

Syllabus for Genetic Counseling Rotation Course  
01:447:488

**Course number:** 01:447:430

**Class location:** Busch Campus- Life Science building, Rom 125

**Class meeting times:** Depending on the semester

**Instructor:** Gary Heiman, PhD

Office address: [Life Science Building](#), Room 125, 145 Bevier Rd, Piscataway, NJ

Phone: 848-445-9576 NOTE: The preferred way to contact Dr. Heiman is by e-mail. The phone should be used only for absolute emergencies!!!

Email: [heiman@dls.rutgers.edu](mailto:heiman@dls.rutgers.edu)

Office Hours: By appointment only

### Course Information

Fall/Spring/Summer; 3 credits; (Note: summer rotation lasts through both summer sessions)

*Special permission required- obtained through Undergraduate Genetics Office after meeting with Dr. Heiman.*

Note: This course counts as 3 research credits for the Genetics major. The other three required research credits may be fulfilled with a related Advanced Independent Study Project or a 3 credit research project with a faculty member or in the Rutgers University Cell and DNA Repository (RUCDR). The Departmental Vice Chair, Dr. Rondo, must approve second related independent study.

**Required textbook-** None; students will research genetic disorders through online databases and published articles

### Prerequisites

- 1) Departmental prerequisites
  - a. Undergraduate student in Department of Genetics
  - b. Have a minimum 2.8 GPA
  - c. [Application essay](#)
  - d. Application interview with Dr. Gary Heiman
  - e. Have completed the Rutgers University [Human Subjects Certification](#) (IRB)
- 2) Placement requirements- Each rotation placement has its own requirements and the student **MAY** be required to pay any charges. Depending on the rotation, these **CAN** include:
  - a. Pass a 5-panel drug screen (paid by student)
  - b. Pass a Criminal background check (paid by student)- required by Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO)
  - c. Completed the hospital orientation manual (self-study) and passed the quiz.
  - d. Proof of immunization and physical exam (obtained from Hurtado)

**IMPORTANT:** The placement requirements can take AT LEAST a month to complete so begin ASAP.

### Academic integrity policy

Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. In accordance with Departmental and University Policies, violations of academic integrity will immediately be referred to the dean. Violations

include: cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, denying others access to information or material, and facilitating violations of academic integrity See the following website for details:  
<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy/>

### **Grading system**

Grading will be as follows. A: 90-100; B: 80-89; C: 70-79; D: 60-69; F: 0-59

The course grade will be based on:

- 25%- Presentation of one case to Genetic Counseling group
- 25%- Ten genetic case logs. To download case log template, [click here](#).
- 25%- Evaluation by the clinical supervisor
- 25%- Weekly meeting with professor

### **Course Goals/Description**

The goal of this course is to provide students with an understanding of the genetic counseling career. To make the experience worthwhile for the student, we expect the student to commit a sizable amount of time to the *Genetic Counseling Rotation* course. *Genetic Counseling Rotation* is not, and should not, be an easy **A**. Students will be placed at a local Genetic Counseling clinic to shadow a genetic counselor for one semester. They are expected to spend at least 8 hours a week at the rotation. At the clinic, the student will observe genetic counseling sessions, observe the genetic counselor's role in coordination of care and follow-up with patients and physicians, perform literature searches and research availability of genetic testing, and research studies and patient literature. In addition, students will attend a weekly meeting with the course instructor. At the weekly meetings, the instructor will discuss the Genetic Counseling career and application to the master-level programs. Students will also discuss cases that they observed that their rotation. At the end of the program students will:

- understand Genetic Counseling as a profession
- understand application requirements for masters-level programs
- gain experience in a clinical Genetic Counseling clinic

### **Directions for case log submission**

The case logs are due to the course director NO LATER THAN the last day of classes (prior to reading period). This information can be found at: <http://scheduling.rutgers.edu/academic.htm>. One copy in (MS word or PDF format) should be sent to Dr. Heiman and a second electronic copy to the genetics office ([geneticsoffice@biology.rutgers.edu](mailto:geneticsoffice@biology.rutgers.edu)). **The file name should include be your name (Lname\_Fname), course number, and date** (e.g., **Smith\_John\_447\_488\_2016-12-16**). All 10 case logs should be included in ONE file. Start each log on a new page and copy the relevant section titles. The GC director must sign, grade the case logs and send the Genetics Undergraduate Office. You **MUST** send the final electronic version to Genetics office by the first day of final exams.

