The Soft Skills of Success

In higher education, there is a movement afoot that is focused on the employability of students. Ralph Wolff, the President of Quality Assurance Commons for Higher & Postsecondary Education, is leading this movement. Mr. Wolff states:

“Work as we know it is changing, so it’s increasingly challenging -- and important -- to ensure higher education experiences appropriately prepare graduates for the 21st century,” Wolff said in a written statement. “A growing body of evidence tells us that the so-called soft skills are the ones employers want most but struggle to find. We are calling them ‘essential employability qualities,’ because they are critical to immediate and long-term success in the world of work.

Essential employment qualities the group will seek to gauge include:

• People skills such as collaboration, teamwork and cross-cultural competence;
• Problem-solving abilities such as inquiry, critical thinking and creativity;
• Professional strengths such as communication, work ethic and technological agility

You may have noticed that at MCU we are just as committed to the development of soft skills as we are to the technical expertise of midwifery. Crucial Conversations, Crucial Accountability and Outward Mindset are foundational textbooks for students and staff and faculty development. The house mother program, student peer groups, Courageous Conversations, and the school-wide enhancement sessions focus on professional excellence and personal greatness. Our mission statement was carefully crafted to capture the essence of a holistic education:

“Midwives College of Utah (MCU) provides an educational structure and an integrated learning environment for individuals to become midwives of technical expertise, professional excellence, and personal greatness—namely Midwives of Excellence.”
President’s Address (cont...)

What we teach and how we teach exemplifies what it means to be a midwife of excellence who is self-actualized, values courageous conversations, and is committed to relationships built upon honesty, trust, and respect. To grow and develop in these areas, we must be willing to know and manage ourselves. As Daniel Goleman says in the forward to the book Resonant Leadership, “That includes connecting with the deep values that guide us, imbuing our actions with meaning. This self-engagement also demands we align our emotions with our goals—both to motivate and to keep our composure and focus. “

Sometimes recognizing our soft skill deficits and changing our daily behavior is the hardest task of all. It is much easier to place blame on another than to shine the light on our own weaknesses. But in refusing to examine our emotional intelligence, the fallout often becomes obvious as we create a story of blame, persecution, or martyrdom. Perhaps, with certain people in your life, you find yourself in a state of constant conflict or disappointment. The story you have in your head colors each exchange because of preconceived notions. I’m reminded of the quote from Marlee Matlin, the only female actress who is deaf and won an Academy Award for her role in Children of A Lesser God. She said, “The handicap of deafness is not in the ear; it is in the mind.”

Moving to an outward mindset requires us to step out of the comfort of self-righteous indignation and dissonance to that scary space of vulnerability and humility. If we are willing to move from an inward to an outward mindset, we find ourselves in a space of resonance. This, in turn, creates an energy of sympathetic vibration that allows us to inquire with curiosity rather than judgement, to collaborate and communicate. Being outward means we are metaphorically face to face rather than back to back.

What are the possibilities if we let go of our own prejudices and preferences and become awake, aware, and attuned to others and the world around us? What would happen if next time we are called upon to interact with that difficult person, we sincerely ask, “What are your needs? What are your objectives in this situation? What challenges are you facing? What can I do that will enable you to be successful?”

As an MCU board, we recently had an eight-hour opportunity to dive into the Arbinger Institute’s Outward Mindset training. Let me share some daily practices the training manual suggests we consider as we continue our daily pursuit toward a resonant, outward mindset:

1. Think of somebody you’ve been in the box toward. Do one thing for this person today that will be helpful to him or her.
2. In EVERY interaction today, concentrate on seeing the needs, objectives, and challenges of others. See what happens as a result.
3. Focus on solutions today rather than affixing blame.
4. Be a good listener today. Talk less. Hear more.
5. Think of a way you have made something more difficult for a coworker or family member and then apologize.
6. Help someone shine today.
7. Think of a way you are contributing to a problem and take responsibility for the problem.
8. Give information, resources, help, or support to someone today.
9. Find something to like about each person you encounter today—especially the difficult ones.
10. Do something for your boss (or preceptor) that would relieve some of the pressure he/she is feeling.
11. What hard or uncomfortable thing have you been avoiding doing? Do it today.
12. Refrain from complaining or saying anything negative about anyone today.
13. Think of some way in which you are giving less than your best effort. Give your best effort today.
A Note From the Student Council:

Your student council representatives are working at being more accessible to the student body. We are here for you as a liaison between students and the MCU administration.

