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A Note about Program Delivery

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).

A Note about this Document

The Simmons School of Social Work Student Handbook is the student’s guide to the Simmons School of Social Work, Master’s in Social Work degree program. Students in the SocialWork@Simmons online program should consult the SW@S Student Handbook.

Students are responsible for knowing and following the policies of Simmons University and those of the School of Social Work, which are available on the Simmons University Website.

The information in this handbook is subject to change, and the SSW reserves the right to change any policy or procedure without notice.

Students should also consult specific program information documents and the field placement manual for both on- and off-campus programs.

School of Social Work Mission Statement

The Mission of the Simmons University School of Social Work is to provide exceptional training, build knowledge and further social and economic justice. We provide transformative
learning experiences to students at the bachelors, masters and doctoral levels. Our graduates are prepared to practice social work in a complex, multicultural world and engage in leadership, scholarship, and teaching, drawing from evidence-based and community informed research, and interprofessional education. Our teaching, scholarship and community engagement purposively includes community stakeholders and works to empower marginalized, oppressed and excluded populations. We promote social change through advancing understanding of the connection between individual circumstances and social policy structures, case to cause.

**MSW Program Mission Statement**

The mission of the MSW program is to prepare masters level professional practitioners with skills for clinical social work practice in a complex, multicultural world using knowledge based on evidence-informed and field-informed practice, in which clinical practice is defined, in part, as a disciplined process for collaboration, in service of social, emotional and behavioral change for individuals, groups, families, organizations and communities. This educational experience, consistent with the history and philosophy of the social work profession, is grounded in a values perspective that emphasizes client strengths, actively opposes all forms of oppression and supports social, economic and environmental justice. The curriculum is designed to help students develop competence, critical thinking and the ability to attend to clients’ presenting concerns and build on their strengths, as well as cultural responsiveness and self-awareness.

**Goals Statement**

Students learn multiple social work roles and skills necessary to be effective within evolving fields of practice. Graduates will be able to work with a variety of populations and social issues, using a broad and flexible array of evidence-informed interventions at an advanced level. They will have the ability to work with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities to facilitate development and change in the service of social, economic and environmental justice. Graduates will be prepared to practice with an appreciation for the dignity and worth of the person and the importance of human relationships; with a sense of integrity and a commitment to supporting human rights and actively opposing structures and practices that oppress and marginalize individuals, groups and communities. The MSW program goals are directly linked to our mission statement.

**MSW Program Goals**

1. Provide high quality education for generalist practice and a concentration in clinical social work.
2. Create and sustain a learning environment that encourages critical thinking and problem-solving, promotes cultural responsiveness and self-awareness, and values the contributions of all stakeholders to the educational experience.
3. Enact a program culture that creates and sustains a learning environment in which we critically self-reflect on issues of human rights, race, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, disability, ethnicity, class, national origin, immigration status, religion, the intersection among these factors and the roles they play in education and the practice of social work.
4. Infuse all activities of the MSW program including the implicit and explicit curricula, with the values and ethics of the social work profession.
5. Prepare students for competent ethical practice in a complex, multicultural world and a rapidly changing global environment.
6. Promote the development of professional knowledge and skills and accountability through the use of evidence-informed practice and a commitment to life-long learning.

**Definition of Clinical Social Work Practice**

A disciplined process for collaboration in service of social, emotional, and behavioral change for individuals, groups, families, organizations, and communities, clinical social work draws on knowledge of human development, relational and group process, cultural learning, and social policies and practices. It employs evidence-informed methods that facilitate change through dialogue and collective action. It is grounded in a history of commitment to social justice and guided by a professional code of ethics.
SIMMONS UNIVERSITY PRINCIPLES AND POLICIES

Simmons University has committed itself to the following principles and policies:

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 work of the student’s own creation and for not representing as their own work that which is not theirs.
- 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.

ATTENDANCE

Classroom Attendance

Instructors are permitted to and will consider individual class attendance when determining a student’s final grade for a course. In addition to lowering a grade, excessive absences justify a non-passing grade for the entire course. At the SSW, “excessive absence” is typically defined as missing more than 20% of a course (including synchronous and asynchronous involvement). When entire courses are compressed into a short period of time (as sometimes happens with courses delivered in the summer months), missing more than one class (or the equivalent) will constitute excessive absence and thereby result in a final non-passing grade. Attendance is not the same as participation; expectations for each are in the course syllabus.
Audits

1. Audits are permitted if there is space in a given class. Registration to audit a course in the MSW onground platform is permitted no earlier than two weeks prior to the start of course, not before.
2. Only one class may be audited per semester.
3. The cost to audit is the equivalent of one credit of tuition.
4. Auditing students are typically exempt from submitting papers and exams, but are expected to attend all class sessions, complete the readings, and meet any additional requirements at the discretion of the instructor.
5. The audit will appear on the student transcript; students receive no grade and no credit.
6. The audit will not fulfill any degree requirements.
7. Students may not register to audit a course in the MSW program and then change the status from audit to enrolled.
8. Non-degree seeking students cannot audit classes.
9. Instructors cannot approve an audit for a student who is not registered in the course. MSW campus based students interested in auditing should contact the MSW Program Manager (askssw@simmons.edu).

Religious Observance/Student Absence

Simmons abides by the Massachusetts law on Religious Observances. Students who are unable, because of their religious beliefs, to attend classes or to participate in an examination, class, or work requirement on a particular day shall be excused from the class, study, or work requirement and shall be provided with an opportunity to make up the examination, study, or work they may have missed consistent with Massachusetts General Law Chapter 151c, Section 2b. That law states:

“Any student in an educational or vocational training institution, other than a religious or denominational educational or vocational training institution, who is unable, because of his religious beliefs, to attend classes or to participate in any examination, study, or work requirement on a particular day shall be excused from any such examination or study or work requirement, and shall be provided with an opportunity to make up such examination, study, or work requirement which he may have missed because of such absence on any particular day; provided, however, that such makeup examination or work shall not create an unreasonable burden upon such school. No fees of any kind shall be charged by the institution for making available to the said student such opportunity. No adverse or prejudicial effects shall result to any student because of his availing himself of the provisions of this section.”

A student should inform the instructor prior to missing a class if they expect to miss class as a consequence of their religious observances.

Students who need to be excused from field placement attendance due to religious observance
should make arrangements with their field instructor prior to the anticipated absence. Students will be provided the opportunity to make up missed time at a later date.

Questions about absences for religious observances should be directed to the Director of Student Support.

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 University 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 University 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 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.

**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 of Student Experience. For 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.

**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.

**For 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: 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.

**Procedures for Other Student Grievances and Complaints**

MSW students have the right to grieve actions or decisions, which can include but are not limited to grieving a final grade, appealing a dismissal decision, appealing a Student Code of Conduct or Academic Integrity finding. These procedures are outlined later in this document. (See MSW Handbook sections on Appeal of Final Course Grade, Appeal of Dismissal, and Academic Integrity Guidebook.)

Other complaints and grievances not covered in the above should be addressed as follows:

- A student discusses the issue with the faculty member.
- If discussing it with the faculty member is not appropriate to the situation, or the student is dissatisfied with the outcome of the discussion, the issue can be brought to the student’s Academic Advisor, SW@Simmons Director (online), or the MSW Director.
- If those discussions are not appropriate to the situation or, if the student is dissatisfied with the outcome, the issue can be brought to the SSW Director.
ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL ADVISING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Students are assigned an Academic Advisor upon enrollment at the beginning of each academic year. Extended program students who are not enrolled in field placement in Year 1 are assigned to the Associate Director of Student Support. Students in field placement are assigned to a Field Education Liaison (FL) and also can schedule academic advising appointments with an Academic Advisor. The Associate Director for Student Support, Academic Advisors, and the Field Liaisons all hold MSW degrees and have several years practice experience.

Associate Director of Student Support
The Associate Director of Student Support, in addition to Advising students enrolled in the extended program, also organizes community career events (licensing, resume and interviewing workshops; recruitment fair), professional development opportunities, and oversees all MSW student government volunteers and affinity groups.

