



NSGC GUIDELINES FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION

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Introduction

The American Board of Genetic Counseling (ABGC) views continuing education as essential to maintaining and increasing a genetic counselor's knowledge and skills in a rapidly evolving field. For board certified genetic counselors choosing to recertify by earning continuing education units (CEUs), the associated educational programs must meet a minimum set of standards to ensure that they reflect the profession's current needs and promote high quality genetic counseling services.

Continuing education in genetic counseling is an ongoing process consisting of formal learning activities that: (1) are relevant to genetic counseling practice, education, and science; (2) enable genetic counselors to keep pace with the most current scientific evidence regarding clinical practice and education as well as important legal, professional, or regulatory issues; and (3) allow genetic counselors to maintain, develop, and increase competencies in order to improve services to the public and enhance contributions to the profession.

The ABGC has established **Standards** for both Category 1 and Category 2 CEU programs to assure the continuing education is appropriate for recertification of a certified genetic counselor (CGC®). The following NSGC document provides guidelines to assist Program Planners (defined below) with the development of CEU-eligible activities. Program Planners may be audited by NSGC to ensure they are adhering to the Standards.

Glossary of Key Terms

Category 1 CEUs

Category 1 CEUs can be granted for educational programs with content targeted to genetic counselors and pre-approved by an ABGC approved genetic counseling CEU provider.

Category 2 CEUs

Category 2 CEUs can be granted for educational programs with content that is relevant to a genetic counselor's continuing education despite not being primarily designed with the continuing education of a genetic counselor in mind. Category 2 CEUs are only available for educational programs that have been approved to offer continuing education credits or units by a reputable non-genetic counseling CEU provider.

Definition of CEU

One CEU = ten contact hours of participation in organized continuing education/training experience under responsible, qualified direction and instruction.

Definition of Contact Hour

One contact hour = one 60 minute clock hour of interaction between learner and instructor or between learner and materials which have been prepared to bring about learning.

Please Note: Contact implies a connection between a learner and a learning source. For the purpose of the CEU, that connection is two-way. The instructor or learning source must monitor the learner's progress and provide some form of feedback to the learner. This definition and requirement applies to face-to-face interaction as well as distance learning programs.

Rounding

Contact Hours and CEUs should be rounded down to the nearest 100th decimal place. Example: 12.75
Contact Hours = 1.27 CEU

Minimum Hours

NSGC does not grant CEUs for learning programs that are less than a total of one hour in length. Sessions within a learning program may be of any length.

Conflicts of Interests (COI)

ABGC defines conflict of interest (COI) as a situation in which a financial, professional and/or personal affiliation has the potential to compromise an educator's judgment and may potentially bias a person's ability to objectively plan, implement, or review educational content. A conflict of interest may be actual, potential, or perceived. A perceived conflict of interest should be treated the same as if a conflict of interest actually exists. Financial Conflict of Interest may include but is not limited to a wage, salary, contractor, consulting or speaking fee, teaching pay, honoraria, ownership interest, membership on advisory committee, review panel, board or other activity from which a financial benefit is expected. Professional Conflict of Interest may include but is not limited to a situation where an individual receives a contract or a grant, manages funds, is a principal investigator or is in a position to influence the outcomes of research. Personal Conflict of Interest may include but is not limited to a financial relationship held by one's spouse/partner or any of the relationships mentioned above.

Continuing Education (CEU) Provider

An organization or group who is responsible for the evaluation of educational programs to determine if they are CEU-eligible, and, if so, and how many CEUs attendees may obtain for attending or participating in the program [currently the National Society of Genetic Counselors (NSGC) is the sole CEU Provider].

Program Planner

The individual or group who is planning a continuing educational program.

Continuing Education Unit (CEU)

CEU is a standard unit of measurement for continuing education and training. It is awarded for participation in an organized continuing education program. 1 CEU is equivalent to 10 educational contact hours.

