

Simmons UNIVERSITY

School of Social Work

**School of Social Work
BSW Program Student
Handbook 2026-2027**

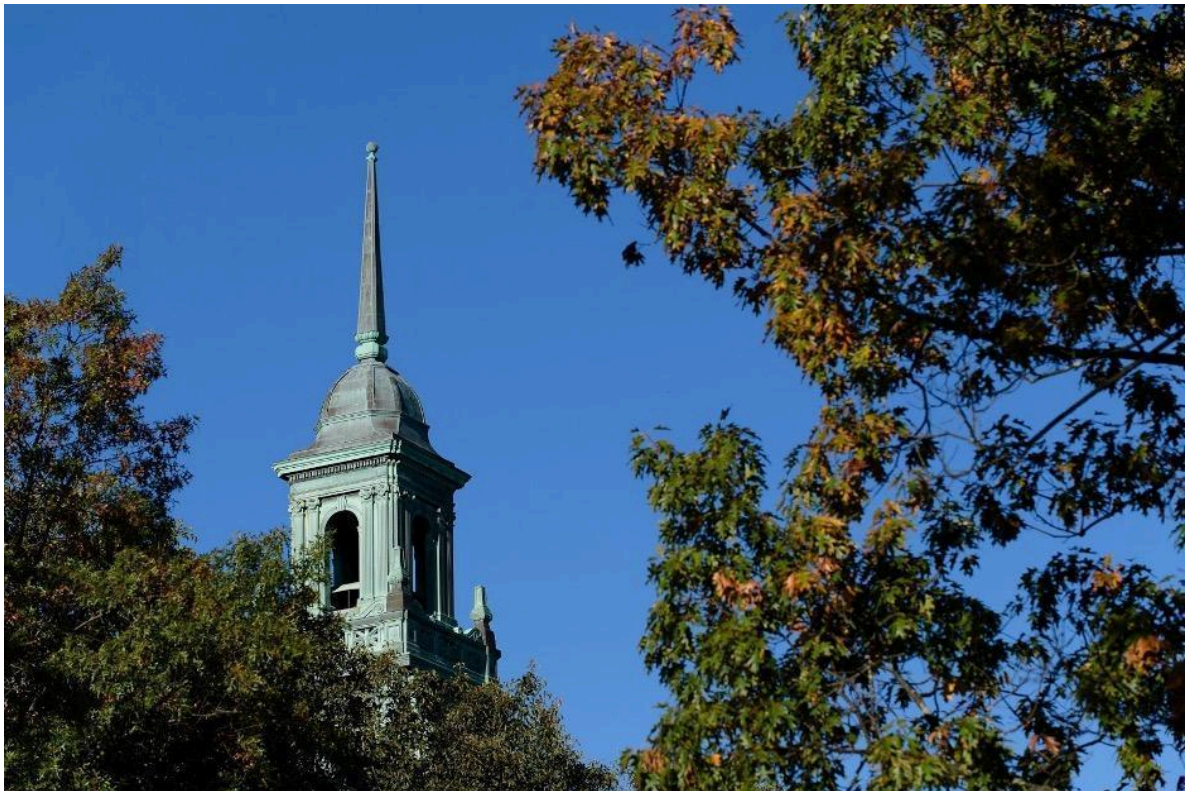


Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
Welcome and Introduction	5
Contact Information for BSW Program Administration and Staff	5
About Simmons University School of Social Work	6
Professional Standards and Professional Performance	6
NASW Code of Ethics	6
Simmons School of Social Work Standards for Professional Practice	7
Simmons University Student Code of Conduct	7
Simmons University Academic Integrity Policy	7
CSWE Competencies	8
The Simmons University BSW Program	10
BSW Program History	10
BSW Program and Generalist Practice	10
BSW Program Mission Statement and Program Goals	11
BSW Program Options	11
Traditional 4-Year BSW Program Option	12
3+1 BSW/MSW Program Option	12
Online Degree Completion Program Option	13
BSW Program Explicit Curriculum	14
Simmons University PLAN Core Curriculum	14
Curriculum Design for Students Admitted to Simmons	14
Curriculum Component I - The Simmons University PLAN	15
Key Content Areas	15
Key Skills Areas	15
Curriculum Component II – Simmons University BSW Program Core Courses	16
Required Social Work Courses for BSW Students	16
Curriculum Component III – Simmons University BSW Program Practicum Education	17
Purpose and Goals of BSW Practicum Education at Simmons University	17
General Plan of Practicum Education	17
Service-Learning	18
Junior Foundations Lab	18
Senior Year BSW Practicum Placement	19
Academic and Performance Standards and Policies for BSW Students	20
BSW Program Grading Processes and Policies	21
Grading Scale for BSW Courses	21
GPA Policies	21
GPA Required for Graduation	21

Policy and Procedures for Grades below a “C”	22
Retake Policy for Grades below a “C”	22
Policy for Multiple Grades below a “C”	22
Non-Matriculation Grade Policy	22
Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy	22
Eligibility for Advanced Standing Status in an MSW Program	23
Course Attendance and Participation Expectations	23
BSW Attendance Policy	23
Expectations for Participation in Live Sessions (In-person and Zoom)	23
Expectations for Zoom Live Session Participation	24
Expectations for Asynchronous Participation	24
Expectations for Participation Regardless of Setting and Time of Day	25
Assignment Submission Policies	25
Assignment Extension Requests	25
Assignment Extension Requests Requiring a Grade of “Incomplete”	26
Guidelines for Written Assignments	26
Citations for References Used in Written Work	27
Simmons SSW Policy on Student Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence	27
Policies Regarding Academic Probation	27
Course Registration Policies	28
Following the Plan of Study	28
Dropping Courses	28
Adding Courses	29
Study Abroad Sequencing for Students in the Traditional and 3+1 Program Options	29
Supporting Student Adherence to Academic and Professional Standards	30
Academic Advising and Support	30
Advising for Students in the On-ground BSW Program Option	30
Advising for Students in the BSW Online Degree Completion Program Option	30
Advising for All BSW Students (regardless of platform)	30
Simmons Tutoring and Writing Center Resources	31
Simmons Office of Accessibility Services	31
Additional Simmons University Resources	32
Religious Accommodations	32
Accommodations for Active Duty in the U.S. Military	33
Review Process to Address Student Professional and Academic Performance Issues	35
The Three Levels of Review	36
Level 1	36
Level 2	36
Level 3	37

Policies and Procedures for Terminating a Student's Enrollment in the BSW Program	39
Notification of Dismissal from the BSW Major	39
Appeal of Dismissal from the BSW Major	39
Removal from an Accelerated Track in the BSW Program	39
Procedures for Student Grievances and Complaints	40
Overview	40
Students' Right to Appeal Final BSW Grades	40
Appealing a BSW Grade: Procedures and Deadlines	41
Students' Right to Appeal Dismissal from the BSW Program	42
Appeal Process	42
Procedures for Appeals Outside of the BSW Program	43
Reapplying after Dismissal from Simmons University	44
Leaves of Absences and Withdrawal from the University	44
Voluntary Leave of Absence	44
Involuntary Leave of Absence	45
Process for Returning to Simmons after an Involuntary Leave	46
Withdrawal from the University	47
Opportunities for Student Input, Involvement, and Recognition	47
Student Feedback on the Explicit and Implicit Curriculum	47
Explicit Curriculum Surveys	47
Implicit Curriculum Survey	47
Alumni Survey	47
Serving on the Faculty Committees	48
Student Leadership Opportunities	48
BSW Social Work Awards	49
Phi Alpha National Social Work Honor Society	49
Additional Relevant Policies	50
BSW Program Credit Transfer Policy	50
BSW Program Policy Regarding Credit for Life and Work Experience	50
Simmons University Policy on Technology Requirements	51
Simmons University Policy Recording of Live Sessions	51
Simmons University Policy on Programs of Study	51
Appendices	52
Appendix 1: SSW Standards of Professional Practice	52
Appendix 2: Simmons SSW Generative Artificial Intelligence Policy for Students	57
Appendix 3: The Simmons Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	58
Appendix 4: Notice of Non-Discrimination	60

Welcome and Introduction

Welcome to the Simmons University BSW Program! This BSW Student Handbook is a guide for students, as well as faculty members, practicum instructors, and others who work with students enrolled in the BSW, BSW 3+1, or Online Degree Completion program options. Primarily, the Handbook is a resource to help students navigate their educational experience in the Program at Simmons University. It contains helpful information regarding the requirements, expectations, and policies of the Program, as well as important information related to coursework and practicum experiences. As students progress through the Program, this Handbook serves as a guide to answer questions and to help them locate the information and resources they need to have a productive and successful educational journey. This Handbook, as well as many other resources for students, is available on the Simmons University Student Handbooks and Forms [webpage](#).

Contact Information for BSW Program Administration and Staff

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About Simmons University School of Social Work

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

In 1904, Simmons became the first college to provide training for clinical social workers, filling a critical community need, expanding the profession, and offering a vehicle through which women could advance their careers. Since then, the Simmons SSW has been a leader in social work education and an enduring example of the University's signature commitment to academic rigor, strong professional preparation, and visionary thinking. Open to students regardless of gender identification, the SSW offers degrees at all levels of social work education with its BSW, MSW, DSW, and PhD programs.

Throughout its history, the SSW has recognized the critical role that its graduates play in the local, national, and global community and has endeavored to provide social work education in a way that maintains the highest educational standards while remaining sensitive to the diverse, changing needs of students and the clients they serve. As a reflection of this knowledge and commitment, the SSW has created unique and innovative programs that attract dedicated students and infuse a steady flow of competent, well trained individuals into the profession. In each of its programs, the SSW seeks to advance the core values and aims of the social work profession.

Professional Standards and Professional Performance

NASW Code of Ethics

- Students are expected to abide by the NASW Code of Ethics and Simmons School of Social Work Standards for Professional Practice. Students are expected to adhere to the **NASW Code of Ethics** and established norms, values, and behavior both during their practicum placement and while earning their Social Work degree. The NASW Code of Ethics outlines behaviors and responsibilities expected of all professional social workers. The NASW considers students to be professional social workers from the time they enroll into a social work program. Students should obtain a copy of the NASW code of ethics and become familiar with its contents.
- Social Work students are also expected to be familiar with and abide by the **Simmons School of Social Work Standards of Professional Practice** (See [Appendix I](#)).

Simmons School of Social Work Standards for Professional Practice

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

Simmons University Student Code of Conduct

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

Simmons University Academic Integrity Policy

- Simmons University maintains and strictly enforces a policy on academic integrity for all students that includes procedures for addressing a student's academic performance when there is a question of academic dishonesty. This may include a formal hearing by the Simmons Academic Integrity Board (AIB), and/or review by the AIB Secretary. One particularly egregious violation of academic integrity is plagiarism, which is defined as following:
 - The citations and references are not in compliance with APA Style Guide guidelines
 - Students are incorrectly representing their work as original ideas or meaning making informed by reliable evidence and literature;
 - Students are drawing verbatim from text sources, but either not citing appropriately or at all;
- If potential plagiarism is indicated, then the procedure outlined in the [Student Code of Conduct](#) will be followed. See the [Simmons website page on academic integrity](#) for more

information about what constitutes academic integrity, and the process following an allegation of academic integrity violation at Simmons.

