



CompleteDegree@Simmons
Baccalaureate Social Work (BSW) Program
Student Handbook
2023 - 2024

The Simmons University BSW Program is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education.

Last Revised September 2023

Welcome Baccalaureate Social Work Students!	2
CompleteDegree BSW Program Administration and Lead Faculty 2023-2024	3
Simmons University and the School of Social Work	3
Brief Introduction and Background	3
Generalist Practice	5
Simmons University BSW Program Mission Statement	7
Simmons University BSW Program Goals	7
Simmons University BSW Program’s Core Competencies and Behaviors: The Foundation of the Professional Curriculum	7
The Simmons BSW Program Curriculum	11
Introduction: Integrating the University Core Curriculum, Social Work Courses, and Practicum Education	11
Curriculum Design for Students Admitted to Simmons	12
Curriculum Component I - The Simmons University PLAN	12
Key Content Areas	13
Curriculum Component II – Simmons University BSW Program Core Courses	13
Required Social Work Courses for Students	13
Curriculum Component III – Simmons University BSW Program Practicum Education	14
Purpose and Goals of BSW Practicum Education at Simmons University	14
General Plan of Practicum Education	15
Service-Learning	15
Junior Year BSW Virtual Practicum Experience	16
Senior Year BSW Practicum Placement	16
5-Term BSW Program Course and PracticumSequencing	17
5-Term CompleteDegree BSW Program	18
Transfer Credit Policy	18
Policy Regarding Credit for Life and Work Experience	19
The Simmons Commitment to Diversity, Equity, And Inclusion	19
Our Diversity & Inclusion Mission	20
Notice of Non-Discrimination	21
Reporting Sexual Misconduct	22
Students Reporting Discrimination or Retaliation	22
Bias Response Protocol	22
For Advice on Whom to Contact about a Concern or Incident	22
Grievance Procedure	22
Procedures for other Student Grievances and Complaints	22
Professional Standards and Professional Performance	23

NASW Code of Ethics	23
Simmons SSW Standards for Professional Practice	23
Simmons University Student Code of Conduct	24
Simmons University Academic Integrity Policy	24
Student Orientation and Advising	25
BSW Program Admission	26
Criteria and Procedures for Admission into the BSW Program	26
Course & Classroom Responsibilities	28
Academic and Performance Standards for BSW Students	28
Social Work Student Assessment & Grading Policy	29
Submission of Assignments for Grading	29
Student Admission to Senior Practicum Placement	30
Assessment of Student Performance in Practicum Education	32
Policies and Procedures for Terminating a Practicum Placement	32
Identifying Concerns in Practicum Placement	32
Problems in the Practicum PlacementAgency	32
Concerns Regarding Student Performance and Conduct in Practicum Placement	33
Termination of Practicum Placement	33
Student Guidelines for Change of Practicum Placement	33
Final Course Grade Appeal	34
Explanation of Grounds for Appeal	34
Grade Appeal Procedures and Deadlines	35
Non-Matriculation Grade Policy	37
Extensions for Assignments	37
Professional Performance and Academic Reviews (Level 1, 2, 3)	37
Three Levels of Review	38
Level 1 Review	38
Level 2 Review	38
Level 3 Review	39
Level 3 Reviews and Referral and/or Consultation with the Assistant Dean of Community Standards	40
Program Progression	41
GPA required for graduation	41
Eligibility for Advanced Standing Status in an MSW Program	41
Policies and Procedures for Terminating a Student’s Enrollment in the BSW Program	41
Notification of Dismissal	42
Appeal of Dismissal	42
Student Leadership	42

Social Work Liaison/Club	43
BSW Social Work Awards	43
Spirit of Social Work Award	43
The Community Service Leadership Award	43
The Excellence in Practicum Education Award	43
Phi Alpha National Social Work Honor Society	43
Appendix 1: Standards for Professional Practice Simmons School of Social Work	44
Introduction	44
Appendix 2: Professional Standards	45

Welcome Baccalaureate Social Work Students!

Welcome to the Simmons University BSW Program. This CompleteDegree BSW Student Handbook is a guide for students, as well as faculty members, practicum instructors, and others who work with students enrolled in the Program. Primarily, the Handbook is a resource to help students navigate their educational experience in the CompleteDegree BSW Program at Simmons University. It contains helpful information regarding the requirements, expectations, and policies of the Program, as well as important information related to coursework and practicum experiences. As students progress through the Program, this Handbook serves as a guide to answer questions and to help them locate the information and resources they need to have a productive and successful educational journey. This Handbook, as well as many other resources for students, is available on the Simmons University Student Handbooks and Forms webpage.

Other Relevant Resources

The Simmons Course Catalog is another important resource for students looking for information on academic requirements, courses, and other relevant principles and policies. It can be found at <https://www.simmons.edu/academics/course-catalog>

CompleteDegree BSW Program Administration and Lead Faculty 2023-2024

Johnnie Hamilton-Mason, MSW, PhD
Interim Director School of Social Work
johnnie.hamilton-mason@simmons.edu

Tiffany Pinckney, DSW, LMSW
Interim BSW Program Director
Director of Online Practicum Education
Associate Professor of Practice
tiffany.pinckney@simmons.edu

Simmons University and the School of Social Work

Brief Introduction and Background

Simmons University, a private, non-sectarian institution, was founded in 1899 to provide a high- quality liberal arts education, combined with professional preparation, to women at the undergraduate level. The University's Mission "To provide transformative learning that links passion with lifelong purpose" has been realized throughout its history as its academic programs have expanded and graduates have taken their places as professional leaders in the community. Simmons University is accredited by the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE), enrolls almost 2000 undergraduate students annually, and houses graduate programs open to all individuals. One of the areas for which the University has become best known is in the education and preparation of graduate level social work professionals under the auspices of its School of Social Work.

In 1904, Simmons became the first college to provide training for clinical social workers, filling a critical community need, expanding the profession, and offering a vehicle through which women could advance their careers. Since then, the Simmons University School of Social Work (SSW) has been a leader in social work education and an enduring example of the University's signature commitment to academic rigor, strong professional preparation, and visionary thinking. Open to students regardless of gender identification, the SSW offers an MSW program that has been continuously accredited by the Council on Social Work Education and a PhD program for advanced clinical social work scholars, which opened in 1983. Throughout its history, the SSW has recognized the critical role that its graduates play in the local, national, and global community and has endeavored to provide social work education in a way that maintains the highest educational standards while remaining sensitive to the diverse, changing needs of students and the clients they serve. As a reflection of this knowledge and commitment, the SSW has created unique and innovative programs that attract dedicated students and infuse a steady flow of competent, well trained individuals into the profession. In each of its programs, the SSW seeks to advance the core values and aims of the social work profession.

The Simmons Baccalaureate Social Work (BSW) Program is a more recent endeavor of the School of Social Work. The BSW Program opened to students in the Fall of 2012 on-ground and became fully accredited by the Council on Social Work Education in June of 2014. In May 2021, Simmons launched the CompleteDegree Online BSW Program. The BSW Program espouses the same core principles and values of the MSW Program while structuring its curriculum around generalist practice competencies for undergraduate social work students.

Generalist Practice

Baccalaureate social work education is intended to teach and train students as social work generalists. The Simmons University BSW Program utilizes the following

definition of Generalist Practice, as articulated by the Council on Social Work Education:

Generalist practice is grounded in the liberal arts and the person-in-environment framework. To promote human and social well-being, generalist practitioners use a range of prevention and intervention methods in their practice with diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities based on scientific inquiry and best practices. The generalist practitioner identifies with the social work profession and applies ethical principles and critical thinking in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Generalist practitioners engage diversity in their practice and advocate for human rights and social and economic justice. They recognize, support, and build on the strengths and resiliency of all human beings. They engage in research-informed practice and are proactive in responding to the impact of context on professional practice. The baccalaureate program in social work prepares students for generalist practice. The descriptions of the nine Social Work Competencies presented in the EPAS identify the knowledge, values, skills, cognitive and affective processes, and behaviors associated with competence at the generalist level of practice.

CSWE 2015 Education Policies & Accreditation Standards

Consistent with this definition, the Program utilizes a curriculum model that flows from the University's liberal arts foundation, integrating the Simmons PLAN, Social Work Program courses, and Practicum Instruction into a cohesive and enriching experience.

Simmons University BSW Program Mission Statement

Consistent with the mission of Simmons University, its MSW Program, and the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (2015) put forth by the Council on Social Work Education, the Simmons University BSW Program's Mission is:

To prepare baccalaureate-level students for professional generalist social work practice and lifelong professional and personal learning. Consistent with the mission and vision of Simmons University, the School of Social Work, and professional social work tradition, the Program seeks to develop competent, ethical practitioners who are attuned to the values of the social work profession, embrace a professional social work identity, value diversity, and seek social justice through effective advocacy and social change efforts.

