

# Simmons

## UNIVERSITY

Dean of the College of Natural, Behavioral, and Health Sciences  
Leadership Profile



# Dean of the College of Natural, Behavioral, and Health Sciences

Located in the heart of Boston, Simmons University is a private university, home to a respected women's undergraduate program and coeducational graduate programs in nursing, health sciences, liberal arts, business, communications, social work, public health, and library and information science.

Simmons has established a model of higher education that only today other colleges and universities are beginning to adapt: the combination of education for leadership in high-demand professional fields with the intellectual foundation of the liberal arts. The result is a Simmons graduate prepared not only to work, but to lead in professional, civic, and personal life — a vision of empowerment that Simmons calls preparation for life's work.

Since its founding in 1899, Simmons' raison d'être has been to expand opportunities for women, forging fields that advance equity and justice locally and globally. The vision of Founder John Simmons, "to establish a female college best calculated to enable the scholars to acquire an independent livelihood" is reflected in Simmons's singular accomplishments:

- The School of Social Work was the first in the nation to take a clinical approach to the field;
- Simmons School of Nursing has long been among the most highly regarded by leaders of Boston's world-class hospitals;
- Simmons School of Library and Information Science is one of the top ranked such programs in the country.

## From College to University: A Decade of Growth

While Simmons has grown and adapted to an evolving higher education landscape over its many years, it is the story of the last 10 years that is critical to understanding the Simmons of today — and of tomorrow. In the summer of 2018, Simmons College became Simmons University — a transition that was many years in planning and reflected the institution's growth over the previous decade. But when President Helen G. Drinan took the helm at Simmons College in 2008, growth and university status were not yet on the horizon. That year, the world economy entered a crisis of a scale not seen since the Great Depression. At Simmons, declining revenues and a lack of investment in the institution's faculty, physical plant, and student experience resulted in a challenging time.

## STRUCTURE & PROGRAMS

Simmons University is made up of four interdisciplinary colleges:

- The Gwen Ifill College of Media, Arts, and Humanities
- The College of Natural, Behavioral, and Health Sciences
- The College of Organizational, Computational, and Information Sciences
- The College of Social Sciences, Policy, and Practice

Within each college sit schools, departments, and programs, including Simmons' four leading historic professional schools:

- The School of Nursing
- The School of Library and Information Science
- The School of Business
- The School of Social Work

Simmons offers over 50 undergraduate majors, and over 60 minors, along with 30+ certificate, master's, and doctoral programs (including five 3+1 year accelerated bachelor's/master's programs, and nine 4+1 accelerated bachelor's/master's programs).

53% of Simmons undergraduates major in health or sciences fields such as nursing, biology, physical therapy, or chemistry and physics.

In 2012, Simmons launched the first of several online graduate programs in partnership with 2U, a nationally recognized education services company.

What a difference a decade makes. Today, the Simmons story is one of growth, innovation, and a solid foundation — fueled by on-the-ground and online enrollment, renewed investments in its campus and technology, and a diversity of revenue streams unmatched in similar-sized institutions.

As with many turnaround stories, there is no one factor that ignited Simmons's rise into a dynamic, growing university. It was the confluence of strong leadership, committed faculty, alumnae/i and students, and a willingness to implement new ways of doing business that paved the road to institutional success.

As is the case with many institutions in crisis, Simmons leadership made difficult decisions, cutting costs and right-sizing the institution. While those decisions were complicated and tough for the Simmons community, in the years since, the college, and now university, has met self-imposed goals for net-tuition revenue growth, revenue surplus budgets, and fundraising, as well as appropriate debt ratios and cash reserves.

At the same time, Simmons leadership recognized that the school could not fulfill its mission by cutting its way to a healthy balance sheet, so in cooperation with the faculty and board of trustees, they began work on a series of initiatives that would ultimately reshape the institution and position it for the long term:

#### THE 2U PARTNERSHIP FOR ONLINE PROGRAMS

- The growth of online programming in higher education has dominated the sector for more than a decade. Although the initial explosion of online initiatives is often characterized by questionable players, established colleges and universities also got in on the action, launching online MOOCs, certificates, and degrees to varying success.
- While large institutions with robust resources and widespread brand awareness such as Harvard, MIT, and Stanford could launch a host of online offerings without any outside assistance, smaller regional institutions such as Simmons, with fewer resources in technological or instructional capacity, made a bigger investment.
- Consummated in 2012, Simmons' partnership with 2U, a private, for-profit company partnering with colleges and universities internationally to provide the technology and services that power online graduate degree programs, was quite simply a game changer, more than doubling Simmons's graduate program enrollment and tuition revenue. Today, Simmons offers five online master's degrees in partnership with 2U, with students from all 50 states enrolled.
- In 2018, President Drinan announced a 15-year extension to the partnership with 2U, ensuring that the University can continue to offer innovative online graduate degree programs and enjoy the

#### STUDENTS

- Simmons is home to 1,700 undergraduate women and 4,000 graduate men and women.
- More than a fifth of Simmons undergrads identify as African American, Latinx, Asian, Native American, or multi-racial . In 2017, the undergraduate community at Simmons was 7% African American; 11% Asian; 7% Latinx; and 5% multiracial.
- Simmons students can participate in more than 80 clubs and organizations.
- 91% of graduates are employed or in graduate school within 6 months of graduation.
- Simmons students are from 47 states and 22 countries.
- 60% of Simmons undergraduates live on campus.
- 14% of Simmons undergraduates are adult learners.
- 13% of Simmons undergraduates double major.
- 8% of Simmons undergraduates transferred to Simmons.
- 3% of Simmons undergraduates are international students.
- Simmons has 10 NCAA Division III varsity teams.

market reach, additional student enrollments, and revenues that come with them — well into the future.