CSWE Competencies

The Simmons SSW, including the BSW Program endorses, and follows the expectations of its accrediting organization, the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). Part of the function of CSWE is to set educational standards that ensure that social work students at the undergraduate and graduate level are receiving high quality educational and training experiences that will prepare them for their careers. CSWE is responsible for continuously reviewing best practices in the practicum of social work and regularly updating their Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS). Accredited social work programs are responsible for meeting these standards, which are designed to progressively build students' knowledge, skills, and abilities through course and practicum work. The most recent update of the CSWE EPAS occurred in 2022, and it is upon these accreditation standards that the BSW Program at Simmons is structured.

Social work education is predicated upon a competency-based model which emphasizes student learning outcomes instead of curricular content. Please see [here](#) for how The Council on Social Work Education describes competency-based social work education.

In keeping with the 2022 EPAS, the Simmons BSW Program strives to prepare its graduates for generalist practice through the mastery of knowledge, values, and skills needed for effective, competent, ethical practice at the baccalaureate level. Thus, the BSW Program has adopted the nine CSWE Core Competencies (numbered) and accompanying *behaviors* (bulleted) as the foundation for its professional curriculum. The Core Competencies represent a synthesis of four dimensions: knowledge, skills, values, and cognitive/affective processes. BSW students are expected to demonstrate progressive growth in each of the nine Core Competencies. This progression will include demonstrating an understanding of concepts, an ability to apply a specific concept or practice skills in a situation, and finally to integrate multiple theories and skills to address a broad range of client-system needs. Evaluation of student performance will occur in multiple components of the BSW Program, including courses and Practicum Education. Thus, by the completion of their baccalaureate education and training, the Simmons University BSW graduate will demonstrate the ability to:

1. Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior
 - make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context
 - demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication
 - use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes
 - use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior

2. Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice
 - advocate for human rights at the individual, family, group, organizational, and community system levels
 - engage in practices that advance human rights to promote social, economic, and environmental justice
3. Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice in Practice
 - demonstrate anti-racist and anti-oppressive social work practice at the individual, family, group, organizational, community, research, and policy levels
 - demonstrate cultural humility by applying critical reflection, self-awareness, and self-regulation to manage the influence of bias, power, privilege, and values in working with clients and constituencies, acknowledging them as experts of their own lived experiences
4. Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice
 - apply research findings to inform and improve practice, policy, and programs
 - identify ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive strategies that address inherent biases for use in quantitative and qualitative research methods to advance the purposes of social work
5. Engage in Policy Practice
 - use social justice, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive lenses to assess how social welfare policies affect the delivery of and access to social services
 - apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice
6. Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
 - apply knowledge of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks, to engage with clients and constituencies
 - use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to engage in culturally responsive practice with clients and constituencies
7. Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
 - apply theories of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as other culturally responsive and interprofessional conceptual frameworks, when assessing clients and constituencies
 - demonstrate respect for client self-determination during the assessment process by collaborating with clients and constituencies in developing a mutually agreed-upon plan
8. Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

- engage with clients and constituencies to critically choose and implement culturally responsive, evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals
 - incorporate culturally responsive methods to negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of clients and constituencies
9. Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
- select and use culturally responsive methods for evaluation of outcomes
 - critically analyze outcomes and apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

The Simmons University BSW Program

BSW Program History

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

BSW Program and Generalist Practice

Baccalaureate social work education is intended to teach and train students as social work generalists. The BSW Program utilizes the following definition of Generalist Practice, as articulated by the Council on Social Work Education in [Educational Policy 3.1](#):

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

Consistent with this definition, the Program utilizes a curriculum model that flows from the University's liberal arts foundation, integrating the Simmons PLAN (described on page 14),

Social Work Program courses, and Practicum Instruction into a cohesive and enriching experience.

BSW Program Mission Statement and Program Goals

Consistent with the mission of Simmons University, its MSW Program, and the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (2022) put forth by the Council on Social Work Education, the Simmons University BSW Program's Mission is:

To prepare baccalaureate-level students for generalist social work practice, lifelong professional learning, and personal growth. The School of Social Work's BSW Program at Simmons University unites social work values, passion, and purpose through transformative learning experiences for students across the country. The BSW Program's innovative curriculum supports the development of competent, ethical, and evidence-informed practitioners and future leaders. Through a dynamic academic and practicum-based education, the BSW Program fosters a professional social work identity grounded in a commitment to anti-oppressive, culturally responsive, and globally informed practice across all levels of the ecological model. Graduates from the BSW Program are equipped to advance social justice through respectful care coordination, advocacy, policy engagement, and social change efforts.

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

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

BSW Program Options

Simmons BSW Program offers multiple program options to ensure that undergraduate students can earn their degree at the pace and format that works best for them. These options are as follows:

Traditional 4-Year BSW Program Option

- Typically, the BSW degree at Simmons is completed in four years of full-time course and field work. Although students are not formally accepted into the BSW Program until the end of their sophomore year, students may designate a Social Work major prior to that time and begin taking foundational requirements of the BSW Curriculum that are also offered to the entire student body.
- This policy allows beginning students to test out their interest in and appropriateness for a career in social work while they complete requirements of the University PLAN Core Curriculum. These courses may include Introduction to Social Work and Social Welfare, Social Welfare Policy, Human Behavior in the Social Environment, Social Inequality, Strategies for Effective Communication in Social Work, as well as BSW Program electives, as they are introduced.
- The BSW courses and their sequence required of upper-level students and transfer students who enter the Program in their junior year are specifically delineated and include all social work courses not already completed, as well as upper level social work courses and the completion of field placement requirements.
- A traditional 4-year BSW Program schedule is outlined in the [2026-2027 Academic Planning Worksheet](#).

3+1 BSW/MSW Program Option

- In addition to the traditional 4-year BSW Program, Simmons University offers a 3+1 BSW/MSW Program option. This program option is generally appropriate for new, incoming Simmons students or those with a limited number of transfer credits (15 or fewer). Current Simmons first year students may also apply to the 3+1 Program at the end of their first year (Spring).
- The 3+1 format is intended to respond to financial and structural barriers that may limit student access to a social work education, especially considering the current economic times when financial constraints are an issue for many hoping to pursue social work careers. Students in the traditional BSW and 3+1 programs complete the same curricular requirements, including all Simmons University Core Courses, electives, BSW courses, and BSW Practicum Placements. Students choosing to pursue the 3+1 path will complete their undergraduate work in three years by taking five courses rather than four during some semesters and by completing elective courses during the summers between each year. Students in the 3+1 program may then apply for advanced standing at the MSW level at the end of three years.
- Provided they meet all requirements of the program, these students would be eligible to earn their MSW in one additional year (3 semesters), allowing them to begin working and earning earlier. Like the traditional BSW Program sequence, the 3+1 Program option prepares students for lifelong learning through the provision of a Simmons liberal arts foundation while also providing classroom learning and field instruction that allows them to master and

demonstrate the Core Competencies and Practice Behaviors required of social work professionals. Students in the 3+1 Program should work closely with their academic advisor to develop their schedule.

- A 3+1 Accelerated BSW/MSW Program schedule is outlined in the [2026-2027 3+1 Academic Planning Worksheet](#).

Online Degree Completion Program Option

5-Term Program Option:

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

6 Term+ Program Option:

- For students entering Simmons without having previously obtained their Associates Degree, the Online Degree Completion program option can be completed in six or more terms and will include completion of all PLAN requirements.

The BSW Online Degree Completion program option requirements are outlined in the [2026-2027 Online Degree Completion Academic Planning Worksheet](#).

BSW Program Explicit Curriculum

Simmons University PLAN Core Curriculum

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

Simmons University was founded on and has become known for providing "extraordinary professional preparation with an emphasis on intellectual exploration and rigor, the integration of theory and practice, leadership, and informed citizenship" (Simmons College Undergraduate Course Catalog, 2018-2019, p. 268) and it is upon this foundation that the BSW Program is built.

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

Curriculum Design for Students Admitted to Simmons

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

- **Course Work**
 - Earn a minimum of 128 credits (with an overall GPA of 2.0)
 - Completion of PLAN Core Curriculum
 - 3 Liberal Arts courses: Biology 113 OR Biology 109; STAT 118; and ECON 101, OR POLS 101, OR POLS 217, OR PH 101.

- 13 required courses in Social Work (C or better course grade)
- **Practicum Education Work**
 - Complete social work practicum placement requirements
 - Service-Learning (may be waived for transfer students)
 - 40 hours in SW 253 Human Behavior in the Social Environment
 - Practicum Placement and Instruction
 - Junior Year: Junior Foundations Lab in SW 345
 - Senior Year: 425-hour formal practicum placement in SW 370 and SW 371

Curriculum Component I - The Simmons University PLAN

The following PLAN requirements pertain to the Traditional 4-Year BSW Program Option and 3+1 BSW/MSW Program Option. PLAN requirements for the Online Degree Completion Program Option can be found [here](#).

Introduced in the Fall 2015 and updated in Fall 2024, the Simmons University PLAN (Purpose Leadership Action) substantively engages students with the city of Boston, develops students' understanding of leadership, engages in interactive learning across academic disciplines, and provides opportunities for students to design key components of their course of study. In order to meet these objectives, the Simmons PLAN is a tiered experience which spans the students' undergraduate course work. Students may select from a diverse series of course offerings to meet the course requirements in order to construct a course of study which explores their personal interests and goals. As part of the PLAN curriculum, all students must take the following courses: Writing Boston; Simmons 100: Explore; and Simmons 200: Extend, in addition to fulfilling all Key Content Areas (KCAs) and Key Skills Areas (KSAs).

Key Content Areas

- The key content area (KCAs) courses draw upon three broad areas of knowledge to emphasize a multidisciplinary approach to ways of knowing. They engage phenomena as objects of study through approaches rooted in various disciplines tied to the sciences, the arts, and broad frames of historical and cultural understanding. Students must complete one course from each of the following three areas: Scientific Inquiry; Global Historical; and Aesthetic, Literary, and Artistic.

Key Skills Areas

- While the Key Content Areas focus on knowledge of content, the Key Skills Areas emphasize skills acquired or applied in courses. This category spans skills that are essential for student's success in and beyond academia. It extends to opportunities for students to apply their developing skills and knowledge toward social engagement and change. Students must complete one course from each of the following areas: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice; Integrative Learning; Leadership; Quantitative Literacy; and

Writing-Intensive. Note: At least two KSA courses must be taken outside of the student's major.

- Students can learn more about the PLAN Core Curriculum on the [Academics & Student Success page](#) on the Simmons University website.

Curriculum Component II – Simmons University BSW Program Core Courses

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

Required Social Work Courses for BSW Students

The 13 required social work courses that make up the Simmons University BSW Program Explicit Curriculum are:

SW 101/SW 101CD	Introduction to Social Work & Social Welfare
SW 200/SW 200CD	Social Welfare Policy
SW 253/SW 253CD	Human Behavior in the Social Environment
RGS/WGSS 101/CD	Identity and Power
SW 239/SW 239CD	Social Work Research
SW 351/SW 351CD	Introduction to Social Work Generalist Practice
SW 352/SW 342CD	Social Work Practice with Individuals and Families
SW 353/SW 353CD	Social Work Practice with Groups
SW 354/SW 354CD	Macro Social Work Practice
SW 255/SW 255CD	Strategies for Effective Communication in Social Work
SW 345/SW 345CD	Junior Foundations Lab
SW 370/SW 371CD	Social Work Practicum Placement & Seminar I
SW 371/SW 371CD	Social Work Practicum Placement & Seminar II

Descriptions of all required BSW courses can be found in the Undergraduate Course [Catalog](#).

