



**Simmons University**  
**Direct Entry MSN Student Handbook**  
**Academic Year 2024-2025**

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## **About This Handbook**

The Simmons University Campus-Based Graduate Nursing Student Handbook contains University policies, guidelines, and procedures relating to Simmons Nursing Programs and is meant to supplement the [Simmons University Student Code of Conduct](#) described below. Students are responsible for knowing the information contained in the Handbook and are bound to the policies, guidelines, and procedures as soon as they become a nursing student.

The policies, guidelines, procedures, and other information contained in the Handbook are not intended to, nor do they create any contractual rights for students. The Simmons School of Nursing (SoN) reserves the right to change any of the policies, guidelines, procedures, and other information contained in the Handbook at any time. When the program policies, guidelines, and procedures contained in this handbook are more rigorous than the general university policies, guidelines, and procedures; the program policies, guidelines, and procedures contained in this handbook will supersede the general university policies, guidelines, and procedures. If you have questions regarding any of these policies, guidelines, procedures, or other information, please contact the Chair of Graduate Nursing.

Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the Student Handbook and are subject to the most recent version of the Student Handbook.

The Simmons University Code of Conduct provides important information on university-wide policies including:

- Student Rights and Responsibilities
  - Honor System
  - Valuing Diversity
  - Non-Discrimination
  - Bias Response Protocol
  - Gender-Based Misconduct
  - Conduct System
  - Hazing Policy
  - Alcohol & Illegal Drugs
  - Technology Policies
  - Protest and Demonstration
  - Student Records
  - Missing Student Policy
- Academic Policies
  - General Policies
  - Undergraduate Policies
- Student Resources

## **Overview**

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

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

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

## **Vision**

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

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

## **Mission**

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

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

## **Philosophy of Nursing**

The faculty of the Nursing Program believes that a liberal education is essential for the development of professional nursing practice, in a culturally, racially, and ethnically diverse community. The quality of this



practice is enhanced by, and dependent on, knowledge acquired from the liberal arts and sciences. The process, as well as the content of the liberal education, is fundamental to development of critical thinking, decision-making and communication skills, as well as facilitating the individual student to develop an appreciation of the global society. The faculty believes that learning is a unique, life long process, moving from the simple to the more complex, encompassing the domains of personal, empirical, aesthetic, and ethical knowledge (Carper, 1975). The science of nursing requires the acquisition of knowledge in each of these domains, and that learners integrate and utilize them in their growth, as professional nurses.

The Simmons University Nursing faculty believes that professional nursing is practiced according to the nursing metaparadigm, which includes beliefs about person, health, nursing, and environment. Each person is unique. Human beings are holistic in nature, yet they have interacting biophysical, cognitive, social, spiritual, and developmental dimensions. People have their own perceptions, values, beliefs, and goals. Individuals have the ability to be self-directive, to adapt to change, to achieve their potential, and to ascribe personal meaning in their lives.

Health may include states of wellness and illness. It has subjective and objective perspectives, viewed from both the standpoint of the client, and the healthcare system. Wellness is a dynamic state of integrity, whereby the person re-patterns life toward optimal functioning. Health is recognized as a multidimensional and dynamic state of wellness and illness, and is defined as “the actualization of inherent and acquired human potential, through goal-directed behavior, competent self-care, and satisfying relationships with others, while adjustments are made as needed to maintain structure, integrity, and harmony with the environment” (Pender, 1987, cited in ANA Social Policy statement, 2010). The faculty believes that the professional nurse assists persons in identifying health needs, which utilizes a holistic framework that recognizes the uniqueness and complexity of each individual.

Nursing is the diagnosis and treatment of human responses to actual or potential health problems.

It involves an interaction between the client and nurse, which is designed to promote, restore, and maintain health, or support a peaceful death. The nurse uses knowledge from the natural sciences, behavioral sciences, and aesthetics, including caring, empathy, and ethics, which involve making moral choices. Nurses are ethically and legally accountable for their actions. The environment includes biophysical, psychosocial, cultural, and spiritual dimensions that interact and influence health. Each person lives and interacts within an ever-changing environment. The environment can be modified to have a positive impact on health.

The nurse independently utilizes the nursing process, and the practice of professional nursing, in accordance with the Standards of Nursing Practice and the ANA Code of Ethics. The nurse collaborates with clients, families, and other healthcare professionals, who are members of an interdisciplinary team in assessing, planning, delivering, and evaluating healthcare. The professional nurse functions as an advocate for a person, and focuses nursing practice on a person, within the context of family and community. The professional nurse is an active participant in the social and political processes that influence the healthcare delivery system. The nurse utilizes critical thinking and clinical judgment to analyze the client's needs, determine and implement appropriate, therapeutic nursing interventions, and coordinate the activities of other healthcare providers involved in the care of the client.

Students completing the pre-licensure Nursing Program are prepared as generalists, who are able to incorporate professional nursing standards and research in their practice, collaborate as members of an interdisciplinary healthcare team, apply the concepts of diversity and community service in their practice, and utilize leadership skills to influence change in the healthcare delivery system.

The Direct Entry Master of Science in Nursing Program at Simmons University is designed to prepare

individuals who possess a Bachelor's degree in a non-nursing field for a career in advanced nursing clinical practice. Students in the program are mentored in a variety of clinical settings, which range from primary healthcare to diverse specialty and acute settings. Knowledge acquired in their undergraduate education is applied and synthesized to the advanced study of natural, behavioral, and applied health sciences. Advanced practice nursing in the Graduate Nursing Program means specialization, expansion, and advancement in the professional role of the nurse practitioner, nurse scientist, and nurse executive. Excellence in scholarship, clinical practice, and service spans the curriculum. The essence of advanced practice nursing consists of the purposeful relationship, created between the individual professional nurse and the patient, community, or system at large. A multidisciplinary practitioner- mentoring model is applied to guide students in the personalized development of clinical practice, which both improves systems of care, and ultimately influences patient outcomes. The program emphasizes the development of excellent skills and acquisition of tools necessary to integrate evidence, including safety, quality care measures, into practice across the lifespan. The advanced practice nurse builds on an in-depth knowledge of the individual, family, and the community as a complex system, and begins to expand interventions to include, not only, a response to immediate healthcare needs, but the promotion of health and prevention of illness in these aggregates. Our students value the patient and the system, from which these arise. The quality of the therapeutic relationship, between nurse and patient, reflects collective competencies in clinical assessment, intervention, and innovative strategies for care. The foundation of practice expands across diverse political, ethical, and cultural populations, establishing opportunity to respond to the healthcare needs of our community.

### **Pre-Licensure Technical Standards**

The faculty has outlined technical standards of students in the program. See Addendum II for a description of these technical standards. The School of Nursing requires cognitive, affective communications and psychomotor functions. The nature of the nursing profession requires students to participate in clinical and laboratory course work that is, at times, physically demanding and requires certain physical strength, agility, endurance, perceptual skills, and other attributes.

### **Outcomes for the Pre-Licensure DE Nursing Curriculum**

- Utilize current evidence, clinical judgment, and patient preference to systematically assess, analyze, implement, and evaluate healthcare interventions, in order to promote safe, quality care throughout the lifespan, beginning with health promotion, through end of life.
- Deliver compassionate and respectful, patient and family centered care, and education that reflects an understanding of human growth, development, nutrition, genomics, spirituality, culture, symptom management, and health literacy across the health illness continuum, through all transitions of care, in all healthcare settings.
- Communicate/collaborate effectively with all members of the healthcare team, patient and family.
- Demonstrate leadership competency, both interprofessionally, and when delegating and supervising, or coordinating teams to achieve shared goals and improve patient outcomes.
- Synthesize knowledge of healthcare delivery systems, social justice, global health, healthcare policy, informatics, and principles of entrepreneurship, in addressing the healthcare needs of individuals and populations.
- Accept accountability for continued development as a strategic, ethical, and reflective scholar and practitioner, to engage as a lifelong learner, with the goal of advancing the profession of nursing.

## **Outcomes for the Post-licensure DE Nursing Curriculum**

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

## **Professional Standards that guide the Master's Programs include**

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

## **Accreditation**

The [baccalaureate degree program in nursing](#), [master's degree program in nursing](#), and [Doctor of Nursing Practice](#) program at Simmons University are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education, 655 K Street, NW, Suite 750, Washington, DC 20001, 202-887-6791 (<http://www.ccneaccreditation.org>). The Simmons University Nursing Program is fully approved by the Massachusetts Board of Registration in Nursing.

Simmons University is accredited by the [New England Commission of Higher Education](#) (formerly the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education).

## **Important Notices**

The principles and policies outlined in this section apply to admissions, progression, attendance, academic integrity, use of social media, course exemption, advanced placement, transfer, advanced

placement or transfer of military education, training or service, education mobility, withdrawal, re-admission, graduation, student rights and grievances

## **Non-Discrimination and Title IX Policies**

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

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

[Admissions Notice of Non-Discrimination](#)

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

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

[Gender-based Misconduct Policy](#)

## **Statement of Solidarity for Racial Justice**

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

## **Bias Response Protocol**

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

[Bias Responses Protocol](#)

## **Religious Observances**

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

## **Academic & Educational Records**

The Simmons University SON follows the Simmons University [Records Management Policy and Retention Schedules](#).

## Contact Information

All students are responsible for information sent to them using their [simmons.edu](mailto:simmons.edu) address. You may forward the Simmons email to another email account.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- educational institution most recently attended

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

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

- officials at an institution where the student is applying for admission
- officials disbursing financial aid
- parents of a dependent student (for tax purposes)
- accrediting and educational testing organizations
- federal officials
- officials complying with a judicial order
- appropriate officials in the event of an emergency (only if necessary to safeguard the health or well-being of the student or other individuals)
- the alleged victim of a crime of violence may receive results of any disciplinary proceedings conducted by the University against the alleged perpetrator of that crime in reference to that crime. Student records are available to the above with the stipulation that this information is only for the use of the above unless written consent is secured from the student.

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

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

## **Student Work**

### **Definition**

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

### **Ownership and Use**

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

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

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

To ensure that Simmons University continues to respect the learner's rights, Simmons University may not and will not accept information from learners under an obligation of confidentiality. Types of information that could be subject to confidentiality requirements include information obtained from an employer, unpatented inventions and information obtained pursuant to a nondisclosure agreement. Information that

is subject to an obligation of confidentiality may not be used in any part of the Simmons University learning process, including but not limited to web postings, materials prepared for a course, dissertation work and/or comprehensive examinations.

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

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

## **Copyright**

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

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

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

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

## **Honor Code & Academic Integrity**

### **Honor System**

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

### **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.

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.

### **Honor Code of Responsibility**

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

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

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

### **Academic Integrity**

Each student is expected to read, understand, and observe the policies outlined in this handbook as well as all other policies that govern students enrolled at Simmons University including those found in the [Simmons Student Handbook](#), [Simmons University Student Code of Conduct](#), [Simmons Academic Integrity Policy](#), and the [Simmons Academic Integrity Appeals Process](#).

