The Department of Human and Molecular Genetics provides multifaceted research activities focusing on important areas of current medical and basic research. Our faculty members conduct research and clinical and educational activities at the VCU Medical Center, the Virginia Institute for Psychiatric and Behavioral Genetics and the VCU Institute of Molecular Medicine. Genetic counselors and medical genetics faculty conduct their outpatient counseling, medical genetics practice and inpatient pediatrics service at the VCU Medical Center and affiliated outpatient clinics.

- Genetic Counseling, Master of Science (M.S.)
- Human Genetics, Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)
- Human Genetics, Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) with a concentration in molecular biology and genetics
- Human Genetics, Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) with a concentration in quantitative human genetics
- Human Genetics, Master of Science (M.S.)
- Human Genetics, Master of Science (M.S.) with a concentration in molecular biology and genetics
- Human Genetics, Master of Science (M.S.) with a concentration in molecular biology and genetics
- Human Genetics, Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)/Genetic Counseling, Master of Science (M.S.) [dual degree]

HGEN 501. Introduction to Human Genetics. 3 Hours.
Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Enrollment restricted to qualified seniors and graduate students. Basic knowledge of genetics is recommended. Provides a comprehensive examination of the fundamentals of human genetics. Explores topics including Mendelian and non-Mendelian inheritance, pedigree analysis, cytogenetics, aneuploid syndromes, cancer, gene structure and function, epigenetics, gene expression, biochemical genetics, and inborn errors of metabolism. Crosslisted as: BIOL 530.

HGEN 502. Advanced Human Genetics. 3 Hours.
Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: HGEN 501 or equivalent. Enrollment restricted to graduate students. A comprehensive study of the principles of specific areas in human genetics. Explores topics including quantitative genetics, genetic epidemiology, gene mapping, animal models, the characterization of complex disease, diagnostic testing and genetic counseling.

HGEN 503. Clinical Human Genetics. 3 Hours.
Continuous course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Enrollment restricted to genetic counseling master’s students. Provides context for practice of genetic counseling through literature review and practical techniques. Places specific emphasis on pregnancy and childhood evaluation, interviewing techniques, social and ethical issues, including fieldwork in prenatal, general genetics and specialty clinics.

HGEN 504. Practice of Genetic Counseling. 3 Hours.
Continuous course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Enrollment restricted to genetic counseling master’s students. Provides context for practice of genetic counseling through literature review and practical techniques. Places specific emphasis on pregnancy and childhood evaluation, interviewing techniques, social and ethical issues, including fieldwork in prenatal, general genetics and specialty clinics.

HGEN 505. Genetics and Biomedical Sciences. 3 Hours.
Continuous course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Enrollment restricted to graduate students. Prerequisite: STAT/BIOS 543. Theoretical and empirical analyses of how demographic and evolutionary processes influence neutral and adaptive genetic variation within populations. Crosslisted as: BIOL 543.

HGEN 506. Population Genetics. 3 Hours.
Continuous course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Enrollment restricted to graduate students. Prerequisite: STAT/BIOS 543. Theoretical and empirical analyses of how demographic and evolutionary processes influence neutral and adaptive genetic variation within populations. Crosslisted as: BIOL 543.

HGEN 510. Classic Papers in Human Genetics. 1 Hour.
Semester course; 1 lecture hour. 1 credit. Enrollment restricted to graduate students in the School of Medicine. This course surveys the seminal discoveries in the discipline of human genetics and introduces students to reading, understanding, discussing, critiquing and presenting original journal articles.

HGEN 511. Human Cytogenetics. 3 Hours.
Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: HGEN 501. A discussion of recent advances in human cytogenetics. Topics covered will include chromosome banding techniques and ultrastructure, meiosis, numerical and structural abnormalities, fragile sites, cancer cytogenetics, methodology for linkage studies, and population cytogenetics. Clinical cases are used to illustrate the application of special diagnostic methodologies.

HGEN 512. Medical Genetics. 3 Hours.
Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: STAT/BIOS 543. Theoretical and empirical analyses of how demographic and evolutionary processes influence neutral and adaptive genetic variation within populations. Crosslisted as: BIOL 543.

HGEN 516. Human Genetics. 3 Hours.
Continuous course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Restriction: STAT/BIOS 543. Theoretical and empirical analyses of how demographic and evolutionary processes influence neutral and adaptive genetic variation within populations. Crosslisted as: BIOL 543.

HGEN 517. Introduction to R Programming for Statistical Genetics. 1 Hour.
Semester course; 1 lecture hour. 1 credit. Open only to graduate students or by permission of course director. This course is to provide and introduction to statistical programming in R. Lectures will provide the fundamentals for efficient handling and exploration of common data set structures in genetic and biomedical sciences.

HGEN 518. Experimental and Quantitative Human Genetics. 3 Hours.
Continuous course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Enrollment restricted to graduate students in the School of Medicine. This course surveys the seminal discoveries in the discipline of human genetics and introduces students to reading, understanding, discussing, critiquing and presenting original journal articles.

