



Simmons UNIVERSITY



Department of Behavior Analysis

Campus Student Policy Handbook & Program Information

2025-2026

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HANDBOOK OVERVIEW

The Department of Behavior Analysis Student Policy Handbook and Program Information is the student's guide to the Department of Behavior Analysis Master's of Science (MS) and Educational Specialist (EdS) degree programs.

Students are responsible for knowing the policies and procedures in this document, as well as Simmons School of Sciences and Health Professions (SSHP) policies and the Policies of Simmons University, which are available on the Simmons University Website.

The information in this document is subject to change. The Simmons SSHP and Department of Behavior Analysis reserve the right to change any policy or procedure without notice.

School of Sciences and Health Professions

In the School of Sciences and Health Professions, you'll discover the intersection of health, life, nature, and science. We cultivate innovative practices and procedures to advance scientific knowledge, address complex problems, ask critical questions, reduce disparities, and improve individual and collective health.

School of Sciences and Health Professions Values

What we share...

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging

We are dedicated to the power and potential of creating a future where all voices are valued and incorporated.

Justice

We nurture and cultivate a commitment to reversing systemic racism and inequalities in our disciplines and practice; we believe in the power of being accomplices toward the creation of a more just world.

Collaboration

We are intentional and collaborative in framing our work towards the betterment of the human condition.



Purpose

We promote and embody reflection, continuous learning, adaptability, and growth in ourselves, our professions, and society.

Community

We foster and prioritize community building and a supportive culture to ensure the success of our individual and collective endeavors.

Simmons University

Aligned fully with our home institution, we impassion our students to pursue their life's work; endeavor to improve the human condition and improve society; form lasting and meaningful relationships through teaching and learning; and welcome all genuine forms of intellectual curiosity, imagination, and self-expression.

DEPARTMENT OF BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS SIMMONS PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

With over 27 years of excellence in behavior analytic education, the Department of Behavior Analysis at Simmons University is a Leader in the field, and prepares students to become scientist-practitioners who are skillfully trained in research and clinical practice. We offer three degree programs, including a campus-based accredited Master of Science (MS) or Education Specialist (EdS) degree program, an online MS degree program, and an online Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree program. Our campus-based MS in Behavior Analysis program is one of the few master's programs across the world that is accredited by the Association for Behavior Analysis International (ABAI), and was the first master's program in New England to be accredited by ABAI. Our campus-based MS degree program meets the Behavior Analyst Certification Board® degree and coursework requirements to apply for the Board Certified Behavior Analyst® (BCBA®) exam under Pathway 1 (accredited programs).

Leadership and Faculty

- Paul Geisler, Dean of the School of Sciences and Health Professions; Professor
- Gretchen Dittrich, Department Chair and Program Director, Associate Professor
- Ronald Allen, Director of the Doctoral Program, Professor of Practice
- Marcella Hangen, Assistant Professor of Practice (BehaviorAnalysis@Simmons)
- Laura Hanratty, Associate Professor of Practice; Practicum Director (Campus); Interim Practicum Director (BehaviorAnalysis@Simmons)
- Christina King, Associate Professor of Practice (BehaviorAnalysis@Simmons)
- Melissa Olive, Professor of Practice; BehaviorAnalysis@Simmons Program Director
- Emily Perry, Assistant Professor of Practice

ADMISSIONS

Program Admission Criteria

- Applicants must hold a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university, achieving at least a B (3.0) average; it is desirable that applicants have a balanced liberal arts education on the undergraduate level with evidence of successful completion of natural science courses.
- Relevant experience through summer employment, volunteer work during/after college, and/or full-time employment in the human services field after college graduation is required.
- Applicants must show a commitment to the science and profession of behavior analysis and be willing to uphold the values of the Behavior Analyst Certification Board® Ethics Code for Behavior Analysts, evidenced in the applicant's Statement of Professional and Educational Intent, and the applicant's letters of recommendation.
- No standardized test scores are required.
- An interview is not required; however, under certain circumstances the school may require an interview with the Director of Admission after application review.
- No course credit is given for life or work experience.

Process and Procedure for Evaluating Applicants

Application files are read by the Office of Graduate Admissions. Each applicant's file is reviewed against the

criteria for admissions. Based on the evaluation of application materials, an applicant is accepted or rejected. On occasion, an applicant may be offered conditional admission.

Other Admissions Requirements

Final Transcripts

Accepted applicants who are in the process of completing a degree program must send a transcript with final grades in order for the acceptance to be finalized.

Transfer Credit

Students seeking transfer course credit from another institution must submit a Transfer Credit Interest form for consideration during the admissions process. At the Chair's discretion, up to two courses (or 8 credits) may be accepted for transfer credit provided the course work was completed at an ABAI-accredited program and/or under an ABAI-verified course sequence, and the course content is comparable to content addressed in courses offered by the program. If transfer credit is approved, it is the student's responsibility to review BACB® standards for course transfer credit. *Note: Acceptance by the Department of Behavior Analysis of course work for transfer does not guarantee that the BACB® will accept the transferred content.*

Requests are approved only if the coursework meets the current curricular requirements of the program, and submitting a request does not guarantee the credits will be accepted for transfer.

Transfer Credit Policies:

1. Credit is not granted for more than the face-value credit assigned by the host institution.
2. Quarter-hour credits transfer at two-thirds of a semester hour.
3. No credit is given for courses completed toward another degree.
4. Students must have received a B (84%) or better in the course to receive transfer credit.
5. An official transcript must accompany the transfer credit form.
6. A copy of the syllabus must accompany the transfer credit form.
7. No credit is given for courses taken more than 5 years before the date of the application for transfer credit.
8. Students may not replace core curriculum with alternative electives taken at other institutions.
9. Transfer credit requests must be made prior to registration for the student's first term.

ADVISING

Academic Advising

The Academic Advisor provides guidance in regards to concerns or conflicts that might arise with course sequence grids (plans of study), academic progress, and leave(s) of absences. In addition, the Academic Advisor might assist with clarification of your learning styles and needs, along with guidance with materials found in any of the student handbooks. The Academic Advisor serves as an advocate during a student's tenure as a graduate student and helps to connect students with academic and other supports and resources.

Worksite Placement and Supervised Fieldwork Advising

To prepare for Practicum, students must begin working at a behavior analytic agency providing

behavior analytic services to clients for whom behavior analysis is appropriate by the end of the first semester. Students are required to report their worksite details to the program each term. Students who need support in finding an appropriate worksite may request support from the department; the department will help students find an appropriate agency within their geographical location; however, students are responsible for interviewing and securing employment. Students who have not secured an appropriate worksite by the end of the first term must take a leave of absence to secure an appropriate worksite before continuing in the program.

Students who have questions regarding their worksite and BCBA® eligibility requirements may request an advising meeting with the department Worksite Support Faculty or Program Director. Students will receive access to a shared drive with resources and tools to help them navigate the BCBA® requirements for Supervised Fieldwork.

Practicum Advising

Students are responsible for proposing an appropriate Practicum site prior to the onset of the first Practicum course. Students must secure a practicum site that satisfies the program standards and the ABAI accreditation standards for experiential learning. The Practicum site and site supervisors are vetted and approved by the Practicum Director, at the discretion of the Practicum Director, before a student may begin Practicum. Prior to registering for Practicum courses, students complete a 0-credit Practicum Orientation course prior to the first term of Practicum (typically during term 3 of the program). The Orientation helps prepare students for the Practicum experience and familiarizes students with program requirements. Once enrolled in experiential learning courses, the Practicum Director will also serve as the primary point of contact regarding any student progress concerns or issues that may arise at the approved Practicum site.

PROGRAM POLICIES AND ATTENDANCE

Communication

Students must use Simmons email for all communication, and all communications from the University, Department, and Program will be sent via Simmons email. Students must check their Simmons email daily at minimum.

Students must be respectful in all communications with faculty, staff, peers, research, and clinical staff. They must be open to feedback and demonstrate a willingness to incorporate feedback into their academic, research, and clinical work. Students must be able to communicate and exchange information clearly, effectively, accurately, and in a timely manner with faculty, staff, and colleagues. Students must be able to offer care and communicate effectively in diverse settings and with all patient, participant, and client populations.

