Simmons UNIVERSITY

School of Social Work

SocialWork@Simmons

Student Policy Handbook and Program Information

2019-2020

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**SOCIALWORK@SIMMONS PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION 2019-2020** ................................................................. viii
  Faculty ....................................................................................................................................................... viii
  Staff ........................................................................................................................................................... viii

**MISSION STATEMENT** ............................................................................................................................ 1

**GOALS** .................................................................................................................................................. 1

**A DEFINITION OF CLINICAL SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE** ........................................................................ 2

**PRINCIPLES AND POLICIES** ................................................................................................................ 2
  Student Principles ....................................................................................................................................... 2

**ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL ADVISING** ..................................................................................... 2
  Academic Advising .................................................................................................................................... 2
  Field Advising .......................................................................................................................................... 3

**ATTENDANCE** .......................................................................................................................................... 3
  Classroom Attendance ............................................................................................................................... 3
  Asynchronous Course Work Policy for Academic Courses .................................................................... 3
  Auditing Classes ........................................................................................................................................ 3
  Religious Observance/Student Absence .................................................................................................. 3
  Information Regarding Class and Clinical Placement Attendance for Students Who Are on Active Duty in the U.S. Military ................................................................. 4
  Duty to Notify Faculty in Advance of Anticipated Absences ................................................................ 4
  Requesting Supplemental or Replacement Work ..................................................................................... 5
    For Missed Classes ................................................................................................................................... 5
    For Missed Clinical Hours ......................................................................................................................... 5
  When Students Have No Notice of Changes in Deployment .................................................................... 5

**Our Diversity and Inclusion Mission** ..................................................................................................... 6

**Notice of Non-Discrimination** ................................................................................................................ 7

**Reporting Sexual Misconduct** ............................................................................................................... 8

**Students Reporting Discrimination or Retaliation** ................................................................................. 8

**Reporting a Web/Online Accessibility Barrier** ....................................................................................... 8

**For Advice on Whom to Contact about a Concern or Incident** ................................................................ 8

**Grievance Procedure** ............................................................................................................................ 8

**PROCEDURES FOR OTHER GRIEVANCES AND COMPLAINTS** ......................................................... 8

**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR EVALUATING STUDENTS’ ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE** .................................................................................................................. 9

**PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE** .................................................. 9
  NASW Code of Ethics ............................................................................................................................... 9
  Simmons School of Social Work Standards for Professional Practice .................................................... 9

**PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE AND ACADEMIC REVIEWS (LEVEL 1, 2, 3)** ................................ 10
  Three Levels of Review ............................................................................................................................. 10
    Level 1: Student/Instructor Consultation ................................................................................................. 11
    Level 2 .................................................................................................................................................... 11
    Level 3 .................................................................................................................................................... 12
  Level 3 Reviews and Referral and/or Consultation with the Simmons University Dean for Student Life ................................................................................................................................. 13

**Simmons University Student Code of Conduct** .................................................................................... 13

**Simmons University Academic Integrity Policy** ..................................................................................... 13
5. Physical and Cognitive Ability, Critical Thinking .............................................. 33
6. Emotional and Mental Stability, and Stress Management ..................................... 33
7. Professional Values and Ethics ............................................................................ 33
8. Respect for Diversity and Social Justice ............................................................... 34

APPENDIX 2 .................................................................................................................. 35
Live Session Protocol ............................................................................................... 35
Online Etiquette ......................................................................................................... 35
Technology Requirements ....................................................................................... 36
Recording of Live Sessions ..................................................................................... 36

SOCIALWORK@SIMMONS PROGRAM INFORMATION 2019-2020 ................................. 37
THE MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK (MSW) .................................................................... 37
The School of Social Work ......................................................................................... 37
CORRESPONDENCE FROM SSW ............................................................................. 37

OPTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE ONLINE MSW DEGREE ........................................ 37
The Accelerated Program .......................................................................................... 37
The Full-Time Program ............................................................................................ 37
The Extended Program ............................................................................................. 37
The Advanced Standing Program .......................................................................... 38
Working and the SW@S Program............................................................................. 38
Sample Program Tracks .......................................................................................... 38

FIELD EDUCATION .................................................................................................... 38
REGISTRATION ........................................................................................................... 38
PREREQUISITES ........................................................................................................ 38

GRADUATION INFORMATION .................................................................................. 39
Diplomas .................................................................................................................... 39

TRANSCRIPTS ............................................................................................................ 39

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS .................................................................................. 39

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ............................................................................. 39

CERTIFICATE INFORMATION AND DESCRIPTIONS .................................................... 40
Practice with Groups and Families .......................................................................... 40
Trauma Practice ........................................................................................................ 40
Mental Health Practice .............................................................................................. 40

AWARDS ....................................................................................................................... 41

SPECIALIZED COURSES OF STUDY .......................................................................... 41
Curricular Pathways: Individualized Course of Study and Specialized Courses of Study ................................................................................................. 41
Frequently Asked Questions .................................................................................... 42
Specialized Course of Study Descriptions ................................................................ 42
Individualized Course of Study (ICS) ........................................................................ 42
Child and Family ....................................................................................................... 42
Trauma and Interpersonal Violence .......................................................................... 43
Mental Health and Substance Abuse ......................................................................... 43
Health and Aging ...................................................................................................... 43
The SocialWork@Simmons Student Policy Handbook and Program Information is the student’s guide to the SocialWork@Simmons program.

Students are responsible for knowing the policies and procedures in this document, as well as Simmons School of Social Work Policies and the Policies of Simmons University, which are available on the Simmons University website.

The information in this document is subject to change. The Simmons SSW and SocialWork@Simmons reserve the right to change any policy or procedure without notice.
SOCIALWORK@SIMMONS PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION 2019-2020

Faculty

- Stephanie Berzin, Dean, College of Social Sciences, Policy, and Practice
- Carly Burton, Associate Professor of Practice
- Lindsey Baughman-Dalton, Associate Professor of Practice and Assistant Director of Field Education Evaluation and Planning
- Silvana Castañeda, Associate Professor of Practice and Director of Field Education
- Melinda Gushwa, Associate Professor, MSW Director and Director, Simmons School of Social Work
- Julia Riley, Associate Professor of Practice and Associate Director, Faculty-Facing
- Elana Sandler, Associate Professor of Practice and Assistant Director of Field Education Community Partner Engagement
- Leah Hart Tennen, Associate Professor of Practice and Associate Director, Student-Facing
- Elizabeth Whitney, Associate Professor of Practice and Assistant Director of Field Education Curriculum and Training

Staff

- Tanya Barker, Academic Advisor
- Michael Cicone, Assistant Director of Operations
- Aqueela Culbreath-Britt, Academic Advisor
- Lauren Fallon, Academic Advisor
- Andrew Kiritsy, Academic Assessment Analyst
- Latoya Oliver, Administrative Assistant
- Anna Williams, Academic Advisor
MISSION STATEMENT
The mission of the MSW program is to prepare masters level professional practitioners with skills for clinical social work practice in a complex, multicultural world using knowledge based on evidence-informed and field-informed practice, in which clinical practice is defined, in part, as a disciplined process for collaboration, in service of social, emotional and behavioral change for individuals, groups, families, organizations and communities. This educational experience, consistent with the history and philosophy of the social work profession, is grounded in a values perspective that emphasizes client strengths, actively opposes all forms of oppression and supports social, economic and environmental justice. The curriculum is designed to help students develop competence, critical thinking and the ability to attend to clients’ presenting concerns and build on their strengths, as well as cultural responsiveness and self-awareness.

GOALS
Students learn multiple social work roles and skills necessary to be effective within evolving fields of practice. Graduates will be able to work with a variety of populations and social issues, using a broad and flexible array of evidence-informed interventions at an advanced level. They will have the ability to work with individuals, families, groups and communities to facilitate development and change in the service of social, economic and environmental justice. Graduates will be prepared to practice with an appreciation for the dignity and worth of the person and the importance of human relationships; with a sense of integrity and a commitment to supporting human rights and actively opposing structures and practices that oppress and marginalize individuals, groups and communities. The MSW program goals are directly linked to our mission statement.

1. Provide high-quality education for generalist practice and a concentration in clinical social work.
2. Create and sustain a learning environment that encourages critical thinking and problem-solving, promotes cultural responsiveness and self-awareness, and values the contributions of all stakeholders to the educational experience.
3. Enact a program culture that creates and sustains a learning environment in which we critically self-reflect on issues of human rights, race, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, disability, ethnicity, class, national origin, immigration status, religion, the intersection among these factors and the roles they play in education and the practice of social work.
4. Infuse all activities of the MSW program including the implicit and explicit curricula, with the values and ethics of the social work profession.
5. Prepare students for competent ethical practice in a complex, multicultural world and a rapidly changing global environment.
6. Promote the development of professional knowledge and skills and accountability through the use of evidence-informed practice and a commitment to lifelong learning.
A DEFINITION OF CLINICAL SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

A disciplined process for collaboration in service of social, emotional and behavioral change for individuals, groups, families, organizations and communities. Clinical social work draws on knowledge of human development, relational and group process, cultural learning and social policies. It employs evidence-informed methods that facilitate change through dialogue and collective action. It is grounded in a history of commitment to social justice and guided by a professional code of ethics.

