

Simmons UNIVERSITY

School of Nursing



Graduate Nursing Academic Policy Handbook

2024-2025

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Greetings

Welcome to Simmons University! Simmons has had a long tradition in offering academic programs in the health profession. We have been educating nurses since 1902; dietitians and physical therapists since the 1940s, and nurse practitioners since 1978; nursing executives since 2008; and, health professions educators since 2005. While we have a long and rich history, we are preparing our graduates for a future that today is unknown. Our curricula are cutting edge and our faculty top notch scholars, researchers, clinicians, and leaders in their fields. We are a school with an inter-professional mission and approach.

The mission of the Simmons School of Nursing is to educate students to become expert practitioners, scholars, and leaders in the health professions. We respect the inherent dignity of all humanity and are committed to educating students who embrace: social responsibility and social justice; professional standards and ethical comportment; culturally competent care; diversity, inclusion, and care for all populations, including the most vulnerable members of our society; and, service to others. Our school embraces the core purpose of the Simmons Strategic Plan: Transformative learning that links passion with lifelong purpose.

This Handbook will serve as a guide during your time at Simmons. It contains program-specific terminology, policies and procedures. Please read it carefully as you are responsible for knowing and following the content herein. Additionally, this handbook will assist you in your success at the program as it delineates everything and everyone available to support you.

We wish you all the best in your studies and look forward to getting to know you and helping you achieve your goals!

Sincerely,

Graduate Nursing Faculty & Staff

Preface

This Student Handbook is published by Graduate Nursing faculty and staff. It is updated annually for the start of the September term and throughout the year as the need arises. When the handbook is revised, the program reserves the right to change any policy, process, or procedure at any time. The Student Handbook provides current information on University policies, program requirements and expectations. When a new version is available, it can be found in the LMS Foundations course and is updated on the simmons.edu website.

Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the Student Handbook and are subject to the most recent version of the Student Handbook. The policies, guidelines, procedures, and other information contained in the Handbook are not intended to, nor do they create any contractual rights for students. The Simmons School of Nursing (SoN) reserves the right to change any of the policies, guidelines, procedures, and other information contained in the Handbook at any time. If you have questions regarding any of these policies, guidelines, procedures, or other information, please contact the SON Chair or the Associate Dean of Nursing.

Overview

Simmons University is a private, non-profit, non-sectarian university providing an undergraduate program for women and graduate programs for all individuals.

The University makes all reasonable efforts to deliver the programs of study, other services, and facilities in the way described in its materials and on its website. However, the University shall be entitled, if it reasonably considers it to be necessary (including in order to manage its resources and pursue its policy of continuous improvement appropriately):

- To alter the timetable, location, number of classes and method of delivery of programs of study, provided such alterations are reasonable.
- To make reasonable variations to the content and syllabus of programs of study (including in relation to placements).
- To suspend or discontinue programs of study
- To make changes to its policies and procedures which the University reasonably considers necessary. Such changes if significant will normally come into force at the beginning of the following academic year, and if fundamental to the program will normally come into force with effect from the next cohort of students.
- Not to provide programs of study or to combine them with others if the University reasonably considers this to be necessary (for example, because too few students apply to join the program for it to be viable).

The Simmons School of Nursing

Simmons University has provided higher education programs for nurses since its beginning in 1902 and for the nurse practitioners since 1978. In 2007 the department celebrated the 100th anniversary of the first graduating class of Simmons Nurses. In response to a growing interest in nursing and the development of a direct-entry program as well as an accelerated baccalaureate program, enrollments in the Nursing Programs have increased significantly, reflecting the commitment of the faculty and administration to the advancement of professional education. Continued feedback from graduates and employers speaks to the rigor and success of the program.

The reputation of the University and of its graduates is exceptionally strong. Graduates are well known for their clinical expertise and knowledge. This is a result of not only a rigorous curriculum but also the fact that all Nursing faculty practice at least one day per week. The Master's of Science in Nursing (MSN) and Doctorate of Nursing Practice (DNP) programs at Simmons University is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (<http://www.ccnaccreditation.org>).

Vision

The Simmons School of Nursing is a welcoming and diverse community that is preeminently known for preparing innovative clinicians and knowledgeable scholars who lead the re-design of health care to address the changing needs of humankind worldwide. The education of future nursing professionals is designed to improve the health and common good of the world embracing the following values:

- Respect
 - We have the utmost regard for one's individual humanness and inherent dignity.
- Social Justice and inclusion
 - We appreciate the differences of all people, cultures, identities, and perspectives.
- Integrity and accountability
 - We accept responsibility for establishing and maintaining the trust of patients and families during the provision of safe, quality care.
- Collaboration and teamwork
 - We provide holistic care with a unique disciplinary focus as part of an interprofessional team.
- Caring and Compassion
 - We offer care and compassion to those in need with intention and purpose.
- Professional development
 - We are committed to life-long learning and the advancement of nursing science.
- Excellence
 - We provide specialized expertise and wisdom to optimize health outcomes for patients, families and communities.

Mission

The School of Nursing is preeminently known for its transformative, learner-centered education preparing students to become compassionate, patient and family-centered clinicians who care for diverse populations.

Our program of study is designed to prepare nurses in various spheres of health care to be future leaders who are clinically expert, socially and scientifically grounded, inquisitive and curious. Our graduates engage in nursing practice that is exemplified by caring, scholarship, leadership, and advocacy commensurate with their level of preparation in order to advance nursing science and address the significant health concerns within our global society.

Philosophy

The Nursing Program offers a liberal arts and professional education which is fundamental to an appreciation of individuals as citizens in a global society and the development of communication, critical thinking, clinical judgment skills to address the health care needs of a diverse world.

Professional nursing is focused on the unique relationship with patients and families and the diagnosis and treatment of their human responses to actual or potential health problems within and across various care

settings. As a member of the interprofessional healthcare team, the nurse is committed to promoting, restoring, and maintaining health, or supporting a peaceful death using knowledge from the natural sciences, behavioral sciences, and aesthetics.

Professional nurses are ethically and legally accountable for their actions within and across various care settings. The nurse independently utilizes the nursing process as a basis for the practice of professional nursing in accordance with the Standards of Nursing Practice and the ANA Code of Ethics. As an advocate, the nurse applies principles of caring and empathy to guide moral choices on behalf of the patients and families being cared for and serves as an active participant in the social and political processes that influence the healthcare delivery system.

Professional Expectations & Standards

Code of Conduct and Discipline

The faculty of the School of Nursing adhere to the standards and codes, developed by the American Nurses Association (ANA). It is expected that all students will adhere to this professional code, in all of their nursing activities. The faculty reserves the right to recommend the withdrawal of a student at any time, without prejudice, who does not maintain an acceptable level of behavior, as defined in the [ANA Code of Ethics \(2015\)](#).

Professional Standards Guide

The standards that guide the specialist programs include:

- The ANA Standards of Clinical Practice
 - [Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice, Third Edition, 2015](#)
 - [New ANA Standard 8-Jan 2017](#)
- [ANA Code of Ethics](#)
- The American Nurses Association Social Policy Statement
 - [ANA Social Policy Statement 2010](#)
- The American Association of Colleges of Nursing
 - [The New AACN Essentials](#)
- The National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties Domains and Competencies of Nurse Practitioner Practice
 - [Competencies for Nurse Practitioners](#)
- Criteria for Evaluation of Nurse Practitioner Programs (National Task Force on Quality NP Education)
 - [Criteria for Evaluation of Nurse Practitioner Programs, 5th Edition, 2016](#)

Board of Registration Policy on Good Moral Character and Licensure Requirements

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Board of Registration in Nursing Licensure Policy 00-011 Determination of Good Moral Character identifies specific criminal convictions which will permanently exclude an individual from initial Nurse Licensure in all individual states due to the egregious nature of the crime. The policy also requires initial Nurse Licensure applicants to be conviction-free for a minimum of five years before the submission of an application for initial Nurse Licensure. In addition, the disposition of any criminal conviction must be closed for a minimum of one year before the submission of a Nurse Licensure application; any other criminal case must also be closed at the time of application. Please refer to the most current policy online at: [Mass Licensure Policy 00-011](#). If you have any questions about this policy and how it may affect your ability to

become licensed as a Registered Nurse in Massachusetts, please contact the Dean of The School of Nursing immediately.

Students are responsible for being aware of the professional obligations of the state in which they are working as each state might have different requirements.

Professional Communication

The student must be respectful in all communications with faculty, staff, peers, and clinical staff. They must be open to feedback and demonstrate a willingness to incorporate feedback into their academic and clinical work.

The student must be able to communicate and exchange clinical information effectively, accurately, and in a timely manner with faculty, staff, and colleagues. The student must be able to describe the health history, patient problems, and interventions to address clinical concerns. The student must be able to offer care and communicate effectively in diverse settings and with all patient populations (*adapted from the University of Arizona College of Nursing, Essential Qualifications*).

Responses to any communication from faculty, the Clinical Placement Team (CPT), and any other Simmons or 2U staff or team member is expected to be within 24 - 48 business hours.

**Throughout the clinical placement process, a delay in communication can result in forfeit of a student's clinical placement.*

RN Work Requirement

All RN students that have less than one year of full time, or two years of part-time nursing experience (paid employment as an RN), must work as an RN during the program.

Change in RN License Status

All graduate nursing students must possess an unencumbered and unrestricted RN license in their state of residence throughout the duration of their program. Students with past or pending disciplinary action against a professional license are advised that such actions may affect a student's participation in the program. Such actions include, but are not limited to, suspension, probation or revocation, by the licensing body. A past or pending disciplinary action against a professional license will not automatically disqualify a nursing student. Rather, determinations of suitability based on licensure status will be made by the Program Director, Chair of Graduate Nursing or Dean of the School of Nursing. Students have an obligation to notify the Program Director of any new complaints or if there is an incident that changes licensure status while a student at Simmons University. Failure to report a change in licensure status is considered a serious violation and could result in dismissal from the Program.

Behaviors

As in all professional environments, the following behaviors demonstrate commitment to professional standards of conduct:

- Attending each class and clinical experience
- Arriving on time and being well-prepared
- Turning off all devices and cell phones
- Being attentive to and respectful of the individual presenting information
- Being attentive to and respectful of classmates
- Adhering to the Simmons University Honor code at all times

- Being respectful of all faculty and staff involved in the administration and delivery of the program

The student must demonstrate good judgment and complete all responsibilities related to the clinical care of their patients and their families. They must be able to maintain professional relationships that are mature, sensitive, and effective under highly stressful circumstances in environments that can change rapidly in unpredictable and significant ways. The student must be able to demonstrate empathy and caring for others and act with integrity in all situations (*adapted from the University of Arizona College of Nursing, Essential Qualifications*).

Summary of Expected Professional Behaviors for All Students

- On time for scheduled online meetings, synchronous sessions, and clinical
- Complete assignments on time
- Set goals for clinical
- Actively seek feedback and assistance
- Receptive to feedback and incorporate feedback into future work
- Communicate with all constituents in respectful manner (written and verbally)
- Identify learning needs around client issues and self-educate via professional literature, electronic sources, and weekly journals
- Listen actively
- Courteous during interactions with others
- Aware of and sensitive to cultural differences
- Collaborate with and respect the work of classmates
- Maintain confidentiality of clinical information
- Research policies and procedures relevant to the clinical setting
- Meet legal requirements to provide nursing care
- Identify steps around processing an ethical issue
- Maintain organization in order to complete assignments in a timely manner
- Self-accountable for learning

PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE AND ACADEMIC REVIEWS (LEVEL 1, 2, 3)

The Graduate nursing program is committed to supporting student success and the achievement of academic and practice proficiency while also upholding professional standards and the expectations set forth by the University-wide Student Code of Conduct. A three-level review process is used to address student academic performance and professional conduct issues. The specific level of review depends upon the severity of the concern. Information shared by the student with faculty and school administrators related to the concerns being reviewed will not be treated as confidential if the information shared raises concerns about professional performance or student safety. Students are advised that faculty or administrators will share pertinent information with each other on a need to know basis for the purpose of identifying student issues and enhancing problem solving about those issues and concerns. A student will be reviewed at the level (1, 2 or 3) that is appropriate to the concern. Instances of academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism, cheating and unauthorized collaboration) are addressed in the processes described by the [Simmons Academic Integrity Policy](#).

Reviews of students can occur for the following circumstances:

- To identify need for academic support

- To determine a remediation plan for a University Student Code of Conduct violation
- If a student fails to meet or maintain academic requirements
- If a student is terminated from a clinical placement either by the clinical placement team or by Director of MSN Clinical Education, CDM faculty or site administrators due to performance issues
- If a student exhibits behavior judged by faculty to be in violation of professional ethics and/or Simmons University and/or SoN policies
- If a student exhibits consistent pattern of unprofessional behavior in the classroom, virtual learning environment, or in clinical sites

Three Levels of Review

There are three levels of review to address student academic performance and professional conduct issues. A student can be reviewed at any level, and consecutive level review is not required. Specifically, a student may have undergone a Level 1 review and then may be asked to engage in a Level 3 review, without having engaged in a Level 2 review.

Level 1: Student/Instructor Consultation

A Level 1 review involves a consultation between a faculty member and a student, typically at the request of the faculty member. When a faculty member has concerns about a student meeting any of the academic criteria, whether related to professional behavior or academic performance, that faculty member will:

- Discuss those concerns directly with the student and seek to work with the student to resolve the difficulties.
- Apprise the Academic Advisor of the concerns
- Summarize plans and or recommendations in an email to the student

If a problem arises in an external training site (i.e., clinical setting) the supervisor is expected to discuss concerns directly with the student and with the MSN Director of Clinical Education. It is the responsibility of the MSN Director of Clinical Education to appraise the clinical placement team and Program Director of the concerns.

The purpose of the Level 1 review is to provide the student an opportunity to receive feedback from their instructors about areas of concern and suggestions for addressing the concerns.

The outcome of many Level 1 consultations is that, together, the faculty and students resolve the concerns and no further reviews are desired or required.

Examples of situations triggering a Level 1 review are attendance issues, a poor grade or missed assignment.

Level 2

A Level 2 meeting can be convened when concerns have not been resolved at Level 1 or when a student appears to be developing a pattern of not following academic or program standards, policies, or procedures.

All students on academic probation will have a Level 2 review meeting.

A Level 2 review is a meeting that usually involves the student and the student support advisor, and can also include the appropriate faculty member and appropriate program administrator.

The student will be informed of the Level 2 review by their advisor or their instructor. In preparation for the Level 2 meeting, the advisor or program administrator will gather information about the nature of the concern. The meeting will be used to discuss the concerns and to develop a Corrective Plan to address that concern. If the outcome of the meeting is that no further action is needed, the meeting will be documented as a behavioral flag in starfish but no Corrective Plan will be created.

When a Corrective Plan is determined to be appropriate next steps, the Corrective Plan may address the need for the student to modify their behavior and/or seek appropriate help or academic assistance. All parties to the Level 2 meeting, including the student, shall receive a copy of the Corrective Plan via Simmons email and a behavioral flag will be placed in starfish..

The purpose of a Level 2 review is to assist students in fully understanding and addressing the academic or professional conduct concerns that are negatively impacting their success in the program.

