Birthwise Student Handbook 2020-21
The Birthwise 2020-21 Student Handbook was originally published on January 31, 2020.

The content of this publication is subject to change at any time. When changes are made, students will be notified and will be expected to read and understand any changes. Changes incorporated into this version can be found in the appendix.

Please direct any questions to Info@birthwisemidwifery.edu
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About Birthwise

Birthwise is a small, non-profit educational institution founded in 1994 in Bridgton, Maine. A Birthwise education prepares students for practice in free-standing birth centers or home birth practices.

The school offers a comprehensive three-year certificate program for Certified Professional Midwives (CPMs) accredited by the Midwifery Education Accreditation Council (MEAC) and licensed by the Department of Education in the States of Maine and New Hampshire. Birthwise has been approved by SEVIS for enrollment of international students, and students are eligible to apply for Federal Student Aid through the U.S. Department of Education (FAFSA). Graduates are eligible to sit for the national certification exam through NARM and, if successful, become CPMs.

In addition to the Midwifery Certificate program, Birthwise offers DONA Doula Workshops held several times each year.

Birthwise Vision and Mission Statement

Vision...

Our vision is that every person has access to safe and empowering midwifery care that is representative of them and their community.

Mission...

The Birthwise Midwifery School mission is to train skilled and compassionate direct-entry midwives who safeguard physiological birth by providing care that is informed both by tradition and scientific evidence.

Philosophy...

- Pregnancy and birth are natural processes that work best when undisturbed. Normal healthy pregnant people often do not benefit from, and can be hindered by, routine medical intervention.
- Birth has spiritual, aesthetic, and personal significance for birthing parents and their families.
- Midwives should be available as primary caregivers to all pregnant people and their infants.
- Giving birth at home or in a freestanding birth center are viable and safe options that should be available to people today and in the future.
- A person’s right to choose and have decision-making power in their care, to receive continuous care from known providers, and to share in the responsibility for their care are cornerstone concepts for midwives. This model of care encourages a relationship of empowerment and collaboration between the client and the midwife.
- Every individual and family have diverse desires and needs when it comes to childbirth. At Birthwise we aim to train midwives that appreciate, accommodate and reflect this diversity. Our faculty and alumni represent a spectrum of approaches to midwifery care and, in the Birthwise curriculum, these varied approaches are treated with equal respect and attention.
- Midwifery is a positive force in both human ecology and global politics. As holistic, natural childbirth, midwifery preserves a primordial cultural tradition. In the strengthening of family units and birthing parents in particular, the respect for the natural birth process, the holistic approach to care, and the cost-effectiveness of midwifery care, we see midwives as being a key ingredient in creating a sustainable world.

Learning Environment and Faculty
Cohort Size: Enrollment is limited to 20 students per cohort, ensuring that the classroom environment is intimate and interactive.

Adult Learning Model: The structure of the programs requires a highly motivated adult learner with a commitment to putting in many hours of study outside of class time. The faculty is directed to use class time to integrate, apply, clarify, facilitate discussion, and share personal experience more than to reiterate the assigned textbook reading. We utilize an active, discussion and competency-based approach to education.

Holistic and Integrative Education: The Birthwise approach to midwifery and midwifery assistant education is holistic and integrates components of traditional midwifery with modern maternity care practices in a way that best serves clients and their babies in the current context.

Faculty: Birthwise Midwifery school has approximately 20 active faculty members in the core midwifery program, with additional instructors who teach elective courses. Four of the instructors are on staff at Birthwise, while the remaining are adjunct instructors. Instructors live in Maine, New Hampshire and Massachusetts, and include Certified Professional Midwives (CPMs), Certified Nurse Midwives (CNMs), Nurse Practitioners (NPs), Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs), International Board-Certified Lactation Consultants (IBCLCs), an herbalist and more. Most of the instructors are in active midwifery practice, in home-birth, birth-center and hospital-based settings.

Please reference the faculty contact list later in this catalog for a full list of faculty members.

Equity and Inclusion: Birthwise Midwifery School is committed to expanding access to midwifery education and midwifery care in the United States. We recognize that racism and structural oppression limit access to midwifery care and to midwifery education for Black, Indigenous, People of Color and members of the LGBTQAI+ communities (and we recognize that these communities are not distinct, and that folks may identify with multiple marginalized groups, compounding the impact). We are committed to using an equity lens through our work as a school, both in the way we support and engage staff and faculty, and in the way we train midwives. We recognize that inclusion is not a destination, but rather a process. As an institution, we will make mistakes and continue to learn from them, grow and do better. We recognize that our students will also make mistakes, and we want our students to learn from them, grow and do better.

We are proud of the rich tapestry of communities from which our students come, and which they will serve, and we honor the diversity of our students. We aim to reflect that diversity in the curriculum and prepare students to skillfully practice in communities across the cultural spectrum.

The Midwifery Certificate Program

Program Objectives

A. To have at least 80% of graduates become nationally certified by NARM and/or licensed to practice midwifery in their own states.
B. To prepare graduates to be autonomous providers of prenatal, intrapartum, postpartum, and early newborn care for families and healthy persons who choose to have their babies at home or in birth centers.
C. To prepare graduates to provide routine well body care.
D. To deliver an effective and accountable educational model for direct-entry midwives.
E. To prepare our students for entry into and involvement in the political landscape of midwifery in the US and abroad.
F. To offer classes and continuing education opportunities to aspiring and practicing midwives and maternity care providers.

Requirements to complete the Midwifery Program

Academic Prerequisites:
- A high school diploma or equivalent
- Doula training (can be done at Birthwise before classes begin—contact us for more information)
- CPR certification (does not have to be current)

Strongly Recommended Preparation:
- Successful completion of a Biology and/or Anatomy & Physiology course from an accredited institution of higher education.
- Experience in the field of healthcare or childbirth (as doula, childbirth educator, attendance at midwifery conferences/workshops, volunteer work with a midwife, attending breastfeeding classes).
- Independent reading and research on childbirth and midwifery.

Other requirements:
- A car and license to drive
- Fluency in the English language
- A cellphone
- A computer (laptop is preferable) with internet access
- Physical ability to carry out the work of a midwife

Curriculum Overview and Program Options

Class Preparation and Homework: Class time is divided between didactic, classroom-based learning and hands-on skill development. Preparation for each six to eight-hour class day usually requires 12 to 16 hours of study outside of class. Each student is expected to keep up with the reading and homework to fully participate in class discussions. This frees class time for interactive learning, such as discussion, case studies, student presentations, exercises and skill development.

CPM Credentialing: Upon graduation from Birthwise, students are eligible to sit for the North American Registry of Midwives (NARM) exam. Passing the NARM written exam in conjunction with graduation from Birthwise results in being nationally credentialed as a CPM. Most U.S. states use the CPM credential as a requirement for licensure. CPMs are regulated on a state-by-state basis, so students are encouraged to do their own research regarding the state in which they will eventually practice.
Our program is approved by the state of California, a state with its own unique law that requires midwives not only to have their NARM certification, but also to have attended an approved school.

Preceptorship: Birthwise students may not complete preceptorships in certain states, including New York, New Mexico, Florida, Illinois, North Carolina, West Virginia, Wyoming, Oklahoma, Oregon, Nebraska and Kentucky. For a complete list of states in which students may complete preceptorships please contact robin@birthwisemidwifery.edu.

Length of Program: Our program is designed to be completed in three years for full time matriculating students, excluding any leaves of absence. If a student enrolls in our program part time for any of the 6 semesters, it will extend their time at Birthwise. Our program must be completed within 4.5 years of initial enrollment, excluding any leaves of absence, for full-time students and within 6 years for part-time students.

Program Options:
Applicants can choose between two options for our program: The Campus Option and the Community Option. The distinctions between these two programs are detailed below.

Community Option Overview
- The Community Option utilizes a low-residency educational model consisting of an orientation week and eleven two-week academic sessions at the Birthwise campus in Bridgton, while simultaneously working with a midwifery practice in the student’s home community. This is not an online or distance program.
- Course assignments are done at home between sessions so that students are prepared for their classes while on campus.
- The preceptorship can vary in length, depending on the volume of births that occur at the preceptor’s practice.

Each credit is equivalent to 15 class hours or 45 clinical hours of preceptorship

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| Academic Session 6: 2 weeks in August | }
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### Academic Session 9: 2 weeks in February

### Academic Session 10: 2 weeks in May

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<td><strong>14.2 credits</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Minimum Credits for Graduation: 107.2 credit

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**Campus Option Overview**

- The Birthwise Campus Option consists of 4 academic semesters on campus, followed by 3 semesters of preceptorship with preceptors chosen by the student and approved by the Clinical Director.
- The student is placed in a clinical rotation with a local preceptor in the second and third semester for six to eight hours per week.
- The full-time student can expect to carry a course load of fifteen to twenty credits per semester and attend classes approximately three days per week for 6 hours each day.
- Most students relocate outside of Maine for their preceptorship. The preceptorship can vary in length, depending on the volume of births that occur at their preceptor’s practice.

*Each credit is equivalent to 15 class hours or 45 clinical hours of preceptorship*

### Semester One: Apr - Jul 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Name</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Historical Roots of the CPM</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overview of the Human Body Part 1</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normal Labor and Birth</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normal Prenatal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skills Practice 1</td>
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</tr>
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Birthwise Student Handbook 2020-2021 Updated 2020.09.08
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional Midwifery 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Counseling Skills and Group</td>
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<td>Research Methods</td>
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**Semester Two: Aug - Dec 2020**

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<thead>
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<th>Course Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Midwifery &amp; Social Justice 1</td>
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<tbody>
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<td>Normal Newborn</td>
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<tr>
<td>Complications of Labor &amp; Birth</td>
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<tr>
<td>Therapeutic Nutrition</td>
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<td>Homeopathy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skills Practice 3</td>
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<td>Midwifery &amp; Social Justice 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Newborn Complications</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professional Midwifery 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Well Body Care</td>
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<td>Hospital Birth Seminar</td>
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<td>VBAC/ Cesarean Semester</td>
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<td>Suturing Workshop</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Research Info</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clinical Rotation 2</td>
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**Semester Four: Aug - Dec 2021**

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<tr>
<td>Professional Midwifery 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lab work for Midwives</td>
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<td>Pharmacology for Midwives</td>
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<tr>
<td>Independent Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>Neonatal Resuscitation Certification</td>
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<td>Botanicals</td>
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<td>Re-Orientation Retreat</td>
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<td>Birth Center Seminar</td>
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**Semester Six: Jul - Dec 2022**

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<td>Preceptorship 3</td>
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**Semester Seven: Jan - Apr 2023**

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<tr>
<th>Course Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Homecoming Workshop 2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Credits:</strong></td>
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</table>

*Minimum Credits for Graduation: 108.5 credits*

**Elective Course Examples**

- Fertility Awareness Training
- Massage for Labor
- Placenta Medicine
- Transgender Health
- Domestic Violence Training
- Sexual Abuse & Pregnancy
- Vaccination Decisions
- Childbirth Preparation Methods
- Pelvic Floor Physical Therapy
Clinical Skill Development and Experience

Clinical skill development is fostered in two ways at Birthwise Midwifery School: Classroom instruction & practice in the clinical setting:

**Learning Skills in the Classroom:**
Although much of the classroom time is devoted to theoretical learning, most practical skills are introduced and practiced for the first time within the context of your coursework. These skills are then practiced and evaluated during the Skills Practice courses and special skills assessment exams (OSATs) to gain initial proficiency before your clinical experiences begin.

**Learning Skills in the Clinical Setting**

**Campus Option**
- Clinical Rotations 1 & 2 take place during the 2nd and 3rd semesters, respectively. During these rotations, students are placed in a variety of clinic sites in Maine and New Hampshire for initial exposure to, and experience with, midwifery skills in the clinical setting. Students spend a minimum of 90 hours in each clinical rotation.
- Preceptorship begins at the end of the 4th semester, upon completion of the academic courses. Students identify an acceptable midwifery practice with the guidance and support of the Clinical Director.

**Community Option**
- Students begin their preceptorships during their first semester at Birthwise and continue until all clinical experiences required for graduation have been met. These preceptorships occur alongside the academic curriculum and take place in the students’ home community.

**Preceptorships (Campus and Community Options)**
- This is where the bulk of the student’s midwifery skill development happens.
- Students may complete several preceptorships to learn a variety of midwifery styles. Some students may require additional clinical experiences above the minimum required.
- Although Birthwise will assist students in locating a clinical site, we do not guarantee placement or completion of the Preceptorship.

**Clinical Details**
Periodic evaluations are performed by the preceptor and the student, all experience is documented, and phone and email contact is maintained by our Clinical Director for the duration of the experience. Students will need a driver’s license, dependable transportation, and 24 hour on-call capabilities.

**Homecoming**
Homecoming Workshops 1 and 2 are held each June and October. These three-day workshops are an opportunity for precepting students to return to Birthwise to update us in person about their progress, to practice and be evaluated on skills through OSAT (Objective, Simulated Assessment of Technical Skills) testing and to learn from each other’s experience.

**Midwifery Program Course Descriptions**
**Overview of the Human Body Part 1 & 2:** An overview of anatomy and physiology of the human body by system with special emphasis on the pregnant body, neonatal development, and applied knowledge of the human body for the practicing midwife.

**Histories of Midwifery:** This course examines the roots of midwifery practice in what is broadly recognized as the contemporary United States. Students will explore the stories, histories, and influences of midwives and birth keepers that have been largely excluded from narratives surrounding the development of the CPM credential. The course will focus on the intersecting histories and experiences of indigenous birth keepers, immigrant and settler midwives, and the work and legacy of black midwives, as forebearers and participants in crafting and shaping professional midwifery. These stories, alongside the development of the medical and nursing professions, paint an expanding, and increasingly inclusive perspective of the state of the midwifery profession, and the directions in which it continues to grow, to flourish, and be reclaimed.

**Normal Labor and Birth:** This core course explores the process of normal labor and birth in detail, and the midwife’s role in caring for a laboring person up through the immediate postpartum period. Basic midwifery skills such as labor support, aseptic technique, universal precautions, intrapartum examinations, injections, and suturing techniques are learned and practiced.

**Normal Prenatal:** This course lays the foundation for excellent prenatal care in the midwifery model. Topics include embryonic and fetal development, pregnancy-induced physiological changes, normal parameters of pregnancy, nutrition in pregnancy, and the components of routine prenatal care. Students learn and practice all aspects of care for healthy pregnant people.

**Skills Practice 1-5:** Skills Practice 1-5 are for practicing skill competencies, most of which have been previously introduced in a prior course. Students are asked to come prepared to practice and perform each of the skills listed for each class day. Skills exams (OSATS) are administered during each Skills Course and require students to demonstrate proficiency in the skill objectives for that semester.

**Professional Midwifery 1-5:** This series of courses explore a wide array of professional issues for midwives such as charting, shared decision-making, ethics, quality improvement, policy-making, health disparities, healthcare delivery systems and professional associations. The business skills necessary to open and operate a midwifery practice are also discussed.