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.

### **Student Legal Name and Name Changes**

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

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

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

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

### **Equal Access Policy**



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

### **The Simmons Commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion**

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

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

### **Our Diversity & Inclusion Mission**

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

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

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

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

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

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

- We recognize, respect and honor the inherent individuality of all. We strive to ensure that all decisions concerning the educational progress of students are based on considerations appropriate to an academic institution and not on factors such as race, color, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, religion, age, national origin, ancestry, disability, or veteran status.

- All students are given equal access to the University's programs and resources. Admission to the University's undergraduate baccalaureate program considers people who self-identify as women. The University is committed to admitting qualified students of any race, color, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, religion, age, national origin, ancestry, disability, or veteran status to all programs and activities made generally available to students at the University, including scholarship and loan programs, athletic programs, and other University-administered student services, and social, educational and recreational programs.
- We subscribe to the policies set forth in Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which mandates equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities in educational programs and activities.
- We are committed to creating an atmosphere where diversity is supported with understanding, respect, and encouragement. The University does not tolerate unlawful or other harassment of employees or students. Any discrimination or harassment by any member of the faculty, staff, or student body against any other member of the community will be handled according to the process articulated in the Bias Response Protocol, Title IX Policy, Faculty Policy Manual, Employee Handbook, and other relevant Simmons policies.

## **Notice of Non-Discrimination**

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

Simmons is, therefore, committed to the following principles:

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

complaints.

### **Reporting Sexual Misconduct**

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

### **Students Reporting Discrimination or Retaliation**

If you are a student and you believe you have been subjected to unlawful discrimination or retaliation, please contact the Dean of your University, the Director of your Program or the Dean for Student Life. The Dean for Student Life can be found in C-115 of the Main Campus Building.

Reporting a web/online accessibility barrier: Please use this form:

<http://www.simmons.edu/report-barrier>. We are committed to making our programs and activities accessible to all individuals.

### **Advice on Whom to Contact about a Concern or Incident**

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

### **Grievance Procedure**

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

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

### **Information for Students with Disabilities**

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

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

Requests for accommodations and supporting documentation should be directed to the Office of Accessibility Services, located in the Center for Student Success. The Office of Accessibility Services is responsible for assisting Simmons students who have identified themselves as having a disability and who are seeking accommodation as a result of their disabilities. Timeliness is an integral part of the accommodation process. Students should initiate the process for obtaining accommodations as soon as possible, preferably no later than the start of the course in which they are seeking the accommodation. Academic accommodations for a disability are not granted retroactively. Concerns or grievances with the Office of Accessibility Services and/or its determinations regarding accommodations should be brought to the Director of Accessibility Services.

## **Campus Security**

Simmons University subscribes, without exception, to the Campus Security Act of 1990. It is University policy to provide members of the Simmons community with information, reports, and statistics as required by P.L. 101- 502, to maintain working relationships with other law enforcement agencies to ensure co-operation between different law enforcement jurisdictions, and to provide educational programs designed to increase crime and safety awareness among students, faculty, and staff. For information regarding the Campus Security Act, contact the Director of Public Safety at 617-521-2289.

## **Human Subjects**

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

## **General Policies**

### **Code of Conduct and Discipline**

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

- Provision 1: The nurse practices with compassion and respect for the inherent dignity, worth, and unique attributes of every person.
- Provision 2: The nurse's primary commitment is to the patient, whether an individual, family, group, community, or population.
- Provision 3: The nurse promotes, advocates for, and protects the rights, health, and safety of the patient.
- Provision 4: The nurse has authority, accountability, and responsibility for nursing practice; makes decisions; and takes action consistent with the obligation to promote health and to provide optimal care.
- Provision 5: The nurse owes the same duties to self as to others, including the responsibility to promote health and safety, preserve wholeness of character and integrity, maintain competence,

and continue personal and professional growth.

- Provision 6: The nurse, through individual and collective effort, establishes, maintains and improves the ethical environment of the work setting and conditions of employment that are conducive to safe, quality health care.
- Provision 7: The nurse, in all roles and settings, advances the profession through research and scholarly inquiry, professional standards development, and the generation of both nursing and health policy.
- Provision 8: The nurse collaborates with other health professionals and the public to protect human rights, promote health diplomacy, and reduce health disparities.
- Provision 9: The profession of nursing, collectively through its professional organizations, must articulate nursing values, maintain the integrity of the profession, and integrate principles of social justice into nursing and health policy.

### **Professional Behaviors**

The classroom is similar to any and all professional settings. As in all professional environments, the following behaviors demonstrate commitment to professional standards of conduct:

- Attending each class and clinical experience
- Arriving on time and being well prepared for class and clinical
- Staying in the classroom for the entire class period
- Turning off all pagers and cell phones
- Refraining from side conversations with classmates
- Being attentive to and respectful of the faculty presenting during class
- Being attentive to and respectful of classmates discussing questions, cases, or issues raised during class
- Notifying the professor or clinical instructor, well in advance, in the unusual circumstance that the student will be late, unable to attend class or clinical or unable to meet class or clinical requirements.

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

### **Professional Communication**

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

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

Responses to any communication from faculty, the Clinical Placement Team (CPT), and any other Simmons or 2U staff or team member is expected to be within 24 - 48 business hours. Throughout the clinical placement process, a delay in communication can result in forfeit of a student's clinical placement.

### **Summary of Expected Behaviors**

<b>Classroom</b>	<b>Clinical</b>
On time for class	On time for clinical
Completes assignments on time, typed	Sets goals for clinical experiences
Actively seeks feedback and help	Actively seeks feedback and help
Receptive to feedback	Receptive to feedback without becoming defensive
Incorporates feedback into work	Incorporates feedback into work
Communicates with faculty in respectful manner	Communicates with faculty, agency staff, patients and families in respectful manner
Identifies learning needs, educates self	Identifies learning needs around client issues, educates self, uses professional literature, electronic sources, self-evaluates with weekly journals
Listens actively, is courteous	Listens actively, is courteous
Is culturally sensitive	Self-aware re: cultural differences. Demonstrates respect for/is nonjudgmental about cultural, ethnic, and personal differences in patients and healthcare team members
Collaborates with and respects the work of classmates	Collaborates with and respects the work of classmates
Maintains confidentiality of clinical information	Maintains confidentiality of clinical information Researches policies and procedures relevant to the clinical setting Nursing care and documentation meet legal requirements Identifies steps around processing an ethical issue
Is accountable for own learning	Organizes work. Completes assignments and documentation in a timely manner

## **Social Media Use**

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

Students should be aware of, consider, and comply with the Massachusetts Board of Registration in Nursing's regulations whenever using social and electronic media. Visit

<http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/dph/quality/boards/nursing/nursing-news-july12.pdf> for more information.

Additionally, The National Council of State Boards of Nursing, in its White Paper: A Nurse's Guide to the Use of Social Media ([https://www.ncsbn.org/Social\\_Media.pdf](https://www.ncsbn.org/Social_Media.pdf)), has identified guidelines to which students should adhere to.

### **Professionalism and Integrity Issues**

Suspected violations of Academic Integrity by Nursing students will be addressed in alignment with the [Simmons Academic Integrity Policy](#), and the [Simmons Academic Integrity Appeals Process](#). Alleged violations of professional conduct may be referred to the SON Academic Review & Appeals Committee and resolved in keeping with the policies and procedures outlined in the Student Nursing Handbook, [Simmons Student Handbook](#), [Simmons University Student Code of Conduct](#). SON Academic Review & Appeals Committee has the authority to determine departmental sanctions in consultation with the appropriate program Chair(s) who will have oversight for administering the sanctions..

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

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

Reviews of students can occur for the following circumstances:

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

### **Three Levels of Review**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### ***Level 2***

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

### ***Level 3***

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

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

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

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

Once an understanding has been reached, the student will be excused from the meeting. Faculty conducting the Level 3 review will confer with the SON Academic Review & Appeals Committee and agree on recommendations, which will then be made to the Program Director who will implement a course of action based on the recommendations. The Program Director or designee will inform the student of the decision, which can include one of the following:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **Health Policies**

The University adheres to the philosophy and the standards of the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (PL 93-112) as amended (PL 92-156). All educational programs at Simmons University are dedicated to the principle of nondiscrimination. This includes a

commitment not to discriminate against students with disabilities, who are otherwise qualified, to be enrolled as nursing students. As part of its effort to ensure that all students are given the opportunity to participate fully in the Nursing Program, the faculty has outlined technical standards of students in the program. See Addendum II for a list of these technical standards. The Nursing Program requires cognitive, affective, communications, and psychomotor functions. The nature of the nursing profession requires students to participate in clinical and laboratory course work that is, at times, physically demanding and requires certain physical strength, agility, endurance, perceptual skills, and other attributes.

### **Disabilities and Special Health Needs**

1. Students with disabilities: The College subscribes to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (PL 93-112), as amended (PL 92-156), and the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), which mandates equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities in educational programs.
2. Pregnancy is recognized as a special health need under title IX. Early notification to the Student Affairs Office is recommended so that consideration for appropriate clinical rotation can be planned. The department is guided by the student's physician and the policies of the agency, in which the student is placed for clinical. The Student Affairs Office can be contacted at 617-521-2116 or via e-mail at [studentlife@simmons.edu](mailto:studentlife@simmons.edu).
3. Any nursing student with a health concern that may impact their ability to complete the technical standards, as outlined in Addendum II, should follow the procedure listed below to request accommodations and seek clearance (please note that any student who is hospitalized or experiences a surgical procedure must engage in this process).
4. Changes in health status may occur over the course of the Nursing Program. Health concerns that have the potential to impact the student's ability to perform the technical standards should follow the following procedure to request medical clearance and/or accommodations.
  - a. The student should contact the Disability Services Office, for an intake appointment, to discuss the need for accommodations, in relation to the Technical Standards.
  - b. If accommodations are required, the student should submit documentation to Disability Services, from the appropriate licensed professional, specifically addressing the limitations, in relation to the technical standards and the recommended accommodations.
  - c. The Disability Services staff will work, in collaboration, with the nursing department to determine whether the student is eligible to return to clinical with or without accommodations.

### **Board of Registration Policy on Good Moral Character and Licensure Requirements**

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Board of Registration in Nursing Licensure Policy 00-011 Determination of Good Moral Character identifies specific criminal convictions, which will permanently exclude an individual from initial nurse licensure in Massachusetts, due to the egregious nature of the crime. The policy also requires initial nurse licensure applicants to be conviction-free, for a minimum of five years, before the submission of an application for initial nurse licensure. In addition, the disposition of any criminal conviction must be closed, for a minimum of one year, before the submission of a nurse licensure application; any other criminal case must also be closed at the time of application. Please refer to the most current policy online at

<http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/departments/dph/programs/hcq/dhpl/nursing/licensing/good-moral-character-requirements-for-licensure.html>.