Examples of issues that may lead to a Level 2 review are repeated attendance problems, poor grades, and general difficulties meeting the standards and expectations of coursework or clinical placement.

Students placed on a corrective plan will be expected to meet all requirements outlined in the plan in order to progress in the program. Requirements may include required live session attendance for flex courses, referral for test taking strategies, utilization of faculty office hours, mandatory exam reviews, referral to writing center, etc.

The administrator overseeing the Level 2 review may consult with the Program Director, SoN Chair, or Associate Dean to determine if the Level 2 assessment is sufficient or whether it would be in the student's and Simmons's best interests to conduct a more comprehensive review, pursuant to Level 3.

Level 3

A Level 3 review involves the Program Director, members of the SoN Academic Review and Appeals Committee and the student.

Generally, the Level 3 review is called when serious or complex problematic patterns are identified with students or when the issues are serious enough to require formal consultation with faculty and the student. A student can be referred for a Level 3 review by a faculty member or administrator. When a Level 3 review is required a A Graduate Nursing Professional Conduct form is submitted online by the faculty or administrator to academic advising.

The Program Director, in consultation with the SoN Chair or Associate Dean, will then decide whether a Level 3 meeting shall be convened. The Program Director, SON Chair and/or Associate Dean may also consult with the Assistant Dean of Community Standards as well as file a [non-academic incident report](#) for a Simmons University Code of Conduct violation.

The Program Director will inform the Assistant Dean for Community Standards about the decision to convene a Level 3 review.

A Level 3 review may be conducted when concerns have not been fully resolved at prior Level 1 or Level 2 meetings; when a student continues to not meet the criteria for academic performance or when a student exhibits unprofessional or unethical behaviors in a classroom, online environment, or clinical setting.

When a Level 3 review is called, the school will convene a meeting with the appropriate faculty and the student. Information will be provided by the student and by appropriate faculty to determine the nature of the problem and to identify alternatives for its remediation. The student will be notified in writing of the concerns and meeting date with sufficient time to prepare for and attend the meeting. If a student chooses not to attend, a finding can be made with the available information in the student's absence.

Once an understanding has been reached, the student will be excused from the meeting. Faculty conducting the Level 3 review will confer with the SoN Academic Review and Appeals Committee and agree on recommendations, which will then be made to the Program Director who will implement a course of action based on the recommendations.

The Program Director or designee will inform the student of the decision, which can include one of the following:

- Continue the student in the program with no conditions.
- Establish written conditions for the student's continuance in the program.
- Consult with or refer to the Simmons University Associate Dean for Student Life
- Dismiss student from the program

In any Level 3 review, there must be clear, concise documentation of the problem areas as well as verification that the concerns have been discussed with the student and attempted to be ameliorated when appropriate. Students must be notified of the decision in 10 business days of the review.

Decisions which result in dismissal can be appealed following the dismissal appeal policy. Other appeals must be made within five days of the student's receipt of the committee's decision. Appeals should be made in writing to the Dean of the School of Nursing and may be made on these grounds only: a)procedural error that unfairly affected the outcome of the committee's decision; b)new information that was not reasonably available at the time to the review; c)sanctions imposed are disproportionate to the nature and severity of the offense and the cumulative conduct of the responding party.

Level 3 Reviews and Referral/Consultation with the Simmons University Dean of Student Experience

In some instances, depending on the nature of the problem, the Simmons University Dean for Student Experience or the Director of Academic Integrity may be consulted to determine whether a Level 3 Review or a non-academic incident referral or an academic integrity referral is the most appropriate course of action. After consultation, if it is determined that a report requiring a University level review is appropriate, the student will be notified.

Situations that may result in referral include academic dishonesty, plagiarism, cheating, gender-based misconduct (which includes unlawful harassment), damage or destruction of University property, and conduct that endangers the health or safety of any University student, employee, campus visitor or member of the Simmons community and conduct that disrupts the functioning of the University as an open, educational community.

Cases that are referred to another body may be referred for the purpose of developing a corrective plan. The Program Director may consult with the Academic Standards Committee for guidance in developing the corrective plan.

Social Media Use

Professional values, ethical standards, and adherence to HIPAA requirements extend to all forms of social media. Violations in relation to these professional standards and behaviors may result in dismissal from the nursing program.

Students should comply with the Massachusetts Board of Registration in Nursing regulations and the state Board of Registration of Nursing regulations in which they are practicing whenever using social and electronic media. These regulations may be updated and changed during the tenure of a student's training. Visit [Use of Social and Electronic Media by Nurses 2012](#) for more information.

Additionally, The National Council of State Boards of Nursing, in its [White Paper: A Nurse's Guide to the Use of Social Media](#) has identified guidelines that students should adhere to.

Outcomes for the Master's APRN Curriculum:

- Provide person-centered care across the lifespan to a diverse population while considering the social determinants of health.
(AACN Essentials, 2021 Domain 2 and 3).
- Evaluate and manage health care needs of communities and individuals through the application of advanced nursing knowledge.
(AACN Essentials, 2021 Domain 1).
- Conduct nursing research designed to advance the science of nursing and scholarship for the profession.
(AACN Essentials, 2021 Domain 4).
- Engage in evidence-based practice and quality improvement, leveraging informatics and healthcare technologies, to reduce inequities and improve health outcomes.
(AACN Essentials, 2021 Domain 5, 8).
- Cultivate interprofessionalism and leadership to guide practice as an advanced practice registered nurse. (AACN Essentials, 2021 Domain 6, 9).
- Analyze healthcare systems to disrupt structural barriers and optimize healthcare outcomes in a global society
(AACN Essentials, 2021 Domain 7).
- Advocate for policies at institutional and societal levels that promote social justice in healthcare.
(AACN Essentials, 2021 Domain 10).
- Advance professional growth through continued acquisition of theoretical knowledge, clinical experience, participation in self care and the professional community.

(AACN Essentials, 2021 Domain 10).

Nurse Educator

- Create evidence-based, innovative teaching strategies to impact nursing education, clinical reasoning and judgment, and positive patient outcomes.
- Develop teaching skills to enhance human flourishing for students, colleagues, patients, and communities.
- Appraise different teaching methods based on the learning styles and needs of patients and communities.

Nurse Leadership

- Analyze the complex healthcare system as it relates to leadership in nursing practice.
- Evaluate steps in the budget planning process.
- Interpret data to make informed decisions about quality improvement initiatives.
- Assemble diverse healthcare teams to provide safe, effective, fiscally responsible, equitable, and patient-centered care.
- Appraise organizational policies in order to promote growth in nursing leadership.

Professional Standards that guide the Master's Programs include:

- The American Nurses Association Standards of Clinical Practice
- The American Nurses Association Nursing Code of Ethics
- The American Nurses Association Social Policy Statement
- The American Association of Colleges of Nursing Essentials of Master's Education for Advanced Practice Nursing
- The National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties Domains and Competencies of Nurse Practitioner Practice
- Criteria for Evaluation of Nurse Practitioner Programs (National Task Force on Quality NP Education)
- The American Organization for Nursing Leadership Nurse Leader Core Competencies
- The National League for Nursing Nurse Educator Competencies

Outcomes for the Post-Graduate Certificate APRN Curriculum:

- Provide person-centered care across the lifespan to a diverse population while considering the social determinants of health.
(AACN Essentials, 2021 Domain 2 and 3).
- Evaluate and manage health care needs of communities and individuals through the application of advanced nursing knowledge.
(AACN Essentials, 2021 Domain 1).
- Engage in evidence-based practice and quality improvement, leveraging informatics and healthcare technologies, to reduce inequities and improve health outcomes.
(AACN Essentials, 2021 Domain 5, 8).
- Cultivate interprofessionalism and leadership to guide practice as an advanced practice registered nurse. (AACN Essentials, 2021 Domain 6, 9).
- Advocate for policies at institutional and societal levels that promote social justice in healthcare.
(AACN Essentials, 2021 Domain 10).

- Advance professional growth through continued acquisition of theoretical knowledge, clinical experience, participation in self care and the professional community.

Professional Standards that guide the Master's Programs include:

- The American Nurses Association Standards of Clinical Practice
- The American Nurses Association Nursing Code of Ethics
- The American Nurses Association Social Policy Statement
- The American Association of Colleges of Nursing The Essentials: Core Competencies for Professional Nursing Education
- The National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties Domains and Competencies of Nurse Practitioner Practice
- Criteria for Evaluation of Nurse Practitioner Programs (National Task Force on Quality NP Education)

Outcomes for the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) Curriculum:

- Integrate nursing science with knowledge from ethics, the biophysical, psychosocial, analytical, and organizational sciences.
(AACN Essentials for Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice, 2006, Essential I and VIII).
- Demonstrate leadership in organizations and healthcare systems to promote safe, efficient care delivery to both individuals and populations.
(AACN Essentials for Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice, 2006, Essential II, VIII).
- Conduct practice-based research.
(AACN Essentials for Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice, 2006, Essential III).
- Utilize technology and informatics to improve healthcare processes and communication and to implement change in healthcare systems.
(AACN Essentials for Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice, 2006, Essential IV, VIII).
- Advocate for healthcare policies that affect healthcare financing, practice regulations, as well as access to care, safety, quality, and efficacy of care.
(AACN Essentials for Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice, 2006, Essential V, VIII).
- Collaborate with interdisciplinary professionals and teams to improve patient and population health outcomes.
(AACN Essentials for Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice, 2006, Essential VI, VIII).
- Assume a leadership role in the design of evidence-based interventions that enhance clinical prevention and population health
(AACN Essentials for Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice, 2006, Essential VII, VIII).

Professional Standards that guide the DNP Program include:

- The American Nurses Association Standards of Clinical Practice
- The American Nurses Association Nursing Code of Ethics 11
- The American Nurses Association Social Policy Statement

- The American Association of Colleges of Nursing Doctoral Essentials (2006)
- The American Association of Colleges of Nursing The Essentials: Core Competencies for Professional Nursing Education (2021)
-

Tuition

Nursing tuition is charged by the credit hour. Tuition charges may be obtained by multiplying the number of credits by the per-credit tuition rate. The current tuition rate is available here: [Tuition & Fees](#).

Tuition Refunds

Please consult the Student Financial Services representatives or review the [tuition refund schedule](#) for the exact dates for all semesters and a description of the financial implications. Please note: The schedule differs from semester to semester.

Satisfactory Academic Program for Federal Financial Aid

To be eligible to continue to receive federal student aid, students must make Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) by achieving and completing their program of study as measured using qualitative (GPA) and quantitative (completed credits) standards.

- Qualitative Standard: Students enrolled in a graduate degree program must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0
- Quantitative Standard: A graduate student must complete at least 50% of all credits attempted. This is calculated by dividing the total credits earned by the total credits attempted.
- Graduate students are required to complete within the timeframe established by Simmons. All credits attempted will count towards this timeframe. Graduate degree candidates should consult their program as the number of credits required varies per program
- Note: Withdrawals after the add/drop period count as attempted but not completed credits.

For more information on Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP), please see the complete information and policies on the [Student Financial Services Website](#).

Program-Specific Terminology

- 2U
 - o 2U is the education technology company that provides the Learning Management System (LMS) that graduate nursing students utilize for their courses.
- The Digital Campus
 - o The Digital Campus is the LMS provided by 2U where students can access their syllabi, grades, and messages from their faculty.
- Workday Student
 - o Workday Student is the system that students use to register for classes/sections as well as add or drop from classes/sections. Students can also use this to find their final course grades and GPA, view their transcripts, and view their class schedule.
- Starfish

- o Starfish is a platform for you to schedule appointments with your Academic Advisor and to receive feedback from your faculty on your participation and coursework.
- Asynchronous vs. Synchronous Content
 - o Asynchronous content includes coursework that students do on their own time per faculty instructions and deadlines.
 - o Synchronous content includes regularly scheduled group class time.
- SI
 - o SI stands for Section Instructor. Each course has several sections to accommodate students' schedules and to keep the faculty-to-student ratio low.
- CL
 - o CL stands for Course Lead. CDM courses have Course Leads. These faculty members support and supervise the Section Instructors teaching the course.
- CC
 - o CC stands for Course Coordinator. CCs are full-time faculty members who supervise the Course Leads and Section Instructors.
- CDM/RCI
 - o CDM/RCI stands for Clinical Decision Making/Regional Clinical Instructor. During students' clinical rotations, CDM/RCI faculty will provide oversight and support to students.
- CPT or CP
 - o CPT or CP refers to the Clinical Placement Team who supports students during their clinical rotations or Clinical Placement. The CPT will assist students in finding a preceptor and clinical site.
- SFS
 - o SFS stands for Student Financial Services.
- RO
 - o RO stands for Registrar's Office.

Important Notices

The principles and policies outlined in this section apply to admissions, progression, attendance, course exemption, advanced placement, transfer, education mobility, withdrawal, re-admission, graduation, student rights and grievances.

Non-Discrimination and Title IX Policies

Simmons University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, physical or mental disability, marital status, veteran's status, or age, in its programs and activities.

Please read the information contained in the below links to learn more about Simmons University Non-Discrimination and Title IX policies:

[Admissions Notice of Non-Discrimination](#)

[Notice of Non-Discrimination Grievance Procedures](#)

[Title IX and Freedom from Discrimination and Harassment](#)

[Gender-based Misconduct Policy](#)

Statement of Solidarity for Racial Justice

The School of Nursing is [committed to racial justice](#). We believe that scientists and health professionals must have the benefit of diverse perspectives in and outside the classroom. We recognize the need to instill students with knowledge about racial/ethnic inequities and health disparities. SON aims to educate students on social determinants of health that foster disparities. We are dedicated to equipping students with the leadership skills necessary to confront, challenge, and create viable solutions for disparities in their disciplines. Through realization of these objectives our students can lead the way toward equity and improved science and health care.

Simmons University Graduate Catalog [2022-2023](#)

Bias Response Protocol

Simmons is committed to inclusive excellence in all aspects of an individual's community experience. Our values, vision and mission mandate that we strive to create an environment that is free of bias, prejudice, discrimination and hurtful acts. Individuals who believe they have experienced or encountered bias, harassment or discrimination can utilize the Simmons bias response protocol to have their concern addressed. Information about protocol can be accessed via the link below.

[Bias Responses Protocol](#)

Religious Observances

Classes may be scheduled and held on days that fall on one or more religious holidays. Please consult the academic calendar to see the dates when classes are held in a given year. Faculty members or students who are unable—because of their religious beliefs—to give a class, to attend classes, or to participate in an examination, class, or work requirement on a particular day so that they can observe a religious holiday shall be excused and provided with an opportunity to make up the examination, study, or work they may have missed consistent with [Massachusetts General Law](#). Religious accommodation is a legal right for students and faculty; it is not a matter left to the discretion of any faculty member or administrator. Absences due to religious observances are not limited to certain religions or particular holidays; the law covers all religions and all religious holidays.

Academic & Educational Records

Contact Information

All students are responsible for information sent to them using their simmons.edu address. You may forward the Simmons email to another email account.

[The Family of Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#)

The University's practice in regard to student record-keeping is based on the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 and is intended to be a safeguard against the unauthorized release of information. This act applies to all enrolled students, former students, and alumni. It does not apply to applicants seeking admission into an institution.

