

UCSF Genetic Counseling Program Bylaws

Administrative Home: Institute for Human Genetics & Division of Medical Genetics,
Department of Pediatrics
Revision date(s): June 7, 2022
Graduate Council Approval: Approved November 17, 2022

Article I. Objective

- A. Degree(s) offered by the program: Master of Science (MS)
- B. Discipline: A brief statement on the discipline(s) of the program.

The Genetic Counseling Program (GCP) is a 21-month program of study leading to a Master of Science in Genetic Counseling. Genetic Counselors are advanced healthcare practitioners working with patients, clinicians, researchers and laboratories to interpret the impact of genomic information on human health. The GCP is for students who wish to be at the forefront of the genetic counseling profession and harness the potential of genomic medicine to advance healthcare. Students immerse themselves in advanced human and molecular genetics, gain competency in adeptly interpreting increasingly complex data from sophisticated testing technologies, develop and execute an original capstone research project, integrate the core principles of humanistic counseling into their clinical encounters and foster personal and professional engagement in the social and ethical issues surrounding the rapidly evolving field of genetics. Successful completion of the program confers eligibility to sit for the American Board of Genetic Counseling (ABGC) board certification examination.

- C. Mission of the Program:

We endeavor to train genetic counselors that are able to meet the demands of the rapidly evolving field of contemporary genetic medicine and successfully practice in a wide variety of settings. Our mission is to create a nurturing, collaborative and welcoming educational environment that fosters successful, independent learners through:

- A rigorous, comprehensive curriculum reflective of contemporary genetics and genomics practice
- Clinical experiences dedicated to the pursuit of excellence in patient care
- Innovative research opportunities that support the development of clinical scholars
- A commitment to the responsible and ethical application of genomic medicine in order to better the health of all members of our community

Article II. Membership

- A. Criteria for Membership in the Graduate Program.

The GGCC will be comprised of 5 committees and instructional faculty. The Executive Committee will provide the primary oversight of the GGGC. New Committees may be proposed by any member of the GGGC with majority approval by the GGGC membership and Executive Committee.

Authority to define criteria for membership in the various committees is delegated to the individual committees and approved by the Executive Committee. This includes criteria for inclusion, exclusion, and removal, unless otherwise specified. Membership is independent and separate from academic department appointments and/or other employment responsibilities. Membership is based upon

disciplinary expertise and members throughout campus are eligible for consideration to membership.

B. Voting rights.

Members within each committee will have equal voting rights. Recommendations or matters presented by GGGC committees that would result in change to the graduate program will be determined by a vote of the Executive Committee members. All members of the Executive Committee will have an equal vote.

Commented [NT1]: Note to programs: this is how we do it in DSCB now, but there is an opportunity here to develop a more democratic process. We plan to consider changing this.

C. Application for membership.

1. How faculty may apply:

To become a member of the GCGG committee, a candidate must be nominated by an existing GCGG member. Interested candidates must submit a CV and statement of purpose to the appropriate committee. Membership will be approved by the appropriate committee and presented to the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee may veto membership for due cause, non-compliance with Accreditation Counsel for Genetic Counseling (ACGC) Standards of Accreditation or conflicts with UCSF policies. Membership in the GCGG training program is considered a privilege and a responsibility

2. Anticipated contributions that graduate faculty members will perform as a member.

a. **Members of the GCGG are expected to demonstrate their commitment to the training program by active service on their committee and/or other program activities.** Other program activities include teaching in courses; serving as an academic mentor; serving on capstone project; outreach and other activities that promote diversity and inclusivity in the Genetic Counseling Program; participating in recruitment, application review and interviews; and regular attendance at program events.

Commented [MC2]: Is this in contrast to previous definition (II.A) where it's just serving on Committees?

b. **Mentoring and teaching:** Program instructional faculty are expected to maintain a productive and inclusive training environment for students. Relevant measures may include evidence that the classroom or clinical training environment is welcoming to and supportive of trainees from all backgrounds; that students produce high quality capstone projects that are suitable for publication; that students complete their degrees on time and that students successfully transition into careers in the workforce.

