Genetic Counseling, MS

NHGCOMS

A program fee is pending ABOR approval.


Program Description

Degree Awarded: MS Genetic Counseling
The MS program in genetic counseling, accredited by the Accreditation Council for Genetic Counseling, prepares students for a successful career as a genetic counselor where they can apply their knowledge and unique skill set to help advance the understanding of genetics and genomic-related conditions within the communities where they work and live.

The two-year, full time program offers an engaging and comprehensive curriculum covering topics such as: clinical genetics and genomics; the fundamentals of genetic counseling and advanced genetic counseling techniques; cultural competencies in genetics; social and ethical dimensions of genetic counseling and decision-making; and the role of genetic counselors in laboratories and research. The curriculum is taught by genetic counselors and medical geneticists.

Students also have the opportunity to participate in diverse fieldwork experiences throughout Phoenix. Upon graduation, new graduates are prepared to pass the American Board of Genetic Counseling certification exam and find a job that fits their acquired skills.

At a Glance

- **College/School:** [College of Health Solutions](#)
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)**
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 & Population Screening (3)
GCO 620 Genetic Counseling Techniques (3)
GCO 625 Cultural, Ethical & 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 Biostatistics and Data Management (3)
HCD 520 Population Health (3)
HCD 562 Emerging Bioethical Issues in Translational Biomedical Research (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**
Other requirements topic courses are 1 credit hour each semester in this series: Journal Club (I-IV). This course is designed to introduce students to the process of identifying relevant and current peer-reviewed articles on a topic pertaining to the field of genetics. Students are expected to present the article (review, discuss and critique the article) to their fellow students (first and second year-students take this course together).
Students who choose the applied project as their culminating experience work under the supervision of a faculty member to identify and complete a project in a related area of study.

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 ABGC/ABMG(G)/CAGC certified genetic counselor. The fieldwork coordinator for the program will place all students at their fieldwork sites and works with the sites to ensure students are exposed to the necessary types and numbers of cases to meet the requirements for graduation. The fieldwork experience must be completed by the end of spring semester of year two of 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. professional resume
5. three letters of recommendation
6. proof of English proficiency

**Additional Application Information**

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

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

**Application Deadlines**
Fall

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Career Opportunities

Graduates of the program are prepared for a position as a genetic counselor in clinical care, research or a 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.

Contact Information

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