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As noted above, we recognize that from time to time, students may take a voluntary leave of absence from their studies as a result of medical, mental health, or other personal matters that compromise their ability to continue in an academic program. However, we also recognize that sometimes it will be necessary for Simmons University to require a student to take an *involuntary* leave – a leave, which Simmons University has concluded, is in the best interest of the student but which the student may object to.

In instances where a student's mental, emotional, or medical health pose a threat to themselves and/or others, or where health circumstances or conditions become a barrier to appropriate or prescribed levels of self-care, or when a student's health condition causes significant disruption to the activities of the University community, students may be required to take an involuntary leave of absence from the University for a specific period of time.

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 healthcare setting to undergo medical or psychological treatment (hospitalization, intensive outpatient or inpatient program), the Associate Dean of Students 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 her/him being placed on leave and direct the student to the process for return. The student's parent/guardian/emergency contact person may also be notified that the student is in a potentially dangerous situation.

In circumstances when the student has not met direct threat/inpatient criteria, the Associate Dean of Students or designee may, based on observable/recorded behavior, still require a student to undergo an individualized psychological and/or medical assessment to make an informed decision regarding the student's ability to meet the academic, social, and emotional requirements of a Simmons student. This evaluation can be conducted by a member of the Simmons clinical staff, or by an external health care provider who is treating the student. The student will be required to sign a release that gives permission to the designated clinical personnel at Simmons 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 above, then she/he will be required to take an involuntary leave of absence and if applicable, an immediate removal from the residence halls.

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

In any instance in which a leave is required, the Associate Dean for Student Life 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. When appropriate, 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) or significant other prior to and during the leave process.

The duration of the leave is typically no fewer than six months, although the specific length of the leave will be based on the individualized assessment and determined by the Associate Dean of Student Life or designee on a case-by-case basis. The Program Director will be consulted about the duration of the leave. When a student takes a leave before the end of a semester, whether voluntary or involuntary, Simmons' standard tuition refund schedule applies.

### **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 healthcare 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 Life or designee.

Following the interview with the clinical staff, a recommendation based 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 Associate Dean for Student Life or designee regarding the student's readiness to return. Then, on a case-by-case basis the Associate Dean of Student Life or designee will make a determination if the student shall be permitted to return to the Simmons community. If it is determined that the student can return, the student will meet with the Associate Dean for Student Life or designee to establish a plan to return to the University and identify community resources. The appropriate academic program administrator (Dean, Associate Dean or Program Director) will be consulted for purposes of establishing the plan to return to active student status. 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, including clinical and professional internships, field placements, teaching practica and all activities associated with 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 follow the recommended and established treatment plan.

If, after reviewing all pertinent information, the Associate Dean of Student Life 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 Program**

Students who withdraw from Simmons should first meet with their Academic Advisor for an exit interview as part of the withdrawal process. Recipients of financial aid should also notify the Office of Student Financial Services. Students who withdraw from school and who wish to seek re-admission at some later time must apply for readmission through the standard Admissions process applicable to all candidates seeking admission. Admission once does not guarantee that admission will be granted a second time.

### **Mode of Delivery Transfer Policy**

Simmons University offers both on-campus and online Master's degree options in Behavior Analysis. Students admitted into the online program who are interested in transferring to the on-campus program must first consult with the BA@S Program Director for more information. Student requests for a transfer across either program option must be approved by both respective Program Directors. Student requests to transfer are not guaranteed.

### **Program Completion Policy**

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

## **SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS FOR FEDERAL FINANCIAL AID**

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

quantitative (completed credits) standards.

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

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

## TUITION REFUNDS

### 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.

## SIMMONS UNIVERSITY HONOR CODE

All students are expected to adhere to the Honor System of Simmons University, which can be found at: <https://www.simmons.edu/student-life/handbook/rights-responsibilities/honor-system>

### Honor Code Violations

Violations of the Simmons University Honor Code, specifically, academic dishonesty, plagiarism and cheating are referred to the Associate Dean for Student Life and the University Honor Board. Also referred are situations involving sexual misconduct the damage or destruction of University property, and conduct that endangers the health or safety of any student, employee, or campus visitor.

