

University of Pittsburgh Genetic Counseling Program Technical Standards

Overview

The Genetic Counseling Graduate Program at the University of Pittsburgh is committed to providing cutting edge training in the complex science of genetics/genomics while fostering a strong foundation in counseling. Accredited by the Accreditation Council for Genetic Counseling (ACGC), the Program is designed to allow students to achieve the ACGC practice-based competencies, which define the knowledge and skills that an entry-level genetic counselor should demonstrate upon graduation. The practice-based competencies are comprised of the following domains: Genetics Expertise and Analysis; Interpersonal, Psychosocial and Counseling Skills; Education; and Professional Development and Practice (http://gceducation.org/Documents/ACGC%20Core%20Competencies%20Brochure_15_Web.pdf). To achieve the knowledge and skills in these domains, the graduate training is a rigorous process that is meant to ensure that our graduates are competent practitioners.

The technical standards outlined in this document reflect the abilities and characteristics necessary to successfully complete all requirements of the Program and describe attributes that extend beyond academic requirements for admission. Moreover, they define areas that are not addressed in the ACGC practice-based competencies.

The University fosters a culture of inclusiveness and is committed to providing an accessible environment for its faculty, staff and students. These standards describe the nonacademic essential functions that are required for admission to, advancement through, and graduation from, the program. Applicants or students who would like to request reasonable accommodations to these standards should contact our Office of Disability Resources and Services, 140 William Pitt Union (Voice or TTD 412-648-7890 www.drs.pitt.edu).

Technical Standards

The technical standards are categorized into the following areas: Observation, Communication, Motor Function, Intellectual Ability, and Ethics and Professionalism.

Observation

The candidate must be able to:

- observe presentations in the classroom, laboratory and clinic sites
- observe patients at a distance and close at hand during the clinical rotations
- demonstrate sufficient use of visual and auditory senses to conduct genetic counseling sessions

Communication

The candidate must be able to:

- interact with patients to elicit relevant information including but not limited to personal and family medical information as well as documenting pertinent patient information
- communicate in a clear, effective, respectful, and timely manner with patients and their family members as well as with other health care professionals both orally and in writing
- establish therapeutic relationships with patients and professional relationships with colleagues

Motor Function

The candidate must be able to:

- transport her/himself from room to room and location to location to complete curricular, clinical and research requirements
- have the physical stamina to complete the curricular, clinical, and research requirements of the program

Intellectual Ability

The candidate must be able to:

- demonstrate problem solving ability and critical thinking skills with good judgment, psychological stability, maturity, and empathy
- interpret and assimilate scientific literature and apply this knowledge in patient care and in the conduct of research
- understand the material presented in coursework and apply this information in patient care and in the conduct of research

Ethics and Professionalism

The candidate must be able to:

- demonstrate sound intellectual ability and judgment in completing program requirements within established timelines
- demonstrate a calm and diplomatic demeanor in stressful situations and display flexibility in working in fast-paced academic and clinical settings
- practice within the law and ethical standards of the genetic counseling profession including the NSGC Code of Ethics
- accept feedback and modify behavior in response to this feedback
- work cooperatively and collaboratively with members of the health care team
- interact with diverse populations
- recognize limitations in one's own competency and seek appropriate help
- recognize medical and emotional problems that interfere with academic and clinical performance and seek appropriate help

Should you have any questions, please contact:

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To learn more about accommodations and the process at the University of Pittsburgh please contact:

Disability Resources and Services

University of Pittsburgh

140 William Pitt Union

Pittsburgh, PA 15260

Voice or TTD 412-648-7890

Website: www.drs.pitt.edu