Simmons University BSW Program Goals

Within the liberal arts tradition and guided by the purpose and values of the social work profession, the Simmons University BSW Program aims to:

1. Participate in the fulfillment of the mission and goals of Simmons University and the School of Social Work by contributing to a liberal arts foundation and providing strong professional social work career preparation at the baccalaureate level;
2. Prepare students for generalist social work employment and graduate level education;
3. Provide students with instruction, practicum experiences, and opportunities to develop proficiency in the knowledge, values, and skills represented in core competencies required for effective, culturally sensitive, evidence-based, and ethical social work practice;
4. Provide students with instructional opportunities that will facilitate the development of critical thinking and writing skills necessary for effective social work practice;
5. Prepare students to become competent practitioners, social justice advocates, policy analysts, and agents of social change;
6. Provide a foundation for students' professional futures, emphasizing life-long learning, growth, and professional development

Simmons University BSW Program's Core Competencies and Behaviors: The Foundation of the Professional Curriculum

The Simmons BSW Program endorses and follows the expectations of its accrediting organization, the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). Part of the function of CSWE is to set educational standards that ensure that social work students at the undergraduate and graduate level are receiving high quality educational and training experiences that will prepare them for their careers. CSWE is responsible for continuously reviewing best practices in the practicum of social work and regularly updating their Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS). Accredited social work programs are responsible for meeting these standards, which are designed to progressively build students' knowledge, skills, and abilities through course and practicum work. The most recent update of the CSWE EPAS occurred in 2015, and it is upon these accreditation standards that the BSW Program at Simmons is structured.

Social work education is predicated upon a competency-based model which emphasizes student learning outcomes instead of curricular content. The Council on Social Work Education describes competency-based social work education as:

Competency-based education rests upon a shared view of the nature of competence in professional practice. Social work competence is the ability to integrate and apply social work knowledge, values, and skills to practice situations in a purposeful, intentional, and professional manner to promote human and community well-being. EPAS recognizes a holistic view of competence; that is, the demonstration of competence is informed by knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes that include the social worker's critical thinking, affective reactions, and exercise of judgment in regard to unique practice situations. Overall professional

competence is multi-dimensional and composed of interrelated competencies. An individual social worker's competence is seen as developmental and dynamic, changing over time in relation to continuous learning.

Competency-based education is an outcomes-oriented approach to curriculum design. The goal of the outcomes approach is to ensure that students are able to demonstrate the integration and application of the competencies in practice. In EPAS, social work practice competence consists of nine interrelated competencies and component behaviors that are comprised of knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes. Using a curriculum design that begins with the outcomes, expressed as the expected competencies, programs develop the substantive content, pedagogical approach, and educational activities that provide learning opportunities for students to demonstrate the competencies.

Assessment of student learning outcomes is an essential component of competency-based education. Assessment provides evidence that students have demonstrated the level of competence necessary to enter professional practice, which in turn shows programs are successful in achieving their goals. Assessment information is used to improve the educational program and the methods used to assess student learning outcomes. Programs assess students' demonstration of competence. The assessment methods used by programs gather data that serve as evidence of student learning outcomes and the demonstration of competence. Understanding social work practice is complex and multi-dimensional, the assessment methods used by programs and the data collected may vary by context.

CSWE 2015 Education Policies & Accreditation Standards

In keeping with the 2015 EPAS, the Simmons BSW Program strives to prepare its graduates for generalist practice through the mastery of knowledge, values, and skills needed for effective, competent, ethical practice at the baccalaureate level. Thus, the BSW Program has adopted the nine CSWE Core Competencies (numbered) and accompanying *behaviors* (bulleted) as the foundation for its professional curriculum. This means that the Program's courses, practicum placements, and overall educational experience are structured to assist students in progressively building their ability to perform essential practice-related behaviors. The Core Competencies represent a synthesis of four dimensions: knowledge, skills, values, and cognitive/affective processes. BSW students are expected to demonstrate progressive growth in each of the nine Core Competencies. This progression will include demonstrating an understanding of concepts, an ability to apply a specific concept or practice skills in a situation, and finally to integrate multiple theories and skills to address a broad range of client-system needs. Evaluation of student performance will occur in multiple components of the BSW Program, including courses and Practicum Education. Thus, by the completion of their baccalaureate education and training, the Simmons University BSW graduate will demonstrate the ability to:

1. Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior
 - make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context
 - use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations
 - demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication
 - use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes
 - use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior
2. Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice
 - apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels
 - present themselves as learners and engage clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences
 - apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies
3. Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice
 - apply their understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels
 - engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice
4. Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice
 - use practice experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research
 - apply critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings
 - use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery
5. Engage in Policy Practice
 - identify social policy at the local, state, and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to social services
 - assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services
 - apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice

6. Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
 - apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies
 - use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to effectively engage diverse clients and constituencies
7. Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
 - collect and organize data, and apply critical thinking to interpret information from clients and constituencies
 - apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the analysis of assessment data from clients and constituencies
 - develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs, and challenges within clients and constituencies
 - select appropriate intervention strategies based on the assessment, research knowledge, and values and preferences of clients and constituencies
8. Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
 - critically choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies
 - apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies
 - use inter-professional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes
 - negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies
 - facilitate effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals
9. Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
 - select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes
 - apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcomes
 - critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes

- apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels

The Simmons BSW Program Curriculum

Introduction: Integrating the University Core Curriculum, Social Work Courses, and Practicum Education

According to Fink’s (2003) Taxonomy of Significant Learning, creating effective courses and a coherent curriculum involves attention to key areas of student learning. These include not only providing foundational knowledge, but assisting students in applying what is learned and helping them to integrate and make connections within and among their subjects so that the information they have gained can be useful in their lives and work. This taxonomy emphasizes the need for students to gain knowledge, build practical skills, learn about themselves and others, develop a sense of caring about those around them, and employ this knowledge to become life-long learners. In this way, the taxonomy mirrors the mandate that undergraduate social work education be both grounded in the liberal arts and based in an intentional curriculum design that combines classroom learning and practicum work to allow students to master the Core Competencies and Practice Behaviors necessary for effective, competent practice. The Simmons University BSW Program’s formal curriculum design is based upon this philosophy of knowledge building, application, and integration.

Simmons University was founded on and has become known for providing “extraordinary professional preparation with an emphasis on intellectual exploration and rigor, the integration of theory and practice, leadership, and informed citizenship” (Simmons College Undergraduate Course Catalog, 2018-2019, p. 266) and it is upon this foundation that the BSW Program is built.

In order to achieve its goals and intentions, the Program’s Curriculum integrates three key areas: the College Core Curriculum based in the liberal arts, BSW Program courses, and BSW Practicum Education. Through the Core Curriculum, students become well rounded scholars and learners with foundational intellectual habits and abilities, including critical thinking and writing skills, an appreciation for diversity, information literacy skills, foreign language competencies, a foundation in science and mathematics, and an appreciation for the arts. Through BSW courses and practicum placements, students learn the social work knowledge, values and skills they need to be strong practitioners.

In Fall 2015, Simmons implemented a new core curriculum, The PLAN (Purpose Leadership ActionN). First Year students admitted to Simmons beginning in Fall 2015 participate in this new curriculum. In Spring 2020, the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (UCC) approved changes to the BSW required courses. Students admitted to Simmons beginning in Fall 2020 participate in this new BSW curriculum.

Curriculum Design for Students Admitted to Simmons

In order to be eligible to graduate, BSW students must fulfill the following requirements:

Course Work

- ✓ Earn a minimum of 128 credits (with an overall GPA of 2.0)
 - Completion of Core Curriculum: PLAN
 - At least one course from each Key Content Area (KCAs)
 - 13 required courses in Social Work (C or better course grade)
 - 3 Liberal Arts courses: Biology 113 OR Biology 109; STAT 118; and ECON 101, OR POLS 101, OR POLS 217, OR PH 101.

Practicum Work

- ✓ Complete social work practicum placement requirements
 - Service-Learning (may be waived for transfer students)
 - 40 hours in SW 253 Human Behavior in the Social Environment
 - Practicum Placement & Instruction
 - Junior Virtual Practicum Experience Seminar in SW 345X
 - 425-hour formal practicum placement in SW 370 and SW 371

Curriculum Component I - The Simmons University PLAN

Introduced in the Fall 2015 for incoming students, the Simmons University PLAN (Purpose Leadership ActionN) substantively engages students with the city of Boston, develops students' understanding of leadership, engages in interactive learning across academic disciplines, and provides opportunities for students to design key components of their course of study. In order to meet these objectives, the Simmons PLAN is a tiered experience which spans the students' undergraduate course work. Students may select from a diverse series of course offerings to meet the requirements of the Boston Course, The Learning Community, and 3D Design Across Diverse Disciplines in order to construct a course of study which explores their personal interests and goals.

Key Content Areas

The key content areas (KCAs) pertain to phenomena as objects of study across the disciplines, rather than modes of inquiry defined by a particular discipline or set of disciplines. These categories describe areas of knowledge from multidisciplinary perspectives. The phenomena included under each of the four areas admit a wide variety of ways of knowing or disciplinary approaches. Only courses taken to fulfill the 3D requirement or as part of the Learning Community requirement can also fulfill a KCA requirement. Students will complete one course from each of the following KCAs: Scientific Inquiry; Global Cultural; Social & Historical; and Aesthetic, Literary, and Artistic.

