

Academic Handbook

2025-2026



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WELCOME

Welcome to the Xavier University of Louisiana Genetic Counseling Program (XULA GCP), the first of its kind in the state of Louisiana. We anticipate receiving Accreditation for New Program status from the Accreditation Council for Genetic Counseling (ACGC) in 2024. Based in the College of Arts and Sciences, the XULA GCP offers rigorous and comprehensive coursework in molecular genetics, clinical genetics and genetic counseling, along with numerous clinical rotations in pediatric/general genetics, cancer genetics, prenatal genetics and other specialties. We also place an emphasis on diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice within the genetic counseling profession. The curriculum is designed not only to satisfy requirements of the ACGC practice-based competencies, but to provide a well-rounded education that prepares students to enter our constantly evolving profession.

Xavier University of Louisiana Genetic Counseling Program Mission Statement:

"Our mission is to equip our students with the necessary skills to become ethical, compassionate, culturally aware, and forward-thinking genetic counselors. We are committed to promoting the health of individuals and communities by providing a rigorous and



CONTACT INFORMATION

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FACTS ABOUT XULA

XULA Mission Statement

"Xavier University of Louisiana, founded by Saint Katharine Drexel and Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, is Catholic and historically Black. The ultimate purpose of the University is to contribute to the promotion of a more just and humane society by preparing its students to assume roles of leadership and service in a global society. This preparation takes place in a diverse learning and teaching environment that incorporates all relevant educational means, including research and community services."

Xavier University of Louisiana was established in 1925 and is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award bachelors, masters, and doctorate degrees. Its major divisions include the College of Arts and Sciences and the College of Pharmacy.

University Leadership



FIELDWORK ROTATIONS

In the Fall of Year 1, students will participate in approximately 3 days of clinical observation across various clinics in order to gain familiarity with the clinic setting. Students will not be expected to complete any components of the genetic counseling session during these observational opportunities, but attendance is required.

In the Summer of Year 1, Fieldwork Rotations (GENC 5070 and GENC 5071) begin and continue into Fall and Spring of Year 2. The fieldwork rotations include three 6-8-week core rotations (pediatric/general genetics, prenatal and cancer), and two ~4-week elective rotations. The core rotations occur at ACGC-approved sites, most of which are at one of the Ochsner Medical Center (OMC) locations (Main Campus, Baptist, Baton Rouge, St. Tammany) that are within the New Orleans metro area or ~1-hour drive. These rotations are scheduled by program leadership in coordination with the clinical supervisors. Students will typically spend three days per week in clinic. Logbooks will be monitored closely to ensure that students are obtaining an adequate number of participatory cases. Grades for fieldwork rotations will be based on student evaluations from clinical supervisors.

Sample Rotation Schedule

| Semester | Student 1 | Student 2 | Student 3 | Student 4 | Student 5 |
|----------|--------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Summer | Prenatal- OMC Baptist | Pediatrics- OMC | Cancer- OMC BR | Pediatrics- OMC | Cancer- OMC |
| Fall 1 | Pediatrics- OMC | Cancer- OMC | Prenatal- OMC Baptist | Cancer- OMC BR | Prenatal- UMMC |



SCHEDULING

We recognize that there are many personal obligations outside of the XULA GCP that you hope to participate in during your time in school. While we expect you to remain available for all program-related activities, we understand that there may be scheduling conflicts, such as a religious observation. If there is a scheduling conflict, it is your responsibility to alert the faculty to the issue in advance or as soon as you become aware of the conflict. We will do our best to honor requests, however we may not be able to do so in every case. It is important to understand that many variables are factored into the scheduling of courses, fieldwork rotations, presentations, etc., most of which happen confidentially and involve multiple individuals. While a request may seem reasonable initially, it may not be feasible due to other considerations.

If we can accommodate a scheduling conflict, y



ORAL COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

In the spring semester of the second year, each student is required to complete an oral comprehensive examination before a panel of five faculty members. The purpose of this examination is to evaluate a student's ability to prepare for a genetic counseling session and present information in a clear, concise, and thorough manner across several areas of clinical genetics.

The format of the examination typically involves the following:

- Students are given a clinical scenario and ninety minutes to prepare.

- Students are allowed access to multiple resources, such as textbooks and computers, for their preparation.

- Some specific questions may be



ENROLLMENT GUIDELINES

Continuous, full-time enrollment is required. XULA considers this a minimum of six credit hours during the Fall and Spring semesters or three credit hours during the Summer semester. However, there are additional specifications for the XULA GCP.

1. Dropping of required courses may only be done under special circumstances with the permission of program leadership. All required courses must be taken at the XULA GCP.
2. Students with extenuating circumstances may request in writing a leave of absence from the XULA GCP and are considered on a case-by-case basis.
3. Students who have not completed the academic requirements for May graduation must register for the remaining course(s)/fieldwork rotations needing completion. These students can only continue registration for a maximum of one year after the original expected graduation date.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

1. Successful completion of all coursework, with a minimum GPA of 3.0 and a grade of "B" or higher in all courses with letter grades (or pass if the course is on a pass/fail basis; or satisfactory if the course is satisfactory/unsatisfactory). Students may only retake up to two courses if they fail on the first attempt.
2. Passing each of the fieldwork rotations at ACGC



CRITERIA FOR DISMISSAL

1. Students on Academic Probation who do not attain the required 3.0 G.P.A .after two



If an appeal is denied, a student may not return to the XULA GCP for the next upcoming semester but may apply for readmission for the following semester.