Under the provisions of the act, it is the right of the student to view their official educational records. Educational records are defined as records regarding a student that are maintained by an educational institution. Such records are kept in the Office of the Dean for Student Life, the Office of the Registrar, faculty advisors' offices, and the Academic Support Center. Not included in this category of records are the following:

- records containing confidential information written before January 1, 1975
- financial records submitted to the University by the parents of a student
- medical and counseling records
- records containing information on more than one student
- private records intended for use of an individual
- law enforcement records
- student employment records
- records to which a student has waived their right of access as required by a judicial order or a lawful subpoena

A student may view their record in Workday at any time. A student must make a request in writing to order an official transcript so please email the Office of the Registrar at registrar@simmons.edu to do so. The office has 45 days to fulfill the request. If requested, copies of a student's record are available to the student for a slight charge to cover the cost of duplicating. Any information in a student's record found to be "inaccurate, misleading, or [that] violates the privacy or other rights of the student" ([FERPA](#)) may be challenged by the student. Only the accuracy of the information may be challenged. For example, a grade received may not be questioned, only the accuracy of its recording. In order to contest the information in their record, the student must submit a written statement to the person responsible for the content of the record and request that they receive a written response. If no written response is forthcoming or if an unsatisfactory response is received by a student, they may appeal to the chairperson or appropriate supervisory person. In the event that no resolution is made, it is the student's right to request a hearing, to be presided over by the Dean of Student Life or a University designee.

The University has the right to publish a directory listing all enrolled students and containing the following information:

- student's name
- address
- telephone number
- place and date of birth
- concentration
- digital photo
- year of graduation and dates of attendance
- awards and degrees received
- membership in organizations
- educational institution most recently attended

A student who wishes to be omitted from the directory must indicate this via email to the Office of the Registrar at registrar@simmons.edu by the last day of the term prior to the start of the following term. For example, in order to be omitted from the directory for Term 2, the Office of the Registrar must be notified by the last day of Term 1.

A student's record is not accessible to anyone outside the University without the written authorization from the student. Exceptions to this regulation are as follows:

- officials at an institution where the student is applying for admission
- officials disbursing financial aid
- parents of a dependent student (for tax purposes)
- accrediting and educational testing organizations

- federal officials
- officials complying with a judicial order
- appropriate officials in the event of an emergency (only if necessary to safeguard the health or well-being of the student or other individuals)
- the alleged victim of a crime of violence may receive results of any disciplinary proceedings conducted by the University against the alleged perpetrator of that crime in reference to that crime. Student records are available to the above with the stipulation that this information is only for the use of the above unless written consent is secured from the student.

Student records may not be distributed to other parties. It is the responsibility of each office maintaining records to keep a log that verifies the name and date of each person who has viewed the record and for what reason. Students have the right to see this log.

A student may sign a waiver of access to confidential recommendations, but the student must be kept informed of those people providing recommendations.

Student Work

Definition

Papers, computer programs, dissertations, theses, artistic works, musical works, and other creative works made by Simmons students in the pursuit of their academic coursework while enrolled as a student.

Ownership and Use

Students shall own copyright in student work except in the following cases:

- a. Copyright to Traditional Works authored by faculty with assistance from students shall be owned by faculty or the University.
- b. The University shall own a student work that is a sponsored or externally contracted work.
- c. Students Works created in the course of the student's employment by the University shall be considered Works Made for Hire, and the University shall retain ownership and use of such works.

***Works created by students for third parties as part of an internship or experiential learning program are not subject to this policy.

To ensure that Simmons University continues to respect the learner's rights, Simmons University may not and will not accept information from learners under an obligation of confidentiality. Types of information that could be subject to confidentiality requirements include information obtained from an employer, unpatented inventions and information obtained pursuant to a nondisclosure agreement. Information that is subject to an obligation of confidentiality may not be used in any part of the Simmons University learning process, including but not limited to web postings, materials prepared for a course, dissertation work and/or comprehensive examinations.

To the degree that applicable laws or regulations provide for confidentiality, such as in connection with certain learner records and financial aid, Simmons University will abide by such laws or regulations.

Faculty members do not have authority to modify this policy. Simmons University therefore recommends that prior to disclosing any information to faculty members, learners ensure that the information being disclosed is not confidential information of a third party.

Copyright

As a community of scholars, Simmons University subscribes to the belief that intellectual property rights should be respected and honored and also that fair and appropriate use of published materials is both a legal and an ethical obligation that all members of the Simmons community should observe.

It is the policy of the University that all members abide by the relevant copyright laws. These laws include:

- The Copyright Law of the United States of America
- Title 17, U.S. Code, Sect. 101, et. seq.
- General Revisions of the Copyright Law
- Public Law 94-553 (effective January 1, 1978)
- 1998 Digital Millennium Copyright Act
- Public Law 105-304
- 1998 Sonny Bono Term Extension Act
- Public Law 105-298

The intent of the Simmons University Copyright Policy is to encourage scholarship conducted in the spirit of honest inquiry. Using the works of others obligates scholars to acknowledge such use whose works are protected by the law. It is the individual user's responsibility to comply with copyright law. You should permanently keep a copy in your files of any permission-to-use that you obtain.

Access to Learning Resources

For regulatory, accreditation and other business purposes, the online learning management system may be accessed and observed by persons other than Simmons students, faculty and staff. Access to courses may be granted by the Program Director only after determining that access is necessary, appropriate, does not infringe on the activities of learners and faculty, and does not threaten the academic integrity of the online course. Although the learning management system is not open to public access, it is not a private or confidential domain; neither students nor faculty should assume privacy within the online course.

Student Principles

Individual responsibility is the foundation of the Simmons community. The student's enrollment at Simmons University carries with it the expectation that one will abide by the Honor Code of Responsibility:

- Each member of the Simmons community is responsible for maintaining a high level of integrity, honesty, and trust within the community.
- Each student is responsible for the work of the student's own creation and for not representing it as their own work which is not their own.
- Conduct in keeping with the policies outlined in the Student Handbook and all other official publications is expected of each member of the Simmons community.

The Honor Code of Responsibility is shared by the entire Simmons community. It implies that each segment has obligations based upon its specific function within the University.

Simmons University reserves the right to require the withdrawal of any student who does not maintain acceptable academic standing or modes of behavior as outlined in the Undergraduate Catalog, Graduate Catalog, Student Handbooks, and other official publications.

Enrollment in a course implies an agreement between instructor and student. The instructor is obliged to teach, to evaluate student work, and to be available for conferences during designated office hours; the student is obliged to complete all work by the assigned deadlines, to attend all classes, and to devote sufficient out-of-class time to course material. Three hours spent out of class in preparation for every hour in class is a reasonable expectation.

Attendance and punctuality are expected at all classes. While there are no established University-wide penalties for absences, the instructor may take attendance into account when evaluating the student's performance in the course. In accordance with Massachusetts state law, no student will be penalized for absence due to religious observances.

Student Legal Name and Name Changes

A student's name of record is defined as the legal name under which the student was admitted to Simmons University. Legal name is that name, verified by a birth certificate, marriage certificate, social security card, passport, or court order.

Your legal name appears on all Simmons records, including transcripts, verifications, and diplomas. Current Simmons students who have legally changed their names since the time of admission may request that this change be made on their official records.

Students who wish to change their name from the name of record at the time of admission must provide the Office of the Registrar with legal documentation reflecting their new legal name, such as a marriage license or government-issued ID, as well as a Name Change Form. Forms may be faxed along with a scanned copy of legal documentation to the Registrar's Office at 617-521-3144 or brought to the Office with legal documentation in person, Room C-115 in the Main College Building.

Consult the Registrar's page on the University website for additional information about updating your first name for class rosters or your diploma and for indicating preferred pronouns.

Equal Access Policy

All students are given equal access to the University's programs and resources. As permitted by state and federal law, admission to the University's undergraduate baccalaureate program is reserved for individuals who identify as women. Simmons is committed to admitting qualified students of any race, color, age, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, and national and ethnic origin, regardless of disability, to all the programs and activities generally made available to students, including scholarship and loan programs, athletic programs, and other University-administered social, educational, and recreational programs, and student services. All graduate schools and programs are open to both men and women.

The Simmons Commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

The Simmons Commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion was developed with input from the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Action Council, supported by the College leadership, and unanimously affirmed by our Board of Trustees.

Simmons is committed to inclusive excellence in all aspects of an individual's community experience. Our values, vision and mission mandate that we strive to create an environment that is free from bias, prejudice, discrimination and hurtful/hateful acts that can prevent each member from thriving in the Simmons community.

Our Diversity & Inclusion Mission

We seek to extend to the entire Simmons University community opportunities for learning, growth, success, and meaningful participation and to build a welcoming, diverse, and inclusive culture for our community. To that end, we will engage in ongoing work to combat racism, bias, and all forms of individual and institutional oppression.

We believe diversity is necessary in all aspects of an educational and residential environment to ensure inclusive excellence. As an academic community, rich with varied life experiences, perspectives, and values, we are uniquely positioned to facilitate the ongoing engagement and intellectual dialogue that honors the inherent and unique characteristics of each member of our community. This includes, but is not limited to, interrogating socially constructed concepts and addressing issues of power, phobia, isms, or any other detractors to building and sustaining an equitable community.

Simmons will affirm diversity and inclusion by moving beyond tolerance and civility to a respect and appreciation that recognizes the social positioning of underrepresented and marginalized segments of the population.

Simmons values academic excellence, intellectual freedom, critical thinking, leadership, innovation, respect for the dignity of all individuals, and continuous improvement. We adhere to policies and practices that promote and support diversity and inclusion.

We prepare students to be well informed, open-minded, and sensitive to the values and diversity of others. We strive to foster an atmosphere where students can become actively engaged leaders in a changing, diverse society. We promote this goal through proactive and continual exchange of ideas among students, faculty and the general college community.

To ensure that these goals are attained, Simmons University commits to the following principles.

- We recognize, respect and honor the inherent individuality of all. We strive to ensure that all decisions concerning the educational progress of students are based on considerations appropriate to an academic institution and not on factors such as race, color, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, religion, age, national origin, ancestry, disability, or veteran status.
- All students are given equal access to the University's programs and resources. Admission to the University's undergraduate baccalaureate program considers people who self-identify as women. The University is committed to admitting qualified students of any race, color, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, religion, age, national origin, ancestry, disability, or veteran status to all programs and activities made generally available to students at the University, including scholarship and loan programs, athletic programs, and other University-administered student services, and social, educational and recreational programs.
- We subscribe to the policies set forth in Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which mandates equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities in educational programs and activities.

- We are committed to creating an atmosphere where diversity is supported with understanding, respect, and encouragement. The University does not tolerate unlawful or other harassment of employees or students. Any discrimination or harassment by any member of the faculty, staff, or student body against any other member of the community will be handled according to the process articulated in the Bias Response Protocol, Title IX Policy, Faculty Policy Manual, Employee Handbook, and other relevant Simmons policies.

Notice of Non-Discrimination

Chartered in 1899 and opened in 1902, Simmons is first and foremost an academic community whose goals include preparing students and other members of the Simmons community to be well informed, open-minded, and respectful of the values and diversity of others.

Simmons is, therefore, committed to the following principles:

- We support equal educational and employment opportunities for all persons, based on each individual's qualifications and fitness, and we seek to administer our university policies without regard to race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital or parental status, religion, age, national or ethnic origin, socio-economic status, ancestry, disability, veterans' status or genetic predisposition.
- We strive to administer our educational programs and activities, as well as the employment opportunities we provide, in accordance with all relevant state and federal requirements and implementing regulations. This includes, but is not limited to, Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Titles I and III of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, the Massachusetts Equal Rights Law (M.G.L. 93, Section 102 et seq.), and Equal Pay Act, and Chapter 151B of the General Laws of Massachusetts, as amended.
- We are committed to making our programs and activities accessible to individuals with disabilities, including our online/digital services and offerings. We recognize that in the virtual/online learning environment, technology-dependent teaching and learning processes may create unique and unanticipated access barriers. We encourage individuals to contact us if an obstacle to access is found to exist. (See below for how to do so.)
- We seek to build and maintain a Simmons where the diversity of our community members is met with understanding, respect, and encouragement, and where unlawful discrimination, harassment and retaliation by any member of the administration, faculty, staff, or student body against any other individual will be investigated, evaluated and redressed. The University does not tolerate unlawful discrimination or harassment of its employees or students or retaliation against those who report incidents of unlawful behavior or those who cooperate in the investigation of such complaints.

Reporting Sexual Misconduct

If you believe you have been subjected to gender-based misconduct (sexual harassment, sexual violence, gender discrimination, stalking, exploitation), please contact our Title IX Coordinator, at (617) 521-2768. She is located in Room E-200 in the Main Campus Building.

Students Reporting Discrimination or Retaliation

If you are a student and you believe you have been subjected to unlawful discrimination or retaliation, please contact the Dean of your College the Director of your Program or the Dean for Student Life. The Dean for Student

Life can be found in C-115 of the Main Campus Building.

Reporting a web/online accessibility barrier: Please use this form: <http://www.simmons.edu/report-barrier>. We are committed to making our programs and activities accessible to all individuals.

Advice on Whom to Contact about a Concern or Incident

If you are unsure of where to bring complaints or concerns about unlawful discrimination, harassment or retaliation, please contact the Office of the General Counsel in E-200 in the Main Campus Building or call 617-521- 2276.

Grievance Procedure

A written complaint alleging violation of the federal sex and disability discrimination laws and/or regulations (34 C.F.R. Part 106 and 45 C.F.R. Part 86, implementing Title IX; 34 C.F.R. Part 104 and 45 C.F.R. Part 84, implementing Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act; and 45 C.F.R. Part 83, implementing Section 855 of the Public Health Service Act) may be filed with the University by any student, employee, or other aggrieved person. Complaints under this procedure will not be processed from applicants for employment or admission. A University employee's allegation that they have been subjected to discrimination prohibited by the regulations will be processed under the relevant employee grievance procedure.

Inquiries concerning the application of non- discrimination policies may also be directed to the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights at the U. S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 330 C Street, Washington, DC 20202.

Student Complaints

The Nursing Department defines a formal complaint as any complaint documented by a student or external stakeholder. This may range from minor reports of dissatisfaction, to a direct violation of rights, resulting in harm, or impeding the ability to study or learn. This policy excludes a student's appeal for a grade change and/or change in academic status. There is a separate policy, delineated in the student handbooks, for these appeals. An individual, or group of students, who have complaints related to the clinical or classroom components of the course, are expected to follow these steps:

Student-Faculty Level

An individual student, or group of students, should directly discuss, with the faculty members involved, any issues related to the faculty member's performance or expectations. If a satisfactory resolution is not achieved, the student has the prerogative to inform the faculty member of any intentions to bring the situation to the course coordinator. This process should be initiated within two weeks.

Program Director

A problem, which is not satisfactorily resolved at the course level, may be taken to the program director. The Director will review the data and act as an arbitrator of the complaint.

School of Nursing

For an issue that remains unresolved after consultation with the Director, the student may take concerns to the Chair of Graduate Nursing Programs. The Chair will review the issue, and act as an arbitrator of the grievance, consulting with the Dean if needed.