Curriculum Component II – Simmons University BSW Program Core Courses

The second component of the Simmons University BSW Program's Curriculum is the Social Work Program's required courses. It is through these courses that BSW students receive direct instruction on the fundamentals of professional generalist social work. Built upon the liberal arts foundation established by the Simmons Core Curriculum, the courses that make up the formal BSW Program curriculum are grounded in the person-in-environment framework that is the hallmark of social work education and practice. Further, they are intentionally designed to progressively develop students' mastery of the Program's Core Competencies and Practice Behaviors. By requiring a coherent package of courses that focuses on human behavior in the social environment, social welfare history, policy, social science research, diversity and cultural competence, micro, mezzo, and macro practice methods, and practicum integration, the BSW Program sequence is designed to educate and train students who are competent, ethical practitioners and advocates who can effectively utilize their knowledge and skills to intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

Required Social Work Courses for Students

The thirteen required social work courses that make up the Simmons University BSW Program Explicit Curriculum are:

SW 101	Introduction to Social Work & Social Welfare
SW 200	Social Welfare Policy
SW 253	Human Behavior in the Social Environment
SOCI 249	Inequalities
SW 255	Interviewing and Documentation in Human Services
SW 351	Social Work Practice I: Introduction to Generalist Practice
SW 352	Social Work Practice II: Work with Individuals and Families
SW 353	Social Work Practice III: Groups
SW 354	Social Work Practice IV: Macro Social Work
SOCI 239	Introduction to Social Research I
SW 345X	Junior Virtual Practicum Experience Seminar
SW 370	Social Work Practicum Placement & Seminar I
SW 371	Social Work Practicum Placement & Seminar II and Capstone Project

Brief descriptions of all required BSW courses can be found in the Undergraduate Course Catalog.

Curriculum Component III – Simmons University BSW Program Practicum Education

The third and final component of the Simmons University BSW Program's Curriculum is the Practicum Education Program. At Simmons, BSW Practicum Placement and Instruction is structured to not only build upon the University's Core Curriculum, but to support the student's learning, growth, and mastery of the Program's Core Competencies and Practice Behaviors. Of equal importance to the classroom component of the curriculum, practicum placement and

instruction contributes to student education and training by complementing and reinforcing the classroom learning that is achieved through the Program's required courses. The BSW Practicum Placement Program progressively socializes students to the profession and connects the classroom with the practice of social work within an agency setting.

Purpose and Goals of BSW Practicum Education at Simmons University

The companion to classroom learning in professional social work education, agency-based practicum placement provides students with direct practice opportunities to enhance their learning and solidify the knowledge, values and skills that are essential for competent, ethical generalist social work practice. Practicum placement allows students to develop, and ultimately demonstrate mastery of professional Social Work Core Competencies and Practice Behaviors by applying generalist concepts from the curriculum to their hands-on work with clients. With supervision from experienced bachelor's and master's level social workers, students within the Simmons BSW Program work directly with clients, perform a variety of social work interventions, learn to work with community and social service systems, advance their cultural competency, and become skilled advocates and case managers. All procedures, policies, and required documents related to BSW student practicum placement are detailed in the CompleteDegree@Simmons BSW Program *Practicum Education Manual*, which is provided to students prior to entering the senior practicum placement.

General Plan of Practicum Education

In keeping with the primary goals of preparing students for professional employment and connecting the classroom and practicum learning experiences, CompleteDegree@Simmons BSW Practicum Director works with students to select practicum placement settings which give students the opportunity to provide direct and supportive services for micro to macro client systems, utilizing generalist social work knowledge, values, skills, and reflective processes. The formal practicum program of the senior year, in addition to Junior Virtual Practicum Experience Seminar, is intended to be part of the larger practicum experience that occurs throughout the student's academic career in the CompleteDegree BSW Program at Simmons University. Generally, students assess their interest in and suitability for the social work profession through service-learning placements or equivalent experiences and continue to the formal practicum placements during the final two terms of the program.

Service-Learning

Students are introduced to practicum-based learning upon entering the BSW Program through the Program's service-learning component. Typically taken in the first year, SW 253 Human Behavior in the Social Environment has a service learning component, allowing students to complete 40 hours of service-learning as part of their course work. The service-learning experience may be formally facilitated by the BSW Program's faculty who work in collaboration with the University's *Simmons Community Engagement* to develop relationships with appropriate practicum settings. BSW Program faculty work with the *Simmons Community Engagement* to ensure that the service-learning experience is developmentally challenging and provides appropriate and meaningful opportunities for students to begin their practicum work journey.

Prior to beginning their service-learning experience, each BSW student is provided with information about service-learning requirements, expectations, and the placement process. Students are oriented to the goals and intentions of service-learning and are provided with helpful information and guidelines regarding their service-learning experience. Students work with *Simmons Community Engagement*, in consultation with BSW Program faculty, to select service learning opportunities.

Through service-learning, students are provided with opportunities to build their skills gradually during the beginning of their educational experience, allowing them to gain a wider range of practical skills, build their resume, and be more prepared for the rigors of their junior and senior year practicum placements. In addition, because a hallmark of service-learning is self-reflection, students are required to think critically about their experiences, completing writing assignments and participating in classroom discussions that allow them to progressively assess their emerging skills and competencies, as well as areas needing work and refinement.

Service-learning hours may be paid or unpaid, but must involve work with or on behalf of people and be documented by the person supervising the service-learning activity. Throughout the term, students provide documentation of their hours. Occasionally, service-learning requirements may be waived for students who are currently employed in or have had significant experience in the social service practicum .

Junior Year BSW Virtual Practicum Experience

As the second phase of the BSW Program's Practicum Placement component, students complete a virtual practicum placement course (SW 345X). This virtual lab is meant to advance the knowledge, values and skills students have gained through their service-learning, provide continued orientation to practicum work, and offer an additional opportunity for students to identify areas of interest and professional strengths and needs.

This junior virtual practicum placement course also provides a way for BSW Program faculty to evaluate student readiness for the rigors and demands of the practicum placement that occurs in the senior year. At the end of the junior practicum placement, each student's progress in the BSW Program is formally reviewed and a determination is made regarding the student's readiness to move on to the senior year practicum placement. This review process involves the evaluation of the student's Junior Virtual Practicum Placement course instructor, a student self-evaluation and a Junior Practicum Placement course experience essay written by the student. These sources of information are reviewed and discussed during individual practicum evaluation conferences conducted by the BSW program faculty with each student where final determinations about senior student practicum placement are made.

Senior Year BSW Practicum Placement

The Simmons BSW Program's Practicum Education component culminates with the 425-hour, two-term, senior year social work practicum placement, supervised by a bachelor's or master's

level social worker. This intensive practicum experience is intended to broaden, deepen, and allow students to practice the social work concepts and skills learned in the classroom and observed during their service-learning experiences and Junior Virtual Practicum Experience Seminar. During the senior year placement, it is expected that students will ultimately demonstrate mastery of the Program's Core Competencies and related behaviors within the practicum context.

In order to complete the required 425 hours in the practicum, students are generally in the practicum setting 16 hours per week for two academic terms. Practicum is designed to be completed while Simmons is in session and students are encouraged to complete all 425 hours during this time. In some cases, student schedules may necessitate completing some hours during Winter Break or Spring Break. If a student's agency is open on a holiday that Simmons is closed, the student is expected to attend placement. Most students arrange their practicum placement on a two-day per week schedule, taking their required courses in three-day blocks. This schedule may vary from student to student, depending upon agency needs and students' course needs, employment requirements, and family obligations. However, each student must establish and adhere to a regular weekly schedule at their agency. This is important for continuity of services which are being provided to client systems. By entering a practicum placement, students are assuming responsibility to provide consistent, ethical services within the scope of practice defined by their host agency and Practicum Instructor.

As part of Practicum Education, all students participate in a weekly Social Work Practicum Placement Seminar (I & II), where the faculty instructor also serves as their liaison with their internship site. All placements are overseen by the Director of Complete Degree BSW Practicum Education. The Practicum Seminar is an opportunity for students to integrate the practicum experience with academic learning through class discussion, case presentations, and course assignments. Through the Practicum Seminar, students are exposed to a range of populations and social work roles through peer-to-peer learning; among other benefits, the seminar offers the opportunity for students to recognize the transferability of social work competencies across professional roles, settings, and populations.

5-Term BSW Program Course and Practicum Sequencing

For students entering the program with their PLAN requirements fulfilled, the Complete Degree BSW degree at Simmons can be completed in five terms of full-time course and practicum work. Although students are not formally accepted into the BSW Program until they are in SW 351 Social Work Practice I: Introduction to Generalist Practice, students may declare a Social Work major prior to that time and begin taking foundational requirements of the BSW Curriculum that are also offered to the entire student body. This allows beginning students to test out their interest in and appropriateness for a career in social work while they complete requirements of the University Core Curriculum. These courses may include Introduction to Social Work and Social Welfare, Social Welfare Policy, Human Behavior in the Social Environment, Inequalities, Interviewing and Documentation in Human Services, as well as BSW Program electives, as they are introduced. The BSW courses and their sequence required of upper-level students and transfer students who enter the Program in their junior year are

specifically delineated and include all social work courses not already completed, as well as upper level social work courses and the completion of practicum placement requirements.

5-Term Complete Degree BSW Program

1ST TERM	2ND TERM	3RD TERM	4TH TERM	5TH TERM
SW 101 Introduction to Social Work & Social Welfare (4 credits)	SW 351 Social Work Practice I: Introduction to Generalist Practice (4 credits)	SW 352 Social Work Practice II: Work with Individuals and Families (4 credits)	SW 370 Social Work Practicum Placement & Seminar I (8 credits)	SW 371 Social Work Practicum Placement & Seminar II (8 credits)
SW 253 Human Behavior in the Social Environment (4 credits)	SW 200 Social Welfare Policy (4 credits)	SW 345X Junior Virtual Practicum Experience Seminar (4 credit)	SW 353 Social Work Practice III: Groups (4 credits)	
SW 255 Interviewing & Documentation in Human Services (4 credits)	SOCI 249 Inequalities (4 credits)	SW 354 Social Work Practice IV: Macro Social Work (4 credits)	SOCI 239 Introduction to Social Research I (4 credits)	
ECON 101 Principles of Macroeconomics OR POLS 101 Introduction to American Politics OR POLS 217 American Public Policy OR PH 101 Public Health (4 credits)	STAT 118 Introduction to Statistics (4 credits)	BIOL 113 General Biology OR BIOL 109 Sex, Gender and Biology (4 credits)		

All KCAs are fulfilled through required social work courses except Aesthetic, Literary and Artistic (ALA).

