



**Prospective Student Guidebook**

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## Introduction

This student handbook is a summary of policies, procedures and practices for students enrolled at Birthwise Midwifery School.

The Executive Director, in collaboration with the Academic and Administrative teams, is accountable for creating, updating, and communicating the policies contained here. Policies are guided and/or dictated by the various regulatory agencies that oversee the conduct of our school, as well as current best practices aligned with our institutional mission and vision.

## About Birthwise

Birthwise Midwifery School is a small, non-profit, institution of higher education founded in 1994 by Heidi Fillmore, CPM.

The school offers a comprehensive three-year certificate program for direct-entry midwives. A Birthwise education prepares students to take and pass the North American Registry of Midwives (NARM) exam, which is required by many states for licensure as a Certified Professional Midwife. Graduates of Birthwise go on to practice in free-standing birth centers or home birth practices.

We are accredited by the Midwifery Education Accreditation Council (MEAC) and licensed by the Department of Education in Maine and New Hampshire. Birthwise has been approved by SEVIS for enrollment of international students, and our students are eligible to apply for Federal Student Aid through the U.S. Department of Education by completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

## Guiding Principles

### Vision

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

### Mission

Our 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

Our philosophy is that midwives should have a central role in childbirth and primary care in the United States.

We believe re-establishing midwives as central players will improve birth culture and birth outcomes.

We want everyone who wants a midwife to have one. We advocate for integrating Certified Professional Midwives into the wider care system to improve care for birthing people and babies.

We recognize that racism and structural violence pervade all institutions in the United States. That includes our education and healthcare systems. We are addressing our complicity in these systems. We are also training midwives that will fight against them.

We recognize that individuals of all genders give birth.

We firmly believe that all people deserve skilled, compassionate midwifery care as they build their families.

We believe that midwives center the voices of their clients. Midwives recognize the birthing person as the expert in their own body. Midwives collaborate with them to balance the wisdom and experience they each bring to the birthing space.

We understand that midwives blend tradition with modern science to preserve and build on the family-centered physiological birth supported by midwives who came before us.

We believe that care provided by midwives is safe, effective, affordable, and accessible. We need midwives now more than ever to address the growing costs and worsening outcomes in perinatal health care in this country.

### Beliefs

Pregnancy and birth are **natural processes that work best when undisturbed**. 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** for 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 of their care are cornerstone concepts for midwives. This care model encourages a relationship of empowerment and collaboration between the client and the midwife.

Every person and family have **diverse desires and needs** when it comes to childbirth. Their midwife should appreciate, celebrate, and reflect diversity.

Midwifery is a **positive force in human ecology and global politics**.

Midwifery preserves the **primordial cultural tradition of holistic, natural childbirth**. The Midwife's respect for the natural birth process, holistic approach to care, and midwifery care's cost effectiveness strengthen birthing parents, families, and communities. Midwives are a key ingredient in creating a sustainable world.

## Equity and Justice

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.

## Learning Environment

### 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 program requires a highly motivated adult learner with a commitment to putting in many hours of study outside of class time. When participating fully in the program, students should get three passes at the information, leading to improved retention and integration of key concepts.

We expect students to use the assigned readings, resources, and textbooks to gain their first pass at the material and explore the concepts ahead of class.

The faculty use class time to integrate, apply, and clarify concepts, facilitate discussion, and share personal experience to build on the materials students have already encountered in their self-study. The third pass at the information comes in the study after class takes place, and knowledge is demonstrated through final projects, papers, and exams (written or skills oriented).

To get the most out of this program, students must take ownership of their class experience and consider how their own participation, in the form of preparing for class, engaging in class discussion, and partnering with classmates to study, support their own learning and the learning of their classmates.

### Holistic and Integrative Education

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

### Supplies and Equipment

The school owns many teaching DVDs, simulation models, learning games, and visual aids for use in the classroom and by students outside of class. Models include many plastic pelvises and babies with cords and placentas, Noelle, a birth simulation model, dilation and station models, suture models, IV arms, belly models, breast models, catheterization models, and resuscitation models. Many homemade learning games and activities have been developed by faculty and students.

## Administration

Birthwise and its programs are administered by an all-volunteer Board of Directors, a small core staff, several part-time faculty, and many preceptors.

We hire students to accomplish appropriate administrative and clerical tasks, and have a handful of other contract employees who help with housekeeping, grounds management, etc.

## Birthwise Board of Directors

You can learn more about our current board of directors by visiting our website.

**Responsible for:** The Board is responsible for overseeing the financial health of the organization, fundraising, and evaluation and oversight of the Executive Director. The Board also partners with the Executive Director in long-range strategic planning.