**Midwifery & Social Justice (1&2):** This coursework begins by exploring the dimensions of one’s identity in society, examining the concepts of power and privilege that are associated with identity. Following this introduction, the coursework explores how elements of power and privilege (racism, sexism, classism, etc.) impact health outcomes in society – specifically examining how poorer-outcomes are associated with people & identities afforded less privilege/power in society. The curriculum explores barriers to access to, and the provision of, midwifery care by Certified Professional Midwives. These courses lay the ground-work for the on-going work of midwives in dismantling obstacles to health, and by extension, midwifery care in underserved/underrepresented communities and beyond.

**Postpartum:** This course focuses on the birth parent in the period after giving birth until the sixth week postpartum. Students will learn the normal physiology of this period as well as the potential complications and their management options. All aspects of midwifery care in the postpartum period will be discussed, including the care and support of the physical, social and psychological transitions inherent in this period of a person’s life.

**Lactation:** This course provides a foundation in human lactation and infant feeding. Students will learn about the physiology of lactation, as well as the skills to support the initiation and assessment of newborn feeding.
Further, students will learn how to trouble-shoot common challenges and concerns experienced by lactating parents, in order to support a healthy lactation and feeding relationships from birth into the postpartum period.

**Physical Assessment:** This course teaches the student to perform a head to toe physical exam, including a gynecological exam with Pap test. Students can choose to practice using each other as models or request an outside model to learn from.

**Prenatal Complications:** The focus of this course is prevention and midwifery management of deviations from the normal course of pregnancy. A comprehensive set of potential variations and complications will be explored, and students will be expected to develop their management skills in relation to each.

**Research Methods:** This course prepares students to be able to read, understand and use scientific research in their work as midwives. Students will learn the terminology used in research literature and the essential components of quality research studies and discuss the importance of using scientific evidence in their practice as midwives.

**Waterbirth Seminar:** Students will learn the benefits, risks and how-to’s of birth in water.

**Concepts in Public Health:** This survey course is designed to introduce the midwifery student to the language and concepts of basic public health issues that relate to being a provider in a larger birth care system.

**Normal Newborn:** The focus of this course is the newborn baby from the point of birth to six weeks postpartum. This includes the physiological transition from fetus to newborn, nutrition for the newborn and infant, infant care, and parent education topics related to the newborn. Students will learn how to perform a complete newborn assessment and know the parameters of normal for the newborn.

**Labor and Birth Complications:** This course focuses on the complications and variations that can occur during the birth process and in the immediate postpartum period. This important course explores each complication in detail and how it is managed in the out-of-hospital setting. Students will practice managing these complications through role play, case studies, and simulation activities. Proper transport etiquette from home or birth center to the hospital is discussed.

**Therapeutic Nutrition and Supplementation:** This is a study of the macro and micronutrients and their role in the body to promote health. Students will learn how they can use food and supplements to promote health and treat conditions during the childbearing year and beyond.

**Counseling and Mental Health:** This course prepares students to work with clients with current or past mental health issues: depression, personality disorders, eating disorders, trauma histories, grief. Class topics include treatments, counseling techniques, resources and when to refer a client for higher level care or intervention.

**VBAC/Cesarean Birth Seminar:** Students will explore the risks of giving birth vaginally after a Cesarean Section, how to minimize them, and the current controversy and evidence relating to VBAC both inside and outside the hospital setting. Cesarean birth procedure and risks are discussed.

**Suturing Workshop:** This workshop is an opportunity for students to practice their suturing skills on real tissue.

**Whole Foods Nutrition:** This course is designed to inspire students to look at their own eating habits as they learn to counsel clients on optimal nutrition in pregnancy, post-partum and throughout their lives. We will take a broad look at the evolution of agriculture and the human diet and the impact that has had on the health of populations. Particular attention will be paid to the modern American diet and the effects of the current food industry on the quality of our food. This course is about exploring what food justice means and how we can
participate in creating it. We will discuss strategies for eating a healthy whole foods diet affordably and how we can work with clients in an empowering, non-judgmental, culturally appropriate and transformative way to improve their health through nutrition. Part of this course will be spent in the kitchen.

**Homeopathy for Midwives:** This is an introductory course in homeopathy with a special focus on the person in the childbearing year and the newborn.

**Newborn Complications:** Students will learn the assessment, treatment and appropriate referral or transfer of care for newborns with complications.

**Labwork for Midwives:** This course teaches the indications for, the risks and benefits of and interpretation of the results of the routine, optional and specialized lab tests available to pregnant women and their newborns. Students will also learn basic lab skills used in midwifery offices such as microscopy, hemoglobin/hematocrit, and urinalysis.

**Well Body Care:** This course prepares students to provide routine preventive care outside the childbearing year. Topics include sexuality, infertility, preconception counseling, gynecological disorders and infections, breast and cervical cancer screening, contraception, unwanted pregnancy and menopause.

**Independent Research Project:** This course results in an in-depth research paper on a relevant midwifery topic of the student’s choosing and an oral presentation to our community.

**Birth Center Seminar:** This introductory course will explore the beneficial, logistical, financial and legal aspects of opening and operating a freestanding birth center.

**Botanicals:** This course is an introduction to medicinal plants with a special focus on herbs for birthing people and their babies in the childbearing year. The pharmacology, safety, and benefits of commonly used herbs will be included. Students will learn plant identification, harvesting and how to make medicinal preparations.

**Re-Orientation Retreat:** This is an opportunity for students to step back and revisit their call to midwifery, recharge their batteries, and explore ways to make being a midwifery student and ultimately a practicing midwife sustainable.

**Pharmacology for Midwives:** This course gives a foundation in pharmacology with a special focus on pregnant and lactating people. Students will explore the safety of over-the-counter and prescription drugs during pregnancy and lactation with an emphasis on out-of-hospital practice. They will learn about the commonly used drugs in pregnancy and birth, their administration, dose, and possible side effects. Students will learn how to choose and administer the appropriate medication for the prevention and treatment of eclampsia, prophylactic antibiotics in labor, anti-hemorrhagic medications, and IV fluids.

**Hospital Birth Seminar:** The overall goal of this class is to prepare future midwives to facilitate a smooth transition from home to hospital and a positive hospital experience for their clients in the case of transfer of care for prenatal risk factors or transport during the birth. This requires knowledge of typical procedures done, equipment used, and policies observed in the hospital labor and delivery units. It also requires an understanding of the client’s choices, rights, and desires for their birth experience as well as developing the ability to advocate for these desires while respecting the boundaries necessary in a transfer of care.

**Counseling and Group Process:** This course creates a space for students to process their life changing journey towards midwifery with the help of a skilled facilitator. In this safe and therapeutic context, students learn counseling skills and begin practicing these together.
**Introduction to Neonatal Resuscitation:** The basics of newborn resuscitation will be covered and practiced in this course, including PPV, chest compressions and scenario practice. This course prepares the student for the full NRP Certification course to come later in the program.

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**The Admissions Process**

What you will need to apply:
- A high school diploma or equivalent
- Doula training (can be done at Birthwise before classes begin—contact us for more information)
- CPR certification (does not have to be current)
- Three letters of reference

For admissions questions, please call 207.647.5968 or e-mail us at admissions@birthwisemidwifery.edu.

**Selection**

*Birthwise does not discriminate on the basis of sex, color, race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, marital status, parenting status, ethnic origin, age, or physical ability.*

Our selection process takes place in December (Campus) and February (Community) after the application deadlines and involves reading and evaluating all application materials (application, essay, reference letters, and transcripts), interviewing applicants, and choosing the applicants that seem most promising and appropriate for our particular midwifery program. The applicant may be accepted, denied, or waitlisted based on qualifications and/or the numbers of applicants in that year.

Conditional Accepts: For students who have not previously demonstrated past academic success, but who show promise as future midwives we’ll offer a conditional accept and outline the conditions in the letter. This gives students the opportunity to utilize our tutoring and other supports to achieve academic success.

Waitlist: As accepted applicants enroll in the program in February (Campus) and May (Community), we may find we have extra space in the class and will offer those spots to our waitlisted applicants.

**How to Apply**

Online applications can be found on our website in the Admissions area. Please submit your completed applications by:
- December 6, 2019 (Campus Option)
February 14, 2020 (Community Option)

A completed application includes the following:

- Completed online application
- Application Essay
- Official High school transcript or equivalent (upload to online application or mail to us)
- Official College transcript(s) (if applicable)
- Verification of doula training (completion certificate, etc)
- Verification of CPR course completion (completion certificate, etc - does not need to be current)
- Three letters of reference (see below)
- $50 application fee

Letters of Reference:
We require the following current references, which can be sent separately from your application:

- One or more from a midwifery or birth related connection, if possible
- One or more from a work-related or professional connection
- One non-family personal reference

You will find the Birthwise Reference Form on our website in the Admissions area. Please email or mail a reference form to your references and have them return it to you in a sealed envelope or return it directly to Birthwise.

Interviews
Applicants will be interviewed either in-person or by video call. Interviews will be scheduled shortly after the application deadlines.

Visiting Campus
We welcome visitors to our Bridgton campus and schedule campus tours as part of our Open House days. Please see our website for current open house dates. Private campus tours are given when possible, please contact admissions@birthwisemidwifery.edu for more information.

Tuition and Fees

Tuition amounts for the 2020-2021 Academic year
For Full Time (12 or more credits), matriculated students taking the program as designed, tuition costs are outlined below.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th>Community Option</th>
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<td>YEAR 3</td>
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<td>TOTAL</td>
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Part-Time (under 12 credits), matriculated students will pay $475 per credit

Non-matriculating students will pay $500 per credit

Courses can be audited for $250 per credit

Tuition is due one week prior to the start of each semester.
Tuition pricing is subject to change.

Other costs for both options

- Materials fees, ranging from $12-$35, are required for a few select courses
- Book costs are approximately $2,200 over the academic semesters. Most books are purchased prior to the first semester
- Midwifery equipment costs are approximately $165
- Driving costs for clinical experiences
- Cell phone/pager
- Computer
- Travel and housing costs to return to Bridgton for Homecoming and Graduation
- Fees for achieving Advanced Status in the program

Additional costs for Community option

- Travel costs to and from Bridgton for the orientation and academic sessions
- Housing costs while attending sessions

Financial Aid

Federal Financial Aid through the FAFSA

Students enrolled in the Midwifery Certificate program are eligible to apply for Title IV funds. Qualified students may receive Federal Stafford Loans and Pell Grants, and parents of dependent students can apply to receive a Parent Plus loan. Students must maintain half-time status, and maintain satisfactory academic progress (SAP), to remain eligible to receive Title IV funds.

FAFSA Form
Assessing financial aid eligibility starts with filing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form which is available online at www.studentaid.ed.gov. 2020 Campus and Community students will complete the 2020/21 FAFSA. Birthwise is an undergraduate, technical, 3-year certification program and our school code is 036123.

Financial aid awards must be in place before the beginning of each semester and students must be currently enrolled in order to receive federal student aid. You may receive financial aid counseling by contacting our financial aid officer.
AmeriCorps, GI Bill and International Aid

Enrolled students may use their eligibility to receive funding from AmeriCorps, through the GI Bill and from the Ontario Student Assistant Program. Students should inquire with each option to determine their eligibility.

Birthwise Scholarships

Our vision at Birthwise is that every person has access to safe and empowering midwifery care that is representative of them and their community. We know that increasing the numbers of midwives of color and midwives serving other distinct and underserved communities is one way to realize this vision. Birthwise Midwifery School therefore offers two scholarships designed to reduce the financial barriers to education for these prospective midwives.

The two scholarships, Midwives of Color and Underserved Communities, consist of a potential tuition reduction and stipends for books and materials. The applicants’ financial needs and their award amount are determined based on information generated by the Federal Application for Financial Student Aid (FAFSA) application. The tuition reduction is designed to eliminate out-of-pocket tuition costs above what the applicant is eligible to receive in Federal Financial Aid.

Campus applicants must apply for this scholarship by December 6, 2019 and Community applicants must apply for this scholarship by February 14, 2020. Once awarded, the award applies to each subsequent semester that the student is enrolled at least half time at Birthwise. Please contact Birthwise directly or visit our website for more information, or an application.

Please refer to our website for information on Federal Student Aid, other Aid and the Birthwise Scholarships or contact our financial aid officer, Elizabeth McKinnon at 207-647-5968 ext. 104; elizabeth@birthwisemidwifery.edu

Advanced Standing for Prior Learning

Previous education and/or experience in the field of midwifery may allow students to advance through the Midwifery program more quickly.

- All students, regardless of advanced status, must take and pass all periodic exams, the senior exam, and all skills exams (OSATS).
- A minimum of 40% of awarded academic credits must be received while enrolled at Birthwise.
- Fees are required for some advanced standing applications. See application forms for current fee amounts.

Credits earned at Birthwise generally are transferable to other MEAC-accredited midwifery schools or programs but may not transfer to other institutions of Higher Education.

Course Waiver

To waive an academic course, the student must submit the academic course waiver application. The student provides information about the course previously taken and documentation from the credit granting institution regarding the instructor’s qualifications, number of class hours, grade received, and learning objectives covered. The course waiver application must be submitted prior to the semester when the course being waived is offered. The final decision to waive each course is determined by the Academic Dean of Students. The student may be required to take a written exam to confirm equivalent knowledge.
Course Challenge

To challenge an academic course, the student must submit the course challenge application, the fee, and the necessary documentation/information required. The course challenge application must be submitted prior to the semester when the course being challenged is offered. The final decision to challenge each course is determined by the Academic Dean of Students. The student may be required to take a written exam to confirm equivalent knowledge.

Clinical Credit Challenge

To challenge clinical credits, students must submit the clinical challenge application. The student provides documentation of any previous midwifery experience including the preceptor’s qualifications, signed documents specifying the clinical experience type and amount, and written preceptor evaluations of the student’s experience. The Clinical Director reviews all clinical challenge applications and any challenged credits are negotiated with the student before the first academic session.

- A maximum of 23 clinical credits may be challenged and all experiences will be counted in the Assistant Under Supervision (AUS) category.
- All experiences in the Primary Under Supervision (PUS) category must be documented while an enrolled student at Birthwise.
- Clinical Challenge is intended to award incoming students credit for midwifery experience they achieved prior to initial enrollment at Birthwise. Once the student is enrolled, all clinical experience must be accomplished under the supervision of an approved preceptor while registered for preceptorship credits and is subject to the usual evaluation processes used at Birthwise.

Please contact the Clinical Director to learn more about challenging clinical credits.

Canadian and other International Students

All English-speaking internationals are welcome to apply to Birthwise. Please research the status of direct-entry midwifery and how a certificate from Birthwise might integrate into the existing maternity care system in your country. Our Financial Aid Officer can help you with the student visa process.

Canadian Applicants

Midwives cannot become registered to practice anywhere in Canada unless they graduate from one of the 4-year degree midwifery programs located in Canada or graduate from one of the two bridging programs for foreign-trained midwives.