Learning Assessment

A learning assessment is typically designed to measure specific elements of learning and often refers to strategies designed to confirm the knowledge an attendee gained by participating in the educational program. Learning assessment should also demonstrate whether attendees have met the stated learning objectives.

Program Evaluation

Program evaluation is a systematic method for collecting and analyzing information about an educational program's effectiveness and efficiency with regard to meeting its stated goals.

CEU Standards & Guidelines

1. Content Requirement
2. Education Level
3. Instructional Methodology
4. Program Format
5. Program Planning
6. Continuing Education Program Assessment and Evaluation
7. Conflicts of Interest
8. CEU Payment Policy
9. Audits
10. Category 1 Application Process
11. Category 2 CEU Standards
12. Professional Activity Credits

Standard 1: Content Requirement

The program content must be directly relevant to the professional knowledge and skills of graduate-level genetic counselors. The content must enhance the knowledge, skills, and abilities, beyond the basic level for preparation of genetic counselors, while being mindful of the need to periodically relearn, refresh, or update basic competencies or to adapt them to new practice situations or settings.

- The program content must be consistent with the [NSGC Code of Ethics](#).
- Program Planners are encouraged to consult the current genetic counselor practice-based competencies and detailed content outline when determining program content (See <http://www.nsgc.org/d/do/7178>).
- Category 2 applications must include a rationale which describes how the content is appropriate to the practice of genetic counseling using the detailed content outline (See <http://www.nsgc.org/d/do/7177>).

Standard 2: Education Level

The education level for acceptable program content should be at or above the graduate level.

Standard 3: Instructional Methodology

The instructional methodology should be consistent with the learning objectives, accommodate various learning styles, and promote effective interaction between the learner and instructional resources. The following references are intended as guidance for Program Planners.

List of Resources for Developing Effective Teaching/Adult-learning Models

Association of American Medical Colleges. (2007). [Effective use of educational technology in medical education. Colloquium on educational technology: Recommendations and guidelines for](#)

[medical educators](#). Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) Institute for Improving Medical Education.

Cervero, R.M., & Gaines, J.K. (2014). [Effectiveness of continuing medical education: An updated synthesis of systematic reviews](#). Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education Accreditation (ACCME).

Davis, D., & Davis, N. (2010). [Selecting educational interventions for knowledge translation](#). *CMAJ*, 182(2), E89-93.

Dong, C., & Goh, P. S. (2015). [Twelve tips for the effective use of videos in medical education](#). *Med Teach*, 37(2), 140-145.

Forsethlund, L., Bjorndal, A., Rashidian, A., Jamtvedt, G., O'Brien, M. A., Wolf, F. M., . . .

Oxman, A. D. (2009). [Continuing education meetings and workshops for health professionals](#). Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews.

Morrison, G.R., Ross, S.M., Howard, K.K., & Kemp, J.E. (2012). *Designing effective instruction* (7th ed.): Wiley.

Piskurich, G.M. (2006). *Rapid instructional design: Learning ID right and fast* (2nd ed.).

San Francisco, CA: Pfeiffer.

Steinert, Y., & Snell, L.S. (1999). [Interactive lecturing: strategies for increasing participation in large group presentations](#). *Med Teach*, 21(1), 37-42.

Teaching Excellence in Adult Literacy. (2011). [Teal Center Factsheet No. 11: Adult Learning Theories](#).

Yavner, S. D., Pusic, M. V., Kalet, A. L., Song, H. S., Hopkins, M. A., Nick, M. W., & Ellaway, R. H. (2015). [Twelve tips for improving the effectiveness of web-based multimedia instruction for clinical learners](#). *Med Teach*, 37(3), 239-244.

Standard 4: Program Format

ABGC acknowledges that effective educational programs can take many different forms and the educational landscape continues to expand to encompass new methods of teaching. The following chart outlines examples of the currently acceptable educational formats. The program format and learning environment should be appropriate for the education program's goals and desired outcomes.