PRINCIPLES AND POLICIES

Simmons has committed itself to the following principles and policies:

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:

- Each member of the Simmons community is responsible for maintaining a high level of integrity, honesty, and trust within the community.
- Each student is responsible for work of the student’s own creation and for not representing as their own work that which is not theirs.
- Conduct in keeping with the policies outlined in the Student Handbook and all other official 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.

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.

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.

ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL ADVISING

Academic Advising

Students are assigned an Academic Advisor when they enter the SW@S program. The Academic Advisor provides guidance in regards to concerns or conflicts that might arise with course progression, plans of study, status (leave[s] of absences, withdrawals, change of program options), and academic performance issues. In addition, the Academic Advisor might assist with clarification of learning styles and
needs, along with guidance with materials found in any of the student handbooks. The Academic Advisor serves as an advocate during a student’s tenure as a graduate student and helps to connect students with academic and other support. The advisors also provide advising pertaining to postgraduate social work careers and career resources. Students are informed of academic and professional advising services through the required Foundations module on the Learning Management System.

Field Advising

Each year students in field placements are assigned a Field Liaison who serves as a liaison between the student and the field placement agency. The liaison collaborates with field agency instructors in evaluating student progress and learning and, when necessary, serves as a mediator in problem situations. The liaison also participates in discussions, as needed, about concerns or problems in field placement or academic course work as it pertains to field education.

ATTENDANCE

Classroom Attendance

Instructors are permitted to and will consider individual class attendance when determining a student’s final grade for a course. In addition to lowering a grade, excessive absences may justify a non-passing grade for the entire course. In SocialWork@Simmons courses, “excessive absence” is typically defined as missing 20% or more of combined asynchronous and synchronous work.

Note: attendance differs from participation; expectations for each are spelled out in the course syllabus.

Asynchronous Course Work Policy for Academic Courses

The asynchronous course work is an essential component of student acquisition of knowledge, values and skills related to course content and professional development. The asynchronous course work and the live session comprise at least three hours of contact time for each course, per week.

A student who submits asynchronous course work late, submits incomplete work, or does not submit asynchronous course work for the week has effectively been absent from class. Unless a student has negotiated an extension in a timely manner with their instructor or has accommodations that enable them to submit work after the deadline, missing 20% or more of combined asynchronous and synchronous work will automatically result in a non-passing grade. (Note: this policy applies only to academic courses. There is a separate asynchronous attendance policy for field courses. Please consult the Field Education Manual.)

Asynchronous course work includes responding to all prompts requiring either a written or video recorded response, as well as assignments that are to be completed and brought to live sessions. While readings and videos are not graded, all students are expected to have read and viewed all readings and videos before attending each live session.

Auditing Classes

Auditing classes is not permitted in SocialWork@Simmons courses.

Religious Observance/Student Absence

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

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

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

Students in Field Placement should consult the Field Education Manual for procedures and policies governing the request of release time for religious holidays.

Students who need to be excused from field placement attendance due to religious observance should make arrangements with their field instructor prior to the anticipated absence. Students will be provided the opportunity to make up missed time at a later date. Students should consult the SW@S Field Education Manual for further details.

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

Information Regarding Class and Clinical Placement Attendance for Students Who Are on Active Duty in the U.S. Military

The Simmons School of Social Work (SSW) is committed to supporting students who are enrolled in the SSW while on active duty in the U.S. Military.

We recognize that active-duty students are subject to unexpected and unavoidable changes in their schedules and that you may be deployed to areas where internet access is unreliable or unavailable. Because we know it is not uncommon for students in the military to miss one or more live sessions or clinical placement hours due to military obligations, we ask our active military students to take the following steps to ensure their success:

**Duty to Notify Faculty in Advance of Anticipated Absences**

In most instances, we expect students will know in advance when they will need to report for duty and how the nature and location of the deployment may impact their ability to attend live sessions or to participate in field placement. Thus, when students have advance notice that they will be absent from a class or clinical placement
due to a military assignment, they are asked to provide the following in writing to their instructor (if missing a class) or to both their Field instructor and Field Liaison (if missing field placement hours):

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

**Requesting Supplemental or Replacement Work**

Once the student has notified their faculty member of the planned absences, they are asked to talk with their faculty member no later than the end of the first week of the term to discuss how they will make up the missed class and/or clinical placement hours.

**For Missed Classes**

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

**For Missed Clinical Hours**

If the student will be absent from field placement, they must discuss their anticipated absences with their field instructor and Field Liaison. See the [Field Education Manual](#) for the policy relating to absences that exceed the 40 hours of excused absence time per clinical placement.

**When Students Have No Notice of Changes in Deployment**

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

**THE SIMMONS COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION**

The Simmons Commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion was developed with input from the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Action Council, supported by the University leadership, and unanimously affirmed by our Board of Trustees.
Simmons is committed to inclusive excellence in all aspects of an individual’s community experience. Our values, vision and mission mandate that we strive to create an environment that is free from bias, prejudice, discrimination and hurtful/hateful acts that can prevent each member from thriving in the Simmons community.

Our Diversity and 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 leader in a changing, diverse society. We promote this goal through proactive and continual exchange of ideas among students, faculty and the general University community.

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

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

- All students are given equal access to the University’s programs and resources. Admission to the University’s undergraduate baccalaureate program considers people who self-identify as women. The University is committed to admitting qualified students of any race, color, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, religion, age, national origin, ancestry, disability, or veteran status to all programs and activities made generally available to students at the University, including scholarship and loan programs, athletic programs, and other
University-administered student services, and social, educational and recreational programs.

- We subscribe to the policies set forth in Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which mandates equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities in educational programs and activities.
- We are committed to creating an atmosphere where diversity is supported with understanding, respect, and encouragement. The University does not tolerate unlawful or other harassment of employees or students. Any discrimination or harassment by any member of the faculty, staff, or student body against any other member of the community will be handled according to the process articulated in the Bias Response Protocol, Title IX Policy, Faculty Policy Manual, Employee Handbook, and other relevant Simmons policies.

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 the Room E-200 in the Main Campus Building. The Simmons Gender-Based Misconduct Policy can be found here.

Students Reporting Discrimination or Retaliation
If you are a student and you believe you have been subjected to unlawful discrimination or retaliation, please contact the Dean of your College, the Director of your Program or the Dean for Student Life. The Dean for Student Life can be found in C-115 of the Main Campus Building and at 617-521-2117.

Reporting a Web/Online Accessibility Barrier
Please use the form at http://www.simmons.edu/report-barrier. We are committed to making our programs and activities accessible to all individuals.

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

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

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

PROCEDURES FOR OTHER GRIEVANCES AND COMPLAINTS
Students have the right to grieve actions or decisions, which can include grieving a final grade, appealing status decisions, appealing a Student Code of Conduct or Academic Integrity finding, or filing a complaint.

Specifically, students can:

- Grieve a final course grade by following the grade appeal process. (See Handbook section below on Appeal of Final Course Grade.)
- Appeal a dismissal from the MSW program by writing a letter to the SSW Associate Director that addresses allowable appeal criteria.
Appeal a sanction pertaining to an Academic Integrity finding or misconduct (see Academic Integrity Guidebook.)

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

- A student discussing the issue with the faculty member
- If discussion with the faculty member is not appropriate to the situation, or the student is dissatisfied with the outcome, the concern can be brought to the Associate Director (student-facing) online or the SSW Associate Director (campus)
- If discussion with the Associate Director is not appropriate to the situation, or if the student is dissatisfied with the outcome, the issue can be brought to the Director of the SSW.

Policies and Procedures for Evaluating Students’ Academic and Professional Performance

Course faculty evaluate students’ academic performance throughout the semester culminating in a final course grade. The grading scale is published in the SSW Student Handbook and on each syllabus; additional expectations about attendance, participation and timeliness of work are also listed in the syllabus and Handbook. Assignment grading rubrics, when used, are also given to students. Students are required to follow all academic policies outlined in SSW Student Handbook and to adhere to academic progression guidelines. Students who exhibit uneven or poor performance are referred for additional supports and advising. Students can also have a Level 1, 2 or 3 review. (See description of Level Reviews below in this Handbook).