Curriculum Component III – Simmons University BSW Program Practicum Education

The third and final component of the Simmons University BSW Program's Curriculum is the Practicum Education Program. At Simmons, BSW Practicum Placement and Instruction is structured to not only build upon the University's PLAN Core Curriculum, but to support the student's learning, growth, and mastery of the Program's Core Competencies and Practice Behaviors. Of equal importance to the classroom component of the curriculum, practicum placement and instruction contributes to student education and training by complementing and reinforcing the classroom learning that is achieved through the Program's required courses. The BSW Practicum Placement Program progressively socializes students to the profession and connects the classroom with the practice of social work within an agency setting.

Purpose and Goals of BSW Practicum Education at Simmons University

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

General Plan of Practicum Education

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

Service-Learning

- Students are introduced to practicum -based learning upon entering the BSW Program through the Program's service-learning component. Typically taken in the first year of the major, SW 253 Human Behavior in the Social Environment has a service learning component, allowing students to complete 40 hours of service-learning as part of their course work. The service-learning experience may be formally facilitated by the BSW Program's faculty who work in collaboration with the University's *Simmons Community Engagement* to develop relationships with appropriate practicum settings. BSW Program faculty work with the *Simmons Community Engagement* to ensure that the service-learning experience is developmentally challenging and provides appropriate and meaningful opportunities for students to begin their practicum work journey.
- Prior to beginning their service-learning experience, each BSW student is provided with information about service-learning requirements, expectations, and the placement process. Students are oriented to the goals and intentions of service-learning and are provided with helpful information and guidelines regarding their service-learning experience. Students work with *Simmons Community Engagement*, in consultation with BSW Program faculty, to select service learning opportunities.
- Through service-learning, students are provided with opportunities to build their skills gradually during the beginning of their educational experience, allowing them to gain a wider range of practical skills, build their resume, and be more prepared for the rigors of their junior and senior year practicum placements. In addition, because a hallmark of service-learning is self-reflection, students are required to think critically about their experiences, completing writing assignments and participating in classroom discussions that allow them to progressively assess their emerging skills and competencies, as well as areas needing work and refinement.
- Service-learning hours may be paid or unpaid, but must involve work with or on behalf of people and be documented by the person supervising the service-learning activity. Throughout the term, students provide documentation of their hours. Occasionally, service-learning requirements may be waived for students who are currently employed in or have had significant experience in the social service practicum .

Junior Foundations Lab

- As the second phase of the BSW Program's Practicum Placement component, students complete a virtual practicum placement course (SW 345). This course provides students with opportunities to apply social work skills, values, and ethics during class time through virtual practicum experiences. Emphasizing the integration of classroom knowledge with emerging practice, the course supports students' professional development through self-reflection and preparation for their Senior Practicum. Students will engage in activities that promote socialization into the social work profession and strengthen their readiness for Senior practicum experiences.

- The Junior Foundations Lab experience offers learning opportunities that build on the foundational knowledge and skills introduced in SW351: Introduction to Generalist Social Work Practice and SW352: Social Work Practice with Individuals and Families. This course establishes a basis for generalist social work practice by focusing on developing students' knowledge, understanding, and skills in building professional relationships with clients, supervisors, coworkers, and external organizations. Additionally, students will develop and enhance their resumes and strengthen communication skills to prepare for their Senior Practicum Internship.
- In the Junior Foundations Lab, students will engage in collaborative learning, sharing experiences from diverse immersive communities and virtual practicum settings. The course will emphasize active participation in group processes and the development of group leadership skills. Students will also explore and deepen their understanding of the professional use of self within the social work role.
- This Junior Foundations Lab course also provides a way for BSW Program faculty to evaluate student readiness for the rigors and demands of the practicum placement that occurs in the senior year. At the end of the junior practicum placement, each student's progress in the BSW Program is formally reviewed and a determination is made regarding the student's readiness to move on to the senior year practicum placement. This review process involves the evaluation of the student's Junior Foundations Lab course instructor, a student self-evaluation and a Junior Foundations Lab experience essay written by the student. These sources of information are reviewed and discussed during individual practicum evaluation conferences conducted by the BSW program faculty with each student where final determinations about senior student practicum placement are made.

Senior Year BSW Practicum Placement

- The Simmons BSW Program's Practicum Education component culminates with the 425-hour, two-term, senior year social work practicum placement, supervised by a bachelor's or master's level social worker. This intensive practicum experience is intended to broaden, deepen, and allow students to practice the social work concepts and skills learned in the classroom and observed during their service-learning experiences and Junior Foundations Lab. During the senior year placement, it is expected that students will ultimately demonstrate mastery of the Program's Core Competencies and related behaviors within the practicum context. To learn more about the Senior Year BSW Practicum, refer to the *BSW Program Practicum Education Manual*.

Academic and Performance Standards and Policies for BSW Students

Students in the BSW Program at Simmons University are expected to uphold the academic standards of Simmons University, the SSW, and the BSW Program and are regularly evaluated throughout their academic careers. Students who exhibit uneven or poor academic performance are referred for additional support in the form of a Level 1, 2, or 3 review. (See [here](#)).

BSW students are also expected to uphold professional standards of Simmons University, the SSW, the BSW Program, and the profession. A student's professional performance is integral to their overall academic performance and success in the program. Failure to meet the standards for professional conduct, ethics and personal integrity requisite for professional social work practice may constitute grounds for a Level 3 review, filing of a Student Code of Conduct or Academic Integrity Board infraction, and/or could result in academic sanctions, including dismissal.

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

- Academic Standards:
 - Maintain an overall grade point average of at least 2.0
 - Earn a minimum grade of C in all required Social Work Core Courses
- Professional Standards:
 - Complete all required service-learning and practicum placement hours
 - Receive a satisfactory assessment from the instructor of Junior Foundations Lab and in each term of the senior year practicum placements
 - Adhere to the [NASW Code of Ethics](#)
 - Adhere to the [University Code of Conduct](#) and [University Integrity Policy](#)
 - Adhere to the [SSW Standards for Professional Practice Education](#)

BSW Program Grading Processes and Policies

<i>Grading Scale for BSW Courses</i>	
Grade	Numerical Equivalent
A (4.00)	93+
A- (3.67)	90 – 92
B+ (3.33)	87 – 89
B (3.00)	84 – 86
B- (2.67)	80 – 83
C+ (2.33)	77 - 79
C (2.00)*	74 - 76
C- (1.67)	70 - 73
D+ (1.33)	67 - 69
D (1.00)	64 - 66
D- (0.67)	60 - 63
F (0)	59 and below
<i>*Minimum grade needed to count towards the Social Work major</i>	

GPA Policies

- Students are expected to maintain a C (2.0) grade average throughout their BSW program and at least a C in each of their required social work courses.
- BSW students must take all classes for a letter grade with the exception of the required Liberal Arts course (ECON 101, POLS 101, POLS 217, or PH 101), which students may opt to take as pass/fail.

GPA Required for Graduation

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

Policy and Procedures for Grades below a "C"

- Any BSW student earning a grade lower than a C (74) in a course will be notified by their Academic Advisor. A Level 2 review may be convened to discuss the grade, the reasons for the low academic performance, and to develop an Action Plan, which will be sent to the student. A student's failure to attend a scheduled Level 2 review may result in the administrative withdrawal of the student's registration and other consequences.

Retake Policy for Grades below a "C"

- **BSW Courses:** If a student earns a grade below a C (74) in a BSW course, they will be required to repeat the course before moving on to the next level in the sequence. Failure to pass the course on the second attempt will result in dismissal from the BSW major.
- **Non-BSW Courses:** If a student earns a grade below a C- (70) in a non-BSW course, they are required to repeat the course
- Both grades remain on the transcript and are accounted for in the GPA.
- Students required to retake a class will do so at their own expense.
- All students are required to earn the requisite number of unique degree credits to graduate.
- A student cannot repeat more than two unique courses and the same course cannot be enrolled in more than twice.
- Students may not submit any previously submitted work. This includes written assignments, exams, and asynchronous work in the online platform.

Policy for Multiple Grades below a "C"

- Students who earn three or more grades below C (74) in courses that are required for the BSW major will be dismissed from the BSW program.
- A C- (70-73) is considered a marginal pass, and although it does not require the course to be repeated, it does count towards the number of grades below C.

Non-Matriculation Grade Policy

- A non-matriculated student must earn a grade of "C" or better in their first BSW course to remain eligible to enroll in a second course.

Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy

- To be eligible and continue to receive federal, state, and/or institutional aid, Simmons students must make satisfactory academic progress toward achieving and completing their program of study through measurement of qualitative (GPA) and quantitative (completed credits) standards.
- The Undergraduate Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy can be found [here](#).

Eligibility for Advanced Standing Status in an MSW Program

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

Course Attendance and Participation Expectations

By enrolling in a course, the student enters a reciprocal agreement with the instructor. The instructor is obliged to teach, to evaluate student work, and to be available for conferences during designated office hours. The student is obliged to complete all work by the assigned deadlines, attend all classes, and devote sufficient out-of-class time to course material, so that what happens in class reaches a mind prepared for that day's lecture, lab, or discussion.

As per NECHE guidelines, students should expect to be assigned three hours of “out-of-seat-time” for every credit hour per week. That means, roughly, that a standard four-credit course would carry 12 hours of outside work per week.

BSW Attendance Policy

- Attendance and punctuality are expected at all classes. Students who miss more than **20%** of the course, which equates to **two class sessions**, will earn no higher than a C+ for their final course grade. Please note that advanced standing programs typically require that applicants have grades of B or higher in all BSW courses to be considered for admission.
- For many students, substantial outside employment may be necessary. On occasion, employment may conflict with the demands of attendance and other academic responsibilities. The University encourages students caught between the demands of schoolwork and employment to consult with a financial aid officer.

Expectations for Participation in Live Sessions (In-person and Zoom)

- Students are expected to participate in every class session.
- Participation requires being mentally present in addition to being physically present. Being mentally present includes ongoing content integration of both conceptual and practical knowledge and skills.
- Students are responsible for completing all readings before class and being prepared to apply them in class discussions. Class discussion includes in-class discussions and exercises and online assignments.
- Texting during live session class and using computers for non-class-related activities (e.g., checking social media, emailing) will result in a reduced participation grade.
- Respect the privacy and confidentiality of your peers, clients, and agencies. Please refrain from disclosing overly sensitive private information about yourself that might not be appropriate in a teaching-and-learning environment.

- Students should inform instructors ahead of time if they will be late to the live class session or are unable to attend. It is students' responsibility to make up for the work they missed.
- Repeated absences will affect a student's ability to pass the course.
- Repeated lateness will impact students' class participation grade.