### **Case Presentation**

The presentation must occur NO LATER THAN the last day of classes. The student must arrange the presentation a date with the Supervising Genetic Counselor and inform Dr. Heiman of that date so he can try to attend. The case presentation is a PowerPoint presentation and should last at least 15 minutes.

### **Class Attendance**

Students are expected to attend the clinic each week for the assigned time (no less than 8 hours per week) and the weekly meeting with Dr. Heiman. It is the student's responsibility to discuss his/her schedule with the assigned supervisor so that they can determine what day(s)

are best for the student to attend. **NOTE: If you expect to miss the scheduled clinic day, you must:**

- 1) Email the Genetic Counseling supervisor and Dr. Heiman
- 2) Use the online University absence reporting website <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/> to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to Dr. Heiman.

If you expect to miss attending the weekly meeting with Dr. Heiman, you must notify Dr. Heiman and complete the online University absence reporting system.

## Expectations

This class is different from most classes at Rutgers. You will be placed at a local Genetics Counseling clinic to shadow a genetic counselor for one semester. Below are the expectations for the time in the clinic and case logs.

### 1) EXPECTATIONS WHILE IN CLINIC

**Note: The clinical supervisor's evaluation is part of your grade.**

- a. **Dress code:** When at the clinical rotations, professional attire (i.e., business casual) is expected. This means no shorts, jeans, clothes with holes, or anything too short, tight, or low-cut. Additional guidelines may be provided by the rotation site. For example, a particular clinical site or hospital may require hosiery and closed toe shoes. Students should discuss rotation site dress code with their supervisor prior to starting the rotation. This conversation should also include details surrounding jewelry, perfume/cologne, and other accessories. For more information on business casual, [Click here](#).
- b. **Time at clinic:** You are expected to spend at least 8 hours a week at the clinic. The time and days you are to attend should be previously agreed upon by both you and your supervisor. If you cannot make it on the regularly scheduled day, you need to notify the supervising genetic counselor (or one of the other genetic counselors), complete the online University absence report, and notify Dr. Heiman. In addition, you are expected to arrive on time and stay until the end of the day UNLESS the genetic counselor tells you that you can leave (e.g. no other patients that day). If you miss a day, you need to make up the time on another day. Arriving late to your placement may result in you not being able to sit in on cases.
- c. **Professional behavior:** You are expected to conduct yourself as a member of the team (e.g., no personal telephone calls).
- d. **During a session:** It is important that you communicate with the supervisor about his/her preferences for what you can do during the session. Some genetic counselor will not want you to write anything during the session, including drawing the pedigree. However, it is possible that the genetic counselor will give you permission to draw the pedigree when they are taking the family history. After the session, you can take notes, draw the pedigree, and research the disorder(s). **IMPORTANT:** If a patient/client asks you a question about their situation when the genetic counselor is not in the room, you need to say you are just training and not qualified to answer. However, sometimes a patient may ask you about your interest in the field. You can answer that you are planning to pursue a career in genetic counseling.
- e. **Rutgers student:** It is possible you may observe a session with a current Rutgers student. If so, and you later see that person on campus, you must keep everything confidential. You would typically not approach the student but, if they

approach you, you can be friendly but not discuss anything you heard during the genetic counseling session.

