



Birthingway
College of Midwifery



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Birthingway is a nonprofit corporation authorized by the State of Oregon to offer and confer the academic degree described herein, following a determination that state academic standards will be satisfied under OAR 583-030. Inquiries concerning the standards or school compliance may be directed to the Office of Degree Authorization, 1500 Valley River Drive, Suite 100, Eugene, Oregon 97401.

Birthingway College of Midwifery meets or exceeds the current educational standards set by the Oregon Midwifery Council and the Oregon State Board of Direct Entry Midwifery. The college is accredited by the Midwifery Education Accreditation Council (MEAC).

MEAC: P.O. Box 984, LaConner, WA 98257
(360)466.2080 <http://www.meacschools.org>.

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Information within is accurate as of this date and subject to change without notice. For further information call 503.760.3131 or visit our website at www.birthingway.edu.

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Introduction

Thank you for inquiring about Birthingway College of Midwifery.

Established as Birthingway Midwifery School in March of 1993, the main purpose of the college is to train direct-entry midwives in a traditional midwifery model of care, using their intellect, senses, intuition, and judgment to integrate new medical approaches with age-old wise woman practices. Birthingway also offers certification programs for Labor Doulas, Postpartum Doulas and Childbirth Educators, as well as certification preparation for Lactation Consultants.

Birthingway's programs provide a balance of textbook and empirical knowledge, along with clinical skills emphasizing low-tech methods, in an environment of respect for the physical, psychological and spiritual dimensions of pregnancy, childbirth and the postpartum period.

Birthingway is institutionally accredited by the Midwifery Education Accreditation Council (MEAC). We are authorized by the State of Oregon to offer a Bachelor of Science in Midwifery degree.

Students who complete all of our midwifery program components should have achieved sufficient classroom and clinical knowledge to meet examination and experiential requirements for national (NARM) professional certification and Oregon state licensure as a direct-entry midwife. Such credentialing is not conducted by Birthingway. Other states may have different requirements.

Our Campus

Birthingway is located on the Southeast side of Portland, about one mile east of I-205 on SE Foster Road. Our two large houses offer multiple classrooms, a cozy community kitchen, a beautiful herb garden, and a wonderful library that contains an extensive collection of midwifery-related books and resources for students and community members.



Birthingway's midwifery library is unparalleled in the United States.



Our beautiful community kitchen....

About Midwifery

A midwife assists a woman in the childbearing year. This includes prenatal, birth, postpartum, and newborn care; in addition she can provide well-woman gynecology care, such as regular PAP smears and assistance with some forms of birth control. Traditionally, a midwife was female, often an older family member such as a grandmother or aunt. She was often also a general healer for the community. Midwives still practice in most traditional cultures, and in many "modern" countries such as the Netherlands. In the United States, the rise of the American medical system during the 20th century led to births in hospitals with obstetricians becoming the norm. However, the choice to use midwives is on the rise.

In the United States there are two types of midwives:

Certified Nurse-Midwives are nurses with hospital-based midwifery training; most CNMs practice in clinics and hospitals. For those interested in a career as a CNM, we recommend contacting the American College of Nurse Midwives (the national organization for CNMs).

Direct-Entry Midwives are specialists in birth outside the hospital, at home and in free-standing birth centers. The legal requirements for direct-entry midwifery education and licensing vary by state. In the United States, there is national certification for direct-entry midwives, but no national licensing. A Certified Professional Midwife (CPM) is nationally certified through the North American Registry of Midwives (NARM). If a midwife is licensed, it will be by the state(s) she practices in. Not all states offer licensing. In Oregon, midwives may choose to become a Licensed Direct-Entry Midwife (LDM).

Most direct-entry midwives are self-employed, providing care in a private office or at the client's home. Sometimes they work together at birth centers. Income varies depending on how many births a midwife attends, the area she lives in, what her fees are, and her expenses. A full-time midwife attending 3-5 births per month can expect to support herself and her family comfortably, but not lavishly.

