



**MIDWIVES**  
COLLEGE OF UTAH  
MIDWIFING MIDWIVES

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## **MISSION, GOALS AND ASSESSMENT PLAN**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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In the rapidly changing birthing care landscape, it is imperative that midwifery education prepare qualified midwives to provide high quality, evidence-based care for childbearing persons and newborns. As a MEAC-accredited institution of higher learning, Midwives College of Utah affirms that midwives fill an important and unique position within the healthcare spectrum. Midwifery care emphasizes facilitation and enhancement of normal, physiologic processes throughout all aspects of pregnancy, labor and birth, postpartum, and well-woman<sup>1</sup> care. A midwife considers physical, emotional, psychosocial, familial, and spiritual factors while utilizing a variety of methods, techniques, modalities and technologies.

MCU's degree programs provide rigorous and relevant learning reflecting philosophies, skills, and behaviors in both the way we model and train our students. What we teach and how we teach exemplifies what it means to be a midwife of excellence. To this end, the Midwives College of Utah articulates not only what a student knows, but what a student can do upon completion of the Bachelor of Science in Midwifery degree and/or the Master of Science in Midwifery degree. This articulation aims to:

- Outline learning outcomes in order to make educational pathways more clear and concrete for our students
- Provide an educational structure and an integrated learning environment in which to frame the acquisition of knowledge, skills and behavior required of a midwife
- Clarify the cumulative force of the student's learning
- Create accountability for MCU to articulate and regularly assess the value of the degree programs to students lives, a future midwifery practice, and the midwifery profession

The MCU student experience, curriculum and clinical placement delivers essential core competencies and student support services that afford the student opportunities to acquire knowledge, skills, and philosophical approaches for their future profession as a midwife. MCU education is organized within five broad learning categories:

- Specialized Knowledge
- Broad and Integrative Knowledge
- Intellectual Skills
- Applied and Collaborative Learning
- Civic and Global Learning

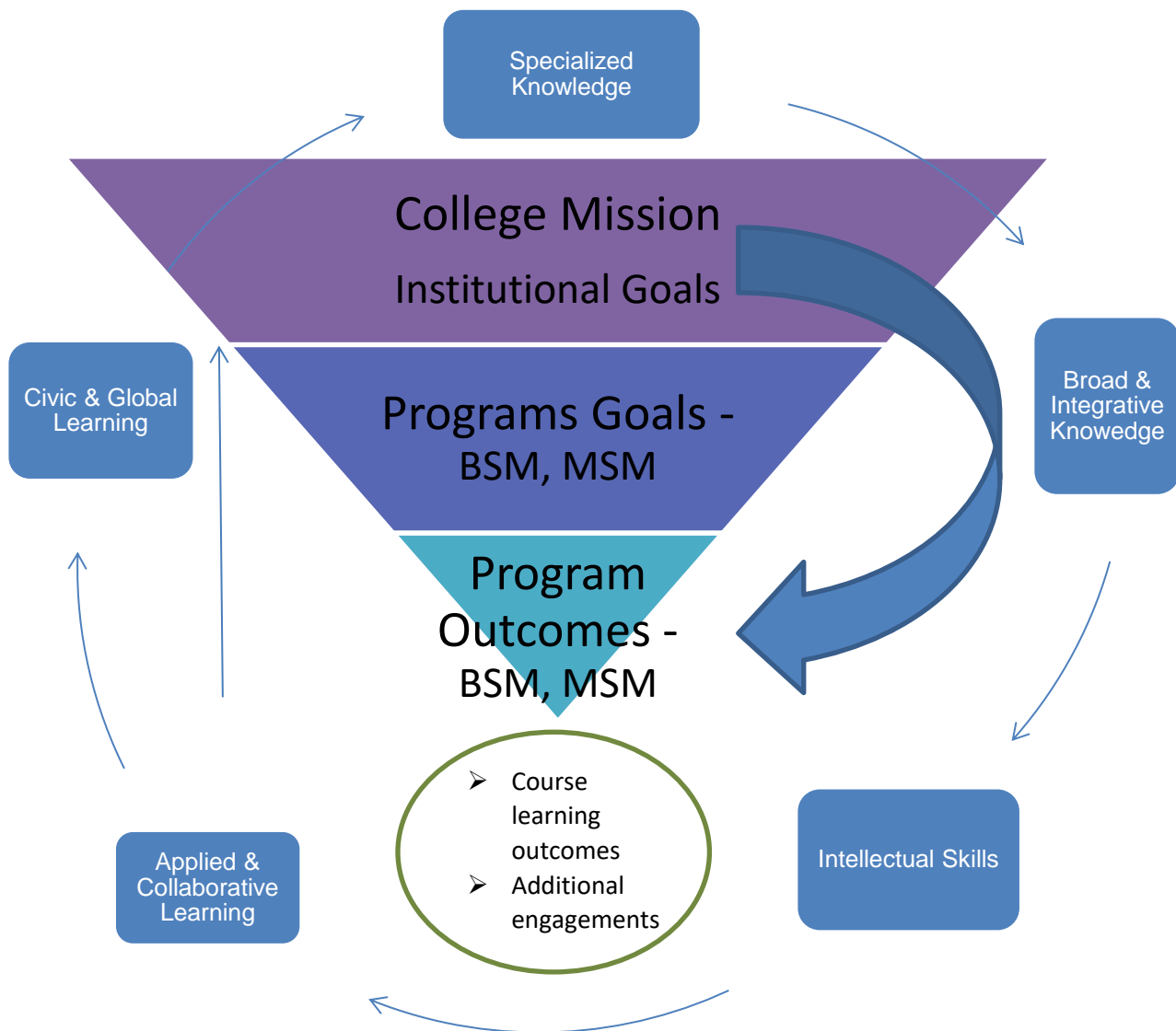
In addition to MCU's institutional goals, the program(s) goals reflect the College's mission. Program outcomes, inherent to each degree, include measures of assessment and indicators of success. Learning outcomes are grounded in and guided by the five broad learning categories at increasing levels of challenge appropriate to the degree awarded. An annual program assessment, with defined evaluation criteria, is held annually. If program weaknesses are identified or changes in the profession occur which expand scope or certification requirements, appropriate adjustments will be strategically implemented.

