



# **Genetic Counseling Education Program Student Handbook**

**2022-2023**

**Department of Medical Sciences  
College of Allied Health Professions (CAHP)  
University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC)**

## SECTION 1 – OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRAM

### Mission Statements

#### **University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) Mission**

Our mission is to lead the world in transforming lives to create a healthy future for all individuals and communities through premier educational programs, innovative research, and extraordinary patient care.

#### **College of Allied Health Professions (CAHP) Mission**

The mission of the CAHP is to advance health by:

- Delivering allied health educational programs that prepare graduates to provide high quality, evidence-based, safe care for all patients;
- Conducting scholarly activities that create and disseminate knowledge reflective of the unique contributions of allied health theory and practice;
- Providing high quality, contemporary clinical care in the allied health disciplines; and
- Providing outreach to underserved populations.

#### **Genetic Counseling Program Mission**

Through an inclusive, state-of-the-art education program, we prepare competent and skilled genetic counselors who are committed to evidence-based, equitable patient care, advocacy for our profession and community, and lifelong learning.

### Program Goals

- Recruit matriculates who are dynamic team players that will work hard and represent UNMC well.
- Foster professional development for our future colleagues.
- Develop student knowledge of genetics and encourage a commitment to lifelong learning.
- Support and mentor the development of exceptional interpersonal, psychosocial, and counseling skills.
- Promote the ACGC Practice-Based Competencies to prepare graduates to excel as entry-level practitioners and to pass the national certification examination.
- Facilitate meaningful, exceptional research while teaching critical thinking and problem solving.
- Instill the value of compassionate patient care by promoting courage, empathy, and respect of all people.
- Create an environment of mentorship that allows graduates to become successful genetic counselors who advocate for their profession and community as well as pursue scholarship activities.

### History of the Program

The Genetic Counseling Education Program at the University of Nebraska Medical Center is housed in the CAHPs and in partnership with the Munroe-Meyer Institute for

Genetics and Rehabilitation (MMI). A partnership was established to meet the administrative and curriculum needs of the program to provide students with a quality education in genetic counseling. The program was funded by five community partners including Blue Cross Blue Shield of Nebraska, Boys Town National Research Hospital, Children's Hospital and Medical Center, Methodist Hospital, and Nebraska Medicine. Holly Zimmerman was recruited for the role of Inaugural Program Director and joined UNMC CAHP in November of 2017. An Application for Candidacy was filed with the Accreditation Council for Genetic Counseling (ACGC) in February of 2018, and a New Program Application was submitted that May. Sara Fisher joined in November of 2018 as the inaugural Assistant Program Director. The program received New Program status from ACGC in January of 2019 just ahead of welcoming its first class of eight students in August of 2019.

### Accreditation

<https://www.unmc.edu/alliedhealth/education/gc/accreditation.html>

The University of Nebraska Medical Center Genetic Counseling Education Program received Accredited New Program status in January of 2019. Students who start a program that holds an accreditation status of Accredited New Program, Full Accreditation or Probationary Accreditation at the time of matriculation are eligible to sit for the American Board of Genetic Counseling's (ABGC) certification examination.

To contact ACGC, please use the contact information below:  
Accreditation Council for Genetic Counseling  
7918 Jones Branch Drive, Suite 300  
McLean, VA 22102

Phone: 703.506.7667  
Fax: 703.506.3266  
Email: [info@gceducation.org](mailto:info@gceducation.org)  
Website: [www.gceducation.org](http://www.gceducation.org)

### ACGC Practice-Based Competencies© 2019

Reference: [https://www.gceducation.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/ACGC-Core-Competencies-Brochure\\_15\\_Web\\_REV-6-2019.pdf](https://www.gceducation.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/ACGC-Core-Competencies-Brochure_15_Web_REV-6-2019.pdf)

The UNMC Genetic Counseling Education program is aligned with the ACGC Practice-Based Competencies (PBCs). The PBCs define and describe the 22 practice-based competencies that an entry-level provider must demonstrate to successfully practice as a genetic counselor. These competencies guide the education of genetic counselors and assessment of competency for practicing genetic counselors. The following four domains represent practice areas that define the activities of a genetic counselor:

**Domain I:** Genetics Expertise and Analysis

**Domain II:** Interpersonal, Psychosocial and Counseling Skills

**Domain III:** Education

## **Domain IV: Professional Development & Practice**

### **Domain I: Genetics Expertise and Analysis**

1. Demonstrate and utilize a depth and breadth of understanding and knowledge of genetics and genomics core concepts and principles.
2. Integrate knowledge of psychosocial aspects of conditions with a genetic component to promote client well-being.
3. Construct relevant, targeted and comprehensive personal and family histories and pedigrees.
4. Identify, assess, order, facilitate, and integrate genetic/genomic testing options in genetic counseling practice (including molecular and non-molecular testing that directly impacts assessment of inherited risk).
5. Assess individuals' and their relatives' probability of conditions with a genetic component or carrier status based on their pedigree, test result(s), and other pertinent information.
6. Demonstrate the skills necessary to successfully manage a genetic counseling case.
7. Critically assess genetic/genomic, medical and social science literature and information.

### **Domain II: Interpersonal, Psychosocial and Counseling Skills**

8. Establish a mutually agreed upon genetic counseling agenda with the client.
9. Employ active listening and interviewing skills to identify, assess, and empathically respond to stated and emerging concerns.
10. Use a range of genetic counseling skills and models to facilitate informed decision-making and adaptation to genetic risks or conditions.
11. Promote client-centered, informed, non-coercive and value-based decision-making.
12. Understand how to adapt genetic counseling skills for varied service delivery models.
13. Apply genetic counseling skills in a culturally responsive and respectful manner to all clients.

### **Domain III: Education**

14. Effectively educate clients about a wide range of genetics and genomics information based on their needs, their characteristics and the circumstances of the encounter.
15. Write concise and understandable clinical and scientific information for audiences of varying educational backgrounds.
16. Effectively give a presentation on genetics, genomics and genetic counseling issues.

## **Domain IV: Professional Development & Practice**

17. Act in accordance with the ethical, legal and philosophical principles and values of the genetic counseling profession and the policies of one's institution or organization.
18. Demonstrate understanding of the research process.
19. Advocate for individuals, families, communities, and the genetic counseling profession.
20. Demonstrate a self-reflective, evidenced-based and current approach to genetic counseling practice.
21. Understand the methods, roles and responsibilities of the process of clinical supervision of trainees.
22. Establish and maintain professional interdisciplinary relationships in both team and one-on-one settings, and recognize one's role in the larger healthcare system.

### Program Personnel

The program leadership positions include the Program Director, the Assistant Program Director, and the Medical Director. The program is supported by an Education Program Coordinator.

### Program Evaluation

Program leadership is responsible for the ongoing evaluation of the program to ensure that competencies specified by the educational program and the ACGC are maintained. This is a continual process and includes the following data: student performance on the American Board of Genetic Counseling (ABGC) Certification Examination, stakeholder feedback (alumni, employers, fieldwork supervisors, etc), personnel evaluations (program leadership, staff, course directors, and fieldwork supervisors), course evaluations, and fieldwork site evaluations. On an annual basis, aggregate data are shared with the Advisory Board and the program's Curriculum Committee. The latter committee will determine and/or implement curriculum modifications.

Program leadership collects data confidentially and securely maintains documentation of program evaluations. Student performance on the ABGC Certification Examination is de-identified and shared as an aggregate with Advisory Board and the program's Curriculum Committee. All stakeholder surveys are anonymous, and personnel evaluation data are kept confidential. The results of the program evaluations are discussed with the program's Advisory Board and Curriculum committee, and this discussion may lead to changes.

### Advisory Board

The Advisory Board provides program leadership with guidance on program development, implementation, and ongoing evaluation. This Board was established in 2018 in accordance with ACGC Standard C.1.1.