STUDENT COMPLAINTS/GRIEVANCES

Academic Grievance Procedure

Students with concerns or grievances with an instructor or course are encouraged to settle their concerns first with the instructor. If the issue is unable to be resolved, students should bring their concerns to the attention of the Program Director and/or Assistant Program Director, and only then the appropriate Associate Dean. Ordinarily, the Associate Dean expects a written summary of the concern and the actions taken to resolve the concern. The Associate Dean will then notify the Dean to facilitate further action if necessary.

Other Grievances

A student who has a complaint that a policy or procedure has been incorrectly or unfairly applied in his/her particular case, or a complaint about the behavior of a University faculty/staff member that does not fall within certain categories (academic integrity, student misconduct, discrimination, sexual misconduct or harassment, complaints through EthicsPoint Hotline), or dissatisfaction with a specific college experience, the complaint will be handled as f1(t) -29.(m) 3 (is) 1 (c) 2 (o) 2 (n) 2 (d) 2 (u) 2 (c) 2 (ai) -2



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- A clear description of the concern or complaint;
 - Appropriate supporting documentation that is directly related to the complaint;
 - Actions taken for an informal resolution of the complaint; and
 - A description of the desired outcome.

The complaint will be forwarded to the dean of the relevant College or the head of the appropriate office from which the complaint arises. Formal complaints must be filed within sixty (60) days of the event that triggered the complaint and



ALLEGATIONS OF DISCRIMINATION AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT

How to Report Sexual Misconduct

The options for disclosure and reporting sexual misconduct are listed below and confidential assistance is available upon request through Violence Prevention Education and Advocacy to help students review these disclosure and reporting options. University support services are available to students regardless of whether they



Confidential Disclosure

Disclosures made to Violence Prevention Education and Advocacy, Counseling and Wellness Center, Student Health Clinic and Campus Ministry staff listed below will be held in strict confidence and will not serve as notice to the university requiring initiation of a review of the disclosed conduct.

- Violence Prevention Education and Advocacy
(504) 520-7503
209 Administration Building
- Counseling and Wellness Center
(504) 504-520-7315
202 St. Joseph Academic and Health Resource Center
Open Monday-Thursday 9am-8pm and Friday 9am-5pm (Fall and Spring)
Open Monday-Friday 9am-5pm (summer)
www.xula.edu/counselingservices
- Student Health Services
(504) 520-7396
217 St. Joseph Academic and Health Resource Center
Clinic Hours: Open 8:30am-4:30pm Monday-Friday
www.xula.edu/student-health-services
- Office of Campus Ministry
101A Administration Building
(504) 520-7593
<http://www.xula.edu/faithandleadership>

Please refer to the Student Handbook for any additional information on reporting and/or the process of handling a Sexual Misconduct report,
<https://www.xula.edu/office-of-violence-prevention-education-and-advocacy/sexual-misconduct.html>

STUDENT ADVISING

All XULA GCP students will be assigned a faculty advisor during their first semester. In most cases this will be either the program PD or APD. The faculty advisor will meet with the student each semester (twice in the first semester) and assist the student in planning her/his/their program of study. Students are encouraged to consult their advisor routinely throughout the program.



SUPPORT AND RESOURCES

Center of Health & Wellness

The Center of Health & Wellness provides quality holistic care for all of Xavier students. We, as a unit are committed to creating a healthy environment and an atmosphere of exclusivity and diversity for all students. Our friendly, caring and professional staff provides medical, mental, accessibility resources and health education programs that help students make healthy lifestyle choices in support of their academic, personal, and professional goals.

Counseling and Wellness

Counseling Services provides a wide range of programs and experiences designed to facilitate academic, personal, and social development. Our professionally trained and



Excuse notes:

- Excuse Notes are given at the discretion of the Student Health staff based on their medical findings and professional assessments.
- Excuse notes are only given when care is received through Xavier Student Health Services. Please acquire a note from the place of service when care is received elsewhere.



prevention practitioners by providing safety and security information to students, faculty and staff of the university and the local community

Any suspicious or potential criminal activity or other emergencies should be reported



TUITION

The total cost of tuition for the XULA GCP is \$75,900 (\$15,000 for first three semesters and \$15,450 each last two semesters), which does not include textbooks or additional costs associated with the program. Students are responsible for ensuring that they have made all required payments on their student account or made any payment arrangements with the Office of Fiscal Services. Students must complete the fiscal clearance process prior to starting classes each semester. In order to be fiscally cleared, students are required to submit an assessment sheet via BannerWeb and make any required payments requested by the Office of Fiscal Services. The assessment sheet will reflect the amount of tuition and fees that a student is charged and the amount of financial aid a student will receive. If a student is receiving enough financial aid to cover all of their tuition and fees, then the required payment with typically be \$0. If a student will not be using financial aid or has not been awarded enough aid to cover their tuition and fees, the Office of Fiscal Services requires them to pay at least 50% of the remaining balance on their student account prior to the start of classes. Any required payments can be made through a student's BannerWeb account.

Please note: Failure to submit a health clearance form to the Office of Student Health Services may prevent the Office of Fiscal Services from fiscally clearing a student.

FINANCIAL AID

Each student is responsible for obtaining her or his own financial aid. The Office of Student Financial Aid and Scholarships is available to assist students and can be contacted at 504-520-7835 or at finaid@xula.edu. Additional information can be found on XULA's website: <https://www.xula.edu/financialaid/>

Graduate Assistantships are offered for graduate students through the Office of Student Affairs. These are on-campus live-in positions where students will serve as Resident Assistance in the Residence Halls on campus. Students must be admitted to one of the graduate programs prior to applying for an assistantship position. Please contact the Office of Graduate Programs for application information.