Expectations for Zoom Live Session Participation

All students are expected to demonstrate the same professional behavior and mutual respect for teachers and colleagues in the online environment as they would demonstrate face-to-face. The expected standards of behavior for interacting with others online are generally referred to as "netiquette." Here are general guidelines, each of which are related to required professional standards of behavior:

- Under no circumstances are students allowed to join a class session by video or phone if they are operating a vehicle.
- Copying, sharing or posting recordings of live class sessions is not allowed and will result in disciplinary action.
- Use or misuse of substances during class time is strictly prohibited. This includes alcohol and tobacco.
- Be mindful of how you present in the live session by doing the following:
 - Be in a private space with minimal distractions
 - Blur your background for the live sessions if it is distracting (e.g., bedrooms).
 - Ensure that your camera and room lighting allows others to see your full face
 - Mute yourself unless you are speaking
 - Limit the frequency with which you pause your video
 - Make sure audio and video are paused when you step away from the camera
 - Treat live class time as they would treat any other professional setting

Expectations for Asynchronous Participation

- Courses in the Online Degree Completion program option consist of 80 minutes of asynchronous engagement and a 90-minute live session. Both count toward the "in-seat-time" and are commensurate with an in-person course session of two hours and 50 minutes.
- Asynchronous course work is an essential component of student acquisition of knowledge, values and skills related to course content and professional development.
- It is expected that students will submit asynchronous course work on time (typically 24 hours in advance of class/live session, but individual instructors may have different policies).
- If students cannot complete the asynchronous work on time, they are responsible for requesting an extension ahead of time.
- A student who submits asynchronous course work late, submits incomplete work, or does not submit asynchronous course work for the week will see a deduction in their overall participation grade. (Note: this policy applies only to academic courses. There is a separate asynchronous attendance policy for Practicum courses.)

- Students should check the course site (Moodle) and their Simmons email on a weekly basis, at minimum, for relevant announcements and information.

Expectations for Participation Regardless of Setting and Time of Day

- Embody the behaviors and skills of a social work student during live sessions and asynchronous engagement by following the standards listed [here](#).
- Do not send emails, texts, or other electronic messages to classmates or faculty when angry, and remember that the use of bold typeface, emojis, and capital letters may not be received as intended.

Assignment Submission Policies

Students are expected to follow the criteria outlined in the assignment descriptions and rubric (if applicable) and 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.

Assignment Extension Requests

- If a student needs additional time to complete an assignment they can request a brief extension from their instructor.
- It is up to the instructor's discretion whether to grant an extension, except when the extension is sought as a religious accommodation, due to active military service, or as a component of an accommodation through the Office of Accessibility Services.
- Regardless of the reason for the extension, the instructor determines the length of the extension.
- A student must request an extension prior to the due date of the assignment. If granted, the instructor will establish a revised date for submission of work.
- Students must have started the assignment and made sufficient progress on it to warrant a brief extension only. Students should be prepared to show their instructor the work they have completed thus far.
- In the event an emergency prohibits a student's ability to submit an assignment on time or contact the instructor beforehand, students should contact the instructor as soon as possible afterwards to collaboratively find a resolution.
- Syllabi stipulate any penalties students will accrue for submitting work after a due date.
- Instructors may not grant an extension for final assignments unless they are granting an Incomplete for the course because other work has not been completed.
- Turning in unexcused late assignments without prior approval will result in a penalty deduction of half a letter grade for each day the assignment is late (e.g., grade of A will be reduced to A- for one day late).
- Barring an approved extension or emergency situation, students who are absent the day an assignment is due are still required to submit the assignments.
- SSW policy does not allow any finals to be rewritten.

Assignment Extension Requests Requiring a Grade of “Incomplete”

- In some cases, students are unable to complete all of their assignments before the end of the semester due to extenuating circumstances.
- The instructor, in consultation with the BSW Program Director and the student’s Academic Advisor, may use their discretion to offer a grade of “incomplete” to allow the student additional time to complete the outstanding work.
- No more than 30% of the course’s work or more than 50% of the total grade can be outstanding.
- A student must consult with both their instructor and Academic Advisor to discuss the options for an Incomplete. If an agreement is reached, the Academic Advisor will send the Petition for an Incomplete Grade to the student to submit in advance of the last class session of the semester/term.
- The form will then be reviewed by the Program Director, or a designee. The Incomplete request must include the nature of the work to be completed, the date and time by when assignments will be submitted to the instructor, and the date and time by when the instructor will submit the updated grade to the registrar. Approval of an Incomplete request is not guaranteed.
- If the Incomplete is approved, the student must complete the requirement(s) by the extension date. At that time, the mark of Incomplete on the student’s transcript will be changed to the assigned letter grade.
- If the requirement(s) are not completed, the student will be assigned a grade based on the work completed to date. Grades not submitted by the Instructor to the Office of the Registrar by the approved deadline will automatically be converted to a grade of “F.”
- Outstanding work must be completed and the Incomplete changed to a final letter grade before the start of the next term. Students with an unresolved Incomplete may not progress to the next term.

Guidelines for Written Assignments

Stylistic guidelines:

- Font: New Times Roman
- Font size: 12 pt.
- 1 inch margin at top, bottom, and each side
- Double spaced
- Must adhere to APA 7th Ed., including all appropriate citations and references
- Correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation
- The length of your paper must adhere to the specification listed in the syllabus.
- *The cover page, reference page(s), and appendices are not counted toward the page allowance.*

Substantive Guidelines:

- Assignments should be well-cited, which does not mean an overuse of direct quotes. Instead, demonstrate understanding through thoughtful paraphrasing (i.e., explaining the material in your own words).
- Plan to have enough time to complete several drafts of the assignment. It is rare that the initial version covers the required content, is succinct, and is well-organized and clearly written.
- Copyedit for correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation
- Include an introduction and conclusion.
- Incorporate relevant vocabulary from course materials and specialty areas of the field that you are working within.
- Refer to the Simmons SSW Generative AI [policy](#).

Citations for References Used in Written Work

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. 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, please contact your instructor or the librarian.

These are other helpful resources for questions on format and how to cite properly:

- Simmons Library Guide to Citations for Social Work is [here](#).
- APA style guide handouts are [here](#).

Simmons SSW Policy on Student Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence

- Students are required to read and follow the Simmons SSW Policy on Student Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence. Please See [Appendix 2](#).

Policies Regarding Academic Probation

All students are expected to remain in good academic standing with the University. Poor academic performance is grounds for a student to be placed on academic probation. For the purposes of academic probation at the University level, poor performance is defined as any one of the following:

- Earn less than a 2.0 in the prior semester
- Earn a cumulative GPA of less than 2.0

Academic performance is monitored by the Simmons University Administrative Board. If a student meets the criteria for poor academic performance, Academic Advising will send a letter to the student informing them of their academic standing (i.e., academic warning, academic probation, or continued academic probation) and the stipulations of their status (e.g., credit restrictions for

academic probation). Students will also have a Level 2 review with their Academic Advisor to develop an Action Plan.

Removal from Academic Probation

- To be removed from academic probation, a student must achieve a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or higher by the following term, or otherwise resolve the issues that caused them to be placed on academic probation, to the satisfaction of the members of the Simmons University Administrative Board.

Course Registration Policies

Following the Plan of Study

- When registering for classes each term, students must follow the plan of study provided as advised by their Academic Advisor. Students are strongly encouraged to meet with their Academic Advisor before registering to discuss course sequencing, plans of study, and prerequisites. Exceptions to the above are rarely allowed and only under highly exceptional circumstances. A request to enroll in an elective, or any course out of sequence, before completion of required course work must be discussed with the Academic Advisor and receive final approval from the Program Director, or their designee. BSW students who are completing their practicum placements must register for the aligning seminar course concurrently.

Dropping Courses

- An undergraduate student may drop one or more courses after registration and until the Friday of the eighth week of classes by completing the add/drop form available online and in the Office of the Registrar and having the form signed by their advisor. The Friday of the eighth week of classes is the final date for withdrawing from a course for the fall and spring semesters. Reference the academic calendar for add and drop dates. If a student drops a course after the fourth week of classes, they must also have the form signed by their instructor. A "W" will appear on the student's transcript for all courses dropped after the fourth week. All add/drop forms must be returned to the Office of the Registrar to make the change official. Any student wishing to withdraw from a course after the eighth week of classes must petition the Undergraduate Administrative Board. Only petitions that contain medical verification validated through the Simmons University Health Center or those that outline unusual circumstances beyond the student's control will be approved. Students who wish to drop a course should review the refund policy carefully and meet with their financial aid counselor before dropping a course.
- Dropping a course may affect a student's financial aid (loans) and merit funds (scholarships and assistantships). U.S. students must be enrolled at least half-time to receive federal loans and usually full-time for scholarships and assistantships. International students (non U.S. citizens) must maintain full-time enrollment to remain in status for immigration purposes.

Before dropping any course, international students are required to consult with the International Student Advisor in the Center for Global Education.

- Once enrolled in a course, a student remains in that course until they update their registration status at the Office of the Registrar. A student who fails to attend a course from which they have not officially withdrawn receives a grade of "F."

Adding Courses

- An undergraduate student may add courses after registration until the end of the fourth week of classes with the instructor's permission. No student will be permitted to add a course after the fourth week of classes except under exceptional circumstances granted by the Undergraduate Administrative Board. During the first two weeks, a student may add a course, provided they complete an add/drop form and obtain the approval of their academic advisor. If a student wishes to add a course during the third and fourth weeks of classes, they must complete the proper form and obtain the approval signatures of both the instructor and their academic advisor.

Study Abroad Sequencing for Students in the Traditional and 3+1 Program Options

- There are many, rich opportunities available to BSW students in the on-ground program option who wish to broaden and deepen their learning and life experiences through studying abroad for a portion of a semester, whole semester, or summer.
- Given the sequential structure and practicum placement requirements of the BSW Program curriculum, it is preferable for BSW students seeking to study abroad for a whole semester to do so during the Spring of their sophomore year.
- BSW students who are interested in studying abroad should first arrange a meeting with their BSW advisor to discuss their thoughts and educational priorities, as well as BSW Program requirements and expectations. In addition, students should arrange a meeting with the Simmons Study Abroad Program at studyabroad@simmons.edu, 617-521-2128. Staff in the Study Abroad office are well acquainted with the rigors and expectations of the BSW Program and, in consultation with BSW faculty, can assist students in crafting a study abroad plan that integrates BSW Program expectations.

Supporting Student Adherence to Academic and Professional Standards

Simmons University and the BSW Program offer a variety of services to support students' successful completion of the program and attainment of their degree. Students are encouraged to reach out as often as needed to get assistance and support.

Academic Advising and Support

Academic Advising is a critical component of student success, and it is provided to BSW students in all program options. Because there is a slight difference in how Academic Advising is delivered across program options, each is described separately.

Advising for Students in the On-ground BSW Program Option

- When students in the on-ground BSW program option (including 3+1) begin at Simmons, they are assigned to a professional Academic Advisor in the University's Advising Center. Advising Center staff members are experts on University-wide requirements and expectations and are able to assist students in navigating their academic choices, especially in the early terms of their college experience when many students are unsure of their major. These Academic Advisors are also well versed in BSW Program requirements and expectations and work closely and collaboratively with BSW faculty members in guiding students who express interest in the BSW Program to ensure that foundational course and service-learning requirements are fulfilled.
- Upon designating a social work major, students in the on-ground BSW program option transition over to an Academic Advisor within the Social Work department. They are also provided with a copy of this *BSW Program Student Handbook*, which outlines Program policies and expectations.

Advising for Students in the BSW Online Degree Completion Program Option

- When Students in the Degree Completion program option begin at Simmons, they are assigned to a professional Academic Advisor in the University's Advising Center. That Academic Advisor Center continues in that role throughout their duration in the program (vs. transferring to a BSW Program Advisor). They are also provided with a copy of this *BSW Program Student Handbook*, which outlines Program policies and expectations. having already declared their BSW major.