Academic Advising
Academic Advising addresses student questions regarding academic progression, course selection, status (leaves, withdrawals, change of program option) and academic performance issues. Additionally, Academic Advising facilitates referrals to the Office of Accessibility Services (OAS), the Writing Center and the University Counseling Center. Academic Advising also provides individual professional advising regarding work-life balance, role transition and post-graduate social work careers.

Students enrolled in the full-time, advanced standing, or accelerated 16-Month Program can find their assigned Academic Advisors by inquiring here: swadvising@simmons.edu

Field Liaison
The Field Education Liaison provides additional advising pertaining to field education and professional development issues and questions. (See the SSW Field Manual for a full description of Field Liaison role.)

Certificates, Licensure, and Special Programs
Students in certificate programs can also meet with the Faculty Certificate Coordinators for advisement pertaining to elective choices and career options.

Changes to Course Program Plans

It is the student’s responsibility to follow their program plan, which will depend on type (e.g., full-time, extended, accelerated, or advanced standing) and enrollment in a special certificate or licensure program. Any deviation from the original program plan must be discussed with and approved by the Academic Advisor. Please see here for the universe of program plans. Deviation from the original plan can hinder students’ ability to obtain a certificate and delay graduation.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR EVALUATING STUDENT ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE
**Academic performance:** Course faculty evaluate students’ academic performance throughout the semester culminating in a final course grade. The grading scale is published in the SSW Student Handbook and on each syllabus; additional expectations about attendance, participation and timeliness of work are also listed in the syllabus and the MSW Student Handbook. Assignment grading rubrics, when used, are also given to students. Students are required to follow all academic policies outlined in the MSW Student Handbook and to adhere to academic progression guidelines. Students who exhibit uneven or poor performance are referred for additional support and advising. A student who does not meet GPA requirements or grade progression requirements will be put on academic probation. Students can also have a Level 1, 2 or 3 review. (See further description of procedures for Level Reviews in the SSW Student Handbook).

The Simmons University **Academic Integrity Policy** includes procedures for addressing a student’s academic performance when there is a question of academic dishonesty.

**Professional performance:** A student’s professional performance is integral to their overall academic performance and success in the program. Students are informed of the criteria for evaluation of professional performance as part of new student orientation and in the MSW Student Handbook. Students are required to read the SSW Standards for Professional Practice and the NASW Code of Ethics; and are introduced to CSWE Competency 2 (Ethics and Social Work Practice). Practice behaviors associated with Competency 2 are evaluated each semester of Field Education via the semester field evaluation form. Students who exhibit unethical conduct or unprofessional behavior are generally referred for a Level 2 review or a Level 3 review by the Academic Standards Committee. (See further description of review procedures below.)

**PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE AND ACADEMIC REVIEWS (Level 1, 2, and 3)**

The SSW 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 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 Code of Conduct or Academic Integrity
Violation

- If a student fails to meet or maintain academic requirements
- If a student is terminated from a field placement or internship either by the placement or by SSW administrators due to performance issues
- If a student is rejected by three agencies during field placement process (SW) in one term
- If a student exhibits behavior judged by faculty to be in violation of professional ethics and/or Simmons University and SSW policies
- If a student exhibits consistent pattern of unprofessional behavior in the classroom or in field placements

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 Level 2 review. If a student chooses not to attend a Review, a finding can be made with the available information in the student’s absence.

**Level 1 Review**

**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
- Inform Academic Advising of the concerns
- Summarize plans and or recommendations in an email to the student

If a problem arises in an external training site, the supervisor is expected to promptly discuss concerns directly with the student and with the Simmons University faculty liaison. It is the responsibility of the faculty liaison to apprise the appropriate school administrator of the concerns.

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

The outcome of many Level 1 consultations is that, together, the faculty and student 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 a missed assignment.

**Level 2 Review**
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 professional 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’s Academic Advisor. It might also include the appropriate faculty member and appropriate program administrator. If a problem arises in an external training site, the external supervisor and liaison can also be included.

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 director will gather information about the nature of the concern. The meeting will be used to discuss the concerns and to develop a formal Action Plan to address that concern. If the outcome of the meeting is that no further action is needed, the meeting will be documented to the student and the program director, and an Action Plan will be written up indicating no further Action Plan needed. When an Action Plan is determined to be appropriate next steps, the Action Plan may address the need for the student to modify his or her 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 Action Plan.

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, general difficulties meeting the standards and expectations of coursework or field placement.

The person overseeing the Level 2 review may consult with the Director of Student Support Services 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 review.

**Level 3 Review**

A Level 3 review may be conducted for any of the following reasons: 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 or related to the classroom, field placement, or other clinical setting.

A Level 3 review involves the Director of Student Support, and the members of the Academic Standards 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 an SSW faculty member or administrator. A Social Work Professional Conduct referral is submitted to the Director of Student Support. The Director of Student Support may also consult with relevant University-level administrators. The Director of Student Support, in consultation with the Academic Standards Committee, decides whether a Level 3 meeting shall
be convened. If a Level 3 is convened, the Director of Student Support notifies the MSW Director (or their designee).

When a Level 3 review is called, the Director of Student Support 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 by the Director of Student Support 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.**

The meeting will occur either virtually or in person. The student will have the opportunity to respond to the concerns, and both the student and committee members can ask for additional information. At the end of the discussion, the student will be excused from the meeting. Faculty conducting the Level 3 review will confer and agree on recommendations for a course of action. The Director of Student Support or designee will inform the student of the decision, which can include one or more 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 referral to the Simmons University Associate Dean for Student Life
- Dismiss student from the program
- Counsel student to change majors (for undergraduates)

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 SSW’s dismissal appeal policy. (See MSW Handbook section on Dismissal Procedures).

**Level 3 Reviews involving Referral and/or Consultation with the Dean of Student Experience**

In some instances, depending on the nature of the problem, the Dean of Student Experience, and/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 back to the Director of Student Support for the purpose of developing a corrective plan. The Director of Student Support may consult with the Academic Standards Committee and/or the Dean of Student Experience for guidance in developing the corrective plan.

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE

NASW Code of Ethics

Students are expected to abide by the NASW Code of Ethics and Simmons School of Social Work Standards for Professional Practice. Students are expected to adhere to the NASW Code of Ethics and established norms, values, and behavior both during their field placement and while earning their Social Work degree. The NASW Code of Ethics outlines behaviors and responsibilities expected of all professional social workers. The NASW considers students to be professional social workers from the time they enroll into a social work program. Students should obtain a copy of the NASW code of ethics and become familiar with its contents. Social Work students are also expected to be familiar with and abide by the Simmons School of Social Work Standards of Professional Practice (See Appendix I).

Simmons SSW Standards for Professional Practice

Social Work students are also expected to be familiar with and abide by the Simmons School of Social Work Standards for Professional Practice (see Appendix I). Students are informed about the Standards for Professional Practice prior to and during new student orientation; they are instructed to read the Standards of Professional Practice as a required component of orientation. At orientation, students are informed about the consequences of not meeting the standards for professional practice. Specifically, failure to meet generally accepted standards for professional conduct, ethics and personal integrity requisite for professional social work practice, as outlined in the NASW Code of Ethics and the SSW Social Work Standards for Professional Practice Education, may constitute grounds for a Level Three Review or the filing of a Student Conduct Code or Academic Integrity infraction, and could result in academic sanctions including dismissal. The Standards for Professional Practice are also in the Field Manual which students are also required to read.

Simmons University Student Code of Conduct

Simmons University is a community founded on the values of respect, integrity, inclusion, honesty, and trust. The Simmons University Student Code of Conduct is a guide to expectations of behaviors by our students and by student organizations. When violations of the conduct occur, Simmons University’s policies and procedures inform responses. Behavior inconsistent with the Code of Conduct is typically addressed through an educational conduct process designed to develop critical thinking, sound judgement, good citizenship and promote overall well-being. The Simmons University Code of Conduct including the processes and procedures for addressing violations is found at http://www.simmons.edu/code-of-conduct.
Simmons University Academic Integrity Policy

Simmons University is a community that values respect, integrity, inclusion, honesty, and trust. Each Simmons student is responsible for presenting work of their own creation, and refraining from representing others’ work as their own. Cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and other forms of academic dishonesty are considered a breach of the Honor Code. Definitions of Academic Integrity violations, procedures for reporting violations can be found in the Simmons University Academic Integrity Guidebook on the Simmons University Website. A faculty member who has concerns about a student’s academic integrity will discuss those concerns with the student and consult with the MSW Director about courses of action.