Anonymous Reporting

Students who wish to report a formal complaint anonymously should refer to the [EthicsPoint page](#) on the Simmons website.

Information for Students with Disabilities

Simmons University is committed to the full participation of all students in its programs and activities. Simmons is committed to providing support services and reasonable accommodations when requested by students who qualify for them. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and the Americans with Disabilities Amendment Act of 2008 (the ADAA) protect otherwise qualified individuals with disabilities from discrimination on the basis of their disabilities. Both Section 504 and the ADAA protect the following persons: those who have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity, those who have a record of impairment, or anyone who is regarded as having impairment.

Accessibility Services

The Office of Accessibility Services (OAS) is available to students who need to utilize academic accommodations for their courses and/or field work due to a documented diagnosis/disability. Any student who believes their diagnosis/disability will impact their ability to fulfill the Essential Functions of the Nursing program (as outlined in Appendix I) should contact the OAS.

To request a reasonable accommodation(s), students must first register with OAS. Students can learn how to register with OAS [here](#). Following a review of the registration information and submitted documentation, the OAS provides eligible students with an Academic Accommodations Authorization document to share with each instructor that confirms the student's authorized accommodations. For more information about the services and accommodations available through the OAS, please visit simmons.edu/access, call 617-521-2658, or email access@simmons.edu.

The process for obtaining a reasonable accommodation for a documented disability is an interactive one that begins with the student's disclosure of her/his disability to the [Office of Accessibility Services](#), along with the request for a reasonable accommodation. Every Simmons student who is seeking an accommodation for a disability must provide Simmons with sufficient current medical documentation from a qualified clinician or health care provider that supports the request for an accommodation and sets forth suggestions for accommodations.

Human Subjects

The University has established policies on the use of human subjects in all Simmons-initiated research and training projects. The [Institutional Review Board \(IRB\)](#) is charged with overseeing all research involving human subjects at Simmons University. Students undertaking research projects that propose to use humans must do the following prior to beginning their projects: 1) prepare and submit an application to the IRB for review and approval and 2) complete the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) Program, a web-based human subjects research investigator education program. A copy of the Simmons University human subjects research policy, IRB forms, and link to the CITI training program may be found on the Office of Sponsored Programs site. The contact for the IRB is the Office of Sponsored Programs, MCB, Room E-206, 617-521-2415. It is expected that all members of the Simmons community will fulfill their legal and ethical responsibilities to ensure that the rights and safety of human subjects are protected.

Student Support Services

Academic Success

Online nursing students will have access to three advisors: a Student Support Specialist (SSS), an Academic Advisor (AA) and a Clinical Decision Making Faculty.

Student Support Specialist

The Student Support team provides support for you from the point of enrollment to graduation and beyond. This is your first point of contact to answer any questions you might have and provide direction to specific resources that you might need. You should contact Student Support for technical support of the learning management platform (Digital Campus) and general guidance throughout the program. Student Support will also reach out to you periodically with reminders (registration, account, settlement, health clearances) and to ensure your satisfaction with the program. You will be provided with a personal SSS to serve as your main point-of-contact for the duration of the program.

Academic Advisor

Your academic advisor (AA) provides guidance in regards to concerns or conflicts that might arise with course progression, plans of study, and leave of absences. The AA can assist with guidance on the materials found in any of your student handbooks as well as direct you to appropriate resource support. The AA serves as an advocate during your tenure as a student. You can reach advising at gradnursadvising@simmons.edu.

Clinical Decision Making Faculty

As an online student, your Clinical Section Instructor will provide mentoring during your clinical rotations. The goals of clinical advisement are to provide a forum for clinical enrichment, establish a mechanism to ensure continuity of open communication, and provide personal support to each student. Specifically, clinical faculty advisement may focus on:

- Identification of your learning styles and needs during the clinical practicum
- Clarification of expectations related to the clinical experience
- Oversight of mastery of instructional content as integrated in the clinical setting
- Evaluation and promotion of skill development
- Monitoring of clinical progress to include discussion of clinical cases, review of clinical evaluation tools and communication with preceptors
- Support for professional problem-solving

As advanced practice nurses they are also available to discuss professional and ethical issues of concern.

Financial Aid

If you are receiving financial aid, it is extremely important to remain in contact with your Financial Aid Counselor. Please contact sfs@simmons.edu or 617-521-2001 to get in touch with your Financial Aid Counselor.

Library Resources

The Simmons University Library fully utilizes online and information technologies that facilitate providing information resources and services that support the University's curricular and research activities. The online

catalog includes e-books, journals, government publications, audio-visual and multimedia materials, World Wide Web sites, and other library resources.

Students can contact library@simmons.edu or call the general line at 617-521-2780.

The Writing Center

The Simmons University Writing Center can assist with citation requirements and proofreading papers. Details on its resources are covered in the Foundations course. Students can contact the Director of the Writing Center, Terry Muller, at terry.muller@simmons.edu or 617-521-2471.

Peer Tutoring

The Simmons University Center for Writing and Academic Support offers peer tutoring for all grad nursing students in select courses.

- Students can create an account and log into Discord for free tutoring and study groups with fellow Simmons nursing graduate students. Click on this link and follow the instructions to get started: <https://discord.gg/Mh4KgQUR7g>
- Peer tutors put their schedule of availability on the Discord server, and students can meet them in Discord to discuss assignments.
- While the tutors are available for synchronous meetings for several hours per week, students can post questions at any time and connect with classmates 24 hours a day.
- If students have any questions about how to use Discord, they can reach out to JoJo Jacobson, the Director of Writing and Academic Support at jacobsonj@simmons.edu.

Dotson Mentoring Program

Dotson mentors are Simmons University faculty members who offer additional support for students in select courses. These mentors are listed as faculty for the course in the LMS. Dotson mentors are available for concept reviews and study sessions. Availability will be posted on course walls in the LMS.

Circumstances Requiring Clearance

Any student who believes their diagnosis/disability will impact their ability to complete the Essential Functions of the Nursing program as outlined in [Appendix I](#) should follow the procedure outlined by OAS to request accommodations. OAS cannot grant clearance on requirements outlined in the Essential Functions of the Nursing program located in Appendix I, all clearance requests must be approved through the Nursing department. Please note that any student who is hospitalized or experiences a surgical procedure must engage in this process.

Pregnancy

Pregnant students with questions/concerns about the impact of their pregnancy and/or birth of their child on the student's participation in the Nursing program should contact the Course Coordinator for didactic courses, the Clinical Director in clinical courses. Pregnant students need not contact the OAS regarding their pregnancy unless seeking a reasonable accommodation due to a pregnancy-related diagnosis/disability. Pregnancy and

parental status is covered by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Questions regarding Title IX's protections may be directed to [Simmons' Title IX Coordinator](#).

Career Center

Simmons Career Center offers many opportunities for online and campus based students. Online Students can access the Virtual Career Center where they can find industry specific development resources. The career center and VCC offer many downloadable resources. Students can sign up for 1-on-1 career coaching. Staff can help with resume reviews, mock interviews, salary negotiation, and career goal and path definition. Online students can contact a Career Counselor specifically assigned to the Nursing@Simmons program at 617-992-7278 or by email at careerservices@onlinenursing.simmons.edu. Campus based students can visit the Career Center's website at [Simmons Career Resource page](#).

Academic Policies & Procedures

Admissions Conditions

Students who have received conditional acceptance to the program must complete the admissions conditions indicated on their letter of acceptance. Online students will work with your Student Support Specialist to complete any outstanding admission conditions. Campus based students will work with the office of graduate admissions. Admission Conditions are as follows:

- **Official Transcripts**

All official transcripts are due prior to registration for the subsequent term. You will not be able to register for your subsequent term courses, which open five weeks prior to the start of classes, until this condition is met. If you require clarification of the date that this condition needs to be completed, please contact your Student Support Specialist or graduate admissions. Students are required to request official transcripts from all postsecondary institutions you have attended, even if a degree was not obtained.

Online Nursing@Simmons should have transcripts mailed to:

Simmons University
Application Processing Center
Nursing@Simmons
PO Box 30096 [015-002]
College Station, TX 77842

Or send electronically to either: applicationservices@onlinenursing.simmons.edu, OR by selecting Simmons University ONLINE- Nursing@Simmons

Campus DE and BSN-MSN students will send all transcripts to NursingCAS at the time of application via Clearinghouse of Parchment to "Graduate Health Science Admissions."

Campus based DE or BSN-MSN students who need to have transcripts mailed should have them sent to:

Graduate Health Sciences Admission
Suite C401
Simmons University

- **Statistics Course**

The statistics course conditions must be completed prior to your first term with an 83% or higher. You must complete a course that focuses on the principles of statistics and emphasizes data analysis and collection, bivariate data analysis, probability and sampling distributions, and inferential procedures. Please work with your Student Support Specialist to find a course that best suits your needs.

- **Statistics Refresher**

The statistics refresher condition must be completed prior to the end of your first term, with a 75% or higher. You will not be able to register for your subsequent term courses, which open five weeks prior to the start of classes, until this condition is met. You must complete a course that focuses on the basic concepts of statistical analysis, with a focus on both univariate (single-variable) and bivariate (two-variable) data. Please work with your Student Support Specialist to find a course that best suits your needs.

Relocation Policy for online students

The online Nursing@Simmons program is not approved in all states, and therefore students who change their state of primary residency may not be able to continue in the online Nursing@Simmons program.

Students changing their state of residence, as defined by the state in which they intend to reside, are required to complete a Relocation Form, which can be obtained from their Clinical Placement Specialist. Once the form is submitted, the placement team will verify eligibility. The program will notify the student if they are relocating to a state where Nursing@Simmons is not approved to operate. After submitting the relocation form, students are required to update their address and contact information in Workday.

Relocation During Placement Terms

Students who relocate prior to and during clinical placement terms must give a minimum of one (1) term's notice prior to relocation to avoid any delay in completing their clinical rotations. Placement cannot be guaranteed for students who do not provide a minimum of one (1) term's notice prior to relocation.

Simmons University Graduate Catalog [2022-2023](#)

Graduate Nursing Courses

Course calendars, sequences and descriptions can be found via the links below:

- [MSN Course Descriptions](#)
 - [MSN Sequence](#)
 - [MSN Calendars](#)
- [RN to MSN Course Descriptions](#)
 - [RN to MSN Sequence](#)
 - [RN to MSN Calendars](#)

- [DNP Course Descriptions](#)
 - [DNP Sequence](#)
 - [DNP Calendars](#)

RN to MSN & MSN Prerequisites & Corequisites Rules:

Students entering the program **prior to September 2019** can find prerequisites and corequisites [here](#).

Students entering the program beginning Term 1 in September 2019 or later, **OR** students who entered prior to September 2019 and transitioned to a new plan of study to accommodate the new curriculum sequence launching in May 2020 please see below:

- ***RN to MSN Specific Courses:***
 - **MATH 418 Statistics**
 - Students must pass MATH 418 (or transferred equivalent) before they can take NURP 410
 - **NURP 345 Professional Issues in Nursing**
 - Students must pass NURP 345 before they can take NURP 387
 - **NURP 492 Health Assessment**
 - Students must pass NURP 492 (or transferred equivalent) before they can take NURP 530
 - **NURP 387 Nursing Care of Communities**
 - Students must pass NURP 387 before they can take NURP 454
 - **NURP 454 Leadership and Management**
 - Students must pass NURP 454 before they can progress into the FNP didactic and clinical courses
- ***MSN FNP Specific Courses:***
 - **Advanced Pathophysiology (CHSO/CHSC 404), Advanced Pharmacology (NURP/NURS 424) & Advanced Health Assessment (NURP/NURS 530)**
 - Students must successfully complete CHSO/CHSC 404 prior to attempting NURP/NURS 424 and 530
 - Students must pass the 3Ps (courses outlined above), prior to entering their didactic, immersion weekend and clinical courses.
 - **NURP/NURS 531: FNP I Primary Care Nursing of the Child Bearing Family & NURP/NURS 532: FNP II Primary Care Nursing**
 - Students may take these courses as corequisites
 - Students must successfully complete their 3Ps prior to taking these courses
 - **NURP/NURS 533 FNP III Primary Care Nursing**
 - Students must successfully complete their 3Ps prior to taking this course
 - Students must successfully complete NURP/NURS 532 and NURP/NURS 531 prior to taking NURP/NURS 533
 - **NURP/NURS 534: Immersion Weekend and Clinical Qualification Course**
 - Students must successfully complete their 3Ps, NURP/NURS 531, NURP/NURS 532 and be actively enrolled in or have passed NURP/NURS 533 prior to attending NURP/NURS 534: Immersion Weekend
 - **NURP/NURS 535: FNP Clinical Decision Making I**

- Students must successfully complete their 3Ps, NURP/NURS 531, NURP/NURS 532 and NURP/NURS 533 and NURP/NURS 534 prior to taking NURP/NURS 535
 - **NURP/NURS 536: FNP Clinical Decision Making II**
 - Students must successfully complete their 3Ps, NURP/NURS 531, NURP/NURS 532 and NURP/NURS 533 and NURP/NURS 534 and NURP/NURS 535 prior to taking NURP/NURS 536
 - **NURP/NURS 411 Scholarly Inquiry**
 - Students must pass NURP/NURS 410 before taking NURP/NURS 411
- MSN PMHNP Specific Courses (Prerequisites & Corequisites):
 - **3Ps: Advanced Pathophysiology (CHSO 404), Advanced Pharmacology (NURP 424) & Advanced Health Assessment (NURP 530)**
 - Students must successfully complete CHSO 404 prior to attempting NURP 424 and 530.
 - Students must pass the 3Ps prior to entering their didactic, immersion weekend, and clinical courses.
 - **NURP 426 Clinical Psychopharmacology Across the Lifespan**
 - Prerequisites: NURP 424 - Advanced Pharmacology Across the Lifespan, CHSO 404 - Advanced Pathophysiology, & NURP 530 - Advanced Health Assessment Across the Lifespan
 - Corequisite: NURP 540
 - **NURP 540 Neurobiology & Differential Diagnosis of Mental Disorders**
 - Prerequisites: NURP 424 - Advanced Pharmacology Across the Lifespan, CHSO 404 - Advanced Pathophysiology, & NURP 530 - Advanced Health Assessment Across the Lifespan
 - Corequisite: NURP 426
 - **NURP 541 PMHNP I: Psychotherapy Across the Lifespan**
 - Prerequisites: NURP 424 - Advanced Pharmacology Across the Lifespan, CHSO 404 - Advanced Pathophysiology, & NURP 530 - Advanced Health Assessment Across the Lifespan
 - **NURP 542 PMHNP II: Diagnosis & Management**
 - Prerequisites: NURP 424 - Advanced Pharmacology Across the Lifespan, CHSO 404 - Advanced Pathophysiology, NURP 530 - Advanced Health Assessment Across the Lifespan, NURP 426, NURP 540
 - Corequisite: NURP 426, NURP 540, NURP 541
 - **NURP 543 PMHNP III: Diagnosis & Management**
 - Prerequisites: NURP 424 - Advanced Pharmacology Across the Lifespan, CHSO 404 - Advanced Pathophysiology, NURP 530 - Advanced Health Assessment Across the Lifespan, NURP 426, NURP 540, NURP 541, NURP 542
 - Corequisite: NURP 544
 - **NURP 544 PMHNP IV: Serious Mental Illness & Addictions Medicine**
 - Prerequisites: NURP 424 - Advanced Pharmacology Across the Lifespan, CHSO 404 - Advanced Pathophysiology, NURP 530 - Advanced Health Assessment Across the Lifespan, NURP 426, NURP 540, NURP 541, NURP 542
 - Corequisite: NURP 543
 - **NURP 534P: PMHNP Immersion & Clinical Qualification Course [Immersion Weekend]**

- Students must have successfully completed all 3Ps, NURP 541, NURP 542 and be enrolled in or passed NURP 543 and NURP 544 prior to attending NURP 534P: PMHNP Immersion & Clinical Qualification Course.
- Prerequisites: NURP 424 - Advanced Pharmacology Across the Lifespan, CHSO 404 - Advanced Pathophysiology, NURP 530 - Advanced Health Assessment Across the Lifespan, NURP 570, NURP 589, NURP 450, NURP 410, NURP 426, NURP 540, NURP 541, NURP 542, NURP 543, NURP 544
- Corequisites: NURP 543, NURP 544
- **NURP 545/546 PMHNP Clinical Decision Making I & II**
 - Prerequisites: NURP 424 - Advanced Pharmacology Across the Lifespan, CHSO 404 - Advanced Pathophysiology, NURP 530 - Advanced Health Assessment Across the Lifespan, NURP 570, NURP 589, NURP 450, NURP 410, NURP 426, NURP 540, NURP 541, NURP 542, NURP 543, NURP 544, NURP 534P
- All PMHNP courses require admission to MSN PMHNP track.