Professional Behavior

As in all professional environments, the following behaviors demonstrate commitment to professional standards of conduct. The following is a summary of expected professional behavior for all students:

- On time for scheduled meetings, class sessions, and clinical or research sessions
- Complete assignments on time
- Set goals for academic work and research
- Actively seek feedback and assistance
- Receptive to feedback and incorporate feedback into future work
- Communicate with all constituents in a respectful manner
- Identify learning needs around client/participant issues and self-educate via professional literature, electronic sources, and peer-reviewed journals
- Listen actively
- Be courteous during interactions with others
- Be aware of and sensitive to cultural differences
- Collaborate with and respect the work of classmates, faculty, colleagues, and stakeholders
- Maintain confidentiality of protected private information, including clinical and research data
- Research policies and procedures relevant to the clinical and research setting
- Meet legal and ethical requirements to provide care and services
- Identify steps around processing an ethical issue
- Maintain organization in order to complete assignments in a timely manner
- Be self-accountable for learning
- Adhere to the BACB® [Ethics Code](#) for Behavior Analysts

Students must demonstrate good judgment and complete all responsibilities related to the research sessions and/or clinical care of their participants, clients, stakeholders, and their families. They must be able to maintain professional relationships that are mature, sensitive, and effective under highly stressful circumstances in environments that can change rapidly in unpredictable and significant ways. Students must be able to demonstrate empathy and caring for others and act with integrity in all situations.

Social Media Use

Professional values, ethical standards, and adherence to confidentiality and HIPAA requirements extend to all forms of social media. **Violations in relation to these professional standards and behaviors may result in dismissal from the program.**

Student Work

Definition:

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

Ownership and Use:

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

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

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

To ensure that Simmons University continues to respect the learner's rights, Simmons University may not and will not accept information from learners under an obligation of confidentiality. Types of information that could be subject to confidentiality requirements include information obtained from an employer, unpatented inventions and information obtained pursuant to a nondisclosure agreement. Information that is subject to an obligation of confidentiality may not be used in any part of the Simmons University learning process, including but not limited to web postings, materials prepared for a course, dissertation work and/or comprehensive examinations.

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

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

Copyright

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

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

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

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

Classroom Attendance

Attendance is mandatory for all weeks of each course. Each course is aligned to the content hours required by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board® (BACB®), thus absences may result in a student not meeting these required content hours to be eligible to sit for the BCBA® exam, and therefore, not being eligible to sit for the exam, regardless of course performance. In Practicum courses, the course includes experiential learning hours required by the Association for Behavior Analysis International (ABAI), which are requirements for degree completion; thus absences may result in a student not meeting these required content hours to be eligible to graduate.

Regardless of your reason for absence, if you are unable to attend the class session, you will forfeit your weekly participation points (if applicable). Tardiness to the class session or leaving the class session early will result in a reduction of points from your weekly participation grade. ***Three hours of missed instructional time due to tardiness or leaving early counts as one absence.*** Tardiness or leaving early may be excused or unexcused, based on the criteria outlined below.

Excused Absences

Although attendance is mandatory we recognize that unexpected circumstances arise, and that students might not be able to attend all required sessions, and may require an excused absence. **Students will be allowed one faculty approved excused absence per course.** The student is responsible for notifying the appropriate instructor(s) of a potential absence at the beginning of the semester for events already scheduled, and not less than a week before a potential missed absence once a semester begins outside of an event of illness, death, or other emergent crises.

- **Acceptable Excused Absences Examples** (*instructors may require written verification)
 - documented illness*
 - deaths in the immediate family and other documented crises*
 - call to active military duty*
 - court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty and subpoenas)*
 - religious observance
 - special requirements of other courses currently enrolled in by the student*
 - consideration will also be given to students whose dependent children experience serious illness*
- **Absences that will not be considered "Excused"**
 - missing class without clear communication with the instructor(s) and approval for an excused absence
 - employment schedules are typically not an excused absence outside of extreme circumstances and supporting documentation*
 - athletic training/practice schedules
 - vacation

The student will be responsible for the material covered in the missed session, meeting with the instructor, and completing all academic work within a period of time and in a manner deemed appropriate by the instructor.

One unexcused absence from class will result in the instructor submitting an academic warning. Two or more absences may result in course failure. Two academic warnings at any point during the degree completion timeline will result in academic probation; three academic warnings may result in program dismissal.

Note: attendance differs from participation; expectations for each are described in the syllabus.

Instructors are permitted to and will consider individual class attendance when determining a student's final grade for a course. **In addition to lowering a grade, excessive absences may justify a failing grade for the entire course.** Although excessive absence is typically defined as missing more than 3.5 hours (1 class) individual instructors are the final arbiter for each course.

Religious Observance/Student Absence

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

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

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

Students in Practicum should consult the Practicum Director or relevant syllabus for procedures and policies governing the request of release time for religious holidays.

Students who need to be excused from Practicum site attendance due to religious observance should make arrangements with their site prior to the anticipated absence.

Questions about absences for religious observances should be directed to the Associate Dean or the Office of Student Life.

Classroom Etiquette

All students are expected to demonstrate professional behavior and mutual respect for teachers and colleagues. Some general guidelines:

- **Respect confidentiality.** To facilitate shared communication in a teaching and learning environment and to respect privacy, refrain from disclosing private information.
- **Adhere to standards of behavior.** Be polite, sincere, and respectful of others. Avoid gossiping about others.
- **Show respect for your colleagues and for dialogue among classmates.**
- **Share expert knowledge.** Be willing to share your expertise.

Practicum Coursework and Thesis Research

Practicum courses include a thesis research project, and experiential learning hours required by the Association for Behavior Analysis International (ABAI). These are degree requirements; students must complete a minimum of 45 supervised Practicum hours (i.e., Experiential Learning hours) per Practicum course, for a minimum total of 90 supervised Practicum hours across Practicum I and Practicum II. Additionally, students must complete and successfully defend a thesis research project to be eligible to graduate. Please see additional requirements for the Practicum experiential learning and thesis research project in the Practicum course syllabi. Prior to registering for Practicum courses, students complete a 0-credit Practicum Orientation course during term 3 of the program. The Orientation helps prepare students for the Practicum experience and familiarizes students with program requirements.

Quizzes and Exams

Each course has specific quiz/exam formats, policies, and procedures. Some courses also utilize proctoring software. Students are responsible for abiding by quiz and exam standards as described in course syllabi or as instructed by course faculty. For courses with technology-enabled proctored exams, the faculty review exam reports once the exam has closed. Students should review the University's academic integrity policy prior to taking any quizzes or exams.

GRADING AND DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

The Behavior Analysis Master's degree requires 40 credit hours, consisting of 32 credit hours of didactic courses and 8 credit hours of Practicum experiential learning courses. Additionally, students must complete a minimum of 90 supervised experiential learning hours during their Practicum courses. Students must complete and successfully defend a thesis research project.

Students are expected to maintain a B (3.0) grade average throughout their program. Courses are graded using the A-F grading system. The numerical equivalent for each grade is as follows:

Grading Scale

Letter Grade	GPA equivalent	Point scale equivalent	Letter Grade	GPA equivalent	Point scale equivalent
A	4.0	100-94	C	2.00	76-74
A-	3.67	93-90	C-	1.67	73-70

B+	3.33	89-87	D+	1.33	69-67
B	3.0	86-84	D	1	66-64
B-	2.67	83-80	D-	.67	63-60
C+	2.33	79-77	F	0	59 or below

Grade Appeal of Final Course Grade

Students have the right to be awarded grades that are calculated correctly and assigned based on a fair evaluation of work. Students have the right to understand how a grade was calculated and why the faculty member evaluated the work as they did.

The University is guided by the principles of academic freedom and respects the integrity, expertise, and professional judgment of its faculty in the evaluation of students' academic work. Faculty members' right and obligation to evaluate students' academic work and determine student grades are fundamental to this principle.

Faculty members have the right to set grading standards in their courses and the responsibility to advise students of their grading standards at the outset of the course; to use their best judgment in applying those standards; and to assign grades based on methods of evaluation they deem appropriate so long as those methods are not arbitrary or capricious or the product of prejudice or discriminatory animus.

Simmons faculty are strongly encouraged to advise students in writing of their grading methods and standards at the beginning of each term in each course they teach, preferably as part of the course syllabus. Students are encouraged to raise questions about how the instructor will calculate the final grade at the beginning of the semester.

Discussion with Instructor

Students should talk to their instructor about any grade concerns or questions *before* initiating the Grade Appeal Process described below. At this stage, the course lead may also be consulted in addition to the section instructor.

Within **one week** of the posting of the course grade, students should meet (or speak on the phone/email) with their instructor and express their concerns about their course grade, providing information the faculty member would need to reconsider the grade. If the faculty member agrees to change a grade, they will complete the Registrar's Change of Grade form. If, after the discussion, the faculty member decides to let the grade stand, a student may wish to initiate a formal grade appeal.