Student’s professional performance is integral to their overall academic performance and success in the program. Students are informed of the criteria for evaluation of professional performance as part of new student orientation. Students are required to read the SSW Standards for Professional Practice and the *NASW Code of Ethics* and are introduced to Competency 2 (Ethics and Social Work Practice). Practice behaviors associated with Competency 2 are evaluated each semester of Field Education via the semester field evaluation form. Students who exhibit unethical conduct or unprofessional behavior can be referred for a Level 3 review by the academic standards committee. (See description of Level 3 review in this Handbook.)

Professional Standards and Professional Performance

**NASW Code of Ethics**

Students are expected to adhere to the *NASW Code of Ethics* and established norms, values, and behavior both during their field placement and while earning their Social Work degree. The *NASW Code of Ethics* outlines behaviors and responsibilities expected of all professional social workers. The NASW considers students to be professional social workers from the time they enroll into a social work program. Students should obtain a copy of the *NASW Code of Ethics* and become familiar with its contents.
Simmons School of Social Work Standards for Professional Practice

SocialWork@Simmons students are also expected to be familiar with and abide by the Simmons School of Social Work Standards for Professional Practice (Appendix 1) and the SocialWork@Simmons Live Session Protocol and Online Etiquette (Appendix 2). Students are informed about the Standards for Professional Practice prior to and during new student orientation; they are instructed to read the Standards for Professional Practice as a required component of orientation. At orientation, students are informed about the consequences of not meeting the standards for professional practice. Specifically, failure to meet generally accepted standards for professional conduct, ethics and personal integrity requisite for professional social work practice, as outlined in the NASW Code of Ethics and the SSW Social Work Standards for Professional Practice, may constitute grounds for a Level 3 review or the filing of a Student Code of Conduct or Academic Integrity infraction, and could result in academic sanctions including dismissal.

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

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

Reviews of students can occur for the following circumstances:

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

Three Levels of Review

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

**Level 1: Student/Instructor Consultation**

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

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

If a problem arises in an external training site (i.e., field placement) the supervisor is expected to discuss promptly concerns directly with the student and with the Field Liaison. It is the responsibility of the Field Liaison to appraise their Field department contact of the concerns.

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

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

**Level 2**

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

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

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

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

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

**Level 3**

A Level 3 review involves the Associate Director, members of the Academic Standards Committee and the student. Generally, the Level 3 review is called when serious or complex problematic patterns are identified with students or when the issues are serious enough to require formal consultation with faculty and the student. A student can be referred for a Level 3 review by a faculty member or administrator. A Social Work Professional Conduct form is submitted online to the Associate Director. The Associate Director, in consultation with the committee, decides whether a Level 3 meeting shall be convened. The Associate Director may also consult with the Assistant Dean of Community Standards (see next section). The Associate Director informs the Simmons University Dean for Student Life about the decision to convene a Level 3 review.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Level 3 Reviews and Referral and/or Consultation with the Simmons University Dean for Student Life

In some instances, depending on the nature of the problem, the Simmons University Dean for Student Life or the Assistant Dean of Community Standards may be consulted to determine whether a Level 3 Review or a non-academic incident referral or an academic integrity referral is the most appropriate course of action.

After consultation, if it is determined that a report requiring a University disciplinary action is appropriate, the student will be notified. Situations that may result in referral include academic dishonesty, plagiarism, cheating, gender-based misconduct (which includes unlawful harassment), damage or destruction of University property, and conduct that endangers the health or safety of any University student, employee, campus visitor or member of the Simmons community and conduct that disrupts the functioning of the University as an open, educational community.

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

Simmons University Student Code of Conduct

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

Simmons University Academic Integrity Policy

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

TurnItIn is similarity-detection software that locates areas in student writing that closely resemble or exactly match the data source from which ideas are extrapolated. TurnItIn will be used for major written assignments in some courses as indicated in course syllabi. The purposes of this tool include providing students with feedback when:

- Their citations are not in compliance with APA Style Guide guidelines;
- They are incorrectly representing their work as original ideas or meaning making informed by reliable evidence and literature;
- They are drawing verbatim from text sources, but either not citing appropriately or at all.

If potential plagiarism is indicated, then the procedure outlined in the Student Code of Conduct will be followed.

GRADING

Students are expected to maintain a B (3.0) grade average throughout their program in the SSW. Courses are graded using the A-F grading system. School of Social Work students must take all classes for a letter grade with the exception of social work field education courses, in which case Pass, Marginal Pass or Fail are used instead of a letter grade. Students should refer to the Field Education Manual for grading guidelines. The numerical equivalent for each grade is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>GPA equivalent</th>
<th>Point scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>100-94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>89-87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>86-84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>83-80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>79-77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>76-74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>73-70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>69-68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>67-64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>63-60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>59 or below</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ACADEMIC STANDING AND DISCIPLINE

Course Grades Below a “B”

Any student earning a grade lower than a B in a course is required to have a Level 2 review, no later than the first day of the subsequent term. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the grade, the reasons for the low academic performance, and to develop a Corrective Plan, which will be sent to the student. Possible actions include a stipulation that the student retake the class and earn a passing grade.

Any student earning a grade below a B minus is required to have a Level 2 review and to retake the class and earn a B or better.

A student’s failure to attend the Level 2 review may result in the administrative withdrawal of the student’s registration.
When a Student Is Required to Retake a Class

When a student is required to retake a class, both grades remain on the transcript and are accounted for in the GPA. All students are required to earn the requisite number of unique degree credits to graduate.

A student is allowed to repeat a maximum of two courses in which they have earned a grade of below a B. The same course cannot be enrolled in more than twice. A student is not permitted to re-submit any work submitted in the prior class. This includes asynchronous work as well as written papers and exams. Students required to retake a class will do so at their own expense.

Academic Probation

Poor academic performance, and poor performance in external internships are grounds for a student to be placed on academic probation. For the purposes of academic probation, poor performance is defined as: two grades below a B, a cumulative GPA of less than 3.0, or an MP in field placement. A student on academic probation will have a Level 2 review no later than the end of the first week of class of the subsequent term. The purpose of the meeting is to develop a Corrective Plan. A copy of the plan, written by the advisor or field liaison, must be forwarded to the appropriate program administrator. A student’s failure to attend a Level 2 review meeting and to develop such a plan may result in the administrative withdrawal of the student’s registration.

Academic Probation Due to Academic Performance for SSW Students Enrolled and Registered as a Degree Candidate for Classes Prior to Fall (September) Term 2016

For students who enrolled prior to Fall term 2016, this policy remains the same as it was when they enrolled: Students who earn two grades below a B will be placed on academic probation.

Academic Probation or Dismissal Due to Field Education Grades

Field grades (P, MP, F) are not factored into the cumulative GPA, however a grade of MP will result in academic probation, a grade of Fail (F) will result in dismissal; two marginal passes will result in dismissal. See the Field Education Manual for full field education grading policy.

Removal from Academic Probation

To be removed from academic probation, a student must achieve a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher by the following term.

Program Progression

- A student is allowed to repeat a maximum of two courses in which they have earned a grade below a B.
- The same course cannot be enrolled in more than twice.
- Students who have utilized their repeat allowances and then go on to earn a grade below a “B” will be dismissed from the program.
- Students are not allowed to withdraw from the same course more than once.
- Students must complete the program in five years.
- Students who do not register for classes in consecutive terms and are not on an official leave, or have not officially withdrawn, will be administratively withdrawn by
Simmons. A new admissions application is required to be considered for return to the active student status.

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

Dismissal (Terminating Enrollment) for Academic and Professional Reasons
Students can be dismissed from the SSW for not meeting academic and/or professional requirements.

Dismissal Due to Academic Performance
The following academic circumstances lead to dismissal:

- Earning a cumulative GPA falling below a 3.0 for two consecutive terms
- When it is determined that a student cannot return their cumulative GPA to at least a 3.0 at the conclusion of the following term
- Earning three grades below a B
- Failure to progress as described in course progression policy
- Failure to gain a field placement after three interviews in one term
- Earning two grades of MP or one grade of F in field education
- In the case of conditional admission, failing to meet the conditions determined.

Dismissal Due to Professional Performance or Conduct Issues
The following professional performance or conduct issues lead to dismissal:

- Simmons University Student Code of Conduct or Academic Integrity violation leading to dismissal
- Behavior judged to be in violation of Simmons University policies
- Behavior that is deemed unprofessional per the NASW Code of Ethics or the Simmons School of Social Work Standards for Professional Practice
- Any threat or attempt to harm someone else inside or outside of the Simmons community
- Commission of a criminal act that is contrary to professional practice, occurring during the course of study at Simmons or occurring prior to admission to the School of Social Work and becoming known after admission.