#### **Committee Roster:**

- Holly Zimmerman, MS, CGC | UNMC Genetic Counseling Program Director

- Sara Fisher, MS, CGC | UNMC Genetic Counseling Assistant Program Director
- Omar Abdul-Rahman, MD, FACMG | UNMC Genetic Counseling Medical Director
- Terri Blase, MS, CGC | Director of Genetic Counseling Services
- Sarah McBrien, PhD | CAHP Director of Curriculum & Assessment
- Brandi Preston | Founder, Kamie K. Preston Hereditary Cancer Foundation
- Bronson Riley, MS, CGC, CCRP | Director of Clinical Research, Cancer Partners
- Jennifer Sanmann, PhD, FACMG | Laboratory Director at Invitae and Adjunct Professor with MMI Genetic Medicine
- Graciela Shariff | LEND Diversity Coordinator | Community Parent Resource Coordinator
- Angela Trepanier, MS, CGC | Genetic Counseling Program Director, Wayne State University

### Stakeholder Feedback

Evaluations and stakeholder feedback are important to the UNMC Genetic Counseling Program. At the end of each semester, instructor and course evaluations are available to complete. Student responses are anonymous and voluntary. This information helps faculty gain student feedback and potentially modify the course. This information is also saved for accreditation purposes.

In addition to the formal instructor and course evaluations, we also send out a midsemester feedback survey to assess what is going well, what areas could improve, and potential topics that are unclear. Other feedback mechanisms may include the Stakeholder Feedback (anonymous) online survey, 360 Leadership Evaluations, and focus groups.

## **SECTION 2 – PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**

### University of Nebraska Code of Student Conduct

<https://catalog.unmc.edu/general-information/student-policies-procedures/code-of-conduct/>

Students at the University of Nebraska are members of an academic community in which academic integrity and responsible conduct are essential for the community to function. To ensure that students know what is expected of them, the University has adopted the Standards of Academic Integrity and Responsible Conduct (“Standards”).

### Genetic Counseling Education Program Professional (Inclusive) Space

The Genetic Counseling program expects respectful language and behaviors to all people including peers, lecturers, instructors, supervisors, proctors, program leadership, UNMC personnel, health care professionals, and patients. We want our students to practice inclusive language, teamwork, excellence, accountability, curiosity, and

vulnerability. We want our students to be aware of the lived experiences of those involved in their education including peers and patients.

Language and behavior that is not professional and/or inclusive will be reported to the program director. The student must meet with the program director and complete a self-reflection activity as well as additional training (if applicable). Additional actions may be taken and can include a written warning in the Student File or disciplinary procedures in accordance with the UNMC Student Code of Conduct.

### Dress Code

**General:** According to the CAHP Professional Conduct policy, “Students are required to maintain a neat, professional appearance in all educational activities.” The remainder of this section is specific to the Genetic Counseling Education Program.

Each student must always wear their identification badge. Masks, protective eyewear, and/or other items may be required for classes and/or placements. Generally, closely trimmed beards, sideburns, and mustaches are allowed.

Hurtful wording and offensive graphics on clothing are not allowed. Students, faculty, and staff who have questions or concerns for student dress code will meet with the program director who will try to answer the questions and/or address the concerns. Depending on the concern, additional actions may be taken and can include a written warning in the Student File or disciplinary procedures in accordance with the UNMC Student Code of Conduct.

**Classes:** When taking classes, students may wear casual attire. This includes t-shirts, sweaters, jeans, and non-athletic shorts. Shoes can include flip flops, sandals, and tennis shoes. Any questions about dress code in the classrooms should be routed to the Program Director.

**Fieldwork Placements:** (clinics, hospitals, businesses): When at a fieldwork placement site (including MMI), students must comply with the dress code and safety requirements of the specific facility—*this includes any time on site for chart review, meetings, etc.* Business casual attire is generally recommended for placements. Unacceptable forms of dress in patient care areas can include jeans, athletic wear, shorts, t-shirts, low necklines, bare backs, and open-toe shoes (sandals, flip flops, etc). Please refer to your placement supervisor for specific dress code requirements.

Students who fail to comply with the dress code requirements (as stated here or required by specific fieldwork placement site) may be dismissed from the program activities, and this could result in failure to meet the requirements of the experience.