Basis of Grade Appeal

Simmons formal grade appeal process addresses situations in which a student believes a grade has been assigned for one of the following reasons:

- Computational error;
- Arbitrariness or capriciousness (including where grading criteria have changed after assignment submission and without explanation);
- Unlawful discrimination.

If a student believes that one of these reasons applies to a grade they have received, they should follow the procedures and timelines outlined below.

Only the final grade in a course is subject to this process. As a result of the process, the final grade may be raised, lowered, or stay the same. No new or revised course work can be requested by the student or accepted by the faculty member as part of the grade appeal process.

Grade Appeal Process

Overview

As noted above, before initiating a formal grade appeal, students are encouraged to meet with their faculty member and discuss their concern and/or ask questions about the grade. Grade concerns are frequently resolved through these “informal” (i.e., before formal appeal) discussions, most often when there is a computational error.

A grade appeal has three levels:

- Level 1: Appeal to the Behavior Analysis Local Appeals Committee
- Level 2: Appeal to the Graduate Program Appeals Committee
- Level 3: Appeal to the Dean

Level 1: Appeal to the Behavior Analysis Local Appeals Committee

As previously noted, students must first consult with the course instructor within 7 days of the final grade being posted. If, after seeking informal resolution with the instructor regarding a final grade issued, the student continues to believe that the assigned grade is unfair and wishes to pursue the appeal, the student must submit a formal written letter indicating their intent to appeal to the respective academic unit head (i.e., the Program Director or Department Chair); the letter must be submitted within 14 days of the final grade being posted. If the student fails to submit the letter within the specified time, the final grade will stand—not subject to an appeal. Note: Only the final course grade may be appealed; the student must indicate under which category they are appealing (i.e., grade calculation error, arbitrariness/capriciousness, or unlawful discrimination). The academic unit head will review the intent to appeal, and provide the student with the electronic appeal form (i.e., this form), which will be provided to the Behavior Analysis Local Appeals committee. The e-form represents the formal written process and initiates the appeal process beyond the Academic Unit level.

Once submitted, the Behavior Analysis Local Appeals Committee Chair (i.e., the Department Chair)

will review the submitted form and may ask for a written (electronic) statement from the faculty member and/or academic unit to complete the data gathering process. If needed, the Chair or their designate shall meet with the appealing student, the faculty member and/or the Academic unit head to gather additional information, and/or clarity.

The Behavior Analysis Local Appeals Committee will convene to review the information and issue a decision. If the Behavior Analysis Local Appeals Committee's review of all submitted materials determines that there is merit to the grade appeal, the grade change will be processed with the Registrar's Office to reflect the revised grade (Note: Final grades may increase, decrease, or remain the same). If the Behavior Analysis Local Appeals Committee's review of all submitted materials determines that there is no merit to the grade appeal, the final grade will stand, as it was originally filed by the corresponding faculty member. However, the student can then choose to appeal that decision, by bringing their appeal to the full SSHP Graduate Program Appeals Committee for a Level 2 appeal.

The student will be notified, in writing, of the Behavior Analysis Local Appeals Committee's decision, within 10 university business days of the meeting at which the appeal is reviewed. Notification of the decision will also be sent to the Dean and corresponding Department Chair or Program Director.

Level 2: Appeal to the SSHP Graduate Program Appeals Committee

The Graduate Program Appeals Committee (GPAC) considers formal, **2nd Level** requests from students in the Behavior Analysis, Physical Therapy, Public Health or Nutrition Departments who are seeking an exception to academic program or SSHP policies relating to academic or professional performance or program progress and retention. The general nature of appeals relevant for this committee regard those pertaining to academic performance or policy; **this committee does not deal with issues related to Academic Integrity.**

A student with an unsatisfactory 1st level appeal (at programmatic or departmental level) may seek an exception to an academic policy, or appeal a programmatic or departmental decision by filing a 2nd level appeal if:

- There is new information that could influence the outcome,
- The student views the original, first level decision as a disproportionate response for the circumstance,
- The student believes that the policies were administered unfairly by the program or department.

Process & Timeline for filing and processing an Academic Appeal with the GPAC:

1. **Level II** consists of a SSHP GPAC Secondary Appeal Committee Hearing
 - a. The student contacts the SSHP GPAC Chairperson to initiate a Level 2 academic appeal (Note: This is the Department Chair for Behavior Analysis cases) within 5 business days of receiving the Level 1 decision.

- b. Chair person arranges a meeting with the three remaining members of SSH APC, the Secondary Appeal Committee
 - i. The 3-member GPAC consists of three full committee representatives from the three programs **not** involving the student; which *might* mean that the Committee Chair serves on the 3 member committee.
- c. The 3-member Secondary Appeal Committee reviews the student's case to decide if it merits a full committee hearing and adjudication process.
 - i. If extenuating circumstances/new evidence, etc. merit a full Level 2 appeal, then the student is instructed to complete the formal Appeal process, fill out and submit required paperwork or forms, and a full SSHP GPAC Hearing is set up to hear and vote on the students overall appeal case.
 1. If the student Appeal is successful at full committee level, then the corresponding program works with the student to make the appropriate adjustments and changes.
 2. If the student Appeal is unsuccessful, the student can then proceed to Level 3 Appeal status.
 - ii. If a full Level 2 appeal is not merited, then the full SSHP GPAC will not hear the case and the original decision stands.
 1. Students in this case have one last appeal chance, to be heard by the SSHP Dean, for a Level 3 Appeal.
- d. The student will be notified of the Level 2 decision in writing and via Simmons' Secure File Transfer of the Committee's decision, within 10 business/university days of the meetings at which the appeal is heard. Notification of the final decision will also be sent to the Registrar's Office, SSHP Dean, and the relevant Department Chair or Program Director.
 - i. If the GPAC grants an exception to a policy, the matter will be referred (back) to the department responsible for determining how to implement the decision (i.e., the BALAC).

Level 3: Appeal to the SSHP Dean

Level III is the final appeal step, and occurs at the SSHP Dean's Level

Students must file a Level 3 Appeal by emailing the Dean of SSHP within 5 business/university days of being sent the Level 2 decision for the SSHP Dean to hear the student appeal and make a final decision. The Dean will contact the student to arrange a meeting before making their final and binding decision. The Dean will be the final arbiter.

The student will be notified of Level 3 decisions in writing and via Simmons' Secure File Transfer of the Committee's decision, within 10 business/university days of the meetings at which the appeal is heard. Notification of the final decision will also be sent to the Registrar's Office, SSHP Dean, and the relevant Department Chair.

If the Dean grants an exception to a policy, the matter will be referred (back) to the department responsible for determining how to implement the decision.

Recommendations During the Appeal Process:

- Students are strongly encouraged to consult with their advisor in preparing their appeal form and/or planning for their appearance in front of the Graduate Program Appeals Committee.
- The student's appeal will be placed for consideration at the next available BALAC or GPAC meeting. The Committee will make reasonable efforts to consider appeals in a timely manner.
- Prior to meeting with the student, the committee may choose to consult with faculty or others involved in the case.
- The student will be invited to appear at the Graduate Program Appeals Committee meeting, where their case is being heard. Students are allowed to have their faculty advisor attend the meeting with them if they choose.
- The grade appeal policy respects the privacy of students and faculty. All parties are responsible for maintaining confidentiality.

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. **No assignments or quizzes will be accepted after the due date** unless the instructor has granted permission for an extension before the due date. An extension must be requested by a student prior to the due date of the assignment and a revised date for submission of work must be approved by the instructor. A student who submits work late even with the instructor's permission, may nonetheless receive a lesser grade from the instructor to reflect the missed deadline. Unless the extension of time is sought as a religious accommodation (which must be granted), the decision to grant an extension or to accept work late rests in the discretion of the faculty member.

No extensions can be granted for final assignments except in the case of an instructor-approved full-course incomplete (Note: Students must meet eligibility criteria for an incomplete).

REGISTRATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Plan of Study

When registering for classes each term, students must follow the course sequence grid outlined in their Plan of Study provided to them by their Academic Advisor. In the Behavior Analysis program, courses are tiered. Students must complete all courses in one tier prior to progressing to the next tier.

It is the student's responsibility to be certain they are in the proper courses. If a student is in a course for which they have not met the prerequisites, they may be asked to drop the course or take the course again at a later date.

