



Simmons University
Baccalaureate Nursing Student Handbook

Academic Year 2023-2024

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About This Handbook

The Simmons University Baccalaureate Nursing Student Handbook contains University policies, guidelines, and procedures relating to Simmons Nursing Programs and is meant to supplement the [Simmons University Student Code of Conduct](#) described below. Students are responsible for knowing the information contained in the Handbook and are bound to the policies, guidelines, and procedures as soon as they become a nursing student. When the program policies, guidelines, and procedures contained in this handbook are more rigorous than the general university policies, guidelines, and procedures; the program policies, guidelines, and procedures contained in this handbook will supersede the general university policies, guidelines, and procedures. The Handbook is reviewed annually.

The policies, guidelines, procedures, and other information contained in the Handbook are not intended to, nor do they create any contractual rights for students. The Simmons School of Nursing (SoN) reserves the right to change any of the policies, guidelines, procedures, and other information contained in the Handbook at any time. If you have questions regarding any of these policies, guidelines, procedures, or other information, please contact the Chair of the School of Nursing.

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

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

Overview

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

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

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

Vision

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

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

Mission

The School of Nursing is preeminently known for its transformative, learner-centered education preparing students to become compassionate, patient and family-centered clinicians who care for diverse populations. Our program of study is designed to prepare nurses in various spheres of health care to be future leaders who are clinically expert, socially and scientifically grounded, inquisitive and curious. Our graduates engage in nursing practice that is exemplified by caring, scholarship, leadership, and advocacy commensurate with their level of preparation in order to advance nursing science and address the significant health concerns within our global society.

Philosophy

The Nursing Program offers a liberal arts and professional education which is fundamental to an appreciation of individuals as citizens in a global society and the development of communication, critical thinking, and clinical judgment skills to address the health care needs of a diverse world.

Professional nursing is focused on the unique relationship with patients and families and the diagnosis and treatment of their human responses to actual or potential health problems within and across various care settings.

As a member of the interprofessional healthcare team, the nurse is committed to promoting, restoring, and maintaining health, or supporting a peaceful death using knowledge from the natural sciences, behavioral sciences, and aesthetics.

Professional nurses are ethically and legally accountable for their actions within and across various care settings. The nurse independently utilizes the nursing process as a basis for the practice of professional nursing in accordance with the Standards of Nursing Practice and the [ANA Code of Ethics](#). As an advocate, the nurse applies principles of caring and empathy to guide moral choices on behalf of the patients and families being cared for and serves as an active participant in the social and political processes that influence the health care delivery system.

Accreditation

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

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

Baccalaureate Program Tracks

The School of Nursing offers a number of programs for different types of students. Specifically, we offer:

- Traditional 4-year BS in Nursing
 - 8-Semester nursing course sequence
- The Dorothea Lynde Dix Scholars Program, designed for students who are 24 years or older, provides adults with the opportunity to benefit from the unique combination of liberal arts and sciences, as well as professional study that Simmons undergraduate programs offer. Our Nursing Dix Scholars Programs:
 - 16-month program for individuals with a previous BA/BS who wish to accelerate
 - 2-year option for those without a baccalaureate degree or those desiring a part-time program
- In our innovative 4+1 year BS/MS in nursing program, students complete an accelerated BS in Nursing curriculum prepared for the registered nurse licensure (NCLEX) exam. Upon passing, students move into the graduate portion of the program, which consists of three components – foundational courses, primary care, and research. We prepare students to deliver primary health care to diverse populations across the lifespan.
- RN to BSN program

Course sequences for each of these programs as well as course descriptions can be found in the Simmons University Undergraduate Course Catalog for the BSN program.

Professional Standards that Guide the Baccalaureate Program Include:

- The American Nurses Association Standards of Clinical Practice
- The American Nurses Association Nursing Code Ethics
- The American Nurses Association Social Policy Statement
- The American Association of Colleges of Nursing Essentials of Baccalaureate Education for Professional Nursing Practice
- The Nurse of the Future Core Competencies
- Institute of Medicine's Core Competencies for all Healthcare Professionals
- Quality and Safety Education for Nurses

Technical Standards

The faculty has outlined technical standards of students in the program. See Addendum III for a description of these technical standards. The School of Nursing requires cognitive, affective communications

and psychomotor functions. The nature of the nursing profession requires students to participate in clinical and laboratory course work that is, at times, physically demanding and requires certain physical strength, agility, endurance, perceptual skills, and other attributes.

Outcomes for Simmons Baccalaureate Nursing Program

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

Please see Addendum 1: Congruence between Values and Learner Outcomes of the University and the School of Nursing (SoN) on Page 44.

Important Notices

The principles and policies outlined in this section apply to admissions, progression, attendance, academic integrity, use of social media, course exemption, advanced placement, transfer, advanced placement or transfer of military education, training or service, education mobility, withdrawal, re-admission, graduation, student rights and grievances.

Non-Discrimination and Title IX Policies

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

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

[Admissions Notice of Non-Discrimination](#)

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

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

[Gender-based Misconduct Policy](#)

CNBHS Statement of Solidarity for Racial Justice

The College of Natural, Behavioral, and Health Sciences is [committed to racial justice](#). We believe that scientists and health professionals must have the benefit of diverse perspectives in and outside the classroom. We recognize the need to instill students with knowledge about racial/ethnic inequities and

health disparities. CNBHS aims to educate students on social determinants of health that foster disparities. We are dedicated to equipping students with the leadership skills necessary to confront, challenge, and create viable solutions for disparities in their disciplines. Through realization of these objectives our students can lead the way toward equity, improved science, and health care.

Inclusion and Belonging Protocol

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

Religious Observances

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

Academic & Educational Records

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

Contact Information

All students are responsible for information sent to them using their simmons.edu address. You may forward the Simmons email to another email account.

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

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

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

- Records containing confidential information written before January 1, 1975
- Financial records submitted to the University by the parents of a student
- Medical and counseling records
- Records containing information on more than one student
- Private records intended for use of an individual
- Law enforcement records

- Student employment records
- Records to which a student has waived their right of access as required by a judicial order or a lawful subpoena

A student may view their academic record in Workday at any time. Students must order official transcripts through [Parchment](#), our third-party provider. Additional information can be located [on our website](#) or obtained by emailing the Office of the Registrar at registrar@simmons.edu. Any information in a student's record found to be "inaccurate, misleading, or [that] violates the privacy or other rights of the student" ([FERPA](#)) may be challenged by the student. Only the accuracy of the information may be challenged. For example, a grade received may not be questioned, only the accuracy of its recording. In order to contest the information in their record, the student must submit a written statement to the person responsible for the content of the record and request that they receive a written response. If no written response is forthcoming or if an unsatisfactory response is received by a student, they may appeal to the chairperson or appropriate supervisory person. In the event that no resolution is made, it is the student's right to request a hearing, to be presided over by the Dean of Student Life or a University designee.

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

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

Students who wish to be omitted from the public directory can indicate their preference when establishing their Workday Student accounts. Any questions regarding the process should be directed to workdaystudent@simmons.edu.

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

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

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

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

Student Work

Definition

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

Ownership and Use

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

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

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

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

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

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

Copyright

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

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

- The Copyright Law of the United States of America
- Title 17, U.S. Code, Sect. 101, et. seq.
- General Revisions of the Copyright Law
- Public Law 94-553 (effective January 1, 1978)

- 1998 Digital Millennium Copyright Act
- Public Law 105-304
- 1998 Sonny Bono Term Extension Act
- Public Law 105-298

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

Honor Code & Academic Integrity

Honor System

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

Student Principles

Individual responsibility is the foundation of the Simmons community. The student's enrollment at Simmons University carries with it the expectation that one will abide by the Honor Code of Responsibility. Enrollment in a course implies an agreement between instructor and student. The instructor is obliged to teach, to evaluate student work, and to be available for conferences during designated office hours; the student is obliged to complete all work by the assigned deadlines, to attend all classes, and to devote sufficient out-of-class time to course material. Three hours spent out of class in preparation for every hour in class is a reasonable expectation.