About Doulas, Childbirth Educators, and Lactation Consultants

Birthingway offers certification programs for Labor Doula, Postpartum Doula and Childbirth Educators, and certification preparation for Lactation Consultants, as these disciplines fall within a direct-entry midwife's scope of practice.

Doulas assist women by providing physical and emotional support during labor (Labor Doula) or as a mother's helper postpartum (Postpartum Doula). A doula is not trained to provide health care for mother or baby. There are several organizations that offer workshops and certification for doulas. At Birthingway, we offer courses and certification for Labor Doula and Postpartum Doula, as well as a web page to facilitate matching doulas in our program with pregnant and postpartum women.

Childbirth Educators provide opportunities for pregnant women and their labor supporters to learn about the birth process, facilitate informed decision-making, teach techniques for natural childbirth, and offer ideas about basic newborn care. Childbirth Educators may work privately or may work for a hospital or other birthing center, providing classes for their clients. Birthingway offers certification for Childbirth Educators.

Lactation Consultants An International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC) is a health care professional who specializes in the clinical management of breastfeeding. IBCLCs are certified by the International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners. IBCLCs work in a variety of health care settings including hospitals, pediatric offices, public

health clinics, and private practice. Birthingway offers a program to prepare for taking the national IBLCE exam via one of the four approved routes. People interested in supporting breastfeeding in another capacity can choose to be certified as a Breastfeeding Counselor, and provide breastfeeding education and peer counseling.

The Biodynamic Model

Birthingway has developed a model of caring for women and families during the childbearing year and beyond. We refer to this as the biodynamic birth, in which birth is not only a natural part of human life, but a necessary part and one that is intimately connected with what it is to be human. The “bio” in biodynamic reflects the model’s grounding in biological processes, while the “dynamic” describes the power of genuine relationships based on trust. Biodynamic care is women-centered and individualized.

Biodynamic birth respects human physiology and thus advocates for the least amount of intervention while still protecting the well-being of the mother and baby. Intervention takes on different meanings depending upon the type of care provider; therefore, each of our programs develops specific tools for the various types of services our students will be providing.



Midwifery Programs

Certificate in Midwifery

Prerequisites: see Prerequisites for Midwifery Program

Certificate in Midwifery consists of:

49 credit hours in Midwifery Core Courses
26 credit hours in Midwifery Supplemental and Elective Courses
20 credit hours in Apprenticeship Credit
95 total credit hours of coursework

Students who do not wish to meet the General Education Requirement to receive the B.S.M. credential have the option of receiving a "Certificate of Midwifery."

To graduate with a Birthingway Certificate in Midwifery, students must meet the following requirements:

- Completion of all coursework (homework, class presentations, exams). See MIDWIFERY COURSES section for course listing
- Documentation of midwifery skills practice and assessment on College approved forms
- Demonstration of "Midwifery Integration," an oral exam that demonstrates the candidate's ability to weave together judgment, knowledge, skills, clinical assessment, decision-making, perceptions, and intuition into appropriate action plans
- Successful completion of written comprehensive exam; student may substitute NARM exam for the in-house exam
- Complete the "Completion of Graduation Requirements" form with an advisor
- Complete the "Application for Midwifery Certificate" and pay the graduation fee
- All financial obligations to Birthingway paid in full

Clinical requirements:

- Participant – 25 out-of-hospital births
- Participant – 5 hospital births
- Participant – 25 prenatal exams
- Primary Role – 25 births
- Primary Role – 75 prenatal exams, including 20 initials
- Primary Role – 25 newborn exams
- Primary Role – 40 postpartum exams
- Continuity of Care on 15 supervised primary clients

Bachelor of Science in Midwifery

Prerequisites: see Prerequisites for Midwifery Program

Bachelor of Science in Midwifery consists of:

30 semester credit hours of General Education (transferred in)
49 credit hours in Midwifery Core Courses
26 credit hours in Midwifery Supplemental and Elective Courses
20 credit hours in Apprenticeship Credit

