



Continuing Education Unit (CEU) Guidelines and Information

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 apply to face-to-face interaction as well as distance learning programs.**

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.

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

Self-paced programs include learning programs in which learners progress at their own pace. Program developers should establish a standard number of contact hours based on an average number of hours required by several representative learners to complete the program. Program developers desiring to introduce a new self-paced learning program might select a representative sample from the intended audience – the larger the audience, the better – to complete the learning program. Each member of the sample records the actual amount of time spent completing the learning program. The number of hours spent by all members of the sample is totaled, averaged, and divided by the number of representatives in the sample. **Please note that NSGC requires a minimum of 3 learners to be considered a representative sample.**

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 the NSGC's established standards.

What CAN be Counted

The following learning activities are examples of types of activities to include when calculating contact hours for CEUs:

- classroom or meeting session time led by instructor and/or discussion leader;
- activities in which a learner is engaged in a planned learning program in which the learner's progress is monitored and the learner receives feedback. (Examples include, but are not limited to, independent study, computer-assisted instruction, interactive video, web site learning, and planned projects.)
- projects and assignments which are an integral part of a learning program; and/or
- learner assessment and learning program evaluations

For more detailed information regarding the assessment of content of live programs (or conferences) for the calculation of CEUs, please click [here](#).

What CANNOT be Counted

While unplanned and unsupervised activities may produce worthy learning and are occasionally recognized by other the professions and licensing boards, they do not meet NSGC's requirements for CEUs.

The following activities do not qualify for CEUs.

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

Specific activities that promote professional development may meet the requirements for Professional Activity Credits (PACs) as defined by the American Board of Genetic Counseling (ABGC). For more information on how to receive PACs, please visit <http://www.abgc.net/english/view.asp?x=1659> or contact ABGC at info@abgc.net.

Guidelines

NSGC requires that learning source/sponsoring organizations adhere to the following guidelines when planning activities that will be submitted for CEU approval. To access the application for CEU approval, please click [here](#).

System for Awarding CEUs: The provider must have a system in place to identify learners who meet requirements for satisfactory completion.

- Satisfactory completion requirements are established prior to the beginning of the learning program.
- Requirements for performance levels are based on the intended learning outcomes.
- For conferences and live events, NSGC requires that attendance within a given session be part of the satisfactory completion requirements.
 - Attendance requirements should be set high and documented on rosters, sign-in sheets, self-report forms, or other methods for tracking attendance. For an example of a self-report form, please click [here](#).
- Learners are informed of satisfactory completion requirements prior to their participation in the learning program and are 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 and is (or is not) awarded CEUs is verified.
- The criteria for successful completion are compatible with the learning outcomes of each learning program.
- When partial credit is awarded to learners who do not attend the entire learning program, the provider has a system to track, calculate, and award variable credit.

Learning Environment and Support Systems: Learning environment and support services, appropriate to the continuing education or training goals and learning outcomes, are provided.

- 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 and 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

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.
- 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.
- NSGC defines “qualified personnel” as those who:
 - Are competent in the subject matter;
 - Understand the learning program’s purpose and learning outcomes; and
 - Have knowledge and skill in instructional methods and learning processes
- NSGC requires that short biographical sketches and/or CVs for instructors and planning personnel be provided at the time an application is submitted for CEU approval.
- 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.
- Individuals who participate in a continuing education/training program have the right to know of any commercial interest an instructor may have in a product or service mentioned during a program. Therefore, NSGC requires that the learning source disclose each instructor’s proprietary interest in any product instrument, device, service, or materials discussed in the program, as well as the source of any compensation related to the presentation.
 - NSGC recommends that learning sources and planning personnel require instructors to complete a Conflict of Interest agreement at the time they are selected/contracted to present. Click [here](#) for a sample Conflict of Interest agreement.
 - This information must be made available to the learners prior to the program and may be conveyed through promotional materials, a written handout, or an announcement prior to the commencement of the training. Disclosure statements are not necessary if there is no commercial interest.
- The learning source/sponsoring organization must provide completed Conflict of Interest agreements to NSGC at the time an application is submitted for CEU approval.
- Instructors should be provided feedback on their performance.

Learning Outcomes: The instructor or learning source has clear and concise written statements of intended learning outcomes, commonly referred to as participant behavioral or performance objectives, based on identified needs for each continuing education and training learning program.