Procedure for Dismissal
Prior to dismissal it is typical for problematic academic and professional performance issues to be addressed in meetings with faculty, advisors and program administrators. In most cases these meetings will include a level 2 or level 3 review. Documentation of the meeting is sent to the student. Students are notified of dismissal in a letter from the Associate Director of the SSW or the Associate Director of the online program. The reasons for the dismissal are outlined in the letter.

Dismissal Due to Academic Performance for SSW Students Enrolled and Registered as a Degree Candidate for Classes Prior to Fall (September) Term 2016
For students who enrolled prior to September term 2016, this policy remains the same as it was when they enrolled: Students who earn three grades below a B, or one F, will be dismissed.
Appeal of Dismissal

The student may appeal the decision, in writing, to the Associate Program Director (Faculty-facing). A written appeal must be received within three (3) calendar days of the date of the letter from the Associate Program Director (Student-facing) or designee. This appeal does not constitute a new review process. Rather, it is a request from a student to have the Associate Program Director (Faculty-facing) review the original record of the dismissal on either one or more of the following grounds: (1) one or more errors in the dismissal process; or (2) new evidence or information material to the case that was not available at the time of the dismissal process; or (3) a substantive error occurred because the decision maker misinterpreted evidence used in the dismissal process. The appeal letter should include an explanation regarding the grounds for appeal and should reference one or more of the three grounds for appeal listed in this policy. The student should provide to the Associate Program Director (Faculty-facing) all documentation necessary for the appeal to be considered. The Associate Program Director (Faculty-facing) will respond to the student appeal within 10 business days of its receipt. The decision of the Associate Program Director (Faculty-facing) is final.

If the appeal is premised on a grading dispute, a grade appeal must be completed before the dismissal appeal will be reviewed. In this case, the time frame for response to the dismissal appeal will begin at the conclusion of the grade appeal.

Reapplying after Dismissal

Students who are dismissed from the program and have been denied reinstatement must wait at least one year from the date of program dismissal before submitting a new application.

Final Course Grade Appeal

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

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

A. Explanation of Grounds for Appeal

1. Computational Error.

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

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

2. Arbitrariness or Capriciousness.

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

3. Discrimination.
The student alleges that the grade reflects a violation of the University’s non-discrimination policy as stated in the catalogs and student handbooks. In this case, the student should follow the "grievance procedures" for bringing a claim of unlawful discrimination as outlined in the University catalogs and student handbooks.

B. Grade Appeal Procedures and Deadlines

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

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

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

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

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

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

4. Fourth Step: Faculty Grade Appeal Committee

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

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

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

Bias Response Protocol

Simmons is committed to inclusive excellence in all aspects of an individual's community experience. Our values, vision and mission mandate that we strive to create an environment that is free of bias, prejudice, discrimination and hurtful acts. Individuals who believe they have experienced or encountered bias, harassment or discrimination can use the Simmons bias response protocol to have their concern addressed. Information about the protocol can be accessed at http://www.simmons.edu/about-simmons/why-simmons/diversity-and-inclusion/bias-response-protocol/.

EXTENSIONS FOR ASSIGNMENTS

Students are expected to complete coursework assignments on time; instructors should clearly articulate policies regarding extensions on the course syllabus and their grading policy for work/assignments passed in after the deadline. In most cases, an extension must be requested by a student prior to the due date of the assignment and a revised date for submission of work must be approved by the instructor. A student who submits work late even with the instructor’s permission, may nonetheless receive a
lesser grade from the instructor to reflect the missed deadline.

Students who are approved for extensions through the Office of Accessibility Services should consult their accommodation letters for extension guidelines.

Rewriting of Graded Papers
Students may, at the instructor’s sole discretion, be given the option of rewriting a paper that has received a grade of “B minus” or below. However, final course assignments may not be rewritten.

REGISTRATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Prerequisites and Plans of Study
When registering for classes each term, students must follow the plan of study provided to them by Student Success Specialists or Academic Advising. Students must successfully complete all required foundational courses before registering for advanced courses, including electives. Information about course sequencing, plans of study and pre-requisites is available through Student Success and academic advising. Students are strongly encouraged to consult these resources before registering.

Exceptions to the above are rarely allowed and only under highly exceptional circumstances. A request to enroll in an elective, or any course out of sequence, before completion of required generalist course work must be discussed with the Academic Advisor and receive final approval from the Program Administrator (Associate Program Director (Student-Facing) Leah Tennen). An exception may be granted only after the student has completed at least one term of Generalist Field Education.

Waitlist Policy
Students must use the AARC automatic waitlist system when they wish to be placed in line for a closed/full class. Professors cannot override the system and add students to their classes. The student should not contact the professor to be put into the class.

Waitlisted students should monitor their Simmons email for further information and for notification that they may enroll in an open seat. Students have 72 hours from when notified via Simmons email to make the change and register for the open seat or they will be automatically removed from the waitlist and the seat will be offered to the next student on the waitlist.

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

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

Student transcripts will show a “W” grade for “withdrawn” for any courses withdrawn from after the 2nd week and up to the end of the 8th week. No withdrawals are permitted after week 8; the instructor will record the grade the student has earned. Students are not allowed to withdraw from the same course more than once.

Students must meet with their Academic Advisor and must submit the relevant form before withdrawing from a course.

Drop/Withdrawal from Field Placement After the Add/Drop Period

To withdraw from field placement after the add/drop period, students must receive approval from the Director of Field Education. Students who perform poorly and/or are not making sufficient progress, and withdraw after the add/drop period may be given a grade that reflects their performance at the time of their withdrawal. Students should consult the SW@S Field Education Manual.

Changing Sections of Two-Term Courses

Students are required to remain in the same section of the two-term classes for which they are registered (SWO-446 A&B, SWO-447 A&B, and SWO-421 A&B). Students will be automatically registered in the second term for each of these courses.

Courses That Must Be Taken Concurrently

Students are required to register for the appropriate field and practice classes concurrently, as follows:

- 446A with 421A
- 446B with 421B
- 447A with 424/424A
- 447B with 425/424B

See the SW@S Field Education Manual for more information.

Incomplete Policy

Required coursework must ordinarily be completed by the last day of final examinations. In extenuating circumstances, students may request an "incomplete" by obtaining approval from the course instructor and Program Administrator (Associate Program Director (Student-Facing), which will be facilitated by the Academic Advisor. The advisor will distribute the Petition for Incomplete Grade form electronically to the student. The form must be completed and submitted in order for the student to be officially granted an incomplete grade in the course. Once the form is submitted, a grade of "I" will be entered by the Office of the Registrar. It is the student’s responsibility to monitor their progress and complete all work so that the instructor can submit a final grade by the date set. Students can only extend their final grade with an incomplete until one week before the beginning of the following term. If a student does not submit required work by the new due date, the instructor will grade the student based on work done up until that point. The grade earned will be assigned accordingly on the due date listed. Grades not submitted by the instructor to the Office of the Registrar on the approved deadline will automatically be converted to a grade of "F."

Incompletes for field placements may be extended beyond the typical deadline with Field Director or Program Administrator approval.
LEAVES OF ABSENCE AND WITHDRAWAL FROM THE UNIVERSITY

Voluntary Leave of Absence

Students wishing to leave the University for a temporary period, with the intention of returning to complete their degree, may apply to take a leave of absence (LOA). Student considering a leave of absence should consult their Academic Advisor; and also, if desired, the program director, the Dean of Student Affairs and Student Financial Services.

If the student chooses to take a voluntary leave of absence in order to receive intensive clinical health care treatment, the staff in the Office of Student Affairs will assist with processing this request. In some instances, the student may be asked to complete the Process for Returning from an Involuntary Leave of Absence as a requirement of returning to the University. (See below.)

In order to take an official leave of absence, students must complete a Leave of Absence form, available from their Academic Advisor. A student requesting a LOA must state the reason for the leave, and the semester in which they intend to return. Students who take a leave of absence during the semester are assigned grades based on the Course Withdrawal policy.

Leaves will not be ordinarily granted for periods longer than one academic year. The request for the extension of a leave (for a maximum of one year) is approved only in unusual circumstances. Extension requests must be made before the expiration of the original leave of absence. Leaves of absence for graduate students may not exceed a cumulative total of two years. Students who do not return at the end of an authorized Leave of Absence will be withdrawn from their academic program and must submit a subsequent readmission to the program.

Involuntary Leave of Absence

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

In instances in which a student’s mental, emotional, or medical health pose a threat to themselves and/or others, becomes a barrier to appropriate or prescribed levels of self-care, or causes significant disruption to the activities of the University community, such students may be required to take an involuntary leave of absence from the University.