All Canadian provinces require that foreign-trained midwives complete one of the two bridging programs offered in Canada:

- International Midwifery Pre-Registration Program (IMPP) at Ryerson University in Ontario
- Internationally Educated Midwives Bridging Program (IEMBP) at the University of British Columbia

Many Birthwise alum have been successful in becoming registered in Canada through the bridging programs, although the eligibility requirements for these programs change from time to time. If you are a Canadian citizen hoping to attend Birthwise Midwifery School and then return to Canada to practice as a registered midwife, use the links above to see the registration requirements for foreign-trained midwives in your province.
Special Considerations for International Students

- Students who are attending Birthwise on an M-1 Student Visa must maintain a full course of study while enrolled. This means registering for the full course load as outlined in the school catalog for each semester, including the minimum number of preceptorship credits assigned to each semester.

- At no time during the M-1 student’s enrollment should they be enrolled in fewer than 12 credits except for the final semester of preceptorship. In the final semester, M-1 students must maintain a full-time schedule (a minimum of 22 clock hours of clinical instruction per week) for the time that they are in the U.S., although the total number of credits may be less than 12 if the student completes their graduation requirements before the end of the semester.

The Goddard College Partnership

Birthwise Midwifery School and Goddard College are pleased to have developed a learning partnership that allows for work completed at Birthwise to be applied, in the form of transfer credit, toward the undergraduate degree in Health Arts and Sciences, or independent study at Goddard College. Goddard College is a liberal arts college that allows students to combine short residential sessions (one week per semester) with faculty-supported independent and individualized study. Goddard College is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges and offers the Health Arts and Sciences degree from their campus in Plainfield, VT. To learn more, visit https://www.goddard.edu/admissions/partnerships/opportunities-for-birthwise-graduates/ or email admissions@goddard.edu.

Attendance Academic Policies

Attendance Expectation

- Regular and prompt attendance at all courses is required.
- Students who miss more than 25% of the overall classroom hours for a given course will need to retake the course in a subsequent semester
Tardiness
• Three late arrivals of more than thirty minutes will be considered one absence

Absences
• The student must notify the instructor by phone or email prior to any absence
• The student is responsible for obtaining missed information and must arrange to make up all missed work and classroom activities
• Planned absence due to travel, other activities or obligations must be approved by the instructor or Academic Dean of Students and cannot add up to more than 25% of class hours for any given course
  o If a planned absence due to travel, other activities or obligations exceeds 25% of class hours, the student may not receive credit for that course
  o Planned absences MAY NOT occur during Orientation, Period Exams, or Skills Exams (OSATS)
• Chronic absence is defined as missing more than two class days per semester, whether excused or unexcused, and may be grounds for dismissal

Excused Absences
• Missing class due to attendance at a birth during a clinical rotation is considered an excused absence
• No other clinical activities are considered excused absences, including prenatal visits, clinic days, and postpartum visits
• Excused absences exempt the student from any deduction in grade assigned to late work, but the missing class hours still count towards the 25% maximum allowed in order to receive credit for a course.

Extenuating and Extreme Unforeseen Circumstances
• Unforeseeable circumstances may include illness, serious personal problems, an accident, a recent death in the immediate family, a large and necessary increase in working hours or other situations of equal gravity
• If a student misses more than 25% of classroom hours due to unforeseeable circumstances as listed above, they may receive an incomplete, instead of needing to repeat the entire course.
• If a student wishes to receive an incomplete, they must inform faculty and the academic department of their situation as soon as possible (ideally before absences occur).

Make-Up Days
• Occasionally, Birthwise will need to cancel classes for inclement weather or because the faculty member misses class due to attendance at a birth.
• Make-up days are regularly listed on the Birthwise Calendar for rescheduling classes in instances where classes are cancelled.
• Students are expected to be available to attend make up days and should schedule other obligations accordingly

Virtual Class Attendance Requests
Courses at Birthwise are designed to take place in a classroom setting with an emphasis on discussion-based and active learning activities. Because of this, we know the best learning happens when the student is present in the classroom. Birthwise is also not accredited as a distance-learning program, and as such, it does not offer online courses or distance/remote course-work.

We understand that extenuating circumstances arise in the lives of our students that can prevent them from being able to attend classes. In most of these situations, students are advised to take a Leave of Absence.
(LOA) and are welcomed back when they can begin attending classes again. However, when a short absence is necessary and an LOA does not seem like a viable option, Birthwise does have a mechanism through which a student can request to attend classes virtually through a video conferencing platform.

Attending classes virtually has its limitations and can be difficult for a number of reasons, including difficulty in hearing and participating in class discussion, inability to participate actively in learning activities, technology glitches, and the added and potentially distracting logistics for the instructor and the other students in the classroom when incorporating an online student. Because virtual attendance requires Birthwise staff to arrange for, set up, and curate the video conference experience, **a fee of $60 per day is required for this service.**

**Virtual class attendance may be requested if the following requirements are met:**
- The student must be in **good academic standing**.
- The student must provide as much **prior notice** as possible to the school and will work with the Academic Office and faculty to make suitable arrangements (minimum of 5 business days).
- In order for attendance via video conference to be considered attendance in a class, a classroom assistant must be arranged to curate the student’s experience.
- The student must have access to high-speed internet and appropriate computer technology to use the video conferencing platform used by Birthwise. **Students cannot attend through audio only.**
- If the student is enrolled in the Community option, they must be **off-call** during the time they are planning to attend classes virtually, as they would be had they attended the session in-person.
- The student must be available to **attend all scheduled class hours** unless otherwise negotiated with the Academic office and/or the course instructor.
- If the student has children, they must arrange for **childcare** during class hours, with an exception made for nursing infants.
- A **maximum of ten class days can be attended virtually** during the student’s time enrolled at Birthwise.

The student must be determined to have a circumstance considered eligible for virtual attendance. Following are examples of eligible and ineligible circumstances:

**Eligible Circumstances**
- Birth of a child
- Students experiencing a family/personal emergency
- “Can’t miss” family events

**Ineligible Circumstances**
- Sick days
- Inclement weather
- Transportation issues
- Childcare difficulties

Because of their hands-on and active learning components, **some courses cannot be attended virtually** and must be made up when on campus:

- **Orientation**
- **Skills Practice 1-5**
- **Physical Assessment**
- **Labwork**
- **Midwifery and Social Justice 1-2**
- **BLS for Healthcare Providers***
- **NRP***
- **Suturing Workshop***
- **Botanicals***

*these courses can be taken elsewhere and credits transferred to Birthwise.

**Arrangements for taking the above courses must be made with the Academic Dean of Students and will require a fee for the instructor if done outside the normal course offerings at Birthwise.**
Other courses not listed above may have a skill development, hands-on component and may require the student to hire a tutor while on campus to complete those portions of the course. This requirement will be discussed with the instructor and a formal plan made for remediation prior to the absence.

**RETAIKING full courses via Video Conference**

If a student needs to retake a course due to failure or absence, they can request to attend the course virtually with another cohort if attending the course in-person is not an option. All of the above requirements apply, except the need to be in good academic standing, and requires prior approval from the instructor and the Academic Dean of Students.

**Attending Classes Virtually without a Curator**

If a student must miss a class but it does not meet the criteria for attending virtually as outlined above, including not having enough lead time for Birthwise to arrange for a curator, the student may arrange for a classmate to record the class or set up an audio or video call during class time. This is an informal arrangement made by the student and is not counted as official attendance in the class. Only classes attended virtually with a curator arranged by Birthwise will be considered attendance in the class by faculty.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Full-time versus Part-time Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• A <strong>full-time student</strong> is defined as one registered in at least 12 credits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A <strong>part-time student</strong> is defined as one who is registered for less than 12 credits.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**For financial aid calculations, the following definitions of full and part-time status apply:**

- Full-time = 12 or greater *weighted* credits*
- ¾ time = 9-11 *weighted* credits*
- Half-time = 6-8 *weighted* credits*
- Less than half-time = 1-5 *weighted* credits*

*Weighted credits mean all classroom course credits are divided by two (half weight). Preceptorship credits remain full weight.*

**Grades**

- Each instructor designs their own method for assessing students’ competency which is clearly written in the syllabus for each course.
- A score of 80% and above is considered a passing grade for assignments, exams, skills exams, and courses.
- A student must pass each required course (and 3 credits of elective courses for Campus students) to graduate from the midwifery program.
- If a student receives a failing grade in a course, a remediation plan must be negotiated with the instructor to improve their grade with specific assignments, retakes, and time frames. This written plan must be done on or before the last day of the course and remediation must be complete before grades are submitted (3 weeks after the end of the course).
- If students retake a course they failed and fail a second time, the student is dismissed from the program.

**Grading Scale at Birthwise**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Grade Point</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>GPA</td>
<td>Notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>93-100%</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>PASS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86-92%</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>PASS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-85%</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>PASS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below 80%</td>
<td>Fail</td>
<td>1.0-0.0</td>
<td>Unsatisfactory/Must be remediated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All clinical courses, some academic courses, and electives are graded on a PASS/FAIL system. These courses are not included in the Grade Point Average calculations.

**Late Work**
- Students must complete and submit a late assignment proposal form to the instructor on or before the original assignment due date.
- All work for a course must be completed within two weeks of the last class day of that course to receive credit.
- Late work penalties of 10% are included on the syllabus for each course.

**Course Incompletes**
- Incompletes are only given in situations where
  - Students are receiving a passing grade in a course
  - Students have completed most of the course assignments
  - Students are not able to complete their coursework due to unforeseeable circumstances that may include current illness, serious personal problems, an accident, a recent death in the immediate family, a large and necessary increase in working hours or other situations of equal gravity
  - There is a reasonable expectation that a student can and will complete the work in a timely fashion
  - The Instructor has determined that an Incomplete is warranted
- Process
  - An incomplete agreement is completed by the student and the instructor
  - This agreement outlines the conditions of the Incomplete
  - An 'I' grade must be replaced with a letter grade by the end of the succeeding semester or the grade will revert to an F.

**Course Drop Policy**
- Courses can be dropped by submitting an Add/Drop form to the Registrar. This form can be requested from the Registrar and can be submitted in a digital or paper format.
- A course can be dropped after the first class meeting without penalty for most courses. After that time, the course is listed on the student’s transcript as a withdrawal (WD) and the full credit amount for the course is included on the student’s transcript as “attempted” credits for calculating Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP).
- If the course has only one class day and the student attends, they cannot drop or withdraw from that course.

**Elective Policy**
- Registration for an elective can be cancelled up to one week prior to the date of the elective with no penalty.
• If the student fails to cancel their registration for an elective and does not attend, they will receive an F. Exceptions to this rule are made for students attending births.

Withdrawal from a Course

• Course withdrawals must be submitted to the Registrar by completing the Course Withdrawal form. This form can be requested from the Registrar and can be submitted in a digital or paper format.
• A student may withdraw from a course up to the 60% point of the total classroom hours. The course is posted on the student’s transcript as a withdrawal (WD) and the full credit amount for the course is added to the “attempted” credits when calculating SAP.
• A student may not withdraw from a course after 60% of the classroom hours have passed. The student’s grade achieved appears on their transcript and is used when calculating SAP.
• If a student stops attending a course at any point but does not submit a Course Withdrawal form, they will be considered enrolled in that course and the grade achieved appears on their transcript and is used when calculating SAP.

Testing Policy

• All notes, books, computers, cell phones, and other electronic devices are closed and not touched during exams unless otherwise instructed.
• Exams are taken in the classroom or with a proctor unless otherwise arranged with the instructor.
• For exams taken remotely with a proctor, proctors are expected to have a professional relationship with the student. Example proctors include Public Library personnel, Midwifery Preceptor(s), University Staff, clergy, employers, etc.
• All retake exams must be taken at designated testing times as scheduled by the Program Assistant and are proctored.
• A student caught cheating during an exam automatically fails that exam. A second cheating offense may lead to dismissal from the program.
• If a student does not pass an exam (80% or above) within an academic course it must be retaken, or the student must complete some other form of remediation as determined by the instructor, within two weeks of the original test date. Failure to meet the above requirements results in a failing grade and the student receives no course credits.

Maximum Allowable Credits

In order to set up community option students for academic success in the first four semesters of the program, we recommend that students not sign up for more hours in preceptorship than is laid out in the catalog. This is 5 preceptorship credits in the first 3 semesters (approximately 7 births and corresponding PN/PP visits) and 7-10 credits in the fourth semester (8-12 births and clinic visits). In any academic semester, students may not sign up for more than 24 total academic and preceptorship credits without being in outstanding academic standing and attaining prior approval from the Clinical Director.

Periodic and Senior Exams

• Periodic exams are administered at the end of each academic semester covering the course material for that semester.
• Dates for these exams are noted on the cohort calendar. It is expected that students will make the appropriate arrangements for travel, proctoring, etc., in order to be available to take the exam(s) on the scheduled date.
• A comprehensive senior exam is given during the student’s last semester prior to graduation.
• All sections of periodic and senior exams must be passed with an 80% or above. If a student fails one or more sections of the exams they must be retaken before the student can begin the following semester.
• Students are strongly encouraged (or may be required by the instructor) to attend at least one tutoring session before retaking any exam. Exams may be retaken only once unless otherwise determined by the instructor. If a periodic exam is failed a second time, the student may be dismissed from the program.
• If a student fails one or more sections of the senior exam, they are encouraged to attend two tutoring sessions before retaking the exam. It may be retaken only once. Failure to pass the senior exam on the second try may be grounds for dismissal.
• A student may not fail more than 50% of the sections on these exams, or they may be dismissed from the program or required to retake the courses being tested.

Homecoming Workshops

• Homecoming workshops are three-day workshops held twice each year in October/November and June (immediately prior to the annual graduation ceremony).
• Homecoming 1 is required for Campus program students only, and Homecoming 2 is required for both Campus and Community program students.
• These workshops are an opportunity for students who are engaged in preceptorships to:
  o practice skills that they may not have been able to use in their preceptor sites
  o participate in case reviews taken from their preceptorships
  o take the senior skills exams (OSATS)
  o celebrate, have fun, and rest
• Students attend Homecoming Workshop 2 in the year that they are expected to graduate.

Objective, Simulated Assessment of Technical Skills (OSATS)

• OSATS are simulated skills exams that assess the student’s technical skills and clinical judgment. OSATS are performed in the context of an actual clinical scenario and a team of faculty members objectively assess the student’s abilities.
• OSATS are administered during Skills 1-5, Homecoming 1, and Homecoming 2.
• Retakes for OSATS may be arranged with the Program Assistant when indicated.
• Students must pass all OSATS over the course of the program to graduate.

Leave of Absence (LOA)

• A student may request a Leave of Absence (LOA) from Birthwise of up to a total of 180 days during a 12-month period by submitting the LOA request form to the Registrar in advance of the leave unless unforeseen circumstances prevent the student from doing so. Approval of this LOA maintains the student’s enrollment status.
• The student must indicate their date of return to Birthwise in their written application for the LOA. If the student does not submit the LOA application but discontinues educational activities at Birthwise, they will be automatically withdrawn from Birthwise retroactive to the last day of attendance or participation in educational activities.
• If the student does not comply with the conditions of the LOA, they will be automatically withdrawn from Birthwise retroactive to the last date of attendance.
• Only one LOA may be granted to a student in a twelve-month period and this twelve-month period begins on the first day of the student’s LOA. However, more than one LOA may be granted in limited, well-documented cases, provided the total number of days does not exceed 180 days in any 12-month period.
• An additional LOA of up to thirty days may be granted, if the school determines that it is necessary due to unforeseen circumstances.
• The student returning from the LOA must resume training at the same point in the academic program that they began the LOA.
• If the student is a Title IV loan recipient, Birthwise must explain to the student, prior to granting the LOA, the effects that the student’s failure to return from the LOA may have on the student’s loan repayment terms, including the expiration of the student’s 6-month grace period before repayment is required to begin.