## **SECTION 3 – STUDENT AFFAIRS**

### Program Cost to Students

The cost of attendance is the estimated cost of completing an academic year as a full-time student and includes tuition, fees, books/equipment, course/loan fees, living expenses and other required costs as approved for the program. The estimates provided are conservative by design and not intended to reflect differences in actual costs incurred by students with differing lifestyle choices. Living expenses estimates are based on academic periods of enrollment, including summer living expenses since students are required to be enrolled.

The CAHP Office of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs provides updated information to students prior to the program start date and are available to address questions throughout the student's enrollment.

### Capstone Project Costs

The UNMC Genetic Counseling Program does not have a budget for student projects but may have limited funding to provide on a case-by-case basis. There is no guarantee that the program will have funding to supplement any specific project. If there are concerns about feasibility of the budget, a conclusion regarding costs, funding, and student expenses should be resolved by the student prior to proceeding beyond the topic selection process.

There are funding opportunities through various outside organizations (e.g. NSGC Special Interest Groups, the NSGC JEMF), which have their own applications. Students are encouraged to pursue these funding opportunities after discussion with the capstone course director and/or program director. Students are expected to be prepared to cover other project-related costs that do not receive funding, which could include cost of copies, mailing costs, survey purchase costs, etc.

## **SECTION 4 – ACADEMIC AFFAIRS**

### Requirements for Graduation

Completion of the UNMC Genetic Counseling program requires successful completion of all courses, supplemental curricular activities, fieldwork placements, and capstone project requirements.

### Curriculum

[Genetic Counseling < University of Nebraska Medical Center \(unmc.edu\)](https://unmc.edu)

Capstone Project Overview (see *Addendum "Capstone Project Guide"*): Students work with a faculty advisor (Capstone Chair) and committee to design a capstone experience appropriate to their educational and professional goals. Capstone planning officially begins during the fall semester of the first year. The courses related to the capstone begin in the first year with MNED 775 Research Methods in Medical Science and GENC 720 Capstone Design. The second-year shifts to independent work as part of GENC 721 Capstone Project 1 and GENC 722 Capstone Project II.



## SECTION 5 – ADMITTED STUDENT POLICIES

### Faculty Advising

Each student is assigned a faculty advisor. Advisors serve as contacts for student questions or concerns. First year students meet twice with their advisor during the fall semester and at least once in the spring semester. Second year students meet at least once with their advisor each semester. Additional advising meetings may be requested by the student or recommended by the advisor to support student success and professional development.

Should students have an issue regarding the program director and/or assistant director that they would like to discuss with a faculty member, they should contact the program's Medical Director or the CAHP Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs.

The following summarizes the objectives of advising:

- Monitor student progress in coursework, fieldwork placements, and capstone project.
- Provide guidance for academic support.
- Identify or address concerns from students or those raised by faculty members.
- Facilitate open lines of communication between supervisors and students.
- Provide the student with a confidante with whom they can discuss successes, challenges, etc.

Advisors:

- Listen to concerns related to coursework, fieldwork placements, and/or capstone project.
- Maintain professional boundaries and objectivity.
- Encourage problem solving and critical thinking.
- Stay neutral.
- Document the advisement meeting for student records.

Students:

- Meet on a regular basis.
- Be open and honest.
- Propose at least two potential solutions for any identified problems.

### Student Records

Student Records: Each student's online file shall contain the following while in the program (maintained by CAHP Enrollment Management and Student Affairs):

1. UNMC application form
2. Copy of official college transcripts
3. Record of transcript evaluation

Permanent Student Records: Academic transcript (maintained by the UNMC Registrar or home institution registrar) on record with legal name, grades/credits, dates of admission and completion.

Remediation plans (areas of deficiency, finalized plan, and outcome) will be stored in the secure, online shared drive for the program. Only program leadership and the Education Program Coordinator will have access to these files. A copy of the remediation plan is provided to the student and maintained in the Enrollment Management and Student Affairs Office.