If you have any questions about this policy and how it may affect your ability to become licensed as a registered nurse in Massachusetts, please contact the SoN Dean immediately.

### **Student Complaints**

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

#### **Student-Faculty Level**

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

#### **Director of Direct Entry MSN Program**

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

### **School of Nursing**

For an issue that remains unresolved after consultation with the Director, the student may take concerns to the appropriate (pre-/post- licensure) Chair. The Chair will review the issue, and act as an arbitrator of the grievance, consulting with the SON Dean if needed.

### **Admission Policy**

Our Direct Entry Program is designed for students from all academic backgrounds. We prepare students to deliver primary health care to diverse populations across the lifespan. Graduates of this 3-4 year program are prepared to take the family nurse practitioner (FNP) certification exam. Please visit the [program page](#) to review the curriculum.

Applicants must have a BS or BA from a regionally accredited US college or university or a post-secondary institution abroad which is recognized by the Ministry of Education in the home country in a discipline other than nursing to apply. All candidates for admission will need to provide satisfactory evidence of secondary school graduation, or its equivalent, and compliance with the immunization requirements specified by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health [ref 244 CMR 6.04(3)(a)1] should they be admitted to the program.

Refer to the Graduate Admissions Department for [Direct Entry prerequisite requirements](#) for admission to the Direct Entry program.

### **Mode of Delivery Program Transfer**

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

A request to transfer your program of study mode of delivery must be discussed with your Academic

Advisor and may only be granted in special circumstances. All transfers must be approved by both the Direct Entry MSN Program Director and the Graduate Nursing Chair. More than one transfer between modes of delivery during the duration of your program of study is not permitted.

Students may only transfer if they are in good standing. Students who are on probation or students who have been dismissed and reinstated may not request a mode of delivery transfer. All transfer requests must be made at least 14-weeks prior to the term in which you wish to transition.

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

On-campus DE (Direct Entry) MSN students wishing to transfer to the online Nursing@Simmons MSN program, may only transfer after the pre-licensure courses have been completed. Proof of passing the NCLEX and proof of RN employment will be required by May 1st to continue in the post-licensure curriculum.

## **Academic Policies**

### **Student Advisement**

Students entering the Nursing Program is assigned to an Academic Coach (pre-licensure) and will work closely with the Graduate Advising Team during post-licensure portion of the program. The academic coach and nursing advising team assist students in their plan of study, course selection for upcoming semesters, provide information about on-campus academic resources, and lead discussions with students on major, career, and life goals. If a student completes registration without the advisor's consultation, the student assumes full responsibility for all academic consequences.

### **Grading Policies**

<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>GPA Value</b>	<b>Pre-licensure Courses</b>	<b>Post-licensure Courses</b>
A	4.0	93-100	95-100
A-	3.67	90-92	90-94
B+	3.33	87-89	87-89
B	3.0	83-86	83-86
B-	2.67	80-82	80-82
C+	2.33	77-79	77-79
C	2.0	75-76	75-76
C-	1.67	70-74	70-74
D+	1.33	67-69	67-69
D	1	63-66	63-66
D-	.67	60-62	60-62

### **Incomplete**

Required coursework must ordinarily be completed by the last day of final examinations. In extenuating circumstances, students may request an "incomplete" by obtaining approval from the course instructor and program director prior to the end of the semester, which will be facilitated by the academic advisor. The advisor will distribute the Petition for Incomplete Grade form electronically to the student. The form must be completed and submitted in order to be officially granted an incomplete grade in the course. Once the form is submitted, a grade of "I" will be entered by the Office of the Registrar. It is the student's responsibility to monitor their progress and complete all work so that the instructor can submit a final

grade by the date set. Students can only extend their final grade with an incomplete for two weeks from the last day final grades were due. If a student does not submit required work by the new due date, the instructor will grade the student based on what has been done up until that point. The grade earned will be assigned accordingly on the due date listed. Grades not submitted by the instructor to the Office of the Registrar on the approved deadline will automatically be converted to a grade of "F". Incomplete grades not accompanied by a petition will be automatically converted to a grade of "F" by 11:59pm EST on the date grades are due.

### **Pre-Licensure Nursing Program Grading Policies**

- DE students must receive a 75% or above overall weighted exam average, in order to pass the course. Once the student has achieved a 75% or above weighted exam average, all other course assignments will be factored into the final grade. CHSC-404, SNHS 450, and NURS 589 are exceptions and require an 83% course average to pass the course.
- If the exam average in all other pre licensure courses is less than 75%, the student will receive the grade that is equivalent to the overall average of the exam grades.
- Grades are not rounded for any reason. A score of 74.9% is less than 75%.
- If a DE Nursing student is unable to complete the course work by the end of the semester, the student must request approval from the course faculty for an incomplete and then complete the Petition for Incomplete Grade form.
- Direct Entry Nursing Program students must maintain a 3.0 GPA, in the pre-licensure courses, in order to progress to the Graduate Nursing Sequence.
- Clinical Courses
  - Students must pass both the clinical and didactic components of a nursing course, in order to pass the course. If the student fails one component and passes the other, they will fail the course. If the student fails the clinical component of the course, they will receive a grade of F in the course. Students must re-take both components of the course, in which they received a grade of F.
- Completion of standardized NCLEX style examinations is required for preparation for the National NCLEX exam.

### **Post-licensure Nursing Program Grading Policies**

- Students must maintain an 83.0% weighted course average and must earn a final grade of B (83.0%) or better. Grades are not rounded. To assure the highest level of comprehension and fairness to all students there will be no exceptions.
- All Graduate Nursing Program students must maintain a 3.0 GPA, while in the program. If a student's average falls below the required 3.0, or they demonstrate unsatisfactory clinical performance, they may be placed on probation. Any student who does not pass a course with a grade of B (83%) or better will be placed on academic probation the following term. If probation occurs, the Program Director or an Academic Advisor will notify the student of the probationary status. This notification will delineate the specific goals the student must meet in

order to continue in the program. A student will be removed from academic probation after successfully completing their next semester and receiving a B or better in all courses.

### **Grade Appeal Process**

The process of appealing a grade is available to students to ensure that the evaluation processes for academic courses and clinical experiences were fairly applied. Grade appeals can be initiated only for the following three reasons: computational error; arbitrariness or capriciousness; unlawful discrimination. Students who wish to appeal a grade will first meet with the faculty to discuss their concerns about the grading process. If the student wishes to appeal after they meet with their faculty, they will submit their request and the rationale for the request in writing to the faculty and Program Director within five (5) business days of receiving the official grade. The faculty, Program Director and student will then set a time to meet. The appropriate (pre-/post- licensure) Chair may become involved if necessary. The faculty and Program Director will then review and discuss the student's concerns as well as all written documentation of academic and/or clinical concerns.

If the student and faculty are unable to reach an agreement about the grade, the appropriate (pre-/post- licensure) Chair should be contacted if they are not already involved in the process. If an agreement is still not reached the student can appeal further to the SON Academic Review & Appeals Committee within 5 business days. The Dean of the School of Nursing is the final arbiter of the grade appeal. Grade appeals will not be considered or heard for any reasons other than computational error; arbitrariness or capriciousness; unlawful discrimination.

### **Classroom Policies**

- Recording of lectures can be done only with the permission of the faculty/lecturer. This permission must be obtained prior to class.
- Written assignments are to be handed in, prior to class, on the date specified. Please see the individual course syllabus for the policy. It is suggested that students retain copies of work submitted for grading.
- All written assignments in the Nursing Programs require American Psychological Association (APA) Style.
- Only under extenuating circumstances, and with prior permission of the faculty, are children allowed to attend classroom lectures. Children are not allowed in the nursing laboratories, at any time.

### **Attendance**

Because there is a strong positive relationship between class attendance and success in the classroom, pre-licensure nursing students are expected to attend all classes and clinical and are responsible for the work associated with all classes and clinicals. No exceptions of missing classes or clinical for work will be accepted. For any absences, students are still required to meet course requirements and learning objectives.

### **Excused Absences and Attendance**

Attendance in class, clinical, simulation, and lab is mandatory for all pre-licensure students. Excused absences include:

- student illness,
- bereavement for an immediate family member,
- military obligations

- religious observances
- Jury Duty

## **Class Attendance**

Students are expected to attend all class sessions in their pre-licensure nursing courses. Missing more than 30% of scheduled class sessions is considered excessive. Any student who accumulates more than 30% unexcused absences from scheduled class sessions in a single course will earn a 10% reduction to their final course grade due to excessive absences.

## **Clinical Attendance**

Refer to the Pre-licensure **Clinical Education Policies** section of this handbook for all pre-licensure clinical attendance related policies and specifics.

## **Course Exemption**

Simmons University School of Nursing follows the University [Exceptions and Exemptions policy](#). Graduate students seeking exceptions to College Policy should contact their program director or academic advisor.

All courses must be taken according to the Simmons University School of Nursing [Direct Entry MSN plan of study](#). In the rare event that there is academically sound legitimate reason for exception, the exception must be approved in writing at the discretion of the SON Chair.

## **Advanced Placement**

As a graduate nursing degree program, transfer credit for advanced placement courses is not applicable. Students do not receive transfer credit for advanced placement courses.

## **Exam Policies For Pre-licensure Students**

- During a nursing exam, any discussion among students or sharing of any information, once the exam begins, may be considered an infraction of the Simmons Honor Code.
- During examinations, the following items are prohibited and if brought by student must be left at the front of the classroom:
  - Food or beverages
  - Hats (unless worn as a religious requirement)
  - Hooded sweatshirts or sweaters
  - Any device capable of recording audio, photographic, or video content, or capable of viewing or playing back such content
  - Any other unauthorized testing aids
  - Calculators (except those provided/permitted by professor)
  - Cellular phones, smart-phones, smart watch, or wireless communication devices
  - Dictionaries, books, pamphlets, or reference materials
  - Digital cameras
  - Flash/thumb drives or any other portable electronic devices
  - Listening devices such as radios, media players with headphones, or recorder
- Any student suspected of giving or receiving information, during an examination, may be asked to leave the examination. According to policy, a student may be excluded from the Nursing Program for academic dishonesty or failure to report the academic dishonesty of others.
- Once a student begins an exam, they must complete the exam during the examination period.



If a student leaves the exam before completing the exam, the faculty member may grade the student on the work completed, during that exam period only. The only exception would be a medical emergency that occurs during the exam. The situation would be considered emergent, only if the student requires immediate emergency medical attention in the emergency room. Documentation from the emergency room physician may be required.

- Students who observe behaviors consistent with academic dishonesty by other students, are bound by the Simmons Honor Code to report such behavior to the faculty.
- Students should not use test banks that are restricted for faculty use. The Simmons University Honor Code prohibits students from copying, sharing, or distributing any test information, or test items, from tests administered by faculty in their classes. In addition, purchasing, sharing, or distributing test banks that are designated by the publisher as faculty resources is considered academic dishonesty, and is a violation of the Simmons Honor Code. Please be advised that students who unwittingly use these materials will be held equally accountable.