The student council holds monthly meetings where we gather to discuss how to better serve the MCU student body. In order to facilitate this, we have arranged to have an open dialogue with the student body and student council.

Every third Friday of the month, the student council meets in the Big Blue Button (BBB) from 2:00 - 2:30 pm MT. The student body is then invited to join us from 2:30 - 3:00 pm MT. MCU faculty will NOT be present, and this meeting will NOT be recorded. Any conversation discussed during this gathering will be strictly confidential. If any topic is taken back to Kristi Ridd-Young (President), or any other MCU administration or faculty, it will be held strictly anonymous.

These gatherings are accessible in the School Wide Events and Announcements class in Canvas, and in the calendar.

We are honored to serve you!!

Student Council Representatives:
Skaidre (Sky) Brown (360) 421-5140
Brittany Furgason (206) 753-9694
Cathy Smith (708) 710-7172
Nicki Solomto Pugh (225) 819-7977 (GRAD Student Rep)
Marivette Torres (661) 332-3288

NACPM Briefing Papers

CPMs: Midwifery Landscape and Future Directions A set of briefing papers and recommendations from NACPM | October 2017

NACPM has prepared this series of briefing papers and recommendations, *Midwifery Landscape and Future Directions for CPMs*, designed to answer questions and engage midwives in further conversations about the future of the profession.

The papers are organized around three broad areas. First, we explore why CPMs matter to families and the health care system; how NACPM’s vision and understanding of the landscape for CPMs informs our commitments; and our recommendations for midwives and students preparing for the future.

The full papers can be found at: [http://nacpm.org/midwifery-landscape-and-future-directions-for-cpms/](http://nacpm.org/midwifery-landscape-and-future-directions-for-cpms/)
MCU in the Community

Whether presenting in professional venues, running for local office, or publishing articles, the staff, faculty, students, and alumni of MCU are often doing great work to continue to improve the quality of midwifery care and the reach of the midwifery community.

MCU at the Midwives Alliance of North America Annual Conference #MANACAM17

The Annual Midwives Alliance of North America (MANA) Conference was held the first week of November, 2017 in beautiful Southern California, in collaboration with the California Association of Midwives (CAM), and MCU was amazingly well represented at #MANACAM17! (MCU Students, Staff, & Faculty are in bold.)

Sarah Carter, CPM, LDM, presented a preconference workshop: “Biodynamic Resuscitation of the Newborn”

Jana Studelska, CPM, LM, BS, presented a preconference workshop: “Pharmacology for Midwives”

Rebecca (Becky) Hazel and Megan Koontz, CPM, LM, presented: “Midwifery in the Backbone - Joys and Barriers of Rural Midwifery in America”

Courtney Everson, PhD presented: “Integrating Research into Midwifery Communities: Evidence-informed Practice in Action”

Courtney Everson, PhD & Gina Gerboth, MPH, RM, CPM, IBCLC, presented: “Best Practices in Charting: Lessons Learned from the 4.0 MANA Stats Validation Project”


Lindsay Kinman, CPM, LDM, presented: “The Science of Saying I’m Sorry”

Cassandra Aho completed a poster presentation titled: “Sharing Sexual Responsibility - Male STI Screening and the Implication for Women”

Courtney Everson, PhD, and her colleagues on the MANA Division of Research: presented the Division of Research Annual Round-up plenary session.
MCU student Cassandra Aho won the student Harris-Braun Outstanding Poster Award for Research at #MANACAM17 for her conference poster presentation titled, “Sharing Sexual Responsibility - Male STI Screening and the Implication for Women”

...to Cassandra Aho!

