Simmons College
School of Nursing and Health Sciences
Department of Nursing

Doctor of Nursing Practice Student Handbook
Effective September 1, 2011
Introduction

This handbook is a supplement to the SNHS Student Handbook and the Nursing Programs Student Handbook. Policies developed by the School of Nursing and Health Sciences and the Nursing Programs also apply to DNP students. Policies dealing with online learning, described in the SNHS Online Teaching and Learning Handbook, are also applicable to DNP students. Links to these handbooks are available on the DNP Forum eLearning site. Detailed information about the DNP is also posted on the Simmons School of Health Sciences website.

1. DESCRIPTION OF THE DNP PROGRAM

DNP Overview

The focus of the Simmons College Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) Program is Professional Practice Leadership. The DNP is a Post-Master’s DNP Program that will develop nursing leaders who will improve health care outcomes in clinical practice and management. Graduates will have the clinical, organizational and leadership skills to meet the changing demands of the present and future health care system. The DNP is a practice-focused degree analogous to professional doctoral degrees in other disciplines, including Pharmacy, Physical Therapy, Medicine, Dentistry and Clinical Psychology. The DNP differs from the PhD in its emphasis on practice and practice-related research.

The Simmons DNP was developed in full compliance with professional standards for the practice doctorate (“Doctoral Essentials”) developed by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN).

The Simmons DNP is designed for 1) Experienced advanced practice nurses (Nurse Practitioners, Certified Nurse Midwives, Clinical Nurse Specialists and Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists) who have had at least two years (approximately 5000 hours) of post-Master’s advanced practice experience (Post-Master’s DNP in Professional Practice Leadership); 3) Master’s-prepared experienced nurse managers who have at least two years (approximately 5000 hours) in a managerial or executive position (Post-Master’s DNP in Professional Practice Leadership); and 3) MSN-prepared nurses who are not advanced practice nurses who desire a nurse practitioner specialty (FNP) in addition to the DNP (Post-Master’s DNP/FNP Program).

The DNP program is offered in a “blended” format. Classes are taught online and students are required to attend two on-campus residencies per semester. Courses are designed to expand practice and to prepare students as leaders in nursing and
the health care system. Students are required to complete a practice-based Capstone Project, as well as document DNP-related practice and policy experience in a comprehensive DNP portfolio.

**DNP Program Objectives**

The Post-Master’s DNP program builds on students’ clinical experience and educational preparation by enabling graduates to assume leadership roles in professional practice. Specifically, the DNP will prepare students to:

1. Integrate nursing science with knowledge from ethics, the biophysical, psychosocial, analytical and organizational sciences.
2. Demonstrate leadership in organizations and health care systems to promote safe, efficient care delivery to both individuals and populations.
4. Utilize technology and informatics to improve health care and to implement change in health care systems.
5. Design, influence and implement health care policies that affect health care financing, practice regulation, access to care, safety, quality, and efficacy of care.
6. Collaborate with interdisciplinary professionals and teams to improve patient and population health outcomes.
7. Assume a leadership role in the design of evidence-based interventions that enhance clinical prevention and population health.

Adapted from the AACN Doctoral Essentials (2006)

**DNP Program Courses**

The overall focus of the DNP curriculum is *Professional Practice leadership*. Maintaining this focus, the students may fulfill other interests through elective credits. Each DNP student must enroll in core courses (24 credits); clinical practice for students pursuing an NP specialty (FNP) (variable number of credits); the DNP Capstone Project (6 credits); and 6 elective credits. Elective credits may be combined as a "minor" concentration (e.g., Management, Methods for Practice-Based Research, Health Professions Education, Advanced Clinical Competencies and others) or students may choose elective courses based on their interests. **Note: for students admitted in June 2011 and subsequent dates, NUR 675 will be a required course (pre-requisite to Capstone I) and elective credits will be reduced to 6.**

**Admission Requirements**

See Simmons School of Health Sciences Website (http://simmons.edu/snhsacademics/)
II. DNP PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Requirements for graduation:

1. Completion of all DNP courses (core courses and electives) with a grade of B (3.3) or better.
2. Completion of all requirements for the DNP Capstone Project (Refer to Capstone Guidelines).
3. Completion of the DNP portfolio, as indicated by the DNP Portfolio Audit (Refer to Portfolio Guidelines).