• For the LOA to qualify as an approved LOA –
  o The student must follow the school’s policy in requesting the LOA as described above
  o There must be a reasonable expectation that the student will return from the LOA

**LOA during preceptorship**

• For any semester in which a student is registering for primarily preceptorship credits, the preceptorship start-date must be within 28 days of the start of the semester to register for those credits during the usual pre-semester registration period.

• Students whose preceptorships start later than 28 days after the start of the semester may take a LOA by following the school’s LOA policy. Two weeks prior to the start date of the preceptorship, the student must register for preceptorship credits and return from LOA.

• If a student does not register for preceptorship credits and fails to take an official LOA, they will be automatically withdrawn from the program, effective on their last date of attendance.

• If a student unexpectedly leaves a preceptorship mid-semester and does not have a replacement site that will begin within 28 days, they must take a LOA until which time they have secured a new preceptorship approved by the Clinical Director and begin attending clinical activities. When returning from LOA, the student must register for these new preceptorship credits 2 weeks prior to the start date of that preceptorship.

• The student taking a LOA during preceptorship must discuss the financial aid implications of this change in status with the Birthwise Financial Aid Officer prior to taking the LOA.

### Temporary Withdrawal (TWD)

• A student in good academic standing may request a temporary withdrawal (TWD) from enrollment at Birthwise by submitting a TWD request form to the Registrar in a digital or paper format.

• A return to coursework or preceptorship must occur within one year of withdrawal and if done within that time, requires no further application or reenrollment procedures.

• Only one temporary withdrawal may be granted to a student during their enrollment at Birthwise.

• Details regarding the conditions and plan for return, tuition, and resumption of course work or clinical training is specified in the TWD request form, completed jointly by the student and the Academic Dean of Students and/or Clinical Director.

• Upon return to school, the student is expected to pay tuition and fees per the current rate and schedule as well as fulfill the most current graduation requirements for the program.

• If the student does not return to Birthwise within one year of withdrawal, they are withdrawn from the Birthwise program retroactive to the initial date of the TWD. The student would then be required to reapply to the program as an advanced status applicant should they wish to return.

• A TWD does not maintain a student’s Title IV Federal Aid in-school status and loan repayment is required when the student’s 6-month grace period is over.

### Withdrawal (WD)

If a student wishes to withdraw from Birthwise Midwifery School, they must notify the Academic Dean of Students and complete a Withdrawal form. This form can be requested from the registrar and can be submitted in a digital or paper format.

If a student stops attending all classes and does not complete a Withdrawal form, the student will receive the grade earned in all courses in which they are registered. If no communication is received from the student who
stops attending classes without completing a Withdrawal form, they are formally withdrawn retroactive to their last date of attendance.

**Time Limits for Completing the Program**

- The Birthwise midwifery program is designed to be completed in three years (36 months) for full-time matriculating students, excluding any leaves of absence or withdrawals.
- If the student is maintaining satisfactory academic progress (SAP), then a full-time student can remain enrolled for a maximum of 4.5 years, or 54 months (150% of the standard timeframe), excluding any leaves of absence or withdrawals.
- Students who exceed the maximum time limit for completion or who re-enroll after a withdrawal of more than one year, must meet with the Academic Dean of Students to develop a plan to demonstrate competency, knowledge and skills currency before they can proceed in the program or be approved for graduation.

**Dismissal**

The school reserves the right to dismiss a student for any of the following reasons:

- Unsatisfactory academic progress (failure to maintain passing grades or not progressing towards graduation as determined by the Academic Dean of Students as outlined in the Satisfactory Academic Progress section).
- Habitual tardiness or absence (see attendance requirements).
- Failure to pay tuition per the schedule outlined in the Student Enrollment Agreement.
- Conduct unbecoming the standards of the school or profession. This includes, but is not limited to:
  - substance abuse
  - violating confidentiality in a clinical setting
  - dishonesty
  - inappropriate behavior in the classroom or clinical setting
  - plagiarism

**Tuition Refunds and Withdrawal/Dismissal**

- Students requesting a LOA, TWD, WD, or who are dismissed from Birthwise and are receiving Federal Financial Aid (FFA) receive a refund based on the current policy specified by Title IV regulations. Please see paragraph titled "Return of Title IV Funds", located under the Financial Policies Section of this handbook.
- When students use FFA to pay for tuition and fees, any refundable amount is returned to the appropriate Title IV program (i.e., Pell Grant, Stafford loans). The full amount of a student’s refund is used to restore funds to the Title IV federal account from which aid was received, regardless of any unpaid balance that may still be owed to Birthwise.
- Students not receiving FFA receive a refund based on the school’s refund policy, detailed under the Policy on Refunds section under the Financial Policies section.

**Satisfactory Academic Progress**

- Birthwise students are expected to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP). This standard is based on course grades, periodic and senior exam scores, OSATS grades, progressing through the program at an acceptable pace, and completion of the program within a maximum time frame.
- Each student is evaluated for SAP at the end of each academic semester and at the end of the second year. Any student who does not meet SAP is notified by email of this status.
- The student who does not achieve SAP is put on academic probation (and financial aid probation if they receive FFA) for the subsequent semester. To return to good academic standing, this student must achieve SAP in that subsequent semester.
- Students are allowed one semester on academic probation during their matriculation at Birthwise. If the student does not achieve SAP in the semester in which they are on probation, they may be dismissed from the program.
- Birthwise does not have an appeal process for students who do not meet SAP.

To maintain SAP, Birthwise students must:

1. Receive **passing grades in at least 75% of all attempted credits** each semester.
2. **Pass all Periodic exams** (including one possible retake for each section), by achieving 80% or above on each section.
3. **Pass all Skills exams** (OSATS), including one possible retake for each exam.
4. At the end of their second year, have a **cumulative GPA of at least 2.0** and be progressing at a pace that allows them to complete the graduation requirements **within 4.5 years** of enrollment.
5. **Pass the Senior exam** (including one possible retake for each section), by achieving 80% or above on each section.
6. Complete all graduation requirements within **54 months** (full-time students) or **72 months** (part-time students) of initial enrollment, not including any LOA or WD.

### Satisfactory Academic Progress in Preceptorship

- The duration of the preceptorship is determined by the amount of time needed to fulfill the clinical requirements for graduation from Birthwise but must be completed within 150% of the normal timeframe for completion (4.5 years from initial enrollment), not including any leave of absences or withdrawals.
- Preceptorship grades are pass/fail and are dependent on student documentation submission, the mid-semester conference, and completion of written evaluations by the student and the preceptor each semester throughout preceptorship. Students must achieve a passing grade to apply their experiences towards graduation requirements.

**Note:** The volume of births at a preceptor site will determine the number of credits of preceptorship a student registers for each semester and the length of time the student will be enrolled at Birthwise.

- A site in which a student attends an average of 4 births per month will allow a student to graduate in approximately three years as long as their skill development keeps pace with the birth volume.
- A site with a larger birth volume may lead to a student graduating in less than 3 years and a site with lower birth volume will extend the number of semesters a student will be enrolled.
- The student should keep in mind that extending the preceptorship beyond the normal timeframe may lead to enrollment in and tuition payments for additional semesters.
- Conversely, if a student completes the program in fewer than 6 semesters due to a Clinical Challenge or a high-volume preceptorship site, they may pay less overall tuition.

### Satisfactory Academic Progress and Federal Financial Aid

Students who receive FFA and do not meet SAP for any given semester are placed on Financial Aid Probation. While on FA Probation, students can receive financial aid, but must achieve SAP while on probation or they are ineligible for financial aid (Financial Aid suspension) in the following semester.

Students are eligible for one semester of Financial Aid probation as they work toward completion of the program. If a student is placed on probation, they should take steps to ensure that they are meeting SAP requirements by the end of the probationary semester or they are placed on FA Suspension. A student on FA suspension is ineligible to receive FFA in the subsequent semester. FA Suspension is lifted once the student meets SAP for a semester.
Birthwise Honor Code

Birthwise Midwifery School strives to cultivate a culture of integrity, honesty, and ethical awareness among the staff, faculty, and student body. Our intention is to create a community that models the high ethical standards we believe essential for the care giving profession of midwifery. A Birthwise education is much more than passing tests and assignments; it is about becoming an excellent midwife in the holistic sense. This requires a student with integrity who is open to thinking about their actions and intentions within an ethical framework as well as one who has excellent theoretical and clinical knowledge and skills.

Students sign a written honor code document upon their arrival at Birthwise. We present this Academic Honor Code to bring an awareness of the ethical responsibilities of each person at the school. We pledge together to conduct ourselves in a way that respects each member of this community, the intention of the program, and the profession of midwifery. This includes a commitment to not cheat, plagiarize, fabricate or commit any other form of academic misconduct while enrolled in the Birthwise program. Below are the specific actions that Birthwise considers outside our Honor Code and a process for dealing with violations.

Definitions of Academic Dishonesty

**Cheating**: The intentional use or attempted use of materials or assistance from unauthorized sources for any academic work. Includes, but is not limited to:
- Copying from another student during an exam.
- Collaborating with another person on work when it has not been authorized.
- Using a cell phone, pager, PDA or other electronic device to obtain unauthorized information during an exam.

**Plagiarism**: Representing another person’s ideas, work, or information as your own without giving proper credit to the source. Includes, but is not limited to:
- Quoting another person’s words or writing without acknowledgment of the source.
- Using resources on an exercise that was to be completed without resources.
- Working with another individual on an assignment, sharing information and files, and then turning in separate copies of an assignment, as one’s own individual work.

**Fabrication**: The invention of, or falsification of information, for use on academic exercises. Includes, but is not limited to:
- Citation of a source from which information was not actually acquired.
- Listing a source from which no information was used.
- Using false or fictitious data for an academic exercise.
- Documentation of clinical experiences in which you did not participate at all or as reported.

**Academic Misconduct**: Other academically dishonest acts. Includes, but is not limited to:
- Allowing another student to use your work and claim it as their own.
- Obtaining all or part of an exam that has not yet been administered.
- Selling, giving away, or discussing all or part of an exam that has not yet been administered.
- Attempting to change a grade for any coursework.
- Attempting to falsify an excuse to receive an extension on a deadline.

Procedures for dealing with violation of the Academic Honor Code

It is the responsibility of all students, faculty, and staff to report any violations of the Academic Honor Code to the course instructor or the Academic Dean of Students.

When a report is made, the instructor has the responsibility to:
- Investigate the suspected violation and document any findings,
- Complete a violation report and give the report to the Academic Dean of Students,
- Notify the student, in writing, that a report has been filed.
The preceding should be completed within five school days.

Results of Honor Code Violations

Students found in violation of the Academic Honor Code receive a failing grade for that test, assignment, or course.

Appeals Process

A student found in violation of the Academic Honor Code may appeal the decision. The student must notify the Academic Dean of Students that they are appealing the decision within ten days of the original report being filed. This notification should be in writing, and must include the date, summary of the alleged incident, and the student’s reasons for appealing.

A committee meets within ten days of the notification to review the faculty decision. This committee is made up of:

- Academic Dean of Students, or another faculty member if the Academic Dean of Students was involved in the incident
- Faculty Member
- Executive Director
- One other faculty member
- One student representative.

Parties involved in the process have the following rights and responsibilities during the process:

**The Student**

- Shall receive at least five days’ notice of the appeals hearing. This notice shall be given in writing.
- Shall present their own arguments.
- May be present during the hearing until the time of deliberations.
- May produce witnesses, documents, or other evidence in their defense.
- May ask questions directed toward the committee.

**Faculty**

- Shall receive at least five days’ notice of the appeals hearing. This notice shall be given in writing.
- Shall present their findings from their own investigation.
- May be present during the hearing until the time of deliberations.
- May ask questions directed toward the committee.

**Committee Members**

- Shall give at least five days’ notice of the hearing to all parties involved.
- Shall make decisions by majority vote
- Shall keep minutes of the proceedings and make these minutes available to all involved parties within ten days of the decision.
- Shall notify the student of the committee’s decision within ten days.

Sanctions for Repeated violations for the Academic Honor Code

Students who have more than one violation of the Academic Honor code may be subject to the following sanctions:

- Academic Probation
- Loss of any Birthwise Scholarship
- Dismissal from the Birthwise program

Sanctions are at the discretion of the Academic Dean of Students and the Executive Director.

Birthwise Midwifery Program Graduation Requirements

To graduate from the Birthwise Midwifery Program a student must:
1. Successfully complete and pass each required academic course.
2. Successfully complete a minimum of 42(Campus) or 46(Community) preceptorship credits, including any challenged credits awarded.
3. Pass each section of the periodic exams and the senior exam.
4. Pass all OSATS (Objective, Structured, Assessment of Technical Skills)
5. Document the minimum clinical experience requirements as specified below.
6. Have faculty and preceptors sign off all mastered skills on the Preceptorship Skills Mastered Checklist found in the Birthwise Clinical Documentation Record.
7. Document attendance at a childbirth education series (minimum 10 hours).
8. Document a minimum of 40 hours of midwifery-related community service at no more than four sites.
9. Return for Homecoming Workshop 1 and 2 (only Homecoming 2 is required for Community students).
10. Be approved for graduation by the Clinical Director, the Academic Dean of Students, and the student’s last preceptor(s).
11. Pay all Birthwise fees in full before receiving a certificate of graduation from Birthwise.
12. Complete exit counseling, if a financial aid recipient.
13. Complete the program within 4.5 years for full-time students and 6 years for part-time students of initial enrollment. Students who exceed the 6-year maximum time limit for completion of the program or who re-enroll after a withdrawal of more than one year in duration, must meet with the Academic Dean of Students to develop a plan for assessment of competency and currency in knowledge and skills before they can be approved for graduation.

Clinical Experience Requirements

Clinical Encounters as an Assistant under Supervision (AUS)
- 10 initial exams (includes history taking and EDD)
- 75 prenatal exams
- 20 newborn exams (complete newborn exams within the first 48 hours PP, only one per newborn)
- 30 postpartum exams
- 20 gynecological exams (This exam must include use of speculum and visualization of the os. For example; IUI, GYN testing i.e. pap, cultures or colposcopy)
- 10 complete physical exams (can include a GYN exam which is counted separately)

Births as Assistant under Supervision (AUS)
- 30 births
  - Up to 10 of these may be attended as a doula or as a transport to the hospital in labor (considered “observed births”). A maximum of 2 unplanned cesarean births can be counted here if the student has provided care throughout the labor.
  - A maximum of 4 additional intrapartum labor transports that end in vaginal birth can be counted beyond the 10 observed births.
  - At least 10 must occur in out-of-hospital settings.
  - 5 must involve continuity of care (at least 5 prenatal visits spanning 2 trimesters, birth, newborn exam, and 2 postpartum visits for the same client).