Immersion Experience & Clinical Qualification Course

FNP Immersion Experience is an on-campus course requirement of the Immersion and Clinical Qualification Course, NURP 534. Students must successfully pass the 3Ps (404, 424, and 530), NURP/NURS 531, NURP/NURS 532, and must be concurrently enrolled in NURP/NURS 533 (or already have successfully completed NURP/NURS 533) in order to be eligible to attend the Immersion Experience (NURP/NURS 534).

- FNP Students who do not pass NURP/NURS 533 will still be permitted to complete NURP/NURS 534 and attend the Immersion Experience during the term in which they are enrolled in NURP/NURS 534. Students must repeat NURP/NURS 533 successfully, prior to starting NURP/NURS 535.
- Students who drop or withdraw from NURP/NURS 533 during the term, will also need to withdraw from NURP/NURS 534 and enroll in both courses again in a subsequent term.
- Students who fail the Immersion must retake NURP/NURS 534 prior to beginning NURP/NURS 535: FNP Clinical Decision Making I. Once students have successfully completed NURP/NURS 534: Immersion and Clinical Qualification Course, they will proceed to NURP/NURS 535: FNP Clinical Decision Making I and begin their clinical rotations.
- Students who complete Immersion but are delayed from starting NURP/NURS 535 due to a leave of absence or other reason will be required to remotely repeat the head-to-toe physical examination check-off if it has been more than one year since they attended Immersion Weekend.
- Students who complete Immersion but are delayed from starting NURP/NURS 535 due to a leave of absence or other reason will be required to repeat 534 and return for Immersion if it has been more than two years since they attended Immersion.

PMHNP Immersion Experience is an on-campus course requirement of the Immersion and Clinical Qualification Course (NURP 534P). Students must have successfully completed all 3Ps, NURP 541, NURP 542 and be enrolled in or passed NURP 543 and NURP 544 prior to attending NURP 534P: PMHNP Immersion & Clinical Qualification Course.

- PMHNP students who do not pass NURP 543 or NURP 544 will still be permitted to complete NURP 534P and attend Immersion Weekend after successfully completing NURP 543 and NURP 544. Students must repeat NURP 543 and NURP 544 successfully, prior to starting NURP 545.
- Students who drop or withdraw from /NURP 543 during the term, will also need to withdraw from NURP 534P, and enroll in both courses again in a subsequent term.
- PMHNP students who fail Immersion must retake NURP 534P prior to beginning NURP 545: PMHNP Clinical Decision Making I. Once students have successfully completed NURP 534P: PMHNP Immersion and Clinical Qualification Course, they will proceed to NURP 545: PMHNP Clinical Decision Making I and begin their clinical rotations.
- Students who complete Immersion but are delayed from starting NURP 545 due to a leave of absence or other reason will be required to remotely repeat the head-to-toe physical examination check-off if it has been more than one year since they attended Immersion Weekend.
- Students who complete Immersion but are delayed from starting NURP 545 due to a leave of absence or other reason will be required to repeat NURP 534P and return for Immersion Weekend if it has been more than two years since they attended Immersion.

DNP Prerequisites & Co-Requisites:

- NURP 640 Advanced Research Methods
 - Must be completed prior to DNP Project Seminar Sequence
- NURP 750A DNP Project Seminar I
 - Must be completed prior to NURP 750B & C
- NURP 750B DNP Project Seminar II
 - Must be completed prior to NURP 750C
- NURP 690 Capstone Advisement
 - DNP students must enroll in NURP 690: Capstone Advisement (one credit tuition; no credit is earned), in order to continue work on the Capstone Project, should they not complete their project within the 3-term DNP project sequence.

DNP Symposium

The DNP Symposium for Emerging Nurse Leaders is an on-campus course requirement. After the final term of the Post-MSN to DNP program, students participate in the Doctoral Symposium for Emerging Nurse Leaders. The symposium gives students the opportunity to present their DNP Projects to their peers and faculty as a final requirement to complete their degrees.

Designed to offer professional development and career guidance, the symposium also includes skills workshops, networking opportunities and social events, and a featured speaker and/or panel of experts.

Change in Status from Part-Time to Full Time

Students who are admitted to the program at part-time status are required to begin the program part-time. Should a student wish to accelerate to full-time status after starting the program, they must petition to do so.

MSN/FNP/PMHNP students will not be permitted to accelerate from part-time to full-time prior to completion of term 2, and RN-MSN/FNP/PMHNP students will not be permitted to accelerate from part-time to full-time prior to completion of term 5. In addition, students must successfully complete NURP 424: Advanced Pharmacology Across the Lifespan 1 before being allowed to accelerate to full-time.

Petitions will be accepted no sooner than week 7 of term 2 for MSN/FNP/PMHNP students, and term 5 for RN-MSN/FNP students. However, approval to accelerate starting in the next term will be contingent on receiving a passing grade in all courses, including NURP 424. Any student who is approved to accelerate, but later fails a course may be required to move back to part-time status.

Please note the following students are not eligible to petition for acceleration to full-time:

- Any student who has less than one year of RN experience
- Any student who has received a grade of B- or lower in any course while in the program

The DNP program does not offer a FT program track. PT is required throughout this program sequence.

Change in Specialty Track

MSN students who are in good academic standing can petition to transfer specialty tracks (FNP or PMHNP). Students are required to declare their intent to transfer specialty tracks as soon as possible. Interested students should complete the following steps.

- Contact academic advising for information on how the transfer would impact the plan of study, program completion date, clinical rotations, or financial aid.
- Meet with the program directors from FNP and PMHNP in person or via zoom.
- Request the Graduate Nursing Specialty Track Transfer Petition Form from advising
- Campus FNP students who wish to transfer to PMHNP must also transfer online

Transferring between FNP and PMHNP is not guaranteed and may extend the duration of the program curriculum, as well as impact the availability of clinical sites and federal financial aid eligibility. Transferring between tracks is dependent on additional factors, including but not limited to: 1) the track being approved in the state in which the student resides, 2) a student being currently in good standing, and 3) discretion of the Program Directors.

It is highly encouraged that you also speak with Student Financial Services to discuss the financial implications of this transfer. More than one transfer between specialty tracks during the duration of your program of study is not permitted.

Students may only transfer if they are in good standing. Students who are on academic probation or students who have been dismissed and reinstated may not request a specialty track transfer.

Online Specific Mode of Delivery

You have chosen to pursue your course of study via distance learning. The platform on which the program is delivered incorporates the best available web technologies. The platform uses Web 2.0 tools to stimulate classroom discussion. Anyone familiar with networks like Facebook should feel comfortable with these tools. Students will not need to be proficient with distance education technology before enrolling, but basic computer literacy, such as knowing how to access a web site, is required. Students log onto the learning management

platform using a secure Simmons login and password. Synchronous sessions in the online nursing program are small (approximately 17-25 students) and done via a web video camera. An orientation module for the program is provided and a technology help-desk is available to both students and faculty.

Technology requirements and best practices can be found [here](#).

Important information regarding Chromebook/ChromeOS compatibility can be found [here](#).

Mode of Delivery Program Transfer

Transferring between an online and on-campus program of study is not guaranteed and may extend the duration of the program curriculum, as well as impact the availability of clinical sites, scholarships and federal financial aid eligibility.

A request to transfer your program of study mode of delivery must be discussed with your Academic Advisor. All transfers must be approved by the Program Director. More than one transfer between mode of delivery during the duration of your program of study is **not** permitted.

To begin the request process, please complete the [Mode of Delivery Transfer Petition Form](#) and provide it to your academic advisor.

**On-Campus Direct Entry MSN and 4+1 Students*

On-campus DE (Direct Entry) and 4+1 MSN students wishing to transfer to the online Nursing@Simmons MSN program, may only transfer after completing the prelicensure portion of the curriculum. Proof of passing the NCLEX is required by May 1 to continue your program of study. Proof of RN employment is required by May 1st.

- All Direct Entry Nursing Program and 4+1 students must work a minimum of 8 hours per week, in a paid position, as an RN, while enrolled in the Graduate Nursing Program. Students will be required to submit proof of RN employment to academic advising by May 1.

Online Live Session Protocol & Attendance

This policy pertains to all online Nursing@Simmons courses, with the exception of NURP 424, NURP 530, NURP 531, NURP 532 & NURP 533. Please review the [FLEX classes attendance policy](#) for these courses.

Live sessions occur each week in all Nursing@Simmons courses. Your attendance is required. The live session class time is intended to deepen your understanding of the asynchronous materials. It also offers a time to discuss, demonstrate, analyze skills, and knowledge that will be applied in nursing practice.

Attendance at ALL live session classes is mandatory, for the full duration of the live session. Students who partake in outside class activities or attend class in a setting with friends, family members, or pets during the live session will be asked to leave the live session, which will impact any participation grade and result in a class absence.

Nursing@Simmons faculty strive to provide students with the best learning experience possible. Live session classes occur each week in all Nursing@Simmons courses. These classes are regarded as a time to deepen

an understanding of the asynchronous material and any clinical work experienced in a given week. It also offers time to discuss, demonstrate, analyze skills, and knowledge that will be applied in nursing practice. According to the live session protocol, students should arrive on time for each live session class, consistently demonstrate professional behavior, and respect the live session classroom. This includes being dressed appropriately, exhibiting professional behavior, and ensuring the setting is in a quiet, private area away from friends, family members, pets, and other distractions that can interrupt learning. Students are also expected to be engaged and fully present during the entire live session class. Talking with others or completing side work irrelevant to the live session class interferes with the ability to fully participate in the learning experience. Driving or being a passenger during the live session class, for example, not only poses a safety hazard but impedes the ability to be completely engaged with faculty and peers.

Expectations:

- Be On Time
 - Log into the session early enough to have your audio and camera setup. All students must have their audio & camera active to be considered present. Be ready to work when the class begins.
- Be Professional
 - Nursing@Simmons is a professional education program in an applied field. Live classroom is an extension of the field, and therefore you are expected to treat live class time as you would a professional setting.
- Respect the Classroom
 - Dress: Be appropriately dressed—comfortable clothing is fine, but you should not attend class in your pajamas or beachwear.
 - Setting: Make sure that you are in a quiet, private setting where people, pets, and other distractions will not interrupt your learning or the learning of your classmates.
 - Lighting: Be sure your camera has the appropriate lighting on your face. Make sure that you do not have too much back light, such as a bright light or window behind you, because this will make it difficult to see your face.
- Be Prepared
 - Each week you are expected to prepare for the live session prior to class time. Please refer to your syllabus or the Coursework section of your online class module to know what tasks need to be completed.
- Be Engaged
 - You are expected to be ready to work during your live session. Live sessions require your full presence and commitment to learning. Each week you must be prepared to listen to your classmates, offer feedback and engage in discussion.

Online FLEX Class Live Session Protocol & Attendance

This policy pertains to the following online Nursing@Simmons courses, NURP 424, NURP 530, NURP 531, NURP 532 & NURP 533. Please review the [standard attendance policy](#) for all other Nursing@Simmons courses.

Students are reminded that this is a program leading to a professional degree, and accordingly, class attendance is regarded as not only important but also a privilege. As adult learners, we want to respect students' individual learning styles and complex schedules. Although attendance at live synchronous sessions

is **optional** in NURP 424, NURP 530, NURP 531, NURP 532 & NURP 533, failure to be actively involved in the course may jeopardize the student's success in this course.

Students are required to be present in the online course community each week and actively engaged in the coursework. Students are required to participate in any assigned online discussion forums, online group activities, online group exercises, and projects as assigned in the course. Attendance by way of online participation may be considered in the calculation of the student's final grade, as each activity may be assigned a value and be counted toward the student's final grade. Please refer to the syllabus for the course required on-line participation requirements. The instructor reserves the right to issue a failing grade for lack of online presence in this course.

Excused Absences:

This policy applies to all campus based courses and to online courses which require attendance.

Although attendance is mandatory we recognize that unexpected circumstances arise, and that students might not be able to attend all required sessions and may require an excused absence. Students will be allowed 1 faculty approved excused absences per course. The student is responsible for notifying the appropriate instructor(s) of a potential absence at the beginning of the term for events already scheduled, and not less than a week before a potential missed absence once a term begins outside of an event of illness, death, or other emergent crises.

- Acceptable Excused Absences Examples (*instructors may require written verification):
 - documented illness*
 - deaths in the immediate family and other documented crises*
 - call to active military duty*
 - court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty and subpoenas)*
 - religious observance
 - special requirements of other courses currently enrolled in by the student (e.g. CDM synch session conflicts with a clinical day/time)*
 - consideration will also be given to students whose dependent children experience serious illness*
- Absences that will not be considered "Excused:"
 - missing class without clear communication with the SI approval for an excused absence
 - employment schedules are typically not an excused absence outside of extreme circumstances and supporting documentation*
 - athletic training/practice schedules
 - vacation

If excused for an absence, the student is responsible for all missed material. The student will be responsible for reviewing the missed synchronous session in online courses, meeting with the instructor, and completing all academic work within a period of time and in a manner deemed appropriate by the instructor. With any missed classes the instructor may work with the Course Coordinator to assign the student an additional make up assignment to assure the students optimum professional/academic development.

One unexcused absence from class will result in the Section Instructor submitting an academic warning. Two or more unexcused absences may result in course failure.

Examinations

All exams and quizzes will be conducted online through the LMS (Digital Campus). Unless otherwise instructed, you will be required to have your two-way video camera on during the online exam or quiz. All students will be required to sign the Simmons Honor Pledge prior to exams.