### Behavior Analysis Professional Standards

***Behavior Analysis Certification Board (BACB) Professional and Ethical Compliance Code for Behavior Analysts*** (<http://bacb.com/wpcontent/uploads/2016/03/160321compliancecodeenglish.pdf>).

Students are expected to adhere to the BACB's *Professional and Ethical Compliance Code for Behavior Analysts*, in their workplace and classroom. The BACB's code of ethics outlines behaviors and responsibilities expected of behavior analysts. Students are considered behavior analysts in training and as such as subject to this code of ethical behavior. Students should obtain a copy of the BACB's *Professional and Ethical Compliance Code for Behavior Analysts* and become familiar with its contents.

Failure to meet generally accepted standards for professional conduct, ethics and personal integrity requisite for professional social work practice, as outlined in the *Professional and Ethical Compliance Code for Behavior Analysts*, may constitute grounds for a Level Three Review or a referral to the Simmons University Honor Board and could result in dismissal or other academic sanctions.

## **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR REVIEW OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OR PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT ISSUES**

The University 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 issue and concerns. A student will be reviewed at the level (1, 2 or 3) that is appropriate to the concern.

### **Reviews of Students can occur under any of the following circumstances:**

- To identify need for academic support
- To determine a remediation plan for an Honor Board violation
- If a student fails to meet or maintain academic requirements
- If a student is terminated from a practicum placement either by the experience setting or by the department due to performance issues
- If a student is rejected by three agencies during the field placement process in one term
- If a student exhibits behavior judged by faculty to be in violation of professional ethics and/or Simmons University and CNBHS policies
- If a student exhibits consistent pattern of unprofessional behavior in the classroom or in field placements

### **The Three Levels of Review**

There are three levels of review to address student academic performance and conduct issues. A student can be reviewed at any level, and consecutive level reviews are 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.

#### **Level 1: Student/Instructor Consultation**

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

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

If a problem arises in an external practicum site the intensive practicum mentor (i.e. supervisor) is expected to discuss promptly concerns directly with the student and with the Director of Mentoring. It is the responsibility of the mentor to apprise their department contact of the concerns.

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

The outcome of many Level 1 consultations is that, together, the faculty and students resolve the concerns and no further reviews are desired or required. Examples of situations triggering a Level 1 review are attendance issues, a poor grade or missed assignment.



## **Level 2**

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

A Level 2 review usually involves a meeting with the appropriate faculty member, student, and appropriate program administrator and the Chair of the department.

The student will be informed of the Level 2 review by their instructor. In preparation for the Level 2 meeting, the instructor and/or Chair will gather information about the nature of the concern. The meeting will be used to discuss the concerns and to develop a Corrective Plan to address that concern. If the outcome of the meeting is that no further action is needed, the meeting will be documented to the student and the Chair but no Corrective Plan will be created. When a Corrective Plan is determined to be appropriate next steps, the Corrective Plan may address the need for the student to modify 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 Corrective Plan.

The purpose of a Level 2 review is to assist students in fully understanding and addressing the academic or behavioral 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, other difficulties meeting the standards and expectations of a course

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

## **Level 3**

A Level 3 review involves the Dean (or designee) and the Chair, 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. The Dean, in consultation with the committee, decides whether or not a Level 3 meeting shall be convened. The Dean informs the Simmons University Associate Dean for Student Life about the decision to convene a Level 3 review.

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

When a Level 3 review is called, the Dean 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 Dean, with sufficient time to prepare for and attend the meeting. If a student chooses not to attend, a finding can be made with the available information in the student's absence.