We believe that a degree from MCU prepares graduates to advance the vision of "a midwife for every person" and fulfills MCU's mission of creating "midwives of technical expertise, professional excellence, and personal greatness—namely, Midwives of Excellence."

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<sup>1</sup> Competencies taught and care delivered in this field can be applied to multiple gender identities, including ciswomen, transmen, transwomen, gender non-binary, and genderqueer people. We are working to create a professionally recognized and gender inclusive term. We appreciate your patience during this development process.

## VISUAL SCHEMA OF FULL-CYCLE ASSESSMENT



The visual schema represents the broad, interrelated components of MCU assessment: the inverted triangle delineates the relationships between college mission, program goals, and learning outcomes, as well as their actualization in course learning and additional, required degree engagements. These assessment components are grounded in and guided by five broad learning categories, as displayed in the blue boxes encompassing the visual.<sup>2</sup> Each component is described with narratives in the pages that follow.

<sup>2</sup> These five broad learning areas are adapted from the Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP) developed by the Lumina Foundation, a leading higher education entity. For more information, visit [www.degreeprofile.org](http://www.degreeprofile.org).

## VISION

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Midwives College of Utah is committed to the vision that everyone deserves a midwife.

## MISSION

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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.

## CULTURE

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MCU's culture is inspired by the Midwives Model of Care, reflecting philosophies, skills and behavior in both the way we model and train our students. What we teach and how we teach exemplifies what it means to be a Midwife of Excellence – an individual who is self-actualized and values courageous conversations and relationships built upon honesty and trust. MCU delivers a Midwifery Model of Education, ultimately midwifing midwives through their educational journey and beyond.

## MIDWIVES COLLEGE OF UTAH INSTITUTIONAL GOALS

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The MCU distance education curriculum and community-based clinical placement are firmly grounded in the unique and profound power of the Midwives Model of Care™ (MMoC). We believe the MMOC is a primary pathway for improving outcomes and eliminating inequities for childbearing persons and babies during the childbearing year. Midwives College of Utah fulfills its mission by meeting the following institutional goals:

- offering a bachelor's degree to prepare individuals for career opportunities to practice as direct-entry midwives providing primary care to childbearing persons and babies;
- offering a master's degree to prepare individuals to be midwifery leaders in the birthing care landscape;
- delivering curriculum core competencies and student support services that supply opportunities to acquire knowledge, skills, and philosophical approaches. This education is organized within five broad interrelated categories:
  - Specialized Knowledge
  - Broad and Integrative Knowledge
  - Intellectual Skills
  - Applied and Collaborative Learning
  - Civic and Global Learning;
- nurturing a culture of collaboration as we continually strive to advance equity, access, and social justice at MCU and in the midwifery profession; and
- creating opportunities for students to effect global social change through the development and application of leadership skills.

## UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM GOALS

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**Preamble:** The MCU undergraduate program offers a Bachelor of Science in Midwifery (BSM) degree. The BSM program provides a general education and prepares graduates to become a knowledgeable, skilled and independent Certified Professional Midwife who specializes in community birth settings. BSM graduates will have knowledge of and proficiency in MEAC's Curriculum Checklist of Essential Competencies, which includes the internationally recognized core competencies and guiding principles set forth by the International Confederation of Midwives (ICM) in addition to requirements for national certification of the North American Registry of Midwives (NARM) and the core competencies of Midwives Alliance of North America (MANA). MEAC's accreditation criteria for midwifery education programs reflect the unique components and philosophy of the Midwives Model of Care.

### MIDWIVES OF TECHNICAL EXPERTISE

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**GOAL #1:** The undergraduate program aims to prepare graduates to practice at the full scope of the Certified Professional Midwife credential through the demonstration of broad, integrative, and specialized knowledge.

**Program Outcomes** -- To achieve Goal #1, BSM graduates will:

1. Acquire and demonstrate successful application of 1) traditional and nontraditional cognitive skills; 2) analytic inquiry; 3) utilization of information resources; 4) engagement of diverse perspectives; 5) ethical reasoning; and 6) and quantitative and communicative fluency.
  - Measure: Graduates pass MCU Integrated Assessments (skills exams)
    - ✓ *Indicator of success:* 75% of all students pass each MCU skills exam with proficiency on their first attempt
  - Measure: Graduates pass a national certifying exam
    - ✓ *Indicator of success:* 75% of all students pass a national certifying exam on their first attempt<sup>3</sup>
  - Measure: Graduates demonstrate fluency in appropriate clinical judgment and decision-making
    - ✓ *Indicator of success:* 90% of all students receive exceptional assessment (mark of “exemplary” on Skills Competency Form) from preceptors in the areas of fluency in appropriate clinical judgment and decision-making
    - ✓ *Indicator of success:* 90% of all students receive exceptional marks in MCU Integrated Assessment in the areas of fluency in appropriate clinical judgment and decision-making

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<sup>3</sup>National certifying exam or equivalent based on the student's locale (i.e., Provincial Registration for Canadians)

**GOAL #2:** The undergraduate program aims to advance equity and access in midwifery, as well as to prepare graduates to serve in diverse communities in culturally safe, ethical, and collaborative ways.

**Program Outcomes** -- In order to achieve Goal #2, BSM graduates will:

1. Provide culturally safe care to diverse communities.
  - Measure: Graduates are prepared for the provision of culturally safe care
    - ✓ *Indicator of success:* 90% of all students complete SOSC 1010: Equity and Anti-oppression in Midwifery Care: Understanding Difference, Power, & Privilege with a B letter grade or better
2. Engage in the birthing care system ethically at all times.
  - Measure: Graduates are prepared to enact ethical decision-making processes in their profession
    - ✓ *Indicator of success:* 90% of all students complete SOSC 2050 Ethics and the Law with a B letter grade or better
3. Exemplify strong communication skills with providers and clients.
  - Measure: Graduates demonstrate proficiency in verbal, written and interpersonal communication skills
    - ✓ *Indicator of success:* 90% of students complete COMM 1010: Communication Skills for Midwives with a with a B letter grade or better
    - ✓ *Indicator of success:* 90% of all students receive exceptional assessment (mark of “exemplary” on Skills Competency Form) from preceptors in the area of interpersonal communication skills

**GOAL #3:** The undergraduate program aims to prepare graduates for reflective practice and a perpetual commitment to advance quality and professional direct-entry midwifery.