Courses and Electives

Students admitted prior to June 1, 2010: All students are required to take DNP core courses (21) and complete the DNP Capstone Project (6 credits) (Total 27 credits).

Students admitted June 1, 2010 and subsequently:
All DNP students are required to take the DNP Core Courses (21 credits) and DNP Capstone Project (6 credits), and elective credits (9) (Total 36 credits). Note: As of June 2011, NUR 675 will be a required course; elective credits will be reduced to 6 (Total 36 credits).

DNP Core Courses

NUR 670: Health Policy (3)
The primary objective of this course is to empower the DNP student with the tools to influence health policy. The course will analyze the legal, ethical and social issues inherent in policy development. Students will consider the many dimensions of the present health care crisis such as cost, access, equity, quality, globalization and provision of care to an aging population. Students will also learn the presentation of policy analyses in written, graphic and oral forms.

NUR 660: Evidence-based Practice: Informatics (3)
This course will provide the student with the skills to evaluate and apply the best available evidence-based knowledge and technology in solving clinical practice problems. The student will learn critical appraisal skills to determine the quality and applicability of information for practice. The use of electronic medical records, including implementation and implications for practice, will be considered.

NUR 620: Ethical and Legal Issues in Advanced Practice (3)
This course will address the underlying historical, philosophical and theoretical perspectives in ethics from a biomedical and nursing perspective. Ethical issues will be addressed in a case-based approach. Students will attend ethics rounds and
participate in ethics advisory boards at health care facilities. The course will also explore legal issues in advanced practice and in the health care system. Topics will include scope of practice, state and federal practice regulations, risk management/malpractice, and legal issues in practice ownership/management.

NUR 630: Professional Leadership and Practice Change (3)
This course is designed to advance the student’s ability to use leadership and management theory in nursing practice within current and emerging organizational systems. The course will provide students with an introduction to the theories and experience in practice of a key role of leadership: transforming culture by means of effective implementation of change. This course will interface with the students’ Capstone Project, assisting students in the process of institutional change.

NUR 640: Advanced Research Methods (3)
This course will enable students to achieve skills required for conducting and evaluating practice-based research. Topics will include the following: needs assessment; program planning and evaluation; the application of quantitative/qualitative methods in the study of practice-related phenomena; grant-writing and funding for practice-based research. Students will begin their clinical project, considering the problem, research question (s) and appropriate research design.

NUR 650: Epidemiology (3)
The goals of this course are to enhance the ability of advanced practice nurses to evaluate healthcare practices and delivery systems; to design programs to change practice; and to evaluate programmatic efforts to improve health care. These goals will be met by students’ becoming critical consumers of public health, nursing, and medical literature and understanding the basic principles and methods of epidemiology, including disease (outcome) measures, measures of association, study design options, bias, confounding and effect modification. Seminar projects will guide the analysis of programmatic changes to evaluate outcomes of practice, practice patterns, and systems of care within a practice setting, health care organization, or community against national benchmarks to determine variances in practice outcomes and population trends. A quality improvement data set will be used to evaluate quality improvement methodologies and to disseminate the results in a way that will influence healthcare executives to improve practice.

NUR 655: Biostatistics (3)
This course will enable students to apply statistical methods in research and program planning for advanced nursing practice. The student will acquire skills in design and implementation of epidemiological studies and health programs. The course will introduce students involved in clinical research to the practical application of regression analysis. Linear regression, logistic regression and proportional hazards survival models will be covered, as well as general concepts in model selection, goodness-of-fit and testing procedures.
NUR 675: Quality Improvement in Health Care (Required course as of June 1, 2011)
This course focuses on the knowledge, skills and attitudes that when acquired and applied effectively, can assure a high quality and safe patient and family health care experience in a variety of practice settings. The importance of setting aims, applying statistical methods to measure variation, hypothesis identification and planning change using the PDCA (plan, do, check, and act) cycle form the basis of the course. Current health policy issues related to assuring safe, high quality, effective, equitable, timely, patient-centered and efficient care (Institute of Medicine [IOM] 2000, 2001, 2004, 2007) will be addressed. Given the importance of patient and family centered care, interdisciplinary team work and collaboration, and positive practice environments, these areas of study will enrich the course content.