GRADING

Students are expected to maintain a B (3.0) grade average throughout their program in the SSW. Courses are graded using the A-F grading system. School of Social Work students must take all classes for a letter grade with the exception of social work field education courses. In the case of social work field education courses Pass, Marginal Pass or Fail are used instead of a letter grade. The numerical equivalent for each grade is as follows:

Grading Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>GPA Equivalent</th>
<th>100 point scale equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>100-94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>93-90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>89-87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>86-84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>83-80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>79-77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>76-74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>73-70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>69-68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>67-64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>63-60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>59 or below</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ACADEMIC STANDING AND DISCIPLINE

Course grades below a “B”

Any student earning a grade lower than a B in a course will be notified by their Academic Advisor with an Action Plan. Possible actions include a stipulation that the student retake the class and earn a passing grade. Any student earning a grade below a B minus is required to
retake the class and earn a grade of B or better. In addition, students are strongly encouraged to schedule a meeting with their advisor no later than the first week of the subsequent term.

**When a Student is Required to Retake a Class**

When a student is required to retake a class, 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 of below a B. The same course cannot be enrolled in more than twice. A student is not allowed to re-submit any work submitted in a prior class. Students required to retake a class will do so at their own financial expense.

**ACADEMIC PROBATION**

Poor academic performance, and poor performance in external internships are grounds for a student to be placed on academic probation. For the purposes of academic probation, poor performance is defined as: two grades below a B, a cumulative GPA of less than 3.0, or an MP in field placement (MSW). A student on academic probation will have a Level 2 review no later than the end of the first week of class of the subsequent semester. The purpose of the meeting is to develop an Action Plan. A copy of the plan, written by the advisor, must be forwarded to the appropriate program administrator. A student’s failure to attend a Level 2 review meeting and to develop such a plan can result in the administrative withdrawal of the student’s registration.

**Academic Probation or Dismissal Due to Field Education Grades**

Field grades (P, MP, F) are not factored into the cumulative GPA, however a grade of MP will result in academic probation, a grade of Fail (F) will result in dismissal; a grade of two marginal passes will result in dismissal. See field manual for full field education grading policy.

**Removal from Academic Probation**

To be removed from academic probation, a student must achieve a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher by the following term.

**PROGRAM PROGRESSION**

- A student is allowed to repeat a maximum of two courses in which they have earned a grade below a B.
- The same course cannot be enrolled in more than twice.
- Students who have utilized their repeat allowances and then go on to earn a grade below a “B” will be dismissed from the program.
- Students are not allowed to withdraw from the same course more than once.
- MSW Students must complete the program in five years.
- Students who do not register for classes in consecutive semesters (excluding summer
semester) and are not on an official leave, or have not officially withdrawn, will be administratively withdrawn by Simmons. A new admissions application is required to be considered for return to the active student status.

GPA REQUIRED FOR GRADUATION

Students must achieve a cumulative GPA of 3.0 to be eligible for graduation.

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS FOR FINANCIAL AID

To be eligible to continue to receive Federal Student Aid (FSA), students must make satisfactory academic progress by achieving and completing their program of study as measured using qualitative (GPA) and quantitative (completed credits) standards. The Fall SAP policy can be found on the Simmons student financial services website and should be read to understand how and when this is evaluated.

See here for the Graduate SAP Policy:

DISMISSAL (TERMINATING ENROLLMENT) FOR ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL REASONS

Students can be dismissed from the SSW for not meeting academic and/or professional requirements.

Dismissal Due to Academic Performance

The following circumstances lead to dismissal:

● Earning a cumulative GPA falling below a 3.0 for two consecutive semesters
● When it is determined that a student cannot return their GPA to at least a 3.0 at the conclusion of the following semester.
● Earning three grades below a B.
● Failure to progress as described in course progression policy.
● Earning two grades of MP or one grade of F in field education.
● Failure to gain a field placement after 3 interviews in a term (MSW).
● In the case of conditional admissions, failing to meet the conditions determined.

Dismissal Due to Professional Performance

The following professional performance or conduct issues lead to dismissal:

● Simmons Student Conduct Code or Academic Integrity violation leading to dismissal
● Behavior judged to be in violation or Simmons University Policies
● Behavior that is deemed unprofessional per the NASW Code of Ethics and the Simmons School of Social Work Standards of Professional Practice Behavior
● Any threat or attempt to harm someone else inside or outside of the Simmons community
• Commission of a criminal act that is contrary to professional practice, occurring during
the course of study at Simmons or occurring prior to admission to the School of Social
Work and becoming known after admissions.

Procedure for dismissal

Prior to dismissal it is typical for problematic academic and professional performance issues to
be addressed in meetings with and/or correspondence from faculty, advisors and program
administrators. In most cases these meetings will include a level 2 or level 3 review.
Documentation of the meeting is sent to the student. Students are notified of dismissal in a letter
from the Director of Student Support. The reasons for the dismissal are outlined in the letter.

Appeal of Dismissal

The student may appeal the decision, in writing, to the SSW Director. A written appeal must be
received within three (3) days of the date of the letter from the Director of Student Support. This
appeal does not constitute a new review process. Rather, it is a request from a student to have the
Director review the original record of the dismissal on either one or more of the following
grounds: (1) one or more errors in the dismissal process; or (2) new evidence or information
material to the case that was not available at the time of the dismissal process; or (3) a
substantive error occurred because the decision maker misinterpreted evidence used in the
dismissal process. The appeal letter should include an explanation regarding the grounds for
appeal and should reference one or more of the three grounds for appeal listed in this policy. The
student shall provide the Director all documentation necessary for the appeal to be considered.
The SSW Director (or their designee) will respond to the student appeal within 10 business days
of its receipt. The decision of the Director is final.

If the appeal is premised on a grading dispute, a grade appeal must be completed before the
dismissal appeal will be reviewed. In this case, the time frame for response to the dismissal
appeal will begin at the conclusion of the grade appeal.

Reapplying after Dismissal

Students who are dismissed from the program, and have been denied reinstatement, can reapply
but must wait at least one year from the date of program dismissal before submitting a new
application. Prior admission does not guarantee subsequent admission.

FINAL COURSE GRADE APPEAL

Grade appeals can occur for the following three reasons: computational error; arbitrariness or
capriciousness; discrimination. If a student believes that they have the basis to appeal a final
grade, they should follow the grade appeal procedures and deadlines outlined below.
A grade appeal must be initiated no later than one week after the posting of the grade. A student
cannot appeal a grade after they have graduated.
Explanation of Grounds for Appeal

1. Computational error

The faculty member is alleged to have made a mistake in the mathematical computation of the course grade. If the faculty member discovers a computational error in calculating a student's grade, they should submit a change of grade to the registrar at consent@simmons.edu. The faculty member should notify the student of the error and resulting change; the student has the right to question or appeal this grade following the procedures outlined below. If a student believes that a mistake has been made in the computation of their grade, they should first speak with the faculty member. If the faculty member agrees, the faculty member should submit a change of grade to the registrar at consent@simmons.edu. If the faculty member does not agree, the student may then follow the procedures and deadlines outlined below.

Deadline: A change of grade request must be received by the registrar no later than one semester following the semester in which the computational error was made.

2. Arbitrariness or capriciousness

The student alleges that the grade was based on something other than performance in a course (i.e. non-academic criteria); or the grade reflects standards different from those applied to other students in the course; or the grade departs from the standards of evaluation set forth in the syllabi or other written document in a substantial, unreasonable, and unannounced way. In this case, the student should follow the procedures and deadlines outlined below.

3. Discrimination

The student alleges that the grade reflects a violation of the University’s non-discrimination policy as stated in the catalogs and student handbooks. In this case, the student should follow the "grievance procedures" for bringing a claim of unlawful discrimination as outlined in the University catalogs and student handbooks.

