



Pre-Genetic Counseling Quick Facts

COURSE PREREQUISITES

Biology (BIOL 1107/L and BIOL 1108/L)

Statistics (STAT 2000)

Psychology (PSYC 1101)

Biochemistry (BCMB 3100)

Genetics (GENE 3200)

*Not a definitive list, always check with your target school

Recommended

Psychology (PSYC 3230)

Average
Matriculant
Numbers

- Overall GPA: 3.50
 - Science GPA: 3.50
- GRE: ~300 combined, ~4.0 writing

GRADE TRENDS

- Strong science and overall GPAs are essential.
- Positive grade trends matter
- Negative grade trends are cause for concern (repeated withdrawals, poor science grades, excessive science coursework outside UGA)

Show you can handle rigorous scientific content.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Genetic Counselors assess individual or family risk factors for a variety of inherited conditions, such as genetic disorders and birth defects. There is no “best” major for Genetic Counseling students. Pick what you enjoy!

Genetic Counselors need:

- Master's Degree - Most programs are 22 Months
- Board Certification

One institution in Georgia

- Emory University

Students will usually apply using the NMS system, also known as the Genetic Counseling Match. It is \$100 to apply in the system and allows programs and applicants to rank each other as they connect through the interview process.

Students will apply to their prospective programs after applying to the Match.

GRADUATE RECORD EXAMINATION

Some Genetic Counseling Programs require that applicants take the Graduate Record Examination (GRE). The GRE consists of three sections: Quantitative, Verbal, and Essay. There are no specific courses that students need to take prior to the GRE.

While students can opt for a commercial prep course for the GRE, self-study is often sufficient. Students should plan to dedicate roughly six to eight weeks to exam preparation.

The GRE is offered via University Testing Services on a regular basis, and can be done online through the GRE website.

COUNSELING EXPERIENCE & ADVOCACY

Counseling experience develops interpersonal skills and empathy by guiding individuals through challenging situations. This can be done in person or virtually. (DV shelter volunteer crisis text line volunteer, etc.)

Look for boards & committees for diseases you want to advocate for.

- National Organizations (The Huntington Disease Society of America, etc.)
- Local Organizations (The Georgia Chapter Alzheimer's Association, ESP, etc.)

Underserved Volunteering & Advocacy can go hand in hand, but they can also be separate.

SHADOWING

Most GC programs require applicants to observe or shadow Genetic Counselors. Shadowing requirements vary so be sure to check with your target programs. You can also interview genetic counselors to show interest in the field and learn about the profession. Research experience is optional but if it is something that interests you then it is a great addition to your application.

To find a Genetic Counselor in your area:

<https://www.nsgc.org/page/find-a-gcsearch>.

To watch videos relevant to the field:

<https://www.nsgc.org/p/cm/ld/fid=248>.

LETTERS OF EVALUATION

- Large lecture classes make it harder to connect, so be intentional in building relationships with professors.
- Attend office hours regularly
- Engage during class & labs
- Develop relationship over a period of time for a strong letter.

Choose Letter Writers Wisely

- Pick people who know you well
- Choose strong, specific letters over generic letters
- Ask early and give plenty of notice.

Most GC schools require three letters of evaluation. Requirements can vary between schools, and it is the student's responsibility to ensure that they have collected the correct letters for their program of interest.

Generally, programs expect students to provide:

- one letter from a genetic counselor
- two letters from a faculty member (one from a hard science professor)
- one additional letter (employer, research mentor, etc.)

Students should select what they believe will be the most compelling letter.

GENETIC COUNSELING PROGRAM APPLICATION DATES

<u>INSTITUTION</u>	<u>APPLICATION PERIOD</u>	<u>MATRICULATION DATE</u>
University of Alabama at Birmingham*	July - January	August
University of Arkansas Medical Sciences*	July - December	August
University of South Florida*	July - December	August
Emory University School of Medicine*	July - December	August
University of N.C. at Greensboro*	July - December	August
University of South Carolina*	July - December	August

*Participates in the GC Admission Match program. For more information visit <https://natmatch.com/gcadmissions/applicants/index.html>.