Attendance and punctuality are expected at all classes. While there are no established University-wide penalties for absences, the instructor may take attendance into account when evaluating the student's performance in the course. In accordance with Massachusetts state law, no student will be penalized for absence due to religious observances.

Honor Code of Responsibility

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

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

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

Academic Integrity

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

Simmons University reserves the right to require the withdrawal of any student who does not maintain acceptable academic standing or modes of behavior as outlined in the [Undergraduate Catalog](#), [Graduate Catalog](#), Student Handbooks, and other official publications.

Student Legal Name and Name Changes

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

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

Students who wish to change their name from the name of record at the time of admission must request a legal name change through [Workday](#). Students must upload legal documentation to Workday, such as a state I.D., passport, or court documentation to support the change.

Students may also update their preferred (roster) name and pronouns through Workday. Contact workdaystudent@simmons.edu for support if needed.

Equal Access Policy

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

The Simmons Commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

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

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

Our Diversity & Inclusion Mission

We seek to extend to the entire Simmons University community opportunities for learning, growth, success, and meaningful participation and to build a welcoming, diverse, and inclusive culture for our

community. To that end, we will engage in ongoing work to combat racism, bias, and all forms of individual and institutional oppression.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Notice of Non-Discrimination

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

Simmons is, therefore, committed to the following principles:

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

Reporting Sexual Misconduct

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

Students Reporting Discrimination or Retaliation

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

Reporting a web/online accessibility barrier: Please use this form: <http://www.simmons.edu/report-barrier>. We are committed to making our programs and activities accessible to all individuals.

Advice on Whom to Contact about a Concern or Incident

If you are unsure of where to bring complaints or concerns about unlawful discrimination, harassment or retaliation, please contact the Office of the General Counsel in E-200 in the Main Campus Building or call 617-5212276.

Information for Students with Disabilities

Simmons University is committed to the full participation of all students in its programs and activities. Simmons is committed to providing support services and reasonable accommodations when requested by students who qualify for them. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and the Americans with Disabilities Amendment Act of 2008 (the ADA) protect otherwise qualified individuals with disabilities from discrimination on the basis of their disabilities. Both Section 504 and the ADA protect the following persons: those who have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity, those who have a record of impairment, or anyone who is regarded as having impairment. The process for obtaining a reasonable accommodation for a documented disability is an interactive one that begins with the student's disclosure of her/his disability to the [Office of Accessibility Services](#), along with the request for a reasonable accommodation. Every Simmons student who is seeking an accommodation for a disability must provide Simmons with sufficient current medical documentation from a qualified clinician or health care provider that supports the request for an accommodation and sets forth suggestions for accommodations.

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

Campus Security

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

Human Subjects

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

Key Policies

Admissions Policy

Undergraduate Nursing (BSN)

For Information on admissions to the BSN program please refer to the [Simmons University Admissions page](#) and the [Simmons University School of Nursing page](#) for information regarding program requirements for traditional BSN students, transfer program for nursing, Dix Scholars program for adult learners, Dotston Bridge & Mentoring program, and RN to BSN on-line program for adult learners .

Applying to the 4+1 BS-MS Nursing Program

Nursing students are invited to apply to this program during their sophomore year. The application deadline is in the spring semester. Questions about this program can be addressed to the SON Chair. The requirements for admission into this program are:

- A minimum nursing course GPA of 3.33
- A minimum overall GPA of 3.33
- Two recommendation letters from faculty
- A statement from the student about their choice for accelerated, advanced practice program that indicates understanding of the advanced practice role, leadership capacity, inquisitiveness, curiosity, commitment, goals, and a clinical exemplar
- Acceptance is contingent upon completion of any courses in progress at the time of application.
- An interview by a faculty member may be required.

Progression

Students must meet all prerequisite and program requirements for their specific program of study. Refer to course catalogs for course specific information.

1. Retaking of Science Courses

BSN students who do not achieve a grade of C+ or higher/better in a science prerequisite course may retake that specific course only once. Students may repeat one science course in which they have not achieved at least a C+. If the course is taken outside of Simmons University, the student must petition for prior approval of the course by submitting the course syllabus to registrar@simmons.edu. The student must also submit a petition for transfer of credit to the Office of the Registrar.

BSN Students who do not meet the science prerequisite policies will be excluded from the Nursing Programs. Students completing prerequisite science courses during the summer, prior to NURS-295 in the fall, must submit evidence of satisfactory completion of an approved course, no later than August 1.

2. Grading Values

Letter Grade	GPA Value	BSN Students
A	4.0	93-100
A-	3.67	90-92
B+	3.33	87-89
B	3.0	83-86
B-	2.67	80-82
C+	2.33	77-79
C	2.0	75-76
C-	1.67	70-74
D+	1.33	67-69
D	1.0	63-66
D-	0.67	60-62

3. Clinical Courses

Students must pass both the clinical and didactic components of a nursing course, in order to pass the course. If the student fails one component and passes the other, they will fail the course. If the student fails the clinical component of the course, they will receive a grade of F in the course. Students must re-take both components of the course, in which they received a grade of F.

4. Grading Policies

- BSN:
 - BSN students must receive a 75% or above overall weighted exam average, in order to pass the course.
 - If the exam average is less than 75%, the student will receive the grade that is equivalent to the overall average of the exam grades.
 - Once the student has achieved a 75% or above weighted exam average, all other course assignments will be factored into the final grade.
 - In addition to a weighted exam average of 75% or higher, the student must earn an overall course grade of 75% or higher in order to pass the course.
 - Grades are not rounded for any reason. A score of 74.9% is less than 75%.
 - Before the last day of the semester, undergraduate students can request an extension of time to complete their coursework if they have the support of their instructor and will complete the remaining work within four (4) weeks of the request by submitting the Undergraduate [Incomplete Grade Agreement form](#) to the Office of the Registrar. Requests for extensions made after the last day of classes or that propose a due date after the 4-week deadline must be appealed to the Administrative Board using the [Incomplete Grade Agreement form](#).

5. Interruption in Progress

- If a nursing student has an interruption in program progression for any reason, the student may have a maximum of two additional years from their original anticipated date of graduation to complete the program.
- If a nursing student returns to the Nursing Programs following an interruption in program progression and has not had a nursing course within 2 years of their return, the student must meet with the SON Academic Review & Appeals Committee. At the discretion of the SON

Academic Review & Appeals Committee, the student may be required to repeat nursing courses in which they have previously been successful to ensure they have the necessary theory and clinical skills to move forward in the program. If the student is unsuccessful in the repeated course, the student will be dismissed from the program.

6. Completion of standardized NCLEX style examinations is required for preparation for the National NCLEX exam.
7. Students will be cleared for graduation and application for the RN licensure examination (NCLEX-RN®) when all graduation requirements of the college and university have been met.

Attendance

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

Excused Absences and Attendance

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

- student illness,
- bereavement for an immediate family member,
- military obligations
- religious observances
- Jury Duty

Class Attendance

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

Clinical Attendance

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

Course Exemption

Simmons University School of Nursing follows the University [Exceptions and Exemptions policy](#).

Undergraduate students seeking exceptions to College Policy must petition the Administrative Board.

All nursing courses must be taken according to the Simmons University School of Nursing respective plan of study. In the rare event that there is academically sound legitimate reason for exception, the exception must be approved in writing at the discretion of the SON Chair.

Advanced Placement

Please refer to the current [AP Credit Equivalencies list](#) that outlines all of the tests that will count towards general transfer credit versus a specific Simmons course equivalent. Students will receive up to four (4)

transfer credits for each score of 4 or 5 received on an AP exam. No student may receive more than 32 credits for AP scores.

The College Board can send all AP scores upon request directly to Simmons University and they will be delivered to the Office of the Registrar. AP credits can take several weeks to be processed and coded onto students' accounts. If you do not see your AP credits on your account on Workday, you may contact the [Office of the Registrar](#) to confirm that your official score report was received.