Grade Appeal Procedures and Deadlines

1. First Step: Informal Resolution with Course Faculty Member.

If the student believes they have received an unfair course grade, they shall attempt to resolve the matter informally with the faculty member who assigned the grade. The faculty member shall communicate with the student to consider their reasons for believing the final grade to be unfair. If the faculty member does not believe there is merit for a grade change, they notify the student. The student may then proceed to the second step below. If the faculty member believes there is reason to change the grade, they complete the "Change of Grade" form, including a clear explanation of the reason for the change that is consistent with the terms of this grade appeal policy. The faculty member submits the "Change of Grade" form to the SSW Director’s Office and the Registrar’s office.
**Deadline**: The student must make their appeal to the faculty member no later than one week of the posting of the grade. If the grade is not to be changed, the faculty member will notify the student of their decision within five days of their meeting. If the grade is to be changed, the faculty member submits the "Change of Grade" form to the SSW Director and Registrar’s office within five days of their meeting.

2. **Second Step**: Informal Resolution with the Director of Student Support

If, after the faculty member's notification of their consideration of the initial grade appeal, the student continues to believe that the grade is unfairly assigned, the student shall meet with the Director of Student Support or designee and explain the grounds for the grade appeal. The student will provide all supporting course materials. The Director of Student Support shall meet with the faculty member and inform the MSW Director. If the faculty member, after discussion with the Director of Student Support Services agrees that the grade should be changed, they complete a "Change of Grade" form, including a clear explanation of the reason for the change that is consistent with the terms of this grade appeal policy. The faculty member submits the "Change of Grade" form to the SSW Director’s Office and the Registrar’s office. If the faculty member does not agree, the student may proceed to the third step below.

**Deadlines**: The student must submit an appeal with the Director of Student Support within one week after notice of the decision in "first step" above. The Director of Student Support informs the student of their decision within five business days of their meeting.

3. **Third Step**: SSW Director Review

If, after seeking informal resolution with the Director of Student Support the student continues to believe that the assigned grade is unfair and wishes to pursue the appeal, the student may submit a formal written appeal and "Grade Appeal" form to the SSW Director. The written statement includes the student's reasons for appealing the grade and any supporting materials. The SSW Director or their designee shall meet, separately and/or together, with the student and the faculty member and may ask for a written statement from the faculty member. Additionally, the SSW Director or their designee shall meet with the Director of Student Support.

If the SSW Director’s review determines that there is no merit to the grade appeal, the Director informs the student that the final grade stands. The grade appeal process ends here.

**Deadlines**: The student must submit a written statement and "Grade Appeal" form to the Director within one week of the notice of the decision in the "second step" above. The Director informs the student of their decision within ten business days of their final meeting.

If the Director’s Review determines that there is merit to the grade appeal, the SSW Director will refer the appeal to an ad hoc Faculty Grade Appeal Committee.

**Deadlines**: The Faculty Grade Appeal Committee has twenty days to convene and deliberate. The Committee notifies the student, faculty member, and Dean's Office of its decision within days of its decision.
Please note that although individual assignments become part of a course grade appeal, only the final grade in a course is open to appeal under this process. As a result of the grade appeal process, the final grade may be raised, lowered, or stay the same. The grade appeal process will not attempt to grade or re-grade individual assignments or aspects of course work other than the final grade. Similarly, no new or revised course work can be requested by the student or accepted by the faculty member as part of a grade appeal process. Records of all graded material, including examinations, papers, homework, etc. shall be maintained by individual faculty members until the end of the grade appeal procedure period. Students are strongly encouraged to maintain copies of all work submitted to the faculty member as well as graded work returned to the student by the faculty member.

**Deadlines:** The student must submit a written statement and "Grade Appeal" form to the Director within one week of the notice of the decision in the "second step" above. The Director informs the student of their decision within ten business days of their final meeting.

**NON-MATRICULATION GRADE POLICY**

A non-matriculated student must receive a “B” or better in their first class to remain eligible to take a second class.

**EXTENSIONS FOR ASSIGNMENTS**

Students are expected to complete coursework assignments on time; students should consult with their instructors at the start of each semester/term regarding policies for extensions and grading for work/assignments passed in after the deadline. In most cases, an extension must be requested by a student prior to the due date of the assignment and a revised date for submission of work must be approved by the instructor. A student who submits work late even with the instructor’s permission, may nonetheless receive a lesser grade from the instructor to reflect the missed deadline. Students who are approved for extensions through the Office of Accessibility Services should consult their accommodation letters for extension guidelines.

**REWRITING OF GRADED PAPERS**

Students may, at the instructor’s sole discretion, be given the option of rewriting a paper that has received a grade of “B-” or below. However, final course assignments may not be rewritten.

**REGISTRATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

**Drop/Add**

Prior to the start of classes and until the end of the second class, students may add or drop a class on Workday. Please see [here](#) for Fall 2021 dates. Students are responsible for informing the instructor and for making up any missed course work in an added class. The class sessions missed prior to enrollment count as missed classes against the participation grade.
For courses dropped after week two, students must contact the Academic Advising to drop a course. *Please note that instructors in the MSW program CANNOT give consent for students to enroll in courses that are full or have prerequisites that the student has not yet met. That is something that needs to be discussed with Academic Advising and the Onground Registration Coordinator.* MSW students may not add a class after the second class meeting.

Students who change their schedule by dropping or adding a course should consult with an 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 apprised of the impact of course changes on their financial aid.

**Withdrawal from a Course**

Student transcripts will show a “W” grade for “withdrawn” for any courses withdrawn from after the 4th week and up to the end of the 8th week. No withdrawals are permitted after week 8; the instructor will record the grade the student has earned for all course assignments. Students are not allowed to withdraw from the same course more than once. Withdrawal deadlines are adjusted for summer term courses.

MSW students must meet with the Academic Advising before withdrawing from a course.

**Waitlist Policy**

Students must use the Workday automatic waitlist system when they wish to be placed in line for a closed/full class. Professors cannot override the system and add students to their classes. The student should *not* contact the professor to be put into the class.

Waitlisted students should monitor their Simmons email for further information and for notification that they may enroll in an open seat. Students have 72 hours from when notified via Simmons email to make the change and register for the open seat or they will be automatically removed from the waitlist and the seat will be offered to the next student on the waitlist.

**Drop/Withdrawal from Field Placement After the Add/Drop Period**

To withdraw from Field Placement after the add/drop period, the student must receive approval from the Director of Field Education. Students who perform poorly and/or are not making sufficient progress and withdraw after the add/drop period may be given a grade that reflects their performance at the time of their withdrawal.

**Changing Sections of Two-Semester Courses**

Students are required to remain in the same section of the two semesters of year-long class for which they registered (SW421 A&B, SW 424 A&B). Students must register for each class each semester (Fall and Spring).
Courses that must be taken concurrently

Students are required to register for the appropriate field and practice courses concurrently.

Summer Semester Course Registration Policy

Students are not permitted to be enrolled in more than two courses during the summer semester.

Course and Field Placement Schedule

To accommodate field placement attendance for students in their generalist year (M, T, Th/F) and specialist years (M, W, Th/F), courses are offered as follows:

- Monday evenings (generalist and specialist year courses)
- Tuesday daytime (specialist year courses only)
- Tuesday evenings (generalist and specialist year courses)
- Wednesday daytime (generalist year courses only)
- Wednesday evenings (generalist and specialist year courses)
- Thursday evenings (generalist and specialist year courses)
- Friday daytime (generalist and specialist year courses)

Note that courses are not offered Monday daytime, Thursday daytime, Friday evenings, Saturday, or Sunday.

INCOMPLETE POLICY

Completion of coursework including field education by the last day of the semester is essential. An instructor may use their discretion to grant an Incomplete when the majority of the course requirements and assignments have successfully been completed and when the student is unable to complete assignments due to extenuating circumstances.

In permitting an Incomplete, the instructor must establish a completion date no later than three weeks from the last day of classes or by the first day of classes of the following semester (including summer); whichever is earlier. Exceptions to these deadlines must be approved by the Director of Student Support and an alternative deadline must be established and listed on the form.

Incompletes for field placements may be extended beyond the standard deadline with approval by the Director of Field Education.

The instructor must send the student’s request via the Incomplete Form to the Academic Advisor, which will then be reviewed and approved by the Director of Student Support, in consultation with the MSW Director when applicable. Incomplete paperwork must include the nature of the work to be completed, the date by when assignments will be submitted to the instructor, and the date by when the instructor will submit the updated grade to the registrar.
If the student completes the requirement(s) by the extension date, the mark of Incomplete will be changed to a letter grade. If not, the student will be assigned a grade based on the work completed to date. Grades not submitted by the Instructor to the Office of the Registrar by the approved deadline will automatically be converted to a grade of “F.”