HGEN 519. Advanced Human Genetics. 3 Hours.
Continuous course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: HGEN 501. A discussion of recent advances in human cytogenetics. Topics covered will include chromosome banding techniques and ultrastructure, meiosis, numerical and structural abnormalities, fragile sites, cancer cytogenetics, methodology for linkage studies, and population cytogenetics. Clinical cases are used to illustrate the application of special diagnostic methodologies.

HGEN 520. Advanced Topics in Human Genetics. 3 Hours.
Continuous course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: HGEN 501. A discussion of recent advances in human cytogenetics. Topics covered will include chromosome banding techniques and ultrastructure, meiosis, numerical and structural abnormalities, fragile sites, cancer cytogenetics, methodology for linkage studies, and population cytogenetics. Clinical cases are used to illustrate the application of special diagnostic methodologies.

HGEN 521. Clinical and Research Skills in Human Genetics. 3 Hours.
Continuous course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: HGEN 501. A discussion of recent advances in human cytogenetics. Topics covered will include chromosome banding techniques and ultrastructure, meiosis, numerical and structural abnormalities, fragile sites, cancer cytogenetics, methodology for linkage studies, and population cytogenetics. Clinical cases are used to illustrate the application of special diagnostic methodologies.

HGEN 522. Advanced Human Genetics. 3 Hours.
Continuous course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: HGEN 501. A discussion of recent advances in human cytogenetics. Topics covered will include chromosome banding techniques and ultrastructure, meiosis, numerical and structural abnormalities, fragile sites, cancer cytogenetics, methodology for linkage studies, and population cytogenetics. Clinical cases are used to illustrate the application of special diagnostic methodologies.

HGEN 523. Advanced Human Genetics. 3 Hours.
Continuous course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: HGEN 501. A discussion of recent advances in human cytogenetics. Topics covered will include chromosome banding techniques and ultrastructure, meiosis, numerical and structural abnormalities, fragile sites, cancer cytogenetics, methodology for linkage studies, and population cytogenetics. Clinical cases are used to illustrate the application of special diagnostic methodologies.

HGEN 524. Advanced Human Genetics. 3 Hours.
Continuous course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: HGEN 501. A discussion of recent advances in human cytogenetics. Topics covered will include chromosome banding techniques and ultrastructure, meiosis, numerical and structural abnormalities, fragile sites, cancer cytogenetics, methodology for linkage studies, and population cytogenetics. Clinical cases are used to illustrate the application of special diagnostic methodologies.

HGEN 525. Practice of Genetic Counseling. 3 Hours.
Continuous course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Enrollment restricted to genetic counseling master’s students. Provides context for practice of genetic counseling through literature review and practical techniques. Places specific emphasis on pregnancy and childhood evaluation, interviewing techniques, social and ethical issues, including fieldwork in prenatal, general genetics and specialty clinics.

HGEN 526. Practice of Genetic Counseling. 3 Hours.
Continuous course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Enrollment restricted to genetic counseling master’s students. Provides context for practice of genetic counseling through literature review and practical techniques. Places specific emphasis on pregnancy and childhood evaluation, interviewing techniques, social and ethical issues, including fieldwork in prenatal, general genetics and specialty clinics.

HGEN 527. Medical Genetics. 3 Hours.
Continuous course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: HGEN 525-526 or permission of instructor. Enrollment restricted to genetic counseling master’s students. Provides medical information and principles of human genetic disease with specific emphasis on the molecular basis of Mendelian disorders, disorders of sexual development, assessment of dysmorphic features, and the genetics of common diseases. Emphasizes the use of all available resource materials in genetics.

HGEN 528. Medical Genetics. 3 Hours.
Continuous course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: HGEN 525-526 or permission of instructor. Enrollment restricted to genetic counseling master’s students. Provides medical information and principles of human genetic disease with specific emphasis on the molecular basis of Mendelian disorders, disorders of sexual development, assessment of dysmorphic features, and the genetics of common diseases. Emphasizes the use of all available resource materials in genetics.
HGEN 600. Clinical Genetics. 3 Hours.
Semester course; 1 lecture and 4 laboratory hours. 3 credits. Enrollment restricted to genetic counseling master's students. Practical experience in the genetic counseling clinic and on ward rounds. Includes collection and analysis of family histories, genetic counseling, and introduction to genetic nosology.

HGEN 601. Research in Genetic Counseling. 2 Hours.
Semester course; 1.5 lecture and .5 thesis hours. 2 credits. Enrollment restricted to genetic counseling graduate students only. Students must have chosen their research project adviser, with whom they will meet throughout the semester, prior to enrolling. Provides a comprehensive examination of the fundamentals of research relevant for the scientific advancement of the genetic counseling field. Explores topics including developing a research question; conducting literature reviews; designing a research project; working with the institutional review board; and collecting, analyzing and interpreting data. Students will develop and deliver a research proposal orally and in writing.