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

Any student placed on an involuntary leave of absence will not be allowed to remain on campus. This includes living in residence,
attending classes, and participating in Simmons-sponsored events.

In circumstances when the student has not met direct threat/inpatient criteria, the Dean for Student Affairs or designee may, based off of observable/recorded behavior, still require a student to undergo an individualized psychological and/or medical assessment in order to make an informed decision regarding the student’s ability to meet the academic, social and emotional requirements of being a Simmons student. This evaluation can be conducted by a member of the University’s clinical staff, or by a student’s external health care provider who is treating the student. The student will be required to sign a release that gives permission to the University’s designated clinical personnel to speak with her/his external evaluating health care provider and to allow for the release of any relevant medical reports as part of the assessment. If the student chooses not to engage in the process listed above, then she/he will be required to take an involuntary leave of absence and if applicable, immediate removal from the residence halls.

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

In any instance in which a leave is required, the Dean for Student Affairs or designee will provide written notice to the student, including the specific requirements that must be met as a condition of eligibility for re-enrollment, the timeline for initiating and completing the return process, as well as the procedure for appealing the decision.

The duration of the leave is typically no fewer than six full months, although the specific length of the leave will be based on the student’s individualized assessment and determined by the Dean or designee on a case-by-case basis. When a student takes leave before the end of a semester, whether voluntary or involuntary, Simmons’ usual tuition and residence hall refund schedule apply.

Process for Returning to Simmons after an Involuntary Leave

Simmons University students who have been placed on an Involuntary Leave of Absence will be required to undergo an individualized assessment to be cleared to return to Simmons, prior to their return to the University. They are also required to sign an authorization form that enables the hospital, treatment facility, and/or all pertinent external health care providers to release information necessary for the review process. The review process will involve an interview with the appropriately licensed Simmons clinical staff member as well as the Dean of Student Affairs or designee. Following the interview with an individual of the clinical staff, a recommendation that is based off the student’s report, his/her treatment history, information gathered from the external treatment facility, and/or a student’s personal health care provider, will be shared with the Dean for Student Affairs or designee regarding the student’s readiness to return. Then, on a case by case basis, the Dean of Student Affairs or designee will make a determination if the students are permitted to return to the Simmons community. If it is determined that the student can return, the student will meet with the Associate Dean for Student Affairs or designee to establish a plan to return to the University and identify community resources. As a condition of
continued enrollment and, if applicable, as a condition of re-admittance to the residence halls, the following criteria must be met:

1. The consulting health care provider must find that the student has maintained a significant level of physical, mental, or emotional stability along with the skill set necessary to successfully engage in the student’s academic program as well as the activities associated in being a Simmons student.

2. The student and the consulting Simmons clinical staff member in conjunction with all relevant external health care providers must establish and agree upon a plan for continued managed care after returning to the University.

3. The student must commit to following the recommended and established treatment plan.

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

Withdrawal from the University

Students who wish to withdraw from the university must complete a Program Withdrawal Form, available from their Academic Advisor. Students should consult with their Academic Advisors and with Student Financial Services for information on the implications of withdrawal for tuition and student loans. A request for withdrawal is effective on the day it is received in the Registrar’s office. Students who withdraw during the semester are assigned grades based on the Course Withdrawal policy.

If a student withdraws from all of their courses, fails to return from leave of absence after the date approved by the registrar, or fails to register for any courses by the end of the add/drop period, they are considered to have withdrawn from the University. No student will be permitted to register after the add/drop period.

All University expenses incurred by a student before their withdrawal must be paid in full prior to the release of their official records.

Satisfactory Academic Progress for Federal Financial Aid

To be eligible to continue to receive Federal Student Aid (FSA), students must make satisfactory academic progress toward achieving and completing their program of study as measured using qualitative (GPA) and quantitative (completed credits) standards.

- **Qualitative Standard**: Students enrolled in a graduate degree program must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0

- **Quantitative Standard**: A graduate student must complete at least 50% of all credits attempted. This is calculated by dividing the total credits earned by the total credits attempted.

- Graduate students are required to complete within the timeframe established by Simmons. All credits attempted will count towards this timeframe. Graduate degree candidates should consult their program as the number of credits
required varies per program

- Note: Withdrawals after the add/drop period count as attempted but not completed credits.

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

INDEPENDENT STUDIES
Due to limited faculty resources, independent study for course credit is not available to SocialWork@Simmons students.

MSW DEGREE COMPLETION POLICY
Students enroll in one of four program tracks:

- Extended (8 terms)—completed in approximately 2.5 years
- Full-time (6 terms)—completed in approximately 2 years
- Accelerated (4 terms)—completed in approximately 16 months
- Advanced Standing (4 terms)—completed in approximately 16 months

Any changes in program status (e.g., full-time to extended or vice versa) must be discussed with and approved by the Academic Advisor. The student should schedule a meeting with their advisor to create an alternative plan for program completion.

CHANGE OF PROGRAM STATUS/PROGRAM COMPLETION
All degree requirements must be completed within five years of matriculation. At five years or more prior academic coursework must be repeated.

MSW TRANSFER AND WAIVER POLICIES

Transfer Credits from another MSW Program—Non-matriculated students
Students entering the MSW program may request to transfer up to six course credits taken as a non-matriculated student at a CSWE-accredited MSW program. The student must provide an official transcript and relevant syllabi from that program and request transfer credits during the admissions process.

Transfer credits will not be accepted after the first semester in the program. To be transferred, a grade of “B” or better must be received in the course. Courses for transfer must be at least 3 credits, and they must be taken on a graduate level. All degree requirements must be completed within 5 years of matriculation. At 5 years or more prior academic coursework must be repeated. Syllabi and other support material are required for the review of transfer requests. Requests will be reviewed by the Program Administrator or their designee.

Neither certificate programs nor continuing education programs, even when taken in an MSW program, are eligible for transfer.

Transfer Students Applying to Simmons from other MSW Programs
Transfer students are those who apply to leave their current MSW program and matriculate as an MSW student at Simmons. Applicants must be in good standing with the school from which they are transferring and must have a minimum
GPA of 3.0. Additional information for transfer applicants:

- A maximum of 32 credits may be requested for transfer
- The student must provide an official transcript and a letter of good standing from the Dean or Associate Dean of the MSW program
- A syllabus for each course must be submitted for transfer credit
- Courses in which the student receives a “B-” or lower will not be transferred
- A field evaluation for first-year field education is required
- All coursework including transfer credits must be completed within 5 years

Transfer of an Elective Taken at Another Institution

Matriculated students with special interests may be given permission to take one elective at another institution or in another Simmons graduate program if:

- It is a Master’s level course at an accredited, degree-granting institution
- The course content shows clear relevance to the social work degree
- The course is not offered by SocialWork@Simmons
- The course earns a minimum of 3 credits and meets for at least the equivalent contact hours as the SW@S course

Students must notify their Academic Advisor of such a proposal prior to the registration period. The Associate Program Director (Student-facing) must review and approve the plan prior to its submission in writing to the Associate Director.

If permission is granted, the student is responsible for the transfer of credit to Simmons at the end of the semester. Non-receipt of a transcript and the executed Petition to Transfer Credits form by the proper deadline in the final year could affect the student’s ability to graduate on time. Students must receive a grade of “B” or better to transfer credit. The form can be obtained from the SW@S Assistant Director of Operations.

Matriculated students may not take any required courses outside of the School of Social Work.

Waiver for Students Who Receive Advanced Standing

Advanced Standing students take Specialized-year courses; 28 credits are waived for the following Generalist courses. By waiving Generalist-year courses, students are not required to repeat baccalaureate social work content.

- Social Work Practice (SWO 421A & B), 6 credits
- Social Policy (SWO 401, 3 credits; or SWO-403, 3 credits for students entering in Fall 2019 or later)
- Human Behavior in the Social Environment (SWO-411), 3 credits
- Racism (SWO-409), 3 credits
- Research (SWO-441), 3 credits
- Field Education (SWO 446A), 5 credits
- Two Electives, 6 credits

Request for Waiver of Required Generalist Research Course

On occasion, a student may petition the Associate Program Director to waive a requirement in Research (SWO-441) due to a graduate level course(s) taken in these areas in a non-social work program. The
course(s) must have been taken within five years of admission and be closely equivalent to Research (SWO-441).

The course syllabi and/or any other documents requested by the MSW Program Director must be presented for review. **If the course requirement is waived, then the student must take another course of their choice in place of the waived requirement.** These requirement waivers will only be considered at the time of admission until the end of the first term of a student’s matriculation into the program.

Policy to Not Grant Social Work Course Credit for Life Experience or Previous Work Experience

The SSW does not grant course credit for life experience or previous work experience.

