



**Center For International Programs and Sustainability Studies**

**Course name: Wholistic Midwifery Skills: A Latin American Perspective**

**Course code: HHD-3150**

**Total contact hours: 48 Hours**

**Pre-Requisites: must be a health sciences student**

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The course on history, knowledge, holistic medicine, techniques, and procedures of midwifery in Latin America, with an emphasis on Costa Rica, is an immersion into the ancestral and contemporary tradition of childbirth care in the region. It explores the cultural roots and indigenous and mestizo knowledge that have shaped midwifery practices over time, highlighting the connection between body, mind, and spirit in the childbirth process. Additionally, it addresses the phenomenon of the medicalization of childbirth and the problem of obstetric violence, emphasizing the challenges faced by midwives and women in an environment where unnecessary medical interventions prevail and there is a lack of respect for the rights and desires of birthing mothers. Participants gain a comprehensive understanding of maternal and neonatal care, as well as the importance of respectful and woman-centered care in the context of community health in Latin America. It delves into the use of medicinal plants, yoga, breathing techniques, and emotional support as fundamental tools to promote a more natural, conscious, and respectful childbirth experience for both mother and baby.

## **AUDIENCE**

This intensive short-term course is structured for International Students attending the Study Abroad program at Universidad LCI-Veritas. This is a theoretical-practical course that belongs to the CIPSS health, social sciences and wellness area. This is a theoretical-practical course and explores/responds to the following inquiry according to the professional/disciplinary profile:

**How do midwives historically and presently utilize holistic biocultural practices and techniques in Latin America, especially in Costa Rica, to promote mother-baby-centered care and ensure respectful prenatal and maternal care?**

To respond the query, we will study the following **generative topics**:

- History of midwifery in Latin America, focusing on Costa Rica.
- The medicalization of childbirth and obstetric violence.
- Traditional and contemporary midwifery practices, emphasizing their holistic nature.
- Understanding the traditional, communal and natural perspective of maternal and neonatal care.
- The body-mind-spirit connection around women's health and childbirth.
- The use of medicinal plants, yoga, breathing techniques, and emotional support as essential tools for natural childbirth.

Along the course, the following **skills** will be fostered:

- Ability to understand the history of midwifery in Latin America, with a focus on Costa Rica.
- Ability to address the impacts (both positive and negative) that the medicalization of childbirth and obstetric violence has brought onto the traditional, natural and communal maternal and neonatal care.

- Ability to highlight the body-mind-spirit link around women's health and childbirth.
- Ability to recognize traditional and contemporary midwifery holistic wellness practices, like medicinal plants, yoga, therapeutic touch, and breathing and emotional-support techniques.

The following **values and attitudes** will be promoted among students:

- Learning how to learn.
- Teamwork and leadership.
- Interpersonal communication.

## **COMPETENCIES, CRITERIA AND EVIDENCE**

The competencies for the LCI Veritas University are reflexive and integral actions that respond to the professional profile and to the problems of the context, with suitability and ethical commitment, integrating the know-how, and the knowledge to know in a perspective of improvement.

Below are both the disciplinary and general competencies, linked to their criteria and evidence of performance for this course:

Competencies	Key competences	Learning Assessments
Disciplinary: Integrates the notions of Latin America midwifery history and traditional, natural, and communal maternal and neonatal care, together with holistic wellness practices and cares, to promote respectful prenatal and maternal care.	Demonstrates a wide and general insight of midwifery history and challenges in Latin America, with a focus on Costa Rica.	Journal  Concept map
	Recognizes regional holistic bio-cultural practices and techniques fostering a mother-baby-centered care.	Timeline
Core/Generic		
Integrates knowledge, skills and attitudes to learn continuously and through one's life pursuing an efficient development in the knowledge-based society.	Learning to learn	Practices on class  Learning journals  Concept maps
Integrates the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes to learn interpersonal communication techniques.	Manage and solve conflicts  Listen attentively  Speak in a clear and assertive way  Use systemic thinking	Readings' analysis during class time  Timeline  Thematic discussions during workshops

## **COURSE CONTENTS**

### **Unit 1: History of Midwifery in Latin America and Costa Rica**

1. Definition of empirical midwifery.
2. History of Empirical Midwifery in Latin America.
3. How were empirical midwives trained.
4. Types of practices and knowledge used by empirical midwives in Latin America and Costa Rica.
5. Relationship between empirical midwifery and biomedicine in Costa Rica.
6. History of the medicalization and institutionalization of childbirth in Costa Rica.