MCU Faculty and Graduate Dean, Dr. Courtney Everson, has two upcoming book publications! Dr. Everson co-authored the chapter called "Daughter of Time: The Postmodern Midwife" in the book by Robbie Davis-Floyd "Ways of Knowing about Birth: Mothers, Midwives, Medicine, and Birth Activism" as well as authored the chapter called "Pathologized Pregnancies and Deleterious Health Outcomes: Iatrogenic Effects of Teen Pregnancy Stigma" in the book "Stigma Syndemics: New Directions in Biosocial Health."

...to Dr. Courtney Everson!

We would like to congratulate the following students for earning their degrees!

Associate of Science in Midwifery

Christine Mehl (Summa Cum Laude), Elisa Self, Heather Randolph, Michelle Sanders, Tara Mansius, & Taryn Goodwin

Bachelor of Science in Midwifery

Angie Blacket, Demetra Sereiki, Heather Eckstein, Kathryn Ramirez, & Shanlee Robertson

Master of Science in Midwifery

Aisha Al Hajjar
Meet the Board of Directors

The Board of Directors primary role is to sustain and uphold the primary objectives of MCU, including its vision, mission, and values. Serving in a voluntary capacity the members of the Board of Directors advocate for the school and its long-term sustainability and success. The board will, on an on-going basis, use this opportunity to inform the MCU community of board work, oversight, financial transparency, and general connection. We look forward to connecting to the MCU in meaningful ways. Our first introduction is to get to know something interesting about us. Each person was given a list of questions, and asked to choose two to answer. We welcome questions or comments for the board!

**Martina Craner**

**Who inspires you to be a better person?**

My 16 year old daughter consistently inspires me to be a better person. She handles challenges in her life with a calm and fortitude that is remarkable for a person of any age.

**What did your life teach you yesterday?**

Yesterday, life taught me that having choices is a true gift.

---

**Valerie Hall, Board President**

**What were you doing when you last lost track of time?**

Working in my garden.

**Personal anthem:**

Lead, Kindly Light

---

**Rebecca Porter, Secretary**

**What is “home” to you?**

Home to me is being comfortable with my own person. Loving who I am so I can more fully love those around me.

**What are you most grateful for?**

I’m really grateful for the freedom of creating change and newness in life.

---

**Jodie Palmer, Executive Vice President**

**When you’re 90, what will matter most to you?**

I think a lot about what it will be like to be 90 and look over my life. I will be proud, if in the end, I was an instrument of peace, a champion of beauty, a believer in the power of love, and that I walked with kindness.

**What is your definition of love?**

I believe one of the most important gifts we can offer is to leave things better than we found them. Might that be another way to define love? The trick here is to actually make things better. This is the fulcrum where love actually comes alive, sometimes in ways that are counter-intuitive, counter-cultural, and different than we expected.
Meet the Board of Directors (cont....)

**Melanie Lenon**
What’s your personal anthem?
Give all you want, just don’t give up!
What did your life teach you yesterday?
After you have taught your children, it is beautiful to be taught by them.

**Kristi Ridd-Young, MCU President**
What were you doing when you last lost track of time?
Reading "Everyone Brave is Forgiven" while immersed in a clawfoot tub with my favorite music in the background.
What is home to you?
Anywhere that I am with my children and my husband. My personal soul space is a certain spot on the Snake River just beneath the Tetons.

**Terri Demers**
If you could send a message to the entire world, what would you say in 30 seconds?
Kindness begins with me.
What did your life teach you yesterday?
I attended a great conference where I was taught to Keep It Simple. Build it Strong. Make it Work. I thought this was great advise not just for work but also in life, marriage, family, and relationships.

**Amy Jones**
What animal best represents you and why?
If I can interpret this question to be ‘What is my Spirit Animal’, that would be easier for me to answer. Robert Redford. Robert Redford is my Spirit Animal.
What did life teach you yesterday?
I was reminded that Crio Bru really does make everything better.