Commented [MC3]: The Genetic Counseling Program is a professional master's program. Laboratory work does not apply

c. **Participation in faculty development activities:** Program instructors or clinical supervisor working with students are strongly encouraged to complete DEI Champion's Training, participate in the UCSF Office of Medical Education Education Skills Workshops and take part in at least one mentorship or supervisor development activity of their choosing each successive year. An "activity" may include supervisor workshops hosted by the UCSF and Stanford Genetic Counseling Programs, an NSGC Annual Conference session other professional educational activity or an applicable course offered by the Graduate Division (mentoring.ucsf.edu/trainings). However, the development of strong teaching and/or mentorship skills is an ongoing process that extends beyond any single course, and faculty are encouraged to seek mentorship development opportunities in many different ways.

Commented [NT4]: All programs must have a policy that specifies what is required for faculty participation in faculty mentor development activities. To promote consistency across programs, we highly recommend that all programs adopt this policy or a very similar policy.

3. Compliance with University policies and Program values

Program faculty are expected to comply with all university policies and uphold the values of the training program, including but not limited to the University Code of Conduct (APM-016); UC Policy on Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment; the UC Policy on Discrimination, and the Harassment, and Affirmative Action in the Workplace; scientific misconduct and/or financial improprieties.

D. Emeritus Status.

Emeritus faculty and former UCSF genetic counselors may remain members in the GCGG. Emeritus

members and former UCSF genetic counselors are afforded the following rights: they may attend and participate in program activities (including meetings and GCGG committees, excluding the Executive Committee), may teach in graduate courses, and may serve on student capstone committees.

E. Review of Membership

The criteria for reviewing members of the GCGG is the same for all members. Each member's contributions to the program shall be reviewed annually for the purpose of identifying members who are not providing a minimal level of service to the program.

1. Obtaining relevant information

To ensure compliance with these requirements the Program Director(s) and Executive Committee need to have the relevant information about faculty conduct. While information about faculty participation in program events and training is readily attainable, information about other types of violations may be difficult to obtain if, for example, the University is not forthcoming with information about faculty violations of University policies, or an individual who experiences a hostile interaction in the workplace does not report it. Thus, considering the different types and sources of information that are needed, the Genetic Counseling Program proactively seeks to track compliance with these requirements in multiple ways, as described in section 4.2 below.

2. Violations of program expectations for faculty conduct

The Graduate Program Directors, Executive Committee, and Program Coordinators are in frequent communication with trainees, faculty, the Graduate Division, and the University administration to monitor for compliance with all membership policy requirements. This can include reports from the Bias Response Team (once it has been established) or other communications from the Graduate Division, and communications from the University administration about faculty violations of the University Code of Conduct. The Executive Committee will promptly revoke program membership at any time upon learning about faculty conduct detrimental to the program or the safety and welfare of its members. Examples of evidence of this type of detrimental conduct include (but are not limited to), official findings by the University that a faculty member has violated Title VII or IX, or legal determinations of guilt (including settlements out of court) that may not have resulted in a University sanction.

In addition, faculty may also be put on suspension or removed from the program for conduct that has not resulted in a University or legal sanction but nonetheless has been determined by the Executive Committee to be detrimental to the program or the safety and welfare of its members. This may include serious or sustained actions that create a hostile work environment such as a pattern of racist, sexist, or homophobic remarks or behavior, or a significant lack of professionalism or integrity. Indeed, the Genetic Counseling Program expects all of its faculty members to represent and uphold UCSF values of Professionalism, Respect, Integrity, Diversity and Excellence.