**Program Outcomes** -- To achieve Goal #3, BSM graduates will:

1. Apply the indicators of quality health care services in the practice of midwifery.
  - Measure: Graduates demonstrate the ability to internalize, act upon, and communicate to others self-directed initiatives and standards for quality midwifery care that are ethical, humane and socially just
    - ✓ *Indicator of success:* 90% of students complete HLTH 1030 Foundations in Public Health and Health Education for Midwives with a B letter grade or better
2. Integrate theory with applied clinical practice during the provision of midwifery care in systematic and ongoing ways.
  - Measure: Graduates show synthesis of academic and clinical knowledge, skills, and behaviors in the creation of the ePortfolio
    - ✓ *Indicator and success:* 100% of students (enrolled after Fall 2015) develop and add to an ePortfolio throughout their clinical courses
3. Enact professional standards and practice guidelines that ensure quality midwifery care.
  - Measure: All graduates create sustained, coherent written practice guidelines that describe, define and outline parameters for evaluation, diagnosis and care in both general midwifery care and specific clinical conditions.
    - ✓ *Indicator of success:* 100% of students submit a representative collection of practice guidelines as part of their senior portfolio created in midwifery core courses prior to graduation
  - Measure: All graduates have practice documents<sup>4</sup> that communicate information to clients in clear, culturally, and educationally appropriate ways
    - ✓ *Indicator of success:* 100% of students submit a representative collection of practice documents as part of their senior portfolio created in midwifery core courses prior to graduation

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<sup>4</sup> These practice documents may include, but are not limited to: informed disclosures, informed consent, client care agreements, client teaching handouts, legal and professional scopes of practice, statement of ethics, etc.



## GRADUATE PROGRAM GOALS

**Preamble:** The MCU graduate program offers a Master of Science in Midwifery (MSM) degree. The MSM program prepares current midwifery practitioners for leadership, contribution, and scholastic proficiency in midwifery dimensions beyond clinical care with four areas of distinction driving pedagogical objectives: midwifery research, outreach, policy, and education. Graduates of the MSM program will have the knowledge, skills, and experience necessary to influence innovative directions in the birthing care landscape as forefront contributors to best practice models, advocacy initiatives, community education, health equity, and evidence-informed care.

### MIDWIVES OF TECHNICAL EXPERTISE

**GOAL #1:** The graduate program aims to advance practitioner knowledge of the research, educational, programmatic, and policy dimensions of midwifery care and perinatal health.

**Program Outcomes** -- To achieve Goal #1, MSM graduates will:

1. Demonstrate mastery of subject material in midwifery and perinatal health as they pertain to sociopolitical, human rights, health equity, social justice, and ethical contexts by: 1) elucidating major theories, methodologies, and approaches; 2) assessing the contribution of central entities in the birthing care landscape; and 3) articulating primary challenges and opportunities in midwifery care and perinatal health.

- Measure: Graduates pass relevant coursework in the professional development course series (PROD 526/5026-532/5032<sup>5</sup>) and midwifery issues course series (MDWF 553/5053-556/5056<sup>5</sup>)

- ✓ *Indicator of success:* 90% of students pass coursework in PROD 526/5026-532/5032 and MDWF 553/5053-556/5056 with a B letter grade or better

2. Collaborate with expert mentors to design and implement external fieldwork projects in one or more areas of program distinction (midwifery education, research, outreach, policy) that require development and application of advanced knowledge in the field of study.

- Measure: Graduates receive strong assessments by fieldwork supervisors in FLDW 571/5071-573/5073

- ✓ *Indicator of success:* 90% of students receive a composite evaluation score of 3.0 (satisfactory) or above by fieldwork supervisors

3. Articulate and defend the role of ethical conduct in scholarly and professional engagements.

- Measure: Graduates exhibit training in the responsible conduct of research and professional ethics during the final oral defense

- ✓ *Indicator of success:* 90% of students receive an overall “average” (meet) or “superior” (exceed) evaluation score for this learning outcome by at least 75% of committee members

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<sup>5</sup> MSM students are required to take 6 credits in the professional development series and 8 credits in the midwifery issues series that contribute to the mastery of their chosen program area(s) of distinction.

## MIDWIVES OF PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE

**GOAL #2:** The graduate program aims to prepare practitioners for leadership and expert contributions in midwifery education, research, outreach, and policy realms.

**Program Outcomes** -- In order to achieve Goal #2, MSM graduates will:

1. Articulate the major domains of inquiry and practice that guide the conduct and dissemination of original research.

- Measure: Graduates pass coursework in STAT 550/5050, ENGL 513/5013, and relevant courses in the MDWF 553/5053-556/5056 series
  - ✓ *Indicator of success:* 90% of students pass coursework in STAT 550/5050, ENGL 513/5013, and MDWF 553/5053-556/5056 with a B letter grade or better

2. Employ leadership skills in one or more areas of program distinction (midwifery education, research, outreach, policy) through development, application, and evaluation of projects that address significant challenges in the midwifery field.