### **Unit 2: Obstetric Violence in Latin America and Costa Rica**

- Definition of obstetric violence and its causes and manifestations.
- Legal framework and human rights related to reproduction or obstetric violence.
- Initiatives for the eradication and visibility of obstetric violence.

### **Unit 3: Holistic Health: Herbalism, Touch and Contact, Breathing**

1. Basic fundamentals of holistic health for women in the fertile stage.
2. Women's herbalism, bioactive compounds versus drugs .
3. Women's herbalism, and phytotherapist applications.
4. The skin and touch roles, the therapeutic touch during pregnancy and childbirth.
5. Breathing and wellness, breathing techniques for anxiety release.

### **Unit 4: Procedures and Techniques for Respectful and Qualified Care During Pregnancy, Childbirth, and Postpartum.**

1. Breastfeeding workshop.
2. Workshop on Midwifery techniques, part I.
3. Workshop on Midwifery techniques, part II.
4. Workshop on skin care: Making my natural creams.

5. Workshop on Yoga for motherhood.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The methodology is a set of three phases. First, a group of theoretical concepts including an analysis of the midwifery history and key challenges in the region, second a theoretical-practical review of the bio-cultural holistic practices for maternal and neonatal care, and third, the practical part. This approach will provide a clearer intensive and concentrated understanding of midwifery and maternal and neonatal care and respect. Teacher's role is mainly to facilitate and guide the teaching and learning process, allowing students to build and self-regulate their own learning, based on their previous knowledge. The student is active, the teaching-learning process is collective and socialized, as it fosters social integration and enhances wellness learning with respect. To promote active-learning, activities are planned at a basic and intermediate level.

In this short-term program students will get a glimpse about several midwifery analysis and synthesis processes that will use each activity to obtain an understanding of the historic importance of Contemporary Latin America. Teamwork is promoted through class discussion, presenting techniques, and the case analysis, where learning is developed via teacher guidance. Individual work, like journaling, will allow practice analysis, reflection and synthesis.

For the **Spring 2025** term, we will follow the outline described below:

- 1st week: Presential or online asynchronous sessions: Unit 1 and 2, classes from 1 to 4 pm, from Monday till Friday.
- 2nd Week: Presential theoretical-practical classes: Unit 3, classes from 9 am to 12 pm, including some practical sessions.
- 3rd Week: Presential mainly practical classes, with several workshops.

## **EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES**

To guarantee good development of the course, therefore, to guarantee learning, the following resources are available: an updated bibliographic database, multimedia equipment that students can use for their individual presentations; whiteboards and other school equipment for weekly sessions, and readings provided by the educator. These complement the suggested projects and provide the students with higher possibilities of knowledge ownership. Most of the lessons will take place in the classroom.

During independent work periods students will be able to attend the institution. A campus library, study rooms, and computer labs are available for the students' independent work time. Free Wi-Fi connection for students, educators, and staff is provided on campus, which gives students the possibility to work not only in the library or computer labs, but also around campus. The online learning resource platform (Canvas) is provided with the sources, assignment, calendar and grading of the class. You can check it here <https://veritascr.instructure.com/profile>

## **LEARNING ASSESSMENT**

In order to make the course or program better, competencies-based evaluation compiles and evaluates evidence by taking into account feedback providing pre-established criteria. The course evaluation must be aligned with the competencies and the teaching methodology. There is a rubric for each evaluation resource, and the details will be provided in **CANVAS LMS**. Even though the rubric grants a grade, it is also a quantitative and qualitative description of the students' performance. The rubrics include the core and discipline key competences.