Advising for All BSW Students (regardless of platform)

- Can meet with their Academic Advisors via Zoom, telephone and email whenever special concerns or questions arise. Academic Advisors serve as a mentor, resource, referral source, and advocate to BSW students;
- Have access to BSW faculty members for consultation and assistance pertaining to their academic and professional pathways throughout their time at Simmons;

- Work with their practicum supervisor and practicum instructor (while preparing for and engaging in practicum).

All BSW students, including minors, regardless of platform are required to meet with their Academic Advisor at least once per academic year.

The Objectives of Academic and Professional Advising are as follows:

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

Simmons Tutoring and Writing Center Resources

Students in need of academic tutoring support should reach out to their Academic Advisor to explore resources. Students may obtain a private tutor at their own expense if desired. For any submitted work, it must be clear to doctoral faculty that a student has completed their work independently.

BSW students may use the services of the Writing Center at Simmons University. The Simmons Writing Center is available for students, in a limited capacity, to assist in the understanding of structure of the current APA format and proofreading of research papers. The description for the Writing Center and its resources are explained in the Simmons Foundations Course. Students may use editing services, however it must be clear to doctoral faculty that a student has completed work independently on their own.

Simmons Office of Accessibility Services

Students who wish to receive academic accommodations for a course must first register due to a documented diagnosis/disability with the Office of Accessibility Services (OAS). The most commonly requested accommodations are extended time for testing and use of the OAS Testing Center. OAS will provide eligible/registered students with an Academic Accommodations Authorization form to

share with each instructor to confirm the student's authorized accommodations. Please note that emergency absences such as hospitalizations and emergency surgery are not within the purview of the Office of Accessibility Services. The Academic Advisor is the best resource for support during that time. For more information about the services and accommodations available through the Office of Accessibility Services, please review [their webpage](#).

Additional Simmons University Resources

[CARE team](#)

- Campus Assessment, Response, and Evaluation - supports students in distress, struggling with basic needs, experiencing unexpected crises or whose behavior raises concerns about their well-being or that of others. (Not a separate department; includes director of counseling center, director of advising, etc)

[Counseling Center](#)

- The Counseling Center promotes mental health and wellness through in person and telehealth counseling, groups, and outreach. We provide undergraduate students with assessment, urgent care, counseling, referrals, and medication management. Additional, cost-free off-site support is available 24/7 via the [Student Assistance Program](#).

[REEF Support Center](#)

- Resilience, efficacy, and empowerment through foundational support services. Food access, housing access, emergency funding, violence prevention education and outreach etc.

[Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion](#)

- The Office of Diversity Equity and Inclusion (ODEI) seeks to promote awareness and understanding of the intersectionality of diverse identities that constitute our Simmons community. We aim to transform our community into one that recognizes and celebrates diversity in all its forms, actively disrupts and challenges bias, and continuously seeks to achieve equity and inclusion for all.

[Multicultural Center at Simmons](#)

- We are a community that is committed to the growth and healing of all systematically marginalized identities, to educating every student on social inequities, and how to get engaged in improving the future.

[Wellness Ambassadors](#)

- Wellness Ambassadors are a dynamic group of students who are passionate about an inclusive and comprehensive approach to wellbeing for the Simmons community, including undergraduate, graduate, residential, commuter, and online students. We provide open-minded and non-judgmental resources on campus for accurate health and wellness information.

Religious Accommodations

Simmons abides by the MA law on Religious Observances. Students who are unable, because of their religious beliefs, to attend classes or to participate in an examination, class, work or practicum requirement on a particular day shall be excused from the class, study, or work or practicum

requirement and shall be provided with an opportunity to make up the examination, study, or work they may have missed consistent with MA 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 because of their religious observances. Questions about absences for religious observances should be directed to the BSW Program Director, or their designee.

Accommodations for Active Duty in the U.S. Military

The Simmons School of Social Work (SSW) is committed to supporting students who are enrolled in the SSW while on active duty in the U.S. Military. We recognize that active-duty students are subject to unexpected and unavoidable changes in their schedules and that you may be deployed to areas where internet access is unreliable or unavailable. We know it is not uncommon for students in the military to miss one or more live sessions or clinical placement hours due to military obligations. In most instances, we expect students will know in advance when they will need to report for duty and how the nature and location of the deployment may impact their ability to attend live sessions or to participate in Practicum placement. Thus, when students have advance notice that they will be absent from a class or clinical placement due to a military assignment, they are asked to provide the following in writing to their instructor (if missing a class) or to both their Practicum instructor and Practicum Liaison (if missing Practicum placement hours):

- A list of all the dates/times of live sessions and/or Practicum placement hours from which the student anticipates being absent due to military service obligations.
- If the student cannot specify a precise date of absence but know of circumstances or conditions that might preclude them from attending one or more live sessions or to report at their clinical placement site, students must provide their faculty member with as much information as they can regarding the potential absence and how it will affect completion of course work or requirements.

Once the student has notified their instructor of the planned absences, they are asked to talk with their instructor no later than the end of the first week of the term to discuss how they will make up

the missed class and/or clinical placement hours. When a student is absent for one or more live sessions due to military duties, it is likely that their instructor will assign them one or more supplemental or replacement assignments. The decision to assign supplemental or replacement work for absences due to military deployment rests in the sound discretion of the instructor as is the decision regarding the nature and kind of supplemental or replacement academic work that may be submitted by the student to fulfill the course requirements. Agreements by instructor and students on whether and how replacement or supplemental work will be done, and the dates of completion, should be completed in writing to confirm expectations and to avoid misunderstandings.

If the student will be absent from Practicum placement, they must discuss their anticipated absences with their Practicum instructor and Practicum Liaison. Students should review the Practicum Education Manual for their program, for policies relating to absences.

For urgent military matters in which students are called to service with little or no warning, they are required to notify all relevant faculty, the Academic Advisor, and the Program Director as soon as they know when they will be absent from class or practicum placement. To the extent feasible, the same process for determining expectations related to make-up work will be employed. If a student's deployment requires them to be disconnected from the internet, or with limited or no access to the internet, they must notify their Academic Advisor, their instructors, and, if in Practicum, their Practicum Instructor and Practicum Liaison of these extenuating circumstances.

Review Process to Address Student Professional and Academic Performance Issues

The SSW is committed to supporting student success and the achievement of academic and practice proficiency while also upholding professional standards and the expectations set forth by the SSW Standards of Professional Practice, University-wide Student Code of Conduct, and Code of Ethics.

A three-level review process is used to address student academic performance and professional conduct issues. A student will be reviewed at the level (1, 2 or 3) that is appropriate to the severity of the concern. 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. Faculty and administrators may share pertinent information with each other on a need-to-know basis for the purpose of identifying student issues and enhancing problem solving about those issues and concerns. Instances of academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism, cheating, unauthorized collaboration) are addressed in the processes described by the Simmons Academic Integrity Policy.

Reviews of students can occur for the following circumstances, among others:

- To identify need for academic support
- If a student fails to meet or maintain academic requirements
- To determine a remediation plan for a violation of the the academic integrity policy, SSW Standards of Professional Practice, University Student Code of Conduct, or NASW Code of Ethics
- If a student is terminated from a Practicum placement or internship either by the placement or by SSW administrators due to performance issues
- If a student is rejected by three agencies during the Practicum placement process in one term
- If a student exhibits behavior judged by faculty to be in violation of professional ethics and/or Simmons University, SSW, or program-specific policies
- If a student exhibits consistent pattern of unprofessional behavior in the classroom or in Practicum placements

The Three Levels of Review

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

Level 1

- The purpose of a Level 1 review is to alert the student and their Academic Advisor to the student's current academic status, so that the student can receive support. A Level 1 review is not punitive, but rather exists to ensure that students are made aware of the concern and have an opportunity to receive feedback from their instructor and/or Academic Advisor about areas of concern and suggestions for addressing the concerns. A few examples of situations triggering a Level 1 review are attendance issues, a poor grade, or missed assignment.
- A Level 1 review typically occurs when a faculty member or program administrator raises a flag or flags in [Starfish](#), which is advising software.
- Flags are raised when a faculty member has concerns about a student meeting academic criteria, whether related to professional behavior or academic performance. When the faculty member raises a flag in Starfish, it will alert the student to the faculty member's concern. The student's BSW Academic Advisor will also receive a notification when a flag is raised. The faculty member may choose to discuss those concerns directly with the student and seek to work with the student to resolve the difficulties. If not, the flag serves as a notice to the student and the student's Academic Advisor. The Academic Advisor may follow up with the student to discuss the circumstances that led to the student receiving a flag and offer support. If the student's Academic Advisor reaches out to discuss the flag(s), that constitutes a Level 2 review (see next section).

Level 2

- The purpose of a Level 2 review is to assist students in fully understanding and addressing the academic or professional conduct concerns that are negatively impacting their success in the program. A few examples of issues that may lead to a Level 2 review are repeated attendance problems, poor grades, and general difficulties meeting the standards and expectations of coursework, the practicum placement, the SSW or the SW profession.
- 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. A Level 2 review is a meeting that usually involves the student and the student's Academic Advisor. It can also include the appropriate faculty member and BSW program leadership.
- The student will be informed of the Level 2 review by their Academic Advisor, their instructor, and/or BSW program leadership. In preparation for the Level 2 meeting, the advisor or program administrator will gather information about the nature of the concern. The meeting

will be used to discuss the concerns and to develop an Action Plan to address those concerns. The 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 Action Plan. If a student elects to not participate in the Level 2 review process, their Academic Advisor and other relevant parties may choose to develop an Action Plan that the student is responsible to follow.

- All students on academic probation will have a Level 2 review meeting (see below for information about academic probation). In addition, if the problem arises in an external training site (e.g., Practicum placement), a Level 2 review meeting will be convened as soon as possible to develop an Action Plan and will include the Academic Advisor, the Director of Practicum Education.
- The Academic Advisor or other administrator overseeing the Level 2 review may determine that the Level 2 assessment is sufficient or that it would be in the student's and/or Simmons's best interests to conduct a more comprehensive review, pursuant to Level 3 (see next section).

Level 3

- Generally, a Level 3 review is called when serious or complex problematic patterns are identified with students or when the issues are serious enough to require formal consultation with faculty and the student. A student can be referred for a Level 3 review by a faculty member or administrator.
- 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 or Practicum placement.
- The BSW Program Director or their designee will convene a meeting with the student and other appropriate parties as needed (e.g., Practicum Director). It may also involve members of the SSW Academic Standards Committee, Simmons Academic Integrity Board, and the Simmons University Dean for Student Life or their designee. The student will be notified in writing of the concerns and meeting date, with sufficient time to prepare for and attend the meeting, as determined by the Program Director but typically at least three business days. If a student is unable to attend, or 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. The BSW Director or their designee conducting the Level 3 review will confer with other faculty and administrators to develop recommendations and a course of action based on the recommendations. The BSW Director or their designee will inform the student of the decision, which may include one of the following among others:
 - Continue the student in the program with no conditions.
 - Establish written conditions for the student's continuance in the program.