- f. Keep in mind that these supervisors are volunteering to host you for this experience.
- 2) CASE LOG EXPECTATIONS:
- a. The case logs are a major part of your grade and you should write it as if a graduate school program director will read and decide if they want to accept you. Remember, you may submit the case logs to graduate schools as a writing example. **IMPORTANT: There should not be any typos and the professor should NOT have to correct grammar.**
  - b. Style on the case log: Write in full sentences your language should not be judgmental! You should write as if the audience is other genetic counselors and program directors (e.g., you do not have to explain autosomal dominant). You should read example case logs from previous students. **Points will be taken off for your writing and not proof-reading!!** You should have someone else review for errors. If you abbreviate, you should spell out the first time in each log. Do not use colloquial language (e.g., red flags, out-of-the-loop, passed (instead of passed away), mull over, still very **solid** in their decision (should be **firm** in their decision).
  - c. Reasons for referral section: In this section, you should start with some demographics (e.g., patient is a X year male/female of Y and Z decent).
  - d. Pregnancy section: In prenatal cases, you typically also include number of previous pregnancies and how many other children. You should use gravida and para. For example: "This is the woman's 5<sup>th</sup> pregnancy (G5, P1). Three of her pregnancies resulted in spontaneous abortion and one was an elective abortion. Her one child is X years old and healthy."
  - e. Family history section: In the family history information, you can include a pedigree but you should explain the findings in words. Do not include any patient identifiers (names, DOB, etc). If there is nothing relevant, you can just say, "Family history was taken and was unremarkable." If no history was taken during the session (e.g., follow-up session), you can review the case later to determine what was found in the previous session.
  - f. Testing section: In the testing section, include what tests were previously done and what was tests were ordered. Try to find out the results of the tests ordered so you can include (e.g., FOLLOW-UP: \*\*\*)
  - g. About diagnosis section: this section is where you should show you can research a disorder even if no diagnosis is yet given. For example, if a genetic test is conducted but not yet returned, you can describe the gene and the associated disorder. You are a genetics student so you should give details. Thus, in this section, you should include the inheritance pattern, where the gene is located, what is known about the function of the gene, a description of the disorder, the prognosis, and possible treatments.
  - h. Follow-up: If possible, try to find out any follow-up information on the patient.

**Information for Student-Wellness Services:**  
**Student-Wellness Services:**

**Just In Case Web App**

<http://codu.co/cee05e>

Access helpful mental health information and resources for yourself or a friend in a mental health crisis on your smartphone or tablet and easily contact CAPS or RUPD.

**Counseling, ADAP & Psychiatric Services (CAPS)**

**(848) 932-7884 / 17 Senior Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901/ [rhscaps.rutgers.edu/](http://rhscaps.rutgers.edu/)**

CAPS is a University mental health support service that includes counseling, alcohol and other drug assistance, and psychiatric services staffed by a team of professional within Rutgers Health services to support students' efforts to succeed at Rutgers University. CAPS offers a variety of services that include: individual therapy, group therapy and workshops, crisis intervention, referral to specialists in the community and consultation and collaboration with campus partners.

**Violence Prevention & Victim Assistance (VPVA)**

**(848) 932-1181 / 3 Bartlett Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901 / [vpva.rutgers.edu/](http://vpva.rutgers.edu/)**

The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance provides confidential crisis intervention, counseling and advocacy for victims of sexual and relationship violence and stalking to students, staff and faculty. To reach staff during office hours when the university is open or to reach an advocate after hours, call 848-932-1181.

**Disability Services**

**(848) 445-6800 / Lucy Stone Hall, Suite A145, Livingston Campus, 54 Joyce Kilmer Avenue, Piscataway, NJ 08854 / <https://ods.rutgers.edu/>**

The Office of Disability Services works with students with a documented disability to determine the eligibility of reasonable accommodations, facilitates and coordinates those accommodations when applicable, and lastly engages with the Rutgers community at large to provide and connect students to appropriate resources.

**Scarlet Listeners**

**(732) 247-5555 / <http://www.scarletlisteners.com/>**

Free and confidential peer counseling and referral hotline, providing a comforting and supportive safe space.