The Executive Committee will develop a course of action on a case-by-case basis. For example, faculty who are found to have violated Title VII or IX will be removed from the program immediately and are generally not eligible to reapply (see Section 4.5 below) whereas the plan of action to address less severe violations may include interventions by program leadership, mediation, additional training, etc. before a decision to suspend or remove a faculty member from the program is reached. In any of these cases, the program may seek guidance from University offices and resources, such as the Office of Academic Affairs, the Office of the Ombuds, and the Graduate Division.

F. Membership Appeal Process

If membership is denied or not renewed, faculty can appeal to the Executive Committee for reconsideration.

Article III. Administration

The administration of the program and its activities will be vested in the Program Director(s) and an Executive Committee.

Article IV. Graduate Program Director

A. Director and Co-director appointment process

The Genetic Counseling Program Director will be selected after a public search. The Executive Committee will participate in the interview and final selection process, and approve a candidate by a 2/3 vote, provided that a quorum is present.

The Associate Director will be selected after a public search. The Executive Committee will participate in the interviews and final selection process and approve a candidate by a 2/3 vote, provided that a quorum is present. The Associate Director will report to the Director and the Director must be in agreement with the Executive Committee's vote. If the Director and Executive Committee can not come to an agreement, an alternate candidate will be considered.

B. Director and Co-director terms of service

The Director and Associate Director will be asked to commit to serve for at least two years unless extenuating circumstances call for a shorter term. All members of the program leadership team will undergo annual review. The review will include input from other members of the leadership team and Program stakeholders per ACGC Standard C2.3.1

C. Duties of the Director

The Program Director is responsible for all aspects of Program oversight to ensure educational success and fiscal stability. The Program Director has the primary responsibility for the program's organization, administration, fiscal budget, continuous review and analysis of planning, assessment and development. The Program Director will also have teaching responsibilities. Specific lead roles include, but are not limited to:

- a) Provides overall academic leadership for the program
- b) Develops and implements policies and procedures for the program
- c) Ensures compliance with Accreditation Counsel for Genetic Counseling (ACGC) Standards of Accreditation
- d) Serves as primary liaison with ACGC
- e) Oversees curriculum development and implementation
- f) Recruit and oversees instructional faculty and staff; including feedback, support and mentorship
- g) Represents the interests of the program to the campus and University administrators
- h) Calls and presides at meetings of the Executive Committee and Advisory Board
- i) Calls and presides at meetings of the GC program
- j) Responsible for coordinating all administrative matters with the Graduate Division and the program administrators;
- k) Oversees, manages and provides long term planning of the program budget
- l) Submits course change or approval forms; and
- m) Responsible for the accuracy of all publications related to the program including web pages and catalog copy.

D. Duties of the Associate Director

The primary responsibilities of the Associate Director are the coordination, monitoring and oversight of all aspects of student clinical training. Other duties include teaching and participation in program

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Commented [NT6]: There is a good opportunity here to specify whether and how the Directors will be reviewed by the community/the EC and if their position ever needs to be renewed.

administration. The Associate Director will also work closely with the Director to carry out all duties described in (C) above and serve as chief officer of the Group in the absence of the Director. Specific lead roles include, but are not limited to:

- a) Coordination, assessment, and review of rotation placements, including: schedules, site visits (as needed), evaluations, online logbooks and student preparation
- b) Manage needed hospital pre-screening requirements including letters or recommendation, drug screening and background checks, as needed
- c) Manage clinical rotation placements based on students' developmental, logistical & logbook needs; including development of site-specific goals
- d) Monitor student performance during clinical rotations
- e) Assist with revisions and updates to the student and clinical training evaluation tools
- f) Orient, oversee & evaluate the effectiveness of each supervisor, including feedback, support and mentorship
- g) Serve as primary contact for all training sites to troubleshoot student/supervisor concerns as they arise

Article V. Committees

A. Executive Committee

Purpose: The principle responsibilities of the Executive Committee are:

- a. To carry on the activities and services of the GC Program and encourage its further development.
- b. To establish and maintain liaison with programs interested in genetic counseling or clinical genetics in other UCSF departments or organizations.
- c. Take responsibility for informing entire instructional faculty about the affairs of the GC Program and hire instructional faculty when vacancies arise.
- d. To oversee the GC Program and when changes seem desirable, to recommend these to the appropriate committee.
- e. Evaluate recommendations from GGGC committees for compliance with ACGC Standards of Accreditation and UCSF Graduate Division policies and implement suitable recommendations.
- f. The Executive Committee shall also be responsible for helping to identify candidates to fill vacancies in the Advisory Board, Admissions Committee, Curriculum Steering Committee and Capstone Research Committee.