- Consult with or refer to another office, such as the Academic Integrity Board or the Simmons University Dean for Student Life or their designee
 - Dismiss student from the BSW program
 - Counsel student to change majors
- In any Level 3 review, there will 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. Decisions that result in dismissal from the BSW program can be appealed following the SSW dismissal appeal policy. Other appeals must be made within five calendar days of the student's receipt of the committee's decision. Appeals should be made in writing to the SSW Dean, or their designee, and may be made on these grounds only:
 - procedural error that unfairly affected the outcome of the committee's decision;
 - new information that was not reasonably available at the time to the review;
 - sanctions imposed are arbitrary and capricious, or disproportionate to the nature and severity of the offense and the cumulative conduct of the responding party.
- In some instances the Dean, BSW Program Director, Practicum Director, or their designees, may be consulted to determine whether a Level 3 review, a non-academic incident referral, or an academic integrity referral is the most appropriate course of action.
- If a University-level review is appropriate, the student will be notified. Situations that may result in referral include, but are not limited to: academic dishonesty; plagiarism; cheating; unlawful discrimination or harassment; sexual harassment; damage or destruction of University property; 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. The University may place the student on a temporary suspension until the case can be reviewed.
- Cases that are referred to another body may be referred back to the BSW Program Director, or their designee, for the purpose of developing a corrective plan. The BSW Program Director, or their designee, may consult with the Academic Standards Committee and/or the Dean of Student Experience, or their designees, for guidance in developing the corrective plan.

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

The Simmons University BSW Program is committed to ensuring that only those students who have demonstrated proficiency in the CSWE Core Competencies through coursework and field education enter the field of professional Social Work. This serves as a protection for clients and the Social Work profession and is a necessary component of the provision of ethical Social Work education. It is sometimes necessary to advise a student to reconsider their preferences for social work, to change their major, and to work with the Student Life Office, and Associate Dean for Student Life to evaluate additional options. Decisions to terminate a student from the BSW Program are made jointly among SSW Program faculty and administrators. The basis for this decision will be based upon one or more of the following:

1. Failure to maintain the academic performance standards of the Program: BSW students must maintain at least a 2.0 overall grade point average, and achieve a C or better in each required Social Work core course (including courses with a RGS/WGSS designation);
2. Failure in Practicum Placement: BSW students must receive a satisfactory Student Practicum Assessment from their practicum supervisor at the end of each semester of the senior year;
3. Failure to secure a senior practicum placement after multiple attempts. See practicum handbook for specific details.
4. Violation of the Simmons University Code of Conduct, including cheating or plagiarism;
5. Failure to uphold professional Social Work values and ethics as articulated in the *NASW Code of Ethics* and the SSW Standards for Professional Practice Education (See [Appendix 1](#)).

Notification of Dismissal from the BSW Major

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

Appeal of Dismissal from the BSW Major

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

Removal from an Accelerated Track in the BSW Program

- Students enrolled in the 3+1 BSW/MSW track must earn a grade of B or better in each Social Work Core Course. Students earning less than a B in any core course will be scheduled for a Review of Academic Performance and may be removed from the accelerated track. In this

case, the student will continue in the BSW Program along the traditional 4-year track toward graduation.

Procedures for Student Grievances and Complaints

Overview

Students have the right to grieve actions or decisions, which can include grieving a final grade, appealing status decisions, appealing a sanction related to an Academic Standards, Academic Integrity, or Student Code of Conduct finding, or filing a complaint. Specifically, students can:

- Appeal a final grade for a BSW course by following the grade appeal process. (See next section for more detail.)
- Appeal a final grade for a non-BSW course by following the grade appeal process. (See next section for more detail.)
- Appeal a dismissal from the BSW Program by writing a letter to the SSW Dean or designee that addresses allowable appeal criteria. (See subsequent section for more detail.)
- Appeal a dismissal from Simmons University. (See subsequent section for more detail.)
- Appeal a sanction pertaining to an academic integrity violation or academic misconduct (see Simmons Academic Integrity Guidebook, and prior section on the levels of review and Academic Standards Committee.)

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

- For a class-related issue, a student should first discuss the issue with the instructor.
- If discussion with the instructor is not appropriate to the situation, or the student is dissatisfied with the outcome, the concern can be brought to their Academic Advisor.
- If discussion with the Academic Advisor is not appropriate to the situation, or if the student is dissatisfied with the outcome, the issue can be brought to the Program Director or their designee. Except where otherwise stated, the decision of the Program Director, or their designee, is final for student complaints, grievances, and appeals.

For Ethical Complaints and Grievances, please see here: <https://www.simmons.edu/report-incident>

Students' Right to Appeal Final BSW Grades

- Appeals of final grades for a BSW course can occur for the following three reasons: computational error; arbitrariness or capriciousness; unlawful discrimination (described in the Simmons University Course Catalog). If a student believes that they have the basis to appeal a final grade, they should follow the grade appeal procedures and deadlines outlined below.
- A grade appeal must be initiated within ten instructional days of the semester following the term of the grade under appeal. A student cannot appeal a grade after they have graduated.

Appealing a BSW Grade: Procedures and Deadlines

1. Informal Resolution with Course Faculty Member

If the student believes they have received an unfair course grade, they shall attempt to resolve the matter informally with the faculty member who assigned the grade. The faculty member shall meet with the student to consider their reasons for believing the final grade to be unfair. If the faculty member does not believe there is merit for a grade change, they notify the student. The student may then proceed to the second step below. If the faculty member believes there is reason to change the grade, they inform their BSW Program Director in writing, including a clear explanation of the reason for the change that is consistent with the terms of this grade appeal policy. If the BSW Program Director approves this grade change, they then submit it to their Dean for approval; if the Dean approves, they inform the Registrar and the student of the approved grade change.

Deadline: The student must make their appeal to the faculty member no later than the tenth day of instruction of the semester following the assignment of the grade under appeal. If the grade is not to be changed, the faculty member will notify the student of their decision within five days of instruction of their meeting. If the grade is to be changed, the faculty member informs their Academic unit head within five days of instruction.

2. Formal Appeal to the BSW Program Director or their Designee

If, after receiving the faculty member's determination (as described above), the student continues to dispute the accuracy of the final grade and wishes to continue the grade appeal process, the student may submit the formal Grade Appeal petition, using the grade appeal form which can be requested through the student's Academic Advisor. As part of the Grade Appeal petition, the student must provide a written statement that includes the student's reasons for appealing the grade, all supporting course materials, and any other supporting materials. The Program Director, or their designee, shall review the Grade Appeal petition and attendant materials. As part of their review, the Program Director or designee may meet with the student, faculty member, and/or other relevant faculty, staff, or administrators, and may request the submission of additional supporting materials. If the program director's, or designee's, review determines that there is no merit to the grade appeal, they will inform the student that the final grade stands. If they agree that the grade should be changed, they complete a "Change of Grade" form, including a clear explanation of the reason for the change that is consistent with the terms of this grade appeal policy, and submit the "Change of Grade" form to the Director of Student Support who will approve and submit to the Registrar.

Deadlines: The student must submit an appeal with the Program Director within ten calendar days after notice of the decision in "first step" above.

3. Formal Appeal to the SSW Dean or their designee

If, after receiving and completing steps 1 and 2 above, the student continues to dispute the accuracy of the final grade and wishes to continue the grade appeal process, the student may submit the formal Grade Appeal petition to the SSW Dean, who may review the appeal directly or delegate it to a designee. As part of the Grade Appeal petition, the student must provide a written statement that includes the student's reasons for appealing the grade, all supporting course materials, and any other supporting materials. The Dean, or designee, shall review the petition and attendant materials, and follow the same process described in Step 2. The decision of the SSW Dean, or designee, is final, and no higher appeals will be heard.

Deadlines: The student must submit a written statement grade appeal to the Dean within ten calendar days of the notice of the decision in the "second step" above.

Students' Right to Appeal Dismissal from the BSW Program

Appeal Process

- The student may appeal a dismissal decision, in writing, to the SSW Dean or their designee. A written appeal must be received within three (3) calendar days of the date of the dismissal letter from the Program Director, and should be submitted using the dismissal appeal form (available from the Program Director). This appeal does not constitute a new review process. Rather, it is a request by a student to have the Dean review the original record of the dismissal on one or more of the following grounds:
 1. one or more errors in the dismissal process;
 2. new evidence or information material to the case that was not available at the time of the dismissal process; or
 3. a substantive error occurred because the decision maker misinterpreted evidence used in the dismissal process.
- The appeal letter should include an explanation regarding the grounds for appeal and should reference one or more of the three grounds for appeal listed in this policy. The student shall provide the Director, or their designee, all relevant documentation necessary for the appeal to be considered. The decision of the SSW Dean, or their designee, is final.
- If the appeal is premised on a grading dispute, the grade appeal process will be completed before the SSW Dean will decide on the dismissal appeal. Regardless of the premise of the appeal, the student's written appeal of dismissal must be received by the SSW Dean within three (3) calendar days of the date of the dismissal letter.

Procedures for Appeals Outside of the BSW Program

Students can appeal a final grade for non-BSW courses. Grade appeals can occur for the following three reasons: computational error; arbitrariness or capriciousness; unlawful discrimination. If a student believes that they have the basis to appeal a final grade, they should follow the grade appeal procedures and deadlines outlined below.

- First step: Informal Resolution with Course Faculty Member.
 - If the student believes they have received an unfair course grade, they shall attempt to resolve the matter informally with the faculty member who assigned the grade. The faculty member shall meet with the student to consider their reasons for believing the final grade to be unfair. If the faculty member does not believe there is merit for a grade change, they notify the student. The student may then proceed to the second step below. If the faculty member believes there is reason to change the grade, they inform their Academic unit head in writing, including a clear explanation of the reason for the change that is consistent with the terms of this grade appeal policy. If the Academic unit head approves this grade change, they then submit to their Dean for approval; if the Dean approves, they inform the Registrar and the student of the approved grade change.
- Second Step: Informal Resolution with Academic Unit Head.
 - If, after the faculty member's notification of their consideration of the initial grade appeal, the student continues to believe that the grade is unfairly assigned, the student shall meet with the Academic unit head of the Program in which the course was taken and explain the grounds for their grade appeal. The student will provide all supporting course materials. The Academic unit head shall meet with the faculty member. If the faculty member, after discussion with the Academic unit head, agrees that the grade should be changed, they follow the process outlined in Step 1, above. If the faculty member does not agree, the student may proceed to the third step below.
- Third Step: Dean's Review.
 - If, after seeking informal resolution with the Academic unit head, the student continues to believe that the assigned grade is unfair and wishes to pursue the appeal, the student may submit a written appeal to the relevant Dean's Office. The written statement includes the student's reasons for appealing the grade and any supporting materials. The Dean or their designate shall meet, separately and/or together, with the student and the faculty member and may ask for a written statement from the faculty member. Additionally, the Dean or their designate shall meet with the Academic unit head. If the Dean's Review determines that there is no merit to the grade appeal, the Dean informs the student that the final grade stands. The grade appeal process ends here.
- Fourth Step: Faculty Grade Appeal Committee.
 - If the Dean's Review determines that there is merit to the grade appeal, the Dean will refer the appeal to a Faculty Grade Appeal Committee.

Reapplying after Dismissal from Simmons University

Students who are dismissed from the Simmons University, and have been denied reinstatement, must wait at least one year from the date of program dismissal before reapplying. A new application must be submitted and is reviewed by the Dean and BSW Program Director or their individual designees. Prior admission does not guarantee subsequent admission. Students readmitted after a dismissal are not eligible to appeal future dismissals.