- Measure: Graduates provide successful outreach, leadership involvement, or education/training to internal stakeholders (offering to the MCU community) and/or external stakeholders (offering to a community, state, national, or international entity involved in midwifery care and/or perinatal health) through passing of relevant coursework in the MDWF 553/5053-556/5056 series and PROD 526/5026 to 532/5032 series
  - ✓ *Indicator of success:* 90% of students pass coursework in MDWF 553/5053-556/5056 and PROD 526/5026 to 532/5032 with a B letter grade or better
- Measure: Graduates develop strategies for leadership and professional growth based on their self-identified post-graduation goals in midwifery research, education, outreach and policy realms.
  - ✓ *Indicator of success:* 90% of students pass coursework in PROD 510/5010 (Professional Growth & Leadership) with a B letter grade or better
  - ✓ *Indicator of success:* All students (beginning in Summer Term 2016) complete an Individual Development Plan (IDP) as part of their graduate studies

3. Design and execute an original research project or applied (creative) work that applies leading theories, methods, and techniques, and that articulates and defends the significance and implication of the work in terms of contributions to the field.

- Measure: Graduates design, execute and defend an original research-based thesis or a non-thesis applied (creative) project that has identified intellectual merits and applied contributions to the midwifery profession.
  - ✓ *Indicator of success:* 90% of all students pass their final oral defense with an overall “average” (meet) or “superior” (exceed) evaluation score for this learning outcome by at least 75% of committee members

## MIDWIVES OF PERSONAL GREATNESS

**GOAL #3:** The graduate program fosters professionalism, critical thinking, personal reflexivity, and cultural humility of practitioners in service to lifelong learning and the advancement of equity and access in midwifery education, research, outreach, and policy.

**Program Outcomes** -- In order to achieve Goal #3, MSM graduates will:

1. Create sustained, coherent written and oral arguments or explanations that summarize their work for both general and specialized audiences.
  - Measure: Graduates exhibit the ability to create sustained, coherent written and oral arguments or explanations that summarize their work for both general and specialized audiences during the final oral defense and demonstrate excellence in written and oral communications during successful defense of their thesis or applied project.
    - ✓ *Indicator of success:* 90% of students receive an overall “average” (meet) or “superior” (exceed) evaluation score for this learning outcome by at least 75% of committee members.
2. Engage in collaborative learning activities that help to advance the midwifery profession.
  - ✓ Measure: Graduates critically identify and participate in advanced professional development opportunities during their graduate tenure
    - ✓ *Indicator of success:* All students (beginning in Summer Term 2016) successfully participate (receiving a “Pass” grade) in FLDW 574/5074 (Graduate House Program)
3. Disaggregates, reformulates and adapts principal ideas, techniques and methods at the forefront of midwifery care and perinatal health.
  - Measure: Graduates pass relevant coursework in the MDWF 553/5053-556/5056 series, the PROD 526/5026-532/5032 series, STAT 550/5050, and ENGL 513/5013
    - ✓ *Indicator of success:* 90% of students pass coursework in STAT 550/5050, ENGL 513/5013, MDWF 553/5053-556/5056, and PROD 526/5026-532/5032 with a B letter grade or better

## MIDWIVES COLLEGE OF UTAH DEGREE PROFILE

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The Midwives College of Utah Degree Profile provides an overview of the five broad learning areas<sup>6</sup> in which MCU assessment components are grounded. Within each category, learning outcomes are defined for both the undergraduate (BSM) and graduate (MSM) levels. Collectively, the learning outcomes illustrate not only program-specific competency expectations, but also help to define appropriate and differential learning between undergraduate and graduate degree levels. The learning outcomes and demonstrations herein allow for assessment over broad ranges of knowledge throughout a student's career at MCU. Furthermore, we recognize the ongoing nature of learning acquisition and enactment. We expect that the knowledge, skills, and behaviors exhibited in these competencies will be iterative and ongoing, cycling through the dynamic process of acquisition, application, reflection, and evaluation. This process demonstrates how the student connects learning to other courses and broader applications in their careers and lives beyond the "slice in time" periodic assessments of their formal education.

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<sup>6</sup> These five broad learning areas are adapted from the Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP) developed by the Lumina Foundation, a leading higher education entity. For more information, visit [www.degreeprofile.org](http://www.degreeprofile.org).