Documentation related to any student withdrawal or dismissal is maintained in the online, secure shared drive for the program. Only program leadership and the Education Program Coordinator have access to these electronic files. The Enrollment Management and Student Affairs Office also maintains a copy of any documentation related to student withdrawal or dismissal. Additionally, any changes to the student's status are held with the UNMC Academic Records office (Registrar).

Documentation of any counseling reports/sessions is maintained for a minimum of two years. Each student shall have access to their records. No portion of the student's record shall be released without written approval from the student.

#### Student Grievance Policies:

[https://www.unmc.edu/academicaffairs/\\_documents/compliance/UNMC\\_Student\\_Grievance\\_Resolution\\_Procedure.pdf](https://www.unmc.edu/academicaffairs/_documents/compliance/UNMC_Student_Grievance_Resolution_Procedure.pdf)

- Academic Decisions: Grievances related to academic decisions are subject to the policies and procedures of CAHP (note that UNMC genetic counseling students are not part of Graduate Studies): [Appeals of Academic Evaluations < University of Nebraska Medical Center \(unmc.edu\)](#)
- Sexual Harassment or Discrimination: Complaints regarding sexual misconduct against a student by a student can be made to the Title IX Coordinator, Carmen Sirizzotti, (csirizzotti@unmc.edu, 402-559-2710) or the Vice Chancellor for Student Success, Dr. Phil Covington (philip.covington@unmc.edu, 402-559-2792). Sexual misconduct complaints by or against employees should be made to the Title IX Coordinator, Carmen Sirizzotti, (csirizzotti@unmc.edu, 402-559-2710) or Division Director, Employee Relations, Linda Cunningham (lcunning@unmc.edu, 402-559- 7394). The University will investigate reported allegations of sexual misconduct and may take appropriate remedial action even if the person allegedly subject to misconduct or the Complainant does not wish to pursue formal charges. Any response by the University may be hindered by a person's or the Complainant's desire for anonymity and/or inaction. For additional information, please review UNMC Response to Allegations of Student Sexual Misconduct: [https://www.unmc.edu/titleix/\\_documents/student-procedures.pdf](https://www.unmc.edu/titleix/_documents/student-procedures.pdf).

#### Base Pair Program

First year students will be matched with a second-year student mentor through a program called the "Base Pair" program. The second-year students provide peer insights into how to be successful as a genetic counseling student. This mentorship program is designed to be an informal, student driven experience to help students adjust to life as a genetic counseling student at UNMC. As part of the mentor/mentee relationship, students are not to provide their mentee with program-related materials

that could impact the grade of a student (old assignments, projects, etc.). In addition, specific information about tests and other forms of program evaluation should not be discussed. The request for or provision of these materials or information is a violation of the UNMC Student Code of Conduct.

### Program Meetings for Students

To communicate essential information to students, the program may schedule class and/or all student meetings during the academic year. When scheduled, these meetings are required. Meeting dates and times would be scheduled at least one week in advance and typically take place on Tuesdays between 12pm and 1pm CT. Students must attend unless they have an excused absence approved by the program leadership—see *Section 6 of this handbook*.

### Email Communication

All email communication between the program and students must occur using the UNMC Outlook assigned email addresses. Students are responsible for checking their UNMC email and the Learning Management System (Canvas) on a regular basis defined as at least once per day.

A student who regularly does not respond within two business days) to email requests will be reported to the program director who will meet with the student. Additional actions may be taken and can include a written warning in the Student File.

### Student Use of University Computers & Printers

Computer clusters are available for student use on the 7<sup>th</sup> floor third floor of Wittson Hall in the McGoogan Health Sciences Library on the Omaha campus.

Wireless printing from student computers is available in the Michael Sorrell Center and in the McGoogan Health Sciences Library. At the beginning of the Fall and Spring semester, each student has a printing quota at no cost to the student. No additional cost is assessed for duplex printing. A student is notified when 50 pages remain in the quota. Additional pages can be added to the quota with a personal credit card at 10 cents per page (100 page minimum). For additional information see: <https://info.unmc.edu/it/portfolios/teaching/student%20printing%20quota.html>. Photo copiers are available for student use in the McGoogan Health Sciences Library and Michael Sorrell Center.