### **Exam Policies for Post-licensure Students**

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

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

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

- Privacy violations (another person in the room)
- Facial obstruction/suspicion
- Outside noise/sound
- Opening additional applications
- Leaving the exam room
- Having multiple monitors or devices in the room (including cell phones/tablets/Apple watch)
- Opening or running screen sharing or video chat applications (ex: skype)
- Using scratch paper

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

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

Unless otherwise stated, you may not collaborate with others or use any references during any examination. This means that during an exam you may not:

- Leave the testing area/camera view
- Open another browser window or use any other method to look up an answer
- Communicate with anyone via online chat, telephone, email, text message, in-person, or any other method
- Use or have nearby any additional technology devices (phones, tablets, televisions, additional laptops)
- Have any other books, papers, notebooks or other materials, unless specifically permitted through testing accommodations documented with OAS in written guidelines in the testing area/room.
- Have any other portable electronic devices in the room. Cell phones may be in the room in a desk drawer in the case of an IT issue. However, the phone may not be on the desk for any reason. If a student encounters a testing issue and needs to retrieve a cell phone, announce this to the camera so your issue can be documented during the exam (For example, say to the camera "My screen just went blank and I am now getting my phone to call support..."). Send a follow-up email to your section instructor and CC MCL about the incident immediately following the exam.
- **You may not use headphones or earbuds of any type.**
- Have any other computer monitors or televisions in the testing environment and if that can't be avoided, they must be powered off.
- Have pets, children, or other family members/friends in the room
- Ask someone to take the exam for you
- Copy, print, post on social media, write down or screenshot exam questions. This is a violation of the honor code.
- Read exam questions or content out loud unless you have documented accommodations from the Office of Accessibility Services (OAS).
- Use scratch paper unless you have documented accommodations from the Office of Accessibility Services (OAS). If you have an accommodation for scratch paper you must show both sides of the paper to the camera at the start of the exam to demonstrate it is blank. At the end of the exam you must show both sides of the paper to the camera so all notes can be read. Anything written down may not be shared with other students.

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

It is the student's responsibility to make sure that they have the proper technology (i.e. computer, webcam, etc.) as well as reliable access to the Internet prior to taking exams. If a student anticipates a technology issue prior to any of these situations, their faculty should be notified proactively. Exam retakes are not allowed. Students should contact the 2U Technical Support Team immediately at **855-465-7466** if there is a technology issue during an exam. The technician will document the time spent resolving the issue so this time will not be deducted from the exam. Students should document the case number and share it with their faculty. For technical difficulties with Proctorio, students are expected to contact the Proctorio Technical Support Team. All Technology issues will be reviewed by faculty. The Program Director may become involved as needed.

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

### *Room Scan Violation Sanctions*

Students who do not complete the required room scan/desk scan **at the start and then again once the exam is over**, will receive the following sanctions below:

	<b>Room Scan</b>
<b>1st Offense</b>	Written Warning
<b>2nd Offense</b>	5% of the exam grade
<b>3rd Offense</b>	10% of the exam grade
<b>4th Offense</b>	15% of the exam grade

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

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

### ***Exam Violations***

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

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

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

Any decision of the SON Academic Review & Appeals Committee may be appealed by letter from the student to the Dean within ten (10) business days after the date of decision notification. The appeal must

be sent to the Dean in writing and shall state the justification for the appeal. An appeal will only be reviewed if the appeal is made on the basis of bias, an error in the application of policy, or for lack of due process. If the Dean determines the appeal is being made on the basis of bias, an error in application of policy, or lack of due process then the appeal will be reviewed. The decision of the Dean shall be communicated to the student in writing and is the final decision.

### ***Exam Deadlines***

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

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

Examples:

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

### ***Technology Disputes***

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

## **Exam Review Process**

### ***Pre-Licensure Exam Review Process***

Students will be provided an opportunity to review exams. Exam reviews are not intended nor will they be used as forums for arguing the correctness of student responses in a bid for additional points. Exam reviews are a learning opportunity that provides an avenue for the faculty and student to better understand or clarify any misconceptions related to the concepts covered on the exam. After the student receives their test score, the student has 5 business days to confirm or question a test score. Faculty have discretion whether to review actual exam items or review concepts missed during an exam. Exams

may not be taken from the room during exam reviews. Students may be provided their individual test report. Students are not permitted to keep the originals or copies of exams or tests. Group test reviews may be scheduled by individual instructors.

#### *Post-Licensure Exam Review Process*

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

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

The meeting will occur within seven (7) days from grades being posted. It is the student's responsibility to notify the faculty if they cannot attend the scheduled meeting. A student who does not attend a scheduled exam review meeting without prior notification may forfeit the opportunity to review the exam. The purpose of the exam review is to provide clarification on concepts missed during the exam. Students are required to review the concept review video posted prior to meeting with the faculty if the video is available. Questions and concepts from those questions will not be reviewed again, unless the student is seeking further clarification and explanation. Only concepts from missed questions will be reviewed. Students will not be permitted to view the actual question or have the question read to them. Any argumentative or unprofessional behavior displayed during the exam review will lead to a termination of the exam review. The exam review should not last longer than 30 minutes.

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

- b. The faculty will review the applicable exam area(s) and provide the rationale/ feedback around the question(s) to the student. The rationale will be from assigned readings, asynchronous or synchronous material.

### **Missed Exam Policy**

If a student will miss a scheduled exam, due to extenuating circumstances, such as illness, emergency, or major life event, the student must notify the course instructor immediately. Students must contact faculty at least one hour prior to the scheduled exam time. The faculty member will make a determination if the student can reschedule the exam. If a student has a chronic condition that may interfere with their ability to be present in class for an exam, the student should contact the [Office of Accessibility Services \(OAS\)](#) to discuss possible accommodations. For students who take exams through the OAS, please refer to the [policies and procedures to make exam arrangements online](#).

- Generally, students will be allowed a maximum of 48 hours to make up the exam.
- Point deductions for exams taken beyond 48 hours will be at the discretion of the course faculty. Please refer to the course syllabus.
- If a student misses an exam and fails to notify the faculty member, prior to the start of the exam (as above), it may be considered an unexcused absence. The student may not be able to take the exam and will thereby earn a zero.

Alternative exams are at the faculty's discretion. Students should be advised that they may not be taking the same exam that was given in class. The exam will have the same rigor and may have an altered format, such as short answers and fill in the blank.

### **Program Completion Policy**

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

### **Withdrawal Policy**

If you are unable to continue in a specific course you can withdraw from the course up until the end of the Withdrawal period indicated on the Simmons University Academic Calendar. After this time, students are not able to withdraw from a course; they will remain registered and earn a letter grade. It is highly recommended that you speak to your course faculty prior to requesting a withdrawal. A "W" will be noted on your official transcript. Students are allowed to withdraw from one particular course (ex. NURP 424) no more than once. Students must inform Academic Advising via email if they intend to withdraw from a course to request the course withdrawal form. Students with previous withdrawals or other considerations outlined below should meet with their Academic Advisor prior to withdrawal. Should a student completely withdraw from a course after classes have begun, they may still be accountable for a portion of tuition. The percentage of tuition to be refunded is calculated using the official drop date of the course as determined by the Registrar. In all cases, students should be aware that any reduction in the number of registered credit hours and subsequent charges may affect their financial aid.

- Direct Entry MSN students who wish to withdraw from a course, past the Simmons deadline, must submit a written petition to the Program Director.

- If a student withdraws from one or more nursing courses during a single semester because of documented health concerns, those courses from which the student withdraws will be exempt from the course withdrawal policy. Medical documentation will be required to code the W as medical.
- Students are allowed only one opportunity to repeat a nursing course from which they withdrew or in which they were unsuccessful.

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

### ***Withdrawal Process***

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

### **Academic Performance Expectations**

#### ***Progression and Retention***

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

### ***Unsatisfactory progress & Departmental Probation***

#### **Pre-Licensure**

- Students who fail a nursing course will be placed on departmental probation during the next semester in which they are enrolled in nursing courses. Written notification of probationary status will be issued by the Program Director and tracked by the Nursing Academic Coach.
- A nursing student on probation will develop a plan for program completion and a written remediation plan for the following semester addressing any factors that may have contributed to an unsuccessful course attempt. The completion and remediation plans will be developed in collaboration with the Nursing Academic Coach, Director of Pre-licensure Clinical Education and the Program Director. It is the students responsibility to follow the approved plans; however, the Nursing Academic Coach will schedule periodic check-ins with the student to offer support.
- DE students enrolled in pre-licensure courses will be removed from probation if they successfully complete all courses during the semester they are on probation, and adhere to ethical, legal, and professional standards of behavior.

## Post-Licensure

- A student who fails a nursing course will be placed on departmental probation.
- A student will be placed on probation for demonstrating behavior inconsistent with ethical, legal, or professional standards.
- If a student takes a leave of absence after being placed on probation, they will be on probation for the semester they return to the program.
- A student who fails a course may proceed into another course only if the subsequent course does not require prior successful completion of the failed course. If the failure is in a clinical course or clinical placement, the student may not proceed in the program until the clinical course is successfully completed.
- Repetition of a course may affect a student's ability to progress with their class and/or their expected date of graduation.
- A nursing student on nursing probation will plan remediation and coursework for the following semester, and plan for program completion, in collaboration with their academic advisor and Course Faculty or Coordinator.

## Nursing Course Failure and Program Dismissal

- Students are allowed one opportunity to repeat a nursing course from which they withdrew or in which they were unsuccessful.
- A student receiving a failing grade, required by the student's program, must repeat the course for credit. Grades for the initial and repeated course will appear on the student's transcript, and both will be used in calculating the cumulative GPA.
- A nursing student who failed in any two SON courses, as required by their program, shall be dismissed from the Nursing Program.
- Students who are dismissed for failing the same course twice will not be allowed to appeal for reinstatement.
- A student may be dismissed from the program if they are on probation during more than two semesters, over the course of obtaining the degree.
- A student may be excluded from the program for demonstrating behavior that is illegal, unsafe, unethical, or unprofessional.
- If there are extenuating circumstances contributing to academic difficulty, the student in consultation with their academic advisor, may choose to petition the SoN Appeals Committee for exception to this policy.
- A graduate student who fails two courses will be excluded from the program. The student may appeal this exclusion to the SON Academic Review & Appeals Committee. The Chair of the Appeals committee will meet with the student to discuss the process. If the student wishes to appeal the decision of the Appeals committee they may appeal to the Dean of the School. The process for this appeal will be communicated to the student by the Appeals Committee.

## Readmission

If a student has been readmitted to the Direct Entry MSN Program following exclusion due to course failures, any subsequent course failure will result in removal from the Nursing Programs. An upheld appeal for exception to the program's exclusion policy is also considered a readmission.