Clinical Encounters as the Primary under Supervision (PUS):
- 20 initial exams (includes history taking and EDD)
- 75 prenatal exams
- 20 newborn exams (complete newborn exams before 36 hours PP, only one per newborn)
- 40 postpartum exams
- **10 gynecological exams** (This exam must include use of speculum and visualization of the os. For example; IUI, GYN testing i.e. pap, cultures or colposcopy)
- **10 complete physical exams** (can include a GYN exam which is counted separately)

**Births as the Primary under Supervision (PUS):**
- **25 births**
  - 5 births must involve continuity of care (at least 5 prenatal visits spanning 2 trimesters, birth, newborn exam, and 2 postpartum visits for the same client)
  - 10 additional births require at least one prenatal prior to the birth.
  - A maximum of two births may occur following transport/transfer of care as long as client is in active labor when transport occurred, the student remained involved in care and was present for the birth and the immediate PP period (except in the case of C-sec when the student may not be present in the OR)
  - At least 10 births must be in out-of-hospital settings

**Experience in Specific Settings**
- A minimum of **5 home births** must be attended in any role.
- A minimum of **two planned hospital births** must be attended. These cannot be intrapartum transports but may be antepartum referrals. These are counted as AUS births.
- At least 10 births as assistant under supervision must occur in **out-of-hospital settings**.
- At least 10 births as primary under supervision must occur in **out-of-hospital settings**.

**Time Frames**
- At least 10 out-of-hospital births as Primary under Supervision must have been completed within the last 3 years prior to application for certification.
- Clinical experience must span at least two calendar years.

**Documentation of Experience**
- Students must document all clinical experience on the forms provided by Birthwise and have each encounter verified with the preceptor’s signature.

**Childbirth Education Requirement**
- All Birthwise students are required to attend a series of childbirth education (minimum of 10 hours) **during their enrollment** at Birthwise. This can be completed by observing, participating in, or assisting at childbirth education classes, or by participating in a childbirth educator certification course.
- The course must focus on normal vaginal birth; therefore, most hospital-based courses are not appropriate. The following types of childbirth education courses are appropriate: Bradley, Lamaze, Hypnobirthing, CAPPA, Baby Body Birth, and Birthing from Within. Other non-hospital-based courses may be appropriate – approval may be obtained from the Clinical Director.
- The requirement may be completed through a single day-long course or through a series of shorter sessions. If the complete course does not cover 10 hours, it may be supplemented with attendance or participation in a shorter postnatal education course, such as breastfeeding preparation, newborn parenting, or sibling preparation.
- Current certification as a childbirth educator may be demonstrated to waive this requirement.
- Documentation, demonstrated either via the childbirth educator’s signature or via a certificate of attendance/participation, must be recorded in the Birthwise Clinical Documentation Record.
Community Service Requirement

- All students are required to document a minimum of 40 hours of community service working with midwifery-related organizations or endeavors.
- The intent of this requirement is to encourage students to take part in and learn from midwifery legislative or policy-making efforts, service organizations, and/or in the promotion of the midwifery profession. This is an opportunity for growth as a midwifery student, as well as an opportunity to give back to the community.
- To obtain a quality experience, these hours must be completed at no more than four sites) and must be completed by the time the student graduates.
- Acceptable projects include but are not limited to:
  - planning/assisting in public outreach events
  - assisting with fundraisers or conferences
  - helping with state midwifery organizational work
  - distributing midwifery related information in the community
  - assisting with midwifery-related legislative efforts
  - volunteering with pregnant teens
- Students are expected to locate an appropriate site, have the site approved by the Clinical Director, make necessary arrangements, and document their work in their Birthwise Clinical Documentation Record.
- Students are a representative of Birthwise Midwifery School when engaging in community service. The same considerations for a preceptor site apply to community service including: confidentiality, dependability, and appropriate behavior and dress.

Graduation Conference

- Students must be recommended for graduation during their Graduation Conference by consensus of the student’s final preceptor(s) and the Birthwise Clinical Director.
- This Graduation Conference is initiated when the student has documented 18 births as the primary midwife (PUS). The Clinical Director and preceptor review the student’s progress and make a support plan for the student in this last phase of training. It may be decided that the student is ready to graduate after they have reached the minimum required clinical experiences OR that the student needs additional experiences to gain competency for graduation and practice midwifery independently.
- If the student is required to complete additional experiences beyond the minimum requirements, the Clinical Director initiates another evaluation process near the end of the additional required experiences. This process may be repeated until the Clinical Director can recommend the student for graduation OR the student is dismissed from the program for lack of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP).
- The student’s final preceptor completes a final written evaluation of the student after the graduation conference.

Preceptorship and Credits Earned

- By the time a student graduates they will have earned the minimum number of total clinical credits (46) unless they are required to exceed the minimum number of births for graduation.
- The number of preceptorship credits a student will register for in a given semester will be calculated using a worksheet which walks the student and the Clinical Director through a formula which is based on the number of births they have been told by their preceptor that they should expect to attend during that semester. This worksheet is completed before registration for each semester in which the student will be in preceptorship. It is reviewed and approved by the Clinical Director and the number of credits calculated will be used when registering for preceptorship credits.
• The Clinical Director will check in with precepting students half-way through the semester to confirm that they are registered for the correct number of preceptorship credits. If a change in credits is needed based on new calculations, the Clinical Director will initiate this with the Registrar.

• If a student leaves a preceptorship unexpectedly before the 60% of the semester mark and does not move directly into another site and continue to earn the credits they are registered for, the Clinical Director will initiate a WD from some of their preceptorship credits (calculated using the usual formula). This may result in a reduction in the credits earned, and potentially a return of FA funds, loss of full-time status, or loss of student VISA.

• If a student leaves a preceptorship unexpectedly after the 60% of the semester mark and does not move directly into another site and continue to earn the credits they are registered for, they will have two preceptorship courses on their transcript: one for the credits they completed and another for the credits they did not complete and for which they will receive an incomplete (INC). This means they will need to make up those credit hours in the next semester or the INC will convert to an F. The number of credits they register for in the next semester will reflect the fact that they are carrying some hours of clinical experience into that semester (i.e. if a student only completed 6 of 12 credits in a semester and is given an INC for 6 preceptorship credits, they will need to register for 6 fewer credits than they anticipate completing in the next semester to make those up). This may lead to a student needing to register for a part-time semester, which will have VISA or FA implications.

• If a student is in a low/moderate volume preceptorship and anticipates needing additional semesters to finish, they will distribute their 46 clinical credits in such a way to reflect the number of births they will attend in each semester and in doing so, will not exceed the 46 total earned preceptorship credits unless they fail some credits or are required to exceed the minimum number of births in order to meet the skill competencies.

• Students should think of their preceptorship in terms of semesters (i.e. when they register for a semester of preceptorship, they should avoid making an unplanned change in the middle of the semester which will change the number of credits they earn if possible).

• In the student’s final semester (the semester in which they will graduate from the program), if a student registers for 5.9 or fewer weighted credits (preceptorship credits will be based on the worksheet calculations and academic credits are counted as half weight), Birthwise will waive all tuition costs for that semester. This graduation waiver does not apply to students who have not already paid for 6 full-time semesters of tuition. NOTE: a student receiving this waiver will not be eligible for Financial Aid or for a student VISA.

• A student can end up paying more tuition overall if they are enrolled in 6 full-time semesters AND they do not qualify for the graduation waiver, meaning they are registered for more than 5 credits in their 7th semester.

• Preceptorship courses can extend prior to a semester start or beyond the end of the semester by two months. For example, a student could enroll in a 14 cr preceptorship (expecting to attend 17 births) that starts on June 15, 2019 and ends February 1, 2020.

• Once a student completes all of their clinical requirements for graduation, they will be required to complete all other outstanding graduation requirements (INC or failure in academic courses, volunteer hours, attendance and CE classes) before the end of that current semester. If they fail to do so, they will be charged a $200 administrative fee each semester until they complete all requirements.

• A student will be allowed to attend HC 2 only after they have documented all clinical experience requirements for graduation.

• A student may attend HC 2 at either of the 3 times it is offered per year: January, May, and August. For example, if a student completes all clinical experience requirements by March, they will attend HC 2 in May. If they complete their clinical experience requirements in October, they will attend HC 2 in January.

• A student who is registered for August HC 2 (meaning they will be completely done with all clinical experiences by then) will have the option of participating in the Graduation Ceremony in May (3 months
earlier). This is the only example of a time when a student walking at Graduation is not done with all their clinical requirements.

- If a student attends HC in January, they will have the option to return to Birthwise to attend Graduation in May.

### Special Considerations for International Students

- Birthwise is able to offer M-1 Student Visas to eligible international students. These Visas are processed through our Financial Aid office during the enrollment period.
- Students who are attending Birthwise on an M-1 Student Visa must maintain a full course of study while enrolled. This means registering for the full course load as outlined in the school catalog for each semester, including at least the minimum number of preceptorship credits assigned to each semester.
- At no time during the M-1 student’s enrollment should they be enrolled in fewer than 12 credits except for the final semester of preceptorship. In the final semester, M-1 students must maintain a full-time schedule (a minimum of 20 clock hours of clinical instruction per week) for the time that they are in the U.S., although the total number of credits may be less than 12 if the student completes their graduation requirements before the end of the semester.

### Educational Requirements to Becoming a CPM

- The Certified Professional Midwife (CPM) credential is administered by the North American Registry of Midwives (NARM). For more information about certification requirements, please download and read the Candidate Information Bulletin and Certification Application forms, found at [www.narm.org](http://www.narm.org).
- Graduation from the Midwifery Program and Birthwise allows graduates to sit for the national certification exam and apply for certification through NARM.

### Post-Graduation Placement Assistance

Upon graduation from Birthwise, students are eligible to sit for the North American Registry of Midwives (NARM) Written Exam. Passing the NARM Written Exam in conjunction with graduation from Birthwise results in being nationally credentialed as a CPM. Many U.S. states use the CPM credential as a requirement for licensure. Certified Professional Midwives are regulated on a state-by-state basis. Students are encouraged to do their own research regarding the state in which they want to practice. Contacts in each state are listed on the MANA website: [http://mana.org/about-midwives/state-by-state#top](http://mana.org/about-midwives/state-by-state#top)

By California statute, graduation from an educational program approved by the state is a requirement for licensure. Birthwise Midwifery Program is currently an approved school.

Although Birthwise does not guarantee employment upon completion of the midwifery program, most graduates work in private midwifery practices or have joined existing midwifery practices. The school receives postings for job openings, and these are posted for student access on the Facebook group Birthwise Students and Alumni Connect (a private group for alumni and current students only).

### Student Services

#### Financial Aid Counseling

Our Financial Aid Officer is available to counsel students on their financial aid options. Office hours are posted, and appointments may be made for the student’s convenience.

#### Library and Computer Resources
• Birthwise has an extensive library of midwifery and reproductive healthcare related books, periodicals and videos.
• Birthwise subscribes to the major English-language midwifery and obstetrical journals and has print versions for use in the library only. Digital versions of journal articles may be requested through the librarian.
• Birthwise subscribes to Up-To-Date, an online research database, which is available to all students and faculty.
• There are computers with high-speed internet access, printers, and photocopiers available for student use.
• The library and the lounge facilities are always available for student use.
• Our book collection may be searched through our Birthwise Library Card Catalog on our website under the For Accepted Students page on the Birthwise website.
• Books may be checked out from the Birthwise library for up to three weeks at a time. There is a card file system that must be used when taking books from the library.
• Periodicals and literature from the files must be copied for use outside of the Birthwise facility. Videos may not be removed from Birthwise except with special permission.
• If a book is not returned, the student is billed for the cost of replacement.
• Two computers and printers are available for student use, located in the library and living room.
• Highspeed wireless internet is available throughout the campus.

Student Email Address

• Students are given an @birthwisemidwifery.edu email address while enrolled and must check it frequently.
• Students are asked to tell a member of the staff if they receive any inappropriate or offensive emails to their @birthwisemidwifery.edu email address.
• Communication from Birthwise often comes via email. Students who choose to use a personal email account are asked to forward their @birthwisemidwifery.edu account to their preferred account.
• @birthwisemidwifery.edu email accounts are NOT to be used in connection with any money-making or advertising purposes.
• @birthwisemidwifery.edu email addresses are not be used for transmitting any illicit, pornographic, sensitive or confidential information.
• All communication sent via an @birthwisemidwifery.edu email address must be compliant with HIPPA and FERPA regulations.
• It is the responsibility of each student to keep their @birthwisemidwifery.edu email password safe and secure.
• All students with active @birthwisemidwifery.edu email accounts are expected to adhere to the generally accepted rules of etiquette; particularly in relation to the use of appropriate language.

Student Orientation

Incoming students are required to attend two days of orientation at the beginning of their first semester. This time includes orientation to the facility, the learning technology and resources available at Birthwise, our philosophy, the Bridgton area, the campus, activities, and a workshop on study skills.

Academic Advisors

The Academic Dean of Students assigns an academic advisor to each enrolled student at the start of their first semester. Students can contact their academic advisors in person, by email or by phone at any time for guidance on academic issues or to provide feedback about the academic program. The goal of this relationship is to provide support for students to facilitate their academic success as they progress through the program. Students may contact the Academic Dean of Students to change their advisor if desired.
Tutoring

- Birthwise provides access to tutors free of charge in order to accommodate student learning needs, facilitating study sessions before exam time, and for failed exam remediation. Tutoring can be provided to review course content, complete writing assignments, prepare for exams, prepare for retaking failed exams, and any other academic needs.

Healthcare Services

- All students have access, by appointment, to our student-led Birthwise Midwifery Service for basic well-body healthcare needs.
- All services are very low cost and fees for labwork, and other tests done through another facility can be billed through the student’s health insurance.
- Student health insurance is not offered through Birthwise.

Birthwise Fun Gear Sharing

Bicycles, kayaks, and a stand-up paddle-board are available for student use. Gear must be reserved by signing up in the front office and must be returned in good condition to the Carriage House when finished.

Student Organizations

- Currently, Birthwise has three recognized student organizations:
  - Birthwise Student Union
  - Women of Color Student Midwives Committee
  - Canadian Students’ Support Group
- Students may petition to establish new student organizations with specific missions. Each student organization must petition to be recognized by submitting application materials that illustrate the purpose, structure and activities of the proposed group.
- Once established, all student organizations are allotted a small annual budget dependent on the stated needs and the amount available in the overall Birthwise budget for the given year.
- Since Birthwise accepts Federal Financial Aid, we must maintain an environment of non-discrimination and require that all student organizations be open to all Birthwise students.

Birthwise Student Union

The Student Union is an organization that:
- Gives a voice to cohorts on issues of curriculum, student life, and student activities.
- Provides a mechanism for student representation at the school.
- Gives students an opportunity to design and implement community involvement projects.
- Allows participants the opportunity to develop leadership skills.
- Involves student members in school services and functions, including Open House, Applicant Interviews, Orientation, and Graduation.
- Provides a platform and resources for the creation of student community-building activities.