GRADUATION POLICY

Students who have completed all degree requirements must submit a Petition to Graduate form to the Registrar’s Office. Failure to complete the required paperwork, or selecting the incorrect graduation date, could affect participation in graduation ceremonies, diploma availability, or the student’s conferral (graduation) date.

Students who plan to graduate in March, May, July, August, October, or January must complete coursework by the official grade deadline provided by the Registrar’s Office.

COURSE EVALUATIONS

Each course is evaluated by students by the end of the last class meeting. The evaluations can be reviewed by the instructor only after student grades have been submitted. Evaluations are reviewed by the instructor, the Associate Program Director(s) and the Director.

TUITION REFUNDS

Tuition Refund Schedule

Please consult the Student Financial Services representatives or see online at Tuition and Housing Refund Schedules and Appeal Information for the exact dates for all terms and a description of the financial implications.

ADMISSIONS

MSW Program Admission Criteria

- Applicants must hold a bachelor’s degree from an accredited college or university, achieving at least a B (3.0) average; it is desirable that applicants have a balanced liberal arts education on the undergraduate level.
- Relevant experience through summer employment, volunteer work during/after college, and/or full-time employment in the human services field after college graduation is required.
- Applicants must show a commitment to social work values and personal qualifications for social work, evidenced in the applicant’s Statement of Professional and Educational Intent, and the applicant’s letters of recommendation.
- No standardized test scores are required.
- An interview is not required; however, under certain circumstances the school may require an interview after application review.
• No course credit is given for life or work experience.

For additional information, please visit https://socialwork.simmons.edu/

Advanced Standing for BSW Graduates

Application for Admission to Advanced Standing

Applicants with a Bachelor’s degree in Social Work (BSW) who have graduated from a CSWE-accredited BSW program within the last five years can apply for the four-term, 16-month Advanced Standing Program. The AS program includes 11 advanced-level courses and one 24-hour-per-week field placement during the last three terms. Advanced Standing students are not expected to repeat BSW course content and are only required to enroll in advanced-level course work.

Admissions Requirements

• A BSW from a CSWE-accredited program
• A minimum grade of “B” in all BSW course work
• An average GPA of 3.3 or higher in all the social work courses
• An overall GPA of 3.0 or higher
• Completion of the BSW within the last five years

Application File Contents

Applicants should submit a completed application file that includes:

• Application form
• 3- to 5-page statement describing the development of your interest in social work
• 2-3 page AS essay addressing BSW learning and future learning goals
• Recommendations, including one recommendation from the supervisor of your BSW field placement*
• A copy of your most recent BSW field evaluation.
• All college transcripts

Recommendations

Recommendations should address the applicant’s readiness for an advanced clinical internship.

*Note: Applicants who have been employed in a social work position for a minimum of one year post-BSW may submit a letter of reference from an MSW employment supervisor.

Advanced Standing Essay

In addition to the statement of professional and educational intent, applicants must include a 2-3 page, double spaced summary of your learning in your BSW internship. This should include:

• The social work models and approaches utilized
• A discussion of a case example in which the applicant used theory to facilitate understanding of the case and guide an intervention or develop a treatment plan.
• A self-assessment of learning to date, a statement of learning goals and the challenges the applicant anticipates encountering in an advanced clinical placement

Field Placement Evaluation

Applicants must send a copy of the most recent field placement evaluation prior to the application deadline. The application folder will be incomplete without it.

If all supplemental Advanced Standing materials are not included in the admissions packet, applicants must explain in a letter what is not included, why and when we can expect to receive the missing materials.
Process and Procedure for Evaluating Applicants

Application files are reviewed by SSW faculty and admissions staff. Each applicant’s file is reviewed against the criteria for admissions. Based on the evaluation of application materials, an applicant is accepted, rejected, or conditionally admitted. An application can be given an additional review if requested by the first reader.

Process and Procedure for Notifying Applicants of Admissions

Applicants are informed of their admissions status by an email from the director of admissions. The email states the applicant’s admission status (accepted, rejected, accepted as a conditionally admitted student, acceptance pending submission of final transcript).

Contingent Conditions Associated with Admissions

Final Transcripts

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

Conditional Admission

An applicant who does not meet admissions requirements may be offered conditional admission. A student admitted conditionally is required to take two first-term MSW courses and earn grades of B or better. Students who meet this requirement will be fully admitted to the MSW program for the next term.

NOTICE REGARDING HEALTH INSURANCE

Many affiliated agencies in which Simmons students are placed for their field experience hours expect students to have current health insurance coverage. Please be advised that students are responsible for obtaining this coverage and maintaining such coverage during their course of study at Simmons.

STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNANCE

SSW students are encouraged to become active participants in the SSW community and in their educational experience. Students participate in the governance of the SSW through the Student Advisory Board and through membership on SSW committees. Students help to frame SSW policies and initiate community activities; through membership on the Student Advisory Board and SSW committees, students participate in the formulation and modification of academic and student affairs.

Committees and other Opportunities for Participation

Each year students receive an email soliciting their involvement on SSW committees and boards. Student representatives convey student concerns at committee and board meetings. The purpose of student participation on committees is to provide student perspective and preference in decision making about the curriculum and program policies. Students report back to the student body at student meetings and in the community newsletter. Students are members of:

- Curriculum Committee
- Assessment Committee
• Academic Standards Committee
• Student Field Advisory Committee
• Alumni Board
• Faculty Meeting

Student Advisory Board

SAB meetings are open to all students and provide a structured forum to discuss current issues and advocate for changes at the SSW.

Student Organizations

Students can initiate the formation of a new organization at any time. Current student organizations are listed on 2SW. They include:

• ABSW Simmons Online Chapter
• LGBTQ+ students
• Military-involved students
• Groups for students in particular parts of the US (e.g., California, Virginia, Western states)
• Social Workers with Disabilities
• Social Work and Spirituality

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADDITIONAL STUDENT INVOLVEMENT

In recognition of the number of SSW students who are working and may have family responsibilities which limit their capacity to participate on committees and in student groups, the SSW sponsors periodic community meetings for on campus and online. Attended by the Dean, SSW Director, or the Associate Director (online), the purpose of the community meetings is to ensure that all students have a voice in shaping the curriculum and student experience.

OTHER SIMMONS UNIVERSITY POLICIES

• Honor System
• Information for Students with Disabilities
• Hazing Policy
• Student Rights and Responsibilities Statement
• Student Legal Name and Name Changes
• Equal Access Policy
• Human Subjects
• Financial Information: Tuition and Fees, Student Loans, Satisfactory Academic Progress
• Simmons University Academic Integrity Policy
• Student Code of Conduct
APPENDIX 1

Simmons School of Social Work Standards for Professional Practice

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

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

This document outlines eight professional performance standards: Communication, Electronic Communication, Self-Awareness, Openness and Willingness to Learn, Physical and Cognitive Ability, Presentation of Self, Emotional Stability and Stress Management, and Professional Values and Ethics. Each professional standard is accompanied by descriptions of behavioral expectations. Students must satisfy the professional standards to enroll in, progress through, and graduate from the SSW. Specifically, students are expected to act in a manner that is consistent with the values, ethics, and conduct required for professional social work practice in the classroom, in field placements, and in the broader school community. Becoming a professional is a gradual process; as a result, the SSW faculty, field instructors and administrators will continually assess students in accordance with these standards, which constitute the criteria for professional performance.

In addition to the standards outlined in this document, SSW students are expected to abide by the NASW Code of Ethics (NASW, 2017), the Simmons University Honor Code, and the policies outlined in the SSW Student Handbook and in the Simmons University Handbook. Procedures for addressing a violation of the Standards for Professional Practice or any of the ethics, codes, or policies identified above are outlined in the SSW Student Handbook. The ultimate goal of the SSW Standards for Professional Practice is to help you have a successful experience at the SSW and to be prepared for post-graduate practice. This document does not include the complete NASW Code of Ethics or the CSWE Educational Policies, however it highlights particular ethics and competencies to serve as a framework for professional and ethical behaviors to abide by while a student at the SSW. As an SSW student, you will be informed of the Standards for Professional Practice at the time of application to the SSW and at new student orientation. The standards are on the SSW web site and also in the SSW Student Handbook.