### ***Leave of Absence***

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

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

### ***Intent to Return Policy***

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

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

### **SON Academic Review & Appeals Committee**

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

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

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

- There is new information that could influence the outcome
- The student views the original decision as a disproportionate response
- The student believes that the policy/policies is/are administered unfairly

The Committee has regularly scheduled meetings throughout the academic year.

## **SON Academic Review & Appeals Committee Process**

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

## **Transfer Credit**

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

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

- NURP/NURS 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536

## **Advanced Placement or Transfer of Military Education, Training or Service**

The School of Nursing follows the Simmons University process which is aligned with the American Council on Education (ACE) guidelines with regard to advanced placement or transfer of military education, training, or service for a military health care occupation when considering transfer of credit to Simmons.

## **Educational Mobility**

Simmons University School of Nursing supports the [Massachusetts Board of Registration in Nursing Educational Mobility Position Statement](#) and the [American Association of Colleges of Nursing Educational Mobility Statement](#).

## **RN Work Requirement**

Graduate Nursing Program faculty highly value the role of the registered nurse in the development of the advanced practice role. To reinforce the nursing role as the foundation for advanced practice, students in the Graduate Nursing Program are required to have work experience in the RN role. Students should have paid “hands on” clinical experience caring for patients, and can occur in many different healthcare settings. Please check with graduate faculty if you have any questions about requirements, including the appropriateness of the setting. Students must submit documentation of employment to the clinical coordinator by **May 1st**, during the semester the student is enrolled in NURS 530. Students should inform their advisor about the job they are accepting, so that it meets the criteria for clinical practice. Typically, the documentation can be an email from the student’s employer, stating that the student is working as an RN in the setting.

- All Direct Entry Nursing Program students must work a minimum of 8 hours per week, in a paid position, as an RN, while enrolled in the Post-licensure Graduate Nursing Program.

## **NCLEX-RN**

All Direct Entry Nursing Program students, upon completion of the Pre-Licensure Curriculum will be eligible to sit for licensure as a registered nurse. Female students, who choose not to continue in the Master’s Degree Program, may apply to the Undergraduate Nursing Program as a Dix Scholar, and will receive a BS in Nursing, provided they formally withdraw from the Direct Entry Nursing Program and follow the policy guidelines, listed under Admissions Policies for Transferring Academic Tracks.

Completion of the Pre-Licensure Curriculum is equivalent to graduation, as defined by the Massachusetts Board of Registration in Nursing. Students are eligible to sit for the licensure exam at the end of the Pre-Licensure Curriculum. Direct Entry Nursing Program students must pass the NCLEX by **May 1st**, in order to continue in the graduate sequence.

## **Graduation**

Direct-Entry students must successfully complete all of the [Direct Entry MSN Program of study requirements](#).

### **Petition to Graduate**

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

### **Commencement**

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

## **Clinical Education Policies**

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

Additional specific policies pertaining to pre-licensure Direct Entry clinical placement can be found in the below sections.

### **Direct Entry Pre-Licensure Clinical Placement**

For students taking clinical courses in the Direct Entry MSN Pre- Licensure sequence, all clinical placements will be made by the Clinical Coordination Office staff, in consultation with the faculty. When assigning students to clinical placements, staff and faculty consider student learning needs and affiliating healthcare agency requirements, with a goal of students having the opportunity to complete rotations, in a variety of healthcare agencies. Due to the high volume of nursing students enrolled in Boston-area programs, specific student requests cannot be accommodated. Students can expect to be informed of clinical placements approximately four weeks in advance of the clinical session.

### **Clinical Attendance Policy**

This policy applies to Pre-Licensure Direct Entry Program students.

#### **Definitions**

Clinical tardiness is defined as arrival at the clinical site after the assigned time, or at the appointed time, but unprepared to commence clinical duties. Clinical absence is defined as failure to attend a scheduled clinical day, for any reason.

#### **Rationale**

Clinical practice is an essential component of nursing education. During clinical practice, nursing students apply the knowledge and skills, obtained from the didactic portion of courses, to actual patient care. In all clinical courses, attendance is required, as students are considered to be part of the nursing team. Important information, affecting patient care, is communicated to students at the start of clinical experiences. Therefore, tardiness for clinical and lab experiences jeopardizes the student's ability to provide safe nursing care. Missed hours can prevent adequate development and assessment of the required knowledge, skills, attitudes, and clinical judgment. Absence from clinical and lab can jeopardize the student's ability to successfully meet the required clinical course outcomes. Further, time management is a necessary professional skill, and punctuality is expected in professional workplaces. Clinical experiences are carefully planned, in advance of the course, and substitutions and make-up experiences may not be possible. Nursing is a practice profession, and there is no adequate substitute for direct patient care.

#### **Expectation for Attendance and Punctuality**

It is the expectation of the Simmons University School of Nursing, that all students attend all clinical and lab sessions. They are expected to arrive at clinical and lab assignments on time and be fully prepared to participate in providing safe patient care. Absences from clinical practice are closely monitored by faculty and should occur only in rare circumstances.

The clinical instructor has the responsibility to ensure patient safety is not compromised. Therefore, any student unable to participate fully to provide safe and effective care to patients will be dismissed from the clinical experience and incur a clinical absence. If a clinical instructor determines that a student is unable to provide appropriate care for any reason (e.g., inadequate preparation to discuss and deliver patient care, incomplete pre-clinical paperwork, inappropriate

dress, a physical illness, emotional distress, etc.), the clinical instructor, in consultation with the Course faculty teaching the course and the Director of UG Clinical Education, may remove the student from the clinical area immediately.

Should a student be dismissed from clinical for a health concern or safety issue, the clinical faculty must document the incident, using the Simmons University School of Nursing "Reportable Event" form. The student will also be required to complete the student version of this form. If necessary, the clinical faculty, in consultation with the Director of UG Clinical Education and course faculty, will issue a clinical warning and determine if a plan for performance improvement is indicated, or if the circumstances warrant further action, such as referral to the SON Academic Review & Appeals Committee, the Academic Integrity Office, or the Program Director.

### **Clinical, Laboratory or Simulation Absence**

Students who miss clinical, lab, or simulation for any reason, jeopardize their ability to meet the clinical objectives. This may result in course failure.

### **Unavoidable Absences**

We recognize that there are times when students may be absent from clinical, laboratory or simulation, because it is in the best interest of the student's well-being and patient safety. Each student is reminded to use their best judgment, in the event of illness or an unusual situation requiring them to be absent.

In the case of illness, it is important that students not compromise their health or that of the health of their patients. If there is any doubt about whether or not to attend clinical, the student should consult with their clinical instructor. Conditions that may warrant a clinical absence include:

- Skin lesions and/or rash, especially if lesions are weeping, or fever is present
- Non-intact skin or dermatitis
- Conjunctivitis or "pinkeye" ● Diarrheal illness
- Cough of more than two weeks (unless explained by a non-infectious disease). Prolonged cough may be a symptom of tuberculosis or Pertussis.
- New onset of jaundice
- Exposure to TB or other contagious condition
- Diagnosis of a communicable disease by the employee's primary care provider. These conditions include, but are not limited to, measles, chickenpox, scabies, lice, TB, impetigo, mumps, streptococcal pharyngitis, staphylococcal skin infections, and influenza.

### **Notification**

Professional communication is valued and required. The student must notify the clinical instructor/preceptor, in the manner determined by the faculty, at least one hour before the start of the clinical day. The student is also responsible for notifying the course coordinator, within 24 hours. The clinical instructor will inform students of the process and policy to notify the agency/hospital unit.

### **Failure to Notify of Lateness and Absence**

Students who fail to follow the notification policy, outlined above, will be issued a written clinical warning. The student may be referred to the Chair of the School of Nursing, Associate Dean of Nursing, or the Nursing ARB to determine whether a student's performance warrants further action or sanctions.

### **Repeated Tardiness**

Arriving at clinical late, or at the appointed time but unprepared to commence clinical duties, on more than one occasion, constitutes repeated tardiness and is considered unprofessional behavior. This will result in a review by the faculty to determine whether a student's performance warrants further actions. Such actions may include a plan for performance improvement, clinical warning, or clinical/course failure.

### **Clinical/Lab Absence Make-Up**

- Only excused absences from clinical (on-campus/off-campus) or lab will be made up. Please refer to the clinical/lab attendance policy in this Student Handbook for attendance requirements and criteria for excused absences. Excused missed clinical or lab experiences will be made up using methods that are equivalent to the missed experience. Excused absences from direct patient care experiences can ONLY be made up using direct patient care experiences, when available, or high-fidelity simulation experiences. The clinical faculty, didactic faculty, and Director of Clinical Education in consultation with the Director of the Simulation Center will determine how the excused absence will be made up. Once the determination for make-up has been made, the clinical faculty will communicate with the student. If the make-up is to take place in the Simulation Center, it is the student's responsibility to coordinate make-up dates and times with the Director of the Simulation Center or their delegate. Otherwise make up dates and times will be arranged between a designated clinical faculty and the student as appropriate.
- Missing more than 30% of planned clinical or lab is considered excessive. Any student who misses more than 30% of planned clinical or lab for any reason in a single course will not be allowed to make up the missed experiences beyond the 30%. As such students missing more than 30% of planned clinical or lab will earn a failing evaluation for the clinical portion of the course due to excessive absence.

### **Clinical Safety and Performance**

The student may be dismissed or sent home from the clinical, lab, or simulation experience for being unprepared, unprofessional, or unsafe. This is considered an absence and the student will receive an academic warning.

Students must attend clinical well rested, and ready to assume clinical responsibilities for their patients; therefore, students may not work in the overnight hours (e.g. 11 pm – 7 am) on the night prior to a morning clinical experience.

Students may not exceed 12 hours, in a clinical practice setting, on the same day. Exceptions may be made only in the senior capstone nursing clinical experience.

Students may not participate in clinical learning experiences if they have taken prescription narcotic medication or other medications that impair cognitive functioning within eight hours of the start time of their clinical experience. Students who have a significant illness, injury, hospitalization, or surgery, during the time they are in clinical learning experiences, must be cleared to return to clinical by their physician or healthcare provider, as well as relevant Simmons staff/faculty/administrator(s). Please contact the Manager of Clinical Education for information about the medical clearance requirements and process.

## Reportable Event Policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of students, and the patients to whom they are providing care. Unintended injury and lapses in personal or patient safety remain a concern in nursing education. A majority of these events are preventable and may reflect broader systems issues. Communication of such events must be open, timely, and accurate.

Identifying and documenting Reportable Events are essential to assure that the appropriate persons and agencies receive information that can be used for system improvement, enhanced student learning, fostering professional growth, and ensuring patient safety.

These data provide a mechanism to identify patterns, trends, or gaps in student learning and knowledge, as well as identification of systems issues. If an event occurs, the student, in consultation with their clinical faculty, must document the event and submit a "Reportable Event Form." In addition, the student's CDM faculty is also responsible for submitting the faculty reportable event form. Forms are provided below.