Elections

In January every year, each cohort will choose 2 representatives (1 for post-academic cohorts in preceptorship) to the Student Union through the following process:
- Self-nominations will be made to the Student Union Coordinator by December 31st.
- Ballots will be distributed electronically shortly after nominations are made, allowing cohorts to vote for their two representatives from the pool of nominees.
- Appointments to the Student Union will be made based on majority vote, not consensus.
- Appointed representatives will be notified via email.

Terms
Student Union Representatives will serve one-year February-to-February terms, with elections occurring in January of each year. Students may serve more than one term, but they have to be re-nominated and voted in again in subsequent years.

**Virtual Attendance at Monthly Meetings**

Once the schedule for the year is set, the Office Manager will create GoToMeeting logins for each of the proposed meeting days and send all relevant login information to the Facilitator. It will be the responsibility of the Facilitator to reach out to the body of Representatives before each meeting, determine who will be in attendance virtually, and email them the login information for GoToMeeting. If a computer is needed for use in the meetings, the Facilitator should contact the Office Manager in advance of the meeting day.

**Resources**

Birthwise Midwifery School makes the following resources available to the Student Union:
- A budget line for materials used in association with events/actives that promote SU mission
- A budget line for student events that promote SU mission
- Use of the facility for meetings and events
- Use of a classroom computer when needed for GoToMeeting
- Access to a Union Dropbox folder
- Union Facebook page for planning and logistics, with presence of the Office Manager as moderator.

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**The Birthwise Culture**

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Birthwise Student Handbook 2020-2021 Updated 2020.09.08
Classroom Culture

- At Birthwise, we strive to create a classroom environment that reflects our philosophy, values, and ethics. We expect all staff, faculty, and students to act with respect for all, sound ethics, cultural sensitivity, cooperation and honesty.
- The Birthwise classroom is informal and interactive. Our goal is to create an environment in which students can grow academically, personally, clinically, and professionally. This holistic approach acknowledges that the practice of midwifery draws on the midwife’s knowledge, interpersonal skills, clinical skills, and intuition, thus requiring growth in all those areas on the part of the aspiring midwife.
- Our adult learning model requires that students be very self-motivated and disciplined in their studies. Class time is spent expanding on, illustrating, practicing, and integrating the information that the students are required to read or complete outside of class. This adult learning model creates a more dynamic classroom and encourages the development of students’ critical thinking skills.
- Birthwise tries to be socially and environmentally responsible and expects students to participate in our attempts to conserve resources, recycle, and preserve the beauty of our facility and grounds.

Use of Cell Phones and Computers

- No personal phone conversations or texting are allowed in the classroom or during participation in patient/client care.
- If a student must respond to an emergent text or phone call during class or patient/client care, the student is expected to leave the classroom or patient/client care area and respond as deemed necessary.
- Use of computers, PDAs, mobile devices and other electronic devices during class is restricted to note taking and classroom activities unless otherwise instructed by faculty.

Classroom Expectations

Students are expected to:
- Abide by the Birthwise Honor Code signed by each student during Orientation.
- Be on time and attend classes regularly. Please see the attendance policy for more details.
- Obtain notes and assignments from other students in the case of a missed class. All missed work must be discussed with the instructor in a timely fashion and completed to the instructor’s satisfaction before the completion of the course. Late work is not acceptable and is penalized (see Late Work section of Birthwise Academic Policies).
- Be active in class discussion and participate enthusiastically in practical skill exercises.
- Be sensitive to the need for optimum use of class time, i.e. whether they are participating appropriately in class discussion, whether all students have a chance to be heard, the relevancy of comments and questions.
- Follow the Grievance Procedure in the case of unresolved conflict or disagreement with other students, faculty members, or administration.
- Be responsible and clean up after themselves when using the Birthwise facility.
- Submit documents in PDF or Word format.
- Own and maintain a car in good working order and driver’s license.

Class Cancellation

- Class is usually only cancelled when a faculty member is unable to teach due to attendance at a birth, family emergency, or weather that prevents them from getting safely to Birthwise.
- If class is cancelled, students are notified by email, phone or text as soon as it is known.
- The faculty member negotiates a make-up date with the students.
Birthwise will very rarely close campus due to inclement weather. If our instructor can safely get to school, students will be expected to come to class, just as they would drive if they were called to a birth during inclement weather.

Day-to-Day Logistics

- Parking is limited at Birthwise. Students are asked to park in the overflow parking lot across the street from the church (one block south on High St.) and behind the church. Students are asked to park close together. Three spaces near the Carriage House are reserved for Birth House staff and clients.
- All students are required to have a cell phone and regular access to a well-functioning computer.
- All students must maintain an email address (Birthwise student email or personal with Birthwise email forwarded) and check their email frequently.
- A physical mailbox is assigned to each student, which should be checked when the student is in the building.
- Cubbies are available to students where personal belongings may be kept.
- Purified chilled and hot water is available.
- Classes begin promptly at the scheduled time with an hour break for lunch. Students may eat-out, bring lunch to school, or prepare lunch communally on a rotating schedule.
- In the kitchen, students are expected to help with kitchen maintenance by unloading the dishwasher when needed, wiping counters, and clearing the sink strainer. All containers of food items need to be labeled or kept in a personal lunch bag and removed at the end of the day.
- Infants and children are discouraged from attendance in the classroom with the exception of nursing infants in arms. Approval for infant’s attendance in class is must be obtained from the instructor who will take the learning experience of the other students in class into consideration when making a decision. At a minimum, students with infants in arms must arrange childcare outside of the classroom for class time involving skills practice, testing, presentations, and when modeling for classmates.
- No pets are allowed in the Birthwise facility. Service dogs and/or emotional support animals are allowed only in cases where the animal works or performs duties for the student that are deemed necessary for their educational success. Students need to provide documentation in these situations.

Rules for Use of Social Media

- Respect copyright and fair use. When posting, be mindful of the copyright and intellectual property rights of others and of Birthwise Midwifery School.
- Be aware of personal association with Birthwise Midwifery School on social media and online social networks. Students posting information must always represent their views as their own. Students should NOT claim nor imply that they are speaking on Birthwise’s behalf unless authorized to do so by the administration in writing.
- HIPPA guidelines must be followed at all times. Identifiable information regarding patients/clients, clinical facilities, and preceptors must NOT be posted on any social media site.
- In our small community, even vague references to preceptors or births can be identified. Birth related postings should be avoided in the moment they are occurring, as this is often enough of an identifying detail for confidentiality to be violated.
- Social media is of growing importance, including for the promotion of midwifery practices online. Carefully considering appropriate social media use as a student and future midwife is an important skill. Students must maintain the highest standards of confidentiality out of respect for clients and preceptors. There may be a time that social media posts of pregnant or birthing clients, births, or babies are appropriate to be posted. However, the student must obtain explicit permission from the preceptor and the client before posting any and all information or photos.
- If content is posted by fellow students or midwives that appears unprofessional, students should make the school aware of this.
• Students should recognize that posting inappropriate content may negatively affect their reputations among clients and midwives, may have consequences for their future careers, and can undermine the reputation of the midwifery profession.

Extra-Curricular Activities

• Students are encouraged to join their local midwifery organization and to attend at least one of their business meetings during their time at Birthwise.

• Students are encouraged to join Midwife’s Alliance of North America (MANA) and/or the National Association of Certified Professional Midwives (NACPM) to keep abreast of current political issues in midwifery.

Other Policies and Disclosures

Copyright

Copyright Infringement Policies and Sanction

It is against the law to share copyrighted material without the permission of the copyright owner, through methods like peer-to-peer file sharing of course textbooks. If you violate copyright law in this manner, you may face severe criminal and/or civil penalties. In criminal court, first-time offenders face up to five years in prison and a fine of $250,000. In civil court, defendants face penalties of up to $150,000 per offense and may, also, have to compensate plaintiffs for damages and legal fees.

Students who use Birthwise’s computers and/or internet connection to violate copyright law may face disciplinary action. The penalties for students who violate copyright laws include loss of access to the school computers, internet, and/or library.

There are open access options for midwifery research, as well as opportunities to borrow materials through interlibrary loan. See our Online Midwifery Student Resources, the Birthwise Library Card Catalog, or the MaineCat Statewide Library Catalog.

Graduation and Completion Statistics

Current statistics are posted on the Birthwise website on the disclosures page.

Complaint & Grievance Resolution Policy

If a student, faculty member, preceptor, or staff member has a complaint with regards to actions that occurred while engaged in activities related to the school, they may choose to utilize the process below. Complaints and grievances are handled in two steps at Birthwise. The first step is to submit a written explanation of the complaint which activates the complaint process described below. If that process does not satisfactorily resolve the complaint, a formal grievance can be filed which activates a Grievance Committee Hearing as described below.

Step One: The Complaint Process

Definition of a Complaint

A complaint is a written statement that provides detailed information describing discontent with actions that occurred that were not able to be resolved between the involved parties directly. A written complaint does not automatically constitute filing a grievance.

The Process
Birthwise encourages all students, faculty, staff and preceptors to make every attempt to reconcile grievances between the individuals concerned. However, Birthwise also recognizes that there are instances when a mediation process can best provide an optimal environment for reaching common ground on issues left unresolved by other means. **Of critical importance is the need for confidentiality by all participants in the following process at every step.**

When those in conflict require mediation, the following process is initiated:

1. A written statement is submitted to the Executive Director that describes the complaint in detail.
2. Within 30 days, the Executive Director initiates one or both of the following actions:
   - Parties meet face-to-face on at least two occasions to resolve their differences. This may be done with the Executive Director present at the complainant’s requests.
   - OR
   - Parties meet with peer mediators to resolve their conflict. Mediators are selected by the individuals involved with the goal of providing objective feedback and clarification for resolving conflict.
3. If the complaint is resolved satisfactorily parties meet with the Executive Director to complete a written Compromise Agreement that outlines individual responsibilities, goals, and plans of action that resolve the current conflict. All parties and the Executive Director must sign the agreement and meet again within 30 days to review the efficacy in addressing the issue(s).

### Step Two: Grievance Committee Hearing

#### Definition of a Grievance

A grievance involves a formal written request for the Grievance Committee Hearing. This would follow a complaint process outlined above that failed to resolve the complaint satisfactorily.

#### The Process

The Grievance Committee shall be appointed as needed by the Executive Director. The committee shall be composed of two faculty or staff members, two students and the Executive Director. None of the committee members may be directly involved with the grievance issue(s) or participants. The Executive Director may reassign a seat on the committee to either another faculty member, student, or staff member to ensure the philosophy and objectives of Birthwise Midwifery School are represented during the mediation process.

1. If, after completing and documenting the above efforts and any issue(s) is/are outstanding, an individual may file a Request for a Grievance Committee Hearing. The Grievance Committee must meet within thirty days of the request.
2. Before the Grievance Committee Hearing all individuals involved in the grievance must submit written statements outlining the nature of the conflict and all reconciliation efforts. Statements from peer mediators, copies of the Compromise Agreement, and any other documented reconciliation attempts must be included at the time of the hearing request.
3. The Grievance Committee shall review all documentation surrounding the grievance and at its discretion call upon any individuals involved for clarification and/or information to complete its review of the conflict.
4. The Grievance Committee shall submit in writing to all parties involved a Conflict Resolution Agreement. This outlines specific responsibilities, consequences, time limitations, etc. for an equitable resolution to the grievance. The Conflict Resolution Agreement is the last, best attempt at reconciliation and all individuals requesting a meeting of the Grievance Committee agree to abide by the Conflict Resolution Agreement.
5. All activities of the Grievance Committee are held confidential and individuals are not discriminated against because of making a complaint.
If you feel that your complaints concerning your education were not resolved adequately by Birthwise, you may contact the Maine Department of Education or the Midwifery Education Accreditation Council. They act on all written and signed complaints. Please direct your concerns to:

Maine State Department of Education, Higher Education Specialist
23 State House Station, Augusta Maine 04333-0023 (207) 624-6846

MEAC Midwifery Education Accreditation Council
1935 Pauline Blvd, Suite 100B, Ann Arbor, MI 48103 (360) 466-208

New Hampshire Office of Career School Licensing
101 Pleasant Street Concord, NH 03301

Non-Discrimination Policy

- Birthwise Midwifery School operates in accordance with Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendment Act of 1973 which provides that: Birthwise Midwifery School does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, gender, gender identity, religion, sexual orientation, marital status, ethnic origin, nationality, age or physical ability.
- Specific complaints alleging discrimination should be in written form and referred to: Executive Director, Birthwise Midwifery School, 24 S. High St. Bridgton, Maine 04009

Discrimination Complaints

- Procedures used in conjunction with the Non-Discrimination Policy of this school are to be used if an employee or student believes they have been subjected to discrimination; they have means to make their concerns known.
- Regardless of the means selected for resolving allegations of the initiation of a complaint may not cause any reflection on the reporting party nor may it affect their future business dealings with the school, their employment, compensation or work assignments or, in the case of students, grades, or other matters pertaining to their status as a student at the school.
- Every effort should be made to resolve any incident as soon as possible while the facts and contribution of witnesses are current.
- It is the policy of Birthwise Midwifery School that retaliation against reporting parties is prohibited. The school acts vigorously to prevent any retaliation being taken against those initiating inquiries or filing complaints; retaliation constitutes separate grounds for filing a complaint with these procedures and for potential disciplinary action against the alleged violator.

Relationship between Discrimination Complaint Procedures and Disciplinary Action

- Any complaint alleging discrimination in any form is investigated accordingly. This investigation results in findings being made and if necessary, recommendations for sanctions, and serves as the investigation normally carried out prior to deciding to initiate discipline.
- Facts gathered, and any findings made, during resolution process may be sufficient to obligate the school to take disciplinary action against a faculty member, staff member or student or for the school to initiate a criminal investigation.
- If the school pursues disciplinary action against an alleged violator, a hearing may be required. The investigation is conducted independent of any criminal investigation. However, to the extent permissible by law, those conducting the criminal investigation and the discrimination investigation cooperate.
Resolution Process

If a person believes that they have been discriminated against; the following are the optional procedures for resolution.

- A person may try alternative actions prior to requesting the school’s assistance with a discrimination complaint. Persons who feel comfortable may inform (either orally or in writing) the person engaging in discriminatory conduct or communication that the discriminatory behavior is offensive and must stop.
- The complainant may want the school to engage in informal action (meditation or conflict resolution) so that the behavior stops.
- The complainant may prefer a formal procedure for resolution. For a formal procedure see the Complaint & Grievance Resolution Policy.
- All persons involved should document all incidents and attempts at resolution.
- If a complainant does not wish to or feel comfortable communicating directly with the person for which they have a discrimination complaint, the complainant should contact the Executive Director as soon as possible.
- The person requesting a resolution may or may not wish to be identified. Birthwise accommodates complainants wishing to remain anonymous.

Resolution Procedures

- The discrimination complaint resolution may include an informal resolution process. It may include, if appropriate, advising the violator of behaviors or actions which are discriminatory by providing information and education with the purpose of eliminating illegal or inappropriate behaviors or actions.
- An informal resolution is reached within fifteen working days of the complaint. If the informal resolution is conducted between the Executive Director and the offending party, the complainant is notified within fifteen working days.
- Every effort is made to resolve the complaint at the lowest level possible and be consistent with the desires of the complainant. However, the school recognizes that it has a legal obligation to ascertain where discrimination exists.