Registration

The Academic Advisor will be available to meet with new students to help them register for their first semester courses on Workday Student. Students will register themselves for courses for all subsequent semesters via Workday Student, the Simmons University online registration system. Students must register for courses within their registration window; the registration window is listed in Workday Student, and students will also receive an email from their Academic Advisor reminding them of the registration period. Students who do not register by the deadline may not be able to take the scheduled course, and may be required to wait until the course is offered a subsequent term. Students should consult with their Academic Advisor about course selections and course sequencing, the Simmons Service Desk (617-521-2222) for Workday Student technical issues, and the Registrar's Office (617-521-2111 or workday@simmons.edu) regarding Workday Student registration issues. Other questions should be directed to their Academic Advisor.

Waitlist Policy

Students may be placed on the Workday automatic waitlist system for a closed/full class. Regardless of the waitlist, students will always be enrolled in the courses they are scheduled to take, according to their plan of study. Students must contact their Academic Advisor for support if they are placed on a waitlist.

Audits

Auditing classes is not permitted in Behavior Analysis courses.

Add/Drop

Prior to the start of classes and until the end of the second week of the term, students may add or drop by e-mailing the Office of the Registrar. Students are responsible for informing the instructor and for making up any missed course work in an added class. For courses dropped after week two, students must complete and submit a Course Withdrawal Form. Students may not add a class after week two. Courses dropped after the second week of the term will appear on the student's transcript with a grade of "W."

Students who change their schedule by dropping or adding a course should consult with their Academic Advisor to ensure that they will continue to meet degree and graduation requirements. Students should also consult with the Student Financial Services to be fully apprised of the impact of course changes on their financial aid.

Withdrawal from a Course

Student transcripts will show a "W" grade for "withdrawn" for any courses withdrawn from the beginning of the third week and up to the end of the 8th week. No withdrawals are permitted after week 8; the instructor will record the grade the student has earned. Students are not allowed to withdraw from the same course more than once. Students must meet with their Academic Advisor and must submit the relevant form before withdrawing from a course.

Incomplete Policy

Required coursework must ordinarily be completed by the last day of final examinations. In extenuating circumstances, students may request an "incomplete" if they have completed at least 75% of the course before the qualifying event. Students must request an incomplete speaking with their course instructor and obtaining initial approval from the course instructor and the Chair of the department. The student will complete the Petition for Incomplete Grade form, which will be reviewed by the Dean. The form must be completed, approved, and submitted in order for the student to be officially granted an incomplete grade in the course. Once the form is submitted, a grade of "I" will be entered by the Office of the Registrar. It is the student's

responsibility to monitor their progress and complete all work so that the instructor can submit a final grade by the date set. Students can only extend their final grade with an incomplete until one week before the beginning of the following term; however, this deadline may be extended by the Department Chair in extenuating circumstances. If a student does not submit required work by the new due date, the instructor will grade the student based on work done up until that point. The grade earned will be assigned accordingly on the due date listed. Grades not submitted by the instructor to the Office of the Registrar on the approved deadline will automatically be converted to a grade of "F."

Incompletes for Practicum may be extended beyond the typical deadline with Practicum Director and Department Chair approval.

Course Cancellation Policy

Simmons University reserves the right to cancel any courses without prior notification. Every effort will be made to provide information on cancellations in a timely manner. In the event of cancellation, Simmons University will refund tuition charges.

Students with Disabilities

Simmons University is committed to the full participation of all students in its programs and activities. Although Simmons University has no academic program specifically designed for students with disabilities who are otherwise qualified for admission, Simmons University is committed to providing support services and reasonable accommodations when requested by students who qualify for them.

The University adheres to the philosophy and the standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. These laws mandate equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities in educational programs. All educational programs at Simmons University are dedicated to the principle of nondiscrimination. This includes a commitment not to discriminate against students with disabilities who are otherwise qualified to be enrolled as graduate students.

The Office of Accessibility Services (OAS) is available to students who need to utilize academic accommodations for their courses and/or Practicum due to a documented diagnosis/disability. Any student who believes their diagnosis/disability will impact their ability to fulfill the Essential Functions of the graduate program should contact the OAS.

To request a reasonable accommodation(s), students must first register with OAS. Following a review of the registration information and submitted documentation, the OAS provides eligible students with an Academic Accommodations Authorization document to share with each instructor that confirms the student's authorized accommodations. For more information about the services and accommodations available through the OAS, please visit simmons.edu/access, call 617-521-2658, or email access@simmons.edu.

It is the student's responsibility to register with OAS as soon as possible to ensure that requested accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion. Please visit the OAS website at <http://www.simmons.edu/student-life/student-services/disability-services> for additional information regarding disability services. Students can seek assistance in contacting OAS by meeting with their instructor or the Chair of the department. Students are encouraged to inquire about these services if they are interested in learning more about accessing services.

LEAVES OF ABSENCE AND WITHDRAWALS FROM SIMMONS

Voluntary Leave of Absence

From time to time, students may take a voluntary leave of absence from their studies as a result of medical, mental health, or other personal matters that compromise their ability to continue in an academic program. A student may apply for a Leave of Absence (LOA) at any time after enrolling at the University. The maximum duration of a leave of absence is one year. To request a Leave of Absence, students should contact their Academic Advisor and consult the process listed on the [Registrar's web page](#).

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

Involuntary Leave of Absence

Simmons is committed to the safety and well-being of its community members and to the integrity of our living and learning environment. Our goals therefore are to maintain the health and safety of every member of the Simmons community and to enable all enrolled students to participate fully in the life of the community.

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

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

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

In circumstances when the student has not met direct threat/inpatient criteria, the Associate Dean of Students or designee may, based on observable/recorded behavior, still require a student to undergo an individualized psychological and/or medical assessment to make an informed decision regarding the student's ability to meet the academic, social, and emotional requirements of a Simmons student. This evaluation can be conducted by a member of the Simmons clinical staff, or by an external health care provider who is treating the student. The student will be required to sign a release that gives permission to the designated clinical personnel at Simmons to speak with her/his external evaluating health care provider and to allow for the release of any relevant medical reports as part of the assessment. If the student chooses not to engage in the

process above, then she/he will be required to take an involuntary leave of absence and if applicable, an immediate removal from the residence halls.

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

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

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

Process for Returning to Simmons After an Involuntary Leave

Simmons University students who have been placed on an Involuntary Leave of Absence will be required to undergo an individualized assessment to be cleared to return to Simmons, prior to their return to the University. They are also required to sign an authorization form that enables the hospital, treatment facility, and/or all pertinent external healthcare providers to release information necessary for the review process. The review process will involve an interview with the appropriately licensed Simmons clinical staff member as well as the Dean of Students or designee.

Following the interview with the clinical staff, a recommendation based on the student's report, his/ her treatment history, information gathered from the external treatment facility, and/or a student's personal health care provider, will be shared with the Dean of Students or designee regarding the student's readiness to return. Then, on a case-by-case basis the Dean of Students or designee will make a determination if the student shall be permitted to return to the Simmons community. If it is determined that the student can return, the student will meet with the Dean of Students or designee to establish a plan to return to the University and identify community resources. The appropriate academic program administrator (Dean, Associate Dean, Department Chair, or Program Director) will be consulted for purposes of establishing the plan to return to active student status. As a condition of continued enrollment and, if applicable, as a condition of re-admittance to the residence halls, the following criteria must be met:

1. The consulting health care provider must find that the student has maintained a significant level of physical, mental, or emotional stability along with the skill set necessary to successfully engage in the student's academic program, including clinical and professional internships, field placements, teaching practica and all activities associated with being a Simmons student.
2. The student and the consulting Simmons clinical staff member, in conjunction with all relevant external health care providers, must establish and agree upon a plan for continued managed care after returning to the University.
3. The student must commit to follow the recommended and established treatment plan.

If, after reviewing all pertinent information, the Dean of Students or designee denies a student's request to return from an involuntary leave of absence, or the student disagrees with the conditions established as part of the return process, the student can appeal the decision in writing to the Dean of Students.

Withdrawal from the Program

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

Mode of Delivery Transfer Policy

Simmons University offers both on-campus and online Master's degree options in Behavior Analysis. However, these programs are independent of each other (i.e., they are two different degree programs). Students admitted into the online program who are interested in transferring to the on-campus program (or vice versa) must first consult with the Program Director and/or Behavior Analysis Department Chair for more information. Transferring between an online and on-campus degree program may extend the duration of the program degree completion, as well as impact the availability of clinical sites and federal financial aid eligibility, and affect student scholarships, as some scholarships do not transfer across programs. Student requests for a transfer across either program option must be approved by both respective Program Directors and the Department Chair. **Student requests to transfer are not guaranteed.** More than one transfer between mode of delivery during the duration of the program of study is not permitted.