Leaves of Absences and Withdrawal from the University

Voluntary Leave of Absence

- An undergraduate degree candidate may apply for a leave of absence at any time after they enroll at the University through the form on the Office of the Registrar's website. The leave of absence may extend for a period of up to two calendar years from the start of the leave. The student may return to the University at the beginning of any term within that period by notifying the Office of the Registrar at least one month prior to the first day of class if they were in good standing at the start of the leave.
- Registered students who apply for a leave after the eighth week of a semester must have their records reviewed by the Administrative Board. If the Board determines that the student was progressing unsatisfactorily in their courses at the time their leave began, the Board may impose an appropriate academic sanction (e.g., letter of warning, probation, removal from degree candidacy, or exclusion from the University). In such cases the student may apply for readmission to the University when they wish to return. Non-degree candidates are not eligible to apply for a leave of absence.
- Once the Leave of Absence form is submitted, students should schedule an exit meeting to review the Leave of Absence check list with a Success Coach using Starfish to ensure everything is in order before beginning their leave.
- If, during the leave, the student wishes to take courses at another institution and transfer the credit to Simmons, they must obtain prior approval from the Office of the Registrar.
- Students must meet with their academic advisor and the Dean for Student Affairs or their designee to confirm leave plans and must obtain their signatures on the application. Students who are financial aid recipients must meet with a financial aid counselor before taking a leave. All undergraduates must meet with a Success Coach from Advising to review the leave of absence check-list to ensure they have everything in order before beginning their leave.
- The transcript of a student who begins a leave after the fourth week of classes will show a "W" for each of their courses. The statement "Leave of Absence" and the effective date will be recorded on the transcript. Refund policies for students on leave of absence are the same as those for students who withdraw from the University.

Involuntary Leave of Absence

- Simmons University is committed to the safety and well-being of its community members and the integrity of the living and learning environment. Our goals are therefore to maintain the health and safety of each individual in our community and to enable all enrolled students to participate fully in the life of the University.
- In instances in which a student's mental, emotional, or medical health pose a threat to themselves and/or others, becomes a barrier to appropriate or prescribed levels of self-care, or causes significant disruption to the activities of the University community, such a student may be required to take an involuntary leave of absence from the University.
- 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 health care setting to undergo intensive medical or psychological treatment (hospitalization, intensive outpatient or inpatient program), the Office of Student Affairs, 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 led to them being placed on leave and will be directed to the process for return. The student's parent, guardian, emergency contact may be notified if the student is in a potentially dangerous situation.
- Any student placed on an involuntary leave of absence will not be allowed to remain on campus. This includes living in a residence hall, attending classes, and participating in Simmons sponsored events.
- In circumstances when the student has not met direct threat/inpatient criteria, the Office of Student Affairs may, based on observable/recorded behavior, still require a student to undergo an individualized psychological and/or medical assessment in order to make an informed decision regarding the student's ability to meet the academic, social and emotional requirements of being a Simmons student.
- This evaluation can be conducted by a member of the University's clinical staff, or by a student's external health care provider who is treating the student. The student will be required to sign a release that gives permission to the University's designated clinical personnel to speak with their 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 listed above, then they 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 Office of Student Affairs may impose other conditions and/or requirements that the student would be required to comply with as a condition of continued enrollment at the University.
- In any instance in which a leave is required, the Office of Student Affairs will provide written notice to the student, including the specific requirements that must be met as a condition of eligibility for re-enrollment, the time line for initiating and completing the return process, as well as the procedure for appealing the decision. In most instances, 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) prior to and during the leave process.

- The duration of the leave is typically no fewer than six full months, although the specific length of the leave will be based on the student's individualized assessment and determined by the Associate Dean or designee on a case-by-case basis. When a student takes a leave before the end of a semester, whether voluntary or involuntary, Simmons' usual tuition and residence hall 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 health care 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 Office of Student Affairs. Following the interview with an individual of the clinical staff, a recommendation that is based off the student's report, their treatment history, information gathered from the external treatment facility, and/or a student's personal health care provider, will be shared with the Office of Student Affairs regarding the student's readiness to return. Then, on a case-by-case basis, the Office of Student Affairs will make a determination if the student is permitted to return to the Simmons community. If it is determined that the student can return, the student will meet with the Office of Student Affairs to establish a plan to return to the University and identify community resources. 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 as well as the activities associated in 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 Office of Student Affairs 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 Office of the Provost.

Withdrawal from the University

- If a student withdraws from all of their courses, fails to return from leave of absence after the date approved by the registrar, or fails to register for any courses by the end of the fourth week of classes, they are considered to have withdrawn from the University. No student will be permitted to register after the fourth week of the semester. All University expenses incurred by the student before their withdrawal must be paid in full prior to the release of their official records.
- An undergraduate wishing to leave the University should fill out the official undergraduate withdrawal form to notify the Office of the Registrar in writing in advance of their departure. They should also have an exit interview with Undergraduate Advising, the Office of Student Affairs, and the Office of Student Financial Services. Students are urged to consult their parents or guardians and review the University's refund policy before deciding to withdraw from the University.

Opportunities for Student Input, Involvement, and Recognition

Student Feedback on the Explicit and Implicit Curriculum

Explicit Curriculum Surveys

- **End-of-Semester Course Evaluations.** Each course is anonymously evaluated by students by the last class meeting. The evaluations can be reviewed by the instructor only after student grades have been submitted. Evaluations are reviewed by the instructor and program directors and/or their designees.

Implicit Curriculum Survey

- Each year, all current BSW students are asked to complete a confidential survey about the following aspects of the program: overall experience, advising and other supports, professional development and preparation, sense of community, practicum, sense of belonging among students with marginalized identities, and likelihood to stay connected. This survey was created with considerable student feedback, including during development, piloting, and refinement. The responses are analyzed and findings are shared with faculty, staff, and students and used to inform program improvement.

Alumni Survey

- Each year, recent BSW graduates (< 1yr) are asked to complete a confidential survey about the following areas: education and employment status, licensure plan/status, career goals, satisfaction with the program, and suggestions for improvement. This survey was created with considerable student feedback, including during development, piloting, and refinement. The responses are analyzed and findings are shared with faculty, staff, and students and used to inform program improvement.

Serving on the Faculty Committees

- Students are invited to serve as representative members of the Curriculum Committee (BSW/MSW) and the Assessment and Accreditation Committee (BSW/MSW/DSW) where they share their feedback on a variety of critical work, such as syllabi revisions and measure development.

Student Leadership Opportunities

Simmons University and the School of Social Work are committed to student participation and encourage students to exercise their rights and responsibilities in formulating and modifying policies that affect academic and student affairs.

As a demonstration of this commitment, the University, SSW, and BSW Program have implemented policies and procedures to maximize student participation. At the University level, undergraduate students of all majors are encouraged to seek election to the Student Government Association (SGA) and various SGA committees so that they may have a direct link to influencing University-wide policies that affect academics and co-curricular life.

The University also has over 50 student-led organizations that provide robust opportunities for students to hold leadership positions, contribute to the campus community, and shape decision making in all areas of life at Simmons. In addition, it is especially important to the School of Social Work that students have a real voice in decisions that impact them.

BSW Program Committee

- The BSW program has created a BSW Committee that is composed of faculty and student representation. Representatives on this committee have the opportunity to meet several times per year with faculty advisors. They have the opportunity to share common BSW student priorities, needs, and concerns and have a voice in shaping and modifying policies and decisions related to the curriculum and student affairs. In this way, the BSW Program supports and ensures that students are able to exercise their rights and responsibilities in shaping Program development and change. Students are encouraged to participate in this valuable opportunity.

Social Work Liaison/Club

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

BSW Social Work Awards

Spirit of Social Work Award

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

The Community Service Leadership Award

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

The Excellence in Practicum Education Award

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

Phi Alpha National Social Work Honor Society

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

- Declared a social work major
- Completed at least 48 credits (37.5% of the 128 total credits needed to graduate)
- Completed at least 9 credits in social work courses
- Achieved an overall GPA in the top 35% of eligible students

Students who meet the criteria for membership laid out by the Phi Alpha National Social Work Honor Society are inducted into Phi Alpha during a formal ceremony. Once inducted, members are expected to maintain high standards of academic excellence and professional conduct, participate fully in membership meetings and events, and work to foster a sense of community and meaningful engagement among the membership.

Additional Relevant Policies

BSW Program Credit Transfer Policy

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

BSW Program Policy Regarding Credit for Life and Work Experience

- The Simmons College BSW Program is enriched by a student body with a diverse range of life and work experiences. Students with previous or current human service work, life experiences, and volunteer experience offer a unique perspective that supplements their classroom and field learning and often adds to the depth and breadth of their understanding of social work concepts and methods. Although the value of these experiences is acknowledged, it is the Program's policy that no social work course credit will be granted for students' life experience or previous work experience.
- The Simmons College BSW Program curriculum has been designed as an integration of academic coursework and field placement learning that infuses specific content that is in keeping with social work tradition and is necessary for the mastery of knowledge, values, and

skills required for competent, ethical generalist social work practice. Therefore, the student's formal learning in professional social work begins at the point of entry into the Program. Students are encouraged to utilize their life and work experience as a foundation for building, expanding, and refining their social work knowledge, values, and skills.

Simmons University Policy on Technology Requirements

- It is the student's responsibility to assure proper technology (e.g., computer, webcam) and reliable access to the internet/technology prior to synchronous sessions, and exams in particular in order to complete course work (e.g., exams, synchronous/asynchronous sessions, assignments). If a student anticipates a technology issue prior to any of these situations, they should notify their instructor and Academic Advisor proactively.

Simmons University Policy Recording of Live Sessions

- Simmons and/or Simmons's technology partner may record and store any session conducted through the Learning Management System in accordance with the Terms of Use and Privacy Policy.

Simmons University Policy on Programs of Study

- The University makes all reasonable efforts to deliver the programs of study, other services, and facilities in the way described in its materials and on its website. However, the University shall be entitled, if it reasonably considers it to be necessary (including in order to manage its resources and pursue its policy of continuous improvement appropriately):
 - To alter the timetable, location, number of classes and method of delivery of programs of study, provided such alterations are reasonable.
 - To make reasonable variations to the content and syllabus of programs of study (including in relation to placements).
 - To suspend or discontinue programs of study to make changes to its policies and procedures which the University reasonably considers necessary. Such changes if significant will normally come into force at the beginning of the following academic year, and if fundamental to the program will normally come into force with effect from the next cohort of students.
 - Not to provide programs of study or to combine them with others if the University reasonably considers this to be necessary (for example, because too few students apply to join the program for it to be viable).
- Finally, Simmons University maintains a variety of policies, which all students are expected to be familiar with. Explore the course catalog and Simmons website to learn more.

Appendices

Appendix 1: SSW Standards of Professional Practice

The ultimate goal of Simmons University School of Social Work (SSW) Standards for Professional Practice is to help students have a successful experience at the SSW and be prepared for post-graduate social work practice, leadership, and scholarship. The foundation of this document includes the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics and the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Educational Policies. These standards are presented in a social work framework that values diversity of perspectives and experiences. As an SSW student, you will be informed of the Standards for Professional Practice at the time of admission to the SSW and at new student orientation (orientation varies depending on program). The standards are on the SSW website and also in each program's student handbook.

Simmons University SSW is committed to preparing its graduates to be highly competent, ethical social work practitioners, leaders, and scholars. Faculty make a commitment to providing students with a curriculum that supports their educational and professional development and that assists them in adherence to these standards. NASW governs professional standards and conduct for all social workers. Additionally, CSWE mandates that the SSW promote and evaluate the professional development of students in its social work programs (BSW, MSW, and DSW). Likewise, the SSW is responsible to the community at large for graduating knowledgeable, ethical, and skilled social work professionals whose practice, leadership, and scholarship reflect the competencies and values of the social work profession. Achieving professionalism in social work requires your commitment to and demonstration of the values of the social work profession.

