

A large, dark blue, stylized number '16' is the central focus. The '1' is a simple vertical bar with a diagonal top-left stroke. The '6' is a thick, rounded shape with a large circular opening in the middle. Inside this opening, the text 'Steps for Simmons Success' is written in a bold, dark blue, sans-serif font.

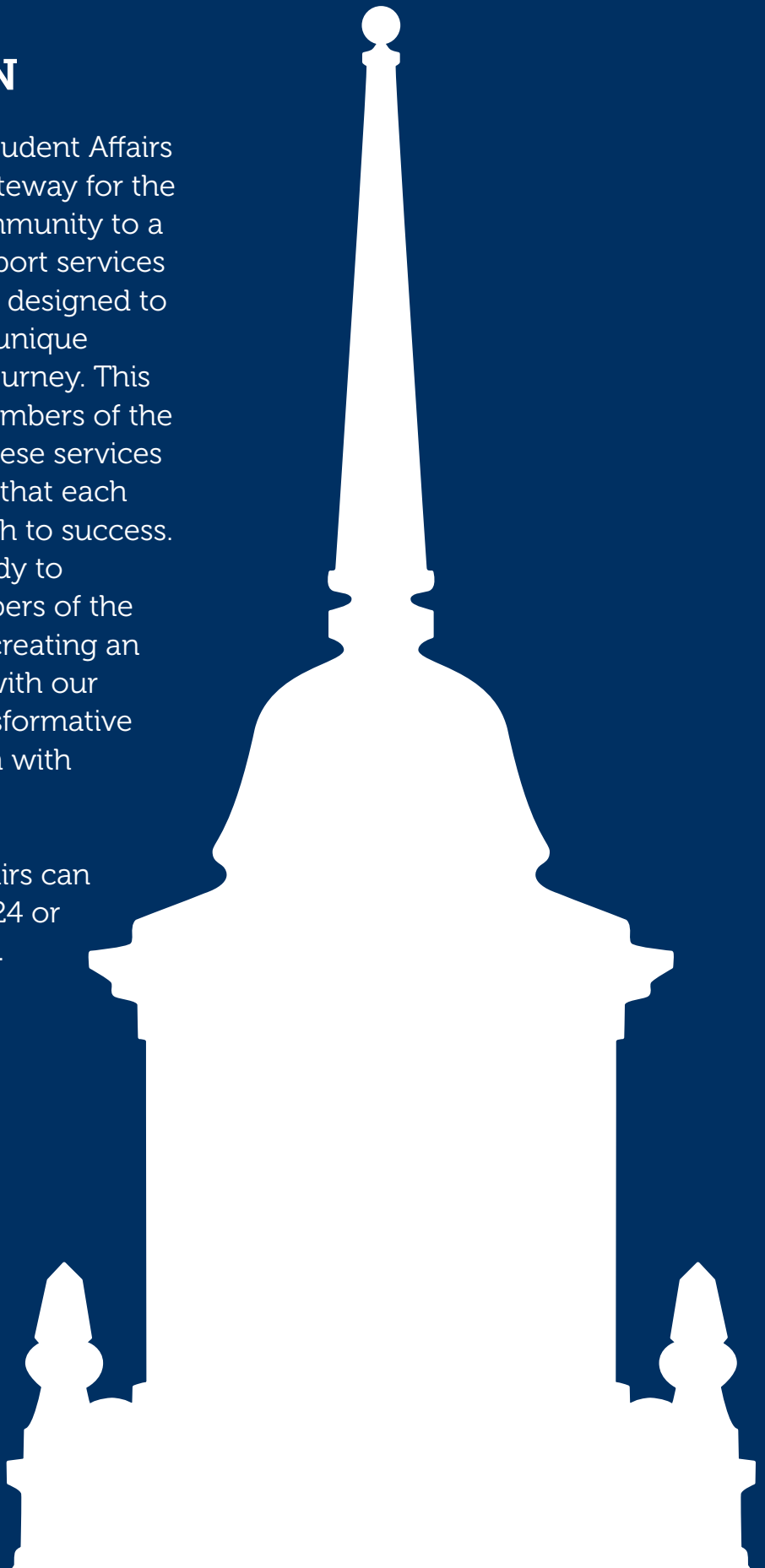
**Steps for  
Simmons  
Success**

Essential Information for Simmons Faculty  
and Staff to Promote Student Success

# INTRODUCTION

**T**he Office of Student Affairs serves as a gateway for the Simmons community to a variety of support services and resources designed to maximize each student's unique academic and personal journey. This manual will introduce members of the community to some of these services with the goal of ensuring that each student is placed on a path to success. Student Affairs stands ready to collaborate with all members of the Simmons community in creating an environment that aligns with our mission of providing transformative learning that links passion with lifelong purpose.

The Office of Student Affairs can be reached at 617-521-2124 or [studentlife@simmons.edu](mailto:studentlife@simmons.edu).



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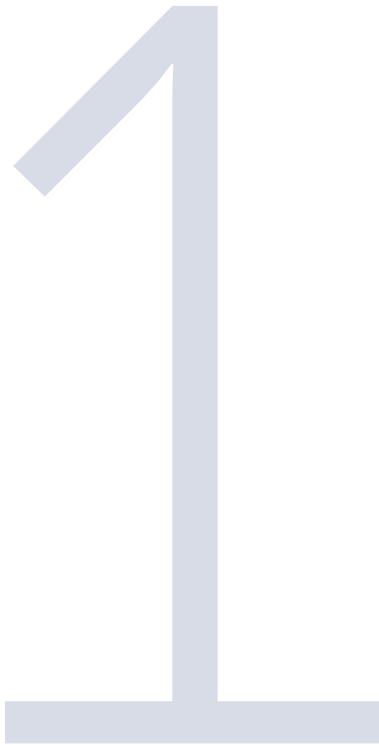
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## Emergency Management

### **If you discover a medical emergency on the Simmons University campus:**

- ▶ Call 911 or the Simmons University Police and Public Safety emergency line immediately at 617-521-1111
- ▶ Follow all instructions given by the Simmons or local police
- ▶ When possible, remain with the injured person until Police and Public Safety and/or medical personnel arrive
- ▶ Administer first aid only if you are certified and you feel comfortable doing so

### **If you discover a mental health emergency or a suicide risk:**

- ▶ Helping someone experiencing a mental health crisis:
  - When possible, listen to the person
  - Recognize warning signs (see Section Eight: Recognizing and Assisting Students in Distress)