Prior to starting the exam students are required to complete a 360 degree room scan, as well as a scan of the desk they are working on. After the exam, students are once again required to complete a 360 degree room scan, as well as a scan of the desk they are working on and should not discuss the exam with other students who have not yet taken it.

Additionally, all exams will be proctored via Proctorio. Proctorio is a software system that verifies a student's identity and automatically proctors students throughout the examination. Proctorio will flag any suspected violation and provide the faculty with brief video clips and screenshots if a suspected violation occurs.

Examples of exam violations include, but are not limited to:

- Privacy violations (another person in the room)
- Facial obstruction/suspicion
- Outside noise/sound
- Opening additional applications
- Leaving the exam room
- Having multiple monitors or devices in the room (including cell phones/tablets/apple watch)
- Opening or running screen sharing or video chat applications (ex: skype)
- Repeatedly looking away from the screen such as looking to the side, up or down for unclear reasons

When taking exams and quizzes students are required to have the following:

- A hardwired high-speed internet connection
- A private location with no distractions
- Nothing around that could make noise
- Proper lighting so face is visible
- All browser tabs and other programs closed
- Only one keyboard, mouse and monitor connected to the computer

Unless otherwise stated, you may not collaborate with others or use any references during any examination.

This means that during an exam you may not:

- Leave the testing area/camera view
- Open another browser window or use any other method to look up an answer
- Communicate with anyone via online chat, telephone, email, text message, in-person, or any other method
- Use or have nearby any additional technology devices (phones, tablets, televisions, additional laptops)
- Have any other books, papers, notebooks or other materials, unless specifically permitted in written guidelines in the testing area/room.
 - Have any other portable electronic devices in the room. Cell phones may be in the room in a desk drawer in the case of an IT issue. However, the phone may not be on the desk for any reason. If a student encounters a testing issue and needs to retrieve a cell phone, announce

this to the camera so your issue can be documented during the exam (For example, say to the camera "My screen just went blank and I am now getting my phone to call support..."). Send a follow-up email to your section instructor and Course Coordinator about the incident immediately following the exam.

- **You may not use headphones or earbuds of any type.**
- Have any other computer monitors or televisions in the testing environment and if that can't be avoided, they must be powered off.
- Have pets, children, or other family members/friends in the room
- Ask someone to take the exam for you
- Copy, print, post on social media, write down or screenshot exam questions. This is a violation of the honor code.
- Read exam questions or content out loud unless you have documented accommodations from the Office of Accessibility Services (OAS).
- Use scratch paper unless you have documented accommodations from the Office of Accessibility Services (OAS). If you have an accommodation for scratch paper you must show both sides of the paper to the camera at the start of the exam to demonstrate it is blank. At the end of the exam you must show both sides of the paper to the camera so all notes can be read. Anything written down may not be shared with other students. No more than one piece of 8 in x11 in paper is allowed.

Any of the above violations will lead to either point deductions from your exam or a complete exam failure as determined by the School of Nursing Academic Review and Appeals Committee. Any repetition of these violations that occur throughout the exam creates a strong suspicion of cheating or the opportunity to cheat and will be considered an academic integrity violation and will become a permanent part of the student's academic record.

It is the student's responsibility to make sure that they have the proper technology (i.e. computer, webcam, etc.) as well as reliable access to the Internet prior to synchronous sessions and exams in order to complete course work. If a student anticipates a technology issue prior to any of these situations, their Section Instructor and Student Support should be notified proactively. Exam retakes are not allowed. Students should contact Student Support [Phone: (855) 465-7466 Email: studentsupport@onlinenursing.simmons.edu] immediately if there is a technology issue during an exam. All of these situations will be reviewed by the Section Instructor, Course Coordinator or Program Director.

All students are required to review the [Proctorio Student Guide](#) prior to completing their first exam.

Room Scan

Students who do not complete the required room scan/desk scan and/or are using scratch paper and neglect to show the camera the blank paper (both sides of the paper in full view) **at the start and then again once the exam is over**, will receive the following sanctions below:

	Room Scan
1st Offense	Written Warning
2nd Offense	5% of the exam grade

3rd Offense	10% of the exam grade
4th Offense	15% of the exam grade

*Students with accommodations for scratch paper who neglect to show the camera the blank paper (both sides of the paper in full view) **at the start and then again once the exam is over**, are subject to the sanctions outlined above.

*Failure to perform a room scan creates a strong suspicion of cheating or the opportunity to cheat. Repeated violations may be considered an academic integrity violation and could become a permanent part of the student's academic record.

Exam Violations

Exam violations are subject to review by the Section Instructor and Course Coordinator. If an exam violation is identified, the SI or CC will notify the student and request a meeting to review the violations. The student will have the opportunity to respond during the meeting and provide any rationale for violations. Sanctions including, but not limited to, written warnings or grade deduction on the exam may be levied by the CC.

Any decision of the CC may be appealed by letter from the student to the Program Director within five (5) business days after the date of decision notification. The appeal must be sent to the Program Director in writing and shall state the justification for the appeal.

Exam violations may create a strong suspicion of cheating or the opportunity to cheat. As such, violations may be referred to the School of Nursing Academic Review and Appeals Committee for further evaluation and sanctions which may include written warnings, academic probation, additional assignments, grade deduction of up to a zero, or referral to the Simmons University Director of Academic Integrity for cases which merit dismissal from the program.

Any decision of the School of Nursing Appeals and Academic Review Committee may be appealed by letter from the student to the Dean within ten (10) business days after the date of decision notification. The appeal must be sent to the Dean in writing and shall state the justification for the appeal. An appeal will only be reviewed if the appeal is made on the basis of bias, an error in the application of policy, or for lack of due process. If the Dean determines the appeal is being made on the basis of bias, an error in application of policy, or lack of due process then the appeal will be reviewed. The decision of the Dean shall be communicated to the student in writing and is the final decision.

Exam Deadlines

Exam deadlines will be outlined in the course syllabus and may vary by course. All graduate level nursing exams will be open for a minimum of 4 days and a maximum of 7 days as determined by the course coordinator. All exams will be open for at least one full weekend day and faculty are expected to respond to student exam related inquiries within 24 hours.

All examinations must be completed by the posted due date day and time. Any examination started after the stated exam due date & time will result in an exam failure and a grade of zero will be applied. If a student goes over the allotted exam time any questions answered after the time allotment will be disregarded.

Examples:

- Missed date/time:
 - If the exam is due on Saturday at 11:59 pm EST and a student takes the exam at 2:00 am EST the exam will not be counted and the student will receive a grade of zero.
 - If the exam is due on Saturday at 11:59 pm EST and a student starts the exam at 11:00 pm EST and finishes at 12:15 am EST, questions answered after 11:59 pm EST will be disregarded.
- Going over time:
 - If there are 75 minutes allowed for an exam and the student takes 90 minutes any questions answered from minutes 76 - 90 will not be counted and the student will be given zero credit for those questions.

Technology Disputes

To assure consistency with respect to managing technology-related disputes in regards to submission of coursework—whether it is discussion board posts, examinations, quizzes, written work, or other assignments—the only documentation that will be used to determine the outcome of any appeal will be what is provided by 2U and Simmons University's review of the incident. No outside evaluations, repairs, or connectivity issues will be part of the process related to any review. It is the student's individual responsibility to ensure that they have submitted all exams, quizzes, and course work in the allotted time.

Exam Review Process

Exam-based courses adhere to a feedback policy that includes the following components:

1. Group concept review – Within 48 hours of exam grades being published for students, the Course Coordinator will post a recorded post-exam content review session. The Course Coordinator will discuss areas/topics from the exam where students, in general, did not demonstrate proficiency. The discussion will be conceptual in nature, including general knowledge and application of this knowledge. The Course Coordinator will provide concept review for all questions in which 40% of students got the answer incorrect. The recorded review will be posted on the course wall and will remain open for one week from the date posted, after which time the recording will no longer be accessible.
2. 1:1 exam review with section instructor – **Any student that receives below an 80.00% on an exam** is required to reach out to the section instructor within three days of their grade being posted to request a meeting so the student can understand the content and develop strategies for success. *If a student scores 80% or greater and would like an exam review, this can be scheduled upon request.*

The meeting will occur within seven (7) days from grades being posted. It is the student's responsibility to notify the faculty if they cannot attend the scheduled meeting. A student who does not attend a scheduled exam review meeting without prior notification may forfeit the opportunity to review the exam. The purpose of the exam review is to provide clarification on concepts missed during the exam. Students are required to review the concept review video posted by the course coordinator prior to meeting with the faculty, if the video is available. Questions and concepts from those questions will not be reviewed again, unless the student is seeking further clarification and explanation. Only concepts

from missed questions will be reviewed. Students will not be permitted to view the actual question or have the question read to them. Any argumentative or unprofessional behavior displayed during the exam review will lead to a termination of the exam review. The exam review should not last longer than 30 minutes.

- a. When a student's exam score is below 80.00%, the faculty's goal is to help students master the content and provide guidance around appropriate study, writing, and test taking habits.
 - b. The faculty and the student will discuss potential reasons for poor performance and a plan for improvement.
 - c. Review the applicable exam area(s) to discuss the content the student was unable to master or has questions about.
3. If a student feels they answered a test question correctly, but it was marked incorrect the following procedure will be followed:
- a. Any inquiries about an exam question should be submitted to the section instructor after the student reviews the post-exam review recording. Any questions must be submitted to the section instructor within 72 hours after the post-exam review recording has been posted to the course wall. Requests made outside of that time-frame will not be accepted
 - b. The section instructor will review the applicable exam area(s) and provide the rationale/ feedback around the question(s) to the student. The rationale will be from assigned readings, asynchronous or synchronous material.

Grading Policies

Overview

All MSN & DNP graduate nursing students must earn a final grade of **B (83.0%) or better**. Grades are not rounded. To assure the highest level of comprehension and fairness to all students there will be no exceptions.

- The following undergraduate courses in the RN to MSN program require a **75% (C) or better**, weighted exam and overall average to pass the course: NURP 492, NURP 345, NURP 387, NURP 454, and MA 418.

Online students are responsible for adjusting for time zone differences and should follow Eastern Time. For example, if an assignment is due at 5:00pm Eastern Time and a student lives in the Pacific time zone, the assignment should be turned in at 2:00pm Pacific Time.

Unethical behavior or professional/personal misconduct warranting failure of a course or academic probation/dismissal include but are not limited to violations of:

- Simmons University's [Code of Conduct](#)
- Professional Standards of Care
- Code of Ethics for Nurses
- The regulations governing nurse practice through the individual state/district Nurse Practice Acts.

Students are expected to make progress towards all course objectives throughout the semester. If in the opinion of the faculty, clinical preceptor and/or student, such objectives are not being met, the student may be required to do additional coursework in order for objectives to be attained. The instructor reserves the right to issue a failing grade for lack of progression.

Transfer Credit Policy

Students may transfer a maximum of 4 courses (up to 12 credits). Any such course must be a master's level course and the student must have achieved a B (83%) or better. Courses must have been taken within the last five years, except CHSO/CHSC 404, NURP/NURS 424, and NURP/NURS 530, which must have been taken within the last three years. The student must fill out the [transfer of credit form](#) and submit the syllabus to their academic advisor. Transfer credit will not be accepted for any Simmons course in which the student fails to achieve a passing grade. The failed course must be retaken at Simmons. Approval of the Program Director is required for all transfer credit requests.

Transfer credit requests will not be considered after a student has completed Term 1. All required documents for a transfer credit petition must be submitted by the last day of a student's first term. Transfer credit is not accepted for the following courses:

- FNP: NURP/NURS 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536
- PMHNP: NURP 426, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 534P, 545, 546

**Simmons University MSN Alumni may waive DNP-level NURP 660 and NURP 670 if they have completed MSN-level NURP 589 and NURP 450, respectively, with a B (83%) or better on their first attempt during the completion of their MSN program at Simmons. MSN level courses must have been taken within the last five (5) years.*

Grades and Their Values

A	95	-	100	4.0
A-	90	-	94	3.67
B+	87	-	89	3.33
B	83	-	86	3.0
B-	80	-	82	2.67
C+	77	-	79	2.33
C	75	-	76	2.0
C-	70	-	74	1.67
D+	67	-	69	1.33
D	63	-	66	1.00
D-	60	-	62	.67

Grade Appeal Process

Grade appeals can occur for the following three reasons: computational error; arbitrariness or capriciousness; unlawful discrimination. Students who wish to appeal an assignment or exam grade based on these reasons have five (5) business days after the grade is posted to initiate the appeal process. The process of appealing a grade is available to students to ensure that the evaluation processes for academic courses and clinical experiences were fairly applied. Students who wish to appeal an assignment or exam grade will first meet with the Instructor to discuss their concerns about the grading process. If the student wishes to appeal after they meet with their SI, they will submit their request and the rationale for the request in writing to the Section Instructor and Course Lead or Course Coordinator within five (5) business days of receiving the assignment or exam grade. The Section Instructor, Course Coordinator and student will then set a time to meet. The Program Director may become involved if necessary. The Section Instructor and Course Coordinator will then review and discuss the student's concerns as well as all written documentation of academic and/or clinical concerns.

If the student and faculty are unable to reach an agreement about the grade, the Program Director should be contacted if they are not already involved in the process. If an agreement is still not reached the student can appeal further to the School of Nursing Academic Review and Appeals Committee.

The student will be notified of the decision of the School of Nursing Academic Review and Appeals Committee in writing by email (via their simmons.edu email account) within ten days of the committee meeting.

Any decision of the School of Nursing Academic Review and Appeals Committee may be appealed by letter from the student to the Dean within ten (10) business days after the date of decision notification. The appeal must be sent to the Dean in writing and shall state the justification for the appeal. An appeal will only be reviewed if the appeal is made on the basis of bias, an error in the application of policy, or for lack of due process. If the Dean determines the appeal is being made on the basis of bias, an error in application of policy, or lack of due process then the appeal will be reviewed. The decision of the Dean shall be communicated to the student in writing and is the final decision.

Academic Performance Expectations

Progression and Retention

- A student can be dismissed from a course in the program at any time with cause.
- The Clinical Faculty or Section Instructor can submit an academic/clinical warning when the progression students' performance is considered to be marginal and/or unsafe. The justification for a warning includes but is not limited to the following:
 - Quizzes or exams with a grade B- or below
 - Overdue assignments
 - Poor attendance
 - Poor or unsafe clinical practice
 - Violation of the Honor Code
 - Violation of the [Professional Code of Ethics](#)

Program Completion Policy

All degree requirements must be completed within five years of matriculation for all MSN and DNP programs. At five years or more, prior academic coursework may be required to be repeated.

Unsatisfactory Student Progress

- All students must maintain a 3.0 GPA. If a student's GPA falls below the required 3.0, or they demonstrate unsatisfactory clinical performance, they may be placed on academic probation. Any student who does not pass a course with a grade of B (83%) or better will be placed on academic probation the following term. If probation occurs, the Program Director or an Academic Advisor will notify the student of the probationary status. This notification will delineate the specific goals the student must meet in order to continue in the program. A student will be removed from academic probation after successfully completing their next semester and receiving a B or better in all courses.
- A student will be placed on probation for demonstrating behavior inconsistent with ethical, legal, or professional standards.