**LEAVES OF ABSENCE, WITHDRAWAL FROM THE UNIVERSITY**

If a student withdraws from all of their courses, fails to return from leave of absence after the date approved by the registrar, or fails to register for any courses by the end of the fourth week of classes, they are considered to have withdrawn from the University. No student will be permitted to register after the fourth week of the semester.

All University expenses incurred by a student before their withdrawal must be paid in full prior to the release of their official records.

**Voluntary Leave of Absence**

Students wishing to leave the University for a temporary period, with the intention of returning to complete their degree, may apply to take a leave of absence (LOA). Students considering an LOA should first meet with their Academic Advisor to discuss their reason for a Leave, create an updated plan of study, and receive the link to the LOA request form. Following the meeting the student can submit a LOA form. Students who take a leave of absence during the semester are assigned grades based on the Course Withdrawal policy.

A student seeking to take a leave of absence should also consult with Student Financial Services. International students should consult the Center for Global Education for the implications of withdrawal on their visa status.

If the student chooses to take a voluntary leave of absence in order to receive intensive clinical health care treatment, the Dean of Student Experience will assist with processing this request. In some instances, the student may be asked to complete the Process for Returning from an Involuntary Leave of Absence as a requirement of returning to the University. (See below.)

Leaves will not be ordinarily granted for periods longer than one academic year. The request for the extension of a leave (for a maximum of one year) is approved only in unusual circumstances. Extension requests must be made before the expiration of the original leave of absence. Leaves of absence for graduate students may not exceed a cumulative total of two years. Students who do not return at the end of an authorized Leave of Absence will be withdrawn from their academic program and must submit a subsequent readmission to the program.

**Involuntary Leave of Absence**

Simmons University is committed to the safety and well-being of its community members and to the integrity of the living and learning environment. Our goals, therefore, are to maintain the health and safety of each individual in our community and to enable all enrolled students to participate fully in the life of the University.
In instances in which a student's mental, emotional, or medical health pose a threat to themselves and/or others, becomes a barrier to appropriate or prescribed levels of self-care, or causes significant disruption to the activities of the University community, such students may be required to take an involuntary leave of absence from the University.

In instances when a student's mental, physical or emotional health may pose a direct, imminent, threat to the safety and well-being of the Simmons community, or the student has been admitted to a health care setting to undergo intensive medical or psychological treatment (hospitalization, intensive outpatient or inpatient program), the Dean of Student Experience, or designee, as an interim measure, can place the student on an involuntary leave of absence from the University. When applicable the student will be informed in writing of the actions that lead to them being placed on leave and direct the student to the process for return. The student's parent/guardian/emergency contact person may be notified that the student is in a potentially dangerous situation.

Any student placed on an involuntary leave of absence will not be allowed to remain on campus. This includes living in residence, attending classes, and participating in Simmons sponsored events.

In circumstances when the student has not met direct threat/inpatient criteria, the Dean of Student Experience or designee may, based off of observable/recorded behavior, still require a student to undergo an individualized psychological and/or medical assessment in order to make an informed decision regarding the student's ability to meet the academic, social and emotional requirements of being a Simmons student. This evaluation can be conducted by a member of the University's clinical staff, or by a student's external health care provider who is treating the student. The student will be required to sign a release that gives permission to the University's designated clinical personnel to speak with her/his external evaluating health care provider and to allow for the release of any relevant medical reports as part of the assessment. If the student chooses not to engage in the process listed above, then she/he will be required to take an involuntary leave of absence and if applicable, immediate removal from the residence halls.

If following the evaluation, a leave is deemed unnecessary, the Dean of Student Experience or designee may impose other conditions and/or requirements which the student would be required to comply with as a condition of continued enrollment at the University.

In any instance in which a leave is required, the Dean of Student Experience or designee will provide written notice to the student, including the specific requirements that must be met as a condition of eligibility for re-enrollment, the timeline for initiating and completing the return process, as well as the procedure for appealing the decision. In most instances, the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the student will be included in this notice. Students are strongly encouraged to discuss the need for a voluntary or involuntary leave with their parent(s) or guardian(s) prior to and during the leave process.

The duration of the leave is typically no fewer than six full months, although the specific length of the leave will be based on the student's individualized assessment and determined by the Dean or designee on a case-by-case basis. When a student takes leave before the end of a semester,
whether voluntary or involuntary, Simmons' usual tuition and residence hall refund schedule apply.

**Process for Returning to Simmons after an Involuntary Leave**

Simmons University students who have been placed on an Involuntary Leave of Absence will be required to undergo an individualized assessment to be cleared to return to Simmons, prior to their return to the University. They are also required to sign an authorization form that enables the hospital, treatment facility, and/or all pertinent external health care providers to release information necessary for the review process. The review process will involve an interview with the appropriately licensed Simmons clinical staff member as well as the Dean of Student Experience or designee. Following the interview with an individual of the clinical staff, a recommendation that is based off the student’s report, his/ her treatment history, information gathered from the external treatment facility, and/or a student’s personal health care provider, will be shared with the Dean of Student Experience or designee regarding the student's readiness to return. Then, on a case by case basis, the Dean of Student Experience or designee will make a determination if the students are permitted to return to the Simmons community. If it is determined that the student can return, the student will meet with the Dean of Student Experience or designee to establish a plan to return to the University and identify community resources. As a condition of continued enrollment and, if applicable, as a condition of re-admittance to the residence halls, the following criteria must be met:

1. The consulting health care provider must find that the student has maintained a significant level of physical, mental, or emotional stability along with the skill set necessary to successfully engage in the student’s academic program as well as the activities associated in being a Simmons student.
2. The student and the consulting Simmons clinical staff member in conjunction with all relevant external health care providers must establish and agree upon a plan for continued managed care after returning to the University.
3. The student must commit to following the recommended and established treatment plan. If, after reviewing all pertinent information, the Dean of Student Experience or designee denies a student’s request to return from an involuntary leave of absence, or the student disagrees with the conditions established as part of the return process, the student can appeal the decision in writing to the Vice President of Student Affairs.

**Withdrawal from the University**

Students who wish to withdraw from the university must complete the University Withdrawal Form, available from their Academic Advisor. Students should consult with their Academic Advisor and with Student Financial Services for information on the implications of withdrawal for tuition and student loans. A request for withdrawal is effective on the day it is received in the Registrar’s office. Students who withdraw during the semester are assigned grades based on the Course Withdrawal policy. Withdrawal from the university will impact an international student’s immigration status; international students should consult with the Center for Global Education before withdrawal.
INDEPENDENT STUDIES

Due to limited faculty resources, independent study for course credit is not available to Master’s students.

MSW DEGREE COMPLETION POLICY

Students enroll in the full-time program or in the extended program. The full-time program is completed in 2 years. The extended program is completed in 2.5, 3, or 4 years.

If a student chooses to change status from the full-time to the extended program, the student’s advisor must be consulted. The student should schedule a meeting with their Academic Advisor to create an alternative plan for program completion.

CHANGE OF PROGRAM STATUS/PROGRAM COMPLETION

All degree requirements must be completed within five years of matriculation. At five years or more prior academic coursework must be repeated.

MSW TRANSFER AND WAIVER POLICIES

Transfer Credits from another MSW program

Students entering the MSW program may request to transfer up to 6 course credits taken as a non-matriculated student at a CSWE accredited MSW program. The student must provide an official transcript from that program and request transfer credits during the admissions process.

Transfer credits will not be accepted after the first semester in the program. To be transferred, a grade of “B” or better must be received in the course. Courses for transfer must be at least 3 credits, and they must be taken on a graduate level. All degree requirements must be completed within 5 years of matriculation. At 5 years or more prior academic coursework must be repeated. Students should submit the official transcript, official syllabi, learning objectives and readings (if not on the syllabi), an assignment completed for the course, and a narrative describing how the course(s) taken elsewhere are commensurate with the Simmons MSW course(s) to be replaced. Requests will be reviewed by the MSW Program Director or her designee.