**Jennifer Rabins, Treasurer**
If you had the freedom, would you spend your time doing?
Crafting (everything), quilting, reading anything not required for school, building & planting my new gardens, & spending time with my kids.
What’s your personal anthem?
“It’s never to late to become what you might have been.” (I read it for the very first time almost 20 years ago, and it has followed me through this very interesting, anything-but-what-I-expected, but-more-than-I-ever-hoped-for journey.
Student Conferences and Integrated Assessments

MCU Student Conferences are held twice a year in April and August at the end of each semester in Salt Lake City, Utah. Attendees have the opportunity to learn and practice clinical skills in a safe learning environment. Integrated assessments, for any MCU student enrolled Fall 2016 Semester onward, also occur during each conference.

In addition, the opportunity to socialize with other MCU students, instructors, midwives and MCU staff is an invaluable experience. This connection—a literal sense of place—opens the door to expanded relationships with peers and mentors. Many attendees report that attending conference changed their perspective as they recognized their unique place in the larger MCU community.

Conference & Gala Dates for 2018:

Spring Conference: April 23rd to 28th

MCU’s Annual Graduation Gala: Tuesday, April 24th

Fall Conference: August 20th to 25th

Come and recognize your unique place in the larger MCU community.

To view current conference information: www.midwifery.edu/student-conferences/ and our FAQ page at: www.midwifery.edu/student-conferences/conference-faq/.

Conference works to:

- Enhance clinical skills through hands-on practice and receive objective feedback from experts.
- Gain inspiration and motivation for next semester’s courses by participating in face-to-face, facilitated activities that serve as companion experiences for your academic coursework.
- Create professional connections and form lifelong relationships that will enrich your experience and career.

For more information please go to www.midwifery.edu/student-conferences or email the conference director at conference@midwifery.edu.
2017 Fall Conference Recap

The 2017 Fall Conference & Student Assessments was a week of fun and learning for all! There was a large group of people - from all walks of birth work, as well as - of course - great instructors, interesting workshops, and successful assessments!

Some highlights of the week:
On Monday we took a morning break in order to see the total solar eclipse that swept across North America. Salt Lake City experienced 91% coverage of the sun so it was quite an experience! Our own Dr. Courtney Everson hosted a free community workshop, Ethics in Midwifery, on Wednesday evening, and our new Conference Director, Masha Mesyef, hosted a walking tour of Salt Lake City on Friday night on the way to dinner.

The theme for our 2017 conferences was “Transform” - a theme that we chose with a goal of honoring the transformation we all go through on this journey of life, education, and midwifery. We were honored by the personal experiences of transformation that were shared, and grateful to MCU President, Kristi Ridd-Young, for her beautiful closing ceremony - honoring both the transformation and the connection in the journey and reality of midwifery.

It was a long week of workshops, assessments, laughter, conversation, debate, food, and companionship with friends both new and old.

Each year we strive to improve your conference experience. We hope that this year we did just that, and we look forward to seeing you next year!

Transform at Conference
Busy? Need to know the newest research? Get Research Alerts Delivered to your Inbox!

Courtney L. Everson, Ph.D., Academic Faculty & Dean of Graduate Studies, Courtney.Everson@midwifery.edu

~ This piece is written as part of MCU’s ongoing commitment to ensuring our students, faculty, and alumni enact evidence-informed practice during care provision. ~

You are busy midwives. You only have 24 hours in a day. But, you also need to keep up with the newest research in order to be Midwives of Excellence. In today’s article, I will introduce you to the concept of “research alerts” – alerts on new research that get delivered right to your inbox! It’s a great tool for your evidence-informed practice (EIP) toolkit.

There are several publishers, journals, and interfaces that provide (free!) research alert services to help busy practitioners just like you keep up with the latest and greatest. Here are a few of the most common alert services for health practitioners:

- **EvidenceAlerts**, a service of McMaster University’s Health Information Research Unit and DynaMed Plus: https://plus.mcmaster.ca/evidencealerts/
- **ScienceDirect Alerts**, a service of Elsevier: https://www elsevier com/solutions/sciencedirect/support/ using-sciencedirect
- **AHRQ Alerts**, a service of Agency for Healthcare Research & Quality: https://subscriptionsahrq gov/accounts/USAHRQ/subscriber/new
- **HealthAffairs E-alert**, a service of Health Affairs: http://content.healthaffairs.org/site/ subscriptions/etoc.xhtml

Final tip: consider signing-up for one alert service to start. Then, review these alert emails as ritual. Sit down with a cup of tea, coffee or your favorite beverage, and check out the newest research. A new study peaks your interest? Save it for your midwifery files! Can’t wait? Read it now! Your clients and professional self will thank you.