- If a student takes a leave of absence after being placed on probation, they will be on probation for the semester they return to the program.
- A student who fails a course may proceed into another course only if the subsequent course does not require prior successful completion of the failed course. If the failure is in a clinical course or clinical placement, the student may not proceed in the program until the clinical course is successfully completed.
- Repetition of a course may affect a student's ability to progress with their class and/or their expected date of graduation.

Repeated Courses

When a student is required to repeat a course, both grades remain on the transcript and are accounted for in the GPA. All students are required to earn the requisite number of unique degree credits to graduate. A student is allowed to repeat a maximum of two courses in which they have earned a grade below a B (83%). Students are allowed to repeat a failed course only once. A student will be dismissed from the program if they fail to obtain a grade of B or better in a repeated course. Students who are dismissed for failing the same course twice will not be allowed to appeal for reinstatement.

The same course cannot be enrolled in more than twice, therefore students are only permitted to withdraw from the same course once earning a W grade.

A student is not permitted to re-submit any work submitted in the prior class. This includes asynchronous work as well as written papers and exams. Students required to repeat a course will do so at their own expense.

Dismissal

- A student who has failing grades in any two courses will be dismissed from the Nursing Program.
- A student may be dismissed from the program if they are on probation for more than two semesters over the course of obtaining the degree.
- A student may be dismissed from the program for demonstrating behavior that is illegal, unethical, or unprofessional.
- A student will be dismissed from the program if they verbally or physically threaten members of the University administration, faculty, staff, students, or clients in the practice setting.
- A student may be dismissed from the program if they fail to progress academically as the same course cannot be enrolled in more than twice.

Dismissal Appeal

Students who are dismissed for failing the same course twice will not be allowed to appeal the dismissal due to lack of academic progression.

A student who has failed two different courses in the program has the right to appeal a dismissal decision by petitioning the School of Nursing Academic Review and Appeals Committee. A student may petition the School of Nursing Academic Review and Appeals Committee if there were extenuating circumstances that led to the grades received that resulted in program dismissal.

All dismissal appeals must be submitted in writing via email to the Program Director and Academic Advising within 30 days after the dismissal letter is issued.

Denied Dismissal Appeal

Students who are terminated from the program and have been denied reinstatement by the School of Nursing Academic Review and Appeals Committee have the right to appeal this decision in writing to the Dean of the School of Nursing within 10 business days of the decision. The decision of the Dean is final and cannot be appealed further.

Approved Dismissal Appeal

If a student's appeal is approved, they will receive a letter of reinstatement from the Program Director specifying the date they can return to the program. The length a student must wait before returning to the program will be determined case-by-case by the School of Nursing Academic Review and Appeals Committee. The reinstatement period for students will be the next available term. Students cannot be reinstated less than a week prior to a term start, therefore return may be delayed. The School of Nursing Academic Review and Appeals Committee may condition reinstatement on requirements or pre-requisites that the student must meet prior to re-starting the program. Reinstated students are re-admitted to Academic Probation and on a part-time plan of study. If a reinstated student fails any other course during their time in the program, they will be automatically dismissed and cannot re-apply to the program or appeal for reinstatement.

SON Academic Review & Appeals Committee

The SON Academic Review & Appeals Committee reviews concerns pertaining to the academic/and or clinical progression of nursing students who fail to meet academic, professional, or ethical standards as prescribed by the SON and Simmons University. This committee will also function as the local appeals committee. The SON Academic Review & Appeals Committee considers formal written requests from students who are seeking an exception to nursing program policies. The appeal must be submitted to the Committee Chairperson within the time frame for the particular appeal:

Policy Being Appealed	Time frame for Appeal Following Student Notification of Decision
Program exclusion	30 days
Other appeals	10 days
Grade appeal	5 days

A student may seek an exception to a policy or appeal decision if:

- There is new information that could influence the outcome
- The student views the original decision as a disproportionate response

- The student believes that the policy/policies is/are administered unfairly

The Committee has regularly scheduled meetings throughout the academic year.

SON Academic Review & Appeals Committee Process

- A written request is submitted by the student to the Committee Chairperson. Students are strongly encouraged to consult with their faculty advisor in preparing their appeal form and planning for their appearance in front of the SON Academic Review & Appeals Committee.
- The Committee Chairperson will place the student's appeal for consideration at the next available SON Academic Review & Appeals Committee meeting. The Committee will make reasonable efforts to consider appeals in a timely manner. The committee will not hear any cases that do not meet the criteria/basis for the desired appeal.
- Prior to meeting with the student, the Committee may choose to consult with faculty or others involved in the case.
- The student will be invited to appear at a SON Academic Review & Appeals Committee meeting, where their case will be heard. Students are allowed to have their faculty advisor attend the meeting with them if they choose.
- The student will be notified in writing of the Committee's decision within 10 business days of the meeting at which their appeal was heard. Notification of the decision will also be sent to the Dean of the College of Natural, Behavioral, and Health Sciences, the SON Chair and the Nursing Academic Coach or Academic Advisor.
- Students excluded from the nursing program may petition the SON Academic Review & Appeals Committee one time only for readmission.
- If the Appeals Committee grants an exception to a policy, the matter will be referred back to the Chair(s) responsible for determining how to best implement an appropriate plan for student progress.
- The Dean of the School of Nursing will be the final arbiter.
- Students can appeal to the SoN Academic Review and Appeals committee only once.
- Students cannot be reinstated less than a week prior to a term start, therefore return may be delayed.

Withdrawal from Nursing in Good Standing

In order to withdraw from either a course or the program in good standing, a student must be passing and meeting all requirements for the program. If they wish to be reinstated, they should submit a written request to the Program Director. The Director will notify the student if any supplemental materials need to be submitted to be considered for reinstatement and will ultimately make the final decision.

Administrative Withdrawal

Students who do not register for classes in consecutive terms and are not on an official leave, or have not officially withdrawn, will be administratively withdrawn by Simmons. Students must be approved for reinstatement in order to be considered for return to the active student status. Students cannot be reinstated less than a week prior to a term start, therefore return may be delayed.

Leave of Absence

Students are eligible for up to one year leave of absence (LOA) during your program of study. Students on military deployment are allowed additional time with permission from the registrar.

- Students must complete a LOA form. To receive the LOA form, please contact your academic advisor.

- If a student takes a LOA, they are eligible to request a return to classes after the term in which you took an LOA has ended. For example, if they take a LOA during the term that runs from May 23 to September 12, they may request a return to a term that begins on or after September 13.
- If a student goes on leave and has any outstanding admissions conditions, they must be completed in full before the student can return from a LOA and resume courses.

Intent to Return Policy

At least 1 term before a student plans to return to the program, students must submit an [Intent to Return form](#) to their academic advisor (gradnursadvising@simmons.edu) no later than 14 weeks prior to their intended return.

If a student plans to only take one semester off (regardless of when the leave is requested), they must submit their Leave of Absence form and Intent to Return form at the same time.

Coursework Completion while on Active Duty/Military Assignments

Students who are required to participate in weekly or monthly meetings, weekend drills, annual training, military schooling or any other training or official military event as a member of the ROTC, National Guard, Reserves, or the Inactive Ready Reserve, will be excused from class.

- The student must provide a copy of their orders or a letter from a unit commander or a readiness/full-time staff Non-Commissioned Officer (NCO). These must be sent to the student's academic advisor. The academic advisor will send the provided information to the faculty for documentation purposes. This is not an approval process. This is for documentation purposes only.
- The student is required to contact their faculty regarding making up work prior to missing class. The faculty member is responsible for giving the student a reasonable extension for making up missed work. A one-day extension per day of class excused is recommended.

Course Evaluations

Students will receive course evaluations to complete at the beginning of week 12 during the term. Evaluations must be completed and submitted by the end of week 13. The evaluations can be reviewed by the instructor only after student grades have been submitted. Evaluations are reviewed by the instructor, the program director, the Department Chair, and/or the Dean.

Student Concerns

An individual or group of students who have concerns related to the clinical or classroom components of the course are expected to follow these steps:

Student-Faculty Level

An individual student or group of students should directly discuss with the instructor any misunderstanding or grievance related to the Instructor's academic performance or expectations. If a satisfactory resolution is not achieved, the student has the prerogative of informing the faculty member of the intention of bringing the situation to the Course Coordinator. This process should be initiated within two weeks.

Course Coordinator/Program Director Level

A problem which is not satisfactorily resolved at the instructor and course coordinator level may be taken to the Program Director. The Course Coordinator and the Program Director will review the information or data related to the concern and act to resolve the concern. This includes communication with both students and course faculty. The Course Coordinator and Program Director will not review the concern without confirmation that the student first brought the concern to the section instructor.

University Level

For an issue that remains unresolved after consultation with the Director, the student may take concerns to the Chair of Graduate Nursing. The Chair will review the issue, and act as an arbitrator of the grievance, consulting with the Dean of the School of Nursing if needed.

Honor Code & Academic Integrity

Honor System

A vital part of the collegiate experience at Simmons University, the Honor System, embodies values of personal integrity, honesty, and trust. Fundamental to the Honor System is the Honor Code of Responsibility, and it is upon its principles that the University community has based the Simmons Standards of Conduct. The Simmons University Honor System has existed since 1907, making it one of the oldest continuing honor systems at any University in the country. Throughout the decades, the Honor System has been revised and amended on an annual basis. Changes are made after consultations with faculty, staff, and students.

Honor Code of Responsibility

The students, faculty, and administrators of Simmons University agree to accept the following responsibilities:

- Each member of the Simmons University community is responsible for maintaining a high level of civility, integrity, honesty, and trust within the community.
- Each student is responsible for presenting work of their own creation, and refraining from representing as their own work which is not theirs.
- Conduct in keeping with the policies outlined in this handbook and all other official University publications is expected of each member of the Simmons community.

The Honor Code of Responsibility is shared by the entire Simmons community. It implies that each segment has obligations based upon its specific function within the University.

Academic Integrity

Each student is expected to read, understand, and observe the policies outlined in this handbook as well as all other policies that govern students enrolled at Simmons University including those found in the [Simmons Student Handbook](#), and the [Simmons University Student Code of Conduct](#). Each student is expected to assume guardianship for the Honor System. To remind students of their personal responsibility under the Honor System, they must sign-off on the honor pledge during the course expectations quiz at the start of each course during week one.

Any student who violates the standards of the Honor System must accept the consequences of their behavior. Important to the integrity of this system is the pledge of each student not only to observe the Honor System but also to try to ensure that others in the community also act honorably.

Faculty/Administrative Responsibility

At the beginning of every semester, each instructor is expected to define and explain—clearly and carefully—standards of conduct as they relate to cheating and plagiarism in their course. Simmons University expects that instructors will refer explicitly in their syllabus to the Simmons University Honor Code and also formally discuss their expectations and standards around academic integrity and attribution and citation practices in each of their classes. The instructor should also clarify their interpretation of individual work, and the extent to which student collaboration and the use of outside assistance will be permitted on papers, laboratory reports, and in-class or take-home examinations. The instructor will use the Statement on Cheating and Plagiarism as a guide for constructing their definition.

Each instructor is asked to make conditions in the online classroom synchronous sessions conducive to the best possible academic achievement of the students. To reinforce student responsibility under the Honor System, students will answer the Honor Pledge as question #1 on all major examinations before testing begins. All examinations will be conducted via the LMS and remote proctored using Proctorio. Instructors should remind students that examinations may not be removed from the assigned examination classroom unless otherwise specified. They should also indicate any time limits that apply as well as the procedure for submitting the examination upon its completion. The instructor should provide specific written instructions as to the use of source materials, time limitations, and the methods of submitting the exam. The instructor should also indicate where and when they can be reached if further clarifications are necessary.

Each administrator is responsible for clarifying policies and procedures with respect to the function of their office in relation to the Honor System.

Statement on Cheating and Plagiarism

Cheating and plagiarism are major academic violations of the Honor Code of Responsibility. It is the responsibility of the instructor and students in a particular class to clarify specific applications of the Statement on Cheating and Plagiarism. Selling or distributing lecture notes, handouts, readers, or other information provided by an instructor, or using them for commercial purposes without the express permission of the instructor, is an academic violation and also violates the University's Honor Code.

Cheating is defined as the representation of someone else's work as one's own. A partial list of examples follows:

- Copying another person's test, paper, or report.
- Collaborating, including a) working with another person or persons in execution of a test, report, or paper without authorization to do so; and b) discussing a test, report, or paper.
- Using crib notes, such as referring to notes brought into class for use during an examination without authorization to do so.
- Using books, class notes, or other source material during an exam without authorization to do so.
- Downloading information from the Internet and presenting it as one's own work and/or without proper attribution.
- Committing laboratory violations. Except where collaboration is permitted or special regulations are made by the instructor, all work for which credit is sought must be performed by the individual student. The unauthorized use of old laboratory reports is a violation of the code. Where procedures are not clear, it is the responsibility of the student to confer with their instructor.

- Submitting the same paper, or substantial parts thereof, in more than one course without the knowledge of the professor.
- Committing computer violations. Except where collaboration is permitted or special regulations are made by the instructor, all computer work for which credit is sought must be performed by the individual student. Tampering with or unauthorized reading of files belonging to others are violations of the code. Where procedures are not clear, it is the responsibility of the student to confer with their instructor.
- Violating any other explicit regulation announced by the instructor and/or circulated in writing to each student at the beginning of the semester.

Plagiarizing is defined as intentionally or unintentionally using someone else's words or thoughts without giving proper credit. All work for which a source is not cited is assumed to be the sole product of the author, i.e., the student. This includes handing in as their own work a paper on which they received extensive aid with substance and/or structure. When using material from outside reading, reference material, etc., the student must use proper citation. The use of term papers or other work obtained from commercial or other services is a clear case of plagiarism and is specifically prohibited.

Turnitin

Turnitin is a text--matching software tool that is integrated into the online LMS and is available to faculty for both educational purposes (i.e., improving student writing and citation practices) and for the review of student work in case of suspicion of plagiarism or other breaches of Simmons's academic integrity policies.

Turnitin indicates whether the text in a submitted document matches text in its database, which has three components: the Internet, journal article databases, and papers previously submitted to Turnitin by participating universities.

In instances of suspected plagiarism or cheating, the Section Instructor will notify the student and Course Coordinator. The Section Instructor and/or Course Coordinator will review the assignment and arrange to have a conversation with the student to gather information and adjudicate the assignment to determine whether or not the student has violated the Simmons University Honor Code. If found in violation of the Honor Code, the case will be referred to the School of Nursing Academic Review and Appeals Committee. The student will receive a letter from the School of Nursing Academic Review and Appeals Committee outlining the findings and any imposed sanctions. Cases which rise to the level of potential dismissal from the program will be referred to the Director of Academic Integrity.

Registration Policies and Procedures

Online Waitlist Policy

Effective September 2021, the @Simmons Online programs will no longer be using waitlists during open registration. If a student is not able to enroll in an open section, or there are no open sections, students will be required to complete the [@Simmons Section Capacity Exception Request Form](#). Professors cannot override the system and add students to their classes. The student should **not** contact the professor to be put into the class.