### Canvas Learning Management System

Course updates, syllabi, assignments, rubrics, tests and more are found in a Canvas Learning shell for each course. All students are required to utilize Canvas for course materials as the instructor may not provide individual copies of materials. Slides for each course may be posted on the course Canvas site with permission of the lecturer. Students are not allowed to reproduce or use any slides provided in class for their own presentations or publications without written consent from the slides author. Access to each course's Canvas shell and its materials may only last during the semester the student is enrolled in the class. Any materials that the students would like to retain from

the course's shell for future use or study should be saved to a personal drive before the end of the class.

### Food & Drink

When on UNMC's main campus, students are allowed to bring a water bottle (container with a lid) into the classroom. A refrigerator and microwave are available in Bennett Hall on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor as well as in the Michael Sorrell Center Commons area. Students may eat in the Sorrell Commons area or outside. Campus safety procedures will guide whether eating is allowed in the smaller classroom spaces (including the Genetic Counseling classroom space).

MMI has a large breakroom on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor where students (and employees) can eat. This space has refrigerators and microwaves. Students should make item(s) with their name and the date.

Most clinical areas do not allow food or drink in patient spaces. There is typically a break room or clinical staff area where you can have a drink or small snack. Please discuss this with your supervisor.

### CAHP Student Employment Policy

Please review the CAHP Student Employment Policy:

[https://www.unmc.edu/cahphandbook/index.php/Non-Academic Policies and Procedures](https://www.unmc.edu/cahphandbook/index.php/Non-Academic_Policies_and_Procedures)

We appreciate that everyone has unique financial responsibilities while enrolled in the program. Enrollment in the Genetic Counseling program is a full-time responsibility, and employment during the academic year may be challenging. We encourage any student considering student employment (outside of campus student workers or federal work study) reach out to the program director.

## **SECTION 6 – ACADEMIC POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

### Attendance and Participation

Students are expected to attend and participate in all scheduled classes in the curriculum. In addition, students are expected to attend any assigned clinical observation, outside conference, and/or multidisciplinary care meeting as assigned by the program. Students must attend all fieldwork experiences as defined by the primary fieldwork supervisor.

Students with special circumstances must communicate with the program as early as possible by submitting an online Absence Form (<https://forms.office.com/r/h95LFLtMBU>). These requests are reviewed by program leadership on a weekly basis. If approved, the student is responsible for notifying the Course Director(s) and/or Fieldwork Placement Supervisors of the absence. A student

is also responsible for determining how the class material or assignments can be made up. If there is an emergency that prevents attendance of required activities, then a student must email the Program Director and Education Program Coordinator directly as soon as possible and submit an Emergency Absence Form within one week of return from the absence.

The Program Leadership will meet with any student who is chronically absent or extensively tardy (defined as 10 minutes late) as this can negatively impact the student's progression in the practice-based competencies. As such, a chronic absence may lead to repeating a course or fieldwork placement according to the Student Success and Academic Standing Policy.

### Monitoring Student Progression

Students are expected to meet with course directors when there is a grade less than 80% or if there are questions about the course content as this facilitates student progression of knowledge and skills. Please refer to the course syllabus as some courses *require* a meeting when a specific exam or assignment grade is not achieved. Students *must* meet with fieldwork supervisors and capstone committee chairs as outlined by the fieldwork evaluations (midpoint and final) and committee monthly meetings, respectively.

Program Leadership will request feedback from course directors, fieldwork supervisors, and capstone committee chairs to monitor the overall progression of each student. Program Leadership will review and discuss student progression as part of the midsemester advisement meetings. Any student who is not meeting expectations midsemester must complete the recommendations (self-reflection, student counseling, development plan, etc.) made by Program Leadership.

What information is collected midsemester to monitor student progression?