## Core Staff

Core staff are responsible for the day to day operations of Birthwise. They include:

### Executive Director – Katie Krebs, MPH

- Email: [Katie@birthwisemidwifery.edu](mailto:Katie@birthwisemidwifery.edu)
- Phone: 207-647-5968, ex 108
- **Responsible for:** Strategic planning, institutional financial management, management of Birthwise staff, liaison to Board of Directors, maintenance of accreditation and licensing, oversight of program development and organizational growth. Katie is a member of the faculty as well.

#### Operations Coordinator + Bursar – Heather Tetreault

- Email: [Heather@birthwisemidwifery.edu](mailto:Heather@birthwisemidwifery.edu)
- Phone: 207-647-5968, ext 110
- **Responsible for:** Bookkeeping, payroll, tuition/billing (Bursar), supplies and facilities management, minor tech troubleshooting

#### Admissions and Recruitment Coordinator – Meg Terwilliger

- Email: [Admissions@birthwisemidwifery.edu](mailto:Admissions@birthwisemidwifery.edu)
- Phone: 207-647-5968, ext 106
- **Responsible for:** Coordination of admissions process, oversight of admissions committee, student recruitment

#### Financial Aid and SEVIS Coordinator – Sarah Paul, MA

- Email: [SaraP@birthwisemidwifery.edu](mailto:SaraP@birthwisemidwifery.edu)
- Phone: 207-647-5968
- **Responsible for:** Financial aid award packaging, student financial aid counseling, federal reporting, administration of student visas

#### Academic Dean of Students – Beth Bongiolatti Gray, MA, CPM, NHCM

- Email: [Beth@birthwisemidwifery.edu](mailto:Beth@birthwisemidwifery.edu)
- Phone: 207-647-5968, ex 102
- **Responsible for:** Oversight and development of Academic Program, including evaluation of curriculum and overall academic program structure, Student liaison. Beth is a member of the Faculty as well.

#### Academic Dean of Faculty – Abby Luca, MA, CPM, NHCM

- Email: [Abby@birthwisemidwifery.edu](mailto:Abby@birthwisemidwifery.edu)
- Phone: 207-647-5968, ext 106
- **Responsible for:** Oversight and development of Academic Program, including evaluation of curriculum and overall academic program structure, Faculty liaison. Abby is a member of the Faculty as well.

#### Academic Program Assistant + Registrar – Acadia Gantz, CPM

- Email: [Acadia@birthwisemidwifery.edu](mailto:Acadia@birthwisemidwifery.edu)
- Phone: 207-647-5968, ext 105
- **Responsible for:** Registration, exam grading and support, coordination of tutors and library resources, assists Academic Deans. Acadia is a member of the Faculty as well.

#### Clinical Director – Sarah Schubeck, MSM, CPM

- Email: [SarahS@birthwisemidwifery.edu](mailto:SarahS@birthwisemidwifery.edu)
- Phone: 207-647-5968

- **Responsible for:** Oversight and development of Clinical Program, including evaluation of curriculum and overall clinical program structure, oversight of skills learning and evaluation, oversight and coordination of preceptors and clinical experiences

#### Clinical Program Assistant + Registrar – Heather Bell

- Email: [HeatherB@birthwisemidwifery.edu](mailto:HeatherB@birthwisemidwifery.edu)
- Phone: 207-647-5968
- **Responsible for:** Coordination of materials, scheduling, and models for skills classes and OSATS, clinical supply ordering and maintenance, assists clinical director, cross coverage for registrar

## Faculty

Birthwise Midwifery school has approximately 20 active faculty members in the core midwifery program, with additional instructors who teach elective courses. Some staff members are also part of the faculty, but most of the faculty 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 homebirth, birth-center and hospital-based settings. Occasionally we bring in guest speakers and faculty from other areas to teach courses online, as we are able.

Please see our website for a current list of faculty and the courses they teach.

## Preceptors

We also have 80-100 preceptors at any given time. Preceptors are also considered adjunct faculty at Birthwise.

## The Midwifery Certificate Program

### Midwifery Program Goals

1. To have at least 80% of graduates become nationally certified by NARM and/or licensed to practice midwifery in their own states.
2. 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.
3. To prepare graduates to provide routine well body care.
4. To deliver an effective and accountable educational model for direct-entry midwives.

5. To prepare our students for entry into and involvement in the political landscape of midwifery in the US and abroad.
6. To offer classes and continuing education opportunities to aspiring and practicing midwives and maternity care providers.