DNP Capstone Courses

These courses will extend over 4 semesters. The first two semesters will offer 2 credits; subsequent semesters will be offered for 1 credit each.

NUR 750A: Capstone Seminar I (2 credits)
This is the first in a series of four seminars that will guide the student in the completion of the DNP Capstone Project. Capstone I will focus on development of the problem statement and the research questions that will be answered in the Capstone. Emphasis will be placed on development of a sound rationale for the project, justified by a thorough review of the context in which the project will take place and a synthesis of relevant literature on the topic.

NUR 750B: Capstone Seminar II (2 credits)
This is the second in a series of four seminars focused on development and implementation of the DNP Capstone Project. During Capstone II, students will develop the Proposal for the Capstone Project, including project design, methods, procedures for data collection, sources of funding, and IRB applications. At the conclusion of Capstone Seminar II, students will submit their proposals to their Capstone Committee for approval.
Pre-requisites: Approval of Capstone Topic (see approval form); Capstone Seminar I; NUR 675: Quality Improvement in Health Care; NUR 640: Advanced Research Methods, Co-requisite: NUR 630: Professional Leadership and Practice Change.

NUR 750C: Capstone Seminar and Practicum III (1 credit)  Note: This course will be two credits until June 1, 2011.
This is the third in a series of four seminars focused on the development and implementation of the DNP Capstone Project. During this semester, students will work with their Capstone Committees to conduct their project. The Capstone Seminar will focus on data analysis, including analysis of qualitative and
quantitative data, measures to assure reliability and validity of data, and the scholarly write-up of project results.

**Prerequisites:** Capstone I and II, NUR 675, NUR 640. Pre-requisite or co-requisite: NUR 655: Biostatistics

NUR 750D: Capstone Seminar and Practicum IV (1 credit)  *Note: This course will be two credits until June 1, 2011.*

This is the final course in a series of four courses in which students develop and implement their DNP Capstone Project. During this course, students will work with their Capstone Committee, completing the project and preparing a written manuscript and oral presentation of the Capstone. The course will culminate in an oral defense of the Capstone.

**Prerequisites:** Capstone Seminar 1-III, NUR 655: Biostatistics, NUR 675: Quality Improvement in Health Care, NUR 630: Leadership and Practice Change. *Note: Students must have completed all of the required DNP coursework before they are allowed to present their Capstone Project and submit the Capstone manuscript.*

**Pre-Requisites for DNP courses:**
1. Capstone courses have to be taken in order—I, II, etc.
2. NUR 640: Advanced Research Methods. No pre-requisites except for statistics course required for admission. It is highly recommended that students acquire Master’s level research knowledge, either through a course or self-study prior to enrolling in this course.
4. NUR 650: Epidemiology. No pre-requisites except for statistics course required for admission—may take Webstats concurrently.
6. NUR 630: Leadership and Practice Change. Capstone I
7. NUR 670: Health Policy. No pre-requisites.
9. NUR 660: Evidence-Based Practice and Informatics. No pre-requisites
10. Capstone Courses--See above.

All courses require consent of the instructor or Program Director for non-matriculated students. Non-matriculated students may not enroll in the Capstone sequence.

**DNP Electives**

Students enrolled in the DNP Program (matriculated after June 1, 2010) are required to take 9 elective credits. Students matriculated after June 1, 2011 are required to take 6 elective credits (in addition to NUR 675, which will be a required
core course). A variety of electives are available, both on-campus and online. Students should refer to the Simmons Registrar’s site (AARC) for course descriptions.

Independent Study

Elective credits may be fulfilled by completion of an Independent Study. Students should consult faculty before enrolling in an Independent study (NUR 651). Students must have a faculty mentor and must submit, and have approved, a detailed proposal for the independent study, including the number of credits that will be earned. The faculty mentor must approve the project before the student can register for NUR 651.

The DNP Capstone Project

The DNP program culminates in the successful completion of a Capstone Practice Inquiry Project. This scholarly project will be practice-focused, evidence-based, and focused on practice improvement. The project will be completed in collaboration with the student’s practice site or community of interest, under the guidance of a clinical practice mentor. The project should make a significant contribution to practice.