Students may only request a transfer if they are in good standing in their current program, and meet eligibility criteria to transfer. Students who are on probation or students who have been dismissed and reinstated may not request a mode of delivery transfer.

All transfer requests must be made at least **20 weeks prior** to the term in which the student wishes to transition. Note: Students should contact Student Financial Services prior to initiating a transfer request, to determine whether the transfer will affect financial aid and/or scholarships. The transfer request process is as follows:

1. The student meets with the Program Director to discuss their wish to transfer. The student must indicate the reason for the request.
2. The Program Director will discuss whether the student meets eligibility criteria to transfer, and whether they are in good standing in the program.
3. If the student meets criteria and is in good standing, the Program Director will provide the student with the Mode of Delivery Transfer Request Form, which must be completed 20 weeks prior to the transfer date.
4. If the request is approved, the student will receive a new plan of study, which will reflect the sequence of remaining courses required, and the degree completion timeline (Note: The degree completion timeline may be different, due to the transfer). The student will complete the remaining steps to transfer, including onboarding and registration tasks.

5. If the request is denied, the student may appeal the decision to the Behavior Analysis Local Appeals Committee. The student should submit a formal letter of appeal to the Department Chair, under the category of Program Policy Appeal.

Program Completion Policy

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

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS FOR FEDERAL FINANCIAL AID

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

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

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

TUITION REFUNDS

Tuition Refund Schedule

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

SIMMONS UNIVERSITY HONOR CODE AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

All students are expected to adhere to the Honor System of Simmons University.

Honor System

A vital part of the collegiate experience at Simmons University, the Honor System, embodies values of

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

Honor Code of Responsibility

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

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

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

Academic Integrity

All students at Simmons University are expected to be honest and forthright in their academic pursuits. Each student is expected to read, understand, and observe the policies outlined in this handbook as well as all other policies that govern students enrolled at Simmons University, including those found in the [Simmons University Student Handbook](#), the Simmons University Student Code of Conduct, the [Academic Integrity Policy](#), as well as any professional standards and guidelines. Ignorance and/or failure to have read this information is not considered an excuse for not understanding or knowing about these policies. Each student is expected to assume guardianship for the Honor System.

Honor Code Violations

The majority of academic integrity cases are handled by the faculty and/or academic leadership. All allegations, incidents, and outcomes are reported to the Associate Provost for Curriculum Assessment and Accreditation. Violations of the Simmons University Honor Code, specifically, academic dishonesty, plagiarism, and cheating are reported to the Associate Provost for Curriculum Assessment, and may be further referred to the Academic Integrity Board. Situations involving sexual misconduct, damage or destruction of University property, and conduct that endangers the health or safety of any student, employee, or campus visitor are referred to the Dean of Students.

Any student who violates the standards of the Honor System must accept the consequences of their behavior. Important to the integrity of this system is the pledge of each student not only to observe the Honor System but also to try to ensure that others in the community also act honorably.

Faculty/Administrative Responsibility

At the beginning of every semester, each instructor is expected to define and explain—clearly and carefully—standards of conduct as they relate to cheating and plagiarism in their course. Simmons University expects that instructors will refer explicitly in their syllabus to the Simmons University Honor Code and Academic Integrity Policy, and also formally discuss their expectations and standards around academic integrity and attribution and citation practices in each of their classes. The instructor should also clarify their interpretation of individual work, and the extent to which student collaboration and the use of outside assistance will be permitted on papers, laboratory reports, and in-class or take-home examinations. The instructor will use the Statement on Cheating and Plagiarism as a guide for constructing their definition.

Each instructor is asked to make conditions in the online classroom synchronous sessions conducive to the best possible academic achievement of the students. Instructors should remind students that examinations may not be removed from the assigned examination classroom unless otherwise specified. They should also indicate any time limits that apply as well as the procedure for submitting the examination upon its completion. The instructor should provide specific written instructions as to the use of source materials, time limitations, and the methods of submitting the exam. The instructor should also indicate where and when they can be reached if further clarifications are necessary.

Each administrator is responsible for clarifying policies and procedures with respect to the function of their office in relation to the Honor System.

Statement on Cheating, Plagiarism, and Academic Integrity

Students must adhere to the University Honor Code and the [Academic Integrity Policy](#). Plagiarism (both intentional and unintentional), is not permitted in any course. **Students who submit plagiarized work for any assignment, assessment, or activity will be reviewed for an academic integrity infraction, and subject to sanctions, including failure of the course.**

Students are not permitted to use books, notes, course materials, internet resources, peers, or other resources to complete quizzes, assessments, or exams. **Students who copy content from other sources into their quizzes, exams, or assessments will be reviewed for an academic integrity infraction, and subject to sanctions, including failure of the course.**

All citations for references used in written work and all reference lists must follow the American Psychological Association Manual, 7th Edition (2020). **Failure to cite a reference or follow the APA guidelines will affect your grade, and may meet criteria for an academic integrity violation.** We recommend that students purchase the APA Manual; however, it is also on reserve in the Beatley Library. If you have any questions about what should be cited or how to format the citation, please contact your instructor or the [University Writing Center](#). You can also refer to <https://apastyle.apa.org/products> for additional resources on APA standards.

Cheating and plagiarism are major academic violations of the Honor Code of Responsibility and Academic Integrity Policy. It is the responsibility of the instructor and students in a particular class to clarify specific applications of the Statement on Cheating and Plagiarism. Selling or distributing lecture notes, handouts, readers, or other information provided by an instructor, or using them for commercial purposes without the express written permission of the instructor, is an academic violation and also violates the University's Honor Code.

Cheating is defined as the representation of someone else's work as one's own. A partial list of examples follows:

- Copying another person's test, paper, or report.
- Collaborating, including a) working with another person or persons in execution of a test, report, or paper without authorization to do so; and b) discussing a test, report, or paper.
- Using crib notes, such as referring to notes brought into class for use during an examination without authorization to do so.
- Using books, class notes, or other source material during an exam without authorization to do so.
- Downloading information from the Internet and presenting it as one's own work and/or without proper attribution.
- Committing laboratory violations. Except where collaboration is permitted or special regulations are made by the instructor, all work for which credit is sought must be performed by the individual student. The unauthorized use of old laboratory reports is a violation of the code. Where procedures are not clear, it is the responsibility of the student to confer with their instructor.
- Submitting the same paper, or substantial parts thereof, in more than one course without the knowledge of the professor.
- Committing computer violations. Except where collaboration is permitted or special regulations are made by the instructor, all computer work for which credit is sought must be performed by the individual student. Tampering with or unauthorized reading of files belonging to others are violations of the code. Where procedures are not clear, it is the responsibility of the student to confer with their instructor.
- Violating any other explicit regulation announced by the instructor and/or circulated in writing to each student at the beginning of the semester.

Plagiarizing is defined as intentionally or unintentionally using someone else's words or thoughts without giving proper credit. All work for which a source is not cited is assumed to be the sole product of the author, i.e., the student. This includes handing in as their own work a paper on which they received extensive aid with substance and/or structure. When using material from outside reading, reference material, etc., the student must use proper citation. The use of term papers or other work obtained from commercial or other services is a clear case of plagiarism and is specifically prohibited.

Unauthorized Use of Artificial Intelligence

- Use of artificial intelligence tools for teaching and learning purposes in a Simmons course remains the decision of the particular academic program and instructor. ***Use of artificial intelligence is strictly prohibited in the Behavior Analysis Program.***
- Unauthorized use of artificial intelligence is an academic integrity violation, and its use will be reviewed for the more serious act of cheating.
- Unauthorized use of an artificial intelligence text generator to complete any assignment is an academic integrity violation, and its use will be reviewed for the more serious act of plagiarism.

Academic Integrity Board: Professionalism and Integrity Issues

When a behavior analysis student violates the professionalism and academic integrity policies, the student's case will be processed according to the Academic Integrity Review Process and Guidelines. The majority of academic integrity cases are handled by the faculty and/or academic leadership. All allegations, incidents, and outcomes are reported to the Associate Provost for Curriculum, Assessment, and Accreditation and to the Office of the Provost. When students who are charged with an alleged academic integrity violation receive a final determination (or sanctions) letter concerning the case but decide to disagree with the outcome of their particular case, they have the right to appeal the decision, according to the guidelines provided in their sanctions letter. Questions about the Honor System and Academic Integrity should be sent to the Associate Provost for Curriculum, Assessment, and Accreditation, Office of the Provost, via email: academicintegrity@simmons.edu.

