

**Graduate School of Public Health  
Department of Human Genetics  
GENETIC COUNSELING INTERNSHIP  
HUGEN 2036  
Thursday 2:00-3:55 PM  
2121C Pitt Public Health  
Credit Hours: 4.0  
Fall Semester 2022**

**Instructors and Contact Information**

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**Goal of the Course**

The goal of this course is to provide students with the knowledge and clinical experience necessary to be well prepared to enter the workforce as a genetic counselor.

**Course Description**

Students will participate in supervised genetic counseling clinical rotations throughout this course in a variety of settings including prenatal, pediatric, cancer, adult, primary care, and specialty genetics. During clinical rotations, feedback will be provided to students by the clinical rotation supervisors to help them build their genetic counseling skills, knowledge and competencies as well as develop their personal genetic counseling style. Students will be involved in the direct care of patients, as well as additional administrative work related to patient care and operations of the genetic counseling clinic.

The purpose of the lectures and activities in the classroom setting is to familiarize the genetic counseling intern with topics relevant to clinical genetics and counseling.

**Learning Objectives**

1. To describe how genetic counselors can collaborate with other health care professionals when working with clients.
2. To explain the clinical characteristics of a variety of genetic conditions as well as testing options for these conditions.
3. To describe the characteristics of effective counselors.
4. To employ attending skills, active listening, and empathetic responding.

5. To demonstrate self-evaluation skills, writing skills, and critical thinking skills.
6. To integrate theoretical and experiential learning to develop your own personal model of the counseling process.
7. To assess your own qualities that support and hinder your attempts to being therapeutic for others.

### **Recommended Texts**

BS LeRoy, P McCarthy Veach, NP Callanan. *Genetic Counseling Practice, Advanced Concepts and Skills, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.* (2021) Wiley Blackwell.

J Weil. (2000). *Psychosocial Genetic Counseling*. Oxford University Press.

### **Course Format and Delivery**

This class utilizes Canvas for class content and grading. Notifications will be sent regarding course content throughout the semester. Please make sure to set up your Canvas to receive email notifications from Canvas and please check for announcements and notifications on a regular basis.

Class will take place in person. However, due to the shifting nature of the pandemic, it may be necessary to alter the delivery of the course. Any changes will be shared with students via announcements on Canvas. Given the pandemic, it is important that students abide by public health regulations and University of Pittsburgh health standards and guidelines. For the most up-to-date information and guidance, please visit <https://www.coronavirus.pitt.edu/>. If you are sick, please do not come to class in-person. Please email all course instructors, and we will determine the most appropriate make-up plan for class depending on the content.

We plan on recording most classes to make them available on Canvas. We recognize that some guest lecturers may prefer not be recorded and we will communicate this information during the semester. Recordings will only be available for the semester and should not be distributed for non-class purposes.

### **Academic Integrity**

All students are expected to adhere to the school's standards of academic honesty. Cheating/plagiarism will not be tolerated. The Graduate School of Public Health's policy on academic integrity, which is based on the University policy, is available online in the Pitt Public Health Academic Handbook [www.publichealth.pitt.edu/home/academics/academic-requirements](http://www.publichealth.pitt.edu/home/academics/academic-requirements). The policy includes obligations for faculty and students, procedures for adjudicating violations, and other critical information. Please take the time to read this policy.

## **Accommodation for Students with Disabilities**

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor(s) and Disability Resources and Services, 140 William Pitt Union, (412) 648-7890, (412) 228-5347 for P3 ASL users, as early as possible in the term. DRS will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course.

Disability Resources and Services is also available to consult with students regarding accommodations in the clinical setting

## **Sexual Misconduct, Required Reporting and Title IX Statement**

The University is committed to combatting sexual misconduct. As a result, you should know that University faculty and staff members are required to report any instances of sexual misconduct, including harassment and sexual violence, to the University's Title IX office so that the victim may be provided appropriate resources and support options. What this means is that as your professors, we are required to report any incidents of sexual misconduct that are directly reported to us, or of which we are somehow made aware.

There are two important exceptions to this requirement about which you should be aware:

A list of the designated University employees who, as counselors and medical professionals, do not have this reporting responsibility and can maintain confidentiality, can be found here:

<https://www.diversity.pitt.edu/civil-rights-title-ix/make-report/report-form>

An important exception to the reporting requirement exists for academic work. Disclosures about sexual misconduct that are shared as part of an academic project, classroom discussion, or course assignment, are not required to be disclosed to the University's Title IX office.

If you are the victim of sexual misconduct, Pitt encourages you to reach out to these resources:

- Title IX Office: 412-648-7860
- SHARE @ the University Counseling Center: 412-648-7930 (8:30 A.M. TO 5 P.M. M-F) and 412-648-7856 (AFTER BUSINESS HOURS)

If you have a safety concern, please contact the University of Pittsburgh Police, 412-624-2121. Other reporting information is available here: <https://www.diversity.pitt.edu/civil-rights-title-ix-compliance/make-report>

Statement from the Department of Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies

[This statement was developed by Katie Pope, Title IX Coordinator, in conjunction with GSWS instructors.]