	Live Programs	Enduring (Self-Directed) Programs
In-person	Conference, course, or workshop <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture or seminar • Journal club • Case conference • Series of live programs outlined above 	N/A

Online	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virtual meeting • Online course or webinar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recorded presentation, webinar, or podcast • Web-based program (interactive or non-interactive)
Hybrid	Part live instruction + part online instruction (may be live or enduring)	
Other	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Journal-based program • Other self-study programs

Calculation of Contact Hours for Distance Education/Training and Other Alternative Delivery Methods

Self-paced programs include activities in which learners progress at their own pace, like reading a journal article or viewing a non-narrated PowerPoint. Program developers desiring to introduce new self-paced learning programs must select a representative sample of at least three learners from the intended audience – the larger the audience, the better – to complete the learning program, and then base the contact hours requested for Category 1 approval off of the average length of time required by the test audience to complete the activity.

Program developers should continue to monitor the amount of time it takes learners to complete the learning program. The standard should be adjusted, if necessary. This continuing validation provides credibility to NSGC’s established standards.

Determining Content Eligible for CEU Credit

The table below describes what can/cannot be counted for CEU credit for any given program.

Type of Session/Activity	Sub-Category	Counted	Not Counted
Introductions/Welcome/opening remarks			X
<i>Presidential address</i>			
	With professional/scientific content	X	
	With no professional/scientific content		X
<i>Poster session</i>			
	With authors present	X	
	Without authors present		X
Abstract session		X	
Business meeting			X
Open forum with experts discussing professional/scientific content		X	

Question and answer period immediately following professional/scientific presentation		X	
Panel discussion immediately following professional/scientific presentation		X	
Plenary session, workshop or practice-based symposium with professional/scientific content		X	
Breaks			X
<i>Meals</i>			
	Without speaker, facilitated group discussion on assigned topic, or professional/scientific content		X
	With keynote speaker on professional/scientific topic (For 1 hour sessions, 30 minutes is deducted from contact hour total.)	X	
	With facilitated small group discussion on assigned professional/scientific topic	X	
Session with topic and/or speaker to be announced			X
Wrap up/closing remarks			X
Course/session evaluation			X
Time spent on Quizzes/Participant Assessment (for self-paced learning)		X	
<i>Professional Issues Panel</i>			
	With keynote speaker on professional/scientific topic with specific session objectives	X	
	Without keynote speaker or specific session objectives		X

System for Awarding CEUs

Prior to the start of the program, the provider must establish a system to identify learners who meet requirements for satisfactory completion. These requirements must be shared with learners prior to their participation in the program, and participants must be informed that only those who meet the requirements will earn CEUs.

Whether each learner has (or has not) met the specified requirements for satisfactory completion to earn CEUs is verified by the conference organizer. The conference organizer then sends a list of eligible participants to NSGC so that official CEU credit can be awarded.

Standard 5: Program Planning

Program Planners

For Category 1 CEU, at least one certified genetic counselor (CGC®) must be included as either a member of the program planning committee or a consultant. The CGC® planning committee member or consultant should help to ensure the education program is applicable and relevant for genetic counselor continuing education. For Category 2 CEUs, a CGC® is not required to be included in the planning or instruction of the educational programs.

The application for Category 1 CEUs must include the CV of the Program Planning Committee Chair and any Co-Chairs. If at least one of these individuals is not a CGC®, then the CV of the CGC® consultant or committee member must also be included.

NSGC recommends that CGC®s be involved in any of the following ways:

- Ensuring that program content is appropriate and relevant to the genetic counseling profession
- Ensuring that speakers for each session/lecture are qualified to speak on their respective topics
- Identifying any potential conflicts of interest in regards to speakers, sponsors, session content, etc. and addressing those concerns with the responsible parties.

