenings can be a time of rest and integration. Assessment of in-class theoretical learning comes in the form of at-home and classroom testing. The classroom atmosphere in the program is intimate, interactive, and informal.

Hands-On Skills Practice

In addition to theoretical learning, students in the Midwifery Assistant Program will work, both in class and at home with their preceptors, on developing the skills necessary for birth assisting and beyond. Students should be prepared to serve as models for each other while learning skills such as taking blood pressure and pulse. Live and simulation models are utilized for other skills such as fetal heart auscultation and belly palpation. Students will work to develop learned skills in their Clinical Assistantship placements, and their clinical skills will be assessed in OSATS (objective, structured assessment of technical skills) exams at the end of the program.
+ Assistants are trained in a multitude of offerings…

The goal of this certificate program is to create competent adjunct maternity care workers who can offer a variety of services to the women and families in their areas. While students may decide to specialize and focus on one or two particular areas when working as Midwifery Assistants, they will be trained through the program to offer:

**Birth Assisting Services**

Much of this program, especially the theoretical learning and hands-on clinical skill practice, is geared towards teaching students to be a capable second set of hands at a birth. As a Birth Assistant, you will not be providing care to your own clients, but you will be assisting a midwife in providing labor and birth care for home and/or birth center birth. You will be trained in all of the skills necessary to assist with a normal, uncomplicated birth, and you will also be trained to assist in case of complications or urgent situations, with special focus on more common emergent occurrences.

**Childbirth Education Classes**

The goal of many of our core classes like Normal Pregnancy and Normal Physiologic Birth is to build the foundational knowledge of the normal processes that you will need to draw on as a Childbirth Educator. Coupled with two courses that specifically address creating and teaching a series of classes, these courses will prepare you to teach birthing people in your local community everything they need to know about preparing for a natural birth. You’ll both observe a series of classes and teach your own during the program.

**Fertility Awareness Classes**

As a Midwifery Assistant, you will be trained to offer classes to your local community on the Fertility Awareness Method (FAM) of natural family planning. In preparation for beginning to share this information with others, students will track and analyze their own cycles, and as a final class project, they will design a course to offer locally to women interested in using FAM to either avoid or achieve pregnancy.

**Labor and Birth Doula Services**

During the program, students will be required, if they have not already done so, to attend an approved training as a labor and birth doula. For students who are interested, a weekend-long training will be held on campus just before or after one of the academic sessions, though students are also welcomed to take courses in their home communities. This training will help students attune to the needs of labor women and develop their skills as support persons.
Postpartum Doula Services

Students will also be required in the program, if they have not already done so, to attend an approved training as a postpartum doula. For students who are interested, a weekend-long training will be held either before or after one of the academic sessions. This training will help students attune to the needs of postpartum clients and develop their skills as support persons. At the completion of the program, students will be able to offer standalone doula services to postpartum parents, regardless of their place of birth. In addition, students will be prepared to offer support with breastfeeding, newborn care, and nutrition to postpartum families.

Placenta Medicine

During Session 1, students will learn techniques for placenta encapsulation, preparation of raw or cooked placenta in food in the immediate postpartum, and tincturing of placenta in an alcohol base. A service that is often high in demand, placenta encapsulation can be a useful addition to a Midwifery Assistant’s skill set. Students will learn techniques for preparation in class, and they will be required to demonstrate proficiency in at least one variation of placenta medicine through a final project.

Birth Art

This fun and creative potential offering for Midwifery Assistants helps connect birthing people to their experiences of pregnancy, labor and birth through art. During the program, you will learn and try birth art skills such as belly casting, placenta printing, and dehydrated cord art. These skills will involve just a little class time and a lot of fun (and sometimes messy!) experimentation at home, and proficiency in at least one skill is demonstrated through a final project.

Basic Office Administration and Billing

For all Midwifery Assistants, but especially for those planning on working with midwives in busy birth centers, basic knowledge of midwifery office administration and billing means that they can potentially utilize these skills as birth center staff members. While it is not an expectation or requirement of the program that students work in this capacity, the program does offer some entry-level training for those who may be interested or who may be working as part of a center with need of additional administrative staff.
Tuition and Fees

16-Month Program Tuition and Fees: $6200

Tuition is divided between academic sessions and each payment is due before the academic session begins.