In addition to the standards outlined in this document, SSW students are expected to abide by the NASW Code of Ethics (NASW, 2021), the policies outlined in the SSW Student Handbook and in the Simmons University Handbook, which includes the Simmons University Code of Conduct and policy on Academic Integrity.

***NASW Ethical Principles:**

1. Service
2. Social Justice
3. Dignity and worth of the person
4. Importance of human relationships
5. Integrity
6. Competence.

Procedures for addressing a violation of the Standards for Professional Practice or any of the ethics, codes, or policies identified above are outlined in the SSW Student Handbooks and the Simmons University Code of Conduct.

To participate in a Simmons social work degree program, you are expected to satisfy its requirements, including the professional standards, *with or without accommodations*. If you seek reasonable accommodations, you must contact the Simmons Office of Accessibility Services. This office will determine your eligibility for accommodations and/or services.

<i>Simmons Standard of Professional Practice</i>	NASW Professional Ethical Principle(s) to meet the Standard*
1. Self-Awareness Expectations to meet the standard: 1. Accurately assess strengths and limitations and provide evidence of observable, sustained improvement over time through ongoing self-reflection and the demonstrated integration of external feedback in practice across all settings (e.g., practicum, classroom, campus, including interactions with faculty, staff, and peers, and the larger community). 2. Actively examine and address personal privilege and biases on an ongoing basis, demonstrating awareness of their impact and taking steps to mitigate potential harm through self-reflection and the integration of external feedback (e.g., supervision, faculty, and staff input). 3. Seek supervision and demonstrate the consistent and effective application of constructive feedback to inform practice, leadership, and scholarship. 4. Take responsibility for actions and demonstrate accountability by acknowledging impact and making sustained behavioral adjustments 5. Critically examine the relationship between personal values, beliefs, and socialization and professional ethics, and demonstrate the ability to reconcile conflicts by consistently aligning behavior with the standards of the <i>NASW Code of Ethics</i>	• 2. Social Justice • 5. Integrity • 6. Competence

<i>Simmons Standard of Professional Practice</i>	NASW Professional Ethical Principle(s) to meet the Standard*
2. Communication Expectations to meet the standard: 1. Demonstrate awareness of your surroundings when discussing client information. Client cases should not be discussed outside of supervision, or used as examples in written work or presentations without client permission 2. In written work, communicate at a level that reflects the academic standards of SSW programs, including honest and ethical use of any artificial intelligence (AI) platforms and APA citation in accordance with assignment guidelines and rubrics, as well as School and University policies 3. Demonstrate a willingness and ability to actively listen to others with objectivity and openness 4. Communicate responsibly and respectfully, with speech that is free of bias, discriminatory language, stereotyping, and plagiarism in all interactions with colleagues, faculty, practicum instructors, staff, and clients, consistent with NASW Code of Ethics (2.01). 5. Advocate for yourself in an ethical, direct, respectful, and responsible manner using SSW and agency-specific channels for conflict management	• 3. Dignity and Worth of a Person • 5. Integrity • 6. Competence
3. Respect for Diversity and Social Justice Expectations to meet the standard: 1. Exhibit a willingness to relate and work nonjudgmentally across differences with others 2. Demonstrate knowledge of, and sensitivity to diversity, oppression, and privilege, including a willingness to examine personal beliefs, values, and assumptions that perpetuate oppression	• 2. Social Justice • 3. Dignity and Worth of a Person
4. Electronic Communication and Use of Social Media Expectations to meet the standard: 1. Demonstrate respect for the privacy of your clients; refrain from gathering information about clients from online sources without the client's consent (e.g., googling client history, accessing client social media); photographing clients; or publishing client information on social media 2. Communicate about and with colleagues and peers with respect and accuracy, refraining from any cyberbullying, harassment, making derogatory or defamatory comments, or disclosing personal information without consent. 3. Follow relevant laws, agency policy, <i>NASW Code of Ethics</i> (1.07) pertaining to social media and the use of technology (e.g. artificial intelligence) in all aspects of service delivery	• 3. Dignity and Worth of a Person • 5. Integrity • 6. Competence

<i>Simmons Standard of Professional Practice</i>	NASW Professional Ethical Principle(s) to meet the Standard*
4. Maintain clear boundaries in social media use, demonstrating awareness that posts and interactions can impact professional relationships with peers, faculty, staff, clients, colleagues, and agencies	
<i>5. Openness and Willingness to Learn; Flexibility and Adaptability</i> Expectations to meet the standard: 1. Demonstrate openness to learning new ideas and perspectives, recognizing that professional social work practice requires continual learning, humility, and reflective practice. This openness strengthens professional competence and enhances one's capacity to serve individuals, families, and communities 2. As required by the demands of professional practice, be flexible and adaptable in new situations and as circumstances change, recognizing that responsive and evolving practice is necessary to effectively meet the needs of those we serve and to address complex social problems 3. Assume the stance of a learner with humility; avoid relying solely on current or past professional experiences to inform your judgment or decision-making in the practicum and in the classroom. Students are expected to remain open to new knowledge, perspectives, supervision, and feedback in order to continually develop their professional expertise 4. Demonstrate a willingness to effectively communicate your learning needs and request clarification to understand requirements. Students are expected to engage peers, instructors, and supervisors as partners in the learning process and contribute to the professional learning community	• 1. Service • 4. Importance of Human Relationships • 6. Competence
<i>6. Physical and Cognitive Ability, Critical Thinking</i> Expectations to meet the standard: 1. Attend and actively participate in classes and practicum as scheduled, demonstrating punctuality, dependability, accountability, and the ability to prioritize responsibilities. As necessary, utilize formal accommodations to support attainment of these aims 2. Navigate transportation needed to attend practicum and meet classroom requirements 3. Responsibly use the technologies required to engage in scholarship and effective practice, including, but not limited to, use of computers, cellphones, artificial intelligence platforms, agency electronic records and databases, and social media 4. Demonstrate the ability to acquire knowledge and reflect on experiences to inform practice	• 4. Importance of Human Relationships • 5. Integrity • 6. Competence

<i>Simmons Standard of Professional Practice</i>	NASW Professional Ethical Principle(s) to meet the Standard*
5. Demonstrate the capacity to think critically and to apply effective problem-solving skills that are well-reasoned, examine multiple perspectives and worldviews, integrate evidence and knowledge, and lead to well-supported decisions and conclusions	
<i>7. Emotional and Mental Stability, and Stress Management</i> Expectations to meet the standard: 1. In accordance with the <i>NASW Code of Ethics</i> (4.05), demonstrate the ability to honor the best interests of people to whom you have professional responsibility by keeping personal life circumstances or problems from interfering with judgment or performance 2. Students are expected to maintain the emotional and mental stability necessary to meet academic and practicum expectations. The academic environment is not intended to function as a therapeutic space; therefore, when stress or mental health concerns interfere with functioning, students are expected to seek appropriate support, which may include a leave of absence. In practicum settings in particular, students must be sufficiently mentally fit to engage safely and effectively, and an inability to do so may constitute a violation of program expectations. 3. Demonstrate professional boundaries, including ethical use of self-disclosure	• 5. Integrity • 6. Competence
<i>8. Professional Values and Ethics</i> Expectations to meet the standard: 1. Exhibit judgment and conduct that is consistent with the values and ethics of the profession as stated in the <i>NASW Code of Ethics</i>, as well as with established laws, policies, and professional standards 2. In accordance with <i>NASW Code of Ethics</i> section on: Dishonesty, Fraud, and Deception (4.04), you should not participate in, condone, or be associated with dishonesty, fraud, or deception 3. Demonstrate professional and academic integrity, including exhibiting truthfulness in fulfilling program requirements. Students should remain aware of and abide by the Simmons Honor Code 4. Follow Federal and State laws and agency policies regarding confidentiality and mandatory reporting	• 2. Social Justice • 3. Dignity and Worth of the person • 5. Integrity • 6. Competence

Appendix 2: Simmons SSW Generative Artificial Intelligence Policy for Students

At the Simmons University School of Social Work, our approach to Generative AI is informed by the NASW Code of Ethics and social work values, and shaped through a process of shared faculty governance. We are committed to fostering a learning environment that prioritizes human relational pedagogy, ensuring that generative AI serves to enhance, rather than replace, the critical thinking, empathy, and human connection essential to social work practice. In alignment with our commitment to social justice, we acknowledge the risk for algorithmic bias, inequity, along with other ethical considerations and strive to create transparency and accountability in all generative AI-supported work.

- **Acceptable Generative AI Use:** Students may use generative AI tools as a tool for brainstorming, outlining, or understanding complex concepts, provided the instructor has approved the usage.
- **Prohibited Generative AI Use:** Generative AI tools may not be used to write entire papers, not credited as original content by students, create clinical case notes, generate case analysis answers, or complete quizzes/exams.
- **Ethical Concerns & Privacy:** Do not input any personal, confidential, or sensitive information regarding clients, practicum internship agencies, or research participants into public AI tools.
- **Academic Integrity and Citation:** Any generative AI-assisted work must be documented. If generative AI is used, you must include an appendix containing the prompt, the output, and a reflection on how you refined the content. Treat AI-generated text as a direct quote if it is copied directly, requiring proper citation (e.g., APA style for AI).
- **Verification and Accuracy:** Students are responsible for verifying all information provided by generative AI, as these tools often produce inaccurate information ("hallucinations") or perpetrate biases.
- **Routine proofreading, spelling, grammar, accessibility, and productivity tools** are not considered generative AI for the purposes of this policy unless they are used to generate or substantially rewrite content.

Declaration of the Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI):

As part of your academic responsibilities, you are required to disclose any use of generative AI tools, in the preparation of your assignments for this class. The use of generative AI should not replace your own critical thinking, creativity, close reading, or original analysis. Your submitted work must ultimately reflect your own effort and understanding of the course materials. This declaration is designed to promote academic integrity, transparency, and the ethical use of generative AI. Failing to disclose generative AI assistance may be considered a violation of academic integrity in this course.

Appendix 3: The Simmons Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

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

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

Our Diversity & Inclusion Mission

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

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

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

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

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

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

We recognize, respect and honor the inherent individuality of all. We strive to ensure that all decisions concerning the educational progress of students are based on considerations appropriate to an academic institution and not on factors such as race, color, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, religion, age, national origin, ancestry, disability, or veteran status. All students are given equal access to the University's programs and resources. Admission to the University's undergraduate baccalaureate program considers people who self-identify as women. The University is committed to admitting qualified students of any race, color, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, religion, age, national origin, ancestry, disability, or veteran status to all programs and activities made generally available to students at the University, including scholarship and loan programs, athletic programs, and other University-administered student services, and social, educational and recreational programs.

We subscribe to the policies set forth in Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which mandates equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities in educational programs and activities.

We are committed to creating an atmosphere where diversity is supported with understanding, respect, and encouragement. The University does not tolerate unlawful or other harassment of employees or students. Any discrimination or harassment by any member of the faculty, staff, or student body against any other member of the community will be handled according to the process articulated in the Bias Response Protocol, Title IX Policy, Faculty Policy Manual, Employee Handbook, and other relevant Simmons policies.

Appendix 4: Notice of Non-Discrimination

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

Simmons is, therefore, committed to the following principles:

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