ASSIGNMENTS	PERCENTAGE VALUE
○ Timeline (History of Midwifery in Costa Rica)	30%
○ Concept Map (Challenges and Solutions for Obstetric Violence)	30%
○ Journal (Prenatal, Natal and Postnatal techniques)	40%
Total	100%

The following quality items will be considered for all the home-works: Preparation and content; Organization and style; Student's critical opinion; Punctuality; Fostering classmates' discussions and/or participation.

Whenever required, assignments should be submitted electronically through:

- CANVAS LMS PLATFORM (priority form)
- Whenever necessary, can be sent to: Professor's mail.

## **LEARNING STRATEGIES AND RUBRICS**

### **(1) Learning journal:**

This learning strategy is an instrument for the reflection of concepts and experiences for the student. A personal journal is developed by each student as a document that contains her/his experiences in the course as a type of learning journal; to be done during the length of the class. It should show challenges and reactions to class activities along the term. Each journal's oral presentation is expected to have at least three main reflections (that can be supported with pictures, graphics, or sketches) where the concepts and experiences acquired are evidenced (PPT required). Three main complete entries shall be included in the individual journal' presentation.



Table 1: Rubric to evaluate the learning journals (40%)					
INDICATOR <i>(Each criterion 5 points)</i>	Exc. <b>(5)</b>	VG <b>(4)</b>	Suff. <b>(3)</b>	Insuff. <b>(2 or less)</b>	Comments
1. Punctuality and general performance is excellent; the quality of the presentation denotes a very good preparation.					
2. The presentation includes a cover slide with course information and another ending slide with quotes' bibliography (authors, year, and URL site; using Google Scholar is a plus).					
3. Each entry reflects the student's learning experience tied with at least one main concept.					
4. At least one entry refers to the Prenatal techniques; this entry is very well elaborated.					
5. At least one entry refers to the Natal techniques; this entry is very well elaborated.					
6. At least one entry refers to the Postnatal techniques; this entry is very well elaborated.					
7. Student supports his/her presentation with pictures, graphics, sketches and at least 2 relevant quotes.					

8. At least one of the reflections contribute towards building a better and profound class knowledge, and works as a main conclusion of the student's learning journal.					
<b>Total</b>	5 points x 8 criteria				<b>40 %</b>

*Exc: Excellent; VG: Very good; Suff: Enough; Insuff: Not enough*

## (2) Timeline (History of Midwifery in Costa Rica):

In this collaborative group activity, students will construct a timeline that traces the history of midwifery in Costa Rica. The assignment aims to foster teamwork, encourage discussions, and systematically organize knowledge about the evolution of feminist movements in the region. Each group is expected to create a visually engaging timeline that highlights key events, milestones, and influential figures in the history of feminism in Latin America.

### Instructions

1. Group Formation: Form groups of 3 students. Consider diverse perspectives and backgrounds within each group.
2. Research and Discussion: Conduct research on the chosen theme, utilizing class materials, scholarly articles, and other relevant sources. Engage in group discussions to identify significant events, movements, and figures related to the selected theme.
3. Timeline Creation: Develop a visual timeline that captures key moments of the history of Midwifery in Costa Rica. Include dates, brief descriptions, and visuals to enhance the understanding of each entry on the timeline. At least 15 events should be included. Includes a bibliography.