125 total credit hours of coursework

The Midwifery Degree program consists of all the requirements of the Certificate in Midwifery (see above) and the following General Education Requirements:

General Education Requirements

To receive a Bachelor of Science in Midwifery degree, students must complete 30 semester credit hours or equivalent of General Education requirements. Students must document with an official transcript from an accredited college program, the following coursework with a grade of at least C/2.0:

- six semester hours of English Composition
- six semester hours of Humanities: language, literature, philosophy, religious thought, fine arts (not emphasizing performance skills)
- six semester hours of Social Studies or Sciences: anthropology, cultural geography, general history, religious history and culture, economics, political science, general psychology, sociology
- six semester hours of Natural Sciences: biology, biological physiology, chemistry, physics, geology and physical geography, mathematics
- six additional semester hours in any Humanities, Social Studies or Natural Sciences coursework

According to State of Oregon standards, liberal arts and sciences do NOT include “professional and vocational courses” such as agriculture and forestry, wildlife management, architecture and design, business and public administration, communication (journalism), computer technology, education, engineering and related technologies, health professions, home economics, law, library science, military science, parks and leisure studies, physical education and recreation, protective services, or religious services. Also NOT included are artistic performance or physical activity courses, nor practical and general information courses such as personal health, career planning, human relations, public speaking, writing, elementary mathematics, and computer fundamentals.

The above requirements are in semester credit hours. If you are transferring credits from schools using quarter hours, multiply the above requirements by 1.5. If you are transferring credits using other systems (units, clock hours, etc.), please contact the Student Affairs Coordinator for assistance in planning your program.

Length of the Midwifery Program

There is no time limit to complete the midwifery program, although your matriculation catalog and course credits may expire. Please see our Student Handbook for more details. Students must be continuously registered as a core or extension student from the date of matriculation to completion. The classroom portion of the program is designed to be completed in three years, by registering for the core, supplemental, and elective courses in the recommended sequence.

Clinical hours are acquired in a hands-on apprenticeship under the direction of an approved preceptor. Birthingway recommends that students begin apprenticeships in the first term of the second year. Students who begin an apprenticeship at that time, register for apprenticeship credit, and attend an average of two births per month, would be able to complete their clinical training requirement within the three year time frame.

While designed to be complete in three years, most students take longer to complete the midwifery program. Birthingway’s program is flexible, allowing students to individualize their educational path and take as long as necessary to graduate. The length of time it takes to complete depends on many factors including:

- whether the student attends full time or less;
- the size and availability of the type of midwifery practice desired as a preceptor site;
- personal life events, such as having a baby, getting married, etc.

Applying to the Midwifery Program

Admission to Birthingway is by application. Core class size is generally limited to 16, and prospective students are encouraged to apply as early as possible prior to the October 15 application deadline.

Prerequisites for Midwifery Program

The following prerequisites are required for admission into either the Bachelor of Science in Midwifery or Certificate of Midwifery program. You may take any of the prerequisite courses Birthingway offers while you are applying for our Midwifery Program. Acceptance into the program would be final pending successful completion and meeting pertinent grade requirements.

- Hold a high school diploma or equivalency
- Anatomy and Physiology Course - applicants must have completed an anatomy and physiology course of at least 3 semester credits (5 quarter credits) which **covers all of the body systems**, taken at an accredited post-secondary institution, and must have earned a grade of at least 3.0 (B). If you are transferring credits using other systems (units, clock hours, etc.), please contact the Student Affairs Coordinator for assistance in planning your program. If more than one section is taken in order to cover the entire human body, the grade earned in **each section** must be a 3.0/B or better. Courses from some vocational-technical schools (such as massage therapy, Chinese medicine, chiropractic and naturopathy) may meet this prerequisite. An official transcript must be provided. Birthingway offers "Human Anatomy and Physiology – Overview for Midwives", which will fulfill this prerequisite if you haven't already taken A&P.
- Writing Course - applicants must have completed a three credit college-level expository writing course, and received a grade of at least 3.0 (B). Creative writing will not be accepted as a prerequisite.
- Labor Doula Workshop - applicants must have completed an approved Labor Doula course or workshop. Birthingway offers an intensive Labor Doula Workshop which will fulfill this prerequisite. (See Labor Doula Programs) Other approved Labor Doula programs include ALACE, DONA, ICEA, Birthworks and Birth Arts Doula Program. For approval of additional programs, please contact the college. Labor Doula Certification is not a requirement.
- Meet Technical Standards for Candidates for Admission