The Capstone Project will be developed and completed over the course of the program, although some students may require additional time for completion. The timeline will be developed in collaboration with the faculty, Capstone Committee members and the collaborating clinical agency. In Capstone Seminars I and II, students will clarify their problem, construct an integrative literature review and write their Capstone proposal. In Capstone Seminar and Practicum III and IV, students will work with their Capstone committees to complete the Capstone project.

On completion of the project, students will write a scholarly paper, as well as present and defend the project orally in a scholarly presentation.

Refer to Capstone Project Guidelines (available on DNP Forum eLearning site) for specifics about the Capstone Project.

DNP Portfolio: Guidelines

Overview
The purposes of the DNP Portfolio are to encourage student reflection on the practice-scholarship link and to document achievement of DNP program competencies. Working with the Portfolio will encourage students to think strategically and thoughtfully about their professional and scholarly development. Portfolio review will also aid faculty in their evaluation of students’ progress and in their ability to provide focused and timely feedback.
**Content**
Each student will have an online portfolio (ePortfolio) on iWebfolio ([www.iwebfolio.com](http://www.iwebfolio.com)).
The Portfolio is organized into sections corresponding to the *Essentials of Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice* (American Association of Colleges of Nursing, 2006) and the Simmons DNP Program Objectives. In each section, the student will document achievement of DNP objectives by including *artifacts* such as class assignments, evidence of professional achievements (presentations, posters or publications), journal entries, notation of progress on the Capstone Project, and other related evidence. Students will also document their evolution as practice-based scholars by reflecting on their progress and on the links between course work and professional practice.

Specifically, the student will:

1. Provide an Introduction to the Portfolio on the *My ePortfolio Home Page*, giving a brief overview of the student’s background as an advanced practice nurse, goals in pursuing the DNP, and practice-based research interests.

2. Provide evidence of achievement of the DNP program objectives and curriculum *Essentials* by adding artifacts to each section of the Portfolio. For each artifact, students should document the relationship of the artifact to achievement of program and personal objectives with a brief Reflection (See iWebfolio tutorial “Using a Template” on [www.iwebfolio.com](http://www.iwebfolio.com)) on the significance of the artifact in relationship to achievement of program objectives.

**Requirements**
Students should add to their Portfolios on a continuous basis each semester. Faculty advisors will have access to the Portfolio as reviewers (See below). Faculty will review and comment on the Portfolio on an ongoing basis and will meet with students at least yearly to assess student progress in achievement of DNP program objectives.

**Specifics for Students**

1. You will have an account on iWebfolio ([www.iwebfolio.com](http://www.iwebfolio.com)). The account is renewable annually, from the first date that you log on to iWebfolio. While you are a DNP student, the Nursing Department will pay the annual fee ($40). After you graduate, you may choose to continue your subscription to iWebfolio, or you can discontinue and download your portfolio.

2. Before you start (or resume) your portfolio, take the online tutorial offered in the upper right corner of the iWebfolio home screen.
3. Designate faculty reviewers for your portfolio. You should allow your faculty advisor access to your portfolio as a reviewer. The DNP Director will also have access. To add a reviewer, click “Permissions” under the “Edit” page of your portfolio Home Page. A list of reviewers should pop up. To add faculty reviewers, choose “Simmons College” and then look for your advisor's name on the list. Click next to your advisor's name and then click “Save.” Your advisor will then have access to your portfolio. You can also add an outside reviewer by clicking “Add Custom Reviewer.”

4. It is your responsibility to update the portfolio on a regular basis. The portfolio is your “opus”—your record of accomplishment in the doctoral program. It will be helpful to you not only in keeping track of your attainment of program objectives, but also will serve as evidence of your achievements to prospective or current employers.

III. GENERAL POLICIES: DNP PROGRAM (Supplementary to Nursing Programs and SNHS policies)

Policies Related to Online Learning

DNP students must adhere to policies on online learning delineated in the SNHS Student Handbook and the SNHS Online Learning Student Handbook. Students should also consult the Simmons Technology Guidelines and Policies (http://my.simmons.edu/services/technology/guidelines).