4. Presentation: Prepare a brief presentation (10-15 minutes) to showcase the timeline to the class.

<b>Table 2: Rubric to evaluate the timeline (30%)</b>					
<b>INDICATOR</b> <i>(Each criterion 5 points)</i>	<b>Exc.</b> <b>(5)</b>	<b>VG</b> <b>(4)</b>	<b>Suff.</b> <b>(3)</b>	<b>Insuff.</b> <b>(2 or less)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
1. Clarity and creativity in visually representing the history of Midwifery in Costa Rica.					
2. Accuracy in presenting 15 key events, movements, and figures on the timeline.					
3. Evidence of active participation from all group members.					
4. Effectiveness of the presentation in conveying the chosen theme and the significance of events.					
5. Engagement with the class during the presentation (e.g., addressing questions, facilitating discussion).					
6. Includes the reading sources and materials used to elaborate the timeline.					
<b>Total</b>	5 points x 6 criteria				<b>30 %</b>

*Exc: Excellent; VG: Very good; Suff: Enough; Insuff: Not enough*

### (3) Concept Map (Challenges and Solutions for Obstetric Violence):

In this group activity, students will collaboratively build a concept map highlighting the challenges and solutions for Obstetric Violence. The assignment aims to promote teamwork, discussion, and the systematization of knowledge. Each group is expected to visually represent the connections between challenges and solutions related to this issue.

#### Instructions

1. **Form groups of 3-4 students.** Ensure diverse perspectives within each group.
2. **Topic Selection:** Include at least 5 challenges and 5 solutions.
3. **Discussion:** Utilizing class materials and additional sources, engage in group discussions to identify the key feminist theories related to the selected theme.
4. **Concept Map Creation:** Develop a visual concept map. Include a bibliography with the reading sources.
5. **Presentation:** Prepare a brief presentation (10-15 minutes) to explain the concept map to the class. Highlight the significance of each theory, their interconnections, and the implications for understanding gender issues.

Table 3: Rubric to evaluate the concept maps (30%)					
INDICATOR <i>(Each criterion 5 points)</i>	Exc. <b>(5)</b>	VG <b>(4)</b>	Suff. <b>(3)</b>	Insuff. <b>(2 or less)</b>	Comments
1. Clarity and creativity in visually representing the challenges and solutions to eradicate obstetric violence.					

2. Accuracy in presenting at least 5 challenges and 5 solutions.					
3. Evidence of active participation from all group members.					
4. Effectiveness of the presentation in conveying the chosen theme and the significance of events.					
5. Engagement with the class during the presentation (e.g., addressing questions, facilitating discussion).					
6. Includes the reading sources and materials used to elaborate the concept map.					
<b>Total</b>	5 points x 6 criteria				<b>30 %</b>

*Exc: Excellent; VG: Very good; Suff: Enough; Insuff: Not enough*

## ATTENDANCE

### Regarding classes:

1. Students are only allowed two (2) **non-consecutive (back-to-back) class absences**. A student shall fail the course if more than two absences are registered by the professor. Administration does not control attendance.
2. Three **late arrivals** to class (arrival after the first 15 minutes) are treated as one absence. Attending class 30 minutes late without an official justification will also count as an absence.

3. In the case of an **absence from any assignment evaluated in class** (presentations, evaluations, field trips, etc.) a student will be given a grade of zero unless an official document is presented within **one week** of the absence.
4. If a student presents an official document to excuse the absence, the missed assignment is to be presented on that same day.

### **Regarding field trips:**

5. An unjustified **absence on a field trip** will immediately result in the loss of all points assigned to that specific trip. However, if an official document justifying the absence is presented, 50% of the assignment points may be obtained upon presentation of a complementary research assignment, to be agreed upon with the professor, within one week of the field trip.
6. An absence on a field trip may be justified should two course field trips coincide. In such a case, and to avoid losing points, students shall be able to opt for carrying out a research assignment.

### **CODE OF CONDUCT**

Professors have the right to expel a student from the classroom should he / she/ they:

1. Be disruptive in the classroom.
2. Behave in a disrespectful way.
3. Be under the influence of alcohol.
4. Be under the influence of any illegal drug.
5. Shows hygiene or odor problems that may disturb other students.

