BS in Midwifery in the Philippines

Bachelor of Science in Midwifery (BSM) is a four year ladderized degree program designed to equip students with knowledge and skills in helping women in their childbearing cycle and birthing process. Students are trained in maternity care during pregnancy, labor, delivery, OB emergencies and post-partum. The program also teaches students how to care for infants and children.  
  
The BSM program aims to provide students with knowledge on the different drugs and medications used in midwifery pharmacology, reproductive health and the administration and supervision of health care facilities. The program gives special emphasis on Community Health Service Management and Family Planning.

Ladderized Curriculum

Once a student successfully completes the two year course he/she is conferred the title Graduate of Midwifery (in some schools this program is called Diploma in Midwifery or Associate in Midwifery). The graduate then becomes eligible to take the Midwife Licensure Examination conducted by the Professional Regulations Commission (PRC).  
  
In the four year BS in Midwifery program, students need to complete the four years of study and then take the Midwife Licensure Examination. However, there are students who opt not to finish the third and fourth year. Since the BSM program is a ladderized program, a student who finishes only two years will still be conferred the same title and diploma (Graduate of Midwifery) and be able to take the licensure exam for midwives. In the event that they wish to finish the third and fourth year of study, they are allowed to do so with or without license.  
While finishing only two years in midwifery may sound appealing, this may only allow you to work in entry level jobs. Graduating the four year BS in Midwifery program is an advantage, since you will be able to hold advanced and supervisory roles in the healthcare industry.  
  
Being a ladderized course, students who successfully complete each year level and pass the TESDA Competency Assessment shall be issued the National Certificate (NC) on that particular level.

* **First year**: Caregiving NC II, Healthcare Services NC II
* **Second year**: Medical Transcription NC II, Barangay Health Services NC II, Graduate of Midwifery

(See [source](http://www.ched.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/CMO-No.05-s2013.pdf))

Subjects and Curriculum

The subjects in the BSM curriculum are divided into four main categories:

* **General Education Courses**:   
  Language/Literature/Philosophy, Mathematics/Natural Sciences/Information Technology, Social Sciences, Mandated Subjects, Physical Education, NSTP-CWTS
* **Core Courses**:   
  Primary Health Care 1 and 2, Anatomy & Physiology, General Physics, General Chemistry, Microbiology & Parasitology, Teaching Strategies in Health Education, Nutrition
* **Professional Courses**:   
  Foundations of Midwifery Practice, OB Care of the Newborn, Pathological obstetrics, basic family planning and care of infants, Professional Growth and Development, Clinical Management, Midwifery Pharmacology, Comprehensive Family Planning, Midwifery Entrepreneurship, Early Childhood Care, Midwifery Research 1 and 2
* **Midwifery Majors**:   
  Midwifery Education Program Management, Community Health Service Management, Reproductive Health, Administration & Supervision, Health Care Facility Management , Application of Entrepreneurship

The BSM program is taught to students through classroom discussions and return demonstrations.  
**Return demonstration** is a teaching method where clinical instructors perform a specific procedure in front of students (example Leopold’s Maneuver, Umbilical Cord Care). After the procedure is performed, students are allowed to practice, after which they have to perform the procedure themselves where they will be graded according to a performance rating scale.  
  
During the fourth year of study, students need to complete two major requirements in the BSM program: **Midwifery Research Paper** and **Clinical Practicum**.

Is Midwifery a profession?

A graduate of at least two years Midwifery program, who passes the **Midwifery Licensure Examination** is called a **Registered Midwife** (RM). A career as a Midwife is considered a profession.  
  
The responsibilities of a Midwife include:

* Monitoring and examining women during pregnancy
* Developing, assessing and evaluating individual programs of care
* Providing full antenatal care, including screening tests in the hospital, community and the home
* Identifying high risk pregnancies and making referrals to doctors and other medical specialists
* Arranging and providing parenting and health education
* Providing counselling and advice before and after screening and tests
* Offering support and advice following events such as miscarriage, termination, stillbirth, neonatal abnormality and neonatal death
* Supervising and assisting mothers in labor, monitoring the condition of the fetus and using knowledge of drugs and pain management
* Giving support and advice on the daily care of the baby, including breastfeeding, bathing and making up feeds
* Liaising with agencies and other health and social care professionals to ensure continuity of care

What are the admission requirements for the BS in Midwifery program?

Requirements at each school may differ, but these are the common requirements:

* **Must be a high school graduate.**  
  Those who did not complete high school education may opt to first attend Alternative Learning System (ALS) and pass the Philippine Educational Placement Test (PEPT) to qualify for college. However, some universities only offer selected courses for PEPT passers
* **College entrance exam**: must pass the college entrance examination with a specified rating set by the school.
* **Interview**: must pass the interview conducted by the college dean/faculty.

A student who is a Graduate of Midwifery/Diploma in Midwifery Holder (two year midwifery education program) is automatically eligible for admission in the BSM program. The two years that he/she completed will automatically be credited allowing him/her to finish the third and fourth year of the BSM program.  
(See [source](http://www.ched.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/CMO-No.33-s2007.pdf))

What skills, traits and attitude will help you succeed in this course?