Behavior Analysis Professional Standards

Students are expected to adhere to the [BACB® Ethics Code for Behavior Analysts](#), in their workplace, practicum site, and classroom. The BACB® Ethics Code for Behavior Analysts outlines behaviors and responsibilities expected of behavior analysts. Students are considered behavior analysts in training, and as such are subject to this code of ethical and professional behavior. Students should obtain a copy of the BACB® Ethics Code for Behavior Analysts and become familiar with its contents.

Failure to meet generally accepted standards for professional conduct, ethics, and personal integrity requisite for professional practice, as outlined in the BACB® Ethics Code for Behavior Analysts, may constitute grounds for a Level 3 Review or a referral to the Simmons University Academic Integrity Board and/or Dean of Students, and could result in dismissal or other academic sanctions.

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

The University is committed to supporting student success and the achievement of academic and practice proficiency while also upholding professional standards and the expectations set forth by the University-wide code of conduct. A three-level review process is used to address student academic performance and

professional conduct issues. The specific level of review depends upon the severity of the concern.

Information shared by the student with faculty and school administrators related to the concerns being reviewed will not be treated as confidential if the information shared raises concerns about professional performance or student safety. Students are advised that faculty or administrators will share pertinent information with each other on a need to know basis for the purpose of identifying student issues and enhancing problem solving about those issue and concerns. A student will be reviewed at the level (1, 2 or 3) that is appropriate to the concern.

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

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

The Three Levels of Review

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

Level 1: Student/Instructor Consultation

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

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

If a problem arises in an external practicum site the practicum site supervisor is expected to promptly discuss concerns directly with the student and with the Practicum Director. It is the responsibility of the mentor to apprise the Practicum Director of the concerns.

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

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

Level 2

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

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

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

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

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

Level 3

A Level 3 review involves the Dean (or designee), the Program Director and/or Department Chair, and the student. In some cases, the Dean of Students may be involved in a Level 3 review. Generally, the Level 3 review is called when serious or complex problematic patterns are identified with students or when the issues are serious enough to require formal consultation with faculty and the student. The Dean, in consultation with the committee, decides whether or not a Level 3 meeting shall be convened. The Dean informs the Simmons University Dean of Students about the decision to convene a Level 3 review.

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

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

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

Once an understanding has been reached, the student will be excused from the meeting. Faculty conducting

the Level 3 review will confer and agree on recommendations, which will then be made to the Dean who will implement a course of action based on the recommendations.

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

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

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

Consultation with the Simmons University Dean of Students

In some instances, depending on the nature of the problem, the Simmons University Dean of Students may be consulted to determine whether a Level 3 review or a referral to the Simmons University Dean of Students, and/or Academic Integrity Board is the most appropriate course of action.

After consultation, if it is determined that a referral to the Dean of Students and/or Academic Integrity Board is appropriate, the student will be notified in writing about the nature of the concern and that the referral is taking place. Situations that may result in referral to the Dean of Students and/or Academic Integrity Board include: academic dishonesty, plagiarism, cheating, gender-based misconduct (which includes unlawful harassment), damage or destruction of University property, and conduct that endangers the health or safety of any University student, employee, campus visitor or member of the Simmons community and conduct that disrupts the functioning of the University as an open, educational community.

Cases that are referred directly to the Academic Integrity Board and/or the Dean of Students may be referred back to the Dean for the purpose of developing an implementation plan (Corrective Action Plan) for sanctions that have been determined by the Academic Integrity Board or Dean of Students. The Dean may seek consultation for guidance in the sanctions implementation plan.

Mid-Semester Academic Review

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

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

ACADEMIC STANDING AND DISCIPLINE

Course Grades below a "B"

Any student earning a grade lower than a B in a course is required to have a Level 2 review, no later than the first day of the subsequent term, and is required to retake the class and earn a B or better. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the grade, and the reasons for the low academic performance. A student's failure to attend this meeting will result in the administrative withdrawal of the student's registration. The student is required to repeat the course at their own expense. The student will receive a Custom Plan of Study reflecting the course repeat. In some cases, repeating a course may affect financial aid eligibility in subsequent terms, due to credit load. Course failure may also affect Satisfactory Academic Progress. Students should contact Student Financial Services to discuss the impact on financial aid eligibility and/or scholarships.

When a Student Is Required to Retake a Class

When a student is required to retake a class, both grades remain on the transcript and are accounted for in the GPA. All students are required to earn the requisite number of unique degree credits to graduate. A student is allowed to repeat a maximum of two courses in which they have earned a grade of below a B. The same course cannot be enrolled in more than twice. A student is not permitted to re-submit any work submitted in the prior class. This includes asynchronous work as well as written papers and exams. Students required to retake a class will do so at their own expense.

Academic Warning

Poor academic performance, poor performance in external internships (e.g., practicum), and poor attendance are grounds for a student to be placed on Academic Warning. Students who earn a final course grade below a B will be placed on Academic Warning and receive a formal letter which will be part of the student's academic record. Students who have an unexcused class absence will be placed on Academic Warning and receive a formal letter which will be part of the student's academic record. Students who are on Academic Warning and receive a subsequent Academic Warning will be placed on Academic Probation (2 Academic Warnings) or Program Dismissal (3 or more Academic Warnings).

Academic Probation

Excessive performance concerns are grounds for a student to be placed on academic probation. Students will be placed on academic probation if any of the following criteria are met:

- The student earns two grades below a B
- The student's cumulative GPA is less than 3.0
- The student receives two Academic Warnings

A student on academic probation will have a Level 2 review with the Program Director and their Academic Advisor no later than the end of the first week of class of the subsequent semester. The purpose of the meeting is to develop a Corrective Action Plan. A copy of the Corrective Action Plan, written by the Program Director, must be forwarded to the appropriate program administrator (e.g., Department Chair) and the Academic Advisor. ***A student's failure to attend the Level 2 review meeting and to develop the Action Plan may result in the administrative withdrawal of the student's registration.*** The student will be expected to attend regular advising meetings during the subsequent semester to monitor their progress.

Removal from Academic Probation

To be removed from academic probation, a student must achieve a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher by the following term. A student will be informed by the Program Director or Academic Adviser when they are removed from academic probation.

Program Progression

A student is allowed to repeat a maximum of two courses in which they have earned a grade below a B. The same course cannot be enrolled in more than twice. Students who have utilized their repeat allowances and then go on to earn a grade below a “B” will be dismissed from the program. Students are not allowed to withdraw from the same course more than once. Students must complete the program in five years.

Students who do not register for classes in consecutive terms and are not on an official leave, or have not officially withdrawn, will be administratively withdrawn by Simmons. A new admissions application is required to be considered for return to the active student status. Students who have been administratively withdrawn are not guaranteed to be readmitted to the program.

GPA Required for Graduation

Students must achieve a cumulative point average of B (3.0) to be eligible for graduation.

Academic and Conduct Issues Leading to Dismissal

Dismissal Due to Academic Performance

The following circumstances lead to dismissal:

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

Dismissal Due to Conduct Issues

- Simmons University Honor Board violation leading to dismissal
- Behavior judged to be in violation of Simmons University Policies
- Behavior that is deemed unprofessional per the BACB® Ethics Code for Behavior Analysts
- Any threat or attempt to harm someone else inside or outside of the Simmons community
- Commission of a criminal act that is contrary to professional practice, occurring during the course of study at Simmons or occurring prior to admission to Simmons and becoming known after admissions

Notification of Dismissal

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

Appeal of Dismissal

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

The GPAC is composed of Program Chairs from each department (or their designee). GPAC Members do not vote on cases from their department. The Acting Committee Chair of the GPAC is the Chair of the Department from which the case originated. For Behavior Analysis cases, the Acting Committee Chair of the GPAC is the Behavior Analysis Department Chair. The Acting Committee Chair coordinates the meetings and communicates the GPAC decisions to the student. The GPAC has regularly scheduled meetings throughout the academic year.

The GPAC considers formal, **Level 2** requests from students in the Behavior Analysis, Physical Therapy, Public Health or Nutrition Departments who are seeking an exception to academic program or SSHP policies relating to academic or professional performance or program progress and retention. The general nature of appeals relevant for this committee regard those pertaining to academic performance or policy; **this committee does not deal with issues related to Academic Integrity.**

A student may file a Level 2 appeal with the GPAC if:

- There is new information that could influence the outcome,
- The student views the original, first level decision as a disproportionate response for the circumstance,
- The student believes that the policies were administered unfairly by the program or department.

The appeal letter should include an explanation regarding the grounds for appeal and should reference one or more of the three grounds for appeal listed in this policy. The student should provide to the GPAC all documentation necessary for the appeal to be considered.