  - Stay with the person, if you feel comfortable doing so
- ▶ If you feel that a student is experiencing an immediate mental health crisis or you have gained knowledge of the student's stated plans or intentions to die by suicide:
  - On-campus:
    - Call Simmons Police and Public Safety at x1111
    - Arrange for clinical care by appropriately-trained medical professionals, or, in instances where the student refuses such assistance, contact the student's emergency contact
  - Off-campus:
    - Call 911 for local police response
    - Arrange for clinical care by appropriately-trained medical professionals, or, in instances where the student refuses such assistance, contact the student's emergency contact
- ▶ If you feel there is potential for an individual to experience a mental health crisis (other than self-harm/suicide), or they have expressed suicidal ideation (but has not informed you of stated plans or intentions to die by suicide):
  - For students: Call Student Affairs at 617-521-214 during business hours or Police and Public Safety at 617-521-1111 after hours
  - For faculty/staff: Call Simmons Police and Public Safety at 617-521-1111
  - For affiliate members of the community: Call Simmons Police and Public Safety at 617-521-1111

# 2 Reporting Concerning Behavior

## CARE (Campus Assessment, Response, and Evaluation) Team

The CARE Team, formerly known as COSH (Committee on Student Health), seeks to proactively coordinate University support for students in distress, struggling with basic needs, experiencing unexpected crises, or whose behavior raises concerns about their well-being or that of others. The CARE Team also addresses behaviors that may be disruptive, harmful, or pose a threat to the health and safety of the Simmons community.

### How to make a referral to the CARE Team:

Complete the [CARE Team Referral Form](#). A member of the CARE team will review incoming reports Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., and will respond within 24 hours.