* **Clinical efficiency** – the ability to use medical instruments and perform procedures efficiently and safely.
* **Patient Care Skills**– the ability to understand and take care of laboring women; involves empathy, compassion and the sincere desire to help patients
* **Ability to deal with emotionally charged situations** – during your OJT, there will be times when expectant mothers become very agitated and panic, you will have to stay calm and alert in times of stress, and enable women to feel confident and in control. On the rare occasions where something goes wrong, you have to be ready to react quickly and effectively.
* **Communication skills** – ability to speak, hear and observe patients and coherently summarize a patient's condition and management plan, verbally and in writing; ability to communicate effectively and sensitively with patients, families, employees and other health-care practitioners
* **Excellent people skills** – in your clinical practicum you will be providing care for pregnant women with different backgrounds. You should be able to put people at their ease, gain their confidence and deal sympathetically with their problems and fears.
* **Service Orientation** – being happy with helping and serving other people
* **Observation skills** – ability to demonstrate skills in observation. In particular, a student must be able to accurately observe a pregnant patient and acquire visual, auditory and tactile information
* **Judgment and Decision making skills** – since you will encounter a lot of laboring women in your clinical practicum being able to decide and prioritize each patient’s case according to importance and urgency is very essential
* **Organization** – the ability to manage different patients at a time, efficiently giving them the same amount of medical attention

How difficult is BS in Midwifery?

BS in Midwifery is not considered a difficult course. The workload for this program is not as heavy compared to other medical or scientific programs; the subjects in the program are also easy to understand. Many students describe the program as interesting. However, there are students who find the return demonstrations a bit challenging, specifically for some midwifery procedures. Overall the curriculum is generally easy and doesn’t require much from students.  
  
There two things that students must focus on: the Clinical Practicum and the Midwifery Research Paper. When you go for Clinical Practicum you should always be ready mentally and physically since you will be dealing with both mother and infant care; life is priceless and mistakes are inexcusable in the clinical setting. Secondly, the Midwifery Research Paper is a little challenging to make thus you need to carefully choose a topic and start early on. Gathering for information may become a bit of challenge since patients may not always be cooperative and the patient’s chart may not always be available.

How long does it take to complete the BSM program in the Philippines?

The BSM program takes four years to complete (Note: this may change due to the K-12 integration). The program may be completed in a shorter time in schools that follow the trimestral curriculum.

Clinical Practicum

Students of the BSM program spend their fourth year of study doing the clinical practicum. The clinical practicum program involves assigning students to different health centers such as tertiary hospitals, community health centers, lying-in clinics (birthing centers) and home settings. This will enable students to hone their skills and apply theoretical knowledge in the actual clinical setting.  
  
A record of the procedures performed, assisted deliveries, handled deliveries and initial care of a newborn is contained in a logbook duly signed by the midwife-in-charge, training officer or chief medical officer of the hospital concerned and submitted at the end of training.  
  
The Clinical Practicum is done under the supervision of a clinical instructor who is also a Registered Midwife. The total number of hours required for the entire fourth years is 2,346 hours. However, if a student is a holder of a two year diploma in midwifery, the number of hours he/she rendered (1,275 hours) during his study will automatically be credited and he/she will only need to comply the 1,071 hours that he/she lacks.  
(See [source](http://www.ched.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/CMO-No.33-s2007.pdf))

Midwifery Licensure Examination

To become a Registered Midwife (RM) in the Philippines, a graduate of BS in Midwifery needs to pass the Midwifery Licensure Examination. The examination is conducted by the [Board of Midwifery](http://www.prc.gov.ph/prb/?id=30&content=173) under the supervision of the [Professional Regulations Commission (PRC)](http://www.prc.gov.ph/). the exam is conducted twice a year.  
  
The scope of the examination includes the following subjects:

* Infant care and feeding
* Obstetrical anatomy and physiology
* Principles of bacteriology as applied to midwifery practice
* Obstetrics
* Midwifery procedures
* Domiciliary midwifery
* Community hygiene and first-aid
* Nutrition
* Ethics of midwifery practice
* Primary health care
* Professional Growth and Development
* Family planning

In order to pass the examination, a candidate must obtain a weighted average of at least 75% with no rating below 50% in any subject.  
(See sources [1](http://www.prc.gov.ph/uploaded/documents/MIDWIFERY-LAW.PDF), [2](http://www.prc.gov.ph/page.aspx?id=36))

Career opportunities for BS in Midwifery graduates

* Jobs for licensed Midwifes (board exam passers)
  + **Community-based Midwife** (Government Clinics, Barangay Healthy Stations, City/Municipal Health Offices)
  + **Hospital Midwife** (Government or Private Hospitals)
  + **Private Practice Midwife** (Self owned Clinics or Self Employed)
  + **Staff Midwife** (Privately owned lying in clinics/Birthing clinics)
  + **Clinical Instructor** – teaches midwifery to college students in Universities and Colleges
  + **Health Facility Administrator** – plan, direct, coordinate, and supervise the delivery of health care.
  + **Health Program Manager** – plans the overall activities and healthcare services that will be offered by healthcare facilities making sure that health programs are able to address current health issues and problems
  + **Consultant Midwife** – provides clinical leadership for midwives and others across maternity services, or a management role such as head of midwifery services or supervisor of midwives at local authority level.
* Jobs for Non Board Passers:
  + **Medical Assistant** – perform routine administrative and clinical tasks to keep the offices of physicians and other health practitioners running smoothly. The duties of medical assistants vary from office to office, depending on the location and size of the practice and the practitioner's specialty.