Requests will be reviewed by the MSW Program Director or her designee.

Neither certificate programs nor continuing education programs, even when taken in an MSW program, are eligible for transfer.

Transfer Students Applying to Simmons from other MSW Programs

Transfer students are those who apply to leave their current MSW program and matriculate as an MSW student at Simmons. Applicants must be in good standing with the school from which they are transferring and must have a minimum GPA of 3.0. The transfer student submits a course syllabus for each course for which they are seeking transfer credit. The request for transfer credit
is reviewed and approved by the MSW Director or her designee. Additional supporting material may also be requested.

Additional information for transfer applicants:

- A maximum of 32 credits may be requested for transfer
- The student must provide an official transcript and a letter of good standing from the Director or Associate Director of the MSW program
- A syllabus for each course must be submitted for transfer credit
- Courses in which the student receives a “B-” or lower will not be transferred
- A field evaluation for first year field education is required
- All coursework including transfer credits must be completed within 5 years

**Transfer of an Elective Course Taken at Another Institution**

Matriculated students with special interests may be given permission to take one elective course at another institution or in another Simmons University graduate program if:

- It is a Master’s level course at an accredited, degree-granting institution
- The course content shows clear relevance to the social work degree
- The course is not offered at SSW
- The course earns a minimum of 3 credits and meets for at least the equivalent classroom contact hours as the MSW course

Students must notify their Academic Advisor of such a proposal prior to the registration period. The Associate Director of Student Support must review and approve the plan prior to its submission in writing to the MSW Director.

If permission is granted, the student is responsible for the transfer of credit to Simmons at the end of the semester. Non-receipt of a transcript and the executed Transfer of Credit Form by the proper deadline in the final year could affect the student’s ability to graduate on time. Students must receive a grade of “B” or better to transfer credit.

Matriculated students may not take any required courses outside of the School of Social Work.

**Waivers for Students who receive Advanced Standing in the MSW program**

Advanced Standing students take advanced year courses and 29 credits are waived for the following foundation courses. By waiving Generalist year courses, students are not required to repeat baccalaureate social work content.

- Social Work Practice (SW 421A & B), 6 credits
- Social Policy and Social Work in Organizations and Communities (SW403) 3 credits
- Human Behavior in the Social Environment (SW 411A), 3 credits
- Racism (SW 409), 3 credits
- Research (SW 441), 3 credits
- Field Education (SW 446A), 5 credits
- 2 Electives, 6 credits

Request for Waiver of Required Generalist Research Course

To prevent students from repeating content mastered in other research courses, the MSW program offers students an opportunity to waive SW441 Social Work Research. To be approved for a course waiver, a student needs to have taken an identical or very similar course within the past five years and to have earned a grade of “B” or better in that course. If approved for a waiver from SW441, a student must enroll in another 3-credit Simmons MSW elective course in place of SW441 to ensure they meet the credit requirements for graduation. Students must meet the prerequisites for any course they choose to take instead of SW441.

A student intending to seek a waiver from SW441 should submit the waiver form and the following supplemental documents listed below to the MSW Director, Dr. Kristie Thomas (kristie.thomas@simmons.edu).

1. Course syllabus
2. Course learning objectives
3. Course description
4. Course readings
5. At least one example of work done for the course (exam or written assignment)
6. Narrative linking the previously-taken course to the specific SW441 learning objectives. The narrative explains how the previously-taken course’s learning objectives are commensurate with the SW441 learning objectives.

A student may use more than one course as the basis of their waiver request. If submitting more than one course, the student should submit the first five documents described previously. One narrative describing the courses will suffice.

Requests are due one month prior to the first day of classes for the semester in which the waiver is requested. Students will be informed of the approval or denial of the request for a SW 441 waiver within two weeks of submission. All decisions are final. Incomplete requests will not be reviewed.

Policy to Not Grant Social Work Course Credit for Life/Previous Work Experience

The SSW does not grant course credit for life experience or previous work experience.

GRADUATION POLICY
Students who have completed all degree requirements must submit a Petition to Graduate form. Failure to complete the required paperwork, or selecting the incorrect graduation date, could affect participation in the graduation ceremony, diploma availability, and the student’s conferral (graduation) date.

Students who plan to graduate in May, August, October, or January must complete coursework by the official grade deadline provided by the Registrar’s Office.

**Commencement**

Graduate students who complete their programs by May of a given calendar year will be invited to participate in that same month’s (May) in-person Commencement ceremony. Graduate students whose degrees are conferred in July and August directly following May Commencement will be invited to participate in the September online commencement ceremony and the in-person Commencement ceremony of that following year.

Graduate students whose degrees are conferred in October and January will be invited to participate in the following March online commencement ceremony and the May in-person Commencement ceremony.

Check the Registrar's web page for degree conferral dates.

For more information about Commencement, please see here:
https://www.simmons.edu/events/commencement

**COURSE EVALUATIONS**

Each course is evaluated by students by the end of the last class meeting. The evaluations can be reviewed by the instructor only after student grades have been submitted.

Evaluations are reviewed by the instructor, the Program Directors, and the Director.

**TUITION REFUND**

**Tuition Refund Schedule**

Please consult the Student Financial Services representatives or see online at http://www.simmons.edu/admission-and-financial-aid/student-financial-services/student-accounts/course-refunds for the exact dates for all semesters and a description of the financial implications. Please note: The schedule differs from semester to semester.

**ADMISSIONS**

**MSW Program Admission Criteria**
Applicants must hold a bachelor’s degree from an accredited college or university, achieving at least a B (3.0) average; it is desirable that applicants have a balanced liberal arts education on the undergraduate level. This includes degrees recognized through CSWE’s International Social Work Degree Recognition and Evaluation Service, or covered under a memorandum of understanding with international social work accreditors.

- Relevant experience through summer employment, volunteer work during/after college, and/or full-time employment in the human services field after college graduation is required.
- Applicants must show a commitment to social work values and personal qualifications for social work, evidenced in the applicant’s Statement of Professional and Educational Intent, and the applicant’s letters of recommendation.
- No standardized test scores are required.
- An interview is not required; however, under certain circumstances the school may require an interview after application review.
- No course credit is given for life or work experience.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR AWARDING ADVANCED STANDING FOR BSW GRADUATES

Applicants with a Bachelor’s degree in Social Work (BSW) who have graduated from a CSWE accredited BSW program within the last five years can apply for the three-semester, 12-month Advanced Standing Program. The program includes a 3 day per week field placement from September to August (13 credits) and 24 credits of advanced coursework. Advanced standing students are not expected to repeat BSW course content and are only required to enroll in advanced level course work. Advanced standing is awarded only to graduates holding degrees from baccalaureate social work programs accredited by CSWE, and that are in a regionally accredited university or college, recognized through CSWE’s International Social Work Degree Recognition and Evaluation services or covered under a memo of understanding with international social work accreditors.

Advanced Standing Admissions requirements:

- A BSW from a CSWE accredited program
- A minimum grade of “B” in all B.S.W. course work
- An average GPA of 3.3 or higher in all the social work courses
- An overall GPA of 3.0 or higher
- Completion of the BSW within the last five years

Applicants should submit a completed application file that includes:

- Application form
- 3-5 page statement describing the development of your interest in social work
- 2-3 page A.S. essay addressing B.S.W. learning and future learning goals
- 3 Recommendations including one recommendation from the supervisor of your senior BSW field placement and one recommendation from a BSW faculty member who can comment on your overall performance (courses and placement).*

* Applicants should submit a completed application file that includes:

- Application form
- 3-5 page statement describing the development of your interest in social work
- 2-3 page A.S. essay addressing B.S.W. learning and future learning goals
- 3 Recommendations including one recommendation from the supervisor of your senior BSW field placement and one recommendation from a BSW faculty member who can comment on your overall performance (courses and placement).*
● A copy of your most recent BSW field evaluation.
● All college transcripts

Recommendations:

Recommendations should address the applicant’s readiness for an advanced clinical internship.

*Note: Applicants who have been employed in a social work position for a minimum of one year post-BSW may submit a letter of reference from an MSW employment supervisor.