Process & Timeline for filing and processing an Academic Appeal with the GPAC:

Level II consists of a SSHP GPAC Secondary Appeal Committee Hearing

1. The student contacts the SSHP GPAC Chairperson to initiate a Level 2 academic appeal.
2. Chairperson arranges a meeting with the three remaining members of SSH APC, the Secondary Appeal Committee
 - a. The 3-member GPAC consists of three full committee representatives from the three programs **not** involving the student; which *might* mean that the Committee Chair serves on the 3 member committee.
3. The 3-member Secondary Appeal Committee reviews the student's case to decide if it merits a full committee hearing and adjudication process.
 - a. If extenuating circumstances/new evidence, etc. merit a full Level 2 appeal, then the student is instructed to complete the formal Appeal process, fill out and submit required paperwork or forms, and a full SSHP GPAC Hearing is set up to hear and vote on the student's overall appeal case.
 - i. If the student Appeal is successful at full committee level, then the

- corresponding program works with the student to make the appropriate adjustments and changes.
 - ii. If the student Appeal is unsuccessful, the student can then proceed to Level 3 Appeal status.
- b. If a full Level 2 appeal is not merited, then the full SSHP GPAC will not hear the case and the original decision stands.
 - i. Students in this case have one last appeal chance, to be heard by the SSHP Dean, for a Level 3 Appeal.
- 4. The student will be notified of the Level 2 decision in writing and via Simmons' Secure File Transfer of the Committee's decision, within 10 business/university days of the meetings at which the appeal is heard. Notification of the final decision will also be sent to the Registrar's Office, SSHP Dean, and the relevant Department Chair or Program Director.
 - a. If the GPAC grants an exception to a policy, the matter will be referred (back) to the department responsible for determining how to implement the decision (i.e., the BALAC).

Level III is the final appeal step, and occurs at the SSHP Dean's Level

Students must file a Level 3 Appeal by emailing the Dean of SSHP within 5 business/university days of being sent the Level 2 decision for the SSHP Dean to hear the student appeal and make a final decision. The Dean will contact the student to arrange a meeting before making their final and binding decision. The Dean will be the final arbiter.

The student will be notified of Level 3 decisions in writing and via Simmons' Secure File Transfer of the Committee's decision, within 10 business/university days of the meetings at which the appeal is heard. Notification of the final decision will also be sent to the Registrar's Office, SSHP Dean, and the relevant Department Chair.

If the Dean grants an exception to a policy, the matter will be referred (back) to the department responsible for determining how to implement the decision.

Recommendations During the Appeal Process:

- Students are strongly encouraged to consult with their advisor in preparing their appeal form and/or planning for their appearance in front of the GPAC.
- The student's appeal will be placed for consideration at the next available GPAC meeting. The Committee will make reasonable efforts to consider appeals in a timely manner.
- Prior to meeting with the student, the committee may choose to consult with faculty or others involved in the case.
- The student will be invited to appear at the GPAC meeting, where their case is being heard. Students are allowed to have their faculty advisor attend the meeting with them if they choose.
- The grade appeal policy respects the privacy of students and faculty. All parties are responsible for maintaining confidentiality.

COURSE EVALUATIONS

Every semester, students have the opportunity to provide constructive feedback about their course and program experiences via course evaluations. These course evaluations are anonymous. Students will receive course evaluations to complete at the beginning of week 12 during the term. Evaluations must be completed and submitted by the end of week 13. The evaluations can be reviewed by the instructor only after student grades have been submitted. Evaluations are reviewed by the instructor, the Department Chair, the Program Director and or Associate Dean, and the Dean.

Student Feedback or Concerns

An individual or group of students who have concerns related to the clinical or classroom components of the course are expected to do the following:

Student-Faculty Level

An individual student or group of students should directly discuss the concern with the course instructor. If a satisfactory resolution is not achieved with the course instructor, the student may contact the Program Director. This process should be initiated within two weeks. If the student proceeds with contacting the Program Director, the course instructor should be notified by the student.

Program Director-Chair Level

A problem which is not satisfactorily resolved at the instructor level may be taken to the Program Director. The Department Chair and the Program Director will review the information or data related to the concern and act to resolve the concern. This includes communication with both students and course faculty. *The Department Chair and Program Director will not review the concern without confirmation that the student first brought the concern to the instructor.*

GRADUATION INFORMATION

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

Diplomas

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

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

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

Transcripts

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

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

Graduation Requirements

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

BACB® Exam and State Licensure Applications

Students are responsible for reviewing BACB® and local state licensing requirements. This includes procedures/deadlines for applying prior to submitting a respective application. BACB® exam information is located here: <https://www.bacb.com>. Licensure requirements vary by state and may be found by contacting the local licensing authority. The Department Chair serves as the verified course sequence coordinator and is available to answer general questions should they arise.

OTHER SIMMONS UNIVERSITY POLICIES

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

Please read the information contained in the below links to learn more about Simmons University policies:

[Notice of Non-Discrimination and Grievance Procedures](#)
[Title IX and Freedom from Discrimination and Harassment](#)
[Sexual Harassment Policy for Students, Faculty, Staff, and Visitors](#)

Bias Response Protocol

Simmons University is committed to inclusive excellence in all aspects of an individual's community

experience. Our values, vision and mission mandate that we strive to create an environment that is free of bias, prejudice, discrimination and hurtful acts. Individuals who believe they have experienced or encountered bias, harassment or discrimination can utilize the Simmons bias response protocol to have their concern addressed. Information about protocol can be accessed at [Bias Responses Protocol](#)

Additional University Policies

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

- [The Family of Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#)
- [Honor System](#)
- Academic Integrity
- Prohibited Conduct
- Judicial System
- University Policies & Procedures
- [Accessibility Services](#)
- [Hazing Policy](#)
- [Student Rights and Responsibilities Statement](#)
- Policy on Valuing Diversity
- Clery Report and Crime Statistics

Appeal of a Policy

A written appeal must be received within fourteen (14) days of the date of the letter from the Program Director or designee. The written appeal must be sent to the Department Chair and the appeal will be reviewed by the Behavior Analysis Local Appeals Committee.

LOCAL AND GRADUATE APPEALS COMMITTEE PURVIEWS AND PROCESSES:

Behavior Analysis Local Appeals Committee:

The Behavior Analysis Local Appeals Committee considers formal written requests from graduate students from the Behavior Analysis Department who are seeking an exception to specific academic program policies, typically those involving final grades or academic integrity sanctions.

All appropriate appeals must be initiated by submitting a formal letter indicating intent to appeal to the Behavior Analysis Program Director or Department Chair within the specified time frame for the particular appeal instance:

- 5 university business days for academic integrity sanction appeals;
- 14 days for final grade appeals denied by the course professor;
- and, 14 university business days for all other appeals

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

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

FINAL GRADE APPEALS:

Per the Department of Behavior Analysis Student Handbook, graduate students must first consult with the course professor within 7 days of the final grade being posted. If, after seeking informal resolution with the professor regarding a final grade issued, the student continues to believe that the assigned grade is unfair and wishes to pursue the appeal, the student must submit a formal written letter indicating their intent to appeal to the respective academic unit head (Program Director or Chair); the letter must be submitted within 14 days of the final grade being posted. If the student fails to submit the letter within the specified time, the final grade will stand—not subject to an appeal. Note: Only the final course grade may be appealed; the student must indicate under which category they are appealing (i.e., grade calculation error, arbitrariness/capriciousness, or unlawful discrimination). The academic unit head will review the intent to appeal, and provide the student with the electronic appeal form (i.e., this form), which will be provided to the Behavior Analysis Local Appeals committee. This e-form represents the formal written process and initiates the appeal process beyond the Academic Unit level.

Once submitted, the Behavior Analysis Local Appeals Committee Chair (Department Chair) will review the submitted form and ask for a written (electronic) statement from the faculty member and/or academic unit to complete the data gathering process. If needed, the Chair or their designate shall meet with the appealing student, the faculty member and/or the Academic unit head to gather additional information, and/or clarity.

The Behavior Analysis Local Appeals Committee will convene to review the information and issue a decision. If the Behavior Analysis Local Appeals Committee's review of all submitted materials determines that there is merit to the grade appeal, the grade change will be processed with the Registrar's Office to reflect the revised grade (Note: Final grades may increase, decrease, or remain the same). If the Behavior Analysis Local Appeals Committee's review of all submitted materials determines that there is no merit to the grade appeal, the final grade will stand, as it was originally filed by the corresponding faculty member. However, the student can then choose to appeal that decision, by bringing their appeal to the full SSHP Graduate Program Appeals Committee for a tertiary appeal.