The remaining Program Planner(s) should be responsible for the following:

- Making sure that all speakers and presenters are made aware of the rules and regulations regarding conflict of interest (see Standard 7)
- Reporting any conflicts of interest (actual, potential, or perceived) to the CEU Review Subcommittee
- Attesting to the accuracy of all information submitted to the CEU Review Subcommittee for Category 1 CEU approval
- Verifying that all attendees claiming Category 1 CEUs for the event have met the requirement for CEUs (attendance, learning assessments, etc.)
- Submitting appropriate materials to NSGC CEU Review Subcommittee following completion of the event for awarding of CEUs to attendees and retaining a copy of all materials for at least 1 year after the event in case of audit by the NSGC CEU Review Sub-Committee or the ABGC

NSGC requires that Program Planners complete Educational Activity Overview (EAO) forms, or provide supplemental information that includes the fields on the EAO form, for each session/module in a given

activity. Sample forms can be found at www.nsgc.org/Category1CEU. The EAO form describes the following:

Delivery Methods

Instructional methodology of an educational program must meet *Standard 3 (page 4)* and documentation for the rationale of the chosen instructional format must be provided to NSGC, who will then determine whether the instructional methodology is appropriate.

Learning environment and support services, appropriate to the continuing education or training goals and learning outcomes, should be provided by the Program Planners.

- The design and use of facilities should facilitate teaching and learning. For example, lighting, sound, seating, visuals, reference materials, and other needed resources should be appropriate and available to enhance learning.
- In distance learning formats, such as correspondence study or computer-assisted instruction, the instructor or learning source may not be able to control the learning environment. In such cases, the instructor or learning source should include ways to support learners and facilitate learning in the planning process.
- The instructor or learning source makes available convenient, efficient, and responsive learner support services (e.g., scheduling, registration, technical support, advising, and counseling, etc.) appropriate and sufficient for the ongoing success of the learning program

Learning Objectives

The Program Planner must develop clear and concise written statements of intended learning outcomes, commonly referred to as participant learning objectives, based on identified needs for each continuing education and training learning program. These learning objectives must provide a framework for learning program planning, serve as the basis for selection of content and instructional strategies, and describe to learners exactly the knowledge, skills and/or attitudes they are expected to demonstrate as a result of completing the activity.

Learning objectives must be consistent with the stated goal(s) of the educational program. Each learning objective must be clear, concise, measurable, and contain only one behavioral verb (See <http://www.nsgc.org/d/do/744> for examples). *At least one learning objective is required for every 30 minutes of educational content AND at least one learning objective is required for each speaker.* An exception can be made for **panel discussions**, where the number of objectives will be based on the length of the panel session and not on the number of panelists.

Examples:

- For a 45-minute educational session with one speaker, two objectives are required.
- For a 30-minute educational session with two speakers, two objectives are required.
- For a 30-minute panel discussion with five panelists, one objective is required.

Learners should be informed of these intended learning objectives prior to and during the learning program. The following resources can help Program Planners design learning objectives:

- <http://www.oucom.ohiou.edu/fd/writingobjectives.pdf>
- <http://nsgc.org/d/do/6013>

Qualifications of Presenter(s)

The Program Planners are responsible for determining each presenter's qualifications and competence to deliver the material. Determining factors of qualifications include, but are not limited to: relevant education experience and/or credentialing, teaching and/or clinical experience, publications, and references. NSGC will not collect CVs from individual presenters; however, Program Planners should keep documentation of presenter qualifications for audit purposes.

Planning and Instructional Personnel

Qualified personnel are involved in planning and conducting each learning program.

- Qualified individuals must be directly involved in determining the learning program purpose, and planning, designing, developing, conducting, and evaluating each learning experience.
 - NSGC defines "qualified personnel" as those who:
 - Are competent in the subject matter;
 - Are credentialed/trained in the learning program's purpose and learning outcomes or are trained in facilitating the event; and
 - Have knowledge and skill in instructional methods and learning processes
- The quality of a continuing education program and its value to the learner rests heavily on the competence of the planners and the instructor(s) in the subject matter, and their ability to communicate and facilitate learning. It is the joint responsibility of the learning source, the planner(s), and the instructor(s) to ensure that the learning experience results in the learners achieving the learning outcomes.
- Instructors should demonstrate high standards of professional conduct and should not discriminate against learners on the basis of gender, age, socioeconomic or ethnic background, sexual orientation, or disability.
- Instructors should be provided feedback on their performance.