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

**Professional Standards**

1. **Self-Awareness**

Expectations to meet the standard:

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

2. **Communication**

Expectations to meet the standard:

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

3. **Electronic Communication and Use of Social Media**

Expectations to meet the standard:

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

4. **Openness and Willingness to Learn; Flexibility and Adaptability**

Expectations to meet the standard:
1. Demonstrate openness learning new ideas and perspectives
2. As required by the demands of professional practice, be flexible and adaptable in new situations and as circumstances change
3. Assume the stance of a learner with humility; avoid solely relying on current or past professional experiences to inform your judgment or decision-making in the field and in the classroom
4. Demonstrate a willingness to effectively communicate your learning needs and request clarification to understand requirements

5. Physical and Cognitive Ability, Critical Thinking

Expectations to meet the standard:

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

6. Emotional and Mental Stability, and Stress Management

Expectations to meet the standard:

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

7. Professional Values and Ethics

Expectations to meet the standard:

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

4. Follow Federal and State laws and agency policies regarding confidentiality and mandatory reporting.

8. Respect for Diversity and Social Justice

Expectations to meet the standard:

1. Exhibit a willingness to relate and work nonjudgmentally across difference with others.

2. Demonstrate knowledge of, and sensitivity to: diversity, oppression, and privilege, including a willingness to examine personal beliefs, values and assumptions that perpetuate oppression.

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

Acknowledgements to UNC Chapel Hill School of Social Work Technical Standards Document

Approved by SSW Faculty 5/10/2018
APPENDIX 2

Live Session Protocol

Live sessions occur each week in all SocialWork@Simmons courses. Your attendance is required. The live session class time is intended to deepen your understanding of the asynchronous materials and any clinical work you have experienced in a given week. It also offers a time to discuss, demonstrate and analyze skills that will be applied in nursing practice.

Below is a list of required expectations for live-session classes:

- **Be on Time**
  Log in to the session early enough to have your audio and camera setup. Be ready to work when the class time begins.

- **Be Professional**
  SocialWork@Simmons is a professional education program in an applied field. The live classroom is an extension of the field and therefore you are expected to treat live class time as you would a professional setting.

- **Respect the Classroom**
  - **Dress:** Be appropriately dressed - comfortable clothing is fine but you should not attend class in your pajamas or beachwear.
  - **Setting:** Set your live session classroom space in a quiet private area where you know family, pets and other distractions will not interrupt your learning (or the learning of your classmates).
  - **Lighting:** Be sure your camera has the appropriate lighting on your face. Be careful you do not have too much backlight, such as a bright window behind you, making it difficult for your face to be seen.

- **Be Prepared**
  Each week you are expected to prepare for the live session prior to class time; specific details on work to be completed before live session can be found in the course work area for each week. Section Instructors will review this prior to the live session and use it to inform discussion and deepen learning.

- **Be Engaged**
  You are expected to be ready to work during your live session. Live session is not a passive experience—it requires your full presence and commitment to learning. Each week you must be prepared to listen to your classmates, offer feedback and engage in a lively discussion.

Online Etiquette

All students are expected to demonstrate the same professional behavior and mutual respect for teachers and colleagues in the online environment as they would demonstrate face-to-face. The expected standards of behavior for interacting with others online are generally referred to as netiquette. Netiquette is addressed in the Foundations module of the Learning Management System (2SW), and there are a wide variety of resources available on the Internet. Some general guidelines:

- **Respect confidentiality.** To facilitate shared communication in a teaching and learning environment and to respect privacy, refrain from disclosing private information.
• Adhere to standards of behavior. Be polite, sincere, and respectful of others. Avoid gossiping about others online.

• Make yourself look good online. Proof for grammatical and spelling errors. Format e-mails for easy responses. Refrain from including content of e-mail in the subject line. Portray the image of an advanced degree student. Avoid sending flaming messages ("Flaming," means to send an angry, hostile or abusive electronic message).

• Cite properly. Attribute the materials and ideas of others, whether spoken or written.

• Be careful when expressing with emotion. When using bold typeface or capital letters, be mindful of how this may be received.

• Read messages prior to sending (e-mail or chat). Consider their overall reception and impact.

• Help keep “flames” under control. Use appropriate language online. If others “flame,” refrain from making inappropriate comments.

• Show respect for your colleagues and for dialogue among classmates.

• Share expert knowledge. Be willing to share your expertise

Technology Requirements

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

Recording of Live Sessions

Simmons and/or Simmons’s technology partner may record and store any session conducted through the Learning Management System (2SW) in accordance with the Terms of Use and Privacy Policy.
THE MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK (MSW)
The Master of Social Work degree prepares graduates for advanced practice in clinical social work. Students can complete the SocialWork@Simmons degree in as few as 16 months or as many as 2.5 years. The MSW degree requires 65 credit hours, consisting of 48 credit hours of classroom courses and 17 credit hours of field placement.

The School of Social Work
The Office of the Director of the School of Social Work (SSW) provides leadership for the MSW, BSW and PhD programs. The Director’s Office develops and implements policies and procedures regarding admissions, academic standing and student requests and petitions. The director is responsible for the faculty and budgets. There are also associate directors, a program director and a field director who oversee curriculum development, student services, admissions, field education and special programs.

CORRESPONDENCE FROM SSW
Students must activate and maintain a Simmons University e-mail account. All school-related correspondence will take place only through the Simmons e-mail. Simmons e-mail can be forwarded to a personal e-mail address, but it is the student's responsibility to make certain that Simmons e-mail is checked at least once per day regularly year-round (including during breaks between terms).

OPTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE ONLINE MSW DEGREE

The Accelerated Program
Students in the Accelerated SocialWork@Simmons program typically require 16 months (four terms) to complete their degree. Internships are two days (16 hours) per week for the Generalist Year and three days (24 hours) for the Specialized Year. Students take a total of four courses concurrently on the other days.

The Full-Time Program
Students in the Full-Time SocialWork@Simmons program typically require two years (6 terms) to complete their degree. Internships are two days (16 hours) per week for the Generalist Year and three days (24 hours) for the Specialized Year. Students take three to four courses concurrently on the other days.

The Extended Program
The Extended Program (8 terms) offers students the option to expand the full-time program into two-and-a-half years. In the first year, students take two classes a week. In the subsequent years, students take between two and four classes per week for classes and field placements. Most students complete the program in three years. Internships, taken during the second and third years of the program, are two days (16 hours) per week in terms four and five, and three days (24 hours) per week in terms seven and eight.
The Advanced Standing Program

SocialWork@Simmons offers a four-term Advanced Standing program to qualified applicants with a bachelor's degree in Social Work (BSW) who have graduated within the last five years from a program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). The AS program includes 11 advanced-level courses and one 24-hour-per-week field placement during the last three terms. Students accepted into the Advanced Standing program receive credits for all generalist-year courses and one semester of field experience.

Working and the SW@S Program

We understand the multitude of reasons that students work while completing the MSW program. However, we do not recommend working full-time when completing the two required field placements.

For some Extended-track students it is possible to continue full-time work during the first year, but students should explore all options available to work less than full-time when completing the field placements and taking concurrent courses. For many students, the amount of time spent attending classes and reading and writing outside of class is significantly higher than was necessary in their undergraduate program. This level of responsibility is substantial. You may need to make accommodations in your non-SSW life during your enrollment in the MSW program in order to maintain good academic standing. Since this may mean a decrease in income, it is recommended that you start early in the program to make plans. Be sure to consult with the Office of Financial Aid about all options available to you.

Sample Program Tracks

See ALL SW@S Course Sequences
September 2019 for sample plans of study.

FIELD EDUCATION

Please see the Field Education Manual for complete information.

REGISTRATION

Course registration for SocialWork@Simmons students typically will open five weeks prior to the first day of classes for any given term. Students will receive a registration notification e-mail on the Friday prior to registration opening. This e-mail will include the classes that students will be registering for, the term to select and screen shots showing how to register.

All registration is done on AARC, the Simmons University online registration system. Students should consult with their Academic Advisor about course selections and course sequencing, the Simmons Service Desk (617-521-2222) for AARC technical issues, and the Registrar's Office (617-521-2111 or aarcsupport@simmons.edu) regarding AARC registration error codes and registration issues. Other questions should be directed to their Academic Advisor or Student Success representative.

PREREQUISITES

The SSW Curriculum Committee determines the needed prerequisites for the SSW courses. When students register for a course, they must have satisfactorily completed the required courses prior to the start of the next semester. There are no exceptions to this policy.

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

GRADUATION INFORMATION

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

Diplomas

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

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

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

TRANSCRIPTS

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

AARC will remain operational for students until approximately two months after graduation and transcripts will be free during this period. If you need to order transcripts after that time, visit the Simmons Registrar’s web page (http://www.simmons.edu/academics/registrar/transcripts-and-diplomas) and follow the directions listed there. There will be a fee depending on your choice of options, such as expedited service.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

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

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students who wish to receive academic accommodations for this course must first register due to a documented diagnosis/disability with the Office of Accessibility Services (OAS). The most commonly requested accommodations are extended time for testing and use of the OAS Testing Center. OAS will provide eligible/registered students with an Academic Accommodations Authorization form to share with each instructor to confirm the student’s authorized accommodations. The OAS is located on the 1st floor of Lefavour Hall in the Center for Student Success and is open from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm Monday through Friday. For more information about the services and
CERTIFICATE INFORMATION AND DESCRIPTIONS

At the time of application, students may elect to enter a certificate program of study. As of September 2019, SocialWork@Simmons offers three certificate programs:

- Practice with Groups and Families
- Trauma Practice
- Mental Health Practice

Note: students who choose a certificate program must do so when first applying to the SW@S program.

