Dear Kristi,

I'm just starting midwifery school, but I'm totally overwhelmed! How am I supposed to keep up with my coursework, my family and my clinical work, on top of being on call for births? I just don't feel like I can do it all, but I don't want to give up my dream of being a midwife.

Help!
Swamped in Salt Lake City

This is a challenge that overwhelms many, if not all, of our students. Figuring out how to thrive rather than just survive the additional workload of studying and being on-call is as important to your midwifery education as your academic and clinical training. Mastering what sounds like chaos with balance and serenity will serve you, your family, and your future clients.

You say you don’t want to give up your “dream” of being a midwife. This tells me that you have decided that being a midwife is something you highly value. Can you feel what’s it like to be a midwife? Can you visualize yourself a few years from now attending women in birth? Can you taste it, touch it, and feel it? Spend some time really thinking about the kind of midwife you want to be. Write about it, or draw a picture, or sculpt it in clay. Hold onto that vision. It will help you choose the things that are most important in your midwifery education.

Like many of our students, I imagine that you might also be a mother (or father), you might be married or be in a significant relationship, and you might have a job outside of the home. I’d like to invite you to take a moment and prioritize the five most significant roles in your life. These are roles that are unique to you; roles that you cannot or will not give up while pursuing your midwifery education.

The trick is not to cram one more task into your already full life but to make choices about what you will and won’t do based on the values and roles that are most important to you.

(Continued on page 3)
Student Spotlight: Breastfeeding Success 101

By Lisa Robertson

Anyone who has either been around new parents or has been a new parent themselves knows just how exhausting life can be with a newborn. As women, we often struggle with a choice between nursing our young and getting the rest we all need. Having been there myself, I can understand how very easy it may be to give up the notion of breastfeeding when you’re suffering from sleep deprivation.

One of our fellow students, Shan Murley, along with two other women, went about crafting an ingenious product that should be given to every new mother. After taking a Breastfeeding for Healthcare Providers course at a local college, Shan and the other ladies decided to create a breastfeeding door hanger. This door hanger announces a sleeping mom and baby on one side while instructing the mom how to breastfeed while lying down on the other. This position allows mothers to rest and fall back to sleep while delivering nourishment to their babies. “Learning to breastfeed while lying down is a survival skill!”

Shan started out many years ago as a social worker in a woman’s shelter. After becoming less than satisfied with her career, she decided to quit her job around six years ago to search her heart. Once she connected with a few practicing doulas in her community within British Columbia, she finally realized midwifery as her calling. She became certified through Doulas of North America about one year ago as a birth doula to reassess herself of her chosen path. She also provides lactation counseling as one of her services. Now having raised four children of her very own, she decided to go back to school for midwifery here at MCU just this past May.

To view Shan’s unique door hangar, please visit www.bcbabyfriendly.ca. Just click on the World Breastfeeding Week tab and download your copy.

Research Resource: EBSCO

By Andrea Lythgoe

Feeling confused about conflicting information in two different textbooks? Keep hearing people say “the research says…” and you’re not sure you believe it? How’s a “the research says…” and you’re books? Keep hearing people say

Information in two different text-

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In a nutshell: EBSCO!

EBSCO is a service that allows you to search for and read research articles from a large number of research databases, and it includes full text for some (but not all) of the studies indexed. It’s an expensive service, but you’re in luck! MCU has purchased a subscription to EBSCO for the use of all students and faculty at no charge to you.

Any time you need to find a study, read a literature review, or find out what the most current evidence says, EBSCO is the place where you should turn first. Your first stop should be the EBSCO training manual where you’ll find more detailed information on how to use EBSCO, including the required user name and password.

You can find this training manual (and the link to access EBSCO itself) within the MCU system on the right hand side under “Research”.

So let’s look at an actual student situation. You find that your three textbooks in your well woman class contain conflicting information on whether antibiotics are helpful in the treatment of a particular STI. How do you know which one is correct? EBSCO to the rescue!

After you log in, you’ll see a list of databases to choose from. After reviewing the descriptions of each database, you decide to try the Cochrane Database of Systemic Reviews, so you check the box next to it and then click on “continue”. You decide to use 2 search terms, “STI” and “antibiotics”, adding each to a search box. Darn it! No results found. So you decide to try spelling out “Sexually Transmitted Infection” (putting it in quotes so the database will be searched for the phrase) YAY! You got a result!

It is an article specific to Chlamydia, and that is the one STI you wanted to learn about! So you click on “PDF Full Text” to read the entire review, all 24 pages. And since this particular review is dated 2008, you know it is about as current as it gets.

So now you have the answer to your question about Chlamydia. When you use this information in any of your course work, be sure that you don’t forget to cite this Cochrane article as your source, using APA format of course!

I hope every student will take a few minutes to explore the EBSCO service and see what a great tool it can be for finding current research. If you would still like more help after reading the training manual and playing around with it, you can attend one of the EBSCO trainings help at the beginning of each semester.

