

Genetic Counseling

The Program in Genetic Counseling is an innovative, 21-month Master of Science program that prepares graduates to be Certified Genetic Counselors (CGCs®). We have *full accreditation status* through the Accreditation Council for Genetic Counseling (ACGC). Admission to programs accredited by the ACGC require registering for the Genetic Counseling Admissions Match.

Applicants to the Program in Genetic Counseling must have a bachelor's degree (or equivalent if from a foreign college or university). Most applicants will have majored in biology or a related field (e.g., biochemistry, genetics) or in psychology. Along with the required prerequisite undergraduate course work in genetics, biochemistry, statistics, and psychology, the Program in Genetic Counseling also highly recommends that applicants have obtained the following types of experiences prior to applying:

- Exposure to the field via shadowing and/or informational interviewing
- Advocacy and/or counseling experience

The **mission** of the Program in Genetic Counseling at Washington University is to educate future generations of genetic counselors to serve the growing need for diverse, culturally humble, innovative genetic counselors serving patients, working in industry, and conducting research. The **objectives** of the program are to provide a rigorous curriculum, broad and robust clinical experiences, and expert research guidance to graduate students who are well prepared to fill the ever-expanding professional roles in which genetic counselors may be employed.

All graduates of accredited genetic counseling graduate programs are prepared for entry-level genetic counseling positions, regardless of the area of specialization. Common areas of specialization for genetic counselors include oncology, prenatal, pediatrics, neurogenetics, and cardiology. Many genetic counselors do select a specialty area of practice that they focus on throughout their careers. Others change their area of practice many times. The field of genetic counseling provides a great deal of career flexibility.

As a result of its ACGC accreditation, the Program in Genetic Counseling curriculum meets the educational requirements to sit for the American Board of Genetic Counseling (ABGC) Certification Examination and to pursue licensure in all states and territories of the United States and Washington, DC, in which licensure is available.

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