## Admissions Requirements

### Academic Prerequisites for Admission

- A high school diploma or equivalent
- Doula training (certification not required, can be any doula training, can be completed at Birthwise before classes begin, contact [HeatherT@birthwisemidwifery.edu](mailto:HeatherT@birthwisemidwifery.edu) for more information)
- CPR training (certification does not need to be current)

### Strongly Recommended Preparation for Admission

- 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 a doula, childbirth educator, attendance at midwifery conferences/workshops, volunteer work with a midwife, attending breastfeeding classes)
- Independent reading and research on childbirth and midwifery
- Personal reflection on issues of equity and justice, and how they relate to the work of a midwife

## Program Requirements

### Non-Academic Requirements for Completion of the Program

- **A car and license to drive** – you must be able to drive to births and client visits
- **Fluency in the English language** – courses are taught in English
- **A cellphone** – to be accessible when on call
- **A computer (laptop is preferable) with internet access** – you will need to be able to access our learning management system, email, and word processing programs. Students who have only used tablets or Chromebooks have had trouble using the programs necessary to complete the program
- **Physical ability to carry out the work of a midwife**

### Graduation Requirements

- Successfully complete and pass each required academic course
- Successfully complete a minimum of 42 (Campus) or 46 (Community) preceptorship credits, including any challenged credits awarded
- Pass each section of the periodic exams and the senior exam
- Pass all OSATS (Objective, Structured, Assessment of Technical Skills)
- Document the minimum clinical experience requirements as specified below

- Have faculty and preceptors sign off on all mastered skills on the Preceptorship skills Mastered Checklist found in the Birthwise Clinical Documentation Record
- Document attendance at a childbirth education series (minimum 10 hours)
- Attend Homecoming Workshop 1 (Campus and Community students), and Homecoming Workshop 2 (Community students only)
- Be approved for graduation by the Clinical Director, the Academic Dean of Students, and the student's last preceptor(s)
- Pay all Birthwise tuition and fees in full before receiving a certificate of graduation from Birthwise
- Complete exit counseling if a recipient of Federal Financial Aid
- 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

## Curriculum Overview

### 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 12-16 hours of study outside of class. Each student is expected to keep up with reading and homework to fully participate in class discussions. This free 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 Certified Professional Midwife (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 strongly encouraged to research the legal status of CPMs and direct-entry midwifery in the state they intend to 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 the Clinical Director, [SarahS@birthwisemidwifery.edu](mailto:SarahS@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 and Details

Applicants can choose between two options for our program: The Campus Option and The Community Option.

### Campus Option Overview

**Semester Structure:** The 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 outline below is the expected trajectory of a campus student. From time to time, Birthwise may update the course names, credits, and sequencing. Please refer to your enrollment agreement (signed when you enroll in the program) for the exact dates and courses you are required to complete for graduation.

**Clinical Learning:** Students are placed in a clinical rotation with a local preceptor in the second and third semester for six to eight hours per week. After the 4<sup>th</sup> semester, students begin preceptorship. Most students leave Maine for their preceptorship, and students should not expect to stay in Maine. Preceptorship can vary in length, depending on the volume of births that occur at the preceptor's practice.

**Credit Load and Class Schedule:** the full-time student can expect to carry a course load of 15 to 20 credits per semester and attend classes approximately three days per week for six hours each day. Each credit is equivalent to 15 classroom hours or 45 clinical hours in preceptorship.

**Minimum Credits to Graduate:** Campus students must complete a minimum of 108.5 credits to graduate.

## Campus Option: Year 1

Semester 1: March/April - July	
Course Name	Credit Amount
Orientation	0.8
Histories of Midwifery	1.2
Overview of the Human Body 1	2.2
Normal Labor and Birth	3.2
Normal Prenatal	3.0
Skills Practice 1	1.0
Professional Midwifery 1	1.0
Counseling Skills and Group Process	0.8
Research Methods	1.0
<b>Total Credits</b>	<b>14.2</b>

Semester 2: August - December	
Course Name	Credit Amount
Overview of the Human Body 2	1.8
Midwifery and Social Justice 1	1.2
Postpartum	1.6
Introduction to Lactation	0.8
Physical Assessment	1.6
Professional Midwifery 2	1.0
Prenatal Complications	4.0
Skills Practice 2	1.6
BLS for Health Care Providers	0.2
Public Health Issues	0.8
Water Birth Seminar	0.3
Mental Health	1.0
Clinical Rotation 1	2.0
<b>Total Credits</b>	<b>17.9</b>

## Campus Option: Year 2

Semester 3: January - May	
Course Name	Credit Amount
Normal Newborn	2.0
Complications of Labor and Birth	4.0
Therapeutic Nutrition	1.2
Homeopathy	0.8
Skills Practice 3	1.4
Midwifery and Social Justice 2	1.2
Newborn Complications	1.6
Professional Midwifery 3	1.2
Well Body Care	2.0
Hospital Birth Seminar	0.4
VBAC/Cesarean Seminar	0.6
Suturing Workshop	0.4
Clinical Rotation 2	2.0
<b>Total Credits</b>	<b>18.8</b>