The student will be notified, in writing, of the Behavior Analysis Local Appeals Committee's decision, within 10 university business days of the meeting at which the appeal is reviewed. Notification of the decision will also be sent to the Dean and corresponding Department Chair or Program Director.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY SANCTION APPEALS:

Per the Academic Integrity Policy Guidelines, graduate students may appeal a Track I Academic Integrity Sanction to the Behavior Analysis Local Appeals Committee. To initiate an appeal, the student must send a formal Letter of Appeal to the respective academic unit head (Program Director or Chair) within five (5) university business days of receiving the final sanctions letter. If the student fails to submit the letter within the specified time, the findings and sanctions will stand—not subject to an appeal. The student should include in the appeal letter a summary of the academic integrity incident, the nature of the allegations, the supporting evidence and the reasons they are challenging the findings and/or sanctions. The academic unit head will review the intent to appeal, and provide the student with the electronic appeal form (i.e., this form), which will be provided to the Behavior Analysis Local Appeals Committee. This e-form represents the formal written process and initiates the appeal process beyond the Academic Unit level. The Behavior Analysis Local Appeals Committee will review all the extant evidence and make a determination only on the evidence and written record used to determine the original findings and sanctions.

The Behavior Analysis Local Appeals Committee may: (1) Uphold the findings and the sanctions; (2) Uphold the findings but modify the sanctions; (3) Reject the findings and dismiss the case altogether. If the findings and sanctions are upheld or modified, they are effective immediately upon the decision of the Behavior Analysis Local Appeals Committee, and the committee chair will send a notification to the student, instructor, College Dean, and Director of Academic Integrity (DAI). If the findings are dismissed, the student's record will show no evidence of the allegation of academic integrity violations for that particular case.

Note: A student who does not accept responsibility for the academic integrity violation may appeal the Behavior Analysis Local Appeals Committee's decision to the College Dean by writing a formal Letter of Appeal to the Dean within five (5) university business days of receiving the Behavior Analysis Local Appeals Committee's response to the initial appeal letter. If the student fails to submit the letter within the specified time, the findings and sanctions will stand—not subject to an appeal.

APPEALING DECISIONS OF THE BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS LOCAL APPEALS COMMITTEE:

If the student wishes to appeal the decision of the Behavior Analysis Local Appeals Committee, students are strongly encouraged to consult with their faculty advisor, in preparing their appeal form and planning for their appearance in front of the SSHP Graduate Program Appeals Committee (for final grade appeals or policy appeals) or preparing their formal Letter of Appeal to the Dean (for Academic Integrity Sanction appeals).

SSHP Graduate Program Appeals Committee

The Graduate Program Appeals Committee (GPAC) considers formal, **2nd Level** requests from students in the Behavior Analysis, Physical Therapy, Public Health or Nutrition Departments who are seeking an

exception to academic program or SSHP policies relating to academic or professional performance or program progress and retention. The general nature of appeals relevant for this committee regard those pertaining to academic performance or policy; **this committee does not deal with issues related to Academic Integrity.**

All academic or professional *performance* related appeals must be activated by the student within the specified time frame for the nature of the appeal: 90 days for a program exclusion appeal and 14 days for grade appeals and other instances.

A student with an unsatisfactory 1st level appeal (at programmatic or departmental level) may seek an exception to an academic policy, or appeal a programmatic or departmental decision by filing a 2nd level appeal if:

- There is new information that could influence the outcome,
- The student views the original, first level decision as a disproportionate response for the circumstance,
- The student believes that the policies were administered unfairly by the program or department.

Process & Timeline for filing and processing an Academic Appeal with the GPAC:

1. **Level I** occurs at the local or department/program level, if applicable (for programs with their own decision level/process for an appeal, i.e. Behavior Analysis, Public Health)
 - a. If Level I academic appeal is Denied, or to student's dislike→triggers Level II Appeal process
 - b. If a student's program/department does not have a Level I appeal process (PT, Nutrition), then a Level II Appeal Hearing is initiated.
2. **Level II** consists of a SSHP GPAC Secondary Appeal Committee Hearing
 - a. Student contacts SSHP GPAC Chairperson to initiate Level II academic appeal
 - b. Chair person arranges ZOOM meeting with 3 remaining members of SSH APC, the Secondary Appeal Committee
 - i. The 3-member GPAC consists of 3 full committee representatives from the 3 programs **not** involving the student; which *might* mean that the Committee Chair serves on the 3 member committee.
 1. For example, if the Committee Chair is from PT, and the student filing the appeal is a DPT student, then the 3 member committee consists of representatives from NUTR, BA and PH.
 2. For example, if the Committee Chair is from PT, and the student filing the appeal is a BA student, then the 3-member committee consists of representatives from PT, NUTR, and PH.

- c. The 3 Member Secondary Appeal Committee hears the student's case (via Zoom meeting) to decide if it merits a full committee hearing and adjudication process.
 - i. If extenuating circumstances/new evidence, etc. merit a full Level II appeal, then the student is instructed to complete the formal Appeal process, fill out and submit required paperwork or forms, and a full SSHP GPAC Hearing is set up to hear and vote on the students overall appeal case.
 - 1. If the student Appeal is successful at full committee level, then the corresponding program works with the student to make the appropriate adjustments and changes.
 - 2. If the student Appeal is unsuccessful, the student can then proceed to Level III Appeal status.
 - ii. If a full Level II appeal is not merited, then the full SSHP GPAC will not hear the case and the original decision stands.
 - 1. Students in this case have one last appeal chance, to be heard by the SSHP Dean, for a Level III Appeal.
- 3. **Level III** is the final appeal step, and occurs at the SSHP Dean's Level
 - a. Students must file a Level III Appeal by emailing the Dean of SSHP within 5 business/university days of being sent the Level II decision for the SSHP Dean to hear the student appeal and make a final decision. The Dean will contact the student to arrange a meeting before making their final and binding decision.
- 4. The student will be notified of Level II and III decisions in writing and via Simmons' Secure File Transfer of the Committee's decision, within 10 business/university days of the meetings at which the appeal levels are heard. Notification of the final decision will also be sent to the Registrar's Office, SSHP Dean and the relevant Department Chair.
- 5. If the GPAC or Dean grants an exception to a policy, the matter will be referred (back) to the department responsible for determining how to implement the decision.

DISCLOSURE, REPORTING, and ELIGIBILITY CONSIDERATIONS and RESPONSIBILITIES

Board Certification

Individuals pursuing the Board Certified Behavior Analyst® (BCBA®) credential must adhere to the

Behavior Analyst Certification Board® (BACB®) Ethics Code for Behavior Analysts and the BCBA® Handbook while pursuing the BCBA® credential and thereafter.

Individuals pursuing the BCBA® credential must self-disclose information that may affect certification status, including but not limited to:

- Violations of ethics standards
- Mental health conditions and substance use disorders
- Investigations
- Agreements or actions, including court decisions and/or civil or criminal charges

Individuals pursuing the BCBA® credential should consult the [BACB® website regarding self-reporting](#) for additional details and guidance. Failure to Self-Report to the BACB® may result in ineligibility to sit for the BCBA® exam, despite successful completion of the Behavior Analysis degree program.

Individuals who have a criminal record may have difficulty finding employment, depending on federal, state, local, and company policies. Individuals who are unable to work in a behavior analytic agency may be unable to accrue BCBA® supervised fieldwork hours, affecting exam eligibility.

The BACB® will provide guidance on eligibility to sit for the BCBA® examination, and that BACB® guidance supersedes and is independent of guidance provided by the Simmons University Behavior Analysis degree program, as the BACB® is the final arbiter of BCBA® examination eligibility.

Licensure

This information is provided in good faith to applicants as of June 11, 2020.

The Behavior Analysis program leads to a Master of Science (MS) or Education Specialist (EdS) in Behavior Analysis. This program is intended to lead to exam eligibility for the Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) examination, and not an individual certificate or license. Some, but not all, states license Behavioral Analysts, with name of license and requirements varying by state. Generally granting of the degree, fulfilling the Behavior Analyst Certification Board® (BACB®) requirements to become a Board Certified Behavior Analyst® (BCBA®), and passage of a background check is sufficient for licensure in most states.

Students can review [state licensure requirements](#), including a determination of eligibility for the national certifying exam. This information provided is designed as a baseline determination of whether the program meets national exam eligibility requirements and not individual state specific requirements. Specific state licenses may be more applicable and/or require additional standards. Exam eligibility, licensure requirements, and appropriate pathways are subject to change and may differ based on individual student backgrounds, including coursework taken outside the scope of the program. Students should do their own due diligence and determine the appropriate pathway and license type for themselves.