Disciplinary Action

For violations, which involve inappropriate behavior or actions, the sanctions may include: an oral warning, probation, suspension, and/or expulsion. Birthwise may notify authorities if a criminal investigation is deemed necessary.

Record of Complaint

Records of all complaints and grievances are maintained at the office of the school for at least seven years.

ADA - Students with Disabilities

- Birthwise welcomes students with disabilities. We work with applicants to discuss the impact that their limitations might have on their education here at Birthwise and their ability to practice midwifery after graduation. It is Birthwise’s policy to provide students who have disabilities with reasonable educational accommodation based upon relevant law, the school’s educational standards, and sound ethical practice in disability services.
- Students who attend Birthwise need to be aware of the “basic functions” necessary for school and for the midwifery workplace. These basic functions range from reading and understanding scientific and technical material, performing motor skills such as suturing, doing examinations, driving vehicles, working long shifts without breaks, acting as a supervisor, lifting and repositioning clients, administering medications, communicating with clients, laboratories, and many other functions.
- Educational accommodations are defined as any reasonable adjustment required for a student to participate fully in the school community, inside or outside the classroom. Students entering the school...
for the first time should submit information related to disability prior to enrollment. The Executive Director is responsible for deciding whether a disability has been adequately documented and they identify a list of potential accommodations in accordance with the manifestations of the disability, a copy of which is shared with the student.

Confidentiality, Student Rights & FERPA, Student Records
The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords students certain rights with respect to their academic records which include:
- The right to inspect and review the student’s academic records within 45 days of the day the school receives a request for access.
- The right to request an amendment of the student’s academic records that the student believes is inaccurate.
- The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student’s academic records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.
- Student has the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the school to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is: Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave SW Washington, DC 20202-4605

Student Right to Know
- Under the Student-Right-To-Know Act, Birthwise is required to report annually on the completion (or graduation) rates for certificate seeking full-time, first-time undergraduate students. Statistics address whether these students complete their program within 150% of the normal time.
- The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 protects the privacy of student education records. Student records cannot be released without written permission, with the exceptions listed here:
  o Birthwise makes every effort to maintain academic records in confidence by keeping information from individuals who are not authorized to receive it. Students may inspect all records relating to themselves. Administrative staff supervise students reviewing their files.
  o Faculty, administration, accreditors and auditors that have a legitimate need to access student records are allowed access without permission.
  o A request for information from an educational institution to which a student has applied for admission, or from an agency from which a student is seeking financial assistance are granted access without the student’s permission.
No student information is given to any third party, except those mentioned above, without written consent.

Vaccination policy
Birthwise Midwifery School recommends that students receive a Hepatitis B vaccination. A student can opt out of a Hepatitis B vaccination if they complete a health waiver.

Anti-Bullying Statement
Informed by the Association of Ontario Midwives’ Position Statement on Bullying

What is bullying?
According to the Association of Ontario Midwives’ Position Statement on Bullying:
“Bullying is a form of psychological aggression and intimidation. It is generally associated with a power imbalance between the victim and perpetrator, where the victim is made to feel inferior. Bullying is repeated and persistent behavior that may be subtle. It may include, but is not limited to: excessive or unjustified
criticism, withholding information or resources needed to do one’s job, social isolation, spreading rumors, personal attacks based on a person’s characteristics, and verbal attacks.¹

Bullying is insidious in healthcare¹² and in the profession of midwifery.³ When surveyed in fall 2017, 81% of respondent midwives reported that they consider bullying to be a major or very significant problem in healthcare and 73% of respondents reported that they consider bullying to be a major problem in the profession of midwifery itself.³

Bullying can negatively impact the individual’s health, engagement, work satisfaction, and can lead to burnout and the perpetuation of bullying.¹² Bullying can compromise the quality of care provided.⁴ As such, bullying impacts the entire profession of midwifery and the health care system.⁴

Birthwise Midwifery School recognizes that bullying has historically been a part of direct entry midwifery in the United States⁶ and as such:

- Denounces any behavior that undermines student midwives in the clinical and academic settings.
- Believes that all students have the right to learn in respectful environments that are free from bullying.
- Recognizes that colonialism, racism, homophobia, transphobia, xenophobia, sexism, and all other forms of systemic oppression contribute to bullying and that black, indigenous, LGBTQIA+ and students of color are more likely to experience these bullying behaviors from preceptors, faculty and other students than their white/cis/straight counterparts.
- Encourages preceptor and faculty midwives to learn about bullying/undermining/intimidating behaviors and to support health and balance in all aspects of their lives, including in the preceptor/student relationship.
- Calls upon midwives to denounce bullying, to actively contribute to a just culture where midwives raise students up to reach their full professional potential, and to be leaders in the treatment of each other within the broader healthcare community (Association of Ontario Midwives, Position Statement on Bullying, 2019).
- Encourages students to report to the Clinical Director any experience of being bullied in a preceptorship or clinical rotation. Report will be confidential.
- Protects students from going to Preceptors sites known to be unsafe via use of Preceptor Suspension, when indicated.

References
Campus Safety Policy and Plan

- Birthwise Midwifery School is located on a main town road in a quiet residential neighborhood in a rural town with a population of 7,000. The town has a very low crime rate and the school has had no incidence of crime in any category in our 25-year history.
- The Birthwise facility is a large 180-year-old home, which includes our offices, library and classrooms. The facility is always open for student use. The entrances are locked during off hours and students are encouraged to be aware and to lock doors when the staff is not on the premises. The surrounding area has streetlights that keep the area lit in the evening hours.
- Students are asked to immediately report any incidence related to safety directly to faculty or Administrative staff.
- More information can be found in Birthwise’s Annual Security Report, available on Sycamore or the disclosures page on the Birthwise website.

Fire Drills

Fire drills are conducted during the orientation of each incoming cohort and randomly once every semester when the campus is full of students. This practice includes instruction on where the students should meet in the event of a fire or other campus emergency so that we can account for all students.

Drug and Alcohol Policy

- Birthwise prohibits the unlawful possession, use or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol by students, faculty or staff in the school facility or at preceptor sites.
- Students are prohibited from being under the influence of drugs or alcohol while in class, at their preceptor sites or while on-call for births. Any violation of this policy initiates disciplinary action (consistent with local, state and federal law) by the Academic Dean of Students.
- Tobacco use of any kind, smoking, chewing, vaping, etc. is prohibited on the Birthwise campus.
- If a student, faculty member, or staff receives a criminal drug conviction, they must notify the school in writing within five days of the conviction.
- Disciplinary action occurs as follows:
  - Suspected substance use in violation of the above is confronted in private counsel with the Academic Dean of Students. If the suspicion is confirmed, probation or suspension is given as deemed appropriate, requiring rehabilitation efforts on the part of the student, faculty member or staff to return to good standing or to resume their place at Birthwise.
  - If these rehabilitation efforts are not successful or if a second violation of policy occurs, the student, faculty member or staff will be suspended from Birthwise until which time they can document their ability to return to Birthwise in full compliance with our Drug and Alcohol policy.

Maine State Laws Regarding Drug and Alcohol Possession

All Birthwise students should be familiar with the Maine State Law pertaining to the sale, consumption, or possession of alcoholic beverages. Please see Federal and Maine State laws website for more details at: http://www.maine.gov/dps/bhs/impaired-driving/guide.html.

Health Risks of Drug Abuse

The following is a link to National Institute of Drug Abuse website providing information and health risks on commonly abused drugs. http://www.drugabuse.gov

Drug and Alcohol Abuse Rehab Centers in Bridgton Area
Detox Treatment Services
Saint Mary’s Regional Medical Center (Lewiston is 25.5 miles from Bridgton)
100 Campus Ave.
Lewiston, ME 04243
(207) 777-8710
https://www.stmarysmaine.com/

Out-patient Drug Counseling
Tri County Mental Health Services
41 North High Street
Bridgton, ME. 04009
(207) 647-5629
www.tcmhs.org

Crooked River Counseling
87 South High St
Bridgton, ME. 04009
(207) 743-1677
https://www.crookedrivermaine.com/

Federal student financial aid penalties for drug law violations

- In line with United States Department of Education policy, Birthwise requires that students notify the Financial Aid Office immediately if they are convicted of a drug offense and are receiving federal aid money. A student convicted of a drug offense, either possession or sale, is ineligible for further federal aid and is required to return any aid the student received after the conviction.
- A student who has been convicted of a drug offense can take advantage of rehabilitation programs to become eligible for federal financial aid again.
- The following is from the Federal Student Aid Handbook, Volume 1 – Student Eligibility:
  - A federal or state drug conviction can disqualify a student for FSA funds. Convictions only count if they were for an offense that occurred during a period of enrollment for which the student was receiving Title IV aid—they do not count if the offense was not during such a period. Also, a conviction that was reversed, set aside, or removed from the student’s record does not count, nor does one received when s/he was a juvenile, unless s/he was tried as an adult.
  - The chart below illustrates the period of ineligibility for FSA funds, depending on whether the conviction was for sale or possession and whether the student had previous offenses. (A conviction for sale of drugs includes convictions for conspiring to sell drugs.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possession of Illegal Drugs</th>
<th>Sale of Illegal Drugs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Offense</td>
<td>1 year from date of conviction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Offense</td>
<td>2 years from date of conviction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3+ Offense</td>
<td>Indefinite period</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- If the student was convicted of both possessing and selling illegal drugs, and the periods of ineligibility are different, the student will be ineligible for the longer period. A student regains eligibility the day after the period of ineligibility ends or when he successfully completes a qualified drug rehabilitation program. Further drug convictions will make him ineligible again. It is the student’s responsibility to certify to that s/he has successfully completed the rehabilitation program.

Financial Policies

Tuition Payment and Schedule

For Full Time (12 or more credits), matriculated students taking the program as designed, tuition costs starting in the year 2020-2021 are outlined below.
### Campus Option | Community Option
--- | ---
YEAR 1 | $16,300 | $14,000
YEAR 2 | $14,000 | $14,000
YEAR 3 | $11,700 | $14,000
TOTAL | $42,000 | $42,000

- Part-Time (under 12 credits), matriculated students will pay $475 per credit
- Non-matriculating students will pay $500 per credit
- Courses can be audited for $250 per credit
- Book costs are approximately $2,200 over the course of the program with most of the books needed in the first semester.
- Birth Kits cost approximately $165 and are purchased through *Everything Birth*
- Materials fees are associated with some classes ranging from $12-$35.

Tuition Cost and Financial Aid Information Letters are sent electronically prior to the start of each semester.

* **Tuition is due one-week prior to semester start dates.** For students in preceptorship, start dates are the first week of January for the Spring semester and the first week of July for the Fall semester. For students not in preceptorship, the start date will be the first scheduled day of academic classes.

All tuition payments or installment plan arrangements must be made by designated due dates.

If a student fails to pay tuition in full by the end of the semester, they will not be able to attend the following semester unless arrangements are made with administration.

* *Full time student is defined as a student registered for 12 or more credits.*
** *Part-time student is defined as a student registered for less than 12 credits.*

### Policy on Refunds
- In the case of a student who requests cancellation and/or refund within two weeks after signing the enrollment agreement, the school shall cancel the agreement and return in full the enrollment fee paid to the school by the student.
- In the case of cancellation of the enrollment agreement after two weeks of signing and before school begins; the school may retain the student enrollment fee not to exceed $150.
- Tuition is prorated and refunded during the first 60% of each semester. After that no refunds are granted.
- Any prepaid tuition or fee amounts are refunded when a student withdraws or is dismissed from Birthwise. All withdrawals must be submitted in writing to the Registrar.
- Refunds shall be made within thirty days after the effective date of withdrawal or dismissal.

### Installment Plans
- If the student is unable to make payment in full by the payment due date, they must contact the Business Manager by the payment due date to establish a payment plan and sign an installment contract.
- There is a $10 per installment fee and all balances must be paid by the 60% point of the semester. Up to 4 monthly payments can be made in any one semester.
- If a student fails to pay tuition in full by the end of the semester, they will not be able to continue onto the following semester unless arrangements are made with administration.
Other Fees

- There is a $15 fee for all checks returned to Birthwise for insufficient funds.
- A 2% late fee is charged if the tuition payment is not received within seven days of the due date. Late fees apply when there is no signed contract or if payments are not made per the installment contract schedule. The 2% late fee is charged every thirty days on unpaid principal balance - fees are not capitalized.

Financial Aid

For complete information on financial aid options at Birthwise, see our Financial Aid Guide on our website.

Federal Financial Aid

- U.S. students or permanent residents may be eligible for Federal Stafford Loans (subsidized & unsubsidized), Pell Grants and PLUS Loans. Assessing federal financial aid eligibility starts with filing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).
- The FAFSA is available to complete online at https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/fafsa. The FAFSA becomes available on October 1st of each year and should be filed early for best results. Students are notified of their award via email from the Financial Aid Officer.
- Students must update their FAFSA each year prior to the semester they intend to receive federal aid.

  Birthwise’s Title IV code is 036123

GI Bill, AmeriCorps and Canadian Financial Aid

- Birthwise is approved for the use of GI Bill benefits by the Maine State approving agency.
- Birthwise is approved for the use of AmeriCorps benefits.
- Birthwise is approved for the use of funds from Ontario province. Canadian students from other provinces may be eligible for Canada aid, please visit the Canadian Government website for more details.

Per the VA, Birthwise permits any GI Bill recipient under chapter 31 or 33 to attend or participate in the course of education beginning on the date the covered individual provides Birthwise with the certificate of eligibility and ending on the earlier of the following dates: the date on which payment from the VA is made to Birthwise or 90 days after the date Birthwise certified tuition and fees. Further Birthwise will not penalize covered individuals with late fees, denial of access to classes, libraries or other facilities or require covered individuals to borrow additional funds to cover financial obligations due to the delayed disbursement of funding from the VA under Chapter 31 or 33. Additionally, covered individuals under chapter 31 or 33, must provide the school with a certificate of eligibility for entitlement no later than the first day of classes, must provide any additional information necessary to the proper certification of enrollment by Birthwise, and eligible individuals can be assessed fees and penalties on any financial obligations owed to Birthwise that the GI benefits do not cover.

Return of Title IV Funds

- If a student leaves Birthwise during a semester, either voluntarily or involuntary, they are subject to the school’s refund policies. The withdrawal date that is used in determining a student’s refund or repayment is defined as the student’s last day of academically related activity
• The U.S. Department of Education requires Birthwise Midwifery School to use the Return of Title IV Funds Policy for students who withdraw from school and who are receiving Federal Title IV student financial aid. Title IV funds refer to federal financial aid programs authorized under the Higher Education Act of 1965 (as amended).

• The Department of Education expects a student to “earn” the financial aid they receive. Students who receive FFA in the form of a Federal Pell Grant, or Federal Stafford Student Loan(s) are expected to earn those funds by attending school and completing the time in the term for which they are paid.

• If a student leaves school before completing more than 60% of the scheduled hours for which they received FFA, they may be required to pay back a portion to the federal government. They may also be required to pay Birthwise for a part of their tuition in addition to returning money to the Department of Education.