NOTE: This form is not intended for use in emergencies, as reports are not monitored during the evening or weekends. If this is an emergency, please call Simmons Police and Public Safety at 617-521-1111 or dial 911.

### Examples of concerns to report to the CARE Team:

- ▶ The student has not been attending class and has not responded to outreach attempts
- ▶ The student has indicated that they have engaged in self-harm
- ▶ The student's behavior seems out of character such as they have become more withdrawn and are not participating in class when they have done so before, or they are displaying emotional outbursts
- ▶ The student has relayed that they are feeling overwhelmed by their classes and it is affecting their sleep, eating habits, or daily routine
- ▶ The student has relayed they are experiencing a family emergency and is unsure where to go for support
- ▶ The student has relayed that they are or will be going into treatment
- ▶ Student appears to not be engaged and is having difficulty socially

### Examples of concerns NOT to report to the CARE Team:

- ▶ Student is not attending classes regularly
- ▶ Student is in danger of failing a course
- ▶ Student has missing or late assignments
- ▶ Student has never attended a class

NOTE: While these concerns should not be referred via the CARE referral form, we strongly encourage faculty and staff to report them through the [Starfish](#) platform. This will ensure that the student is being monitored and can be referred to the CARE Team if needed.



## Title IX

Simmons takes allegations of sexual harassment seriously and is committed to preventing and addressing this conduct, as it violates our community standards and is inconsistent with mutual respect, dignity, and personal integrity.

Broadly speaking, the term sexual harassment is used to identify various forms of unwelcome behavior of a sexual nature that are prohibited by Simmons University. The term sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, sexual assault, sexual violence, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking. Sexual harassment may occur between any individuals, regardless of their sex, sexual orientation, gender or gender identity, and between members of the opposite sex and the same sex. Please see the University's Sexual Harassment Policy for Students, Faculty, Staff, and Visitors for additional information.

Simmons encourages community members to promptly report to the Title IX Coordinator all incidents of sexual harassment against them or other members of the Simmons community. Please note that, with a few limited exceptions, every Simmons employee, including faculty, staff, and administrators, have a duty to report to the Title IX Coordinator sexual harassment that comes to their attention, they are aware of, they observe, or that they believe to have occurred.

### To File a Complaint:

Please complete the [Title IX/Gender-Based Misconduct Incident Report Form](#).

### Contact Information:

Sara Simberg, Title IX Coordinator

Assistant General Counsel

Location: Suite A-230

Phone: 617-521-3289

Email: [sara.simberg@simmons.edu](mailto:sara.simberg@simmons.edu)

## 4 Addressing Student Misconduct in the Classroom: On the Ground and Online

Simmons University is a community that is founded on the values of respect, integrity, inclusion, honesty, and trust. In instances where violations of these values occur, Simmons University has developed policies and procedures to protect the interests of the community, individually, and collectively. Behavior that is not consistent with these values is addressed through an educational conduct process that is designed to help develop critical thinking, judgement, good citizenship, and overall well-being.

### Examples of misconduct include, but are not limited to:

- ▶ Bullying and cyberbullying
- ▶ Harassment
- ▶ Threats, intimidation, coercion, and defamation
- ▶ Inappropriate use of technology

### Student Conduct Process:

#### STEP 1: FILING A REPORT

When an incident occurs, an incident report is completed by a student, faculty, staff, or community member who becomes aware of, observes, or believes to be the victim of the incident. Incident reports can be submitted by clicking on this link: [Non-Academic Incident Report](#)

#### STEP 2: REVIEW OF REPORT

The Assistant Dean of Community Standards, or designee, will conduct a preliminary review or inquiry into the nature of the incident. This review could lead to a more comprehensive investigation or possibly a conduct hearing.

#### STEP 3: CONDUCT HEARING

During this hearing, the impacted parties will have the opportunity to share information with the purpose of determining whether or not violations have occurred.

#### STEP 4: OUTCOMES AND SANCTIONS

Sanctions are a developmental and educational tool, with the purpose of redirecting the student's behavior towards a pattern that fits the mission and values of the institution and in some cases utilizing restorative justice to restore the damage that impacted the individuals and the community. If the student does not agree with the outcome or sanctions, they may appeal.