- The learning outcomes (performance objectives):
 - Provide a framework for learning program planning;
 - Are the basis for selection of content and instructional strategies;
 - Describe to learners exactly what knowledge, skills, and/or attitudes they are expected to accomplish/demonstrate as a result of the learning program;
 - Are the basis for providing periodic feedback, measuring progress, and final assessment of learning.
- The learning outcomes (performance objectives) must be clear, concise, and measurable.

- NSGC recommends using the suggested list of behavioral verbs when developing learning outcomes (performance objectives). Click [here](#) for the suggested list of behavioral verbs.
- Each learning outcome (performance objective) should contain no more than one behavioral verb.
- For large events such as conferences or conventions:
 - Overall learning outcomes must be established
 - **Each session** within the event must have its own learning outcomes (performance objectives) or be keyed to one or more of the overall program outcomes.
- The number of planned outcomes is appropriate for the learning program.
 - For conferences or conventions, NSGC requires a minimum of three overall learning outcomes
 - For individual sessions or smaller activities NSGC recommends a minimum of two learning outcomes (performance objectives) be established per sixty minutes of educational content
- Learners should be informed of these intended learning outcomes (performance objectives) prior to and during the learning program.

Content and Instructional Methods: Content and instructional methods are appropriate for the learning outcomes of each learning program and provide opportunities for learners to participate and receive feedback.

- Subject matter and content are directly related to learning outcomes. NSGC requires that learning sources/sponsoring organizations track this relation by completing an Educational Activity Overview form, which is available by clicking [here](#).
- Content should be organized in a logical manner, proceeding from basic to advanced levels.
- Instructional methods are consistent with learning outcomes regardless of delivery method.
- Instructional methods accommodate various learning styles.
- Learning experiences should be designed to promote relevant interaction between learner and learning resources to achieve the stated learning outcomes

Assessment of Learning Outcomes: Formal processes or procedures established during program planning are used to assess achievement of the learning outcomes.

- In every learning program for which CEUs are awarded, the learning source/sponsoring organization must require learners to demonstrate that they have attained the learning outcomes
- Assessments may take diverse forms, such as performance demonstrations under real or simulated conditions, written or oral examinations, written reports, completion of a project, self-assessment, or locally or externally developed standardized examinations.
 - NSGC recommends utilizing self-assessment tools for conferences or live programs and the sessions contained within the conference. Please click here to see a sample self-assessment form.
 - NSGC recommends using multiple choice examinations for distance learning programs.
 - A passing score of 80% or higher should be required.
 - NSGC recommends including approximately 5-7 questions per sixty minutes of educational content.
 - The way that learners will demonstrate their attainment of the outcomes should be an integral part of the program planning
 - Assessments may be made at the conclusion of the learning program, or after some elapsed time following the learning experience.
- Learners must be informed in advance that learning outcomes will be assessed.

Post-Program Evaluation: Each learning program is evaluated.

- 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 are incorporated into learning program improvements.

Submitting Your Program for CEU Approval

For consideration of Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for genetic counselors, please complete the CEU application and submit it with the required supporting material. Applications and supporting material must be received in the NSGC Executive Office no later than 6 weeks in advance of the printing of your general information brochure in order to be considered. Programs using only online announcements may submit the application up to 4 weeks in advance of the online posting of the announcement.

Once Your Program has been Approved

Organizations whose applications are approved will receive notification of the number of CEUs approved, as well as the exact verbiage that must appear in the program announcement or brochure.

Issuing of CEUs

NSGC requires learning sources/sponsoring organizations to collect, track and provide various information of an approved learning program or activity in order to issue CEUs to genetic counselors:

- Payment of \$25.00 per individual claiming CEUs will be required at the time the learning source/sponsoring organization files for CEUs on behalf of its participants.
- The learning source/sponsoring organization must provide NSGC with a spreadsheet containing the following information for each individual claiming CEUs:
 - Full Name (first, middle, last)
 - Company
 - Street Address
 - City, State and Zip
 - Email Address
 - Number of CEUs & Contact Hours to be issued
- For live events, copies of sign-in sheets and/or self-report forms (tracking learner attendance)
- For live events distance learning activities, summaries of learner assessments