[Reportable Event Form](#) (Student)

[Reportable Event Form](#) (Faculty)

A reportable event is any assertion, or actual occurrence of an incident, that affects, or has the potential to affect, the health, safety, or welfare of an individual.

Hazard: A situation or circumstance with the potential to do harm

○ Example: Student who arrives to clinical unprepared

- Near Miss: An error or incident occurred but did not reach the patient

○ Example: Student who calculated medication incorrectly but had not yet reached the patient

○ Example: Student's failure to communicate abnormal patient findings to the nurse or

faculty

- Adverse Event: An error or event that reached the patient, individual or student
- Minor Event: An incident or error occurs that does not cause harm to a patient, individual or student

○ Example: Administration of incorrect IV fluids Example: Student who has a syncope episode in clinical Example: Side rails are down

- Major Event: An error or incident that has the potential to cause permanent injury or transient, but potentially life-threatening harm.

Example: Administering of inaccurate narcotic dose that requires administration of NARCAN

If one is unsure whether an event is reportable or not, it is always safer to report the event to ensure proper evaluation of the event.

## Student Health Insurance

In accordance with Simmons University policy and Massachusetts state law, all students are required to have health insurance. University Health Insurance is not available for online students. The Nursing Program encourages students to have insurance that is sufficient to cover any medical expenses that might occur during a clinical rotation.

## Professional Liability Insurance

All students providing direct patient care, as part of their clinical education, must be covered by a professional liability policy. Simmons University holds a blanket professional liability policy that covers all students enrolled in clinical courses. The policy only covers students, while in their capacity, as Simmons nursing students.

### **Dress Code**

Professional appearance is required in all healthcare settings. Pre-Licensure Direct Entry Nursing Program students are required to wear the Simmons University student uniform. In agencies not requiring the school uniform students must adhere to the dress code of the agency. In all cases, students will adhere to the dress code policies, set by the clinical agency.

- Uniform: The Pre-Licensure Nursing Program uniform consists of navy blue scrub pants or skirt, top, and a white scrub jacket. The school emblem is embroidered on the scrub top and jacket. Tightly knit, white cotton t- shirts, with short or long sleeves, may be worn under the scrub top.
- Name Pins: Must include full name, status (student nurse), and the name of the college.
- Sweaters: Because of their tendency to retain pathogens, sweaters are not allowed in the clinical agency.
- Shoes: Shoes must have closed front and backs, with flat rubber or other quiet soles. Shoes must be clean and in good condition.
- Piercings: For safety and professional appearance purposes, all piercings should be discrete – small studs only.
- Tattoos: Students are encouraged to use discretion in covering visible tattoos.
- Nails: Artificial nails of any kind, including gels, acrylic and wraps, are not allowed, as research has shown them to harbor increased bacteria.
- Hair: Hair must be pulled back at or above the line of the collar.
- Graduate students will follow the policy of the agency in which they are being precepted.

### **Transportation**

Students are responsible for all transportation costs, related to clinical experience. Costs will vary with the clinical placement. Students should anticipate incurring transportation expenses \$200 to \$400 per year.

### **Clinical Requirements**

The agencies and hospitals that Simmons University collaborates with for clinical education have strict policies about what is required of students prior to being placed. Please note that students are responsible for keeping track of their clinical compliance, throughout their time in the Simmons Nursing Program. Students are expected to submit documentation of expired clinical requirements in a timely manner. Failure to do so could result in being removed from clinical.

The clinical clearance requirements for the Pre-Licensure Direct Entry Nursing Program students include the following:

- Demonstration of Medication Calculation and Administration Safety Competency: *(Pre-Licensure Nursing Program students only)*
- Health Clearance
- Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation Certification
- Mandatory Clinical Orientation and Agency-Specific Pre-Clinical Requirements
- Background and Criminal History Checks

### ***Demonstration of Medication Calculation and Administration Safety Competency***



## Purpose

Administering medications safely is a critical aspect of nursing practice; therefore, students must demonstrate their competency in the calculation of accurate medication dosages and safe administration of medications.

Students enrolled in any nursing clinical or fundamentals courses must demonstrate competence in medication administration each semester prior to administering medications to patients. Competence will be measured by demonstrating:

- Medication exam grade of 90% or higher demonstrated in no more than three attempts
- Safe medication administration techniques

## Pre-Testing

In the week prior to the first class of the semester (when syllabus is posted), students will be notified about their eligibility and access to resources for this competency assessment.

### Use of Self-paced Medication Administration Modules

- Ten Practice modules are provided (one for each of the 10 competency groups) and can be found in Moodle, under Medication Safety Competency
- Students must complete all required practice module quizzes, or complete the competency quiz with a 90%, before taking the MCAS exam.
- The ten (10) module quizzes, or the competency quiz, must be completed by the end of the first week of class. Upon successful completion of these 10 module quizzes or the competency quiz, the student will be allowed to take the MCAS exam.
- Students must **print out proof of completion** of the required practice material (10 quizzes or competency quiz with a 90% or better) and bring it with them to class as a ticket into the exam. No computer or phone copies will be allowed.
- Students will not be permitted to take the actual Proctored MCAS exam until they have demonstrated successful completion of the practice exam. It is the student's responsibility to request remediation if additional assistance is needed to pass the practice exam.

## Testing

The MCAS exam will be administered in only one clinical course each semester. The MCAS professor will notify students about the schedule for taking the MCAS exam.

Students are responsible for reading and responding to all communication regarding the Proctored MCAS exam including but not limited to date(s), location and time.

- If students require an accommodation, they must schedule their exam with OAS and complete the exam by the established last exam date.
- If students are going to miss the MCAS exam, they must notify the instructor or OAS before the start of the exam or they will receive a grade of zero (0) for the exam. Only excused absences will be considered toward a retake. Otherwise a missed exam is a missed attempt.

- Please refer to the Attendance Policies in this Nursing Student Handbook for what constitutes an excused absence.

## Post-Testing

- If a student does not successfully pass the Proctored MCAS Exam, **they must remediate with a tutor or faculty member and retake the exam within 2-weeks of being notified of their exam grade.**
- If a student does not complete the remediation and retake process within 2 weeks, the exam grade of zero will be recorded, and the student will be withdrawn from their clinical courses.
- Please note, it is the student's responsibility to contact the MCAS faculty to arrange remediation and schedule the retake after an unsuccessful attempt.
- After the first failed attempt, the student will receive a verbal warning from the MCAS faculty.
- After the second failed attempt, the student will receive a written academic warning from the MCAS faculty.
- After the third failed attempt, the student will receive notification from the MCAS faculty and the Director of Clinical Education notifying them of withdrawal from clinical courses because they will be unable to demonstrate one of the core clinical competencies.

In Fundamental Nursing Courses (NURS 494), students will have three opportunities to pass the Medication Calculation and Administration Safety Competency (MCAS) exam administered during the course. Students must remediate prior to taking each subsequent exam.

- After the first failed attempt, the student will receive a verbal warning from the MCAS or fundamentals course faculty.
- After the second failed attempt, the student will receive a written academic warning from the MCAS or fundamentals course faculty that will remain in place until the student successfully demonstrates the MCAS Competency. **Students may remain enrolled in the fundamentals course and will be withdrawn from any clinical courses that they are actively enrolled in.**

## Health Clearance

Prior to entering the first clinical course (NURS 332 or NURS 426), the student must receive health clearance. Please see Addendum 2 for detailed information regarding immunizations and health clearance. All students must have appropriate immunization and health clearance by the deadline set by the Manager of Clinical Education.

Without such evidence and clearance, students will not be allowed to engage in clinical practice. Obtaining health clearance is the responsibility of the student.

Following initial clinical clearance, it is the students' responsibility to remain in compliance with clinical requirements. Certain agencies may require specific health requirements, in addition to what Simmons University requires. Such requirements will be communicated to students at the time of clinical assignment.

## **Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation Certification (CPR)**

All nursing students are required to have current certification of Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation and AED training for Adults, Infants, and Children, prior to clinical courses. The American Heart Association BLS for Healthcare Providers and Red Cross CPR/AED for Professional Rescuers and Health Care Providers are the only acceptable CPR certifications.

Mandatory Clinical Orientation and Agency-Specific Pre-Clinical Requirements Prior to the beginning of each new academic year, all students, who are in clinical courses, are required to complete an online orientation. This orientation is through the Massachusetts Centralized Nursing Clinical Placement System, a collaborative project of the Board of Higher Education and the Massachusetts Center for Nursing (MCN). The orientation covers topics, such as patient privacy and infection control and prevention, which affiliating healthcare agencies have deemed important for students engaged in clinical. The orientation is valid for the entire academic year and can be found online at <http://www.mass.edu/mcncps/orientation/welcome.asp>.

Depending on specific agency regulations, students may be required to complete additional orientation and/or training online or on-site at the agency. In addition to meeting all Simmons University clinical clearance requirements, students must also meet all the requirements of the healthcare facilities where they are in clinical. Students must complete facility-specific paperwork before deadlines set by the Clinical Coordination Office.

## **Nursing Lab Policies** *(Under review and revision Fall 2023)*

The laboratory environment serves to simulate the clinical setting, and it should be managed in a professional manner. The bed, patient, and bedside should look neat, clean, respectful, and professional. The intent is to help you establish very good habits that will carry over, as you care for your patients, in your clinical settings.