For more information, please email [communitystandards@simmons.edu](mailto:communitystandards@simmons.edu)



## Academic Integrity

Any person wishing to initiate an official complaint of an academic integrity violation against any Simmons student may do so by clicking on this link:

[Academic Integrity](#)

Academic violations are behaviors that include, but are not limited to, cheating or plagiarism. General classroom misbehavior is considered a non-academic violation.

A faculty member who suspects a student in their class of violating the Academic Integrity Policy should speak with the student and complete the form with the information of the outcome. This information will become part of the student's record.

The Director of Academic Integrity (DAI) acting on behalf of the Office of the Provost will be the moderator of this information. When an "information only" complaint is received by the DAI for a student who already has one or more complaints on file, the DAI reserves the right to follow up with the student for more corrective action.

### **Simmons Policy about Academic Integrity is as follows:**

*Each 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 Simmons University values. The majority of academic misconduct cases will be handled by the faculty and/or dean and department chairs. In such cases, if the student is found responsible and the sanction could be suspension and/or dismissal from the program and/or the University, the case will be referred to the Academic Integrity Board.*

Cheating is defined as the representation of someone else's work as another person's own.

Plagiarism is defined as intentionally or unintentionally using someone else's words or thoughts without giving proper credit.





## Accessibility Services

The Office of Accessibility Services (OAS) is a strategy-based service that supports students in their academic endeavors both on the ground and online. Students registered with OAS are expected to adhere to the same academic and behavioral standards as the rest of the University. A student's initial connection and ongoing interaction with OAS is self-propelled.

In order to fully register with OAS, students must provide documentation of the disability that substantially limits a major life activity, such as learning, hearing, seeing, reading, walking, and speaking. All submitted documentation must include the name and professional credentials of the evaluator on the diagnostician's letterhead in clear and legible writing.

Accommodation requests must be deemed reasonable and appropriate. A diagnosis, in and of itself, does not automatically qualify the student for the requested accommodations.

Accessible housing accommodations are provided on a case-by-case basis, due to documented disabilities.

Faculty are notified of student's approved accommodations at the start of the semester, once those accommodations have been activated by the student. Accommodations are not retroactive.

For more information, please visit the [Accessibility Services](#) webpage.



## Leave of Absence

**Undergraduate students may apply for a Leave of Absence (LOA) at any time after enrolling at Simmons. To request an LOA, the student must submit an [online form](#).**

- ▶ The LOA may extend for a total period of four ungraded semesters. LOA extensions require special approval by the Administrative Board.
- ▶ The student may return for any term immediately after the LOA by registering on AARC. If the student does not return on the approved date, does not seek an extension, and/or does not register for courses, they will be withdrawn from Simmons three weeks after the start of the semester.

**Graduate students must submit a Leave of Absence request if they wish to not register for Fall or Spring semester but still plan to complete their program. To request a Leave of Absence, the student should contact the designated staff member in their program for approval. For a current list, please visit the [Leaving Simmons](#) webpage.**

Students should also contact Student Affairs, Residence Life, Student Financial Services, and their Academic Advisor with questions pertaining to housing, financial aid, and academic success.

For more information or if you have questions, please contact the Registrar's office at 617-521-2111 or [registrar@simmons.edu](mailto:registrar@simmons.edu).

## Recognizing and Assisting Students in Distress

### Academic Indicators

- ▶ Decline in quality of work and grades
- ▶ Repeated absences
- ▶ Expressing disturbing content in writing or presentations (e.g., violence and death)
- ▶ Continuous classroom disruptions

### Psychological Indicators

- ▶ Self-disclosure of personal distress that could relate to family problems, financial difficulties, depression, grief, or thoughts of self-harm/suicide
- ▶ Tearfulness, panic reactions, anxiety, irritability, fearfulness, or unusual apathy
- ▶ Expression of concern about the student by their peers

### Safety Risk Indicators

- ▶ Unprovoked anger or hostility
- ▶ Making implied or direct threats to harm self or others
- ▶ Themes of extreme hopelessness, rage, worthlessness, isolation, despair, or acting out