Hardware and Software Requirements for the DNP

You will need to have high speed internet access through a cable modem, DSL or satellite. Consult your internet service provider regarding your connection speed. It is in your best interest to purchase the fastest speed your internet service provider offers. We understand that DSL and high-speed cable is not available in some rural areas and students must resort to high-speed satellite internet service. Dial-up connections do not work well with this technology. If dial-up is the only access you have from home, we recommend looking for alternate sites to attend class where you can get high-speed connection.

Newly enrolled students will need to complete an informatics competency will may include successful completion of SNHS 600: Blended Learning Orientation. Students not completely familiar with Microsoft Office products such as Word, PowerPoint and Excel should take self-paced tutorials offered through the software itself prior to enrollment in the first DNP course. These are considered minimal competencies expected at the doctoral level. SPSS or PASW statistical software is the supported
statistical software of the Department of Nursing and students should familiarize themselves with this software application before taking NUR 650: Epidemiology, NUR 655: Biostatistics, and before beginning their capstone project.

Due to the robust number of options available to consumers between desktop or laptop computers, PCs or Macs, the Simmons Technology Department has put together a list of recommendations for the purchase of computers by Simmons College students:

**Recommended Computer Specifications**
Refer to [http://my.simmons.edu/technology/purchasing](http://my.simmons.edu/technology/purchasing) for guidelines on computer purchases.

**Prohibited Use/Ethical Issues related to Online Learning (Simmons College Technology Services)**

Unethical use of technology/violation of policies related to “prohibited use” of technology are violations of the Simmons College Honor Code. Refer to [http://my.simmons.edu/life/handbook/conduct/index.shtml](http://my.simmons.edu/life/handbook/conduct/index.shtml). Specific polices include the following:

Only enrolled students are allowed to access eLearning course websites. Learning posts are confidential and covered by FERPA regulations. Therefore, any sharing of course access to non-authorized users is subject to honor board violation.

Prohibited uses of Simmons’s network and computer facilities include those uses which: infringe on another individual’s right to privacy; adversely affect the user community inside or outside of Simmons; violate federal and state laws (including but not limited to laws governing copyright, privacy and harassment); violate Simmons policy; or are not allowed under the terms of our software licenses. Additional examples of prohibited uses include, but are not limited to:

- Unauthorized reading, copying, or modification of files, network traffic or electronic mail other than your own.
- Unauthorized use of someone else’s password, or sharing of passwords.
- Intentional damage or disruption to hardware, software, services, security devices or codes, or the intentional creation or distribution of viruses, worms or other forms of electronic mayhem.
- Unauthorized access via the voice/data/video network to computers or network traffic at other locations or tampering with the College network or hardware services.
- Abuse of printing privileges, including printing of excessive copies or in violation of copyright.
- Distributing obscene or abusive messages or other forms of harassment.
• Commercial activities, such as selling of personal property, development of software for sale, work undertaken to support any company or other contracted work, unless specific prior authorization is granted.
• Placing excessive demands on network or server capacity.
• Obtaining, storing, using, or sharing copyrighted material (software, text, images, sounds or video in electronic form, etc.) without proper credit to and permission from the copyright owner.
• Revealing confidential information obtained from administrative data systems or otherwise to unauthorized people or groups.
• Unauthorized use of file-sharing software or other applications or equipment that creates excessive network traffic or attempts to circumvent network security or management systems.
• Allowing unauthorized access to the Simmons network through any computer, modem, or network device (including wireless access points).
• Establishing or maintaining a server without specific prior consent of Technology.
• Failure to return borrowed equipment within the loan period.
• Losing or damaging borrowed equipment.

For its own protection, the College reserves the right to block all Internet communications from sites that are involved in extensive spamming or other disruptive practices, even though this may leave College computer users unable to communicate with these sites.

**Passwords and Other Keys**
All passwords, pass codes, keys, and personal identification numbers issued for the purpose of accessing computer and network resources or College premises are the property of Simmons College or are licensed by the College for specific purposes. You are not permitted to use any such tools to access, store or retrieve any information on computer and network resources unless specifically authorized. Without regard to whether information on any resource (such as e-mail, voice-mail, or document files) is access-protected, you may not access any information on any resource maintained by or licensed to another user unless properly authorized by appropriate Simmons personnel or by the user at issue.

Source: http://my.simmons.edu/services/technology/policies/acceptable-use.shtml

**Grading Policies**

Students will be evaluated by grades earned in each course, as well as by their work on their DNP Portfolios and Capstone Projects.