Advanced Placement or Transfer of Military Education, Training or Service

(Under development Fall 2023)

Transfer

A TCE is created by the Manager of Degree Audit and Transfer Credit. Admissions works directly with the Office of the Registrar to provide the transcripts of the incoming student; the Manager of Degree Audit and Transfer Credit then evaluates the courses to see if they are acceptable as transfer credit and also determines eligibility for Simmons course equivalency. After the TCE is complete, it is emailed directly to the student at the email provided in the student's application to Simmons.

For any questions about transferring in credits for new students or transferring credits while a student at Simmons University please contact the [Transfer Credit Department](#) in the Office of the Registrar. Refer to the [Registrar website](#) for further details on transferring credits. **The School of Nursing does not accept transfer courses for any nursing specific courses.**

The School of Nursing offers limited transfer opportunities for internal and external applicants on a space available basis. Applicants who meet the program admission requirements in place at the time of application may be admitted into the 8 semester nursing course sequence or the 2 year Dix Scholars nursing course sequence.

Educational Mobility

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

Withdrawal

Course Withdrawal

- Nursing students who wish to withdraw from a course past the Simmons deadline must petition the Administrative Board.
- A nursing student may withdraw from two nursing courses during their entire academic program. A third course withdrawal will result in dismissal from the Nursing Programs.
- If a student withdraws from one or more nursing courses during the same semester because of documented health concerns, those courses from which the student withdraws will not be counted toward the maximum number of course withdrawals permitted under the withdrawal policy.
- Students are allowed only one opportunity to repeat a nursing course from which they withdrew or in which they were unsuccessful.

University Withdrawal

Students should also contact the SON Chair, Student Affairs, Residence Life, Student Financial Services, and their Academic Adviser with questions pertaining to housing, financial aid, and academic success.

Withdrawing from the University is typically permanent, as opposed to a Leave of Absence, at the end of which a student plans to return. To request a Withdrawal, [this online form](#) must be submitted.

If an undergraduate student on a Leave of Absence does not return by the approved date, does not seek an extension, and does not register for courses, the student will be withdrawn from the University three weeks after the start of the semester. Students may also be withdrawn from the University due to suboptimal academic performance.

University Leave of Absence

If a student is not planning to register for courses in a Fall, Spring, or Summer term at Simmons, the Office of the Registrar must mark your record accordingly, per the processes below. Students who do not follow the appropriate procedure may be withdrawn automatically from the University. SON students must notify the Undergraduate Program Director, SON Chair and the Clinical Placement office of any Leave of Absence.

An undergraduate student may apply for a Leave of Absence (LOA) at any time after enrolling at the University.

To request a Leave of Absence [this online form](#) must be submitted.

- The LOA may extend for a total period of four ungraded semesters. Anyone wishing to extend their leave longer will need to request special approval from the Administrative Board.
- The student may return to the University for any term within or immediately after the Leave of Absence by registering on Workday. If the student does not return on the approved date, does not seek an extension, and does not register for courses, the student will be withdrawn from the University three weeks after the start of the semester.

Questions about undergraduate Leaves of Absence should be directed to the Office of the Registrar at registrar@simmons.edu (Phone: 617-521-2111).

Students should also contact Student Affairs, Residence Life, Student Financial Services, and their Academic Adviser with questions pertaining to housing, financial aid, and academic success.

Return Following a Leave of Absence (LOA)

Nursing students must follow the [Simmons Leave of Absence policy and procedures for undergraduate students](#). In addition, a nursing student who wishes to return from a leave of absence must notify the School of Nursing Chair and the Director of Undergraduate Clinical Education at least six weeks prior to the start of the semester to which the student wishes to return in order to plan for clinical coursework. Please note that students returning from LOAs are admitted to clinical courses on a space available basis.

Program Dismissal & Readmission

Academic warnings

The Nursing Programs may issue an academic/clinical warning when the student's performance is considered to be marginal and/or unsafe. The justification for a warning includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Quizzes or exams with a grade of C or below

- Overdue assignments
- Poor attendance
- Poor or unsafe clinical practice (see course and/or clinical objectives)
- Violation of the [Simmons University Code of Conduct](#) or a significant breach in professional or ethical conduct
- Violation of the [ANA Code of Ethics](#).

Departmental Probation

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

Nursing Course Failure and Program Dismissal

- Students are allowed one opportunity to repeat a nursing course in which they were unsuccessful.
- Any student who fails a nursing course will be required to meet with the Nursing Academic Coach and their Academic Advisor to identify the barriers to success and develop a remediation and program completion plan, if they are eligible to continue in the nursing program.
- A student receiving a failing grade in a course required by the student's program, must repeat the course for credit. Grades for the initial and repeated courses will appear on the student's transcript and both will be used in calculating the cumulative GPA.
- For students who repeat required courses, the total number of credits for graduation will increase. (For example, if a student earns a C- in NURS-333 and must repeat the course under the nursing program grading policy, the total credits required for graduation will increase from 128 to 132.)
- A nursing student who failed in any two NURS and/or SNHS and/or CHSC courses as required by their program shall be dismissed from the Nursing Programs.
- A student may be dismissed from the Nursing Programs if they are on probation during more than two semesters over the course of obtaining the degree.
- A student may be excluded from the Nursing Programs for demonstrating behavior that is illegal, unsafe, unethical, or unprofessional.
- A student will be excluded from the Nursing Programs if they are "Removed from Degree Candidacy" by the University Administrative Board.
- If there are extenuating circumstances contributing to academic difficulty, the student, in consultation with their academic advisor, may choose to petition the SON Academic Review & Appeals Committee for an exception to policy. The Chair of the Appeals committee will meet with the student to discuss the process. If the student wishes to appeal the decision of the Appeals committee they may appeal to the Associate Dean or Dean of the School. The process for this appeal will be communicated to the student by the Appeals Committee

Readmission

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

Graduation

- Undergraduate students at Simmons progress through the class levels by completing credits, and must complete 128 credits, fulfill All-College and Major/Minor requirements, and submit a Senior Audit form in order to graduate.
- Nursing students must successfully complete all of the [School of Nursing program of study](#) requirements in addition to the [University liberal Arts requirements](#).
- Second bachelor's degree candidates may apply for the accelerated nursing sequence or a non-accelerated option and follow a two-year sequence of nursing courses and clinicals.
- Second bachelor's degree ABSN students, transfer students, 2-year DIX Scholars, and RN to BSN students must complete 128 hours of credit with at least 32 semester hours of credit earned at Simmons. Transfer credit, credit for prior learning, credit for prior Associates Degree in Nursing from an accredited institution, passing the NCLEX RN exam, and advanced placement in nursing credit are also granted when certain specifications are met.

Student's Rights and Grievances

Student Complaint Processes

The School of Nursing defines a formal complaint as any complaint documented by a student or external stakeholder. This may range from minor reports of dissatisfaction, to a direct violation of rights, resulting in harm, or impeding the ability to study or learn. This policy excludes a student's appeal for a grade change and/or change in academic status. There is a separate policy, delineated in the student handbooks, for these appeals.

An individual, or group of students, who have complaints related to the clinical or classroom components of the course, are expected to follow these steps:

1. Student-Faculty Level

An individual student, or group of students, should directly discuss, with the faculty member(s) involved, any issues related to the faculty member's performance or expectations. If a satisfactory resolution is not achieved, the student has the prerogative to inform the faculty member of any intentions to bring the situation to the course coordinator (if applicable). This process should be initiated within 5 business days of the grievance or misunderstanding.

2. Chair of the School of Nursing

For an issue that remains unresolved at the student-faculty level; the student may take concerns to the Chair of the School of Nursing. The Chair of the School of Nursing will review the issue and act as an arbitrator of the grievance, consulting with the College of Natural, Behavioral, and Health Sciences' Dean.

