

# ACGC MESSENGER



A Newsletter from the Accreditation Council  
for Genetic Counseling

## Welcome to the ACGC Messenger

Welcome to the 2024 Fourth Quarter ACGC Messenger newsletter. We look forward to keeping you updated with important information and announcements in this quarterly newsletter.

## ACGC Volunteer Spotlight



### **Nancy Hanson, MS, CGC**

*Left to right: Christine Stanislaw, MS, CGC, Nancy Hanson, MS, CGC, and Fallon Brewer, MS, CGC on a recent site-visit*

#### **What is your background?**

I graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Madison program in 1983. My first position was with Kaiser, an HMO, in San Jose, California doing primarily prenatal and pediatric genetic counseling. I transferred to San Francisco Kaiser after a few years and became a supervisor, and then clinical services manager. I was inspired to volunteer as a site visitor for accreditation by Dr. Bruce Blumberg, the medical geneticist I worked with, who prioritized training and enjoyed his work as a site visitor.

In 1997, our family moved to Seattle where I worked with GeneTests - the grant funded genetic laboratory directory that was integrated with GeneReviews. I then had positions in various laboratories at the University of Washington and was on their human subjects committee. I worked with the Genetic Alliance consumer advocacy group which led to working at Group Health, an HMO, as a clinical cancer genetic counselor and supervisor. I also was part of the Group Health Research Committee and participated in a few research projects. I moved to Swedish Cancer Institute in 2014 and helped the program grow from one genetic counselor to six. I recently retired at the end of May 2024.

#### **You have done site visits and program reviews on behalf of ACGC, often as a team lead, for many years. What keeps you coming back to this specific area of volunteering?**

I have prioritized student exposure to our profession and training throughout my career by welcoming individuals to shadow or making myself available for informational interviews. When I was in San Francisco, we had students from the UC Berkeley program. In my clinical settings in Seattle, we accepted as many students as possible for summer rotations before the University of Washington started a genetic counseling program. The Swedish Cancer Institute now serves local students for their clinical rotations. Ensuring that genetic counselors are well trained, and that the profession continues to hold high standards is important to me.

I find it inherently fascinating how a program is created to impart information, skills, emotional maturity and empathy necessary for success. The evolution of the Standards for our profession is a process of constant refinement. I personally do much self-reflection, and it is a privilege to be able to take a self-study and expand on that and mirror a richer view back to the program. I have found all the programs I have had contact with to be very invested in their students and the profession as a whole. It is inspiring to see all the work that institutions - administrators, program leadership, faculty, clinical supervisors and support staff - do for their students.

Also, I enjoy the intensity of the site visit process and working closely with likeminded experienced genetic counselors and physicians. The site visit team prepares carefully and then over just a couple of days frantically gathers and processes information. We must use all our interview skills and be mindful that it is a stressful process for program leadership. In the ideal, the whole process and program report can be used to improve the program. It may also serve to give accolades where due.

#### **What makes you happy?**

I love being outside, and the Pacific Northwest is beautiful. Specifically, I enjoy open water swimming. We live very close to Puget Sound and every Sunday at 9:00am a group meets to dip or swim in the rather frigid water. I love the swim, and I especially love the sauna after. Yes, the group meets year-round and no, I don't wear a wet suit.

My great joy in retirement is helping to care for our now 7-month-old grandson, Wesley, who is delightful and adorable.

## Accreditation Expiration Date Clarification



In September 2017, a letter was sent to all existing programs explaining that due to the implementation of the National Match System for the recruitment process beginning in 2018, ACGC changed the **deadline for reaccreditation applications to be due on August 1st** of the year prior to the program's next review cycle. What was not made clear in the language of this letter was that this also shifted the **expiration date of the accreditation cycle to August 1st**, with the intention being to align all accreditation-related activities with the average start of the academic year.

## 2024 Updates: ACGC Forms, Resources, and Policies

Over the past year, ACGC volunteers have been working to create and update many of our resources to allow for clearer processes, simpler submissions and reviews, faster turnaround times, and overall, better experiences that still ensure the necessary information is provided.



You may see a difference in the information and supporting documents that you are asked to provide from the last time you had a similar submission. This is our effort to ensure consistency for all programs submitting requests so that reviews and decisions can be completed more efficiently.

Below is a **list of the resources** that have been newly written or improved upon:

- Accreditation Manual
  - New to the Manual is a revised Substantive Change Policy, the addition of the Petition for Variance Policy, a new Off-Campus Instructional Site Policy, and a new Program Closure Policy.
- Petition for Variance Policy
- Teach-Out Plan Template to accompany the Program Closure Policy (*not available on the ACGC website*)
- Candidacy Application
- New Program Application
- Self-Study Submission
- Report of Current Status (*Regular and New Program*)
- Program Leadership Change Form
- All Substantive Change Forms (*Increase in Program Enrollment, Change in Delivery Method of Didactic Coursework, Establishing or Closing Off-Campus Instructional Site of Branch Campus, and Change in Established Sponsoring Institution*)
- All Biosketch Forms (*Program Director, Instructional Faculty, and Other Program Leadership*)
- DEIJ Language Consideration Guide
- Distance Education Language Guide (*Coming soon!*)
- Site Visit Review Team Manual (*not available on the ACGC website*)

Additionally, on the ACGC website you can now find an archive of recent Annual Reports and past Quarterly Newsletters. Along with all of this, on the 'Home' tab of all program's Armature profiles, Accreditation Decisions, Substantive Change Decisions, and Petition for Variance Decisions are now displayed for full transparency.

## Program Development

### 2024 Application Status

#### Ongoing New Program Applications

Charles Drew University (May 15, 2024, Review Cycle)  
Southern California University Health Sciences (May 15, 2024, Review Cycle)  
University at Buffalo (January 15, 2025, Review Cycle)

#### 2024 Programs Undergoing Reaccreditation

Augustana University  
Medical College of Wisconsin  
Sarah Lawrence College  
Stanford University  
University of Arizona Health Sciences  
University of British Columbia  
University of California – San Francisco  
University of Washington  
Wake Forest University  
Washington University in St. Louis

## ACGC Office Hours

December 3, 2024, from 12-1 pm ET



## Announcements



2024 Site Visits: **October 2024 through January 2025**  
American College of Medical Genetics and Genomics Annual  
Clinical Genetics Meeting – *Los Angeles, CA*: **March 18-22, 2025**  
Accreditation Fees Due: **June 30, 2025**  
Report of Current Status Application Due: **June 30, 2025**  
Self-Study Application Due: **August 1, 2025**  
Canadian Association of Genetic Counselors 2025 Annual  
Education Conference – *Banff, Alberta*: **October 5-8, 2025**  
National Society of Genetic Counselors 44th Annual Conference –  
*Seattle, WA*: **November 7-10, 2025**  
National Society of Genetic Counselors 45th Annual Conference –  
*Baltimore, MD*: **November 10-14, 2026**

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*We encourage you to forward and share this newsletter on your social media platforms  
or with colleagues and associates.*

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