Technical Standards for Admission Candidates

Because a midwifery diploma from Birthingway signifies the holder is a midwife prepared for entry into active practice, candidates for graduation must have the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and judgment to function in a broad variety of clinical situations and to render a wide spectrum of client care. Therefore, the following abilities and expectations must be met and maintained from matriculation to graduation by all candidates for admission to Birthingway. Students/applicants who have questions regarding these standards are encouraged to contact the Student Affairs Coordinator.

- Candidates must be able to observe demonstrations and experiments in the basic sciences, and learn to conduct basic office lab procedures.
- Candidates must have sufficient use of the sensory, vision, hearing, motor and the somatic sensation necessary to perform a physical examination. Candidates must be able to perform clinical care activities such as palpation, auscultation, percussion, the administration of intravenous medication, the application of pressure to stop bleeding, the opening of obstructed airways and the movements, equilibrium and functional use of the senses of touch and vision. A complete list of required skills can be provided by our Student Affairs Coordinator.
- Candidates must be able to respond with precise, quick and appropriate action in emergency situations.
- Candidates must be able to communicate in English with accuracy, clarity, efficiency and sensitivity both verbally and in writing.
- Candidates must be able to learn the skills to analyze and synthesize information, solve problems and reach diagnostic and therapeutic judgments.
- Candidates must be able to acknowledge evaluation and respond appropriately.

- Candidates must possess the interpersonal skills to develop rapport and positive relationships with clients, midwives, other care providers and with other students.
- Candidates are expected to possess the perseverance, diligence and consistency to complete the midwifery college curriculum. Candidates, therefore, must be able to tolerate physically taxing workloads, to function effectively under stress, to adapt to changing environments, to display flexibility and to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in the clinical problems of many clients.

Submitting Your Application

Potential applicants are encouraged to observe a class at Birthingway, if possible, prior to submitting an application. They are also encouraged to attend our workshop, "So, You Want To Be A Midwife?" which is offered annually at Birthingway in late summer.

Applications must be post-marked by October 15. Late applications will only be considered for admission if space is available after all other applicants have been considered. We recommend that applicants keep a copy of the completed application.

A completed application includes:

- The completed Application for Admission to Midwifery Program, including your signature attesting that you meet the Technical Standards for Midwifery Integration.
- Answers to application essay questions
- Copy of high school diploma, GED, or equivalency certificate, or high school transcript
- Official college transcripts from any colleges attended
- Official transcript documenting completion of a Human Anatomy & Physiology course which meets all our requirements.*
- Official transcript documenting completion of a Writing course which meets all our requirements.*
- Documentation of completion of an approved labor doula workshop
- Two written letters of recommendation (from people not related to the applicant) sent directly to Birthingway. Faxed or emailed letters are acceptable provided that signed, hard copies follow.
- Any outstanding account balance must be paid in full
- \$50 application fee

*Students enrolled in classes to meet admission prerequisites at the time of application must provide an official transcript including the final grades no later than December 31.

Applications are checked for completeness. A letter is sent notifying applicants when all documentation has been received or if more information is needed.

Evaluation of Application

In evaluating applications, the following factors are considered:

- Completeness and clarity of the application
- Responses to the essay questions on the application
- Responses to interview questions
- Completion of all prerequisites including Technical Standards
- Time available to study, be available for clinicals, etc.
- Previous life experience which would contribute to the sensitivity and insight a midwife needs, and which demonstrate initiative, independence, and leadership
- Previous experience as a birth educator, health care provider, lactation consultant, doula, or birth assistant