## **ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

The use of cell phones, smartphones, or other mobile communication devices is disruptive and is therefore prohibited during class. **Please turn all devices OFF and put them away** when class begins. Devices may be used only when the professor assigns a specific activity and allows the use of devices for internet search or recording. Those who fail to comply with the rule must leave the classroom for the remainder of the class period. Using devices while the professor or other peers are lecturing, or presenting is perceived as a lack of interest and disrespectful.

## **STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM POLICIES**

The student must comply with the provisions of the Study Abroad Program Policies available on the Canvas/Omnivox platform.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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Salamon, M. (2023, 7. Juli). *What is somatic therapy?* *Harvard Health*. <https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/what-is-somatic-therapy-202307072951>



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## CHRONOGRAM

Days	CONTENTS	LEARNING STRATEGIES
1	<p><b>Unit 1: History of Midwifery in Latin America and Costa Rica</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Definition of empirical midwifery.</li> <li>○ History of Empirical Midwifery in Latin America</li> </ul>	<p>Class discussions Timeline</p>
2	<p><b>Unit 1: History of Midwifery in Latin America and Costa Rica</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ How were empirical midwives trained.</li> <li>○ Types of practices and knowledge used by empirical midwives in Latin America and Costa Rica.</li> </ul>	<p>Class discussions Timeline</p>
3	<p><b>Unit 1: History of Midwifery in Latin America and Costa Rica</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Relationship between empirical midwifery and biomedicine in Costa Rica</li> <li>○ History of the medicalization and institutionalization of childbirth in Costa Rica.</li> </ul>	<p>Class discussions Timeline</p>

4	<b>Unit 2: Obstetric Violence in Latin America and Costa Rica</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Definition of obstetric violence and its causes and manifestations</li> </ul>	Class discussions Concept Map
5	<b>Unit 2: Obstetric Violence in Latin America and Costa Rica</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Legal framework and human rights related to reproduction or obstetric violence.</li> <li>○ Initiatives for the eradication and visibility of obstetric violence.</li> </ul>	Class discussions Concept Map
6	<b>Unit 3: Holistic Health: Herbalism, Touch and Contact, Breathing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Basic fundamentals of holistic health for women in the fertile stage.</li> </ul>	Class exercises Journal
7	<b>Unit 3: Holistic Health: Herbalism, Touch and Contact, Breathing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Women's herbalism, bioactive compounds versus drugs.</li> </ul>	Class exercises Journal
8	<b>Unit 3: Holistic Health: Herbalism, Touch and Contact, Breathing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Women's herbalism, bioactive compounds versus drugs.</li> </ul>	Class exercises Journal
9	<b>Unit 3: Holistic Health: Herbalism, Touch and Contact, Breathing</b>	Class exercises Journal

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The skin and touch roles, the therapeutic touch during pregnancy and childbirth.</li> </ul>	
10	<b>Unit 3: Holistic Health: Herbalism, Touch and Contact, Breathing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Breathing and wellness, breathing techniques for anxiety release.</li> </ul>	Class exercises Journal
11	<b>Unit 4: Procedures and Techniques for Respectful and Qualified Care During Pregnancy, Childbirth, and Postpartum.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Breastfeeding workshop.</li> </ul>	Class exercises Class exercises Journal
12	<b>Unit 4: Procedures and Techniques for Respectful and Qualified Care During Pregnancy, Childbirth, and Postpartum.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Workshop on Midwifery techniques, part I.</li> </ul>	Class exercises Journal
13	<b>Unit 4: Procedures and Techniques for Respectful and Qualified Care During Pregnancy, Childbirth, and Postpartum.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Workshop on Midwifery techniques, part II.</li> </ul>	Class exercises Journal
14	<b>Unit 4: Procedures and Techniques for Respectful and Qualified Care During Pregnancy, Childbirth, and Postpartum.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Workshop on skin care: Making my natural creams.</li> </ul>	Class exercises Journal

15	<b>Unit 4: Procedures and Techniques for Respectful and Qualified Care During Pregnancy, Childbirth, and Postpartum.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Workshop on Yoga for motherhood.</li></ul>	Class exercises Journal
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