Transfer Credit Policy

Simmons University accepts a maximum of 96 credits in transfer from another undergraduate college or university, specifying that students must have achieved a grade of at least a C or better for a course to be eligible for transfer credit in general education courses. When a student intending to major in social work transfers from another institution, the University Registrar's office first completes an evaluation of transfer credits to determine which specific courses meet all-University requirements. Transfer credits completed in the liberal arts are generally assigned to specific areas within The PLAN. In addition, utilizing the Social Work Academic Planning Worksheet as a guide, the BSW Program Director completes an evaluation of transfer credits that may be accepted in fulfillment of social work requirements. While the BSW Program seeks to avoid undue duplication of courses required of transfer students, the Program is ultimately responsible for assuring that students master the Core Competencies required for competent generalist social work practice. Therefore, it is the Program's policy that credits for the pre-BSW foundational courses (SW 101 Introduction to Social Work & Social Welfare, SW 255 Interviewing & Documentation in Human Services, SW 253 Human Behavior in the Social Environment, and SW 200 Social Welfare Policy) can be transferred in from CSWE-accredited baccalaureate social work programs or other qualified institutions if the student achieved a grade of C or better. Upper-level BSW major courses can only be transferred from CSWE-accredited baccalaureate social work programs and students must receive a grade of a C or better to qualify for a transfer credit review. Additionally, all students entering Simmons will be, at minimum, required to take: SW 352 Social Work Practice II: Work with Individuals and Families, SW 345X Junior Virtual Practicum Experience Seminar, SW 370 Social Work Practicum Placement & Seminar I, and SW 371 Social Work Practicum Placement & Seminar II. This is subject to review and approval by the BSW Program Director. Transfer credits that do not meet all-University requirements and are not eligible for social work course credit may be used to fulfill general electives.

Policy Regarding Credit for Life and Work Experience

The Simmons University BSW Program is enriched by a student body with a diverse range of life and work experiences. Students with previous or current human service work, life experiences, and volunteer experience offer a unique perspective that supplements their classroom and practicum learning and often adds to the depth and breadth of their understanding of social work concepts and methods. While the value of these experiences is acknowledged, it is the Program's policy that no social work course credit will be granted for students' life experience or previous work experience. The Simmons University BSW Program curriculum has been designed as an integration of academic coursework and practicum placement learning that infuses specific content that is in keeping with social work tradition and is necessary for the mastery of knowledge, values, and skills required for competent, ethical generalist social work practice. Therefore, the student's formal learning in professional social work begins at the point of entry into the Program. Students are encouraged to utilize their life and work experience as a foundation for building, expanding, and refining their social work knowledge, values, and skills.

The Simmons Commitment to Diversity, Equity, And Inclusion

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

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

Our Diversity & Inclusion Mission

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

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

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

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

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

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

- We recognize, respect and honor the inherent individuality of all. We strive to ensure that all decisions concerning the educational progress of students are based on considerations appropriate to an academic institution and not on factors such as race,

color, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, religion, age, national origin, ancestry, disability, or veteran status.

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

Notice of Non-Discrimination

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

Simmons is, therefore, committed to the following principles:

We support equal educational and employment opportunities for all persons, based on each individual's qualifications and fitness, and we seek to administer our university policies without regard to race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital or parental status, religion, age, national or ethnic origin, socio-economic status, ancestry, disability, veterans' status or genetic predisposition.

We strive to administer our educational programs and activities, as well as the employment opportunities we provide, in accordance with all relevant state and federal requirements and implementing regulations. This includes, but is not limited to, Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Titles I and III of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, the Massachusetts Equal Rights Law (M.G.L. 93, Section 102 et seq.), and Equal Pay Act, and Chapter 151B of the General Laws of Massachusetts, as amended.

We are committed to making our programs and activities accessible to individuals with disabilities, including our online/digital services and offerings. We recognize that in the virtual/online learning environment, technology-dependent teaching and learning processes

may create unique and unanticipated access barriers. We encourage individuals to contact us if an obstacle to access is found to exist. (See below for how to do so.)

We seek to build and maintain a Simmons where the diversity of our community members is met with understanding, respect, and encouragement, and where unlawful discrimination, harassment and retaliation by any member of the administration, faculty, staff, or student body against any other individual will be investigated, evaluated and redressed. The University does not tolerate unlawful discrimination or harassment of its employees or students or retaliation against those who report incidents of unlawful behavior or those who cooperate in the investigation of such complaints.

Reporting Sexual Misconduct

If you believe you have been subjected to gender-based misconduct (sexual harassment, sexual violence, gender discrimination, stalking, exploitation), please contact our Title IX Coordinator, at (617) 521-2768.

Students Reporting Discrimination or Retaliation

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

For reporting a web/online accessibility barrier, please use [this form](#). We are committed to making our programs and activities accessible to all individuals.

Bias Response Protocol

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

As of August 23, 2022, Simmons has implemented an Inclusion and Belonging Restoration Protocol. Please [see here](#) for more information.

For Advice on Whom to Contact about a Concern or Incident

If you are unsure of where to bring complaints or concerns about unlawful discrimination, harassment or retaliation, please contact the Office of the General Counsel: 617-521-2276.

Grievance Procedure

A written complaint alleging violation of the federal sex and disability discrimination laws and/or regulations (34 C.F.R. Part 106 and 45 C.F.R. Part 86, implementing Title IX; 34 C.F.R. Part 104 and 45 C.F.R. Part 84, implementing Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act; and 45 C.F.R. Part 83, implementing Section 855 of the Public Health Service Act) may be filed with the University by any student, employee, or other aggrieved person. Complaints under this procedure will not be processed from applicants for employment or admission. A University employee's allegation that they have been subjected to discrimination prohibited by the regulations will be processed under the relevant employee grievance procedure. Inquiries concerning the application of non-discrimination policies may also be directed to the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights at the U. S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 330 C Street, Washington, DC 20202.

Procedures for other Student Grievances and Complaints

SSW students have the right to grieve actions or decisions, which can include but are not limited to grieving a final grade, appealing a dismissal decision, appealing a Student Code of Conduct or Academic Integrity finding.

Specifically, students can:

- Grieve a final course grade by following the grade appeal process. (See BSW Handbook section on Grade Appeal of Final Course Grade.)
- Appeal a dismissal from the BSW program by writing a letter of appeal to the Director of Student Support Services (CSSPP) that addresses allowable appeal criteria. (See BSW Handbook section on Appeal of Dismissal.)
- Appeal a sanction pertaining to an Academic Integrity finding. (See Academic Integrity Guidebook.)

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

- A student discussing the issue with the faculty member.
- If discussing it with the faculty person is not appropriate to the situation, or the student is dissatisfied with the outcome of the discussion, the concern can be brought to the Director of Student Support Services (CSSPP).

If discussion with the Director of Student Support Services (CSSPP) is not appropriate to the situation or, if the student is dissatisfied with the outcome, the issue can be brought to the Director of the SSW.

Professional Standards and Professional Performance

NASW Code of Ethics

Students are expected to abide by the NASW Code of Ethics and Simmons School of Social Work Standards for Professional Practice. Students are expected to adhere to the **NASW Code of Ethics** and established norms, values, and behavior both during their practicum placement

and while earning their Social Work degree. The NASW Code of Ethics outlines behaviors and responsibilities expected of all professional social workers. The NASW considers students to be professional social workers from the time they enroll into a social work program. Students should obtain a copy of the NASW code of ethics and become familiar with its contents.

Social Work students are also expected to be familiar with and abide by the **Simmons School of Social Work Standards of Professional Practice** (See Appendix I).

Simmons SSW Standards for Professional Practice

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

Simmons University Student Code of Conduct

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

Simmons University Academic Integrity Policy

Simmons University is a community that values respect, integrity, inclusion, honesty, and trust. Each Simmons student is responsible for presenting work of their own creation, and refraining from representing others' work as their own. Cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and other forms of academic dishonesty are considered a breach of the Honor Code. Definitions of Academic Integrity violations, procedures for reporting violations can be found in the Simmons University Academic Integrity Guidebook.

The School of Social Work retains the ability to refer academic and practicum concerns to the University as well when deemed appropriate.

These professional standards guide all aspects of the BSW Program and students are expected to abide by them. Student adherence to these professional expectations is continuously evaluated by faculty members in the context of BSW courses, through feedback from practicum instructors, and within the ongoing relationship between students and academic advisors.

Failure to meet generally accepted standards for professional conduct, ethics and personal integrity requisite for professional social work practice, as outlined in the NASW Code of Ethics and the SSW Social Work Standards for Professional Practice Education, may constitute grounds for a Level Three Review or a University academic or conduct referral.