Semester 4: August - December	
Course Name	Credit Amount
Professional Midwifery 4	1.0
Lab work for Midwives	1.6
Pharmacology for Midwives	1.4
Independent Research	3.0
Neonatal Resuscitation Certification	0.4
Botanicals	1.2
Skills Practice 4	1.4
Re-Orientation Retreat	1.0
Whole Foods Nutrition	0.8
Birth Center Seminar	0.4
Preceptorship 1	6
<b>Total Credits</b>	<b>18.2</b>

### Campus Option: Year 3+

Semester 5: January - June	
Course Name	Credit Amount
Professional Midwifery 5	1.0
Preceptorship 2	12.0
Total Credits 13.0	

Semester 6: July - December	
Course Name	Credit Amount
Preceptorship 3	12.0
Homecoming Workshop 1	1.2
Total Credits 13.2	

Semester 7: January - June	
Course Name	Credit Amount
Preceptorship 4	12
Homecoming Workshop 2	1.2
Total Credits 13.2	

### Community Option Overview

**Semester Structure:** The Community Option is a low-residency model consisting of an orientation week and eleven two-week academic sessions at the Birthwise campus.

Course assignments are completed at home between sessions so that students are prepared for classes when on campus. This is not an online or distance program.

This outline below is the expected trajectory of a campus student. From time to time, Birthwise may update the course names, credits, and sequencing. Please refer to your enrollment agreement (signed when you enroll in the program) for the exact dates and courses you are required to complete for graduation.

**Clinical Learning:** Students begin preceptorship in semester 1 or 2 with a midwife in their home community. Community students do not complete a clinical rotation in Maine. Preceptorships vary in length, depending on the preceptor's birth volume.

**Credit Load and Class Schedule:** the full-time student can expect to carry a course load of fifteen to twenty credits per semester and take classes M-F, for about 8 hours per day during their sessions. Each credit is equivalent to 15 classroom hours or 45 clinical hours in preceptorship.

**Minimum Credits to Graduate: Community students must complete a minimum of 107.2 credits to graduate.**

**Community Option: Year 1**

**Semester 1: August – December**

Orientation Session: 1 week in August

Academic Session 1: 2 weeks in September

Academic Session 2: 2 weeks in November

Course Name	Credit Amount
Preceptorship 1	5
Orientation	0.8
Histories of Midwifery	1.2
Overview of the Human Body 1	2.2
Normal Labor and Birth	3.2
Normal Prenatal	3.0
Skills Practice 1	1.0
Professional Midwifery 1	1.0
BLS for Health Care Providers	0.2
<b>Total Credits</b>	<b>17.6</b>

**Semester 2: January – June**

Academic Session 3: 2 weeks in February

Academic Session 4: 2 weeks in April

Academic Session 5: 2 weeks in June

Course Name	Credit Amount
Preceptorship 2	5
Overview of the Human Body 2	1.8
Midwifery and Social Justice 1	1.2
Postpartum	1.6
Introduction to Lactation	0.8
Physical Assessment	1.6
Professional Midwifery 2	1.0
Prenatal Complications	4.0
Skills Practice 2	1.6
Counseling and Mental Health	1.4
Research Methods	1.0
<b>Total Credits</b>	<b>21.0</b>

## Community Option: Year 2

### Semester 3: July – December

Academic Session 6: 2 weeks in August

Academic Session 7: 2 weeks in October

Course Name	Credit Amount
Preceptorship 3	5
Normal Newborn	2.0
Complications of Labor and Birth	1.2
Therapeutic Nutrition	1.2
Whole Food Nutrition	0.8
Neonatal Resuscitation Certification	0.4
Skills Practice 3	1.4
Midwifery and Social Justice 2	1.2
Newborn Complications	1.6
Professional Midwifery 3	1.2
Well Body Care	2.0
<b>Total Credits</b>	<b>20.8</b>

### Semester 4: January – June

Academic Session 8: 2 weeks in January

Academic Session 9: 2 weeks in March

Academic Session 10: 2 weeks in May

Course Name	Credit Amount
Preceptorship 4	7.0
Professional Midwifery 4	1.0
Lab work for Midwives	1.6
Suturing Workshop	0.4
Independent Research	3.0
Homeopathy for Midwives	0.8
Water Birth Seminar	0.3
Skills Practice 4	1.5
Re-Orientation Retreat	0.5
Hospital Birth Seminar	0.4
Public Health Issues	0.8
VBAC/Cesarean Seminar	0.6
<b>Total Credits</b>	<b>17.9</b>