- **Coursework:** Course directors will report if any student has scored lower than 80% on any assessment or lower than 80% on any assignment that counts for 15% or more of the final grade. They will also report any students who have submitted more than one late assignment or if there are concerns for quality of work, level of engagement, or general effort in the course.
- **Fieldwork Placements:** The Assistant Program Director (with input from fieldwork supervisors) will report if any student has not progressed in the accrual of participatory cases (when in a setting with a board-certified supervisor), not progressed in the fundamental counseling roles or practice-based competencies or failed to submit the assignments as required by the course and/or primary supervisor.
- **Capstone Project:** The Capstone Course Director will report if any student has not completed tasks required for the course or not progressed in their capstone project or has concerns about the progression of the project.

Committee chairs will provide information to the Capstone Course Director to ensure communication and progress are occurring.

- **Other:** Genetic counseling students may identify themselves as needing academic support or other resources.

#### Student Success and Academic Standing

[https://www.unmc.edu/cahphandbook/index.php/Student\\_Success\\_and\\_Academic\\_Standing](https://www.unmc.edu/cahphandbook/index.php/Student_Success_and_Academic_Standing)

All genetic counseling students have an Academic Standing of Satisfactory upon entry into the program, and any changes will be reported to the student and to the CAHP Director of Enrollment Management, who is responsible for maintaining records of academic status, progression, and sanctions of all CAHP standards. A student's Academic Standing upon completion of the program must be Satisfactory and confirmed prior to graduation.

During every semester of the program, a student must successfully complete all program requirements and required courses. Program Leadership will review the academic performance of every student at the end of each semester.

A student qualifies for program continuation without restrictions when there are no course grades (including capstone courses) below an 80% (B-) or fail (for pass/fail courses) AND fieldwork final evaluations (when completing a fieldwork placement) show the student is meeting the expected level and showing progress. A student who receives a grade of pass on a final fieldwork evaluation, and the supervisor indicates "Usually meets expectations – Consider additional mentorship or targeted remediation of specific skill" or "Sometimes meets expectations – RECOMMEND improvement plan" will first meet with the assistant program director to discuss a plan for the next placement. **The student can continue in the program coursework and fieldwork placements.**

A student who does not successfully complete a course must complete informal or formal remediation with or without academic probation as determined by the program director with input from the course director. A remediation plan would be developed to address the specific deficiencies in the student's performance. The plan would include a specific timeline for completion and evaluation of student performance. The plan may include specific student success resources. The student must remediate to the satisfaction of the course director/instructor and the Program Director as well as by the established deadline. Failure to complete remediation successfully will lead to further academic sanctions.

Any student who has three or more courses where the final grade is below an 80% or fail (for pass/fail courses) in one semester will meet with the Program Director and one of the chairs of the CAHP Academic Success Advisory Board who could recommend a required leave of absence or deceleration, academic suspension, or academic dismissal.

### Fieldwork Placement Progression

A student who receives a “Fails in some areas AND is showing limited progress – RECOMMEND REMEDIATION” on a final evaluation for a fieldwork placement must complete Formal Remediation before being placed in the next fieldwork placement. This may delay a student’s graduation. The student must remediate to the satisfaction of the fieldwork supervisor and assistant program director by the established deadline. Failure to complete remediation successfully will lead to further academic sanctions.

A student who receives a “Fails in most areas AND is showing limited progress – RECOMMEND REPEATING ROTATION” on a fieldwork final evaluation cannot continue in their fieldwork placement until the rotation is repeated. The student must meet with Program Leadership and one of the chairs of the CAHP Academic Success Advisory Board who could recommend a required leave of absence or deceleration, academic suspension, or academic dismissal.

A student receiving a final grade of fail on the final fieldwork evaluation with the notes “Fails in all areas and/or shows no progress-fail rotation” will be recommended for dismissal from the program. Extenuating circumstances will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

### Graduation

Completion of the UNMC Master of Genetic Counseling Education Program will result in issuance of the Master of Genetic Counseling (MGC) degree.

