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Simmons College Appoints School of Social Work Dean

Cheryl A. Parks, MSW, Ph.D. is an expert on clinical care and sexual minority identity

BOSTON (July 7, 2015) – Simmons College is proud to announce the appointment of Cheryl A. Parks, MSW, Ph.D., a social work clinical care intervention expert who specializes in sexual minority identity development, as Dean of the Simmons School of Social Work. Her appointment is effective July 27, 2015.

Parks worked for 18 years as a practicing social work clinician, administrator, and private practitioner before returning to academia to earn her Ph.D. In addition to her expertise in clinical care and sexual minority identity development, she also has studied the intersection of gender, sexual, and racial identities, and their impact on mental health and alcohol use among women.

“Growing research opportunities for faculty and students will be a priority in the coming years, and Dr. Parks’s fresh ideas and proven experience in research will serve Simmons well,” said Simmons Provost and Senior Vice President Katie Conboy. “Her commitment to diversity, community-engaged service and scholarship, and interdisciplinary collaboration are fully consistent with Simmons’s historic values and future direction.”

Parks comes from Salisbury University’s Seidel School of Education and Professional Studies, where she served as dean. She has published multiple articles, made numerous presentations, and is a sought-after speaker. Parks has received grants and funding totaling more than \$3.2 million between 2000 and 2013. Funders have included the National Institutes of Health; Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration; Office of Adolescent Health/Administration on Children, Youth & Families; Lesbian Health Fund of the Gay & Lesbian Medical Association; and the Long Term Care Ombudsmen Program, Hartford.

A member of the National Association of Social Workers and the Council on Social Work Education, she has assumed national leadership roles on identity issues. She was a founding board member of BerksTALKLINE, a more than 20-year old hotline for Pennsylvania youth, and was a three-time president of the Connecticut family service agency True Colors, Inc. Parks holds a B.A. in Social Welfare and Psychology from Rhode Island College, an MSW from the University of Washington, and a Ph.D. in Social Work from Bryn Mawr College.

The Simmons School of Social Work (www.simmons.edu/ssw) was founded in 1904 as a joint venture with Harvard University, and is the nation’s oldest school of social work. With a nationally acclaimed clinical social work program, Simmons SSW is a leader in educating students for the demands of contemporary practice with individuals, families, groups and communities. In recent years, the Simmons School of Social Work has expanded its offerings to include a BSW, and an online MSW with partner 2U, a leading provider of cloud-based software-as-a-service solutions that enable top nonprofit colleges and universities to deliver high quality education to students anywhere.

Founded in 1899, Simmons College (<http://www.simmons.edu>) is a nationally ranked university located in the heart of Boston and the preeminent authority on women’s leadership. Simmons offers undergraduate education for women, and the nation's first MBA program designed for

women. Simmons also provides renowned coeducational graduate programs in nursing and health sciences, liberal arts, library and information science, social work, and business. Follow Simmons on Twitter [@SimmonsCollege](https://twitter.com/SimmonsCollege) and @SimmonsNews.