## **Diversity Statement**

Pitt Public Health Diversity Statement | Effective Academic Year 2022-23

The University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health considers the diversity of its students, faculty, and staff to be a strength and critical to its educational mission. Pitt Public Health is committed to creating and fostering inclusive learning environments that value human dignity and equity and promote social justice. Every member of our community is expected to be respectful of the individual perspectives, experiences, behaviors, worldviews, and backgrounds of others. While intellectual disagreement may be constructive, no derogatory statements, or demeaning or discriminatory behavior will be permitted.

If you feel uncomfortable or would like to discuss a situation, please contact any of the following: the course director or course instructor;

- the Pitt Public Health Associate Dean responsible for diversity and inclusion;
- the University's Office of Diversity and Inclusion at 412-648-7860 or
- <https://www.diversity.pitt.edu/civil-rights-title-ix/make-report/report-form>  
(anonymous reporting form)

## **Student Performance Evaluation and Grading**

Your grade for the course is based upon your rotations from the first half of the genetic counseling rotation schedule (first six rotation blocks, not including the thesis block). Grades are determined through progress towards the practice-based competencies, completion of rotation assignments, and the genetic counseling core activities as outlined on the rotation grading rubric provided to students at the start of rotations. In addition to standard letter grades, the following may also be issued in certain circumstances:

- G (unfinished course work): student needs additional time to complete one or more rotation(s) due to extenuating personal circumstances that resulted in absence or leave from the rotation and/or incomplete assignments. Please see extension/remediation paragraph below.
- I (incomplete): student needs additional time to complete one or more rotation(s) beyond the end of the semester if it is determined the student would benefit from additional cases to successfully demonstrate one or more of the practice-based competencies. Please see extension/remediation paragraph below.

Extensions and Remediation: Students given G or I grade will have a plan for completion and/or a remediation plan developed by the Program Leadership and site supervisor(s) with input from the student. Additionally, remediation plans may be required for students if Program Leadership and/or site supervisors recognize that additional support is needed to help students meet one or more of the practice based competencies or other rotation requirements.

There are no examinations or projects required for this class. However, class attendance is required. Attendance will be tracked and when a session is missed, a student should alert the instructors to the absence and indicate when the recorded class was viewed. *If you miss more than two classes, you*

*must write a paper on a topic selected by the instructors.*

### **Copyright Notice**

Course material may be protected by copyright. United States copyright law, 14 USC section 101, et sec., in addition to University policy and procedures, prohibit unauthorized duplication or retransmission of course materials. See [Library of Congress Copyright Office](#) and the [University Copyright Policy](#).

### **Schedule of Sessions**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Class Topic</b>	<b>Lecturer(s)</b>	<b>Description</b>
9/1/22	Introduction	Andrea Durst, DrPH, Jodie Vento, MGC	Intro to course, Overview of the Comprehensive Exam, Structure and expectations of the NSGC Conference
	Syndromes that all GCs Should Know	Jodie Vento, MGC	A review of syndromes commonly encountered by GCs
9/8/22	Counseling for Hemoglobinopathies	Natasha Berman, MA, MS, MPH	A review of hemoglobinopathies (SCD, alpha and beta-thal) including newborn screening
9/15/22	Interpretation of Complex Genetic Test Results	Laura Jenkins, MS	A “hands-on” class to interpret clinical cases that involve microarray and WES test results
9/22/22: Comprehensive Exam			
9/29/22	Counseling for Neuromuscular Disorders	Lauren Morgenroth, MS, Andrea D’Alessandro, MS	An overview of neuromuscular disease with a select review of certain muscle and nerve conditions
10/6/22	Counseling Skills-Advanced Empathy	Robin Grubs, PhD	A discussion of the psychosocial aspects of advanced empathy building on the concepts from the empathy class taught in the first year
10/13/22	Risk Communication	Elizabeth Felter, DrPH	A discussion of risk communication theory and its relevance to genetic counseling practice
10/20/22	Comprehensive Exam Review & Discussion		

10/27/22	Insurance Panel	Jodie Vento, MGC, Julia Stone, MS	A panel discussion on insurance, billing and reimbursement from a pediatric, prenatal and cancer perspective
11/3/22	Counseling Skills- Guilt and Shame	Robin Grubs, PhD	An examination of guilt and shame from a psychosocial perspective
11/10/22	Gene Therapy	Michelle Alabek	
11/17/22: No Class – NSGC			
11/24/22: No Class - Thanksgiving Break			
12/1/22	Delivering Difficult News: Considerations and Strategies	Naomi Grodin Robin Grubs, PhD	Ms. Grodin will share her family’s experience of receiving a difficult diagnosis. In addition, a review and practice of strategies and approaches for delivering difficult news to patients.
12/8/22	Counseling Skills- Self-Disclosure	Jodie Vento, MGC	A review of the psychosocial aspects of self-disclosure