Verification of Participation

Program Planners must specify the method by which attendance will be verified. NSGC reviewers will determine if the method is acceptable. Examples of attendance verification methods include, but are not limited to:

- Verified attendance list
- Sign-in signature sheet
- Badge scanning
- Live webinar attendance verification code
- Completion of a quiz
 - The quiz questions can be the same as those utilized for the learning assessment (See *Standard 6* below).

When partial credit is awarded to learners who do not attend the entire learning program, the Program Planner must indicate the system used to track, calculate, and award variable credit for individual sessions attended.

Standard 6: Continuing Education Program Assessment and Evaluation

Assessment of Learning

Formal processes or procedures must be established during the planning of the continuing education program to assess achievement of learning objectives. The Program Planner is responsible for assessing whether attendees have achieved the learning objectives. NSGC will ensure that the learning assessment method is appropriate. Attendees must be informed in advance that their achievement of the learning objectives will be assessed.

Examples of learning assessments include, but are not limited to:

- Performance demonstration under real or simulated conditions
- Written or oral examinations
- Written reports
- Completion of a project
- Self-assessment

Specific Requirements for Distance/Self-Paced/Enduring & Online programs

- NSGC requires using multiple choice examinations for distance learning programs.
- A passing score of 80% or higher is required.
- No true/false style questions should be included.
- There should be approximately 5-7 questions per every 60 minutes of educational content.
- The assessments should contain questions assessing whether or not the participant has met the specified learning objectives.

Program Evaluation

Attendees must evaluate the overall quality of the educational program. The evaluation process should assess the degree to which the stated learning objectives were achieved without bias (See *Standard 7 below*), the program enhanced professional development, and the program implementation was effective.

- Program evaluation is a measurement of the quality, or determination of the worth, of the learning program as a whole, examining all parts of the planning and delivery process.
- The evaluation process should examine the needs assessment, logistical and instructional planning and execution, selection and preparation of instructors, operations, and the extent to which learning outcomes were achieved.
- The evaluation process should ask the following questions (amongst others determined by the learning source/sponsoring organization):
 - Did the learning experience and the instructional methods used accomplish the learning outcomes?
 - Did the learners indicate that the learning outcomes were appropriate for the stated program purpose and for the learners involved?
 - Was learning program execution effective and efficient?
- Distance learning programs should be evaluated periodically by comparing the degree of learner achievement to the intended learning outcomes, by assessing the appropriateness and effectiveness of the technology used, and by determining the cost effectiveness of the program
- Evaluation results should be incorporated into learning program improvements.

While separate forms are acceptable, a sample combined self-assessment and program evaluation form is available at <http://www.nsgc.org/d/do/748>.

Standard 7: Conflicts of Interest

Definitions:

Conflicts of Interest: ABGC defines conflict of interest (COI) as a situation in which a financial, professional, and/or personal affiliation has the potential to compromise an educator's judgment and may potentially bias a person's ability to objectively plan, implement, or review educational content. A conflict of interest may be actual, potential, or perceived. Potential and perceived conflicts of interest should be treated the same as actual conflicts of interest.

Financial Conflict of Interest: may include but is not limited to a wage, salary, contractor, consulting or speaking fee, teaching pay, honoraria, ownership interest, membership on advisory committee, review panel, board, or other activity from which a financial benefit is expected.

Professional Conflict of Interest: may include but is not limited to a situation where an individual receives a contract or a grant, manages funds, is a principal investigator, or is in a position to influence the outcomes of research.

Personal Conflict of Interest: may include but is not limited to a financial relationship such as those listed above that is held by one's spouse/partner.

For example, a genetic counselor presenting as part of an educational program may have a conflict of interest if he or she has a financial relationship with a commercial interest and is presenting content that is relevant to that commercial interest.