**For concerns regarding discrimination or Title IX, please refer to the Important Notices section located at the beginning of the student handbook.

Community Standards

The Simmons community culture is founded on the values of respect, integrity, inclusion, honesty and trust. The Student Code of Conduct is our guide to expectations of behaviors by our students and by student organizations. When violations of the Code of Conduct occur, Simmons has policies and procedures in place to inform our responses. Behavior that is not consistent with the Code of Conduct is typically addressed through an educational conduct process designed to help develop critical thinking, sound judgment, good citizenship, and to promote overall well-being.

The Community Standards Mission

- To coordinate the student accountability process, including administering the formal disciplinary process in a rational and responsible manner.
- To resolve allegations of individual and organizational misconduct in a manner consistent with our core values of respect, integrity, inclusion, honesty and trust.
- To balance the interests of the individual student and the community at large through fair, consistent and timely case resolution.
- To facilitate learning and student development of future leaders and ethical global citizens.
- To educate and train students, staff and faculty about their shared responsibility to maintain community standards.

[Code of Conduct](#)

[Report a Concern](#)

[Academic Integrity Concern](#)

Student Accountability Process

We want students to know that the Simmons student conduct process is not intended to be the same as a criminal or civil court proceedings. Procedures and rights in student conduct procedures are conducted with fairness to all. Students are notified of any charge brought against them and have an opportunity to respond to the charges. Please refer to the [Community Standards](#) page for steps for filing a report and for the safeguards in place for all students.

Equal Opportunity Grievances Policies & Procedures

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

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

General Nursing Policies

Code of Conduct and Discipline

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

- **Provision 1:** The nurse practices with compassion and respect for the inherent dignity, worth, and unique attributes of every person.
- **Provision 2:** The nurse's primary commitment is to the patient, whether an individual, family, group, community, or population.
- **Provision 3:** The nurse promotes, advocates for, and protects the rights, health, and safety of the patient.
- **Provision 4:** The nurse has authority, accountability, and responsibility for nursing practice; makes decisions; and takes action consistent with the obligation to promote health and to provide optimal care.
- **Provision 5:** The nurse owes the same duties to self as to others, including the responsibility to promote health and safety, preserve wholeness of character and integrity, maintain competence, and continue personal and professional growth.
- **Provision 6:** The nurse, through individual and collective effort, establishes, maintains and improves the ethical environment of the work setting and conditions of employment that are conducive to safe, quality health care.
- **Provision 7:** The nurse, in all roles and settings, advances the profession through research and scholarly inquiry, professional standards development, and the generation of both nursing and health policy.
- **Provision 8:** The nurse collaborates with other health professionals and the public to protect human rights, promote health diplomacy, and reduce health disparities.
- **Provision 9:** The profession of nursing, collectively through its professional organizations, must articulate nursing values, maintain the integrity of the profession, and integrate principles of social justice into nursing and health policy.

In addition to the [ANA Code of Ethics](#), all Simmons University students are responsible for adhering to the [Simmons University Student Code of Conduct](#).

Professional Behaviors *(Professionalism section under review and revision Fall 2023)*

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

- Attending each class and clinical experience
- Arriving on time and being well prepared for class and clinical
- Staying in the classroom for the entire class period
- Turning off all cell phones
- Refraining from side conversations with classmates
- Being attentive to and respectful of the faculty presenting during class
- Being attentive to and respectful of classmates discussing questions, cases, or issues raised during class

- Notifying the professor or clinical instructor, well in advance, in the unusual circumstance that the student will be late, unable to attend class or clinical or unable to meet class or clinical requirements.

Professional Communication

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

Summary of Expected Behaviors

Class/Seminar/Post-Conference	Clinical/Laboratory Settings
Is on time for class/seminar/post-conference	Is on time for clinical/laboratory sessions
Types and completes assignments on time	Sets goals for clinical experiences
Actively seeks feedback and help	Actively seeks feedback and help
Is receptive to feedback	Is receptive to feedback and help
Incorporates feedback into work	Incorporates feedback into work
Communicates with faculty in a respectful manner	Communicates with faculty, agency staff, patients, and families in a respectful manner
Identifies learning needs and educates self	Identifies learning needs around client issues, educates self, uses professional literature and electronic sources, self-evaluates with weekly journals
Listens actively and is courteous	Listens actively and is courteous
Demonstrates cultural sensitivity and competence	Is self-aware (re: cultural differences) Demonstrates respect for/is nonjudgmental about cultural, ethnic, and personal differences in patients and in healthcare team members
Collaborates with and respects the work of classmates	Collaborates with and respects the work of classmates

Maintains confidentiality of clinical information	Maintains confidentiality of clinical information Researches policies and procedures relevant to the clinical setting Ensures nursing care and documentation meet legal requirements Identifies steps around processing an ethical issue Adheres to the Health Insurance Portability Privacy Act (HIPAA) Refrains from all photography of any kind in all clinical settings
Is accountable for own learning	Organizes work and completes assignments & documentation in a timely manner

Social Media Use

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

Students should be aware of, consider, and comply with the Massachusetts Board of Registration in Nursing’s regulations whenever using social and electronic media. The National Council of State Boards of Nursing has identified [guidelines](#) to which students should adhere in its [A Nurse’s Guide to the Use of Social Media](#).

Professionalism and Integrity Issues

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

Accessibility and Special Health Needs

Students with Accessibility Needs

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

The [Americans with Disabilities Act](#) and [Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#) define a person with a disability as someone who: 1) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; or 2) has a record of such impairment; or 3). is regarded by others as having such

an impairment. Students who are unsure whether a condition qualifies as an accessibility need are encouraged to meet with [Simmons' Office of Accessibility Services](#) (OAS).

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

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

While Simmons is committed to working with students to accommodate their accessibility-related needs, Simmons reserves the right to deny any requested accommodation that would fundamentally alter the essential nature of any aspect of the Nursing Programs or place an undue burden on the Nursing Programs.

Students can find more information about the OAS and requesting accommodations on the [OAS's website](#).

Pregnancy

Simmons University does not discriminate on the basis of pregnancy. Early notification to the Student Affairs Office that one is pregnant is recommended so that consideration for appropriate clinical rotation can be planned. The department is guided by the student's physician and the policies of the agency in which the student is placed for clinical. The Student Affairs Office can be contacted at 617-521-2116 or via email using studentlife@simmons.edu.

Illness/Injury/Hospitalization/Medical Leave

Students who have a significant illness, injury, hospitalization, or surgery must be cleared to return to the classroom and/or their clinical setting by their physician or healthcare provider, as well as relevant Simmons staff/faculty/administrator(s). Please contact the Director of Undergraduate Nursing or Chair of Nursing for information about the medical clearance requirements and process. In addition, students must adhere to specific occupational health guidelines for the agency in which they have their clinical placement.

Board of Registration Policy on Good Moral Character and Licensure Requirements

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

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

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

Academic Policies

Student Advisement

Each student entering the nursing program is assigned to an academic advisor. First-year Undergraduate Nursing Program students will be assigned to a professional advisor, in the Office of Undergraduate Advising. The academic advisors assist students in course selection for upcoming semesters; provide information about on-campus academic resources; and lead discussions with students on major, career, and life goals. Students are required to meet with their advisor at least once during their first semester at Simmons University. A student will be assigned to a nursing faculty advisor or nursing professional advisor when they begin the nursing course sequences. This provides a student with the opportunity to form a professional personal relationship with a faculty member or nursing professional advisor, within the Nursing Programs, while also receiving expert guidance as they prepare for their future career. If a student completes registration without the advisor's consultation, the student assumes full responsibility for all academic consequences.