Membership: The Executive Committee shall consist of the GC Program leadership, a member of the IHG and a budget advisor; for a total of 6 individuals. GC Program leadership consists of the Program Director, Co- Director, Assistant Director, Fresno and Research Director. All members have equal voting rights.

Term: The GC Program leadership will remain on the Executive Committee for the duration of their leadership roles. The IHG member and budget advisor will be asked to serve for two years and may elect to serve another term. Vacancies will be filled through nominations from existing Executive Committee members emailed to the Program Director and membership will be voted on by the remaining Executive Committee members.

Meetings: Meetings of the Executive Committee will occur biannually the first two years of the GC Program. Beginning the third year of the GC Program, Executive Committee meetings will occur at least once per year. A special meeting of the Executive Committee may be requested by written notice of three or more members (email is acceptable written notice). At meetings, presence of at least 50% of membership shall constitute a quorum. In some cases, decisions can be made by email or poll without calling a meeting of the committee members. Such electronic votes also require participation by at least 50% of membership shall constitute a quorum.

B. Advisory Board

Purpose: The GGCC will utilize an Advisory Board to provide program leadership with guidance on program development, implementation, and evaluation. Utilization of an Advisory Board maintains compliance with ACGC Standard of Accreditation C1.1. The principle responsibilities of the Advisory Board are:

- a. Provide counsel and assist in ensuring maintenance of accreditation.
- b. Assist in modification plans regarding areas identified for improvement, including timeline for implementation.
- c. Ensure the GCP's continued relevance by proposing program modifications to meet the evolving needs of the genetic counseling profession.
- d. Promote the program within UCSF and in the greater community.
- e. Provide a forum for discussion of faculty, curriculum, or other concerns.
- f. Assist in program evaluation; including self-study evaluations.

Membership: The Advisory Board will consist of 8-12 members who are genetics professionals or genetics consumers from within UCSF and outside UCSF. Members will have varied backgrounds but will represent a broad spectrum of constituencies relevant to the genetic counseling profession; research, clinical care, education, private industry and general public. The GC Program Director, Co-Director, Research Director and Assistant Director, Fresno will be ex-officio members. As the program becomes established, a recent alumnus will be invited to become a member.

For the initial installment of the Advisory Board, the GC Program leadership will solicit nominations and recommendations from the genetics community. Inaugural membership will be approved by the Executive Committee.

Term: Appointments shall be for one year beginning June 1. Existing members interested in continuing participation will be reappointed for another year. Vacancies or additions will be filled through nominations from existing Advisory Board members and/or Executive Committee. Membership will be voted on by the remaining Advisory Board members.

Meetings: Meetings will occur at least on an annual basis, preferably twice yearly; or as deemed necessary. In the first year of the GC Program, a meeting will occur prior to the completion of the first academic year and then upon graduation of the first cohort. A special meeting of the Advisory Board may be requested by written notice of five or more members. At meetings, presence of at least 50% of membership shall constitute a quorum.

C. Admissions Committee

Purpose: The Admissions Committee is responsible for evaluating the Genetic Counseling Program's admissions process and advising on recruitment. The principle responsibilities of the Admissions Committee are:

- a. Assist in the evaluation of the current admissions processes; including the application, application review and assessment, and interviews.
- b. Make recommendations regarding recruitment strategies that will result in successful recruitment of a high quality, diverse student population.
- c. Admissions Committee members may be involved directly in application review and assessment, candidate interviews, and/or nominating and selecting a team to execute this process.
- d. The Admissions Committee is not responsible for assembling or submitting the final rank list. This is the responsibility of the leadership team.