To complete the program, students must meet the following program requirements:

- Successfully complete all coursework and supplemental curricular activities.
  - Final grade of 80% (B-) or better for graded courses.
  - Final grade of pass for pass/fail courses.
- Successfully complete all fieldwork placements by demonstrating progression of skills (fundamental counseling roles and practice-based competencies) as evidenced by the final evaluations.
  - Final grade of pass for Spring fieldwork placement.
  - Final grade of pass for all fieldwork placement courses (GENC 750-754).
  - Obtain the minimum of 50 participatory cases that represent a variety of practice settings and indications.
- Successfully complete all capstone project courses (MNED 775, GENC 720-722), attend any required workshops or training, and receive approval by their committee.
  - Successfully complete all deliverables including (1) a formal written proposal submitted during the end of the first year approved by the student’s Capstone Chair, (2) an abstract of publishable quality submitted to the College of Allied Health Professions Evidence-Based Forum with consideration of submitting to a local, regional or national meeting (3) a poster presenting the capstone project findings visually at the CAHP’s Evidence-Based Forum, (4) a final capstone paper approved by the

student's Capstone Chair, Capstone Course Director, and Program Director, and (5) an oral presentation of the completed project for peers, faculty, and family members.

- Consistently demonstrate conduct in line with the Student Code of Conduct.

Students are expected to complete all requirements within the 21-month scheduled timeframe. Students who are not able to meet all curriculum requirements within 31.5 months (150%) of the scheduled timeframe may be dismissed from the program. Graduating students are strongly encouraged to attend the CAHP Convocation Ceremony and the UNMC Commencement Ceremony. These events are typically scheduled on the Friday and Saturday of finals week.

## SECTION 7 – Non-Academic Policies & Procedures

### Student Travel

[https://www.unmc.edu/cahphandbook/index.php/Non-Academic\\_Policies\\_and\\_Procedures#Student\\_Travel](https://www.unmc.edu/cahphandbook/index.php/Non-Academic_Policies_and_Procedures#Student_Travel)  
Student Services

The term “travel” is defined as an absence from the campus during normal work or instructional schedules for the purpose of conducting University business. **All travel must be authorized in advance.** Student travel will be approved by the program in which the student is enrolled. The program is responsible for making appropriate arrangements for travel authorization and reimbursement, where applicable.

1. A request for Travel Authorization (TA) is required for all travel involving University business functions, **even when no University expense is involved.** *If the student is also a UNMC employee, OR for travel not required by the educational program*, such as optional travel to a professional conference, a separate TA is required for each trip involving air transportation and for all out-of-state travel, including travel by state vehicle.
2. A TA is required for all student travel; a student travel group may be included on a single TA or in instances where no individual travel expenses will be filed.
3. Prospective travelers are asked to consider the required amount of time needed to secure the necessary approval and to allow 30 days from initiation of the request to final approval.

### Student Health

<https://catalog.unmc.edu/general-information/campus-services/student-health/>  
Genetic counseling students, as full-time students, have access to Student Health Services as delineated in the UNMC Student Handbook.

### Student Health Insurance

Genetic counseling students are classified as full-time students and are required to have health insurance. In addition to payment of Fund B (as described below), UNMC requires that full-time students have inpatient (hospitalization) insurance. Full-time



students who wish to waive/decline UNMC's endorsed student health insurance program may do so by providing proof of coverage through their parents, spouse, employer or their own personal plan. If the student wishes to waive/decline the United Healthcare Student Insurance, they must fill out an electronic waiver form that can be found on their UNMC MyRecords account once their semester tuition bill has been calculated.

#### Counseling Services

<https://www.unmc.edu/student-success/support-services/counseling/students.html>

Genetic counseling students, as full-time students have access to free mental health and wellness related services through the Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS) at UNMC. CAPS provides individual counseling, group counseling, bio-feedback and relaxation training, and crisis support.

### **UNMC & CAHP Policies & Procedures**

Genetic Counseling students are also responsible for reviewing the CAHP and UNMC Student Handbooks.

#### **CAHP Student Handbook Wiki**

[https://www.unmc.edu/cahphandbook/index.php/Main\\_Page](https://www.unmc.edu/cahphandbook/index.php/Main_Page)

#### **UNMC Student Handbook**

<https://catalog.unmc.edu/general-information/student-policies-procedures/>