**Synopsis:** *The Specialized Knowledge broad learning area addresses those capabilities students should demonstrate upon graduation from their particular midwifery program.*

At the bachelor's level, the student:

- Defines and explains the structure and various models of birthing care, with strong emphasis on the Midwives Model of Care using its tools, technologies, methods and specialized terms.
- Investigates common but complex variations of the normal childbearing year and complications in birthing care by assembling, arranging, and reformulating ideas, concepts and techniques.
- Frames, clarifies and evaluates challenges that bridge various birthing care providers using theories, tools, methods and scholarship from those fields to produce independently or collaboratively an investigative, creative or practical work illuminating that challenge.
- Constructs a summative body of practice directive documents that draws on current research, scholarship and techniques in the field of study.

At the master's level, the student:

- Elucidates the major theories, methodologies, and approaches in midwifery and perinatal health research and best practices.
- Synthesizes and assesses the scholarly literature, collects and analyzes original data to inform best practice recommendations in the birthing care landscape, and articulates research findings in light of consumer-oriented paradigms and conventional representations.
- Designs and executes an original research project or creative work that applies leading theories, methods and techniques and also articulates and defends the significance and implication of the work in terms of contributions to the field.

**Synopsis:** *The Broad and Integrative Knowledge broad learning area asks students to consolidate learning from different fields of study and to discover and explore concepts and questions that bridge these essential areas of learning.*

At the bachelor's level, the student:

- Describes and evaluates the ways in which at least two fields of study define, address and interpret the importance for society of a problem in birthing care or the childbearing year. The student also explains how the methods of inquiry in these fields can address the challenge and proposes an approach to the problem that draws on these fields.
- Produces an investigative, creative or practical work that draws on specific theories, tools and methods from at least two fields of study.
- Defines and frames a problem important to midwifery care, justifies the significance of the challenge or problem in a wider societal context, and explains how methods from the Midwives Model of Care can be used to address the problem. The student also develops an approach that draws on at least two fields of study.

At the master's level, the student:

- Articulates and defends the significance and implications of an original research project or creative work in terms of challenges and trends in the social or global birthing care landscape.

***Synopsis:** The Intellectual Skills broad learning area includes cognitive skills from both traditional and nontraditional areas, including analytic inquiry, use of information resources, engaging diverse perspectives, ethical reasoning, quantitative fluency, and communicative fluency.*

At the bachelor's level, the student incorporates these skills as follows:

- Analytic Inquiry: Differentiates and evaluates theories and approaches to selected complex problems within birthing care
- Use of information resources: Locates, evaluates, incorporates and properly cites multiple information resources in different media in projects and papers
- Generates information through independent or collaborative inquiry and uses that information in a project or paper
- Engaging Diverse Perspectives: Constructs a written project, exhibit, or community service design expressing an alternate cultural, political or technological vision and explains how this vision differs from current realities
- Frames a birthing care controversy or problem within the context of at least two political, cultural, historical or technological forces; explores and evaluates competing perspectives on the controversy or problem; and presents a reasoned analysis of the issue, either orally or in writing that demonstrates consideration of the competing views
- Ethical reasoning: Analyzes competing claims from recent developments in birthing care with respect to benefits and harms to those affected, articulates the ethical dilemmas inherent in the tension of benefits and harms, and either a) arrives at a clearly expressed reconciliation of that tension that is informed by ethical principles or b) explains why such a reconciliation cannot be accomplished
- Identifies and elaborates key ethical issues present in one prominent social or cultural problem likely to manifest during the childbearing year, articulates the ways in which at least two ethical perspectives influence decision-making concerning those problems, and develops and defends an approach to address the ethical issues productively
- Quantitative fluency: Translates verbal problems into mathematical algorithms in order to construct valid arguments of mathematical reason and presents the resulting calculations, estimates, or quantitative evaluations of public information in papers, projects or multimedia presentations
- Constructs mathematical expressions where appropriate for issues initially described in non-quantitative terms
- Communicative fluency: Constructs sustained, coherent arguments, narratives or explications of issues, problems or processes in writing and at least one other medium, and presents this material to general and specific audiences
- Negotiates with one or more collaborators to advance an oral argument or articulate an approach to resolving a social, personal or ethical dilemma

At the master's level, the student:

- Disaggregates, reformulates and adapts principal ideas, techniques or methods at the forefront of birthing care and perinatal health fields
- Provides evidence of contributions to, expansion of, and critical evaluation of the information base in perinatal health through papers, original research and creative projects
- Investigates a core issue in one or more program areas of distinction (midwifery education, research, outreach, policy) from the perspective of a different point in time or a different culture, language, political order or technological context, and explains how this perspective yields results that depart from current norms, dominant cultural assumptions or technologies
- Articulates the central role of ethics in contributing to rigorous and meaningful research and professional engagements. The student also challenges conventional assumption around knowledge epistemologies and ontologies in research-based fields through application of ethical reasoning during coursework, fieldwork, scholarly papers and original research projects.
- Articulates appropriate quantitative methods, research questions and theories for one or more problems in birthing care, and undertakes application of quantitative methods, theories and concepts in order to investigate these problems
- Creates sustained, coherent written and verbal arguments and explanations that summarize original work undertaken for both general and specialized audiences
- Identifies an outside mentor with whom a self-directed applied (out-of-classroom) fieldwork project is designed, executed and evaluated. The student also articulates collegial relationships during the collaborative engagement.



**Synopsis:** *The Applied and Collaborative Learning broad learning area emphasizes what students can do with what they know. Students are asked to demonstrate their learning by addressing unscripted problems in scholarly inquiry in the clinical setting. This category includes research and creative activities involving both individual and group effort and includes practical skills crucial to midwifery care.*

At the bachelor's level, the student:

- Prepares and presents a project, paper, exhibit performance or other appropriate demonstration linking knowledge acquired in clinical placement with knowledge acquired in one or more fields of study; explains how these elements are structured; and employs appropriate citations to demonstrate the relationship of the product to literature in the field.
- Writes a design, review or illustrative application for an analysis or case study in a scientific, technical, economic, business, health, education or communications context
- Completes a substantial project that evaluates a significant question in midwifery care, including an analytic narrative of the effects of learning in the clinical setting on the research or practical skills employed in executing the project

At the master's level, the student:

- Collaborates with expert mentors to design and implement external fieldwork projects that actively integrate and apply knowledge in midwifery education, research, outreach, and policy as gained during in-class curriculum activities. The student also articulates the reciprocity of knowledge and skills generated during the integration of in-class and out-of-classroom experiences.
- Designs and implements a project or outreach activity in an out-of-class setting that requires the application of advanced knowledge in perinatal health to a practical challenge, articulating insights achieved through the experience and the intersections with scholarly debates and professional standards

**Synopsis:** *The Civic and Global Learning broad learning area recognizes higher education's responsibilities to both democracy and the global community. Students must demonstrate integration of their knowledge and skills by engaging with and responding to civic, social, environmental and economic challenges at local, national and global levels.*

At the bachelor's level, the student:

- Explains diverse positions, including those representing different cultural and economic interests, on an issue in birthing care and evaluates the issue in light of various perspectives and evidence drawn from scholarship
- Develops and justifies a position on an issue in birthing care and relates this position to alternate views held by the public or within the policy environment
- Collaborates with others in developing and implementing an approach to an issue in birthing care, evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of the approach, and describes the result where applicable
- Identifies a significant issue in maternal or infant health affecting pregnant persons locally, nationally or globally; presents quantitative evidence of that challenge through tables and graphs; and evaluates the activities of either non-governmental organizations or cooperative inter-governmental initiatives in addressing that issue

At the master's level, the student:

- Identifies, assesses, and develops resolutions for issues of cultural diversity and cultural safety in birthing care practice on a national or global level through the implementation of an applied project
- Provides outreach, leadership involvement, or education/training to community, state, national, or international entities involved in midwifery care and/or perinatal health

According to the procedures outlined herein, a program assessment, with defined evaluation criteria, is held annually. If program weaknesses are identified or changes in the profession occur which expand scope or certification requirements, appropriate adjustments will be strategically implemented. We explain these processes with criteria specified, in detail, below.