Classroom Policies

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

Exam Policies

- During a nursing exam, any discussion among students or sharing of any information, once the exam begins, may be considered an infraction of the [Simmons University Code of Conduct](#).
- During examinations, the following items are prohibited; and if brought by a student, must be left at the front of the classroom:
 - Food or beverages
 - Hats (unless worn as a religious requirement)
 - Hooded sweatshirts or sweaters
 - Any device capable of recording audio, photographic, or video content or capable of viewing/playing back such content
 - Any other unauthorized testing aids
 - Calculators (except those provided/permitted by professor)
 - Cellular phones, smartphones, smart watch, or wireless communication devices
 - Dictionaries, books, pamphlets, or reference materials
 - Digital cameras
 - Smart watches
 - Flash/thumb drives or any other portable electronic devices

- Listening devices such as radios, media players with headphones, or recorders
- Any student suspected of giving or receiving information, during an examination, may be asked to leave the examination. According to policy, a student may be excluded from the Nursing Program for academic dishonesty or failure to report the academic dishonesty of others.
- Once students begin an exam, they must complete the exam during the examination period. If a student leaves the exam before completing the exam, the faculty member may grade the student on the work completed during that exam period only. The only exception would be a medical emergency that occurs during the exam. The situation would be considered emergent only if the student requires immediate emergency medical attention in the emergency room. Documentation from the emergency room physician may be required.
- Students who observe behaviors consistent with academic dishonesty by other students, are bound by the [Simmons Honor Code](#) to report such behavior to the faculty.
- Students should not use test banks that are restricted for faculty use. The [Simmons University Honor Code](#) prohibits students from copying, sharing, or distributing any test information, or test items from tests administered by faculty in their classes. In addition, purchasing, sharing, or distributing test banks that are designated by the publisher as faculty resources is considered academic dishonesty, and is a violation of the Simmons Honor Code. Please be advised that students who unwittingly use these materials will be held equally accountable.

Missed Exam Policy for Undergraduate Students (*Under review and revision Fall 2023*)

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

- Generally, students will be allowed a maximum of 48 hours to make up the exam.
- Point deductions for exams taken beyond 48 hours will be at the discretion of the course faculty. Please refer to the course syllabus.
- If a student misses an exam and fails to notify the faculty member, prior to the start of the exam (as above), it may be considered an unexcused absence. The student may not be able to take the exam and will thereby earn a zero.
- Alternative exams are at the faculty's discretion. Students should be advised that they may not be taking the same exam that was given in class. The exam will have the same rigor and may have an altered format, such as short answers and fill in the blank.

Grade Appeal Process

The process of appealing a grade is available to students to ensure that the evaluation processes for academic courses and clinical experiences were fairly applied. Grade appeals can be initiated only for the following three reasons: computational error; arbitrariness or capriciousness; unlawful discrimination. Students who wish to appeal a grade will **first** meet with the course faculty to discuss their concerns about the grading process and the basis for their appeal. The student must make their appeal to the faculty member within 5 business days of the posting of official grades.

If the student and faculty are unable to reach an agreement about the grade, the student may appeal to the SON Chair. The student must submit a written request, rationale, and basis (computational error; arbitrariness or capriciousness; unlawful discrimination) for the grade appeal to the department Chair within

5 days after notice of the decision of the course faculty. If the student wishes to pursue the appeal beyond the SON Chair, they may petition the SON Academic Review & Appeals Committee within 5 business days of notification of the Chair's decision. The Dean of the College of Natural, Behavioral, and Health Sciences is the final arbiter of the grade appeal. Grade appeals will not be considered or heard for any reasons other than computational error; arbitrariness or capriciousness; unlawful discrimination.

Exam Review Policy

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

SON Academic Review & Appeals Committee

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

Policy Being Appealed	Time frame for Appeal Following Student Notification of Decision
Program exclusion	90 days
Other appeals	14 days
Grade appeal	5 days

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

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

The Committee has regularly scheduled meetings throughout the academic year.

SON Academic Review & Appeals Committee Process

- A written request is submitted by the student to the Committee Chairperson. Students are strongly encouraged to consult with their faculty advisor in preparing their appeal form and planning for their appearance in front of the SON Academic Review & Appeals Committee.
- The Committee Chairperson will place the student's appeal for consideration at the next available SON Academic Review & Appeals Committee meeting. The Committee will make reasonable efforts to consider appeals in a timely manner. The committee will not hear any cases that do not meet the criteria/basis for the desired appeal.

- Prior to meeting with the student, the Committee may choose to consult with faculty or others involved in the case.
- The student will be invited to appear at a SON Academic Review & Appeals Committee meeting, where their case will be heard. Students are allowed to have their faculty advisor attend the meeting with them if they choose.
- The student will be notified in writing of the Committee's decision within 10 business days of the meeting at which their appeal was heard. Notification of the decision will also be sent to the Dean of the College of Natural, Behavioral, and Health Sciences, the SON Chair and the Nursing Academic Coach.
- Students excluded from the nursing program may petition the SON Academic Review & Appeals Committee one time only for readmission.
- If the Appeals Committee grants an exception to a policy, the matter will be referred back to the Chair(s) responsible for determining how to best implement an appropriate plan for student progress.
- The Dean of the College of Natural, Behavioral, and Health Sciences will be the final arbiter.

The University Administrative Board

Undergraduate students seeking exceptions to University Policy must petition the Administrative Board. The Administrative Board is for Undergraduate students only. **Graduate students seeking exceptions should contact their program director or academic advisor.**

The Simmons Administrative Board consists of six faculty members who vote on decisions and several administrators who are in advisory capacity: the dean for student life or a designee, the director of disability services, a faculty member from the nursing department. The Associate Registrar serves as secretary to the Administrative Board.

Required Materials for All Petitions

1. Completed [Petition to the Administrative Board form](#), with student signature.
2. Personal statement from the student outlining the reasons for requesting an exception to College policy. There is no length requirement, however the statement must explain clearly and fully the student's reasoning and request for an exception. Personal statements can be emailed to adboard@simmons.edu.
3. Statement of support/electronic signature from advisor emailed to adboard@simmons.edu.
4. Completed form that corresponds with the student's request (e.g.: Completed Add/Drop form, [Petition for Incomplete Grade](#), [Petition to Transfer Credit - Fall/Spring](#), [Petition to Transfer Credit - Summer/Winter](#), etc.).

Optional Materials

1. Letters of support from any outside parties the student may have worked with about the exception requested prior to petitioning (e.g.: Student Life or professors).
2. Medical Documentation from any facility or caregiver.

All materials should be submitted in person to the Office of the Registrar (Room A-200) or emailed to adboard@simmons.edu. The Board meets weekly during most of the academic year. After your petition has been reviewed by the Administrative Board, you will receive an email with the decision within one business day of the meeting.

Clinical Education Policies

Registration for Clinical Nursing Courses

Students must register for clinical nursing courses at the time of the all-university registration period for the following semester, in order to be considered for a clinical placement for that semester. The all-University registration determines the number of clinical placements that are needed and secured. Planning for clinical courses is very complex and time sensitive.

Students who register late for clinical courses (that is, after the initial all-university registration period) will not be granted a space in the course for the following semester and will be admitted to the course on a clinical space available basis only. Any student who has an extenuating circumstance, in relation to the all-university registration, must discuss their situation with the [Clinical Placement Operations Manager](#), prior to the all-university registration period.

Clinical Placements

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

It is important to note that admission to the Nursing Program does not guarantee acceptance to a specific clinical placement. If requested by the affiliating agency, personal information, including immunization status and demographic information, will be released to healthcare agencies.

Clinical/Lab Attendance Policy

This policy applies to all Undergraduate Nursing Program students.

Definitions

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

Rationale

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

Expectation for Attendance and Punctuality

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

The clinical instructor has the responsibility to ensure patient safety is not compromised. Therefore, any student unable to participate fully to provide safe and effective care to patients will be dismissed from the clinical experience and incur a clinical absence. If a clinical instructor determines that a student is unable to provide appropriate care for any reason (e.g., inadequate preparation to discuss and deliver patient care, incomplete pre-clinical paperwork, inappropriate dress, a physical illness, emotional distress, etc.), the clinical instructor, in consultation with the Course faculty teaching the course and the Director of UG Clinical Education, may remove the student from the clinical area immediately.