- Enrollment fee: $300 (applied toward tuition)
- Orientation Tuition: $830 (after applied enrollment fee)
- Session 1 Tuition: $1690
- Session 2 Tuition: $1690
- Session 3 Tuition: $1690

Payments must be made before a student begins each academic session and may be made with cash, check, or over the phone with a credit card. Attendance at a session will not be allowed if payment has not been made. Federal financial aid (FAFSA) is not currently available for this program.

Additional Expenses:

- Application Fee: $30
- Labor/Birth Doula workshop: $400* (approx.)
- Postpartum Doula Workshop: $400* (approx.)
- Books: $450 (approx. if bought new)
- Student Equipment from Everything Birth: $99.95
- Placental Encapsulation Equipment: $60-$100 (approx. if bought new)
- Travel to Bridgton, ME for academic sessions: Varies
- Lodging and food for academic sessions: Varies
- Fees for achieving Advanced Status: Varies
- Costs associated with clinical experiences: Varies (examples: cell phone, pager, gas)
- Computer: Varies

*Students who have already taken approved doula workshops or who would prefer to take the workshops in their home states should provide proof of completion to waive this requirement.
The Application Process

**Academic Prerequisites:**
All applicants must have a high school diploma or equivalent.

**Strongly Recommended Preparation:**
Applicants are encouraged to do a great deal of independent reading on childbirth and midwifery care.

**The Application Process:**
Prospective students must submit the following either in print or electronically:

- A completed application
- 2 letters of recommendation (may be academic, professional, or birth-related)
- An application essay
- The $30 application fee

All materials must be received before the deadlines listed below. If accepted, a student pays a $300 enrollment fee to hold her/his place, and the fee is applied towards tuition at the start of the program. Birthwise does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, gender, religion, sexual orientation, marital status, ethnic origin, age, or physical ability.

- **Early Admissions Application Deadline:** April 15, 2018
- **Regular Admissions Deadline:** Open until program is full

Prospective students will be notified of their acceptance status within two (2) weeks of the application deadline.

**Visit Birthwise:**
We welcome visitors to our Bridgton campus. Please call to schedule a campus tour.

For applications, please contact Abby Hall Luca, Program Director

Abby@birthwisemidwifery.edu
Previous education and/or experience in the field of midwifery or midwifery assisting may allow students to advance through the Birthwise program more quickly.

To waive a course, the student must submit an application stating information about the course previously taken and provide documentation from the institution where it was taken regarding the instructor’s qualifications, the number of class hours, the grade received, and the learning objectives covered. Course waiver applications must be submitted at the time of enrollment, prior to starting Session 1. The final decision to waive each course is determined by the Program Director, and each submission is considered on a case-by-case basis. In order to confirm equivalent knowledge, the student may be required to take a written test from Birthwise. All students, regardless of advanced status, must take and pass class, final, and skills exams.

To challenge a course based on life experience or previous study that directly relevant to the learning objectives of a Birthwise course, students may also submit an application for Advanced Status. The application process requires a fee.

To challenge clinical credits, students must provide complete documentation of any previous midwifery assisting experience on the application for advanced status, including information on the preceptor, signed documents specifying the type and amount of experience, and written evaluations form the preceptor on that experience. The advanced status application includes a fee as well as a fee per credit hour awarded. The Program Director will review all applications for advanced status, and decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis. Clinical credit waivers will be negotiated with the student before the start of Session 1. A maximum of 3 out of 6 clinical credits may be challenged.

If you are transferring into the Midwifery Assistant Certificate Program from a midwifery school, please contact Program Director Abby Hall Luca at abby@birthwisemidwifery.edu to discuss your case. You will be able to submit an Application for Advanced Status, and credits may be transferred on a case-by-case basis.
Birthwise Midwifery School
Midwifery Assistant Certificate Program

24 South High Street
Bridgton, ME 04009

207-647-5968

www.birthwisemidwifery.edu