1. Laboratory and Simulation Attendance Policy
  - a. Laboratory and simulation attendance is mandatory. Each student is reminded to use their best judgment, in the event of illness or an unusual situation, where the student may be absent. Professional communication is valued and required. Please follow these guidelines.
    - i. Laboratory Absence: The student must call the course coordinator and laboratory faculty, to notify and arrange for make-up.
    - ii. Simulation Lab Tardiness: The door will be closed five minutes after the session starts; if you are more than five minutes late, you will not be allowed to attend.
    - iii. Simulation Lab Absence: Missing a simulation counts as a clinical absence. If you are sick, or have other extenuating circumstances, you must contact the simulation lab director to schedule a make-up.
2. Basic Rules of Lab Usage
  - a. Keep the labs neat. This is your workspace, and it will be most useful to you if it is kept tidy and well-organized.
  - b. Lab equipment is for use only in the lab. Anything removed from the lab will be considered stolen equipment, and will be dealt with as such.
  - c. Food and drinks (except water) are not permitted in the lab.
  - d. Bring all materials, as directed by your Instructor (e.g., nursing supply kit, stethoscope, writing materials, textbooks, etc.). If you do not have all of your materials, you may not be allowed to participate.
  - e. Appropriate dress is required. This includes closed-toed shoes (no sandals, flip-flops, or other open-toed shoes, even in summer), your nursing uniform, and any other protective

- clothing, as directed by your instructor.
  - f. Clean up after yourself. Put all equipment and furniture away where you found it, place all trash in appropriate receptacles, and turn off all electrical equipment.
  - g. Report any damaged or non-working equipment to your instructor or the Lab Coordinator.
3. Mannequins
- a. Types of Mannequins
    - i. SimMen (solid blue gowns): most advanced; used with laptops for scenarios
    - ii. VitalSims (solid yellow gowns): have vital signs and sounds for auscultation
    - iii. Basic mannequins (printed white gowns): have no simulation capabilities
  - b. Moving Mannequins
    - i. Always use two people when lifting the models and use good body mechanics. (Lift with your legs, etc.)
    - ii. If moving a SimMan or VitalSim, be sure to move all associated equipment carefully and appropriately. Do not let anything drag or fall on the floor.
  - c. Storage of Mannequins
    - i. Mannequins in use should be in beds. Mannequins not in use should be placed on the mannequin rack or on a stretcher. Do NOT put the mannequins in chairs, on the floor, or anywhere else, as this will damage them. There is ample rack space for all mannequins.
    - ii. Mannequins in the beds should be left with all anatomical parts in place, and should be covered with a sheet, as you would leave your patient in a hospital setting. Place a pillow under the mannequin and leave the HOB elevated to about 30 degrees.
  - d. Use of Mannequins
    - i. Use only Tega Dermor paper tape on mannequins; other tape damages Them.
    - ii. Do not use iodine or Betadine on the mannequins; it stains them.
4. Care and Usage of Other Lab Equipment
- a. Reuse/recycle supplies and equipment, whenever possible. This includes bedding, which should only be changed if stained or soiled. Do not use new supplies, unless specifically directed to do so. Please discard all single-use equipment, such as specula for the otoscope, tongue blades, cotton swabs, gauze, etc., and place stained or soiled linens in the hamper bags provided.
  - b. Turn off all lights, Welch-Allyn wall units, any portable equipment, and VitalSims and SimMen.
  - c. If using the examination tables, place unused paper over the table after each use.
  - d. When working with IV fluids, use proper containers (e.g., bucket, trash bin) to prevent fluid from running onto the floor.

## Admissions Policies for Nursing Academic Tracks

### **Transferring from the Dix Program to Direct-Entry Nursing Program**

Students enrolled in the Dix Program, who wish to change to the Direct-Entry Master's Program, MUST first consult with the Chair of the Graduate Nursing Program. Since each student's curricular status will be different, based on length of time in the Dix Program, such a transition may or may not be possible. Additionally, application to the Direct-Entry Program, via the School of Nursing, is required. Students must apply by the designated Direct-Entry application deadline.

## **Transferring from the Graduate Nursing Program (MSN) to Undergraduate (BSN) Program (Dix Scholar)**

It is important to first speak with your academic advisor and the FNP or PMHNP Program Director if you are considering a transfer between a MSN program offered through the School of Nursing (SoN) and the BSN program for adult women that is offered through the undergraduate college. Students must also adhere to the following policies and process:

- . **It is important to FIRST speak with your academic advisor and the Direct Entry MSN Program Director before applying.**
- i. Apply, be accepted and enroll as an undergraduate adult student (Dix Scholar).
  - 0. DO NOT use the regular Dix Scholar application-- there is a simplified version to save you time, and allows your application's review to be expedited.
- ii. The student's admission to the Dix Program, and degree candidacy, must occur by the deadlines outlined in the below section.
- iii. Satisfy the All-College Graduation Requirements for Undergraduates:
  - 0. Math competency (satisfied by a C or higher in any college math course in the past 7 years, or by exam)
    - 1. iComps (technology/resources exam)
    - 2. Financial Empowerment Seminar
    - 3. Simmons University PLAN (satisfied by transfer credit from your first degree)
- iv. A student who has completed, or is completing in the current semester, coursework equivalent to the BSN nursing sequence is not eligible to receive a bachelor's degree in nursing from Simmons without fulfilling the requirements listed above.
- v. MSN to BSN program transfer becomes effective in the semester following admission to the BSN program. Please note application deadlines listed below.
- vi. If you choose to enroll in the BSN program, you must formally withdraw from the MSN Program. You must submit a written notification to the Chair of Nursing with copies to The Registrar, and Office of Undergraduate Admission.
- vii. If admitted to the undergraduate BSN program, students must formally accept the offer of admission in order to enroll. The tuition deposit is waived.
- viii. No interview is required.
- ix. Your financial aid will likely change. Guidelines for awarding federal aid are different between graduate and undergraduate study.
  - 0. Speak to [your financial aid counselor](#) before making your decision.
- x. All questions about graduation date and degree conferral should be directed to the Registrar's office and not to Undergraduate Admission.

## **Deadlines**

For students who will be taking BSN classes after their admission:

- Fall semester: July 21st
- Spring semester: December 8th
- Summer semester: April 7th

For students who will have completed all of their pre-licensure coursework before their admission:

- January degree conferral: August 4th
- May degree conferral: January 5th
- August degree conferral: April 28th

Decisions are made on a rolling basis, typically within 2 weeks of when your application and supporting materials are received by Undergraduate Admission.

### **Required materials:**

- Online application form (email [katherine.innes@simmons.edu](mailto:katherine.innes@simmons.edu)) to request the special application for internal applicants
- Statement explaining your reason for transferring to the BSN program (1 page, double-spaced)
- Official college transcripts from all previously attended institutions (forwarded from Graduate Admissions)
- Official Simmons University transcript (forwarded from the Registrar's Office)
- Official high school transcript (emailed from your high school is fine)
- 1 recommendation letter from a Simmons faculty member (or 2 from non-Simmons faculty or professional sources)
- Please submit all materials to [ugadm@simmons.edu](mailto:ugadm@simmons.edu), drop them off at W102, or mail them to:

Simmons University  
Office of Undergraduate Admission  
300 The Fenway  
Boston, MA 02115

### **Considerations when transferring programs**

You must satisfy the All-College Graduation Requirements for Undergraduates. A "Transfer Credit Evaluation" (TCE) of your transcripts, from all post-secondary institutions you have attended, will provide you with a report of what, if any, of these requirements remain outstanding, at the time you enroll as an undergraduate.

Financial aid may change. Guidelines for awarding federal aid are different between graduate and undergraduate study.

- Students transferring from the Direct Entry Program are not eligible to receive the Dix Scholarship.
- Dean's Scholarships received from the Direct Entry Program are not eligible to be transferred to the Dix Program.

### **Applying to the MSN-DNP Program**

Students matriculated in the Simmons' MS in Nursing Program can apply to earn their DNP in an accelerated format, taking doctoral-level courses, while in the Master's Program. Interested students should meet with the Chair of Graduate nursing. There is no formal application but information about enrollment dates will be collected to ensure correct coding. Questions about this program or application process can be addressed to the Chair of Graduate Nursing and the Director of the DNP Program.

The requirements for admission into this program are:

1. Matriculated student in the MS in Nursing Program at Simmons
2. Simmons GPA: 3.5

### **Addendum I**

#### **Vaccinations/Immunizations Required for Clinical**

Nursing students must provide documentation, relating to immunizations and infectious diseases, to

receive health clearance to participate in clinical. The Nursing Program reserves the right to change health requirements, as needed, to meet contractual obligations with affiliating healthcare facilities. Immunization can be done at the Simmons University Health Center. Charges may apply.

Please contact the Health Center for more information.

[COVID Vaccine](#) is required for all Simmons University Students.

### **Tuberculosis and the PPD (Purified Protein Derivative) Test**

For initial clearance, a student must complete the TWO STEP Tuberculin Skin Test (TST) Method (per CDC Guidelines). The student will receive the 1<sup>st</sup> PPD and then repeat it (between 1 week and 3 weeks of first skin test) with a 2<sup>nd</sup> PPD. If both are negative, the TST is complete and the student will then need an annual PPD, while in clinical courses.

If a student has a positive history of PPD (mantoux), documentation of the following is required: the year of conversion, treatment received, and/or date of a negative chest x-ray. Student must also complete an annual symptom review, which can be done with an RN, at the Simmons University Health Center.

Some clinical agencies may require a PPD more frequently than once a year. Students will be notified of this, prior to placement in that particular agency.

### **Tetanus, Diphtheria, and Pertussis (Tdap)**

Students are required to receive a Tdap. Td booster is also required if 10 years has passed since the Tdap.

### **Measles**

Immunization for measles requires two doses of vaccine. For many persons, a first dose was given at 12 months of age; a second dose may or may not have been given. If unsure of your measles status, two doses are required to ensure protection. If the titer is positive, no immunization is needed. If the titer is negative, two doses of vaccine are needed.

### **Mumps**

One dose of mumps vaccine is required. Many people were vaccinated as children, and therefore need only provide documentation of vaccination. If you are unable to find any documentation, you may have another dose of the vaccine or have an antibody titer drawn. If the titer is positive, you do not need immunization. If the titer is negative, you will need one dose of vaccine.

### **Rubella**

Students must have an antibody titer that documents immunity to rubella. A history of receiving rubella vaccine is not sufficient. The titer does not need to be recent, as the immunity lasts a lifetime. If the titer is negative, a healthcare provider can give rubella vaccines alone or in combination with the measles and mumps vaccines. One month after receipt of the rubella vaccine, the recipient must have an antibody titer to document immunity.

### **Hepatitis B (3 doses OR positive titer)**

Documented completion of the Hepatitis B vaccine series OR the HBsAB titer is required. An HBsAB titer is also required for students whose series is in process or is within the last two years. If the series is incomplete at the start of clinical nursing courses, the student will receive temporary health clearance. Full health clearance is granted when the immune titer is complete. Students must be current in the Hepatitis B vaccination series to continue with clinical.

### ***Clinical Policy Regarding Hepatitis B Positive***

The purpose of this policy is to clarify clinical recommendations for students who have been diagnosed with Hepatitis B (HBV). Hepatitis B infections should not ordinarily exclude clinical experiences for nursing students whether at the undergraduate or graduate level. The Nursing Program adheres to the Centers for



Disease Control Recommendations for the Management of Hepatitis B Virus- Infected Health-Care Providers and Students. CDC recommendations can be found at:

<https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/pdf/rr/rr6103.pdf>. The CDC Guidelines establish two categories of clinical procedures relevant for Hepatitis B virus infected (HBV) healthcare providers and students. Category I procedures include invasive procedures such as surgery or repair of traumatic injuries, vaginal deliveries or other procedures that require the use of sharp instruments in a poorly visualized, tightly contained, anatomic site that carry the risk of provider-to-patient transmission of HBV through percutaneous injury to the health-care provider. Students in the health care professions and in the Nursing Program do not ordinarily perform those procedures.

CDC Category 2 procedures include all other invasive and non-invasive procedures that pose no or low risk of percutaneous injury in a contained anatomic site.

