

Technical Standards

Genetic Counseling

Washington University welcomes diverse applicants, including those with physical, sensory, learning, psychological, and chronic disease–related disabilities. The School of Medicine is committed to advocating for its students with disabilities and to educating a genetic counseling workforce that mirrors the diversity of the national population. We aim to be leaders in accessibility and inclusion.

Individuals seeking to graduate from Washington University with a Master of Science in Genetic Counseling degree are expected to gain broad competence in the skills that underlie the practice of genetic counseling. With or without accommodations, they must have the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to meet the Accreditation Council for Genetic Counseling Practice-Based Competencies (<https://www.gceducation.org/>) as well as both the Program in Genetic Counseling’s educational program objectives and the Technical Standards outlined in this document.

Technical standards represent the intellectual, physical, and emotional attributes that any applicant and student must have to successfully participate in and complete the Program in Genetic Counseling. The Program in Genetic Counseling has further defined the essential skills and competencies that a student must demonstrate to complete the curriculum and pursue a career path in genetic counseling. These Technical Standards are included as prerequisites for admission, continuation, and graduation from the Program in Genetic Counseling.

The technical standards for the Program in Genetic Counseling are categorized into the following areas: Observation/Participation; Communication; Behavioral and Social; Intellectual, Conceptual, and Cognitive Abilities; Legal and Ethical Standards.

Standard	Student Requirements
Observation/Participation	<p>Candidates for admission and students enrolled in the program must be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain information from demonstrations in classroom and fieldwork instruction • Assess patients and evaluate findings accurately • Participate and engage in interactive activities, which include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Obtaining and documenting medical and family histories ○ Evaluating medical documents ○ Discussing testing with patients ○ Coordinating genetic testing ○ Identifying support resources for patients and their families ○ Discussing research participation options with patients

<p style="text-align: center;">Communication</p>	<p>Candidates for admission and students enrolled in the program must be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate clearly, efficiently, and effectively with patients, families, and other members of the healthcare team • Establish therapeutic relationships with patients • Obtain patient history in a timely manner • Record information accurately • Interpret non-verbal aspects of communication
<p style="text-align: center;">Behavioral and Social</p>	<p>Candidates for admission and students enrolled in the program must possess the emotional health necessary to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accept constructive feedback • Engage in and contribute to collaborative learning environments including research endeavors, fieldwork settings, the classroom, and interprofessional working teams • Develop therapeutic relationships with patients • Contribute to collaborative interprofessional clinical teams <p>Care and concern for others, compassion, professionalism, and integrity are all personal qualities expected during the education process.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Intellectual, Conceptual, and Cognitive Abilities</p>	<p>Candidates for admission and students enrolled in the program must possess the cognitive and mental abilities to effectively learn and synthesize complex information delivered throughout the curriculum in a variety of modalities including both virtual and in-person learning.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Legal and Ethical Standards</p>	<p>Candidates for admission and students enrolled in the program must be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain and display ethical behaviors comparable with the role of a professional genetic counselor in all interactions with patients, faculty, staff, and students • Possess baseline understanding of legal and ethical decision-making skills associated with patient care and the field of genetic counseling

We will consider for admission any applicant who demonstrates the ability to learn or perform the skills listed in these technical standards. Admissions Committee members are not provided applicants' demographic information, including their disability status, unless the applicant divulges this information in their personal statement by choice. All applicants are held to the same academic and technical standards for admission, training, and assessment regardless of their disability status. Reasonable accommodations are encouraged and provided as needed for students with disabilities.

We welcome students with disabilities to apply to our school, to disclose their disability, and to collaborate with us to develop accommodations so that they can thrive and do their best work. Individuals who anticipate needing accommodations are encouraged to contact the university's Disability Resources office (<https://students.wustl.edu/disability-resources/>) for a consultation. Disability Resources will engage in a confidential and interactive process with the student and other personnel as necessary to determine reasonable accommodations. As accommodations are not applied retroactively and may require time to be implemented, they should be requested in a timely manner. Decisions on admission, retention and graduation will not be affected by the need for accommodations.

Applicants to the Program in Genetic Counseling are required to review and attest to their ability to meet these technical standards as part of their application and upon matriculation.

Last approved on October 12, 2023