Advanced Standing Essay:

In addition to the statement of professional and educational intent, applicants must include a 2-3 page double-spaced summary of your learning in your BSW internship. This should include:

● The social work models and approaches utilized
● A discussion of a case example in which the applicant used theory to facilitate understanding of the case and guide an intervention or develop a treatment plan.
● A self-assessment of learning to date, a statement of learning goals and the challenges the applicant anticipates encountering in an advanced clinical placement

Field Placement Evaluation:

Applicants must send a copy of the most recent field placement evaluation prior to the application deadline. The application folder will be incomplete without it.

If all supplemental Advanced Standing materials are not included in the admissions packet, applicants must explain in a letter what is not included, why and when we can expect to receive the missing materials.

Policy and Procedure for Evaluating MSW Applicants including Advanced Standing Applicants

Application files are reviewed by SSW faculty members and the Director of Admissions for the on-ground campus MSW program. Each applicant’s file is reviewed against the criteria for admissions. Based on the evaluation of application materials, an applicant is accepted or rejected. A faculty person or a member of the admissions staff can request that an application is reviewed by the admissions committee. In those cases, the admissions committee makes the final decision.

POLICY AND PROCEDURE FOR NOTIFYING APPLICANTS OF ADMISSION

Applicants are informed of their admissions status by an email from the director of admissions after the admissions decision is made. The email states the applicant’s admission status (accepted, rejected, and accepted as a conditionally admitted student, acceptance pending submission of final transcript).
CONTINGENT CONDITIONS ASSOCIATED WITH ADMISSIONS

Applicants who have not yet graduated from their undergraduate program are informed that admission is contingent on submission of final degree transcripts.

A student whose admission is contingent on the submission of a final transcript, receives a letter of admissions which includes a statement that their admissions will be finalized upon the receipt of their transcript by the SSW Admissions office; the transcript indicates degree completion. When the admissions office receives the final transcript, a full admissions letter is issued.

At the discretion of the Director of Admissions, conditional admissions can be offered to an applicant who does not meet all admissions criteria. A student who is conditionally admitted is required to take 2 first-semester MSW courses and earn grades of B or better. Students who meet this requirement will be fully admitted to the MSW program in the next semester. Students are informed by email of their conditional admission status.

A student who receives conditional admissions receives an admissions letter indicating that their full admissions is conditional on earning grades of B or better in two required first semester courses. The Director of Admissions reviews final semester grades and issues a full letter of acceptance or a letter confirming that the student has not met the conditions of admissions.

HEALTH INSURANCE WHILE AT SCHOOL

State Requirements

All students taking nine or more credits are required by Massachusetts State law to enroll in the Student Health Insurance Plan or be covered by a health insurance plan with comparable coverage. For more information, please review information found at this link: https://www.universityhealthplans.com/letters/letter.cgi?group_id=26

STUDENT PARTICIPATION

Students’ Rights to Participate in Academic and Student Affairs Policymaking:

MSW students have the right to be active participants in Academic and Student Affairs Policy making and to have an impact on shaping their community and educational experience.

The right to participate in academic and student affairs policy making is expressed and implemented in students’ participation on various SSW Committees; in their participation in student initiated and run organizations; and in their participation on the Student Leadership Council. Students are part of the governance of the MSW through their participation in these various groups and committees where they have the opportunity to play a role in shaping policies and initiating community activities.

Students’ Responsibilities to Participate in Academic and Student Affairs Policymaking:

Students are responsible for contributing to shaping their learning environment by participating
in academic and student affairs policy making. To that end, students are encouraged to take part in their student community through membership on committees, in student groups and other ad hoc activities.

**Student Leadership Groups: Student Organizations : School of Social Work : Simmons Internal**

The Student Leadership Council (SLC) aims to serve as a dynamic hub of communication of SSW events, issue advocacy and activities. Membership consists of nominated students from various student organizations, as well as elected representatives of the student body. Meetings will be open to all students and provide a structured forum to discuss current issues or events across the SSW community.

**Committees** In the beginning of the fall semester, students receive an email soliciting their involvement for SSW committees. Student volunteers are matched with their area of interest and students agree to make a commitment to attend regularly scheduled committee meetings. In addition to expressing their own concerns at committee meetings, volunteers are tasked with soliciting the concerns of their fellow students and then are expected to represent those concerns at the committee meeting. The purpose of student participation on committees is to include student opinion, preference and perspective when making decisions about the curriculum and program policies. Committees include: Assessment, Curriculum, and Academic Standards.

**Student Groups:** All MSW students are encouraged to start new student affiliation groups and to join existing groups. At the Fall orientation campus students are introduced to student group leaders and are given information about how to start a new student group. Groups include: National Association of Black Social Workers- student chapter, LGBTQ Group, Social Workers Taking Action Against Racism (STAAR), Student Veterans Group and the Field Advisory Group.

**MSW STUDENT AWARDS**

Simmons School of Social Work confers annual awards to MSW students who have made significant contributions to the SSW community, their agency, or the larger field of social work. Students, supervisors, faculty and advisors are invited by the Faculty Award Committee to submit nominations.

**The Shirley Saks Greenberg Award**

This award honors Shirley Saks Greenberg who received her MS degree from Simmons SSW in 1956. Mrs. Greenberg had a gift for combining theoretical perspectives to understanding with clinical practice. She had a particular interest in the area of psychodynamic psychotherapy and clinical casework. She met an untimely death in 1982. Her family established this award in her honor to recognize a first-year student who shows promise in integrating theory with practice, especially practice pertaining to psychodynamic theory. In recent years the scope of the award has been expanded to a broader definition of clinical practice.

**The Iris MacRae Award**
This award was established in 1980 by students, colleagues, alumni and friends to honor Iris MacRae, a member of the Simmons faculty, who devoted the major part of her professional life to teaching and advising students at the school. Her dedication and commitment remain an inspiration to all that knew her. It seems especially appropriate to use the funds given in her honor to recognize achievement by SSW students. In 1983, the faculty decided that this award should be granted to a student in their final year. Please submit the name of a student and an accompanying letter of support for a student who has made an outstanding achievement in either class or field work.

Examples of field achievement could include special talents in working with a challenging client group, initiation of a special program in the agency, or other evidence of creative achievement in the course of the field work practicum. Class (academic) achievement might consist of overall outstanding performance or particularly creative papers completed for course requirements.

**Achievement in Political Action and Social Justice Award**

This award is given to a student who makes a contribution in the areas of political action and social justice through intervention in a larger system.

**Outstanding Competence in Multicultural Practice**

This award is given to a student for work with a multicultural population, for the education of professional colleagues, program planning, or sensitivity and excellence in cross-cultural practice.

**Faculty Leadership Award**

This award is given at faculty discretion for exemplary school or community leadership. This may be awarded to an individual or group of students.

**The Community Service Award**

This award recognizes special service to the Simmons community by a student or group of students. Nominations may be made by students, faculty, or staff. Note: The Student Advisory Group selects the winner of this award.

**Written Scholarship in Social Work**

This award is given to a student who demonstrates creativity, originality and outstanding scholarship in a written paper. Submitted papers should hold promise for publication.

**The Priscilla Mullen Riley Award**

Established in memory of Professor Emerita Priscilla Mullen Riley, this award honors the dedication, commitment and perseverance of its namesake. Professor Riley experienced significant challenges in her early life, yet went on to have a very successful, rich and rewarding career as a clinical social worker and a social work educator. She was a member of the Simmons Faculty for thirty-four years and the Director of its Field Education Department for many years. She was a national leader in promoting the importance and centrality of field education in graduate social work learning.

**OTHER SIMMONS UNIVERSITY POLICIES**
- **Student Code of Conduct**, including the Honor System, Hazing Policy, and Student Rights and Responsibilities Statement
- **Information for Students with Disabilities and Equal Access Policy**
- **Student Legal Name and Name Changes**
- **Human Subjects**
- **Financial Information: Tuition & Fees, Student Loans, Satisfactory Academic Progress**
APPENDIX 1

Standards for Professional Practice

Simmons School of Social Work

Introduction

These standards are presented in a social work framework that values diversity of perspective and experience, understands there is diversity between and within cultures, and respects difference. Achieving professionalism in social work requires a commitment to and demonstration of the values of the social work profession.