Student Orientation and Advising

At CompleteDegree@Simmons BSW Program, students are assigned to a professional academic advisor in the University's Advising Center, as well as a Student Success Specialist. Students utilize this advisor as their main point of contact on academic matters and their faculty advisor in the academic discipline after they have declared their major. Advising Center staff members are experts on University-wide requirements and expectations and are able to assist students in navigating their academic choices, especially in the early terms of their college experience when many students are unsure of their major. These advisors are also well versed in BSW Program requirements and expectations and work closely and collaboratively with BSW faculty members in guiding students who express interest in the BSW Program to ensure that foundational course and service-learning requirements are fulfilled. Throughout their first year at Simmons, all BSW students also have access to BSW faculty members for consultation and assistance pertaining to their academic and professional pathways. Upon designating a social work major, students in the BSW Program are also provided with a copy of this *CompleteDegree BSW Program Student Handbook* which outlines Program policies and expectations.

BSW students are assigned an academic advisor who is a member of the BSW faculty. It is the role of this faculty member to act as a mentor, orienting the student to the Program and the social work profession and guiding the student throughout their time at the University. The faculty member is a resource who is available to discuss student academic and career goals, select courses appropriate for each term, guide service-learning and practicum placement choices, and assist with personal and academic challenges and difficulties. Students and advisors can meet on a regular basis throughout each term to discuss student needs and concerns and to ensure that students understand Program policies and expectations and are moving forward in mastery of the Program core competencies. Where the full-time BSW faculty members are also the instructors for most Program courses, students and advisors often see one another in the classroom where discussion and consultation on advising issues can also take place. In addition, advisors are available for consultation via Zoom, telephone and email whenever special concerns or questions arise.

The Advising Objectives are:

1. To orient and involve the student in the BSW Program;

2. To assist the student in meeting requirements and expectations of the Program;
3. To assist the student in choosing academic courses needed to progress through the Program and relevant to their areas of interest and professional goals;
4. To assist the student in developing self-knowledge and self-evaluation in relation to their potential and motivation for the practicum of social work;
5. To acquaint the student with the service-learning and practicum experience settings available to the Program and the possible learning experiences the student can expect to find in each setting;
6. To assist and advise the student on long-term educational and professional career opportunities;
7. To discuss strengths and challenges and to evaluate the student's progress in the holistic educational experience;
8. To assist the student, who either decides to leave the Program or who may be encouraged or required to leave the Program, to make the necessary adjustment into their newly chosen area of study.

BSW Program Admission

In accordance with its mission and goals, the Simmons University BSW Program aims to attract, retain, educate, and train undergraduate students who will go on to become competent, ethical generalist practitioners and strong representatives of the University and the Social Work profession. Where the BSW Program is both an academic and a professional training program, it is critically important that students admitted into the Program demonstrate not only the foundational academic ability to successfully engage in the demands of social work courses and practicum placements, but a commitment to the fundamental values and ideals of the profession, and the ability to engage professionally and ethically in work with clients. The Simmons University BSW Program's criteria and procedures for admission address each of these requirements.

Criteria and Procedures for Admission into the BSW Program

Students may designate a social work major at the time they are accepted at Simmons University or at any time during their first or second terms. During this time, they are considered "pre-BSW" students and are expected to complete foundational Program courses and service-learning requirements and engage in BSW Program activities. This pre-BSW period is intended to allow students an opportunity to test out their interest in a career in social work and ability to be successful in the Program, given its significant demands and expectations. Students are not formally accepted into the BSW Program until this pre-BSW period of foundational course and service-learning work is completed and faculty members have gotten to know each student and assess their readiness to move on in the Program. By this time, students have also had an opportunity to consider their own educational and professional intentions and goals.

Simmons students in the CompleteDegree five-term track BSW program submit a formal application no later than the end of SW 351 Social Work Practice I: Introduction to Generalist Practice. In this way, most students accepted into the BSW Program in a given time period will begin their practicum placement preparation together as a cohort.

In order to be eligible to formally apply to the Simmons BSW Program, students must have:

- ✓ earned at least 60 credits
- ✓ completed at least 40 hours of required service-learning (or equivalent)
- ✓ achieved an overall GPA of at least 2.0
- ✓ passed all required pre-major social work courses with a C or better

The *Application for Admission to the BSW Program* involves submission of the following:

1. Application Cover Sheet
2. Statement signed by the student, indicating their willingness to adhere to the *Simmons Honor Code*, *NASW Code of Ethics*, and *SSW Standards for Professional Practice Education* (Self Awareness, Openness and Willingness to Learn, Interpersonal Skills, Communication Skills, Critical Thinking Skills, Presentation of Self, and Self Care) as part of their participation in the BSW Program

In keeping with the BSW Program's goals and intentions, the procedures and criteria for admission are intended to allow faculty members to fairly assess each student's ability to be successful in the Program and in their career. Students admitted into the BSW Program will have demonstrated the ability to meet and maintain a strong grade point average in all their courses, excellence in social work courses, strong performance in their service-learning work, and a sense of maturity and professionalism through adherence to the *NASW Code of Ethics* and the *SSW Standards for Professional Practice Education*.

All student applications for the CompleteDegree BSW Program are reviewed by the Program Director in consultation with the Director of Practicum Education and BSW Faculty. In making these decisions, the Program Director reviews all materials submitted by each student including the student's performance in courses, completion of service-learning work, participation in BSW Program initiatives and activities, ongoing participation in the advising process, and demonstrated ability to abide by the *NASW Code of Ethics* and *SSW Standards for Professional Practice Education*. Considering all factors relevant to the student's admission, the BSW Program Director arrives at a decision, taking the student's demonstration of and potential for growth over time into account. Once a decision is made, the student is informed in writing, by the Program Director.

Although it is expected that most students formally applying to the BSW Program will be accepted without conditions, there may be occasions when the faculty determines that acceptance is contingent upon the student's completion of additional course work, service-learning/practicum activities, or other requirements. For example, this may occur when a student has shown good potential for a career in social work, but has not demonstrated the level

of academic mastery or completed the required service-learning hours for unqualified acceptance into the Program. In these instances, the faculty may decide that the student, upon completion of specified additional course or service-learning/practicum work, would be adequately prepared to continue their social work studies and practicum placements, and acceptance into the Program would be granted. In any circumstance where there are contingencies associated with admission, the student will be informed, in writing, by the BSW Program Director of the conditions associated with their admission.

In rare circumstances, there may be a student whose application to the BSW Program is denied, due to their inability to meet the basic requirements for admission. In this situation, the student will be informed of the decision in writing. In addition, the BSW Program Director and the student's academic advisor will be available to discuss the decision with the student and to help them in re-evaluating their academic and career goals, and alternative options for majors and graduation.

Course & Classroom Responsibilities

By enrolling in a course, the student enters a reciprocal agreement with the instructor: 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, attend all classes, and devote sufficient out-of-class time to course material, so that what happens in class reaches a mind prepared for that day's lecture, lab, or discussion. Though there are no hard-and-fast rules about how much course work outside of class should be anticipated, three hours spent out of class for every hour in class is a reasonable expectation. That means, roughly, that a standard four-credit course would carry 12 hours of outside work per week.

Attendance and punctuality are expected at all classes. While there are no established penalties for absences, the instructor may take attendance into account when evaluating the student's achievement. The responsibility for explaining an absence rests with the individual student, but they must understand that the instructor is not obligated to grant requests for make-up or supplementary work regardless of the reason for absence.

While recognizing that some of a student's time might need to be set aside for outside employment and other non-academic obligations, University obligations, especially class attendance, must take precedence over other commitments. In addition, attendance may be required at class meetings, lectures, presentations, events, or examinations scheduled at times outside the regular class hours.

For many students, substantial outside employment may be necessary. On occasion, this may conflict with the demands of one's academic responsibilities. The University encourages a student caught between the demands of schoolwork and employment to consult with a financial aid officer.

Academic and Performance Standards for BSW Students

Students admitted into the BSW Program at Simmons University are expected to uphold the academic and professional standards of the Program and are regularly evaluated throughout their academic careers.

In order to be retained in the BSW Program, students must meet the following standards:

Academic Standards:

- ✓ Maintain an overall grade point average of at least 2.0
- ✓ Earn a minimum grade of C in all required Social Work Core Courses

Professional Standards:

- ✓ Complete all required service-learning and practicum placement hours
- ✓ Receive a satisfactory assessment from the instructor of Junior Virtual Practicum Experience Seminar and in each term of the senior year practicum placements
- ✓ Adhere to the [College Code of Conduct](#)
- ✓ Adhere to the [NASW Code of Ethics](#)
- ✓ Adhere to the [SSW Standards for Professional Practice Education](#)

Social Work Student Assessment & Grading Policy

The core competencies and related behaviors are comprised of four distinct dimensions: knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive/affective process (See Figure 1). Assessment of student learning will address each of these four dimensions, as well as students' ability to synthesize these elements into a coherent style of practice. Assessment of specific competencies occur in each Social Work course; this includes practicum placements as a component of the practicum seminar sequence. Assessment is based upon the student's ability to *demonstrate* achievement of expected benchmarks for each competency. While effort and intent are important elements in preparing for and shaping performance, these alone do not demonstrate ability, readiness for practice, or professional competence. The CSWE Educational Policies and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) require that students be evaluated upon their demonstration of the professional competencies and related behaviors. This means that students are assessed upon their ability to *apply* concepts, theories, and skills in an ethical and coherent manner using evidence-based social work models of practice. This includes a student's ability to reflect upon, process, and articulate the internal processes which shape their practice and response(s) to experiences in coursework and practicum placements. Assessments of student performance may include exams, simulations, role plays, practice in practicum placement, presentations, and written work.