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

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

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

- Dismiss student from the program

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

### **Level 3 Reviews and Referral and/or Consultation with the Simmons University Associate Dean for Student Life**

In some instances, depending on the nature of the problem, the Simmons University Associate Dean for Student Life may be consulted to determine whether a Level 3 Review or a referral to the Simmons University Associate Dean for Student Life, and/or Honor Board is the most appropriate course of action.

After consultation, if it is determined that a referral to the Associate Dean for Student Life and/or Honor Board is appropriate, the student will be notified in writing about the nature of the concern and that the referral is taking place. Situations that may result in referral to the Associate Dean for Student Life and/or Honor Board 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 directly to the Honor Board and/or the Associate Dean for Student Life may be referred back to the Associate Dean for the purpose of developing an implementation plan (Corrective Plan) for sanctions that have been determined by the Honor Board or Associate Dean for Student Life. The Associate Dean may consult with the Academic Standards Committee for guidance in the sanctions implementation plan.

### **Mid-Semester Academic Review**

Faculty who have concerns about a student's academic or field performance, attendance or professional behavior will first discuss these concerns directly with the student and may notify the student's Academic Advisor. If the concern or difficulty persists, the student's Academic Advisor must be informed.

Mid-semester academic reviews will take place regularly, during which faculty will be asked to identify any student who is experiencing field or academic difficulties. If a faculty member intends to include a student's name in the mid-semester academic review, the faculty member must inform the student and the student's Academic Advisor. The concern will be "flagged" for further exploration. The advisor will be in contact with the student, and generally a Level 2 review, convened by the student's Academic Advisor, will follow.

## **ACADEMIC STANDING AND DISCIPLINE**

*Note: Some of the policies below are new beginning September 2017. Unless noted otherwise, all policies below apply to all students regardless of when they entered the program.*

### **Course Grades below a "B"**

Any student earning a grade lower than a B in a course is required to have a Level 2 review, no later than the first day of the subsequent term, and is required to retake the class and earn a B or better. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the grade, the reasons for the low academic performance, and to develop a Corrective Plan, which will be sent to the student. A student's failure to attend this meeting will result in the administrative withdrawal of the student's registration.

### **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 permitted to re-submit any work submitted in the prior class. This includes asynchronous work as well as written papers and exams. Students required to retake a class will do so at their own 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 or a cumulative GPA of less than 3.0. 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 a Corrective 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 may result in the administrative withdrawal of the student's registration.

### **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. A student will be informed by the Program Director or Academic Adviser when they are removed from academic probation.

### **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. Students must complete the program in five years.

Students who do not register for classes in consecutive terms and are not on an official leave, or have not officially withdrawn, will be administratively withdrawn by Simmons. 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 point average of B (3.0) to be eligible for graduation.

### **Academic and Conduct Issues Leading to Dismissal**

#### **Dismissal Due to Academic Performance**

The following circumstances lead to dismissal:

- Earning a cumulative GPA falling below a 3.0 for two consecutive terms
- When it is determined that a student cannot return their cumulative GPA to at least a 3.0 at the conclusion of the following term
- Earning three grades below a B
- Failure to progress as described in course progression policy
- In the case of conditional admission, failing to meet the conditions determined.

#### **Dismissal Due to Conduct Issues**

- Simmons University Honor Board violation leading to dismissal
- Behavior judged to be in violation of Simmons University Policies
- Behavior that is deemed unprofessional per the BACB's *Professional and Ethical Compliance Code for Behavior Analysts*
- 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 Simmons and becoming known after admissions

### **Notification of Dismissal**

A student who is dismissed will be informed in a letter from the Program Director or designee. The reasons for the dismissal will be outlined in the letter.

### **Appeal of Dismissal**

A written appeal must be received within ninety (90) days of the date of the letter from the Program Director or designee. The written appeal must be sent to the Associate Dean or designee and the appeal will be reviewed by the CNBHS Appeals Committee.