### Physical Indicators

- ▶ Marked change in physical appearance such as deterioration in grooming, hygiene, weight loss/gain
- ▶ Excessive fatigue/sleep disturbance
- ▶ Intoxication, hangover, smelling of alcohol or marijuana
- ▶ Signs of abuse (bruises, black eyes, marks around neck)

### How to Assist a Student in Distress:

- ▶ For those in immediate danger to themselves or others, see the directions set forth in Section 1. For non-emergency referrals, please complete a [CARE Team Referral Form](#)
- ▶ In instances where there is no immediate danger to the individual or others, ask to speak to the student in private, if you feel comfortable doing so. Advise the student that you may have a duty to report any information the student shares with you. Specifically state your observations and concerns. Listen carefully to what the student says. Avoid criticizing and sounding judgmental. Convey acceptance.
- ▶ If the student would like a confidential discussion, they should contact the Counseling Center at 617-521-2455 or the Student Health Center at 617-521-1020. In addition to the Counseling Center or the Student Health Center, students wishing to speak confidentially with someone relating to a matter of gender-based misconduct may also contact the Director and/or the Program Coordinator of the Violence Prevention and Educational Outreach Program and/or the Program Manager for Spiritual Life.



## Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law, the purpose of which is to protect the privacy of student education records. Simmons must comply with the requirements of FERPA.

**In general, FERPA addresses the following with regard to students who are over the age of 18 and/or enrolled at Simmons:**

- ▶ Review and inspection of the student's own educational records
- ▶ Having the student's educational records amended or corrected, as appropriate
- ▶ Controlling disclosure of certain portions of the student's educational records

FERPA has certain exemptions that relate to instances where a student's health and/or safety is at risk.

For more information regarding FERPA, please visit the [U.S. Department of Education's](https://www.ed.gov/) website.

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## Academic Advising

The Office of Academic Advising and Support (OAAS) serves all undergraduate students who have questions about academic advising. OAAS is primarily responsible for advising incoming and first-year students and continues to serve as a resource throughout a student's academic career.

All first-year students are assigned to a professional advisor in OAAS or the Honors program based on their intended major or track. At the end of their first year students are typically transitioned to a faculty advisor in their intended major(s).

### OAAS is also responsible for:

- ▶ Coordinating the Academic Warning process
- ▶ Managing assignment and shifting of faculty advisors
- ▶ Registering all incoming students for the Fall and Spring semesters
- ▶ Representing the office at Admissions events
- ▶ Creating student programming around the advising process

OAAS oversees the Starfish Advising system at Simmons. Through Starfish, faculty can report academic concerns such as when a student has several absences or has failed an exam. Faculty can also send kudos to their students, encouraging them to keep up their good work!

For more information, please visit [Undergraduate Advising](#).

## CARE (Campus Assessment, Response, and Evaluation) Team

The CARE Team is an interdisciplinary team which accepts referrals regarding students in distress, struggling with basic needs, experiencing unexpected crises, or whose behavior raises concerns about their well-being or that of others within the Simmons community. The CARE team connects students with appropriate resources and monitors their progress in an effort to ensure their general well-being and academic success, as well as to maintain a healthy and safe University environment.

Students should be referred to the CARE team anytime a staff member, faculty member, or a peer is concerned about their safety or well-being. Referrals are made via the [CARE Team Referral Form](#). A member of the CARE Team will review submitted forms Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and will respond within 24 hours.

**IMPORTANT:** If you feel that a student or community member is in imminent danger, to themselves or others, do not refer them to the CARE Team. Instead, follow the directions set forth above in Section 1: Emergency Management. A member of the CARE Team will follow up with the student for support.

The CARE Team meets on a regular basis and a member of the CARE Team will be identified to reach out to the individual student and provide additional screening to determine what services, support, or resources would be beneficial to the student. A plan is developed collaboratively with the student to address concerns which were raised. We encourage faculty to notify the student that they will be referred to the CARE Team.