Membership: The Admissions Committee shall consist of at least five members comprised of at least three genetic counselors and one genetic 2nd year counseling student. The Program Director and Assistant Director will be ex-officio members. The student member will represent the student perspective and will provide a summary of impressions (positive or negative) about specific applicants encountered during the admissions process. Vacancies or additions will be filled through nominations from existing Admissions Committee members and/or Executive Committee. Membership will be voted on by the remaining Admissions Committee members.

Term: Faculty and student members will serve for one-year renewable terms beginning June 1. Existing members interested in continuing participation will be reappointed for another year.

Meetings: The Admissions Committee will meet at least once prior to the start of admissions, and as necessary during the application and admissions season. An additional meeting may also occur in the spring of each year to review recruitment strategies. At meetings, presence of at least 50% of membership shall constitute a quorum.

Any Admissions Committee member may rule that an item of business is inappropriate for discussion in the presence of the student representative. That item of business will then be discussed in the absence of the student member of the Committee. More generally, the chair of any committee with a student member must excuse the student representatives from meetings during discussion about personnel actions or disciplinary issues relating to faculty, during discussion of the rank list(s), student scholarship awards or disciplinary issues related to students during admissions.

D. Curriculum Steering Committee

Purpose: The Curriculum Steering Committee is responsible for ensuring the effectiveness and relevance of the current curriculum; including didactic coursework and clinical training experiences. The principle responsibilities of the Curriculum Steering Committee are:

- a. Assist in the assessment of the effectiveness of current curriculum through student course evaluations, clinical rotation supervisor evaluations, assessment of instructional faculty and student performance on the board certification examination.

- b. Make recommendations, as necessary, for curriculum modifications.
- c. Review significant changes in existing courses.
- d. Provide advice regarding student course concerns.
- e. Review proposals for new courses to ensure that the proposed course logically fits within the context of the GC Program.
- f. Ensure that courses meet Accreditation Council for Genetic Counseling (ACGC) Standards of Accreditation and promote attainment of ACGC Practice Based Competencies.

Membership: The Curriculum Steering Committee shall consist of five members comprised of at least two GC Program instructional faculty and at least one clinical rotation supervisor. The Program Director and Assistant Director and Medical Director will be ex-officio members. Vacancies or additions will be filled through nominations from existing Curriculum Steering Committee members and/or Executive Committee. Membership will be voted on by the remaining Curriculum Steering Committee members.

Term: Faculty will serve for one-year renewable terms beginning June 1. Existing members interested in continuing participation will be reappointed for another year.

Meetings: The Curriculum Steering Committee will convene twice per year, with one meeting occurring prior to the start of the fall quarter. A special meeting of the Curriculum Steering Committee may be requested by written notice of two or more members. At meetings, presence of at least 50% of membership shall constitute a quorum.

E. CAPSTONE RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Purpose: The Capstone Research Committee (CRC) will oversee the research curriculum and Capstone projects for the GC Program. The principle responsibilities of the Capstone Research Committee are:

- a. Review and approve student capstone research proposals to ensure projects are of appropriate scope and rigor for the GCP.
- b. Work with the Research Director to maintain quarterly contact with research advisors to ensure students are making appropriate progress on capstone projects
- c. Assist in creating programs of remediation for struggling students.
- d. Assess the effectiveness of the current research curriculum including review of changes to existing courses.
- e. Create proposals for new research-related courses, if needed.

Membership: The Capstone Research Committee shall consist of 2-3 members, including the Research Director, who serves as Committee Chair. The remaining members are comprised of at least one genetic counselor.