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

Clinical, Laboratory or Simulation Absence

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

Unavoidable Absences

We recognize that there are times when students may be absent from clinical, laboratory or simulation, because it

is in the best interest of the student's well-being and patient safety. Each student is reminded to use their best judgment, in the event of illness or an unusual situation requiring them to be absent.

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

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

Notification

Professional communication is valued and required. The student must notify the clinical or laboratory instructor, in the manner determined by the faculty, at least one hour before the start of the clinical/lab

day. The student is also responsible for notifying the course coordinator, within 24 hours. The clinical instructor will inform students of the process and policy to notify the agency/hospital unit.

Failure to Notify of Lateness and Absence

Students who fail to follow the notification policy, outlined above, will be issued a written clinical warning. The student may be referred to the Chair of Undergraduate Nursing or the SON Academic Review & Appeals Committee to determine whether a student's performance warrants further action or sanctions.

Repeated Tardiness

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

Clinical/Lab Absence Make-Up

Only excused absences from clinical (on-campus/off-campus) or lab will be made up. Please refer to the clinical/lab attendance policy in this Student Handbook for attendance requirements and criteria for excused absences. Excused missed clinical or lab experiences will be made up using methods that are equivalent to the missed experience. Excused absences from direct patient care experiences can ONLY be made up using direct patient care experiences, when available, or high-fidelity simulation experiences. The clinical faculty, didactic faculty, and Director of Clinical Education in consultation with the Director of the Simulation Center will determine how the excused absence will be made up. Once the determination for make-up has been made, the clinical faculty will communicate with the student. If the make-up is to take place in the Simulation Center, it is the student's responsibility to coordinate make-up dates and times with the Director of the Simulation Center or their delegate. Otherwise make up dates and times will be arranged between a designated clinical faculty and the student as appropriate.

Missing more than 30% of planned clinical or lab is considered excessive. Any student who misses more than 30% of planned clinical or lab for any reason in a single course will not be allowed to make up the missed experiences beyond the 30%. As such students missing more than 30% of planned clinical or lab will earn a failing evaluation for the clinical portion of the course due to excessive absence.

Clinical Safety and Performance

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

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

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

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

Reportable Event Policy

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

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

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

[Reportable Event Form \(Student\)](#)

[Reportable Event Form \(Faculty\)](#)

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

- Hazard: A situation or circumstance with the potential to do harm
 - Example: Student who arrives to clinical unprepared
- Near Miss: An error or incident occurred but did not reach the patient
 - Example: Student who calculated medication incorrectly but had not yet reached the patient
 - Example: Student's failure to communicate abnormal patient findings to the nurse or faculty
- Adverse Event: An error or event that reached the patient, individual or student
- Minor Event: An incident or error occurs that does not cause harm to a patient, individual or student
 - Example: Administration of incorrect IV fluids Example: Student who has a syncope episode in clinical
 - Example: Side rails are down
- Major Event: An error or incident that has the potential to cause permanent injury or transient, but potentially life-threatening harm.
 - Example: Administering of inaccurate narcotic dose that requires administration of NARCAN

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

Student Health Insurance

All nursing students are required to have health insurance. Complete information on the health insurance requirements as well as resources for obtaining coverage can be found on the Simmons University Website. Please be aware that in order to be eligible for the [university health insurance program](#), students must be enrolled in a minimum of 9 credits each semester.

Injury On Site/Exposure to Infectious Disease

Students who experience a health incident/occupational accident such as a needlestick, splash injury, fall, or exposure/potential exposure to infectious disease should follow all affiliating agency specific policies and procedures.

Students injured in the clinical setting or exposed to infectious disease will be responsible for expenses incurred while receiving treatment. Students are viewed as guests, not hospital employees, so affiliating agencies are not responsible for injuries occurring in the clinical setting. Students are generally evaluated in the agency's emergency room. In the event of a clinical incident or injury, students should notify their Clinical Section Instructor immediately so the faculty can inform appropriate Simmons and agency staff.

Professional Liability Insurance

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

Dress Code

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

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

Hair: Hair must be pulled back at or above the line of the collar.

Transportation

Students are responsible for all transportation costs, related to clinical experience. Costs will vary with the clinical placement. Students should anticipate incurring transportation expenses of approximately \$250 to \$450 per year.

Use of Handheld Devices in Clinical

Given the increasing importance of mobile devices for accessing relevant clinical information and evolving standards of use in the clinical setting, Simmons expects students to use professional judgment and to follow agency-specific guidelines regarding the use of mobile devices. Students may not use mobile devices for personal business during clinical and may not take photographs of any kind, anywhere in the clinical area.

Clinical Requirements

The agencies and hospitals with which Simmons University collaborates for clinical education have strict policies about what is required of students prior to being placed. Please note: Students are responsible for keeping track of their clinical compliance throughout their time in the Simmons School of Nursing.

Students are expected to submit documentation of expired clinical requirements in a timely manner. Failure to do so could result in being removed from clinical.

The clinical clearance requirements for Undergraduate Nursing Program students include the following:

- Demonstration of Medication Calculation and Administration Safety Competency
- Health Clearance
- Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation Certification
- Mandatory Clinical Orientation and Agency-Specific Pre-Clinical Requirements
- Background and Criminal History Checks

Full clinical clearance requirements and detailed information can be found on the [Clinical Clearance website](#).

Demonstration of Medication Calculation and Administration Safety Competency

Purpose

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

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

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

Pre-Testing

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

Use of Self-paced Medication Administration Modules

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

Testing

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

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

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

Post-Testing

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

In Fundamental Nursing Courses (NURS 295/295-AC/494), students will have three opportunities to pass the Medication Calculation and Administration Safety Competency (MCAS) exam administered during the course. Students must remediate prior to taking each subsequent exam.

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

[MCAS FAQs](#)

Health Clearance

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

Without such evidence and clearance, students will not be allowed to engage in clinical practice.

Obtaining health clearance is the responsibility of the student.

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

Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation Certification (CPR)

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

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

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

Criminal Offender Record Inquiry (CORI) Policy

Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) checks are part of a general background check for placement in clinical rotations, by the Nursing Programs of Simmons University. The following practices and procedures will generally be followed:

1. CORI checks will only be conducted, as authorized, by the Massachusetts Criminal History Systems Board (CHSB). All students will be notified that a CORI check will be conducted. All students will be provided with a copy of the Simmons University School of Nursing Programs' CORI Policy.
2. An informed review of a criminal record requires adequate training. Accordingly, all Simmons University School of Nursing Program's faculty and staff, authorized to review CORIs in the decision-making process, will be thoroughly familiar with the educational materials made available by the CHSB.
3. Prior to the beginning of clinical nursing coursework, each student will be required to request a CORI check by the CHSB. For Undergraduate Nursing Program students, the CORI is run prior to the first clinical course.
4. If a criminal record is received from CHSB, the authorized Nursing Programs' faculty or staff will closely compare the record, provided by CHSB, with the information on the [CORI request form](#) and

any other identifying information, provided by the applicant, to ensure the record relates to the applicant.