**Behaviors or concerns which should be relayed to the CARE Team include, but are not limited to:**

- ▶ Changes in demeanor
- ▶ Drastic changes to grooming or hygiene
- ▶ Appearance of being sad
- ▶ Exaggerated or heightened emotional responses
- ▶ Repeated classroom disruptions
- ▶ Assignments or assessments containing disturbing writing
- ▶ References to weapons

For questions or additional information, email the CARE Team at [care@simmons.edu](mailto:care@simmons.edu).

## Supporting Students During Extended Absences

Students are responsible for notifying their faculty when they will miss class. Students are strongly encouraged to notify their professors if they are aware in advance of an upcoming absence so that they can engage in conversations with their faculty about a plan to make up material that has been missed.

If a student finds that they will be missing class for an extended period of time, we encourage them to notify their professors as well as Student Affairs. A check-in meeting can then be scheduled with a member of the Student Affairs staff to discuss supports during their absence as well as upon their return. The Office of Student Affairs cannot excuse absences but, if appropriate, can confirm that the student has met with a staff member, or has provided medical documentation to support their absence.

There may be an occasion during the course of a semester when a student must miss classes due to urgent medical treatment or personal emergency. The student or a family member may be able to reach out to faculty but even if this is the case, Student Affairs staff will reach out to faculty as well. In some instances, where the student may not be able to reach out to their faculty, Student Affairs staff will notify each faculty member of the student's absence. Student Affairs will maintain communication with faculty throughout the student's absence in order to best develop a plan for support and success.

Dependent upon the amount of class time, assessment, or placement time missed, it may be most reasonable for the student to request an incomplete or retroactive withdrawal. If this is determined to be the most feasible option, Student Affairs will provide guidance, in collaboration with faculty, around incompletes, and the student's adviser will counsel them regarding withdrawals and any impact they may have on the student's academic plan.

If you have any questions, please reach out to the Office of Student Affairs at 617-521-2124 or [studentlife@simmons.edu](mailto:studentlife@simmons.edu).

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## Navigating Incompletes or Withdrawals

Consistent attendance in class is essential to student success and all students must adhere to the attendance guidelines set forth by their faculty. In some cases, students may be approved for academic accommodations related to attendance; students must communicate with their faculty around related absences and comply with accommodation guidelines as relayed by the Office of Accessibility Services. There may however be instances where a student must miss a considerable amount of class time, resulting in the consideration of an incomplete or retroactive withdrawal.

An incomplete grade may be granted, at the discretion of the faculty member and with approval by the Administrative Board, when unforeseen and extraordinary circumstances prevent the student from being able to complete course requirements. Examples include, but are not limited to: admittance for urgent treatment, the death of a family member, or family emergency. While we understand that students may be working through medical issues, mental health concerns, or significant stress throughout the semester, incompletes are most appropriate when an unforeseen event occurs toward the end of the semester. If a student discloses hardships or appears to be in distress due to such circumstances, they should be referred to the [CARE Team](#) for additional support. Staff in the Office of Student Affairs will provide guidance for the student through this process.

A student may petition for a retroactive withdrawal from a course or courses if circumstances of a serious or compelling nature prevented them from dropping the course or courses prior to the deadline set forth in the Academic Calendar. Approval for a retroactive withdrawal is at the discretion of the student's faculty member and must be approved by the Administrative Board. Students seeking a retroactive withdrawal should check in with their Academic Advisor to determine its impact to their academic plan as well as with their Financial Aid counselor to confirm what, if any, impact the withdrawal will have on their aid.

### Forms:

- ▶ [Petition to the Administrative Board](#)
- ▶ [Petition for Incomplete Grade: Undergraduate](#)
- ▶ [Add/Drop Form](#)

Graduate students should contact the designated staff member in their program for approval. For a current list, please visit the [Leaving Simmons](#) webpage.



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## Violence Prevention and Education/ Survivor Advocacy

The Simmons University Violence Prevention and Educational Outreach Program (VPEO) works to educate and spread awareness around forms of gender-based violence (e.g., sexual harassment, sexual assault, intimate partner violence, stalking, etc.); to prevent the occurrence of violence on our campus or impacting our community; familiarizing community members with Simmons policy and protocol to address and respond to these issues if they arise; and to support and advocate for student survivors of violence.