Nursing program grades and their values:
- A  95-100
- A-  90-94
DNP students must earn a grade of B (GPA 3.3) or better in order to pass a course. All grades less than 83 are considered a course failure.

Incomplete Grades ("Extension of Time")
If a student is unable to complete course work by the end of the semester, the student may request an Incomplete grade from the course faculty. A DNP student who would like to request an extension of time to complete a course ("Incomplete") must provide persuasive reasons for the delay. Petitions for an Incomplete must be submitted at least two weeks prior to the end of the semester. Extension of time forms are available online and from the department or program office, and must be signed by the instructor, department chair or program director, and the dean of the SNHS, and submitted to the Office of the Registrar on or before the date grades are due each semester. A contract must be developed between the student and course faculty, with a plan for resolving the Incomplete. The student, the course faculty, the Dean and the DNP Director should all have a copy of the contract. This contract must be in place before an Incomplete grade can be given. The contract should clearly explicate the work that needs to be completed to resolve the Incomplete and the time frame for course completion. Incomplete grades should not extend beyond the deadline indicated by the Simmons College Registrar (i.e., February 1 for fall semester courses; July 1 for spring semester; September 1 for summer semester). If additional time is needed for course completion, the student must petition the course faculty for an extension.

The absolute deadline for completion of an Incomplete is the end of the semester following the semester when the Incomplete is granted (i.e., end of summer semester for spring semester Incompletes; end of spring semester for fall semester Incompletes). Incomplete grades will convert to an “F” if the course is not completed by contracted deadlines. Students who earn an “F” must repeat the course the next time that it is offered.

Students who want faculty assistance on their projects during semesters when the specific Capstone courses are not offered, must enroll in NUR 690: Capstone Advisement (one credit tuition; no credit is earned) in order to continue work on the Capstone Project.
Unsatisfactory DNP Student Progress

Academic Warning
The justification for an academic warning includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Quizzes, exams or papers with a grade of B- or below
2. Overdue assignments
3. Poor attendance in on-campus classes; inadequate participation in online courses (Refer to SNHS Online Learning Policies)
4. Violation of the Honor Code
5. Violation of the Professional Code of Ethics

Progress
1. DNP students must maintain a B (3.3) average. A student whose grade point average (GPA) falls below a B (3.3 in any semester) will be put on probation and will receive an Academic Warning. If probation occurs, the DNP Director will notify the student of the probationary status. This notification will delineate the specific goals the student must meet in order to continue in the program.

2. If a student takes a leave of absence after being placed on probation, s/he will be on probation for the semester s/he returns to the program.

3. A student receiving a grade below B in any course will receive the earned non-passing grade (B- or less) and must repeat the course for credit. Grades for the initial and repeated course will appear on the student's transcript and both will be used in calculating the cumulative GPA. Students may repeat a given course only once.

4. A student who fails any DNP course must be aware of the courses for which the failed course is a prerequisite. Prerequisite courses must be successfully completed before taking subsequent DNP courses that require the failed course to be taken prior to the course. A student who fails a DNP course may proceed into another DNP course only if the subsequent course does not require prior successful completion of the failed course.

5. Repetition of the course may affect a student’s ability to progress with her/his class and/or her/his expected date of graduation.

6. A student can be dismissed from a course in the Nursing program at any time, with cause. Evidence of failing work or violation of the Simmons Honor Code and Professional Code of Ethics are grounds for failure.
Removal from Probation
A student will be removed from probation if s/he receives a grade of B (3.3) or better in all courses during the semester s/he is on probation, has a cumulative GPA greater than 3.3 at the end of that semester, and adheres to ethical, legal, and professional standards of behavior.

Exclusion
1. A DNP student who withdraws from a DNP course or begins an approved leave of absence from the College after the eighth (8) week of the term shall be considered to have failed any course in which he/she has a failing grade at the time he/she begins the leave of absence [and the student’s transcript will reflect a failing grade].

2. A DNP student who has failing grades (less than a B [3.3]) in any two (2) DNP courses, under any circumstances, including the situation described in Paragraph 1 above, shall be dismissed from the DNP Program.

3. A student will be excluded from the program if s/he is on probation during more than two semesters over the course of obtaining the degree.