Conflict of Interest Policy

ABGC recognizes that actual, potential and perceived conflicts of interest can compromise the educational process. ABGC acknowledges that conflicts of interest may exist with industry-sponsored educational programs. ABGC also recognizes that genetic counselors and other experts employed by commercial entities possess expertise that is valuable to the continuing education of genetic counselors. Therefore, industry-sponsored educational programs may be eligible for CEUs. Program Planners and presenters are responsible for recognizing conflicts of interest and maintaining the highest level of integrity with respect to the educational content of the program.

ABGC aims to minimize the negative impact that a conflict of interest can have on continuing education through disclosure. To help assure full disclosure of any actual, potential, or perceived conflict, all presenters participating in CEU-related activities must comply with this conflict of interest standard. If a presenter does not adhere to the conflicts of interest standards outlined in this document, disciplinary action may be taken by ABGC.

All educational program presenter(s) must sign a [COI disclosure document](#) acknowledging that he/she has read the policy, is in compliance with its standards, and has fully disclosed his/her actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest.

At the beginning of each presentation, presenters must provide verbal and written disclosures to attendees (conflicts of interest disclosure on slides is required) regarding any actual, potential or

perceived conflicts of interest, and include the nature of the relationship. If the presenter does not have any conflict of interest, then the learner(s) must be informed that no conflict of interest exists. The Program Planners must provide information to attendees about the process for submitting complaints regarding conflicts of interest. CEU Providers must have a process to review and follow-up on any complaints.

Programs Planners should encourage presenters to implement techniques to manage and resolve conflicts of interest prior to the educational program; for example, by having a qualified unbiased third party conduct an impartial review of the learning objectives and presentation content.

Documentation of the methods used to identify and resolve all conflicts of interest should be submitted to the CEU Provider.

Sessions that do not comply with this conflict of interest standard may be included as part of a larger educational program but are not individually eligible for CEUs. For example, a Category 1 CEU approved conference may include industry-sponsored sessions that do not meet the ABGC conflict of interest standard; however, these sessions are not eligible for attendees to earn CEUs, and therefore cannot be counted towards the overall CEUs awarded. Even if CEUs are not being awarded for individual sessions that do not comply with the standard, speakers are still responsible for disclosing conflicts of interest to attendees.

Conflict of Interest Standards for Educational Content

Every effort should be made to minimize the effect of any conflicts of interest on the overall program content.

Generic names (i.e., non-branded names) should be used. Specific products or commercial entities should neither be promoted nor disparaged. The content of an educational program may not contain advertisements for a specific product, company, and/or service.

No advertisements may be visible at the same time as the educational content. **Branded slide templates or logos cannot be used by any presenter.** Marketing materials cannot be made available in or around the education space immediately before, during, or immediately after an industry-sponsored program. If the educational content, materials, and/or slides are developed by a commercial entity, this should be disclosed on the COI form and to the attendees.

Complaint Process for Conflicts of Interest

Should a violation of the Conflict of Interest Policy occur, a formal complaint must be filed with NSGC. The complaint should include the name of the presenter(s) who committed a violation, the name of the educational activity, and a description of the nature of the incident. NSGC reviews all complaints on a regular basis and will take disciplinary action with the presenter or Program Planner involved.

Guideline 8: CEU Payment Policy

In order for an event to receive Category 1 CEU approval (i) the event must be generally open to all potential attendees on substantially similar grounds; and (ii) you may not engage in deceptive or misleading advertising.

Specifically, all similarly situated attendees must be treated similarly, (i.e., all board certified and/or board eligible genetic counselors should be treated equally). Accordingly, a host may not charge a fee to certain attendees and not others without a reason acceptable to NSGC, in its sole discretion.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, employers may offer events approved for CEU at no cost to employees while charging non-employees a fee without seeking NSGC approval.

For example:

1. A hospital may offer a seminar approved for CEU to its employees at no cost while charging a reasonable fee to non-employee genetic counselors. However, all non-employee attendees must be charged the same fee.
2. If a provider advertises a free CEU event, such as a webinar or other educational session, it must provide such event at no cost to all attendees. If attendees are required to cover the administrative cost of obtaining CEU, the provider must disclose such requirement in advance on all marketing materials and all attendees must be charged the fee (with the exception of the provider's employees).