**Process Used to Evaluate Goals:** As delineated in this program assessment plan, program goals are comprised of program outcomes, which are then assessed through stated measures and corresponding indicators of success. The stated measures each use measurable verbs in accordance with Bloom's taxonomy for measurable verbs (the standard for assessment in higher education). The stated measures for each program outcome thus provide the requisite foundation by which program goals remain measurable. The indicators of success then provide an objective threshold by which measurement can take place. Accordingly, the following process is used to evaluate the goals:

- Step 1: The Director of Institutional Research (IR) will conduct primary and secondary analyses for each measure, per program outcome and goal, annually, using the specified quantitative evaluation criteria in each indicator of success (see below). Whenever possible, all analyses are done by individual years and through multi-year trend analysis. Analytical approaches follow standard data definitions and methodologies whenever possible, with adaptation to fit the institution and midwifery discipline.
- Step 2: Any result that falls below the threshold specified in the indicator of success will be flagged by the IR Director. Results nearing the threshold, even if not yet below, will also be flagged. Full results will be documented and sent to the President as well as Deans.
- Step 3: The President and Deans will review the documented results during a regularly scheduled bi-weekly Senior Leadership Meeting. At that time, the Senior Leadership Team will use the specified qualitative evaluation criteria (see below) to review all program goals and corresponding outcomes with measures and indicators of success. If, following this review, any criteria are found to be unsatisfactory or otherwise indicate need for exploration and quality improvement, then the process for updating goals will be triggered (see below).

**Evaluation Criteria:** The evaluation criteria are made up of both quantitative and qualitative criteria.

*Quantitative:* Continuous and discrete variables are used during primary analysis with the criteria specified in each indicator of success, per measure. Binary variables are used during secondary analysis with the criteria specified in each indicator of success, per measure, using the threshold noted.

Example: In BSM Program Goal 3, Outcome 1 reads: Apply the indicators of quality health care services in the practice of midwifery. The Measure reads: Graduates demonstrate the ability to internalize, act upon, and communicate to others self-directed initiatives and standards for quality midwifery care that are ethical, humane and socially just. The Indicator of Success reads: 90% of students complete HLTH 1030 Foundations in Public Health and Health Education for Midwives with a B letter grade or better

In this example, primary analysis would involve examining all grade distributions for HLTH 1030, per term, for the academic year(s) under focus. During secondary analysis, a binary variable would be created that indicates percentage of student grades at or above the B letter grade and the percentage of student grades below a B letter grade (i.e., the threshold). If results indicate that 90% or more of students met the threshold, then the indicator of success would be determined as satisfied. If results indicate that below 90% of students met the threshold, then the indicator of success would be determined as not satisfied and, subsequently, flagged. In addition, if determined to be satisfied, but at a rate that is within 5% of the threshold minimum, the result will also be flagged, as results nearing the minimum threshold may indicate an early warning trend that warrants proactive discussion.

*Qualitative:* The quantitative results will then be used as part of a qualitative review of the program goals that are guided by the following criteria-based questions:

- Are the program goals accurately and completely reflected in the measures?
- Are the BSM and MSM graduation requirements accurately captured in the program goals and indicators of success?
- Are there course changes that should be integrated into the overall assessment plan at the level of program goals, outcomes, measures, and indicators?
- Are there professional changes or trends in the field that should inform updates or revisions to the assessment plan at the level of program goals, outcomes, measures, and indicators?
- Are students meeting the indicators of success at the threshold?
  - If not, what actions can be taken to help students better achieve the program outcome and corresponding goal?
  - If yes, what actions are being done that are helping us to achieve the results we are seeing and how do we ensure continuous investment in these actions?

In this way, a mixed methodology approach to the evaluation process is implemented.

**Process Used to Updates Goals:** Actions to be taken if any criteria are found to be unsatisfactory or otherwise indicate need for exploration and quality improvement:

- As deemed necessary per evaluation results, the President and Dean(s) will convene work group(s) to appropriately rectify areas of weakness. Staff, faculty, alumni, students, and administrative leadership will be appropriately involved in the work group(s), depending on the issue at-hand.
- A review of evaluation results will also occur during the yearly in-person MCU Leadership Retreat. The agenda at the retreat and/or the subsequent bi-weekly strategic implementation meetings will be informed by weaknesses that are identified in reviewing evaluation results, and as informed by working group recommendations. Strategies to rectify identified weaknesses will be implemented with consideration of student achievement, timelines, administrative and staff capacity, and fiscal impact and sustainability.

Please note: MCU does not believe in updating program goals unless the program goals become irrelevant to our mission, institutional goals, or to the field of midwifery, or if the program goals otherwise need updating to ensure a reflection of current midwifery landscape and impact for childbearing families. Otherwise, if evaluation indicates that goals are not being met, then the ethical and integrous approach is not to change the goal, but rather, to thoughtfully examine the

approaches the institution is taking to ensure student success in meeting the goals. In other words, we don't lower the bar for student success by changing goals; we raise the support structures needed for ensuring student success in achieving goals.