• Once a student completes over 60% of the scheduled hours for which they received FFA, the federal government deems all (100%) of the aid “earned” and no repayment is required.

How Refunds are Calculated

The percentage of a payment period or semester completed equals the number of days completed up to the WD date divided by the total days in the payment period or term. This percentage is also the percentage of earned aid. Funds are returned to the appropriate federal program based on the percentage of unearned aid using the following formula:

Aid to be returned = (100% of the aid that could be disbursed minus the percentage of earned aid) multiplied by the total amount of aid that could have been disbursed during the payment period or term.

If a student earned less aid than was disbursed, the institution would be required to return a portion of the funds and the student would be required to return a portion of the funds. Keep in mind that when Title IV funds are returned, the student borrower may owe a debit balance to the school. If a student earned more aid than was disbursed to them, the institution would owe the student a post-withdrawal disbursement, which must be paid within 120 days of the student’s withdrawal.

EXAMPLES: A semester starting 9/7 and ending 12/15 would have 100 days as the total days in the payment term. If a student received $4,750 in Financial Aid for this term, the following shows the amount the student earned and the amount that would need to be refunded.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Attended</th>
<th>/total days</th>
<th>% earned</th>
<th>$ Earned</th>
<th>$$ to be returned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 weeks (14 days)</td>
<td>14/100</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>$665</td>
<td>$4085</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 weeks (28 days)</td>
<td>28/100</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>$1330</td>
<td>$3420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 weeks (42 days)</td>
<td>42/100</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>$1995</td>
<td>$2755</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 weeks (56 days)</td>
<td>56/100</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>$2660</td>
<td>$2090</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61 days</td>
<td>61/100</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>100% earned</td>
<td>no refund</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Refunds are allocated in the following order:

1. Unsubsidized Federal Stafford Loans
2. Subsidized Federal Stafford Loans
3. Federal (PLUS) Loans
4. Federal Pell Grants for which a Return of funds is required
5. Other assistance under this Title for which a Return of funds is required

• Return of Title IV funds is determined by the Financial Aid Office, in conjunction with our 3rd party servicer, within thirty days of the determined last day of attendance.
• The Financial Aid Officer provides the student with written notification of the breakdown of which funds are being returned to the Department of Education, which funds the student has earned,
and/or portions of awarded funds that the student is responsible for repaying and to whom they must repay.

- If it is determined that a portion of the FFA received on the student’s behalf is unearned, Birthwise is responsible for returning those funds in accordance with the Return of Title IV Funds regulations.
- Any grant funds that the student is required to return to the federal programs are considered an overpayment. The student must repay the amount in full. If a student fails to repay, or make payments as arranged with the Financial Aid Office and the Business Manager they may lose eligibility to receive future FFA.
- All refunds shall be paid within 30 days upon written notification from a student of cancellation or withdrawal.
- Students receiving benefits from federal programs shall be subject to federal refund policies, rules and regulations.

Title IV Verification Disclosure

- The US Department of Education requires that Federal Title IV applicants provide documentation to verify the accuracy of information submitted on the FAFSA each year. If a student is selected for verification, s/he will be contacted by the Financial Aid Office.
- To complete the verification process, the Financial Aid Office requests, and must be provided with, documentation which may include IRS Tax Transcripts, W2 forms, Tax forms, Verification Worksheets, or other official documentation.
- All documentation required to complete any verification related to FFA must be submitted to the Financial Aid Office within 45 days of the request of the documentation material.
- FFA is not awarded until the verification process is complete.

Professional Judgement in Financial Aid Awards Policy

- The Financial Aid Office at Birthwise Midwifery School reviews requests for professional judgement as they relate to FFA awards.
- In extenuating circumstances, the Financial Aid Office in conjunction with the Administrative Office may exercise professional judgement and change elements of the federal needs analysis which they feel have not been adequately considered in the FAFSA.
- Requirements for a Professional Judgement Request:
  - Initiated by a letter of request from the student which outlines the circumstances and why they would like the request considered.
  - Requires third party documentation, and any documentation requested by the Financial Aid Office.
  - Requires a valid and current SAR (student aid report which is generated when the FAFSA is done).
  - Requires a signed copy of the tax year(s) applicable to the year of financial aid consideration.

Birthwise Contact List
Birthwise Office
(207) 647-5968 phone
(207) 647-5919 fax
(844)410-8874 clinical fax

Staff

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Faculty
Beth Bongiolatti, MA, CPM, NHCM: Beth@birthwisemidwifery.edu
Beth is the Academic Dean of Students of Birthwise Midwifery School. She is a graduate of Birthwise and began her work as a midwife in Southern New Hampshire before returning to Maine in 2014. She received a BA in Global Politics & English from the University of New England, and a master’s degree in Sustainable International Development from the SIT Graduate Institute.

Emily Bowler, CPM: emily@birthwisemidwifery.edu
Emily is a 2016 graduate from Birthwise and practicing midwife in the Boston area. She also holds a bachelor’s degree in Psychology from Amherst College and a master’s degree in Health Education from Teacher's College in New York.

Tiffany Carter-Skillings, CPM: Tiffany@birthwisemidwifery.edu
Tiffany is a CPM with a home birth practice in Yarmouth, Maine and provides prenatal care, lactation counseling, well body care, routine GYN services, pre-conception counseling, and nutrition. She received a B.A. in Sociology from Bates College in 2004 and graduated from Birthwise in 2013.

Gretchen Davidson, MA, LICSW: Gretchen@birthwisemidwifery.edu
Gretchen has a BA in Sociology and minor in Women’s Studies. She also has a master’s degree from the Smith College School for Social Work. When she is not teaching here at Birthwise, she offers counseling services to Victims of Domestic and Sexual Violence.

Susi Delaney, MA, CPM: Susi@birthwisemidwifery.edu
Susi is a graduate of Birthwise. She opened Red Tent Midwifery, a private home birth practice based in New Gloucester, Maine, in 2007. She holds a bachelor’s degree in History from the University of Rochester (1995) and a master’s degree in History & Sociology of Science from the University of Pennsylvania (1997).

Jacqueline Dubord, MPH, CPM, NHCM: Jackie@birthwisemidwifery.edu
Jacqueline has a homebirth midwifery practice in central Maine. Jacqueline has her master’s degree in public health, specializing in maternal and child health, and is also an alumnus of Birthwise. She has a bachelor’s degree in Psychology and Biology.

Heidi Fillmore, CPM, NHCM: Heidi@birthwisemidwifery.edu
Heidi is the founder of Birthwise. She has a bachelor’s degree in Architectural Technology from Southern Illinois University (1982) and graduated from the Midwifery Training Institute in 1987. She has been practicing midwifery in Maine and New Hampshire for 30 years and has been a faculty member since 1994. She is currently Vice President of Accreditation of the Midwifery Education Accreditation Council Board of Directors.

Cathy Heffernan, MSN, CNM: cathy@birthwisemidwifery.edu
Cathy is a practicing CNM out of our local Bridgton hospital. She gained her midwifery certification through Frontier Nursing University and her graduate degree from Case Western University. She teaches Hospital Birth here at Birthwise.

Kate Hartwell, CPM, NHCM: Kate@birthwisemidwifery.edu
Kate Hartwell is an owner of a busy, free-standing birth center in Concord, NH. Kate completed her CPM through the PEP process in 2010. She is a yoga instructor as well, teaching prenatal yoga since 2008.

Robin Illian, CPM: Robin@birthwisemidwifery.edu
Robin is the Clinical Director at Birthwise Midwifery School and has been a practicing midwife since 2005. She has a bachelor’s degree in Anthropology and Biology from James Madison University (1999) and is an
alumnus of Birthwise. Robin has attended births and been part of the midwifery community in California, Colorado and Maine.

Katie Krebs, MPH: Katie@birthwisemidwifery.edu
Katie is the Executive Director at Birthwise Midwifery School and holds an MPH in Maternal and Child Health and Epidemiology from Boston University School of Public Health. She received a B.A. in Molecular, Cellular, and Developmental Biology from the University of Colorado at Boulder. Katie has trained and worked as a doula and childbirth educator, and has extensive curriculum design experience.

Abby Luca, CPM: Abby@birthwisemidwifery.edu
Abby is the Academic Dean of Faculty at Birthwise. She received a B.A. in English and Religious Studies from the University of Alabama in 2006. She went on and received her M.A. in English from the University of Alabama in 2010. She taught 3 courses at the University of Alabama as a primary instructor between 2008 and 2010. Abby graduated from Birthwise in 2016 and started her midwifery practice in North Conway as well as working at The Birth House.

Judith Josiah-Martin, MSW, LMSW-CC, ACSW: Judith@birthwisemidwifery.edu
Judith is a Faculty and Field Placement Supervisor at the University of Maine and Research Advisor at Smith College. An experienced clinician, educator, and administrator, Judith brings an extensive knowledge of programs and interventions that have been effective in assisting health care, mental health and hospitality workers in enhancing diversity in the workplace.

Sarafina Kennedy, CPM: sarafina@birthwisemidwifery.edu
Sarafina Kennedy is a Boston-based midwife, birth doula and childbirth educator. She has been practicing for the past 7 years as a midwife and the past 10 as a doula. She trained with midwives in the Boston area and attended Birthwise in the flagship community class. She has a master’s degree in medical sociology from Brandeis University that has helped her understand how women’s birth experiences have the potential to be sources of great empowerment in all avenues of their lives.

Holly Murphy, CPM: Holly@birthwisemidwifery.edu
Holly received a B.A. in Religion and Philosophy from Saint Mary’s College. She lived and worked with people with disabilities in a volunteer community in Washington state for three years before moving to Maine. Holly graduated from Birthwise, and as part of her training spent a month working in a birth center in the Philippines. In 2005, she opened Birch Moon Midwifery, a private home birth practice in Bath, Maine.

Mell Pulsifer, CPM: Mell@birthwisemidwifery.edu
Mell is a Birthwise graduate and current CPM practicing in mid-coast of Maine. She holds a bachelor’s in biology from the University of Maine, Orono. She teaches Normal Labor and Birth to our first-year students. She lives in mid-coast Maine with her partner and young daughter.

Cheri Sarton, PhD, CNM Email: Cheri@birthwisemidwifery.edu
Cheri has a Ph.D. from State University of New York and is a Nurse-Midwife. She teaches our Independent Research class.

Mischa Schuler: mischa@birthwisemidwifery.edu
Mischa Schuler is an herbal practitioner and medicine maker offering herbal consultations in Portland, Maine in her private practice Wild Carrot Herbs. She specializes in anxiety support, as well as women's reproductive health and children’s digestive, respiratory and skin health. Her herbal studies have been through apprenticeship with Deb Soule of Avena Botanicals, in Rockport, Maine; preceptorship with herbalist, midwife and naturopath Dr. Mary Bove in Brattleboro, Vermont; and clinically at the Tai Sophia Institute in Laurel, Maryland where she earned a Master of Science degree in Herbal Medicine during a three-year course of clinical study.
Autumn Vergo, CNM: Autumn@birthwisemidwifery.edu
Autumn is a CNM currently the chair of Women’s Health at Cheshire Medical Center in Keene, NH. Previously, she practiced as a CPM for 8 years, and provided care out of the large free-standing birth center she owned in Southern New Hampshire. She is an active board member in NNEPQUIN, NACPM, and provides policy council for increasing access to midwifery care.
Appendices

How to Format Citations and References at Birthwise

Citation style for sources should follow the National Library of Medicine's (NLM) International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) recommendations. This resource is frequently updated, covers a comprehensive variety of source material, and can be accessed online: [http://www.nlm.nih.gov/bsd/uniform_requirements.html](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/bsd/uniform_requirements.html). For additional details about reference formatting, the NLM's *Citing Medicine* style guide should be consulted: [http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK7256/](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK7256/).

Guidelines for the most common types of citations are included below.

**Journal Article**

Include the names of all authors:


If an article has more than 6 authors, list the first 6 authors followed by et al.:


Organizations may be listed as the author:


**Book**


**Chapter in an Edited Book**


**Institutional Publication**


**Website**

For websites, use the following format and include as much as possible of the available information:

Title of Homepage. Edition. Place of publication: publisher; date of publication [date updated; date accessed]. Web address.


**Personal Communications**

References to personal communications like letters, emails, and conversations should be included in the text of the manuscript and not as a formal end reference. Put source information in parentheses. Consider including the people cited in an “Acknowledgements” or “Notes” section at the end of the article.

Example:
...the state Midwifery Advisory Committee was the only place where complaints about midwives were formally processed, and they had a poorly articulated process for case reviews (2014 email from Mary Midwife to the author).

If an interview is a major primary source, include it as a reference and cite it in the endnotes as follows:
Mary Midwife, telephone interview by author, March 14, 2014.

Compliance Disclosures

A complete list of disclosures can be found at https://birthwisemidwifery.edu/disclosures/

Completion and Retention Rates

Retention Rates

- Between 2013 and 2017 (latest numbers available), the average retention rate was 72% for all Midwifery Certificate Program students (as calculated by MEAC).
- Between 2013 and 2017 (latest numbers available), the average retention rate was 80% for all Midwifery Assistant Program students (as calculated by MEAC).
- Birthwise did not enroll any full-time, first-time students in 2017 (as calculated by IPEDS).

Completion/Graduation and Transfer Out Rates

- Students beginning the program between 2010 and 2014 (latest numbers available), the completion rate was 47% for all Midwifery Certificate Program students (as calculated by MEAC).
- For the cohort year in question, Birthwise did not enroll any full-time, first-time undergraduate students. IPEDS only tracks full-time students with no prior higher education experience, it is rare for students to be full-time per the Dept of Education in the first semester.

IPEDS Student Body Diversity

- 68% of students are part time. 32% are full time.
- 100% of students are female.
- As defined by IPEDS: 68% of students are white. 10% are non-resident alien. 11% are Black/African American. 1% are Asian. 7% are Hispanic/Latino. 1% are Native Hawaiian or other. 1% are American Indian or Alaskan.
- 19 students received Pell Grants in the 2017-18 year

Accreditation and Licensure

Birthwise Midwifery School is licensed by the Department of Education, State of Maine and State of New Hampshire, accredited by the Midwifery Education Accreditation Council (MEAC) and recognized by the United States Department of Education for Title IV Student Financial Aid. The US Immigration and Naturalization Service (SEVIS) has approved the school for enrollment of students from other countries.

To request documents detailing our accreditation and licenses, contact info@birthwisemidwifery.edu.

To file a grievance with the State of Maine please contact:
Maine State Department of Education, Higher Education Specialist
23 State House Station
August, ME 04333-0023
(207) 624-6846

To file a grievance with the State of New Hampshire, please contact:
New Hampshire Office of Career School Licensing
Changes since last publication

- Updates to the equity statement for clarification
- Scholarship language was updated to reflect the application instructions and language sent out to applications and posted on our website in December 2019.
- Virtual attendance policy language updated to match the most recent application form for virtual attendance. This language includes the option for community students to request virtual attendance for course re-takes
- Addition of Conditional Accept language in the admissions section
- Formatting was updated throughout for clarity
- NH DOE contact information added for grievance reporting
- Standards for Federal Returns have been updated