HGEN 602. Genetic Models of Disease. 3 Hours.
Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Understanding the molecular basis of human disease states is a major focus for biomedical research. This course will train students to investigate molecular-genetic mechanisms of disease using four genetic model organisms: the nematode C. elegans, the fruit fly Drosophila melanogaster, the teleost zebrafish Danio rerio and the mouse Mus musculus, which serve as important laboratory models for human diseases and facilitate the elucidation of the underlying molecular mechanisms.

HGEN 603. Mathematical and Statistical Genetics. 3 Hours.
Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisites: BIOS 543 and BIOS 544; CCTR 702 and 703; or equivalents or permission from the course director. Provides an introduction to the rudiments of theoretical and applied mathematical population genetics including the segregation of genes in families, genetic linkage and quantitative inheritance. Emphasizes the methods used in the analysis of genetic data.

HGEN 605. Experimental Methods in Human Genetics. 1-3 Hours.
Semester course; 2-6 laboratory hours. 1-3 credits. Restricted to students in the M.S. or Ph.D. programs in human genetics. Provides hands-on experience with the experimental methods that are used to carry out research in specific areas of human genetics prior to beginning thesis/dissertation research. Graded S/U/F.

HGEN 606. Introduction to Clinical Genetics. 1 Hour.
Semester course; 1 lecture hour. 1 credit. Prerequisite: open only to graduate students in human genetics programs or by permission of instructor. Provides an overview of medical genetics and counseling practice for non-genetic counseling students, including orientation to the translational side of research genetics and contemporary practice of clinical genetics. Graded S/U/F.

HGEN 610. Current Literature in Human Molecular Genetics. 1 Hour.
Semester course; 1 lecture hour. 1 credit. Prerequisite: open only to graduate students. Provides directed experience in critiquing, understanding and presenting current literature on a focused topic in molecular genetics. Graded as S/U/F.

HGEN 614. Pathogenesis of Human Genetic Disease. 3 Hours.
Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisites: BIOC 503 or BIOC 530-533 and BIOC 504, equivalent, or permission of instructor. Surveys the mechanisms and varieties of human gene mutations resulting in human genetic disease and emphasizes different investigational disorders using current scientific literature.

HGEN 615. Techniques in Genetic Counseling. 3 Hours.
Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Enrollment restricted to students in the M.S. in Genetic Counseling program or by permission of the instructor. Provides theory and context for interviewing as well as counseling skills required for genetic counseling practice. Literature and practical techniques utilized to acquire skills. There is significant reliance on live in-class role play scenarios to exercise and demonstrate emerging skills. Additional deconstruction of taped master genetic counselor role plays aids in the understanding and evaluation of theory and skill to be acquired. Emphasis is on understanding and developing the verbal and non-verbal skills required for effective genetic counseling practice.

HGEN 617. Genetic Analysis of Complex Traits. 3 Hours.
Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: introductory biostatistics or permission of instructor. Introduces the theory and practice of analysis of complex human traits. Provides a solid grounding in the fundamental concepts, study designs and analytical strategies for this evolving and important area.

HGEN 619. Quantitative Genetics. 3 Hours.
Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. The effects of genes and environment on complex human traits with emphasis on: Genetic architecture and evolution; nongenetic inheritance; mate selection; developmental change; sex-effects; genotype-environment interaction; resolving cause from effect; design of genetic studies, statistical methods and computer algorithms for genetic data analysis.

HGEN 620. Principles of Human Behavioral Genetics. 3 Hours.
Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. The theory of genetic and nongenetic transmission considered in relation to the design, analysis, and interpretation of studies to identify the principal genetic and environmental causes of behavioral variation. Included will be analysis of intelligence, personality, social attitudes, and psychiatric disorders.

HGEN 622. Cancer Genetic Counseling. 3 Hours.
Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: HGEN 501-502 or permission of instructor. Provides a background in as well as the most current information relevant to cancer genetics and cancer genetic counseling. Includes instruction in basic science and genetic and psychosocial aspects of cancer, with an emphasis on familial and hereditary cancers.

HGEN 631. Advanced Dental Genetics. 1 Hour.
Semester course; 1 lecture hour. 1 credit. Enrollment is limited to students in the DDS program. A 1 credit hour course on topics in human genetics with application to clinical dentistry.

HGEN 690. Genetics Research Seminar. 1 Hour.
Semester course; 1 lecture hour. 1 credit. Selected topics in genetics presented by students and staff.

HGEN 691. Special Topics in Genetics. 1-4 Hours.
1-4 credits. Lectures, tutorial studies, library assignments in selected areas of advanced study or specialized laboratory procedures not available in other courses or as part of the research training.

HGEN 692. Special Topics. 1-4 Hours.
Semester course; 1-4 variable hours. 1-4 credits. Lectures, tutorial studies, library assignments in selected areas of advanced study or specialized laboratory procedures not available in other courses or as part of the research training. Graded as S/U/F.

HGEN 697. Directed Research in Genetics. 1-15 Hours.
1-15 credits. Research leading to the M.S. or Ph.D. degree and elective research projects for other students.