

Genetic Counseling, MS

NHGCOMS

The future is bright for genetic counselors. Prepare for a career empowering and educating others in a dynamic and growing field.

Program description

Degree awarded: MS Genetic Counseling

The MS program in genetic counseling prepares students for a successful career as a genetic counselor. Graduates can apply their knowledge and unique skill set to advance the understanding of genetics and genomic-related conditions in the communities where they work and live.

The two-year, full-time program is taught by genetic counselors and medical geneticists. Students participate in fieldwork experiences throughout Phoenix and engage in a comprehensive curriculum covering:

- advanced genetic counseling techniques
- clinical genetics and genomics
- cultural competencies in genetics
- fundamentals of genetic counseling
- the role of genetic counselors in laboratories and research
- social and ethical dimensions of genetic counseling and decision-making

Students gain the knowledge and experience necessary to pass the American Board of Genetic Counseling certification exam and find employment that fits their skill set.

This program is classified as Accredited, New Program by the Accreditation Council for Genetic Counseling, <https://www.gceducation.org/>.

Students should note that some courses and faculty offices are located at the [Health Futures Center](#) building in North Phoenix.

At a glance

- **College/School:** [College of Health Solutions](#)
- **Location:** [Downtown Phoenix](#)

Degree requirements

71 credit hours and a thesis, or

71 credit hours including the required applied project course (GCO 593)

Required Core (46 credit hours)

BMD 562 Bioethical Issues in Applied Biomedicine (3)

GCO 510 Fieldwork Preparatory (1)

GCO 530 Genetic Counseling Fundamentals (3)

GCO 540 Foundations of Medical Genetics (3)

GCO 560 Practice of Genetic Counseling (3)

GCO 570 Clinical Genetics (3)

GCO 610 Laboratory Fundamentals and Population Screening (3)

GCO 620 Genetic Counseling Techniques (3)

GCO 625 Cultural, Ethical and Legal Aspects of Genetics (3)

GCO 630 Advanced Genetic Counseling Techniques (3)

GCO 650 Cancer, Cardiac Genomics and Precision Medicine (3)

GCO 659 Embryology and Genetics (3)

GCO 660 Professional Issues for Genetic Counselors (3)

HCD 501 Population Health Data Management and Analysis (3)

HCD 520 Population Health (3)

IBC 640 Family and Couples in Primary Care (3)

Fieldwork (15 credit hours)

GCO 583 or GCO 683 Fieldwork (15)

Other Requirements (4 credit hours)

GCO 691 Topic: Journal Club I (1)

GCO 691 Topic: Journal Club II (1)

GCO 691 Topic: Journal Club III (1)

GCO 691 Topic: Journal Club IV (1)

Culminating Experience (6 credit hours)

GCO 593 Applied Project (6) or

GCO 599 Thesis (6)

Additional Curriculum Information

GCO 691 Journal Club topics are taken consecutively for 1 credit hour in each term of the program.

Students must have a minimum of 50 participatory cases during their fieldwork experiences with individuals who are being evaluated in the specialty areas of prenatal, pediatric, cancer and other adult conditions, with no one specialty dominating. All 50 participatory cases must be supervised by an

experienced genetic counselor with certification from the American Board of Genetic Counseling, the American Board of Medical Genetics and Genomics or the Canadian Association of Genetic Counsellors. Students will be placed in fieldwork sites by the program.

Admission requirements

Applicants must fulfill the requirements of both the Graduate College and the College of Health Solutions.

Applicants are eligible to apply to the program if they have earned a bachelor's or master's degree in a related field from a regionally accredited institution.

Applicants must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.00 (scale is 4.00 = "A") in the last 60 hours of their first bachelor's degree program, or applicants must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.00 (scale is 4.00 = "A") in an applicable master's degree program.

Applicants are required to submit:

1. graduate admissions application and application fee
2. official transcripts
3. letter of intent
4. resume or curriculum vitae
5. three references (academic or professional)
6. proof of English proficiency

Additional Application Information

An applicant whose native language is not English must provide proof of English proficiency regardless of their current residency.

Applicants must register with National Matching Services, Inc. prior to applying to ASU to be considered for this program (<https://natmatch.com/gcadmissions>). The Genetics Counseling, MS program at ASU has an ID code of 15710. Applications will be reviewed by the admissions committee after all materials have been received, and the applicant has registered with Match.

All applicants must have coursework in the following areas, as evidenced in their transcript:

- biology (two courses)
- chemistry (one course)
- biochemistry (one course)
- genetics (one course)
- statistics (one course)
- psychology, sociology, or public health (two courses)

The letter of intent (single-spaced, one to two pages) should include experience and knowledge in the field of genetic counseling and articulate what makes the applicant a good candidate for this program.

Contact information for three references is required. References will be contacted via email to submit a letter of recommendation. Academic and professional recommendations are strongly encouraged. If possible, candidates are encouraged to include at least one letter of recommendation from a genetic counselor.

All applicants are strongly encouraged to interview genetic counselors and observe genetic counseling sessions when possible. It is also highly recommended that applicants have experience working in a health care setting; experience volunteering or working with individuals who have special needs; advocacy experience; or experience providing crisis counseling.

Tuition information

When it comes to paying for higher education, everyone's situation is different. Students can learn about [ASU tuition and financial aid](#) options to find out which will work best for them.

Application deadlines

Fall

[expand](#)

Career opportunities

Graduates of the program are prepared for a position as a genetic counselor in a clinical care, research or laboratory setting or as an industry-based genetic counselor. Genetic counselors are uniquely trained with a skill set that will allow them to work in a variety of medical, scientific or research-based settings, as well as in private practice and academia.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts a growth rate of 16% for genetic counseling positions between 2022 and 2032, which is much faster than average.

Professional licensure

ASU programs that may lead to professional licensure or certification are intended to prepare students for potential licensure or certification in Arizona. Completion of an ASU program may not meet educational requirements for licensure or certification in another state. For more information, students should visit the [ASU professional licensure](#) webpage.

Contact information

[College of Health Solutions](#) | HLTHN 401AA
CHSGrad@asu.edu | 602-496-3300