5. Unless otherwise provided by law, a criminal record will not automatically disqualify a nursing student. Rather, determinations of suitability, based on CORI checks, will be made by the Dean of the College of Natural, Behavioral, and Health Sciences. A student with any criminal convictions, past court appearances for any reason, pending criminal cases (including misdemeanors), or past or pending disciplinary action against a professional license, is advised that the Simmons University may not be able to secure a clinical placement. Students have an obligation to notify the Dean of the College of Natural, Behavioral, and Health Sciences if any new complaints occur, after the initial CORI is obtained, or if there is an incidence which changes CORI status while classified as a student.
 - a. Some clinical agencies will require the actual data obtained from a CORI. In this case, the agency will require a separate CORI, performed by the CHSB, of students placed in their agency. Students will be informed before the CORI is done and will be asked to sign a CORI release form. All student clinical placements are at the discretion of the agency; therefore, agencies do not have to accept students with CORI issues. The School of Nursing at Simmons cannot be held responsible for alternate clinical placements of students who are withdrawn from a clinical placement, or who cannot be placed in an agency, because of background checks.
6. A student challenging the accuracy of the policy shall be provided a copy of CHSB's Information Concerning the Process in Correcting a Criminal Record. If the CORI record provided does not exactly match the identification information provided by the student, Simmons University Nursing Programs will make a determination based on comparison of the CORI record and documents provided by the student. Simmons University Nursing Programs may contact CHSB and request a detailed search consistent with CHSB policy.
7. If Simmons University CORI-certified faculty and staff have a concern regarding the CORI, the student will be notified immediately. The student shall be provided with a copy of the criminal record, a copy of the Simmons Nursing Programs' CORI policy, advised of the part(s) of the record that make the student unsuitable for the position of student nurse and given an opportunity to dispute the accuracy and relevance of the CORI record.
8. If Simmons University Nursing Programs reasonably believes that the record belongs to the student and is accurately based on the information provided in Section IV of this policy, then the determination of suitability for the position or license will be made. Unless otherwise provided by law, factors considered in determining suitability may include, but not be limited to, the following:
 - a. Relevance of the crime to the proposed clinical practicum
 - b. Nature of the proposed clinical practicum
 - c. Time elapsed since the conviction
 - d. Age of the student at the time of the offense
 - e. Seriousness and specific circumstances of the offense
 - f. The number of offenses
 - g. Whether the student has pending charges
 - h. Any relevant evidence of rehabilitation, or lack thereof
 - i. Any other relevant information, including information submitted by the student or requested by the Simmons University Nursing Programs
9. Simmons University Nursing Programs will notify the student of the decision and the basis of the decision in a timely manner.

Nursing Simulation Center Policies (*Under review and revision Fall 2023*)

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

Laboratory and Simulation Attendance Policy

- Laboratory and simulation attendance is mandatory. Students are reminded to use their best judgment, in the event of illness or an unusual situation, where the student may be absent.
- Professional communication is valued and required. Please follow these guidelines.
- Laboratory Absence: The student must call the course coordinator and laboratory faculty, to notify and arrange for make-up.
- Simulation Lab Tardiness: The door will be closed five minutes after the session starts; if you are more than five minutes late, you will not be allowed to attend.
- Simulation Lab Absence: Missing a simulation counts as a clinical absence. If you are sick, or have other extenuating circumstances, you must notify the Course Faculty and [the Director of the Simulation Center](#), to schedule a make-up.
 - If a student does not make up the missed simulation or lab, a 2-point deduction from the final grade may be applied.

Basic Rules of Lab Usage

- Keep the labs neat. This is your workspace, and it will be most useful to you if it is kept tidy and well organized.
- Lab equipment is for use only in the lab. Anything removed from the lab will be considered stolen equipment and will be dealt with as such.
- Food and drinks (except water) are not permitted in the lab.
- Bring all materials, as directed by your instructor (e.g., nursing supply kit, stethoscope, writing materials, textbooks, etc.). If you do not have all of your materials, you may not be allowed to participate.
- Appropriate dress is required. This includes closed-toe shoes (no sandals, flip flops shoes, or other open-toe shoes, even in summer), your nursing uniform, and any other protective clothing, as directed by your instructor.
- Clean up after yourself. Put all equipment and furniture away where you found it, place all trash in appropriate receptacles, and turn off all electrical equipment.
- Report any damaged or non-working equipment to your instructor or the Lab Coordinator.

Mannequins

Types of Mannequins

- SimMen (solid blue gowns): most advanced; used with laptops for scenarios
- VitalSims (solid yellow gowns): have vital signs and sounds for auscultation
- Basic mannequins (printed white gowns): have no simulation capabilities

Moving Mannequins

- Always use two people when lifting the models and use good body mechanics. (Lift with your legs, etc.)
- If moving a SimMan or VitalSim, be sure to move all associated equipment carefully and appropriately. Do not let anything drag or fall on the floor.

Storage of Mannequins

- Mannequins in use should be in beds. Mannequins not in use should be placed on the mannequin rack or on a stretcher. Do NOT put the mannequins in chairs, on the floor, or anywhere else, as this will damage them. There is ample rack space for all mannequins. ii. Mannequins in the beds should be left with all anatomical parts in place, and should be covered with a sheet, as you would leave your patient in hospital setting. Place a pillow under the mannequin and leave the head of the bed (HOB) elevated to about 30 degrees.

Use of Mannequins

- Use only TegaDerm or paper tape on the mannequins. Other tape damages them.
- Do not use iodine or Betadine on the mannequins. It stains them.

Care and Usage of Other Lab Equipment

- Reuse/recycle supplies and equipment whenever possible. This includes bedding, which should only be changed if stained or soiled. Do not use new supplies unless specifically directed to do so.
- Please discard all single-use equipment, such as specula for the otoscope, tongue blades, cotton swabs, gauze, etc., and place stained or soiled linens in the hamper bags provided.
- Turn off all lights, Welch-Allyn wall units, any portable equipment, VitalSims, and SimMen.
- If using the examination tables, place unused paper over the table after each use.
- When working with IV fluids, use proper containers (e.g., bucket, trash bin) to prevent fluid from running onto the floor.

Study Abroad

There are several opportunities for nursing students to study abroad. If a traditional 4-year nursing student wants to spend a semester abroad, the ideal opportunity is the fall semester of the junior year. The student would then take summer coursework to meet nursing degree requirements. This would not alter the expected date of graduation. Students must apply by March 15 of their sophomore year. Please contact the [Simmons University Center for Global Education](#) to learn about how a semester abroad will affect your course of study.

Addendum 1: Congruence between Values & Learner Outcomes of the University and the SoN

University Goals/Values	SoN Values	Baccalaureate/Pre-Licensure Generalist Outcomes
Professional Preparation	Professionalism, Integrity, Accountability, Collaboration & Teamwork	<p>Utilize current evidence, clinical judgment, and patient preference to systematically assess, analyze, implement, and evaluate healthcare interventions in order to promote safe, quality care throughout the lifespan, beginning with health promotion through end of life.</p> <p>Communicate/collaborate effectively with all members of the healthcare team, patients, and families.</p> <p>Synthesize knowledge of healthcare delivery systems, social justice, global health, healthcare policy, informatics, and principles of entrepreneurship in addressing the healthcare needs of individuals and populations.</p> <p>Accept accountability for continued development as a strategic, ethical, and reflective scholar and practitioner to engage as a lifelong learner with the goal of advancing the profession of nursing.</p>
Intellectual Leadership	Leadership Excellence	<p>Utilize current evidence, clinical judgment, and patient preference to systematically assess, analyze, implement, and evaluate healthcare interventions in order to promote safe, quality care throughout the lifespan beginning with health promotion through the end of life.</p> <p>Demonstrate leadership competency both inter-professionally and when delegating, supervising, or coordinating teams to achieve shared goals and improve patient outcomes.</p>
Lifelong Learning	Lifelong Learning Scholarship	Accept accountability for continued development as a strategic, ethical, and reflective scholar and practitioner to engage as a lifelong learner with the goal of advancing the profession of nursing.
Intellectual Leadership and Professional Preparation	Scholarship Evidence-Based Practice	Synthesize knowledge of healthcare delivery systems, social justice, global health, healthcare policy, informatics, and principles of entrepreneurship in addressing the healthcare needs of individuals and populations.
Making Difference	a Respect, Social Justice, Inclusion, Caring & Compassion	Deliver compassionate and respectful, patient and family-centered care and education that reflects an understanding of human growth, development, nutrition, genomics, spirituality, culture, symptom management, and health

		literacy across the health illness continuum through all transitions of care in all healthcare settings.
Global Perspective Based on Research & Scholarship	Evidence-Based Practice and Integration of Theory & Practice	Utilize current evidence, clinical judgment, and patient preference to systematically assess, implement, and evaluate healthcare intervention in order to promote safe, quality care throughout the lifespan beginning with health promotion through end of life. Synthesize knowledge of healthcare delivery systems, social justice, global healthcare policy, informatics, and principles of entrepreneurship in addressing the healthcare needs of individuals and populations.