4. A student will be excluded from the program if s/he fails to obtain a grade of B or better in a repeated course.

5. A student will be excluded from the program for demonstrating behavior that is grossly or consistently illegal, unethical, or unprofessional as determined by each program faculty.

6. A student will be excluded from the program if s/he verbally or physically threatens members of the College administration, faculty, staff, students, or clients in the practice setting.

7. A student will be excluded from the program if s/he is “Removed from Degree Candidacy” by the College Administrative Board.

Appeal
A student has the right to appeal the faculty’s decision regarding academic standing by petitioning through the SNHS grievance process. Please refer to the policy and procedures for grievance in this SNHS Handbook and in the College Student Handbook.

Withdrawal from Nursing in Good Standing
In order to withdraw from either a Nursing course or the Nursing major in good standing, a student must be passing and meeting all requirements for the Nursing major. Any student who withdraws from the major after having been excluded for any reasons, will not be considered in good standing.
Readmission of Excluded Students
All applications for readmission from students who are excluded from the program are referred to the Nursing Academic Review Board. Upon recommendation of the Nursing Academic Review Board, the dean will review the case and take appropriate action. A student who is excluded from the program is considered to be not in good standing and will not be readmitted to the Nursing program. Nursing will not accept any student who has been excluded from any other SNHS program.

Professional Behaviors (Refer to SNHS Student Handbook and Nursing Programs Student Handbook)

Professional Standards that Guide the DNP Program
- The American Nurses Association Standards of Clinical Practice
- The American Nurses Association Nursing Code of Ethics
- The American Nurses Association Social Policy Statement
- The American Association of Colleges of Nursing Doctoral Essentials
- The National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties Domains and Competencies of Nurse Practitioner Practice
- Criteria for Evaluation of Nurse Practitioner Programs (National Task Force on Quality NP Education)

All students will adhere to the Simmons College Honor Code and the ANA Code of Ethics. Refer to SNHS Student Handbook and Nursing Programs Handbook for additional information.

As adult learners, students are expected to engage in the educational process with openness and honesty in their self-assessment. Students cooperate with each other in creating an environment conducive to learning and professional growth. Students are expected to be respectful of each other’s learning styles. Students participate with faculty in the learning process and seek appropriate feedback in meeting course objectives and individual learning goals. Students are expected to adhere to course policies as stated in the syllabus and should seek the timely assistance and advice of appropriate faculty when there are concerns regarding the evaluative process.

Faculty and student privacy, professional reputation, and academic freedom are to be respected when disagreements arise in the evaluative process.

Student Advisement
A faculty mentor is assigned to each student at the time the student enters the Program and this person will remain the student’s advisor.

Students are expected to meet with their advisor, online or face to face, at least once each semester to discuss the student’s plan of study. Students should consult with their advisors before registering for courses for the following semester. The student or advisor may initiate other meetings as needed. Advisor notes and the student’s plan of study will be kept in the student’s folder in the Simmons Nursing Office. In addition, advisors will read and comment on the students’ DNP portfolios, contributing to an ongoing portfolio audit each semester. The portfolio audit must be complete prior to the student’s graduation. Students are responsible for keeping copies of all forms related to program progression, including plans of study and Capstone approval forms.

If the student experiences problems in the program, the advisor needs to be notified by the student and/or faculty involved. The advisor will meet with the student and consult involved faculty, evaluate the problem and confer with the Director until resolution is reached.

**Transfer of Course Credit**

Students may transfer a maximum of 6 graduate/doctoral level credits into the DNP program. Credit may be transferred from programs accredited at the graduate level. The student must have taken the course within the last 5 years and earned a grade of B or better. A student wishing to transfer credit must discuss the transfer with his/her advisor. Courses for transfer must be approved by the DNP Director. A form for transfer of credit must be completed (obtained from the Nursing Programs office or online). A course description and syllabus must also be submitted. An official transcript of the course grade must be submitted with the transfer of credit form.

**IV. Other Simmons College Policies**

In some instances, the DNP, Nursing, or SNHS policies may differ from Simmons College policies, as delineated in the Simmons College Handbook (http://my.simmons.edu/life/handbook/). In these instances, DNP, Nursing or SNHS policies take precedence.