The cost of obtaining CEUs for an activity must be disclosed to attendees at the time of registering for the event. All requirements for obtaining CEUs, including payment, assessment and evaluation requirements, must be completely transparent to attendees.

Guideline 9: Audits

As the sole approver of Category 1 CEU events, NSGC reserves the rights to conduct random audits of any approved activities to ensure the Standards and Guidelines are met. All Program Planners should retain documentation of the following for a minimum of one (1) year after the program completion:

1. Activity brochure and/or finalized schedule
2. Verification of attendance/completion of activity
3. Presenter qualifications (i.e. CVs, bios, other relevant information)
4. Documentation of the methods used to identify and resolve all conflicts of interest
5. Completed learning assessments
6. Completed program evaluations

Should any of these materials not be available by the Program Planner if a program is selected for audit, or if the materials are found to in any way not meet the Standards and Guidelines outlined in this document, the program will automatically be placed on the list for audit in the following year.

If a program is audited more than two (2) consecutive years and is found to not meet the Standards and Guidelines, the activity may be placed on probation, meaning that it will not be eligible to apply for Category 1 CEU Credit the following year.

Guideline 10: Application Submission Process

All Category 1 CEU educational programs must be pre-approved. Category 1 CEU applications must be downloaded from the [NSGC website](#) and submitted to NSGC within the following timeframes:

- Category 1 activities must be submitted 8 weeks before the event. Applications submitted less than 8 weeks before the start of an event will incur a rush fee.
 - The approval process takes approximately 4 weeks.
 - Once an application has been submitted, NSGC will provide verbiage that must be used on any advertising material for the event to indicate the pending status of CEU approval.
- Program Planners are encouraged to submit applications for both enduring and live activities. Enduring content (online courses, conference recordings) that is offered separately from the live

activity administration should be submitted in a separate Category 1 application.

- For ongoing, series-style educational programs (e.g., case conferences, journal clubs, etc.), a preliminary application that includes the purpose of the educational program, program format, estimation of CEU/contact hours, example agenda, estimation of number of attendees, attendance verification, self-assessment, and evaluation methods are acceptable for initial submission.
 - Further required details such as the confirmed agenda, presenter names, learning objectives, and confirmation of contact hours can be submitted after completion of the program. Complete details can be found in the [Category 1 Application for Series-Style Events](#).

Post Activity Documentation Requirements

After an approved Category 1 Activity has occurred:

- The conference organizer must send NSGC all required post-event documentation within **60 days**. The required documentation can be found in the approval letter that is issued to the Program Planner.
 - For enduring activities, post-activity documentation must be submitted to NSGC on a quarterly basis.
 - If an event attendee does not claim credit for a Category 1 activity during the initial CEU intake, the attendee has 60 days from the end of the activity to communicate with the activity organizer to complete the necessary requirements (i.e. completing an evaluation form and/or quiz) to claim Category 1 CEUs.
- Once all filing materials and payment (see Guideline 9 for payment information) have been received, NSGC issues CEU certificates to eligible participants.
 - Eligible participants are defined as those who have completed the conference assessments and evaluation and paid the CEU fee to the conference organizer within the organizer's designated time frame.

Applications for Category 2 CEU educational activities are submitted to NSGC after an event has occurred that was not approved for Category 1 CEU but was approved by another educational provider (i.e CME, ACCME, CNE, etc.). Category 2 CEU applications must be downloaded from the [NSGC website](#) and submitted to NSGC within the following timeframes:

- Applications for a one-time conference, course, workshop, virtual meeting, online course or webinar must be submitted within **90 days of the conclusion of the event**.
- Applications for an ongoing, series-style educational program (e.g., case conferences, journal clubs, etc.), should be submitted on a quarterly basis.
- The approval process takes approximately 8-10 weeks.