### Services provided by VPEO include, but are not limited to:

- ▶ Facilitation of educational events, workshops, and trainings for all students regarding gender-based violence, respectful and healthy relationships, consent, bystander intervention, etc.
- ▶ Collaboration with the University's Health Education Program to provide comprehensive sex education, which include conversations with students about how to communicate about safer sex, contraception, boundaries, respect, healthy relationships, and sexual consent
- ▶ Serve as a consultant for other departments on campus to help better practices and protocols for supporting student survivors

### Student Advocacy

- ▶ Offer one-on-one support for students who have experienced gender-based discrimination
- ▶ Refer students to valuable resources
- ▶ Accompany students to Police and Public Safety, local police departments, court, etc. when appropriate
- ▶ Answer student questions about the Sexual Harassment Policy for Students, Faculty, Staff, and Visitors and assist them in reporting concerns to the University's Title IX Team

For more information, please visit the [Violence Prevention, Education, and Outreach](#) webpage or email [vpeo@simmons.edu](mailto:vpeo@simmons.edu).

NOTE: Confidential advocates are available to meet with students.

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## Health, Wellness, and Recreation

At Simmons, students aren't just a number, they are a valuable part of the Simmons community. We know that Simmons students thrive when they're healthy and it's our goal to support their well-being.

Our programs are designed to promote the well-being of Simmons students in support of their academic success. Working in close collaboration with student support services like the Health Center, On-Campus Nutritionist, Violence Prevention and Education, Counseling Services, Athletics, and Spiritual Life, we specialize in offering health promotion events, prevention programs, educational materials, and resources.

### Services include but are not limited to:

- ▶ Wellness Ambassadors
  - A group of students passionate about a comprehensive and inclusive picture of well-being for the Simmons community. Ambassadors serve as an open-minded and nonjudgmental resource for accurate health and wellness information
- ▶ Fit at Simmons
  - Provides opportunities for students to stay active and develop lifestyles of physical fitness and health. Classes include: Gentle Yoga, Contemporary Dance, Zumba, Barre, and Mindful Meditation
- ▶ Safer Sex Express
  - A free delivery program that sends safer sex supplies and health information to Simmons students. The Safer Sex Express aims to remove barriers to accessing safer sex supplies, such as cost, inconvenience, embarrassment, or worries about privacy.

For more information, please visit the [Health, Wellness, and Recreation](#) webpage.

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## Counseling Center

The Counseling Center offers confidential and free counseling services, including assessment, urgent care, referrals to community providers, groups, medication management for Counseling Center clients, and counseling to Simmons students. To make an appointment to see a counselor, students should stop by the office located in the Palace Road Building, room P305, Monday through Friday, between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Counseling Center staff will ask that a brief intake form be completed, which includes some basic demographic information. Students are asked to bring their class/work schedule and insurance card, if possible. Appointments are not scheduled over the phone, unless it is urgent. Once paperwork has been completed, students will be matched with a counselor and will be contacted via phone or email with an appointment time. If a student has an urgent concern, they will be seen within 24 hours.

**Students utilize the Counseling Center for a variety of concerns and issues.**

**These include but are not limited to:**

- ▶ Anxiety and stress
- ▶ Depression
- ▶ Eating problems and body image concerns
- ▶ General adjustment/transition concerns
- ▶ Homesickness
- ▶ Impact of oppression on well-being
- ▶ Mental health struggles
- ▶ Relationship concerns
- ▶ Self-esteem
- ▶ Sexual assault and trauma
- ▶ Sexuality and sexual identity
- ▶ Substance abuse
- ▶ Suicidal feelings

**In a life-threatening mental health or medical emergency**

- ▶ On campus: Call Police and Public Safety at x1111
- ▶ Off campus: Call 911

**For urgent, but non-life-threatening, mental health care**

- ▶ Call the RD on duty if a resident student and on campus
- ▶ Call Police and Public Safety or go to a local emergency room if a commuter student

Visit the [Counseling Center](#) webpage for more information.

# Simmons

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