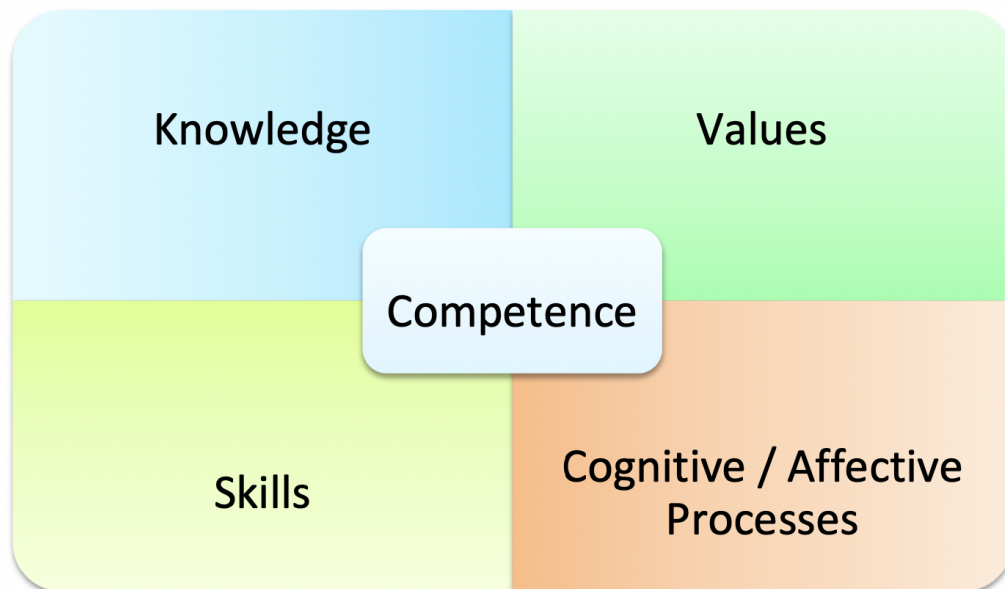


Figure 1: Four dimensions of competent social work practice.

Expectations for individual BSW courses, including assessment and grading procedures, are addressed in the first several pages of each BSW course syllabus and are verbally reviewed with students at the beginning of the semester. Students are offered several opportunities in each course to demonstrate their mastery of course objectives that are linked to Program's core competencies and related behaviors through a variety of assignments including homework, exams, papers, presentations, simulations, and participation in class discussion and group work. Students are graded using both formative and summative measures, aimed at assessing student achievement and determining the overall course grade.

In order to maintain high professional and academic standards, it is BSW Program policy that students graduating from Simmons University with a BSW will have earned a 2.0 cumulative average in their overall college coursework and at least a C in each of their required social work courses.

Submission of Assignments for Grading

Written assignments are one method of assessing student learning and performance in coursework. It is the student's responsibility to ensure their written work is submitted in a form which is readable by the instructor. In the case of electronic submissions (e.g., Moodle, TurnItIn, email), students must follow the guidelines provided by the instructor. The following general guidelines apply for electronic submissions:

Submission Type	Accessibility
Electronic document <i>Example: WORD document, pdf</i>	These files must open in Microsoft WORD or Adobe Acrobat Reader
Weblinks <i>Example: YouTube video</i>	Link must be accurate and working
Shared document or file <i>Example: Google Doc</i>	The student must ensure the instructor and any peer reviewers have permission to view the file

If the material(s) are not accessible to the instructor, then the assignment does not count as submitted. Applicable late penalties will accrue until the materials are correctly submitted and so the instructor may access them.

Student Admission to Senior Practicum Placement

The Simmons University BSW Program takes great care to only admit into senior year practicum placement those students who have demonstrated their readiness for the responsibilities and challenges that senior year practicum placement entails. The ability to enter the senior year practicum placement component is a privilege that is earned by strong foundational course work, including practice-related courses, and satisfactory completion of required service-learning and junior year virtual practicum placement work. Students who move on to the senior year practicum placement have demonstrated maturity, integrity, and professionalism, and a commitment to a career in social work by being actively involved in their learning and growth.

The end of the junior year marks a critical point in the academic journey of a Simmons University BSW student. It is at this point that students must demonstrate readiness to enter the Program's senior year practice sequence and their senior practicum placement. SW 345X Junior Virtual Practicum Experience Seminar provides an important opportunity for students to develop their practice competencies. It is also a vehicle through which student performance is evaluated and readiness for the senior year practicum placement is assessed. Students in their Junior Virtual Practicum Experience Seminar are not expected to have mastered the Program's practice behaviors and core competencies. Rather, it is anticipated that they will demonstrate the knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive/affective processes that are articulated in the practice behaviors and core competencies at a beginning, foundational level that readies them for the rigors of their 425-hour senior year practicum placement. At the completion of Junior Virtual Practicum Experience Seminar, a formal evaluation takes place and includes the following components:

1. Student Assessment by Instructor
2. Student Self-Evaluation
3. Performance in Junior Virtual Practicum Experience Seminar
4. Practicum Evaluation Conference
5. Performance in Social Work coursework

In order to be admitted into their senior year practicum placement, students must achieve a final rating of Satisfactory on the junior year virtual practicum assessment, completed by the instructor at the end of the course. In addition to the assessment completed by the practicum supervisor, each student completes a Student Self-Evaluation. The Student Self-Evaluation is a self-assessment instrument which allows each student to rate their own junior year virtual practicum placement performance, using the practice behaviors and core competencies, describe specific learning experiences related to each competency, and reflect upon their professional development. The reflective component requires students to describe in detail and reflect upon their Junior Virtual Practicum Experience, articulate their perceived areas of strength and need, and assess their readiness for senior year practicum placement. Each of these documents are reviewed by the BSW program faculty and then discussed with the student in a formal Practicum Evaluation Conference with the CompleteDegree BSW Director of Practicum Education; additional faculty may attend based upon availability and need. During the Practicum Evaluation Conference, the student's performance in the Junior Virtual Practicum Experience (as objectively assessed by the instructor and subjectively assessed by the student) are reviewed and the student's readiness to enter the senior year practicum placement is discussed and determined.

Assessment of Student Performance in Practicum Education

Evaluation of Senior BSW students in practicum education occurs during each semester that the student is in a placement. This evaluation involves an end-of-semester formal assessment of the student's practicum performance by the agency practicum supervisor, as well as the assessment of the student's PracticumSeminar assignments. These sources of information are reviewed with the student and are used to determine a student's readiness to move on in the practicum placement, a final course grade, and the student's progress toward earning a BSW.

Policies and Procedures for Terminating a Practicum Placement

Identifying Concerns in Practicum Placement

There may be occasions when students have concerns about aspects of their placement (e.g. amount of supervision, agency policies, appropriateness of practice-related activities and responsibilities, and/or workload). Alternately, agencies at times may identify concerns about a student's functioning or performance in the agency. When problems arise, it is always important for the student and/or practicum instructor to contact the Director of Practicum Education early on. The Director of Practicum Education is available for consultation regarding the problem(s), helping to identify the issues and suggesting steps towards a resolution. If problems persist despite the efforts of the practicum instructor, student, and Director of Practicum Education to resolve them, a determination will be made regarding termination of the Practicum Placement. In the event that a practicum placement is terminated, a formal review of academic performance and conduct issues may be initiated, as described in this handbook.

Problems in the Practicum Placement Agency

If there are problems in the agency that affect student learning (e.g. not enough tasks, insufficient supervision), the Director of Practicum Education should be notified. The Director of Practicum Education discusses the difficulties with all involved parties, makes an assessment and collaboratively helps to develop a plan. The agency training director and/or BSW Program Director may join in this process. Plans to improve the situation are always the first step and the Director of Practicum will remain involved to monitor progress towards changes that are being initiated. If, for example, supervision time has not been adequate, the School would work with the agency to address this problem. If the agency is unable to provide a sufficient level of training and supervision, the student will be placed in a new setting.

Concerns Regarding Student Performance and Conduct in Practicum Placement

The School of Social Work requests that the practicum instructor notify the Director of Practicum Education promptly regarding any concerns about the student's performance or conduct in the agency. If needed, a meeting of appropriate parties (Director of Practicum Education, student, practicum instructor and, at times, the BSW Program Director) will be held to assess and locate areas of difficulty. Plans are generally made to alleviate or resolve problems by carefully designed and monitored strategies. The outcome of a meeting will include a plan of action, written by the Director of Practicum Education, with copies distributed to the student and practicum instructor. Goals set forth will be reviewed periodically. The Director of Practicum and practicum instructor remain in close communication with each other and the student throughout this process. The Director of Practicum Education and BSW Program Director may decide, in consultation with the SSW Director, to meet with the student to address the concerns raised. The Director of Practicum Education, or other faculty teaching the practicum seminar course, will issue an academic warning to address and document the problems highlighted. The instructor develops a revised learning plan as described above.

Some incidents of student conduct related to practicum may warrant a review of academic performance and conduct issues (described in this handbook), as well as immediate termination from a practicum placement.

Termination of Practicum Placement

If attempts to resolve the problem fail, a student may be asked to leave the placement. In the case of this occurrence, at the discretion of the Director of Practicum Education, there are a few possible outcomes:

1. The student may be placed in a different agency and be asked to extend the required hours.
2. The student may receive an "F" in their current practicum seminar course.
3. The student may be reviewed for academic performance or conduct issues, as described in this handbook.