Guideline 11: Category 2 CEU Standards & Guidelines

This application is for individuals who have attended an event that was not already approved by NSGC for Category 1 CEUs. It can be downloaded from www.nsgc.org/CEU. Applicants need to submit the application within 90 days of the last day of the conference or event, or quarterly if the event occurs as part of a series.

Category 2 activities must meet the guidelines established by another organization (CME's, Nursing Contact Hours) and provide educational content that is considered to be relevant to a genetic counselor's continuing education. Applicants will not be allowed to claim Category 2 CEU credit for poster sessions that a) were not previously approved by the other conference's approving body and b) did not have authors present.

Applications must include the following information:

- A certificate of credit stating the participant's name and credit earned. If a certificate specifying the exact credit earned is not available, the applicant must submit a certificate of attendance PLUS proof of the overall conference hours that were available for credit (in the form of an agenda/program), and then specify on the session grid the amount of hours he/she is claiming.
- The certificate should clearly indicate the name of the authorized body approving the program's continuing education credits as well as the number of credits earned. **The certificate must not be a self-report form.**
- In the cases that certificates from international conferences or other programs do not meet the above specified requirements, and a conference organizer is unable to provide special accommodations to the applicant to meet those requirements, exceptions will be made on a case-by-case basis granted:
 - The attendee provides some proof of attendance (registration receipt, photo of name tag, brochure with notes taken, etc.)
 - The attendee can also provide a conference program book/agenda document to verify the hours he or she is claiming.
- A statement from the attendee regarding the activity's relevancy to his or her professional development as a genetic counselor. The attendee can describe the application of this activity to one of the specific practice-based competencies of a genetic counselor (as described here: http://gceducation.org/Documents/ACGC%20Core%20Competencies%20Brochure_15_Web.pdf) or it can be justified in another manner.
- A copy of the program brochure showing topics, time schedule, and speakers. For case conferences or series-style events, a copy of an email with this information received from the activity organizer will suffice.
- Indication of session(s) attended that are relevant to genetic counseling should be denoted in the grid provided in the Category 2 CEU Application.
- \$25.00 nonrefundable fee.

If any of these components are not included, applications will be returned for revisions. CEU reviewers may ask for a participant's notes or other supplemental materials during their review.

NSGC will not award more credits to a genetic counselor than were already awarded by the original accrediting body for a Category 2 activity. For this reason, a certificate of credit earned must be included with the application materials.

Content Relevancy Requirements:

- Events submitted for Category 2 CEU approval are required to be relevant to the continuing education of genetic counselors.
- For more information on the practice-based competencies of a genetic counselor, consult this document: <http://www.nsgc.org/d/do/7178>
- Sessions submitted for approval should fall within ABGC guidelines for approved session structure. For information about whether various session types/categories are eligible for continuing education, please see pages 6-7.

The following activities do not qualify for Category 2 CEUs:

- Academic credit courses
- Association membership and leadership activities
- Committee meetings
- Individual scholarships
- Mass media learning programs (i.e., through television, radio, newspaper)

Applicants will hear back from NSGC within 8-10 weeks of submitting an application. If an applicant does not receive a response within this timeframe, the applicant must contact NSGC within 12 weeks of the original date of submission to have an application re-reviewed.

For those applications denied by a team for any reason (i.e. incomplete application or missing required materials), applicants may submit corrections within 30 days or less of the revision request date in order for an application to be eligible for re-review by an NSGC Review Team.

Guideline 12: Professional Activity Credits (PACs)

Specific activities that do not meet the requirements for Category 1 or 2 CEU approval through NSGC may be eligible for Professional Activity Credits (PACs). PAC credits are awarded by the American Board of Genetic Counseling (ABGC) for participation in a variety of professional activities determined by ABGC to promote educational development. NSGC does not administer PAC credit to genetic counselors.

To learn more about the opportunities and requirements for earning Professional Activity Credits, please visit http://abgc.net/Certification/documents/ABGCPACTable_2014Updates_000.pdf or contact ABGC (info@abgc.net).