Bonus tip: having trouble managing those pesky citations? Try Zotero, a free citation service that will save your citations and even help you format the bibliography for papers and articles! www.zotero.org

Onward, EIP midwives!
MCU Response to
Open Letter by Demetra Seriki

The Midwives College of Utah (MCU) denounces the role that racism, implicit bias, and microaggressions play in the midwifery profession, in midwifery care, and in midwifery education. We acknowledge that communities of color continue to suffer from deep health inequities, that pregnant persons are being harmed, and that babies are dying. This is unacceptable. Midwives, midwifery educators, midwifery leaders, and other birth workers must take ownership of these inequities and work diligently to redress. This requires us to trust, listen carefully to, honor, follow the wisdom of, and acknowledge the experiences of people of color. We must believe people of color when they say they are harmed by actions, inactions, and words. This requires white people, allies, and white-run institutions to turn the lens critically inward and unpack their privilege, to overcome their white fragility and reflexive defensiveness, and finally to step up to follow the recommendations of the leadership of color. Together, we must engage in brave conversations – conversations that are hard, that are uncomfortable, and that are deeply important and necessary. Alongside our talk must also be transformative action.

On September 21st 2017, Demetra Seriki, CPM, RM, of a Mother’s Choice—and the only black midwife in the State of Colorado—released an Open Letter of Accountability and Transparency to the Colorado Midwives Association. We stand in solidarity with Demetra and are proud to call her an alumna of the Midwives College of Utah and a valued member of the MCU community. The eight action points outlined by Ms. Seriki in the letter are reasonable, necessary, and deeply important for the midwifery profession and childbearing families everywhere. We support the eight action points outlined in this letter and believe that all midwifery organizations and educational institutions should heed the call to action. At MCU, we have a longstanding commitment to social justice and equity as well as ongoing actions to meet the call. We stand in support of Demetra and of communities of color. Let us repeat: there is no place for racism, implicit bias, or microaggressions in midwifery.

In solidarity,
Midwives College of Utah Senior Leadership Team
Kristi Ridd-Young, President
Tamara Taitt, Academic Dean
Courtney Everson, Graduate Dean

Courageous Conversations

MCU offers an opportunity, twice a month, for the MCU community to come together and have a courageous conversation. Open sessions are where you are welcome to share anything on your mind, including a recent incident in your community you would like to reflect on, a national event that requires critical dialogue, or an idea you want feedback on in advancing health equity and social justice work. Alternating sessions are focused sessions with a topic set and announced ahead of time. All sessions are led by a facilitator.

Students, staff, and faculty are welcome to facilitate a session. Please contact Cheryl Furer for more details.
Graduate Electives

Consider taking electives at the graduate level! If you’re interested in testing the waters of graduate education, looking to complete the elective portion of the curriculum, or developing critical thinking and research skills, consider the following courses:

PROD 510/5010 (1 CREDIT): PROFESSIONAL GROWTH & LEADERSHIP
PROD 527/5027 (2 CREDITS): COMMUNITY MATERNAL & CHILD HEALTH
PROD 528/5028 (2 CREDITS): POLICY & ADVOCACY IN MIDWIFERY
PROD 529/5029 (2 CREDITS): FIELD INSTRUCTOR PREPARATION (PRECEPTOR)
PROD 530/5030 (2 CREDITS): GLOBAL MATERNAL & CHILD HEALTH
PROD 531/5031 (2 CREDITS): HOLISTIC MIDWIFERY
PROD 532/5032 (2 CREDITS): MIDWIFERY EDUCATION

Visit the Student Handbook and Course Catalog for course descriptions and details: https://www.midwifery.edu/student-handbook-course-catalog/

Contact Laura Park with questions!