Addendum 2: Vaccinations/Immunizations Required for Clinical

Nursing students must provide documentation, relating to immunizations and infectious diseases, to receive health clearance to participate in clinical. The Nursing Programs reserve the right to change health requirements, as needed, to meet contractual obligations with affiliating healthcare facilities. Immunization can be done at the [Simmons University Health Center](#). Charges may apply. Please contact the Health Center for more information.

COVID Vaccine

All Simmons students who are enrolled in classes on campus and/or in clinical courses must be fully vaccinated. Students are required to upload COVID-19 vaccine documentation to the patient portal by visiting myhealth.simmons.edu. Students are also required to upload COVID-19 vaccine documentation to CastleBranch.

Tuberculosis and the PPD (Purified Protein Derivative) Test

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

If a student has a positive history of PPD (mantoux), documentation of the following is required: the year of conversion, treatment received, and/or date of a negative chest x-ray. The student must also complete an annual symptom review, which can be done with an RN, at the Simmons University Health Center. Some clinical agencies may require a PPD more frequently than once a year. Students will be notified of this prior to placement at that particular agency.

Tetanus, Diphtheria, and Pertussis (Tdap)

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

Measles

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

Mumps

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

Rubella

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

Hepatitis B

Documented completion of the Hepatitis B vaccine series AND the HBsAb (Hepatitis B surface antibody) titer is required. If the series is incomplete at the start of clinical nursing courses, the student will receive temporary health clearance. Full health clearance is granted when the immune titer is complete. Note: Students must be current in the Hepatitis B vaccination series to continue with clinical studies.

Clinical Policy Regarding Hepatitis B Positive Students The purpose of this policy is to clarify clinical recommendations for students who have been diagnosed with Hepatitis B (HBV). Hepatitis B infections should not ordinarily exclude clinical experiences for nursing students whether at the undergraduate or graduate level. The Nursing Programs adhere to the Centers for Disease Control Recommendations for the Management of Hepatitis B Virus-Infected Health-Care Providers and Students. CDC recommendations can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/pdf/rr/rr6103.pdf>. The CDC Guidelines establish two categories of clinical procedures relevant for Hepatitis B virus infected (HBV) healthcare providers and students.

Category I procedures include invasive procedures such as surgery or repair of traumatic injuries, vaginal deliveries, or other procedures that require the use of sharp instruments in a poorly visualized, tightly contained, anatomic site that carry the risk of provider-to-patient transmission of HBV through percutaneous injury to the health-care provider. Students in the health care professions and in the Nursing Program do not ordinarily perform those procedures.

CDC Category 2 procedures include all other invasive and non-invasive procedures that pose no or low risk of percutaneous injury in a contained anatomic site. Chronic HBV infection should not exclude clinical care experiences for healthcare professionals or students. Standard Precautions should be rigorously adhered to in all clinical situations to protect both patients and providers. The Nursing Programs recommend that students with a HBV diagnosis contact the [Office of Accessibility Services](#) to review the CDC Recommendations and document health-related information. If students were to engage in Category I Procedures, they would be required to contact the Office of Accessibility Services before engaging in the Category I Procedure so that a higher level of review can be conducted.

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

Varicella

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

Seasonal Flu Vaccine

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

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

Addendum 3: Technical Standards of Professional Nursing Practice for Simmons University Pre-Licensure Nursing Students

The mission of the Simmons University Nursing Programs is to educate and graduate students to be highly qualified, skilled, and compassionate nurses who will be future leaders in the profession.

What follows below are technical standards that reflect the academic and clinical requirements that are integral to the practice of nursing. These standards are derived from the [American Association of Colleges of Nursing Baccalaureate Essentials](#), [The Nurse of the Future Core Competencies](#), [The American Nurses Association Code of Ethics](#), as well as from best practices in technical standards from leading nursing schools and organizations across the United States (including New York University, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Drexel University and the Utah Organization for Nurse Leaders). These technical standards apply in all areas of student academic experiences, including classroom, laboratory, offices, clinical, and Simmons community environments.

Technical Standards Definition

To progress through, and graduate from, the Simmons Nursing Programs, students must master core competencies in five separate areas. These technical standards reflect the core competencies that must be demonstrated to earn a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree at Simmons.

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

Technical Standards Summary

Under the supervision of a licensed nurse, student nurses are responsible for direct patient care for those individuals assigned to them during a scheduled shift. A shift varies in duration from 4 to 12 hours and may be during the day, night, or weekend. Student nurses are also responsible for communicating with families, caregivers, and other staff, be it written, verbal, electronic, or other media, in relation to their

assignments. Duties may require responding effectively in emotionally, highly charged, and emergent situations. The physical demands of the role may require standing, walking, lifting, bending, twisting, squatting, carrying, pushing, pulling, reaching, writing, typing, pinching, gripping, manual dexterity, visual acuity, hearing, and touch.

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

Reasonable Accommodations for Qualified Individuals with Accessibility Needs

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

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

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

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

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

The First Core Competency: Cognitive Abilities

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

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

The Second Core Competency: Communication Skills

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

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

The Third Core Competency: Observational Abilities

Students must have the ability to make accurate visual and aural observations in the care of patients. Examples of observational abilities include:

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

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

Students must be able to perform or assist with nursing interventions to provide comprehensive nursing care.

Motor competencies generally include the ability to:

1. Perform gross and fine motor movements to perform complete physical examinations utilizing the techniques of inspection, palpation, percussion, auscultation, as well as other diagnostic tools and equipment (e.g., sphygmomanometer, otoscope, stethoscope, ophthalmoscope, EKG, IVs).

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

The Fifth Core Competency: Behavioral, Interpersonal, and Ethical Comportment Skills

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

1. Demonstrating capacity for compassion and regard for the welfare of others
2. Forming mature, sensitive, caring, sensitive therapeutic relationships with patients and families
3. Forming professional relationships with faculty, staff, and peers
4. Maintaining composure and perform effectively in highly charged, rapidly changing, and urgent situations
5. Adhering to the ANA Code of Ethics, the ANA Standards for Professional Practice, and Simmons University Honor Code
6. Maintaining confidentiality
7. Being flexible in changing situations
8. Being open to constructive feedback and ability to modify behavior
9. Working collaboratively with faculty, staff, peers, patients, and families
10. Being open to examination of personal responses, perceptions, and attitudes
11. Engaging with individuals from all backgrounds and cultures with openness, communication of regard and caring, respect, warmth, and inclusion

Additional Considerations

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

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

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

Students who have a significant illness, injury, hospitalization, or surgery during the time they are in clinical learning experiences must be cleared to return to clinical by their physician or healthcare provider, as well as relevant Simmons staff/faculty/administrator(s). Please contact the Manager of Clinical Education for information about the medical clearance requirements and process.

Addendum 4: Preceptor Voucher Policies

Professional Development Vouchers (Campus-Based Programs)

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

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

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

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

*Please see the Clinical Preceptor Scholarship Program.

Procedure for redeeming voucher(s)

1. Have authorized representatives of Agency/Institution verify employment by signing voucher where designated.
2. Register with the Office of the Registrar for a course.
3. Submit completed voucher to Simmons University, School of Nursing for signature by Clinical Coordination office staff.
4. Proceed to the Office of Student Financial Services with the Professional Development Voucher(s) to make payment.

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

This voucher policy is subject to change.

Clinical Preceptor Scholarship Program (Nursing@Simmons)

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

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

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

New students (prior to first term)

Nursing@Simmons Admissions

1-855-461-7466 admissions@onlinenursing.simmons.edu

Current students (actively enrolled in courses)

Nursing@Simmons Student Success

1-855-465-7466 studentsupport@onlinenursing.simmons.edu

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