Students in a certificate program take four specific electives, in a specific order, during their course of study.

Practice with Groups and Families

The Certificate in Practice with Groups and Families prepares graduates to:

- Build enhanced clinical practice capacity when working with more than one client, particularly groups and families
- Become skilled in delivering evidence-based and best practice models that support clinical work with groups and families
- Develop expertise in exploring systems issues, including oppression and discrimination, that impact the lives of group and family members

Electives:

- SWO-461: Best Practices in Group Work
- SWO-462: Advanced Group Work with Vulnerable Populations
- SWO-467: Family Approaches
- SWO-475: Narrative Approaches to Social Work Practice

Trauma Practice

The Certificate in Trauma Practice will prepare graduates for practice with a variety of populations in multiple settings including: schools and universities, community mental health centers, immigrant and refugee centers, the legal justice and prison systems, inpatient and outpatient hospitalization programs, and psychotherapeutic settings with children, adults, couples, families and groups.

Electives:

- SWO-418: Crisis Intervention with Children
- SWO-528A: Child and Adolescent Trauma
- SWO-528B: Lifespan of Trauma Treatment: Adults and Families
- SWO-582: Attachment and Neurobiology in Social Work Practice

Mental Health Practice

The Certificate in Mental Health Practice prepares graduates to:

- Work with people who have experience with serious mental health conditions, including those with concurrent health conditions
- Recognize and address the significant impacts of stigma, marginalization, and discrimination that impede the health, safety, access to resources, and quality of life for people with serious mental health conditions
• Become skilled in delivering evidence-based and best practice approaches for managing symptoms and achieving wellness and recovery
• Understand the role of social worker as provider and advocate working in collaboration with interdisciplinary teams, families, and other supports and services

Electives:
• SWO-578: Perspectives on Severe and Persistent Mental Illness
• SWO-478: Social Work Practice in Health Care
• SWO-472: Evidence-Based Approaches in Social Work Practice
• SWO-483: Cognitive Behavioral Approaches and Treatment

AWARDS
Each spring, the SSW confers awards to students who have made significant contributions to our community, their agency, or the larger field of social work. Students can be nominated by faculty, supervisors, advisors, or other students. The potential awards are:
• The Shirley Saks Greenberg Award: Awarded to a first-year student who shows promise in integrating theory with practice, especially practice pertaining to psychodynamic theory.
• The Iris MacRae Award: Awarded to a student in their final term who has made an outstanding achievement in either class or field work.
• Achievement in Political Action and Social Justice
• Outstanding Competence in Multicultural Practice
• Faculty Leadership Award
• Written Scholarship in Social Work

• The Priscilla Mullen Riley Award: granted to a graduating student who has done very well in classes and in field despite navigating and managing challenging circumstances.

SPECIALIZED COURSES OF STUDY
As students move into advanced curriculum, they can choose to develop skills in different ways through the selection of electives. All students choose four elective courses to deepen their clinical social work knowledge and skill. Course selection is organized by choosing one of five curricular pathways: The Individualized Course of Study or one of the four clinical specialized courses of study. **Students who select a specialized course of study will be required to take courses specific to their specialization.** Choosing a specialized course of study may mean that students will have less flexibility in their schedule, as they will need to register for specific classes that are only scheduled on certain days or evenings. Students should take this into consideration as they make their decision. Students who select the Individualized Course of Study can select elective courses from the full list of available online electives.

Curricular Pathways: Individualized Course of Study and Specialized Courses of Study

Students are encouraged to speak with their academic advisor regarding any questions they have about selecting a Specialized Course of Study (SCS) or choosing the Individualized Course of Study (ICS). In a specialized course of study, students will need to complete four electives from the specialization; three
must be from the required list(s), and one from the recommended list.

Students may choose one of the following curricular pathways:

- Individualized Course of Study (ICS)
- Child and Family
- Health and Aging
- Mental Health and Substance Abuse
- Trauma and Interpersonal Violence

Frequently Asked Questions

**If I select the Individualized Course of Study (ICS), how do I select electives?**
If students choose the ICS, they will choose electives based on their interests, career goals, and schedules. Students may engage their academic advisor to discuss course selections.

**If I select a Specialized Course of Study (SCS), how do I select electives?**
Each SCS has a list of required courses from which students must choose. As a result, students will be required to take certain courses at designated times on certain days, which may limit flexibility in their schedules.

**Do I need to complete any forms?**
Students who select the ICS are not required to submit any additional paperwork. Students who elect SCS, however, must submit a completed Request for Specialized Course of Study form to their academic advisor by week 7 (midterm) of the term prior to their first elective.

**What if I change my mind?**
Students can change their curricular path after declaring by completing the Request to Change Specialized Course of Study form and submitting it to their academic advisor. A student may change to another course of study if they can complete the coursework associated with that specialization, or they can change to the Individualized Course of Study.

**How does choosing a specialized course of study impact my field placement?**
A student’s curricular pathway choice does NOT dictate a specific placement, but the placement team will consider students’ interests when searching for a placement. There are many types of placements that will meet the learning needs for each specialized course of study, and students can engage their field liaison and field instructor to think about how to integrate their specialization at their placement. Students will also have the opportunity to integrate their learning from their field placements with their elective courses through a capstone project at the end of the program.

**Specialized Course of Study Descriptions**

**Individualized Course of Study (ICS)**
Students who select the ICS will select their elective courses based on their interests and career goals, and have a wider choice of courses. Students who select this option will develop advanced clinical skills in the areas of practice where they have the most interest, or explore new interests related to practice approaches or fields of practice.

**Child and Family**
Students who choose a specialized course of study in the area of child and family will engage in study that helps them prepare to engage with children, adolescents and family systems coping with addiction, mental illness, attachment-related problems, and trauma. Students who follow this course of study will learn about the impacts of attachment and trauma on development, functioning and interpersonal relationships. Students will study various clinical approaches that are
applicable to practice with children, adolescents and families across agency contexts with an array of presenting problems.

**Trauma and Interpersonal Violence**

Social work practitioners who choose a specialized course of study in trauma and interpersonal violence build on their required courses and field placement. Practice settings where social workers provide care to survivors of trauma include, but are not limited to, health and mental health care settings, schools, family agencies, advocacy agencies, residential treatment facilities, and criminal justice settings such as courts, jails or prisons. The advanced curriculum for this course of study includes a focus on evidence-based practice approaches to trauma-informed care such as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and Child and Adolescent Trauma. Students will also gain an understanding of how traumatic attachments inform interpersonal relationships, self-perception, and emotional regulation throughout one's lifecycle. Moreover, recommended courses focus on the acquisition of advanced clinical skills in group work or narrative therapy, or co-morbid problems such as addiction or mental illness that are often the result of traumatic stress.

**Mental Health and Substance Abuse**

This specialized course of study prepares students for careers in mental health and/or addictions. This includes work with clients struggling with severe and persistent mental illness; those with addictions and those with co-occurring mental illness and substance use disorders. Through elective courses students will develop skills in rapid assessment and more thorough evaluation. They will learn to use several treatment modalities and will become skilled at developing treatment relationships and differentially using themselves with a wide range of clients over time or in brief encounters. Social workers who specialize in mental health and substance abuse often work in acute care settings such as inpatient units, detoxification settings, and partial or day hospitals, as well as mental health clinics and family agencies. Most social workers treat clients whose lives intersect with mental illness or addiction, or both. Knowledge of a variety of evidence-based approaches for practice, and understanding of assessment, treatment, and application of models of change will help students be more effective when intervening with individuals, families and groups.

**Health and Aging**

Social work practitioners who specialize in this area may focus on social work practice in health-related settings and settings devoted to providing services to older adults. This will entail understanding inter-professional practice and interventions in larger systems, as well as an understanding of the policy contexts that shape health care delivery and the social work role in interdisciplinary collaboration. Social workers who specialize in health or aging work in a variety of settings including acute care hospitals, medical specialty clinics, community health clinics, schools, skilled nursing facilities, senior centers, hospice, and integrated healthcare settings. Additional coursework such as advanced group work or cognitive behavioral therapy will enable students to learn specific practice approaches that are commonly used in the aforementioned settings to help clients increase coping skills and reduce the stigma that attends chronic illness or being elderly.