Student Guidelines for Change of Practicum Placement

On rare occasions, a student may request a change of placement. Such requests must be accompanied with a clearly articulated rationale, in writing, and submitted to the CompleteDegree BSW Program Director of Practicum Education. Students may not terminate their practicum placement without first speaking with the Director of Practicum Education and engaging in a problem resolution process, which would include a meeting with all relevant school and agency representatives to develop an action plan. The process for reviewing a student-initiated request for change of practicum placement is described below:

1. Submit a written request for a change of placement to the Director of CompleteDegree BSW Practicum Education. This document must include a clear description of the student's concerns, attempts to resolve the issue (if appropriate), and rationale for terminating the placement.
2. Director of Practicum Education discusses, assesses, and evaluates the issues and recommends a plan.
3. Director of Practicum Education discusses issues with practicum instructor and agency training administrators with the hope that the problem(s) can be resolved.
4. If placement in a different setting is deemed necessary, it is expected that an appropriate termination process will be planned for all clients and that a professional way of bringing closure with the agency will be followed. A student who prematurely ends a practicum placement, without approval of the Director of CompleteDegree BSW Practicum Education, may receive a formal academic warning, a failing grade in the current practicum seminar, and/or be reviewed for academic performance and conduct issues.

All placement disruptions will be assessed to determine the extent to which the need for a replacement is due to agency or supervision issues and/or student performance issues. If it is determined that the student will return to practicum, the Practicum Department and placement specialists will do their best to locate an alternate placement as soon as possible. Please note, the ability to secure an alternate placement is impacted by many factors, most importantly the availability of an appropriate match for the student. Therefore, this process may take some time. Students replaced for any reason must expect to complete a minimum of 3 additional weeks in the practicum to account for time needed to orient to a new placement setting and develop a new Learning Plan and caseload. This is in addition to time owed to complete the total number of Practicum hours. There may be circumstances that necessitate a student add even more time, either to address the student's learning needs, meet agency needs, and/or to allow appropriate time for the practicum supervisor to make an informed assessment of the student's competence in practice. Students should be aware that any placement disruption or replacement could have the effect of delaying their graduation date. Alternate graduation dates include August, October and January.

Final Course Grade Appeal

Grade appeals can occur for the following two reasons: computational error and arbitrariness or capriciousness. If a student believes that they have the basis to appeal a final grade, they should follow the grade appeal procedures and deadlines outlined below. A grade appeal must be

initiated no later than one week after the posting of the grade. A student cannot appeal a grade after they have graduated.

Explanation of Grounds for Appeal

1. Computational error.

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

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

2. Arbitrariness or capriciousness.

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

Grade Appeal Procedures and Deadlines

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

If the student believes they have received an unfair course grade, they shall attempt to resolve the matter informally with the faculty member who assigned the grade. The faculty member shall meet with the student to consider their reasons for believing the final grade to be unfair. If the faculty member does not believe there is merit for a grade change, they notify the student. The student may then proceed to the second step below. If the faculty member believes there is reason to change the grade, they complete the "Change of Grade" form, including a clear explanation of the reason for the change that is consistent with the terms of this grade appeal policy. The faculty member submits the "Change of Grade" form to the SSW Director's Office and the Registrar's office.

Deadline: The student must make their appeal to the faculty member no later than one week of the posting of the grade. If the grade is not to be changed, the faculty member will notify the student of their decision within five days of their meeting. If the grade is to be changed, the faculty member submits the "Change of Grade" form to the SSW Director and Registrar's office within five days of their meeting.

2. Second Step: Informal Resolution with the BSW Program Director

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

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

3. Third Step: SSW Director Review

If, after seeking informal resolution with the BSW Program Director, the student continues to believe that the assigned grade is unfair and wishes to pursue the appeal, the student may submit a formal written appeal and "Grade Appeal" form to the SSW Director. The written statement includes the student's reasons for appealing the grade and any supporting materials. The SSW Director or their designee shall meet, separately and/or together, with the student and the faculty member and may ask for a written statement from the faculty member. Additionally, the SSW Director or their designee shall meet with the BSW Program Director. If the SSW Director's review determines that there is no merit to the grade appeal, the Director informs the student that the final grade stands. The grade appeal process ends here.

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

4. Fourth Step: Faculty Grade Appeal Committee.

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

Deadlines: The Faculty Grade Appeal Committee has twenty days to convene and deliberate. The Committee notifies the student, faculty member, and Dean's Office of its decision within days of its decision.

Please note that although individual assignments become part of a course grade appeal, only the final grade in a course is open to appeal under this process. As a result of the grade appeal process, the final grade may be raised, lowered, or stay the same. The grade appeal process will not attempt to grade or re-grade individual assignments or aspects of course work other than the final grade. Similarly, no new or revised course work can be requested by the student or accepted by the faculty member as part of a grade appeal process. Records of all graded material, including examinations, papers, homework, etc. shall be maintained by individual faculty members until the end of the grade appeal procedure period. Students are strongly encouraged to maintain copies of all work submitted to the faculty member as well as graded work returned to the student by the faculty member.

Non-Matriculation Grade Policy

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

Extensions for Assignments

Students are expected to complete coursework assignments on time; instructors should clearly articulate policies regarding extensions on the course syllabus and their grading policy for work/assignments passed in after the deadline. A student must request an extension prior to the due date of the assignment. If granted, the instructor will establish a revised date for submission of work. Course syllabi stipulate any penalties students will accrue for submitting work after a due date. Unless the extension of time is sought as a religious accommodation or as a component of an accommodation through the Office of Accessibility Services (which must be granted), the decision to grant an extension or to accept work late rests in the discretion of the faculty member.

Instructors may not grant an extension for final assignments unless they are granting an Incomplete for the course because other work has not been completed.

Professional Performance and Academic Reviews (Level 1, 2, 3)

The SSW is committed to supporting student success and the achievement of academic and practice proficiency while also upholding professional standards and the expectations set forth by the University-wide code of conduct. A three-level review process is used to address student **academic performance** and **professional conduct** issues. The specific level of review depends upon the severity of the concern. Information shared by the student with faculty and school administrators related to the concerns being reviewed will not be treated as confidential if the information shared raises concerns about professional performance or student safety. Students are advised that faculty or administrators will share pertinent information with each other on a

need to know basis for the purpose of identifying student issues and enhancing problem solving about those issues and concerns. A student will be reviewed at the level (1, 2 or 3) that is appropriate to the concern.

Reviews of students can occur for the following circumstances:

- To identify need for academic support
- To determine a remediation plan for a [University Code of Conduct](#) or [Academic Integrity Violation](#)
- If a student fails to meet or maintain academic requirements
- If a student is terminated from a practicum placement or internship either by the placement or by SSW administrators due to performance issues
- If a student is rejected by three agencies during practicum placement process in one term
- If a student exhibits behavior judged by faculty to be in violation of professional ethics and/or Simmons University and SSW policies
- If a student exhibits consistent pattern of unprofessional behavior in the classroom or in practicum placements

Three Levels of Review

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

Level 1 Review

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

- Discuss those concerns directly with the student and seek to work with the student to resolve the difficulties.
- Apprise the student's advisor (BSW program). Summarize plans and or recommendations in an email to the student

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

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

The outcome of many Level 1 consultations is that, together, the faculty and 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 Review

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

A Level 2 review is a meeting that usually involves the student and the student's advisor and can also include the appropriate faculty member, and appropriate program administrator. If a problem arises in an external training site, the external supervisor and liaison can also be included.

The student will be informed of the Level 2 review by their advisor or their instructor. In preparation for the Level 2 meeting, the advisor or program director will gather information about the nature of the concern. The meeting will be used to discuss the concerns and to develop a Corrective Plan to address that concern. If the outcome of the meeting is that no further action is needed, the meeting will be documented to the student and the program director 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 her behavior and/or seek appropriate help or academic assistance. All parties to the Level 2 meeting, including the student, shall receive a copy of the Corrective Plan.

The purpose of a Level 2 review is to assist students in fully understanding and addressing the academic or professional conduct concerns that are negatively impacting their success in the program. Examples of issues that may lead to a Level 2 review are repeated attendance problems, poor grades, general difficulties meeting the standards and expectations of coursework or practicum placement.

The administrator overseeing the Level 2 review may consult with the BSW Program Director (BSW Program), MSW Director (MSW Program) or SSW Director 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 Review

A Level 3 review involves the SSW Director and the BSW Program Director, members of the Academic Standards Committee and the student. Generally, the Level 3 review is called when serious or complex problematic patterns are identified with students or when the issues are serious enough to require formal consultation with faculty and the student. A student can be referred for a Level 3 review by an SSW faculty member or administrator. A Social Work Professional Conduct referral is submitted to the BSW Program Director and SSW Director. The BSW Program Director and SSW Director may also consult with the Simmons University Assistant Dean of Community Standards (see next section). The SSW Director, in consultation

with the committee, decides whether Level 3 meeting shall be convened. The SSW Director informs the Simmons University Dean for Student Life about the decision to convene a Level 3 review.

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

When a Level 3 review is called, the Director of the SSW will convene a meeting with the appropriate faculty and the student. Information will be provided by the student and by appropriate faculty to determine the nature of the problem and to identify alternatives for its remediation.

The student will be notified in writing of the concerns and meeting date by the SSW Director, with sufficient time to prepare for and attend the meeting. If a student chooses not to attend, a finding can be made with the available information in the student's absence.