The Simmons School of Social Work (SSW) is committed to preparing its graduates to be highly competent and ethical social work practitioners. Faculty make a commitment to provide students with a curriculum that supports their educational and professional development and that assists them in adherence to these standards. Additionally, the SSW is mandated by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) to promote and evaluate professional development for students in Social Work programs (BSW, MSW). Likewise, the SSW is responsible to the community at large for graduating knowledgeable, ethical, and skilled social work professionals whose practice reflects the competencies, skills, and values of the social work profession.

This document outlines eight professional performance standards: Communication, Electronic Communication, Self-Awareness, Openness and Willingness to Learn, Physical and Cognitive Ability, Presentation of Self, Emotional Stability and Stress Management, and Professional Values and Ethics. Each professional standard is accompanied by descriptions of behavioral expectations. Students must satisfy the professional standards to enroll in, progress through, and graduate from the SSW. Specifically, students are expected to act in a manner that is consistent with the values, ethics, and conduct required for professional social work practice in the classroom, in field placements, and in the broader school community. Becoming a professional is a gradual process; as a result, the SSW faculty, field instructors and administrators will continually assess students in accordance with these standards, which constitute the criteria for professional performance. In addition to the standards outlined in this document, SSW students are expected to abide by the NASW Code of Ethics (NASW, 2017), the Simmons University Honor Code, and the policies outlined in the SSW Student Handbook and in the Simmons University Handbook. Procedures for addressing a violation of the Standards for Professional Practice or any of the ethics, codes, or policies identified above are outlined in the SSW Student Handbook. The ultimate goal of the SSW Standards for Professional Practice is to help you have a successful experience at the SSW and to be prepared for post-graduate practice. This document does not include the complete NASW Code of Ethics or the CSWE Educational Policies, however it highlights particular ethics and competencies to serve as a framework for professional and ethical behaviors to abide by while a student at the SSW. As an SSW student, you will be informed of the Standards for Professional Practice at the time of application to the SSW and at new student orientation. The standards are on the SSW web site and also in the SSW student handbook.

To participate in a degree program, you are expected to satisfy program requirements, including
these professional standards, with or without accommodations. If you seek reasonable accommodations for disabilities, you must contact the Simmons Office of Accessibility Services. This office will determine your eligibility for accommodations and recommend accommodations and/or services.
APPENDIX 2

Professional Standards

1. Self-Awareness

Expectations to meet the standard:

a. Accurately assess your own strengths and limitations and display a willingness to examine and change behaviors that interfere with your work in field placement, in the classroom, on campus, and in the larger community
b. Actively examine your own biases

c. Seek supervision and use constructive feedback to inform practice
d. Take responsibility for your own actions and consider the impact of these actions on others
e. Demonstrate a willingness to examine and assess the relationship between your own personal values/socialization and their alignment with expected professional ethics
f. Reconcile conflicts between your personal values and those of the profession, as required by the *NASW Code of Ethics*

2. Communication

Expectations to meet the standard:

a. Express ideas, thoughts, and feelings clearly in the classroom and in field placement
b. In written work, communicate clearly and at a level that reflects the academic standards of SSW programs
c. Demonstrate a willingness and ability to actively listen to others with objectivity and openness
d. Communicate responsibly and respectfully, with speech that is free of bias, discriminatory language, or stereotyping in all interactions with colleagues, faculty, field instructors, staff, and clients
e. Advocate for yourself in an ethical, direct, respectful, and responsible manner using SSW and agency-specific channels for conflict management

3. Electronic Communication and use of Social Media

Expectations to meet the standard:

a. Demonstrate respect for the privacy of your clients; refrain from gathering information about clients from online sources without the client’s consent (i.e., googling client history, accessing client social media); photographing clients; or publishing client information on social media
b. Communicate about and with colleagues and peers with respect and accuracy, avoiding cyberbullying, harassment, or making derogatory or defamatory comments, or disclosing personal information without consent
c. Follow relevant laws, field education agency policy, NASW Code of Ethics (1.07) pertaining to social media and in use of technology in all aspects of service delivery
d. Maintain awareness of how personal communications using social media could affect professional relationships with clients, colleagues, and agencies

4. **Openness and willingness to learn; flexibility and adaptability**

Expectations to meet the standard:

a. Demonstrate openness learning new ideas and perspectives
b. As required by the demands of professional practice, be flexible and adaptable in new situations and as circumstances change
c. Assume the stance of a learner with humility; avoid solely relying on current or past professional experiences to inform your judgment or decision-making in the field and in the classroom
d. Demonstrate a willingness to effectively communicate your learning needs and request clarification to understand requirements

5. **Physical and Cognitive Ability, Critical Thinking**

Expectations to meet the standard:

a. Attend and participate in classes and field placement as scheduled, demonstrating punctuality, dependability, accountability, and the ability to prioritize responsibilities
b. Navigate transportation needed to attend field and classroom requirements
c. Use the technology required to engage in scholarship and effective practice including, but not limited to, use of computers, telephones, and agency electronic records and databases
d. Demonstrate the ability to acquire knowledge and reflect on experiences to inform practice
e. Demonstrate the capacity to think critically and to apply effective problem solving skills that are well reasoned, examine multiple perspectives and world views, integrate evidence and knowledge, and lead to well-supported decisions and conclusions

6. **Emotional and Mental Stability, and stress management standard**

Expectations to meet the standard:

a. In accordance with the NASW Code of Ethics (4.05), demonstrate the ability to honor the best interests of people for whom you have professional responsibility by keeping personal life circumstances or problems from interfering with judgment or performance
b. Recognize current life stressors that may interfere with scholastic or professional performance; seek and effectively use help for medical or emotional problems such as those problems stemming from psychosocial distress, substance misuse, and mental health difficulties
c. Demonstrate professional boundaries, including ethical use of self-disclosure
d. Maintain respectful relationships with all colleagues, faculty, field instructors, staff, and clients consistent with NASW Code of Ethics (2.01)

7. **Professional Values and Ethics Standard:**
Expectations to meet the standards:

a. Exhibit judgment and conduct that is consistent with the values and ethics of the profession as stated in the NASW Code of Ethics, as well as with established laws, policies and professional standards
b. In accordance with NASW Code of Ethics section on: Dishonesty, Fraud, and Deception (4.04), you should not participate in, condone, or be associated with dishonesty, fraud, or deception
c. Demonstrate professional and academic integrity, including exhibiting truthfulness in fulfilling program requirements. Students should remain aware of, and abide by, the Simmons Honor Code
d. Follow Federal and State laws and agency policies regarding confidentiality and mandatory reporting

8. **Respect for Diversity and Social Justice**

a. Exhibit a willingness to relate and work nonjudgmentally across difference with others
b. Demonstrate knowledge of, and sensitivity to: diversity, oppression, and privilege, including a willingness to examine personal beliefs, values and assumptions that perpetuate oppression

Meeting the academic degree requirements is not sufficient to successfully complete the program. If you meet the academic requirements, but fail to adhere to the NASW Code of Ethics and/or the Standards for Professional Practice, you are at risk for dismissal or other disciplinary action.
APPENDIX 3

MSW Assessment of Student Learning and the Learning Environment

The SSW is committed to continuous examination and improvement of student learning outcomes within the framework of the nine CSWE competencies. We have developed a structure for systematically gathering evidence of student learning, and for regularly assessing the implicit curriculum (learning environment). Student learning is assessed by measures and through the field evaluation. Implicit curriculum is assessed by an annual survey. Assessment findings are reported to and analyzed by faculty and administrators and are used to inform curricular revisions, to address changes in the learning environment, and to make changes to our evaluation methods. Built into our assessment plan is a continuous feedback loop that is foundational to our capacity to strengthen student learning. Our stakeholders are included in this feedback loop and include our students, our field agencies, our faculty and our staff. We also post our annual findings on the SSW website for the larger public.

The campus and online options use the same assessment plan for the implicit and explicit curriculum.

CSWE Competencies

The nine CSWE competencies are listed below. For detailed descriptions of the competencies, related observable behaviors, and embedded dimensions of practice for the Generalist and Specialized levels, see the Field Education Manual.

Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice

Competency 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic and Environmental Justice

Competency 4: Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice

Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice

Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations and Communities

Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations and Communities

Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations and Communities

Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organization and Communities