Term: Faculty will serve for one-year renewable terms beginning June 1. Existing members interested in continuing participation will be reappointed for another year. Vacancies will be filled through nominations from existing CRC members and/or Executive Committee members. Membership will be voted on by the remaining Capstone Research Committee.

Meetings: The Capstone Research Committee will meet at least three times during the academic year. The first meeting will occur in the first quarter to review the bank of research topics and potential research advisors for first year students. By the second year of the program, this meeting will also include a review of second year students' progress on their Capstone project. The second meeting will occur at the end of the second quarter to discuss student Capstone Project Proposals. At this meeting, the committee will also provide a plan for remediation for any project not receiving approval. During the second meeting (or the committee may elect to hold a separate meeting), second year students will be evaluated on the progress of their Capstone Projects. The committee may also need to reconvene to review revised Capstone Project Proposals. A third meeting will occur after students have presented their Capstone projects and before the start of the first quarter of the next academic year. This meeting will review the curriculum and Capstone projects and make any recommendations for modification in subsequent years.

Article VI. Student Representatives

Student representatives are self-nominated or nominated by the students, typically in response to a Committee Service Announcement sent out by email. The nominees submit a short description of their interest in the position and particular qualifications, if applicable. The Program Director or Committee Chair will select the student representative from the list of nominees. The term of service and voting rights of the student representative will be determined by the Chair of the committee.

Article VII. Graduate Advisers

The Genetic Counseling Program will assign an academic mentor for each member of the incoming cohort. The academic mentor will be a UCSF faculty member, practicing genetic counselor or other member of the UCSF genetics community. The academic mentor is someone outside of a course instructor and shall function as a partner who is committed, for the duration of the program, to providing guidance through courses and clinical training experiences, being an academic advocate, facilitating decision making, promoting the growth and professional development of the beginning genetic counselor and otherwise providing support to ensure student success. Students may request a specific mentor, such as someone employed in a certain genetics specialty, one that followed a particular career path, someone of similar background or identity, or other desired characteristic, but students may be paired with someone outside of their specified interests.

During the first year of training, communication between the mentor and mentee should occur at least once per month. During the second year of training, the mentee will have increased advisement with their clinical rotation supervisors and Capstone Project advisor, and therefore communication between the mentor and mentee will likely decrease. A minimum meeting frequency of once per quarter is recommended during the second year of training.

Academic mentors are not required to report the contents or outcomes of their meetings to GC Program leadership and will be encouraged to provide a confidential outlet for students. If an academic mentor feels that information brought to their attention by the student should be shared with the Program Director or other GC Program leadership, the mentor will inform the student of such.

Article IX. Quorum

All issues that require a vote must be:

- Voted on by at least 50% of the Executive Committee Membership
- On graduate program matters other than amendment/revision of bylaws, passage requires a supporting vote by at least 50% supporting vote of the members voting.
- On amendments and revision of bylaws: passage requires a supporting vote by at least two thirds of the members voting.

If balloting is conducted via e-mail or web-based technology, 7 days must be provided for expression of opinions about the proposal prior to the acceptance of votes; the program must allow 14 days for votes to be returned or before the "polls are closed."

Article XI. Amendments

- a. Changes in these bylaws shall be made by approval of both the Executive Committee and at least two-thirds of the GGGC membership.
- b. An amendment shall be voted on either at a duly scheduled GGGC meeting following the one in which it is proposed. Voting discussion and modification may take place on both occasions.
- c. Voting may also occur by mail ballot, proposed changes shall be sent to the members at least one week in advance of the vote.
- d. All amendments and revisions must be submitted to the Graduate Council for review and approval; changes in the bylaws will become effective upon approval by the Graduate Council.

Amendments to these bylaws may be made in accordance with program's quorum policy in Article IX. Program members may propose amendments by petition to the program Chair. The program Chair, or relevant program committee, may ask for revisions from the faculty who submitted proposed amendments before forwarding the revisions to the membership for review and voting. Quorum, voting and passage is prescribed in Article IX.