Chronic HBV infection should not exclude clinical-care experiences for healthcare professionals or students. Standard Precautions should be rigorously adhered to in all clinical situations to protect both patients and providers. The Nursing Program recommends that students with a HBV diagnosis contact Disability Services to review the CDC Recommendations and document health related information within Disability Services. If students were to engage in Category 1 Procedures, they would be required to contact Disability Services before engaging in the Category 1 Procedure so that a higher level of review can be conducted.

Some clinical agencies may have additional requirements for students who carry a diagnosis of HBV, such as assurance of an annual review of viral levels of HBV or student evaluation by the agency's Occupational Health Department. In the event of additional requirements for a specific agency, students would be notified and guided through the process by the Nursing Program faculty and the Disability Services Director.

### **Varicella**

Students must show proof of two vaccinations or proof of a positive varicella titer. A history of disease is not acceptable.

### **Seasonal Flu Vaccine**

It is required that students receive the seasonal flu vaccine, for the safety of patients, coworkers, and fellow students. All students shall provide evidence of receiving the seasonal flu vaccine, at the commencement of each flu season. If a student is unable to receive the seasonal flu shot, they must sign a declination form that will be retained in the student's file.

Please note that students who do not receive the seasonal flu vaccine, for any reason, including religious beliefs or medical contraindication, may be limiting opportunities for clinical placements. Because our affiliated agencies have the legal right to refuse unvaccinated students wishing to participate in patient care, Simmons University cannot guarantee that students will be able to fulfill the clinical requirements of the program. In some cases, students may be required to wear a surgical mask, while providing direct patient care.

## **Addendum II**

### **Technical Standards of Professional Nursing Practice for Simmons University**

#### **Pre-Licensure Nursing Students**

The mission of the Simmons University Nursing Programs is to educate and graduate students to be highly-qualified, skilled, and compassionate nurses, who will be future leaders in the profession. What follows below are technical standards that reflect the academic requirements, which are integral to the practice of nursing. These standards are derived from the American Association of Colleges of Nursing



Baccalaureate Essentials, The Nurse of the Future Core Competencies, The American Nurses Association Code of Ethics, as well as from best practices in technical standards, from leading nursing schools and organizations across the United States (including New York University, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Drexel University and the Utah Organization for Nurse Leaders). These technical standards apply in all areas of student academic experiences, including classroom, laboratory, offices, clinical, and Simmons community environments.

### **Technical Standards Definition**

To progress through, and graduate from, the Simmons Nursing Program, students must master core competencies in five separate areas. These technical standards reflect the core competencies that must be demonstrated to earn the B.S. Nursing Degree at Simmons.

1. Cognitive: Intellectual, conceptual, and quantitative abilities
2. Communication skills
3. Observational ability
4. Motor and perceptual abilities
5. Behavioral, interpersonal, and ethical comportment skills

### **Technical Standards Summary**

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

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

### **Reasonable Accommodations for Qualified Individuals with Accessibility Needs**

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

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

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

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

While Simmons is committed to working with students to accommodate their accessibility-related needs, Simmons reserves the right to deny any requested accommodation that would fundamentally alter the essential nature of any aspect of the Nursing Programs or place an undue burden on the Nursing Programs. Students can find more information about the OAS and requesting accommodations on the OAS's website: <https://www.simmons.edu/your-simmons/commitment-inclusivity/accessibility-services>.

### **The First Core Competency: Cognitive Abilities**

Students must be able to demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for the provision of high quality, safe nursing care, in all healthcare settings. Examples of this competency include the ability to:

1. Follow policies and procedures of Simmons University and of the clinical agencies hosting the faculty and students for clinical learning
2. Comprehend and follow directions
3. Demonstrate ability to achieve course and program outcomes
4. Demonstrate ability to comprehend, integrate, and apply knowledge
5. Assess, analyze, and synthesize subjective and objective data to develop nursing diagnoses and comprehensive plans of care
6. Engage effective problem solving and accurately prioritize patient needs
7. Utilize current evidence, clinical judgment, and patient preferences to systematically assess, analyze, implement, and evaluate healthcare interventions
8. Promote safe, quality care across the lifespan

### **The Second Core Competency: Communication Skills**

Students must be able to communicate effectively, with a wide variety of people, in a wide variety of circumstances. This competency requires that students:

1. Speak, read, and write clearly in English
2. Communicate effectively verbally, nonverbally, and in writing
3. Interact respectfully with faculty, staff, peers, healthcare professionals, patients, and families
4. Elicit information effectively from patients, families, and healthcare team members to evaluate the patient's condition and establish a plan of care for the patient
5. Transmit and communicate information clearly and accurately to patients and the healthcare team members
6. In the course of caring for patients, counsel, teach, and explain complex information effectively
7. Maintain accurate patient records
8. Complete all written and oral assignments effectively

### **The Third Core Competency: Observational Abilities**

Students must have the ability to make accurate visual and aural observations in the care of patients.

Examples of observational abilities include:

1. Use and interpret information from digital, analog, and diagnostic tools such as: thermometers, sphygmomanometers, otoscopes, ophthalmoscopes, EKGs, IVs, various patient alarms
2. Observe and interpret patients' verbal and nonverbal communications
3. Observe and interpret bodily sounds (such as heart rate, breath sounds, bowel sounds) and visual indicators of bodily functioning (such as color of wounds, drainage, urine, feces, expectoration)
4. Observe a patient during all aspects of assessment and care

### **The Fourth Core Competency: Physical, Motor, and Perceptual Requirements**

Students must be able to perform or assist with nursing interventions to provide comprehensive nursing care. Motor competencies generally include the ability to:

1. Perform gross and fine motor movements to perform complete physical examinations utilizing the techniques of inspection, palpation, percussion, auscultation, as well as other diagnostic tools and equipment (e.g., sphygmomanometer, otoscope, stethoscope, ophthalmoscope, EKG, IVs).
2. Perform and/or assist appropriately with expected nursing procedures, treatments, and medication administration (e.g., drawing medications into syringes in precise measurements; giving a medication IV, IM, or subcutaneously using the appropriate syringe or apparatus; performing tracheotomy care and suctioning; inserting urinary catheters; creating sterile fields; sterile and clean dressing changes basic life support [BLS] cardiopulmonary resuscitation or advanced cardiopulmonary life support [ACLS]).
3. Move, transfer, and position patients or equipment safely under a variety of circumstances with or without a lift team or assistive devices during the delivery of nursing care or in emergency situations.
4. Navigate patients' rooms, workspaces, and treatment areas with appropriate precision and speed to carry out the nursing process during the delivery of general nursing care or in emergency situations.
5. Complete all required nursing care and documentation during the assigned period of clinical practice.

### **The Fifth Core Competency**

**Behavioral, Interpersonal, and Ethical Comportment Skills** Students must demonstrate that they can relate with faculty, staff, peers, patients/families, and healthcare team members effectively, with honesty, integrity, and respect. Examples of these abilities include:

1. Demonstrated capacity for compassion and regard for the welfare of others
2. Ability to form mature, sensitive, caring, sensitive therapeutic relationships with patients and families
3. Ability to form professional relationships with faculty, staff, and peers
4. Ability to maintain composure and perform effectively in highly charged, rapidly changing, and urgent situations
5. Ability to adhere to the ANA Code of Ethics, the ANA Standards for Professional Practice, and Simmons University Honor Code
6. Ability to maintain confidentiality

7. Capacity for flexibility in changing situations
8. Openness to constructive feedback and ability to modify behavior
9. Ability to work collaboratively with faculty, staff, peers, patients, and families
10. Openness to examination of personal responses, perceptions, and attitudes
11. Ability to engage with individuals from all backgrounds and cultures with openness, communication of regard and caring, respect, warmth, and inclusion

### **Additional Considerations**

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

Students may not participate in clinical learning experiences if they have taken prescription narcotic medication, less than eight hours prior to the start time of their clinical experience.

Students must be well rested when caring for patients, and so may not work in the overnight hours (e.g. 11:00 pm to 7:00 am) on the night prior to a morning clinical experience.

Students who have a significant illness, injury, hospitalization, or surgery during the time they are in clinical learning experiences must be cleared to return to clinical by their physician or healthcare provider, and these technical standards must be reviewed by the healthcare provider and submitted to the Office of Disability Services.

### **Addendum III Preceptor Voucher Policies**

#### **Professional Development Vouchers (Campus-Based Programs)**

In return for the placement and supervision of students in clinical settings, the School of Nursing at Simmons University provides clinical preceptors with a Professional Development Voucher. Vouchers may be used for courses offered at the School of Nursing at Simmons University on a space-available basis. Vouchers may be used for courses at other colleges at Simmons University. Approval by the chosen college will be required.

Professional Development Vouchers will be issued by the School of Nursing in the name of the Agency/Institution where the clinical preceptor is employed at the time of the placement. Professional Development Vouchers are not transferable outside an Agency/ Institution. Vouchers may be used by any employee of the Agency/ Institution. Verification of employment may be requested. New vouchers will not be issued for lost vouchers.

Students cannot redeem more than four credits worth of vouchers throughout their program. Non-matriculated students may not apply the vouchers towards their tuition. Eligible students must be matriculated in an on-ground program.

Vouchers cannot be applied to tuition for Nursing@Simmons online FNP program or any other Simmons online programs.

\*Please see the Clinical Preceptor Scholarship Program.

#### **Procedure for redeeming voucher(s)**

1. Have authorized representatives of Agency/Institution verify employment by signing voucher where designated.
2. Register with the Office of the Registrar for a course.
3. Submit completed voucher to Simmons University, School of Nursing for signature by Clinical

Coordination office staff.

4. Proceed to the Office of Student Financial Services with the Professional Development Voucher(s) to make payment.

Any questions concerning the use of Professional Development Vouchers may be directed to Simmons University School of Nursing for Clinical Coordination office by phoning 617-521-2529.

This voucher policy is subject to change.

### **Clinical Preceptor Scholarship Program (Nursing@Simmons)**

Professional Development Vouchers cannot be redeemed for any of the Nursing@Simmons online programs (including RN-MSN, MS, and DNP). In lieu of the Professional Development Vouchers, Nursing@Simmons preceptors will be eligible for a Preceptor Scholarship. This scholarship will be applied on a per credit basis over the course of the students program.

Note that Preceptor Scholarships can not be combined with any other scholarship offer provided by Simmons University or its technology partner, 2U, Inc., or any other entity offering scholarships based on that entity's relationship with Simmons University and/or 2U, Inc., unless expressly permitted by another scholarship offer.

For more information about the Preceptor Scholarship, please reach out to the following contacts -

New students (prior to first term)  
Nursing@Simmons Admissions  
1-855-461-7466  
admissions@onlinenursing.simmons.edu

Current students (actively enrolled in courses)  
Nursing@Simmons Student Success  
1-855-465-7466  
studentsupport@onlinenursing.simmons.edu

The clinical preceptor scholarship program and scholarship amount is subject to change at any time without notice as dictated by Simmons University or its technology partner, 2U, Inc.