New Well Midwife Courses Available!

At MCU, we’ve always focused on “midwifing the midwife,” and our main focus has been on the process of becoming a midwife. But there’s a need out there for evidence and education for midwives who have completed the process of becoming midwives. Practicing midwives need continuing education opportunities, peer connection and up-to-date information. Midwives College of Utah is uniquely positioned to provide support and education for these midwives, just as they have provided support and education for students for over 35 years.

As such, MCU offers professional development courses to midwives generally and midwifery educators specifically. As advancing accreditation requirements continue to expand our responsibilities, so too is MCU’s commitment to “midwifing the midwife.” Two of our newest course offerings include Copyright for Midwifery Educators and Plagiarism in Midwifery Education.

Visit midwifery.edu/well-midwife for more information on these courses including the registration links.

You can also access Well Midwife programming under our “About Us” menu.
Get Your Master of Science in Midwifery - apply today!

Courtney L. Everson, Ph.D., Academic Faculty & Dean of Graduate Studies, graduatedean@midwifery.edu

~ The MCU MSM program is research-based and is intended to nurture the next generation of midwifery leaders, educators, and advocates~

Are you looking to advance your skills as a midwife? Perhaps you are interested in becoming a midwifery educator? Want to apply your creativity and love for midwifery on a larger scale? Do you want to advance social justice and health equity? If you answered “yes!” to any of these questions, the Master of Science in Midwifery (MSM) program at MCU may be just what you are looking for!

The MCU graduate program is designed especially for midwives looking to obtain advanced skills in one or more of our four areas of program distinction: midwifery research, midwifery outreach, midwifery policy, and midwifery education. Graduates of our program are equipped with the foundational skills necessary to be leaders in the maternity care landscape, contributing to the development of best practice models, social justice and equity, advocacy initiatives, community engagement, and evidence-informed care.

Here are the fast facts!

Degree: Master of Science in Midwifery (MSM)

Institution: Midwives College of Utah (MCU), the largest MEAC-accredited school in the United States. Students are eligible for federal financial aid too!

Campus: Anywhere you are! We are a distance-learning program, which means you can continue to live and work where you are currently located while earning your degree through an interactive, online platform. We bring graduate education to you!

Program Length: 2 years on average. 32 credits total. Full-time status is 4 – 6 credits per trimester. Part-time options are available.

Admission Requirements:
To be eligible for admission, a prospective student must:

- Hold a Bachelor’s degree in any field;
- Complete SOSC 1010 (Equity & Anti-Oppression in Midwifery Care: Understanding Difference, Power & Privilege), SOSC 2050 (Ethics & the Law) and STAT 2010 (Principles of Evidence-Informed Practice), or demonstrate course equivalency. These three courses can be completed as part of your graduate program; and
- Must be or have been recognized as a midwife by regional, national or international certification or licensure. Traditional or community midwives without past or current proof of certification/licensure may choose to prepare a portfolio demonstrating the experiences and training they engaged to become a midwife.
Master of Science in Midwifery (cont...)

Some graduate courses you might be interested in include:
- PROD 527/5027: Community Maternal & Child Health
- PROD 529/5029: Field Instructor Preparation
- PROD 530/5030: Global Maternal & Child Health
- PROD 532/5032: Midwifery Education

Whether a degree-seeking student or a continuing education student, your graduate studies will be individualized and substantive with plenty of support by graduate faculty and the MCU graduate student community. Contact Dr. Courtney Everson, Ph.D., Dean of Graduate Studies, at graduatedean@midwifery.edu or 866-680-2756, ext. 806 to discuss your future!

Ready to apply! Go for it! https://www.midwifery.edu/application-process/

MCU in Review is for You

Alumni, let us know what you are up to! Field Faculty, announce clinical opportunities!
Current students, share your stories with us. Letters to the editor are always welcome.

Submit your articles to marketing@midwifery.edu
Earn Your Degree at MCU!

Become an MCU Student!

Application deadline for Fall Semester 2018 is March 5, 2018!

Apply today at midwifery.edu/application-process/

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