The CNBHS Appeals Committee is composed of Program Chairs from each department (or their designee), the Associate Dean, the Director of the Dotson Bridge and Mentoring Program, and an at-large-faculty member appointed by the Dean for a two-year term. The Assistant Dean shall be an ex officio member of the committee. The Committee has regularly scheduled meetings throughout the academic year.

This appeal does not constitute a new review process. Rather, it is a request from a student to have the CNBHS Appeals Committee review the original record of the dismissal on either one or more of the following three 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 should provide to the CNBHS Appeals Committee all documentation necessary for the appeal to be considered.

### **Dismissal Appeal Process:**

- Students are strongly encouraged to consult with their advisor, in preparing their appeal form and planning for their appearance, in front of the CNBHS Appeals Committee.
- The Associate Dean or designee will place the student's appeal for consideration at the next available CNBHS Appeals Committee meeting. The committee will make reasonable efforts to consider appeals in a timely manner.
- Prior to meeting with the student, the committee may choose to consult with faculty or others involved in the case.
- The student will be invited to appear at the CNBHS Appeals Committee meeting, where their case is being heard. Students are allowed to have their faculty advisor attend the meeting with them if they choose.
- The student will be notified, in writing, of the Committee's decision, within 10 business days of the meeting, at which their appeal is heard. Notification of the decision will also be sent to the Dean and the Department Chair.
- In the event that the Appeals Committee grants an exception to a policy, the matter will be referred back to the department responsible for determining how to implement an appropriate plan for student progress.

- The Dean will be the final arbiter. Students who are terminated from the program and have been denied reinstatement by the Appeals have the right to appeal this decision in writing to the Dean of the College of Natural, Behavioral and Health Sciences within 10 business days of the decision. The decision of the Dean is final and cannot be appealed further.

## **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 Department Chair, the Program Director and or Associate Dean, and the Dean.

## **GRADUATION INFORMATION**

The Faculty and the Board of Trustees grants degrees six times per academic year. The dates are the last business days of January, April, July, August and October, and the third Friday in May. The University has one on-campus graduation ceremony, held in May on the third Friday. In addition, an online graduation ceremony is twice per calendar year, in March and September. The exact dates and additional information will be sent to eligible graduates.

### **Diplomas**

For all students graduating in August, October, January, March, and July, diplomas will be mailed directly to the address listed in AARC approximately four to six weeks after degree conferral. It is important that the student's address is correct on AARC.

For students graduating in May, your diploma will be available for pick up at Commencement. For students who do not attend Commencement or claim their diploma, it will be mailed in mid-June to the address listed in AARC. It is important that the student's address is correct on AARC.

Replacement diplomas can be ordered through the Registrar's Office Diplomas will not be ordered for students who do not return completed Petitions to Graduate. Late petitions may delay the availability of your diploma.

### **Transcripts**

Transcripts can be ordered through the Registrar's Office at any time after the conferral of degrees. To order, log onto AARC, click "transcript requests" and follow the directions.

AARC will remain operational for students until approximately two months after graduation and transcripts will be free during this period. If you need to order transcripts after that time, visit the Simmons [Registrar's web page](#) and follow the directions listed there. There will be a fee depending on your choice of options, such as expedited service.

### **Graduation Requirements**

Students are responsible for tracking their own credit requirements. Regular meetings with Academic Advisors and review of AARC transcripts are encouraged to keep track of credits completed and needed.

## **OTHER SIMMONS UNIVERSITY POLICIES**

Information on the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) can be found at

<http://www.simmons.edu/academics/registrar/resources/student-record-privacy>.

Please visit <http://www.simmons.edu/student-life/handbook/> for University Policies on the following topics:

- [Honor System](#)
- Prohibited Conduct
- Judicial System
- University Policies & Procedures
- [Notice of Non-Discrimination and Grievance Procedures](#)
- [Accessibility Services](#)
- [Hazing Policy](#)
- [Gender-based Misconduct Policy](#)
- [Student Rights and Responsibilities Statement](#)
- Policy on Valuing Diversity
- Clery Report and Crime Statistics