

# The Johns Hopkins University/National Human Genome Research Institute Genetic Counseling Training Program

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **How many applications are typically received for the JHU/NHGRI Genetic Counseling Training Program? How many students are admitted to the program?**

We generally receive 120 to 140 applications per year for the program. Currently, 4 to 5 students are admitted each year.

### **Do all students entering the program have a strong background in biology or genetics?**

No. Many successful applicants have backgrounds in other areas, including psychology, sociology or education. But all qualified applicants have successfully completed courses in genetics and biochemistry prior to enrolling. Many successful applicants have had some work or research experience beyond college that has helped to focus their interest in genetic counseling.

### **May I request an interview if I am applying to the program?**

We do not normally schedule formal interviews at the applicant's request, but we are available for answering questions by phone and by email. You may schedule a tour of the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health through the Admissions Office (410-955-3543).

### **Do you pay any of the travel costs for an interview?**

We are unable to pay for expenses associated with interviewing. In years past, candidates have been hosted by current students who may be able to provide transportation to and from the airport as well as between JHU and NHGRI. Some meals are provided by the hosting students and by the program.

### **Which application form do I use to apply to the Genetic Counseling Training Program? Where do I send my application materials?**

Please find the online application and instructions on the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health website. Applications are processed through SOPHAS, the centralized application service for CEPH-accredited public health programs. Please note that all supporting materials shall be submitted online and/or directly to the SOPHAS processing center.

### **Do I really need to take the Graduate Record Examinations (GRE) in order to be accepted?**

Yes. Scores from other tests such as the MCAT are not acceptable. GRE scores should be reported using the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health code 5352. There is no departmental code.

### **Is it necessary to have completed the required courses in biochemistry and genetics in order to apply?**

We require that students entering the program have completed at least one course in biochemistry and one in genetics. Occasionally, a student may be enrolled in one of these required courses at the time of applying to the program, or may even be planning to take a course over the summer, before matriculating in the Genetic Counseling Training Program. If one of the required courses does not appear on a transcript that accompanies the application, an explanation of the plan for completing the required prerequisite should be appended to the application.

### **What type of counseling experience fulfills the pre-requisite of "one-on-one counseling?"**

Many of our successful applicants have worked in a paid or voluntary capacity for a rape crisis center, Planned Parenthood, or a crisis intervention hotline. Classroom teaching and work as a camp counselor are useful experiences but do not generally fulfill this requirement. A distinguishing characteristic of an experience that fulfills this requirement is that the applicant received counseling training as part of his or her experience.

### **May I enroll in the program as a part-time student? May I transfer credits from another school or program if I am accepted into the Genetic Counseling Training Program?**

The JHU/NHGRI Genetic Counseling Training Program requires 2 and 1/2 years of full-time study. Due to the complexity of scheduling clinical rotations and sequences of required courses, we cannot accept part-time students at this time. Occasionally, a course required as a part of the program might be waived if the student has taken a comparable graduate-level course elsewhere. Even when this occurs, the degree program would not be likely to be shortened to less than 2 and 1/2 years.

### **Is shadowing a genetic counselor required for admission?**

We do not require that applicants have experience observing genetic counseling. However, some applicants who have had this experience have a better understanding of the profession and its requirements.

### **How successful are your graduates in finding jobs after graduation?**

Virtually all of our graduates are employed in the field of genetic counseling. In general, there continue to be more genetic counseling job openings than there are qualified counselors to fill them.

### **How do I get more information about a career in genetic counseling?**

The National Society of Genetic Counselors (NSGC) has prepared a career information packet that can be obtained by calling the NSGC at 312-321-6834. Additional information is available through the NSGC Web site [nsgc.org].