### Community Option: Year 3

#### Semester 5: July – December

Academic Session 11: 2 weeks in August

Course Name	Credit Amount
Preceptorship 5	11
Pharmacology for Midwives	1.4
Botanicals	1.2
Birth Center Seminar	0.4
Skills Practice 5	0.7
Professional Midwifery 5	1.0
<b>Total Credits</b>	<b>15.7</b>

#### Semester 6: January – June

Course Name	Credit Amount
Preceptorship 6	13.0
Homecoming 2**	1.2
<b>Total Credits</b>	<b>14.2</b>

**\*\*Homecoming 2 happens on campus leading up to Graduation.**

### Elective Course Examples

Students are welcome and encouraged to take electives. These are typically scheduled on nights and weekends to maximize the number of students who can attend. Elective course offerings change frequently, but some examples include:

Fertility Awareness Training	Domestic Violence Training
Massage for Labor	Sexual Abuse and Pregnancy
Placenta Medicine	Vaccination Choices
Transgender Health	Childbirth Preparation Methods

### Clinical Skill Development and Experience

Clinical skill development is fostered in two ways at Birthwise Midwifery School: Classroom instruction and 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 Objective, Structured, Assessment of Technical Skills exams (OSATS) to gain initial proficiency before your clinical experiences begin.

#### Learning Skills in the Clinical Setting – Campus Option

**Clinical Rotations 1 and 2** take place during the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> semesters, respectively. During these rotation, 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 4<sup>th</sup> semester, upon completion of the academic courses. Students identify an acceptable midwifery practice with the guidance and support of the Clinical Director. Students typically move away from Maine for these preceptorships.

#### Learning Skills in the Clinical Setting – Community Option

Students begin their **preceptorship** 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, or community of choice. These preceptorships typically do not take place in Maine.

#### Preceptorship – Campus and Community Options

Most of your midwifery skill development happens in preceptorship. You may choose to complete preceptorship at several sites to learn from a variety of midwives and increase your exposure to different styles and ways of practicing.

Birthwise has a list of preceptors that have frequently worked with our students, a collaborative resource created by MEAC accredited schools that invites preceptors and aspiring preceptors to make themselves available, as well as files of student feedback about preceptors to assist students in locating a suitable preceptorship site. However, Birthwise does not guarantee placement in or completion of the preceptorship. Students should begin developing relationships with practicing midwives early in anticipation of preceptorship.

**Requirements:** Students will need a driver's license, dependable transportation, and 24 hour on-call capabilities when they are in preceptorship. Some preceptorship and clinical sites will require vaccinations.

#### Accountability in Preceptorship

We recognize that preceptorship is one of the most rewarding and most challenging aspects of midwifery school. To ensure the safety, wellbeing, and satisfactory progress of our students in preceptorship, we have several accountability measures in place.

**Site approval:** All preceptors must apply through Birthwise to be recognized as a preceptor. Birthwise has specific requirements that preceptors and preceptorship sites must meet, as well as training they must complete.

**Regular Communication:** The Clinical Director maintains regular phone and email contact with precepting students and preceptors and serves as the student's primary contact with the school once they enter full preceptorship. The Clinical Director also hosts regular mid-semester conferences with both the preceptor and student, to monitor progress and address any concerns.

**Documentation of Skills:** All student clinical experiences are tracked in the Clinical Documentation Guide. This allows the Clinical Director to monitor the student's progress through skills, identify gaps, and course correct as needed.

**Evaluations:** Students and preceptors are asked to fill out evaluations periodically throughout the preceptorship. These evaluations help the Clinical Director monitor the health of the student – preceptor relationship, and can inform future guidance we give students seeking to work with any given preceptor, or raise concerns about a students' suitability to practice as a midwife.

### 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 their progress, to practice and be evaluated on skills through OSATS testing and to learn from each other's experiences.

## Course Descriptions

### 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.

### 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.

### Counseling and Mental Health

This course prepares students to work with clients with current or past mental health issues such as depression, personality disorders, eating disorders, trauma histories,

and grief. Class topics include treatments, counseling techniques, resources, and when to refer a client for higher level care or intervention.

### 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 the crafting and shaping of 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, flourish, and be reclaimed.

### Homeopathy for Midwives

This is an introductory course in homeopathy with a special focus on the person in the childbearing year and the newborn.

### 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.

### Independent Research

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.

### 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 students for the full NRP Certification course to come later in the program.

### Introduction to 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 healthy lactation and feeding relationships from birth into the postpartum period.

### Lab work for Midwives

The 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 people and their newborns. Students will also learn basic lab skills used in midwifery offices such as microscopy, hemoglobin/hematocrit, and urinalysis.