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

The SSW 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 referral to the Simmons University Associate Dean for Student Life
- Dismiss student from the program
- Counsel student to change majors (for undergraduates)

In any Level 3 review, there must be clear, concise documentation of the problem areas as well as verification that the concerns have been discussed with the student and attempted to be ameliorated when appropriate. Students must be notified of the decision in 10 business days of the review. Decisions which result in dismissal can be appealed following the SSW's dismissal appeal policy. Other appeals must be made within 5 days of the student's receipt of the committee's decision. Appeals should be made in writing to the BSW Director (BSW Program) or MSW Director (MSW Program) 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 and/or Consultation with the Assistant Dean of Community Standards

In some instances, depending on the nature of the problem, the Simmons Assistant Dean of Community Standards 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 disciplinary action is appropriate, the student will be notified. Situations that may result in referral include: academic dishonesty, plagiarism, cheating, gender-based misconduct (which includes unlawful harassment), damage or destruction of University property, and conduct that endangers the health or safety of any University student, employee, campus visitor or member of the Simmons community and conduct that disrupts the functioning of the University as an open, educational community.

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

Program Progression

A student is allowed to repeat a maximum of two courses in which they earned a grade below a “C”. The same course cannot be taken more than twice. Students who have utilized their repeat allowances and then go on to earn a grade below a “C” will be dismissed from the Program. Students must complete all pre-major courses prior to enrolling in SW 351 Social Work Practice I: Introduction to Generalist Practice.

GPA required for graduation

BSW majors with a cumulative grade point average below 2.0, and/or earning a final course grade below a “C” in any BSW Core Course will not be eligible to earn a Bachelor of Social Work degree.

Eligibility for Advanced Standing Status in an MSW Program

Students considering applying for *Advanced Standing* status in an MSW Program should familiarize themselves with the specific criteria for admission to the program(s) of their choice. Criteria may vary by MSW program. Generally, a BSW student must earn a grade of B or better in each Social Work Core Course and have positive recommendations from BSW faculty and practicum supervisors to qualify for Advanced Standing.

Policies and Procedures for Terminating a Student’s Enrollment in the BSW Program

The Simmons University BSW Program is committed to ensuring that only those students who have demonstrated proficiency in the CSWE Core Competencies through coursework and

practicum education enter the practicum of professional Social Work. This serves as a protection for clients and the Social Work profession and is a necessary component of the provision of ethical Social Work education. It is sometimes necessary to advise a student to reconsider their preferences for social work, to change their major, and to work with the Student Life Office, and Associate Dean for Student Life to evaluate additional options. Decisions to terminate a student from the BSW Program are made jointly among Program faculty, in consultation with the SSW Director. The basis for this decision will be based upon one or more of the following:

1. Failure to maintain the academic performance standards of the Program: BSW students must maintain at least a 2.0 overall grade point average, and achieve a C or better in each required Social Work core course (including courses with a SOCI designation);
2. Failure in Practicum Placement: BSW students must receive a satisfactory grade from their instructor for SW 345X Junior Virtual Practicum Experience Seminar course and a satisfactory *Student Practicum Assessment* from their practicum supervisor at the end of each term of the senior year placement;
3. Violation of the [Simmons University Code of Conduct](#), including cheating or plagiarism;
4. Failure to uphold professional Social Work values and ethics as articulated in the [NASW Code of Ethics](#);
5. Failure to uphold the [SSW Standards for Professional Practice Education](#) (Self Awareness, Openness and Willingness to Learn, Interpersonal Skills, Communication Skills, Critical Thinking Skills, Presentation of Self, and Self Care).

Notification of Dismissal

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

Appeal of Dismissal

The student may appeal the decision, in writing, to the Director of the School of Social Work. Written appeal must be received within 7 days of the date of the letter from the SSW Director. This appeal does not constitute a new review process. Rather, it is a review of the original record of the dismissal. An appeal may be sought on the following three grounds: (1) on a claim of error in the dismissal procedure, or (2) on a claim of new evidence or information material to the case that was not available at the time of the dismissal, or (3) on a claim of substantive error arising from misinterpretation of evidence used in the dismissal process. The decision of the Director is final.

Student Leadership

Simmons University and the School of Social Work are committed to student participation and encourage students to exercise their rights and responsibilities in formulating and modifying policies that affect academic and student affairs. As a demonstration of this commitment, the University, SSW, and BSW Program have implemented policies and procedures to maximize student participation. At the University level, undergraduate students of all majors are

encouraged to seek election to the Student Government Association (SGA) and various SGA committees so that they may have a direct link to influencing University-wide policies that affect academics and co-curricular life. The University also has over 50 student-led organizations that provide robust opportunities for students to hold leadership positions, contribute to the campus community, and shape decision making in all areas of life at Simmons. In addition, it is especially important to the School of Social Work that students have a real voice in decisions that impact them. The BSW program has created a BSW Committee that is composed of faculty and student representation. Representatives on this committee have the opportunity to meet several times per year with faculty advisors. They have the opportunity to share common BSW student priorities, needs, and concerns and have a voice in shaping and modifying policies and decisions related to the curriculum and student affairs. In this way, the BSW Program supports and ensures that students are able to exercise their rights and responsibilities in shaping Program development and change. Students are encouraged to participate in this valuable opportunity.

Social Work Liaison/Club

As part of a rich campus community, BSW students are provided with many opportunities to organize in their interests, including participation in an array of student programs and organizations. The greatest opportunity that the BSW Program provides for students to organize in their interests is through participation in the Social Work Liaison/Club. Specifically intended for social work majors and those interested in exploring social work careers, this club is run by elected student officers and advised by the BSW Program Director.

BSW Social Work Awards

Spirit of Social Work Award

This award recognizes a BSW student who exemplifies generalist social work practice. The honoree consistently demonstrates an understanding of, and ability to apply, social work practice across different venues. The honoree approaches their work with individuals, groups, families, communities and organizations with cultural humility, and the perspective that each system is the expert in their own experience and needs. As a generalist social worker, the student integrates policy, advocacy, and the tenets of social justice throughout their work with these systems.

The Community Service Leadership Award

This award recognizes distinctive service to the Simmons and/or their local community by a BSW student or group of students. This service extends beyond the expectations of service learning or practicum in the BSW Program. Nominations may be submitted by students, faculty, or staff.

The Excellence in Practicum Education Award

This award recognizes a BSW student who has excelled in their senior year practicum placement by showing a dedication to the profession's Core Competencies, with a particular focus on professionalism, ethical practice, and a deep commitment to empowering and centralizing the voices and perspectives of client systems. The student demonstrates an advanced ability to utilize practice skills to effectively engage with clients, assess needs and strengths, intervene, and evaluate their work.

Phi Alpha National Social Work Honor Society

The Simmons University BSW Program established a chapter of the Phi Alpha Honor Society in January 2013. A national honor society, the purpose of Phi Alpha is to create a sense of community among social work students, reward those who have attained excellence in scholarship and achievement, and create a space where students can share social justice goals and ideals. At Simmons, students invited into Phi Alpha membership have met the following criteria:

- Declared a social work major
- Achieved junior status (at least 60 credits)
- Earned at least 16 credits in social work courses
- Achieved an overall GPA of at least 3.0 (on a 4.0) scale
- Achieved a GPA of at least 3.5 in required social work courses

Students who meet the criteria for membership laid out by both the BSW program and the Phi Alpha National Social Work Honor Society, are inducted into Phi Alpha during a formal ceremony. Once inducted, members are expected to maintain high standards of academic excellence and professional conduct, participate fully in membership meetings and events, and work to foster a sense of community and meaningful engagement among the membership. Members are encouraged to run for election for one of the three Phi Alpha officer positions, President, Vice President, or Secretary/Treasurer. Elected officers and members, in consultation with the chapter advisor, are expected to plan and facilitate at least one service project per academic year, in addition to other social activities of their choosing.

Appendix 1: Standards for Professional Practice Simmons School of Social Work

Introduction

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

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

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

To participate in a degree program, you are expected to satisfy program requirements, including these professional standards, with or without accommodations. If you seek reasonable accommodations for disabilities, you must contact the Simmons Office of Accessibility Services.

This office will determine your eligibility for accommodations and recommend accommodations and/or services.

Appendix 2: Professional Standards

1. Self-Awareness

Expectations to meet the standard:

- a. Accurately assess your own strengths and limitations and display a willingness to examine and change behaviors that interfere with your work in practicum placement, in the classroom, on campus, and in the larger community
- b. Actively examine your own biases
- c. Seek supervision and use constructive feedback to inform practice
- d. Take responsibility for your own actions and consider the impact of these actions on others
- e. Demonstrate a willingness to examine and assess the relationship between your own personal values/socialization and their alignment with expected professional ethics
- f. Reconcile conflicts between your personal values and those of the profession, as required by the *NASW Code of Ethics*

2. Communication

Expectations to meet the standard:

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

3. Electronic Communication and use of Social Media

Expectations to meet the standard:

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

4. Openness and willingness to learn; flexibility and adaptability

Expectations to meet the standard:

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

5. Physical and Cognitive Ability, Critical Thinking

Expectations to meet the standard:

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

6. Emotional and Mental Stability, and stress management standard

Expectations to meet the standard:

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

7. Professional Values and Ethics Standard:

Expectations to meet the standards:

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

8. Respect for Diversity and Social Justice

Expectations to meet the standards:

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

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

*Acknowledgements to UNC Chapel Hill School of Social Work Technical Standards
Document Approved by SSW Faculty May 10, 2018.*