All forms must be submitted by 4pm on Monday prior to the term start. **Submitting this form does not guarantee a spot in the requested section.** All forms will be reviewed by the registrar's office, and a decision will be emailed to you no later than the Tuesday before the term starts.

As a reminder, any seats that open up during open registration can be claimed by anyone at any time. Continue to check Workday frequently to see if you can enroll in an open section. If you are able to register for an open section after submitting your request form and no longer need an exception, students are required to email Advising and Student Support.

Students are expected to register for courses according to the plan of study which has been issued to the student by academic advising. Failure to register based on the plan of study may result in delayed program completion, administrative withdrawal from courses, ineligibility for federal financial aid in terms with less than 5 credits of coursework, or an administrative leave of absences. These implications are based on the updated plan of study which is created according to course availability, course sequence and prerequisites, and maintaining eligibility for federal financial aid.

Add/Drop

Campus students should refer to the [academic calendar](#) for add/drop dates.

For online Nursing@Simmons students, Add/Drop begins the Monday after registration ends. Students may add or drop a class until the end of week 2 of a course by Sunday at 11:59pm Eastern Time. Students may add or drop by emailing the Office of the Registrar. Requests to add courses will be processed based on enrollment availability. Students are responsible for informing the instructor and for making up any missed coursework in an added class. For courses dropped after week two, students must complete and submit a Course Withdrawal Form. Students may not add a class after week two. Courses dropped after the second week of the term will appear on the student's transcript with a grade of "W."

All students who change their schedule by dropping or adding a course should consult with their Academic Advisor to ensure that they will continue to meet degree and graduation requirements. Students should also consult with the Student Financial Services to be fully informed of the impact of course changes on their financial aid.

Please visit the Tuition [Refunds Schedule](#) and view the chart for graduate students to assist you with understanding the financial effects of dropping a class.

Withdrawal Policy

If you are unable to continue in a specific course online, students can withdraw from the course up until Sunday of the 8th week at 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time. Campus students should refer to the [academic calendar](#) for withdrawal dates.

After this withdrawal period has ended, students are not able to withdraw from a course; they will remain registered and earn a letter grade. It is highly recommended that you speak to your course faculty prior to requesting a withdrawal. A "W" will be noted on your official transcript. Students are allowed to withdraw from one particular course (ex. NURP/NURS 424) no more than once. Students must inform Academic Advising via

email if they intend to withdraw from a course to request the course withdrawal form. Students with previous withdrawals or other considerations outlined below should meet with their Academic Advisor prior to withdrawal. Should a student completely withdraw from a course after classes have begun, he/she may still be accountable for a portion of tuition. The percentage of tuition to be refunded is calculated using the official drop date of the course as determined by the Registrar. In all cases, students should be aware that any reduction in the number of registered credit hours and subsequent charges may affect their financial aid.

- Students who wish to withdraw from a course, past the Simmons deadline, must submit a written petition to academic advising which will be reviewed by the Program Director.
- If a student withdraws from one or more nursing courses during a single semester because of documented health concerns, those courses from which the student withdraws will be exempt from the course withdrawal policy. Medical documentation will be required to code the W as medical.
- Students are allowed only one opportunity to repeat a nursing course from which they withdrew or in which they were unsuccessful.

In addition, students may withdraw from their program at any point in the term, up until the end of the course withdrawal period. After that time, students must remain enrolled in courses until the end of the term. Once final grades for the term have been submitted, the program withdrawal will then be processed.

Withdrawal Process

To start the withdrawal process from a course or a program, please email your Academic Advisor at gradnursadvising@simmons.edu to receive the withdrawal paperwork. Once the paperwork is submitted, you will be withdrawn from the course or program within 1-2 business days. You will receive a confirmation email once you have been officially withdrawn.

Incomplete

Required coursework must ordinarily be completed by the last day of the term. In extenuating circumstances, students may request an "incomplete" by obtaining approval from the course instructor, which will be facilitated by the academic advisor. The advisor will distribute the Petition for Incomplete Grade form electronically to the student, and copy the course instructor and course coordinator. The form must be completed and submitted in order to be officially granted an incomplete grade in the course. Once the form is submitted, a grade of "I" will be entered by the Office of the Registrar. It is the student's responsibility to monitor their progress and complete all work so that the instructor can submit a final grade by the date set. Students can only extend their final grade with an incomplete for two weeks from the last day final grades were due. If a student does not submit required work by the new due date, the instructor will grade the student based on what has been done up until that point. The grade earned will be assigned accordingly on the due date listed. Grades not submitted by the instructor to the Office of the Registrar on the approved deadline will automatically be converted to a grade of "F." Incomplete grades not accompanied by a petition will be automatically converted to a grade of "F" by 11:59pm EST on the date grades are due.

Audit

Online courses are ineligible for auditing. In the event of an extenuating circumstance, a student interested in auditing an online Nursing@Simmons course should contact the Program Director.

Course Cancellation Policy

Simmons University reserves the right to cancel any courses without prior notification. Every effort will be made to provide information on cancellations in a timely manner. In the event of cancellation, Simmons University will refund tuition charges.

Graduation

Degree Conferrals & Diplomas

Degrees are conferred on the last business day of the month in January, March, July, August, and October. Degrees are conferred the third Friday of May. Diplomas are mailed to the address that students have on file in Workday. Diplomas will not be released if there are significant outstanding obligations to the University or financial holds on a student's account. No records pertaining to the student account will be released until these obligations and holds are fulfilled and lifted.

Petition to Graduate

At the start of their second to last term, students will receive a Petition to Graduate form from the Registrar's office via email to their Simmons email address. Students are required to complete the Petition to Graduate form and return it prior to the start of their final term. Failure to submit the Petition to Graduate will result in exclusion from the graduation list.

Commencement

Commencement occurs in Boston in May each year. Specific information will be sent out via the Provost Office close to the actual date of Commencement. Students with degree conferral dates from July of the year previous to the ceremony, through May of the year of the ceremony, are eligible to attend and participate in the May Commencement. For general information, students can visit the [Commencement website](#).

Virtual Commencement

In addition to the May Commencement ceremony, all @Simmons online students will be invited to attend the Virtual Commencement ceremony. Virtual Commencement is held twice a year, in March and September. Students are eligible to attend Virtual Commencement, as outlined below:

- May through August degree conferrals: September Virtual Commencement Ceremony
- October (previous year) through March degree conferrals: March Virtual Commencement Ceremony

Clinical Placement Policies & Procedures

All policies and procedures pertaining to clinical placement can be located in the [Simmons University Graduate Nursing Clinical Placement Policy Handbook](#).

Appendix

Appendix I: Essential Functions for Simmons University Nursing Students

Definition

Essential functions refer to the responsibilities of a job that are of major importance and which, if eliminated, from the position would substantially change the nature of the job. The purpose of this document is to describe, in detail, the specific expected essential functions that nursing students perform as they care for patients during clinical learning experiences. This policy is adapted, with permission, from the policy developed by the Academic Leadership Committee of the Utah Organization for Nurse Leaders: State of Utah Student Nursing Physical Demands created by Eric Passey MPT, Intermountain Health Care.

Summary

Students must demonstrate good judgment and complete all responsibilities related to coursework as well as the clinical care of patients and families. They must be respectful in all communications with patients, families, faculty, staff, peers and clinical staff and be able to maintain professional relationships that are mature, sensitive, and effective under highly stressful, unpredictable, and rapidly changing circumstances. Students must have the ability to communicate and exchange clinical information effectively, accurately, and in a timely manner. Students must be open to feedback and able to incorporate faculty and staff recommendations in the care of patients. Students must be able to offer care and communicate effectively in diverse settings with all patient populations and must be able to demonstrate empathy and caring for others and act with integrity in all situations.

Technical Standards Summary

Under the supervision of a licensed nurse, student nurses are responsible for direct patient care for those individuals assigned to them during a scheduled shift. A shift varies in duration from 4 to 12 hours and may be during the day, night, or weekend. Student nurses are also responsible for communicating with families, caregivers, and other staff, be it written, verbal, electronic, or other media, in relation to their assignments. Duties may require responding effectively in emotionally, highly charged, and emergent situations. The physical demands of the role may require standing, walking, lifting, bending, twisting, squatting, carrying, pushing, pulling, reaching, writing, typing, pinching, gripping, manual dexterity, visual acuity, hearing, and touch.

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Reasonable Accommodations for Qualified Individuals with Accessibility Needs

The Simmons University Nursing Programs are committed to the full participation of all students in its programs and activities and providing educational opportunities to otherwise qualified students with accessibility needs and/or learning differences equitable to those provided to students who do not have any accessibility needs and/or learning differences. For the purposes of the Nursing Programs, a “qualified individual” with an accessibility need is one who meets the Nursing Programs’ Technical Standards and academic and conduct requirements with or without reasonable accommodations.

The Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 define a person with a disability as someone who: 1) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; or 2) has a record of such impairment; or 3) is regarded by others as having such an impairment. Students who are unsure whether a condition qualifies as an accessibility need are encouraged to meet with the Simmons University Office of Accessibility (OAS).

Students with accessibility needs do not have to disclose their accessibility needs to the Nursing Programs. However, students who wish to request reasonable accommodations relating to their courses and/or clinical placements must register with the OAS. Upon receipt from a student of a request for reasonable accommodation, the OAS will obtain information regarding the relevant accessibility needs from the student and may conduct a meeting with the student to learn of the impact of the student's diagnosis/accessibility need on the educational environment. OAS will then conduct a review of the requested accommodations to confirm they are reasonable and appropriate to allow for equal access by the student to the respective program/course. Determinations relating to the appropriateness of any given accommodation request are made on a case-by-case basis.

Accommodations are applied on a prospective basis -students are not entitled to have accommodations applied on a retroactive basis. Accordingly, students are encouraged to contact the OAS immediately upon deciding to request an accommodation, as well as, going forward, as appropriate.

While Simmons is committed to working with students to accommodate their accessibility-related needs, Simmons reserves the right to deny any requested accommodation that would fundamentally alter the essential nature of any aspect of the Nursing Programs or place an undue burden on the Nursing Programs. Students can find more information about the OAS and request accommodations on the [OAS's website](#).

Essential Functions

Students Must Have the Ability to:

- Follow policies and procedures of Simmons University and of the facility
- Read, write, speak and understand the English language
- Communicate:
 - o face to face with individuals, families, members of the health care team
 - o via call system with individuals
 - o via telephone with individuals
- Identify and interpret nonverbal cues
- Comprehend and follow instructions
- Perform repetitive tasks
- Maintain an appropriate pace for the workload
- Relate to other people beyond receiving and giving instructions
- Influence other people
- Perform complex or varied tasks, perform repetitive tasks
- Make generalizations, evaluations and decisions without direct supervision
- Accept and carry out responsibility for directing, controlling and planning patient care
- Assess patients' physical condition
- Use eye-hand coordination
- Respond to and carefully manage situation of high stress

Lift / Push / Pull / Carry Objects

Position	Weight / Frequency	Weight / Frequency
Floor to waist	35 lbs occasionally	20 lbs frequently
Waist to shoulder	35 lbs occasionally	20 lbs frequently
Overhead	35 lbs occasionally	20 lbs frequently
Push	35 lbs occasionally	20 lbs frequently
Pull	35 lbs occasionally	20 lbs frequently
Carry	35 lbs occasionally	20 lbs frequently

Examples of items commonly lifted, pushed, pulled and carried include:

- Beds, stretchers, wheelchairs, doors,
- Monitors, pumps, mobile IV poles
- Fluid bags: IV, urinary, blood, drainage
- Adaptive equipment: CPM machines, walkers, crutches, canes, braces, splints, prostheses etc.
- Patient supplies, linen
- Bedside commodes, mannequins, food trays, laundry and trash containers

Change and sustain different body movements and postures:

Movement / Posture	Frequency	Maximum Sustained/Time Demand
Trunk bending < 20°	Occasional ¹	2-5 minutes
Trunk bending > 20°	Occasional	1-2 minutes
Trunk twisting	Occasional	1-2 minutes
Trunk turning	Occasional	1 minute
Kneeling	Occasional	1 minute
Squatting	Occasional	1-2 minutes
Crawling	Rare	
Climbing	Rare	
Overhead reaching	Occasional	1 minute
Side reaching <90° abduction	Occasional	1 minute
Side reaching >90° abduction	Occasional	1 minute

Forward reaching < 90° elevation	Occasional	5 minutes
Forward reaching > 90° elevation	Occasional	1 minute
Wrist turning	Occasional	1 minute
Grasping	Occasional	5 minutes
Power grip	Occasional	1 minute

¹ Department of Labor: Occasional = 0-33% of shift; less than 3 hours in an 8 hour day; approximately 1 exertion every half hour

Examples of situations requiring student's body movements and postures:

- Patient transfers: bed to/from stretcher, bed to/from chair, bed to/from standing
- Moving patients in bed: rolling, pulling up
- Supporting a patient extremity
- Obtaining supplies, emptying drainage bags, spiking and hanging IV fluids, blood products
- Using monitors, scales, lifts, oxygen equipment, mobile IV poles
- Inserting / maintaining intravenous, urinary catheters, nasogastric tubes, feeding tubes
- Performing CPR

Use Bimanual Dexterity to:

- Administer medications: oral, parenteral, topical, rectal, eye/ear/nose drops, or via feeding tube
- Don personal safety equipment: goggles, face shield, gloves, gown, mask, HEPA respirator
- Provide basic hygiene: bathing, mouth care, brushing teeth
- Use stethoscope, sphygmomanometer, thermometers, scales, lifts, scissors, reflex hammer, tuning fork, otoscope, ophthalmoscope
- Insert/maintain: urinary catheters, nasogastric tubes, intravenous catheters
- Maintain sterility of needles, catheters, dressings while performing complex procedures
- Use oxygen equipment including moving oxygen canisters
- Remove sutures, staples, IVs, empty drains
- Perform basic CPR
- Collect specimens: blood, urine, stool, sputum
- Set and maintain pumps, monitors, etc.
- Put on gloves while maintaining a sterile field
- Percuss body systems
- Change dressings

Use Visual Acuity to:

- Assess patient's general appearance: skin, nail bed color, eye color, tissue appearance, wounds, dressings, drains, catheters
- Examine eye, ear, nose, throat structures with and without ophthalmoscope, otoscope
- Read measurements on syringes, medication cups, droppers, bags, pumps, etc.
- Read orders and notes on computer and/or paper
- Identify anatomical landmarks

- Read patient temperature on various thermometers
- Respond to alarms in the form of call lights
- Read labels on medications
- Read vital signs on monitors
- Note markings on medications

Use Hearing Acuity to:

- Auscultate blood pressure, heart, lung, bowel, vascular and fetal heart sounds with stethoscope
- Hear respiratory sounds without a stethoscope
- Assess pulses and fetal heart sounds with a Doppler
- Hear patient verbalizations: speech, crying, moaning, etc.
- Respond to auditory alarms

Use Touch to:

- Palpate body parts such as but not limited to the abdomen, fetal position, joints, scalp, muscles, etc.
- Locate and count pulses in various locations
- Palpate for edema, tissue temperature, lesions

Note: Students will be in contact with various chemical agents while mixing or dispensing medications and may be in contact with skin preparations and room cleaners and sprays.