### 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 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.

### Midwifery and 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 and 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 groundwork for the on-going work of midwives in dismantling obstacles to health, and by extension, midwifery care in underserved/underrepresented communities and beyond.

### Newborn Complications

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

### 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.

### 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.

### 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.

### 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.

### 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.

### 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.

### 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.

### 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.

### 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, policymaking, health disparities, healthcare delivery systems and professional associations. The business skills necessary to open and operate a midwifery practice are also discussed.

### Public Health Issues

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.

### 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.

### 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.

### Skills Practice 1-5

These courses 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.

### Suturing Workshop

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

### 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.

### 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.

### Waterbirth Seminar

Students will learn the benefits, risks, and how-tos of birth in water.

### 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.

### 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.

## Becoming a Birthwise Student

### The Admissions Process

For admissions questions and support, please call 207-647-5968 or email us at [admissions@birthwisemidwifery.edu](mailto:admissions@birthwisemidwifery.edu).

Please be sure that all materials sent to Birthwise as part of your application include your full name so that we can clearly identify which materials belong to your application.

### 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](mailto:admissions@birthwisemidwifery.edu) for more information.

### How to Apply

Online applications can be found on our website in the Admissions area. Please submit your completed applications by the dates listed on the website.

A completed application includes the following:

- Complete online application
- Application Essay
- Official High School Transcript or equivalent (upload online 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 (can be paid online, or you can mail a check)

**Letters of Reference:** Please send the Birthwise reference form (located on our website) to each of your references. Have them return the reference to you in a sealed envelope or have them return it directly to Birthwise. If you have them send it to you in a sealed envelope, mail the sealed references to Birthwise.

**Please ensure you have the following references:**

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

### 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.*

In December (Campus option) and February (Community option), the admissions committee reviews and evaluates all application materials, including applications, essays, reference letters, and transcripts. After review of materials, the admissions committee invites applicants to interview. Those who meet the admissions requirements and seem to be the most promising and appropriate candidates for our midwifery program are offered acceptance. Applicants may be accepted, denied, or waitlisted based on their qualifications and the number of applicants in that year.

**Conditional Accept:** For students who have not demonstrated past academic success, but who show promise as future midwives, we may offer a conditional accept and outline the conditions of acceptance in the acceptance 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 option) and May (Community option), we may find we have extra space in the class and will offer those spots to our waitlisted applicants.

### Interviews

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

## Enrollment

If you are accepted, you will be sent an enrollment agreement to confirm your intent to enroll at Birthwise. At this time you will

- make a \$300 tuition deposit
- turn in your advanced standing application (if applicable)
- give Birthwise permission to register you in your first semester classes

- Submit your immunization records or a vaccine waiver form (for medical or religious/personal exemption, [in accordance with the State of Maine law](#)).

### Immunization Requirements

In addition, the requirements from the State of Maine, Birthwise requires that students provide proof of Hepatitis B vaccine (immunization record or titers) or a waiver form. These must be on file before you are registered for your first semester of classes.

Midwifery school requires hands on practice of invasive skills that may lead to student exposure to pathogens. To reduce the risk to students, we strictly practice all universal precautions, use appropriate personal protective equipment, and require that students provide proof of vaccination or have a waiver on file.

Some clinical rotation and preceptor sites require additional vaccines, and some may not accept students who have chosen to waive the vaccine requirement.

### 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. If you are interested in applying previous education and/or experience to your program at Birthwise, you must apply for advanced standing at the time you submit your enrollment agreement (after acceptance to Birthwise and before you register for courses).

### Academic Course Waiver

To waive an academic course, the student must submit the Academic Course Waiver application at the time of enrollment. Academic Course Waivers are reviewed and approved by the Academic Dean of Students.

There are two ways a student demonstrate ability to waive a course:

**Credit earned from another institution:** The student will submit information about the course previous taken, including the credit granting institution, qualifications of the course instructor, number of class hours, grade received, and learning objectives covered. Please see the Academic Course Waiver application for details.

**Substantial experience:** The student will submit information about the experience and knowledge they have that meets or exceeds the course objectives. The student may be required to take a written exam to confirm equivalent knowledge. Please see the Academic Course Waiver application for details.

### Academic Course Waiver Restrictions

All students, regardless of advanced status, **must take and pass all periodic exams, the senior exam, and all skills exams (OSATS)**. If there is not a periodic exam associated with the course or credit you wish to challenge, you must complete all regular exams for that course.

**A minimum of 40% of awarded academic credits must be received while enrolled at Birthwise.**

**Fees are required for advanced standing applications.** See the 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. Birthwise has a special agreement with Goddard College, which will accept credits from Birthwise towards a bachelor's or master's degree.