Happy researching!
Tips for Success: One Bite at a Time
by Sarah Carter

Bite sized. These two words are both the downfall of my weight loss efforts and the key to my success professionally. Of course, I find small, grabbable snacks and sweets nearly irresistible. They’re so easy. And fun. And tasty. And I’m only going to have one. Or two. Or a dozen.

But breaking things into small “bites” has been very helpful in my professional and academic life. Right now most of you are looking at three or four syllabi, half a dozen textbooks, and dozens of assignments. You may be thinking, “How am I going to get this all done?” The same way the man ate the proverbial elephant—one bite at a time.

Right now, take some time to go through each class and break it into bites that you can swallow. Reading one chapter a day might be one bite. Answering questions about the reading can be another. A final paper might need to be broken into fun-sized steps of researching, organizing, drafting and editing. Make it bite-sized. Make it doable.

Look at your calendar and spread your bites out over your study time (whatever that is for you). Tuesday night after the kids are in bed, I can do one, maybe two bites. Thursday on my lunch hour, I will be able to get this one bite of reading done. Saturday I am going to the library to get at least two, maybe three bites of this assignment done.

Need help setting goals and keeping commitments? Consider calling on our coach, Jodie Palmer, or joining a Sister Circle.

You’ll have this elephant eaten before you know it, and without getting sick to your stomach. You can do this. Really.

Coming Soon: Shout Outs!
Share your good news with the MCU community. Did you do something incredible? Did someone help you out or have a significant life event? Share your good news here.

Send Shout Outs to Round Table Editor with the subject line Shout out!

Dear Kristi

(Continued from page 1)

Our most successful students set long-term goals based on these defined values. Long-term goals are broken down into smaller, more specific tasks. Students achieve the bite-size tasks related to midwifery education when they set aside a specific time to study. Whatever works for you, hold that study time sacred. Schedule it in your planner. Do not succumb to the distance-education pitfall of procrastination.

Ask your family to brainstorm with you on ways they can support you. One student’s husband comes home from work a half an hour earlier two days a week. He takes the children to the park or library for 45 minutes while mom studies. She makes a note to herself when she ends each study session so she can pick right up where she left off. Another student takes the bus to work rather than driving her own car. She uses the hour drive to study every day. If you find yourself unable to develop a habit of consistent study, please schedule a coaching session with Jodie Palmer. She can give you many practical tips and help you clarify the roadblocks that are preventing your progress.

No matter what time management method you use, remember:
~You can be proactive
~You can delegate
~You can draw on the energy of your fellow students and faculty members
~You can keep commitments to yourself

As you organize your daily schedule, remember that the Midwives College of Utah wants to support you in becoming a midwife of technical expertise, professional excellence and personal greatness. If your goals are tied to your personal values, you will be able to thrive rather than just survive. More importantly, when you hold that diploma in your hand, you will know that those roles and values you hold most dear have not been sacrificed for the sake of midwifery. Instead you have become more than you were when you began this journey. Maya Angelou, one of my favorite poets, said it best.

Have a question for Kristi?
Send it to President-Kristi Ridd-Young and mark it “Dear Kristi!”
Research Alerts

All articles are available in full text from EBSCO or on the Internet.

Third Stage Management
From the abstract: “This study is a cross-sectional survey of maternity practitioners in usual practice settings in British Columbia. All 199 obstetricians, all 82 midwives, and a random sample of family physicians practicing intrapartum maternity care…A major difference was found between physicians and midwives in the management of third-stage labor. Physicians routinely implemented active management of the third stage of labor; midwives preferred expectant approaches, principally based on women's preference.”


Gestational Diabetes in Previously Inactive Pregnant Women
From the abstract: “Results suggest that physical activity during pregnancy is associated with lower risk for gestational diabetes among previously inactive women.”


Midwifery Consultation
From the abstract: “The findings from the interviews suggest that women experience a conflict between biomedical knowledge and embodied knowledge, and between the hierarchy of physician-centred care and woman-centred care during the act of consultation. The interviews demonstrate that divergent professional philosophies may represent a significant barrier to interprofessional practice.”


HIV Testing Challenges
From the abstract: “Over half of HIV-infected women knew they or their partner were infected with HIV, but did not initially disclose their status. Increased support services and substance abuse treatment are critical to facilitate better continuity of care for these socially marginalized women.”


Calendar of Events

November 5-8, 2008
16th Annual Symposia Medicus Fall Conference on Issues in Women's Health
Maui, Hawaii
http://www.symposiamedicus.org/

November 12-13-14, 2008
Canadian Association of Midwives Conference “Sages-femmes: Présence & Leadership”
Québec, Québec
http://www.canadianmidwives.org/conference.htm

November 19-22, 2008
Challenges in Taking Care of the High Risk Pregnancy
Hilton Head, South Carolina
http://www.symposiamedicus.org/

December 12, 2008
MCU Fall Semester ends

December 19-20, 2008
Challenges in Gynecology
New York, New York
http://www.symposiamedicus.org/

January 5, 2009
MCU Winter Semester begins

The Round Table is For You!

Now accepting articles from students, faculty, alumni and preceptors. We’re especially looking for: student and alumni spotlights, media reviews, calendar events and tips for success.

Send ideas for articles and pictures to Round Table Editor.