

## LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR GENETIC COUNSELING M.S. PROGRAM

The Genetic Counseling M.S. Program trains graduate students to become competent and effective health professionals. The *American Board of Genetic Counseling (ABGC)*, the accrediting body for genetic counseling graduate programs in North America, defines the following *Practice-Based Competencies* that an entry level genetic counselor must demonstrate. The competencies are categorized into the following domains: Communication Skills; Critical-Thinking Skills; Interpersonal, Counseling, and Psychosocial Assessment Skills; and Professional Ethics and Values. Some competencies may pertain to more than one domain. These domains represent practice areas that define activities of a genetic counselor. The explication below each competency elaborates on skills necessary for achievement of each competency.

### ABGC Practice-Based Competencies

#### Domain I: Communication Skills

1. Can establish a mutually agreed upon genetic counseling agenda with the client.
2. Can elicit an appropriate and inclusive family history.
3. Can elicit pertinent medical information including pregnancy, developmental, and medical histories.
4. Can elicit a social and psychosocial history.
5. Can convey genetic, medical, and technical information including, but not limited to, diagnosis, etiology, natural history, prognosis, and treatment/management of genetic conditions and/or birth defects to clients with a variety of educational, socioeconomic, and ethnocultural backgrounds.
6. Can explain the technical and medical aspects of diagnostic and screening methods and reproductive options including associated risks, benefits, and limitations.
7. Can understand, listen, communicate, and manage a genetic counseling case in a culturally responsive manner.
8. Can document and present case information clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing, as appropriate to the audience.
9. Can plan, organize, and conduct public and professional education programs on human genetics, patient care, and genetic counseling issues.

#### Domain II: Critical-Thinking Skills

1. Can assess and calculate genetic and teratogenic risks.
2. Can evaluate a social and psychosocial history.
3. Can identify, synthesize, organize and summarize pertinent medical and genetic information for use in genetic counseling.
4. Can demonstrate successful case management skills.
5. Can assess client understanding and response to information and its implications to modify a counseling session as needed.
6. Can identify and access local, regional, and national resources and services.
7. Can identify and access information resources pertinent to clinical genetics and counseling.

### Domain III: Interpersonal, Counseling, and Psychosocial Assessment Skills

1. Can establish rapport, identify major concerns, and respond to emerging issues of a client or family.
2. Can elicit and interpret individual and family experiences, behaviors, emotions, perceptions, and attitudes that clarify beliefs and values.
3. Can use a range of interviewing techniques.
4. Can provide short-term, client-centered counseling and psychological support.
5. Can promote client decision-making in an unbiased, non-coercive manner.
6. Can establish and maintain inter- and interdisciplinary professional relationships to function as part of a health-care delivery team.

### Domain IV: Professional Ethics and Values

1. Can act in accordance with the ethical, legal, and philosophical principles and values of the profession.
2. Can serve as an advocate for clients.
3. Can introduce research options and issues to clients and families.
4. Can recognize his or her own limitations in knowledge and capabilities regarding medical, psychosocial, and ethnocultural issues and seek consultation or refer clients when needed.
5. Can demonstrate initiative for continued professional growth.