Please contact the Academic Dean of Students for more information:

[Beth@birthwisemidwifery.edu](mailto:Beth@birthwisemidwifery.edu)

### **Clinical Credit Challenge**

Students who come to Birthwise with previous clinical experience can apply for a Clinical Credit Challenge. This application will be reviewed by the Clinical Director and will work with the student to determine an appropriate number of credits to be awarded prior to the first academic session.

To apply for a Clinical Credit Challenge, the student will provide 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. Please see the Clinical Credit Challenge application for details.

### **Clinical Credit Challenge Restrictions**

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 category must be documented while an enrolled student at Birthwise

Clinical Challenge is intended to award incoming students credit for midwifery experience 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 for more information:

[SarahS@birthwisemidwifery.edu](mailto:SarahS@birthwisemidwifery.edu)

## **Canadian and other International Students**

Birthwise is approved by the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) to accept international students on an M-1 visa. All English-speaking international students are welcome to apply.

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 Student Visa Coordinator can help you with the student visa process. Please email [SarahP@birthwisemidwifery.edu](mailto:SarahP@birthwisemidwifery.edu) with any questions.

### 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.

### Special Considerations for Canadian Students

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 program for foreign-trained midwives.

**The two bridging programs for foreign-trained midwives are:**

- [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 graduates 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, please fully research the requirements for foreign-trained midwives in your province.

## Financing Your Education

### Tuition and Fees for 2021-2022 Academic Year

#### Tuition Costs

For full time matriculated students (12 or more credits) taking the program as designed, tuition costs are outlined in the table below.

	Campus Option	Community Option
YEAR 1	\$16,300	\$14,000
YEAR 2	\$14,000	\$14,000
YEAR 3	\$11,700	\$14,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$42,000</b>	<b>\$42,000</b>

Part time matriculated students (fewer than 12 credits) 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.**

### Fees and Other Costs

These costs are approximate and subject to change. Please contact the Operation Coordinator with any questions: [Heather@birthwisemidwifery.edu](mailto:Heather@birthwisemidwifery.edu)

#### School costs:

- Materials fees for some courses: \$12 - \$35 each
- Book Costs: Approximately \$2200 over the full program, most purchased in the first semester
- Midwifery equipment: Approximately \$165
- Advanced Status fees- \$50 application fee, plus \$30 fee per credit awarded

#### Others costs:

- Transportation/driving to and from clinical experiences
- Cell phone/pager for on-call time
- Computer (we recommend a laptop, and that students do not rely on a tablet)
- Travel and housing costs to and from Bridgton for Homecoming and Graduation

#### Costs Specific to Community Option:

- Travel costs to and from Bridgton for Orientation and Academic Sessions
- Housing costs while attending sessions

## Financial Support

One of the biggest hurdles our students face is financing their education. We never want finances to prevent our students from attending and graduating from Birthwise, and have several avenues for support. Our Financial Aid Coordinator, Sarah Paul, is

available to guide you through the financial aid application process and consider the options available to you for financing your education. For questions, please email Sarah at [SarahP@birthwisemidwifery.edu](mailto:SarahP@birthwisemidwifery.edu).

### Payment Plans

Tuition is due in full 1 week before the semester begins.

We can also set up payment plans upon request, breaking your semester tuition payment up into 3 smaller payments. You'll pay a \$10 service fee for each payment (up to \$30) and all payments must be made by the 60% mark of the semester. If you are interested in setting up a payment, please contact [Heather@Birthwisemidwifery.edu](mailto:Heather@Birthwisemidwifery.edu).

### 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. We therefore offer several scholarships per year to incoming and returning students. See our website for more information.

### External Scholarships

Many organizations offer scholarships that can be used to pay for midwifery school. We maintain an informal list of scholarships that students can access on our website. We also post notices about scholarship and funding opportunities to our student Facebook group, and announce them in schoolwide emails.

### State Education Grants

Many states have small grants that our students are eligible for each year if they are a resident of that state (in Maine it is called FAME, [www.famemaine.com](http://www.famemaine.com)) . If you're interested in exploring this option, please contact [SarahP@birthwisemidwifery.edu](mailto:SarahP@birthwisemidwifery.edu)

### AmeriCorps, GI Bill, and International Aid

Eligible students may use their AmeriCorps, GI Bill, or Ontario Student Assistant Program funds to pay for their Birthwise education. Interested students should inquire with each agency to determine their eligibility and application requirements.

## Federal Student Aid

Because Birthwise is an accredited institution and recognized by the U.S. Department of Education, our students enrolled in the Midwifery Certificate Program are eligible to apply for Title IV funds (Federal Student Aid). Qualified students may receive Federal Stafford Loans and Pell Grants, and parents of dependent students can apply to receive a parent Plus Loan.

### Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

To apply for federal student aid, students must fill out the FAFSA, which is available online at [www.studentaid.ed.gov](http://www.studentaid.ed.gov) beginning October 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. This is the same application that all students in the U.S. complete when seeking federal financial aid to attend institutes of higher education. Once the application is completed, the student indicates that they would like to attend Birthwise Midwifery School by including the following information:

**Birthwise is an undergraduate, technical, 3-year certificate program**

**Our school code is 036123**

Inputting the incorrect information on the form may cause a delay in processing your financial aid.

### Determining Your Aid Package

The specific type and amount of Federal Student Aid you receive will depend on four criteria:

1. Dependent (24 years old or younger) vs. independent status (>24 years old)
2. Family income (parent income if a dependent)
3. Full vs. part-time enrollment status (this affects Pell Grants only)
4. Past student loan awards

### Types of Federal Student Aid

There are three types of Federal Student Aid.

**Pell Grants:** This is money that is awarded based on family income and does not need to be paid back. This is only available to students who do not have a bachelor's degree. The annual Pell Grant is split in two parts, each part being paid at the start of each of the two semesters of that academic year.

It is important to note that Birthwise students are not eligible for as much Pell Grant money as a student attending a degree granting institution. This is because academic credits are divided by two for schools that do not confer degrees (associate's, bachelor's, etc), and Pell amounts are based on whether the student is full time (12 or more credits), three quarter time (9-11 credits), or part time (6-8 credits).

*For example, if a student registers for 17 academic credits at Birthwise, the US Department of Education (USDE) recognizes that as 8.5 credits, which is part time.*

However, clinical credits (clinical rotations and preceptorships) are recognized as full credits.

*For example, if a student registers for 16 credits of preceptorship, the USDE recognizes all 16 credits and that student is considered eligible for a full-time Pell Grant.*

Each semester is calculated using this formula and Pell is awarded accordingly. Because the clinical credits in the Community Option are distributed more evenly throughout the program, students in that option will be eligible for larger Pell Grants.

**Subsidized Stafford Loans:** These are loans that do not accrue interest until after the student is no longer attending school. The student must begin paying back these loans 6 months after either graduating, withdrawing from school, or dropping below half time status. The annual loan amount is split in two parts, each part being paid at the start of the two semesters of that academic year. Most students are eligible for the maximum amount of these loans unless their family income is very high or they have reached the limit set by the U.S. government due to past educational loans.

**Unsubsidized Stafford Loans:** These loans are low interest loans for which the interest is not subsidized. The loans begin accruing interest from the time the loan is given. The student does not need to begin payment on the loan until 6 months after graduating, withdrawing, or dropping below half-time status, but they will need to pay off the interest accrued while they were in school. The annual loan amount is split in two parts, each part being paid at the start of the two semesters of that academic year. Most students are eligible for the maximum amount of these loans unless their family income is very high or they have reached the limit set by the U.S. government due to past educational loans.

For more information on maximum loan amounts, visit the Federal Student Aid website: <https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/types/loans/subsidized-unsubsidized>

**Please note** that Birthwise students are considered to be in first year status for the first 3 semesters, then sophomore status for semesters 4-6.

## Partnerships

### Goddard College Partnership

Birthwise Midwifery School and Goddard College have developed a partnership that allows for work completed at Birthwise to be applied in the form of transfer credit toward undergraduate and graduate degrees at Goddard College.

Goddard College is a low-residency, liberal arts college at which students 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 School and Colleges.

For more information, visit

<https://www.goddard.edu/admissions/partnerships/opportunities-for-birthwise-graduates/> or email [admissions@goddard.edu](mailto:admissions@goddard.edu)

## Onkwehon:we Midwifery Collective Partnership

Birthwise has partnered with the Onkwehon:we Midwifery Collective to support the education of their Onkwehon:we Midwifery Training Program (OMTP) Students. OMTP students can enroll in courses at Birthwise to earn credit toward the completion of their midwifery program and will graduate from OMTP.

In exchange, the Onkwehon:we Midwifery Collective provides curriculum review to help us diversify and decolonize our course materials, as well as cultural humility training for faculty and staff, and cultural history courses for students.

## CHANGES SINCE LAST VERSION

1. Re-arranged introduction section and expanded on adult learning model.
2. Updated formatting
3. Changed heading “other requirements” to more accurately be described as “non-academic requirements for completion of the program”
4. Organized campus and community semester outlines by year and made timelines general (not specific to a given semester – these details are outlined in each student’s enrollment agreement).
5. Reorganized sections for better flow
6. Added details regarding financial aid and scholarship opportunities
7. Updated staff information
8. Updated Advanced Standing to combine Course waivers and Course challenges in Academic Course Waivers.