

Common Pre-requisites for Genetic Counseling Graduate Programs

Common Prerequisite Coursework for Admission to Genetic Counseling Graduate Programs. Students should research the admission requirements for the graduate programs to which they intend to apply early in their academic career, and they should schedule their undergraduate classes based on the requirements of the programs in which they are interested. *Each student is ultimately responsible for knowing and fulfilling the admission requirements of the programs to which they intend to apply.*

Most Genetic Counseling graduate programs require the following classes:

- 2 semesters of general biology with laboratory (BIO 211 - *note that the pre-requisite for this class is CHM 111, and that the pre-requisite for CHM 111 is MAT 133*; and BIO 212)
- 1 semester of biochemistry (BMB 465; you will have to have taken CHM 112, 221 and 222)
- 1 semester of genetics (BIO 310)
- 1 semester in psychology (PSY 101, 245 or 265)
- 1 semester of cell or molecular biology (BIO 460)
- 1 semester of statistics (STA 126);

Common recommended but NOT required courses:

- 1 semester of medical terminology or the use of Greek and Latin in the English language
- 1 semester of abnormal psychology (PSY 265)
- 1 semester of research methods
- 1 semester of child development (PSY 245 may be acceptable)
- 1 semester of technical writing (TCO 341)
- 2 semesters in psychology, sociology, anthropology and/or public health
- 1 semester of embryology
- 1 semester of bioethics (PHI 293)
- 1 semester of epidemiology (PBH 305 –*note that the prerequisite for this class is PBH 101*)

Non-academic pre-requisites:

- Experience shadowing or interviewing a genetic counselor

Preferred:

- Experience in counseling, either paid or volunteer (*e.g., working for a suicide hotline*)
- Research or teaching experience in biology or genetics

Because admission requirements may vary, students are urged to investigate the graduate programs available and identify their preferred programs early.

Suitable Majors and Minors for Pre-Genetic Counseling Students. The Bachelor of Science in Biology degree offered by the College of Liberal Arts fits well with this chosen field, but students are urged to investigate graduate schools to identify their targets to see what each prefers before choosing a major field of study.

Students whose target schools do not prefer a degree in Biology may major in any discipline they chose, but they must also complete the required courses for admission to their preferred graduate programs. Before officially declaring a major, therefore, a student should create a personalized 4-year plan (4YP) that includes all required coursework to see how well the two programs fit together. Students need to be aware that extra semesters might be required for degree programs that do not fit well with these prerequisite classes. Students will also want to plan to take the courses not available at Mercer.

Chemistry and Biology Minors: Students who complete 16 credit hours in chemistry (with 6 or more hours in courses numbered 200 or higher in residence at Mercer) fulfill the Mercer University College of Liberal Arts requirements for a minor in chemistry.

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Students who complete 17 credit hours in biology (with 6 or more hours in courses numbered 300 or higher in residence at Mercer) fulfill the CLA's requirements for a minor in biology.

The Importance of Mathematics to Genetic Counseling. To enroll in the first semester of general biology (BIO 211), a student must have first successfully completed general chemistry (CHM 111). To enroll in CHM 111, a student must demonstrate a minimum mathematics competency that is equivalent to pre-calculus (MAT 133) or above. This competency may be demonstrated through a "math index" (calculated upon entry as a first-year student using the high school GPA and math score on the SAT or ACT) of 980 or higher; college credit for MAT 133 (transfer, AP, or CLEP),

or by scoring 15 or higher on the math placement test. Information about the math placement test can be found online here: <http://aas.mercer.edu/for-students/placement-exams/>.

CLEP Exam for Pre-calculus. A student who scores 50% or higher on the CLEP pre-calculus exam may submit his or her test official transcript to the Mercer registrar and receive MAT 133 credit. Information about the CLEP pre-calculus exam can be found here: <http://clep.collegeboard.org/exam/precalculus>.