#### THE ACADEMIC REDESIGN

- Well before Simmons became a university, Provost Katie Conboy, the faculty, and President Drinan were planning a new model of academic organization. The Academic Redesign, as it is known, came in response not only to trends in higher education generally, but to a vision for Simmons at its best: where all students can strengthen their core areas of study by learning across disciplines, and where the process of intellectual and professional inquiry fuels individual formation — resulting in a competent professional ready to enter her field *and* a lifelong learner ready to embark on her life’s work.
- The Academic Redesign established four colleges, each incorporating a complementary selection of academic fields:
  - The Gwen Ifill College of Media, Arts, and Humanities incorporates disciplines attuned to the modes of expression through which we record and interpret human experience, including communications, literature, art, music, gender and cultural studies, and the humanities.
  - The College of Natural, Behavioral, and Health Sciences sits at the core of Simmons’s long tradition of education for the health professions and incorporates renowned nursing, physical therapy, nutrition, and behavior analysis programs, along with the natural and behavioral sciences.
  - The College of Organizational, Computational, and Information Sciences combines the growing information fields with Simmons’s nationally-ranked Library and Information Sciences program and School of Business, combining the theory and practice of analytics, entrepreneurship, and technology.
  - The College of Social Sciences, Policy, and Practice incorporates Simmons’ first-in-the-nation School of Social Work with programs in education, public health, public policy, and the social sciences, rounding out another important facet of Simmons’s historic tradition in justice and change-oriented education for the human services professions.
- The Academic Redesign not only groups complementary fields within the same colleges, it also makes it easier for both graduate and undergraduate students to combine the study of disciplines across the colleges by standardizing credits and costs across the university, allowing both students and faculty to work around disciplinary “corners” and open new inter-professional opportunities and pathways to meaningful work.

#### FACULTY

- Simmons student-faculty ratio is 12:1
- The average class size is 14
- There are 230 full-time faculty (75% are women)
- Nearly 90% of liberal arts faculty have doctorates in their fields or terminal degrees
- Faculty have received research awards from the Ford Foundation, Freeman Foundation, the National Science Foundation, and United States Institute of Peace

#### THE “MAKING EDUCATION WORK” CAMPAIGN

- Fundraising is critical to the success of any college or university. In the “Making Education Work” comprehensive campaign, Simmons met the \$85 million goal a year early. The goal was then updated to \$100 million and achieved in the final year.

## LEVERAGING REAL ESTATE, STRENGTHENING LIVING AND LEARNING IN COMMUNITY

- In 2017, President Drinan and the Board of Trustees announced that they would seek to leverage the University's substantial real estate holdings in the heart of Boston to further endow the institution and to underwrite critical updating and expansion of core programs. In the coming months, Simmons looks forward to announcing a new institutional master plan that will spell out the campus changes and enhancements that will fuel future growth and stability.

## STRATEGY 2022: A SOLID FOUNDATION, A FUTURE OF POSSIBILITY

- Building off of this decade of growth, the vision for Simmons's next 100 years, articulated in Simmons's Strategy 2022 plan, is for the University to "become a beacon of leadership in the world of higher education; a resource to our nation and world; known for our expertise in fields which improve the human condition; sought out for the findings of our highly reputable research; and seen as the global expert in educating women for their own empowerment and leadership."

Redesigning Simmons: The Strategy for 2022 provides a roadmap to guide the University toward making that vision a reality. Top strategic priorities include:

- *Fostering a diverse, welcoming, and inclusive community.* In September 2018, Simmons hired a senior vice president of Organizational Culture, Inclusion, and Equity (OCIE) that reflects its commitment to building a community that is equitable and inclusive of all its students, staff, faculty, and alumnae/i. The OCIE Office seeks to facilitate fundamental cultural and institutional changes necessary to establish and maintain a fully inclusive campus, and to promote ongoing, meaningful and authentic engagement with diversity, equity, and inclusion. Diversity includes age, ancestry, class, color, disability, ethnicity, gender identify and expression, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, veteran status, or any other status protected by law. The OCIE Office, in partnership with many across campus, is leading the work to make Simmons University the most inclusive campus in New England. By approaching diversity work in a systemic and multidimensional way — so it is embedded in all Simmons does — Simmons will demonstrate the tremendous educational and cultural benefits that equity and inclusion initiatives have served and will continue to serve the University community, the U.S., and the world.
- *Highlighting and building Simmons's strengths in a sustainable structure.* Key components of this strategic priority include the Academic Redesign, strategic investments in faculty development, the completion of Simmons's innovative PLAN general education platform, and elevating the Simmons brand in education for leadership.
- *Supporting students through investment in services, academic support, mentorship, and our campus.* Significant components of this strategic priority include building a state-of-the-art learning and living environment to help students integrate in-classroom learning with the social, emotional, and ethical development at the core of all higher education.

## Where It All Happens: A University in a Global City

No doubt the city of Boston plays a significant role in many of Simmons's academic and professional offerings. Indeed, the University draws on many of the city's cultural, historical, economic, scientific, and educational resources to offer an unparalleled student experience.

The campus is located in the Fenway neighborhood, within walking distance of the Longwood Medical Area, where many Simmons students complete internships and clinical rotations at hospitals and medical research facilities. Simmons is also a short ride to Cambridge's Kendall Square, a locus of technology innovation and

successful startups and the burgeoning Seaport and Financial Districts, where law, venture capital, and investment firms offer opportunities to students with interests in those fields.

The University is also linked with several nearby historical and cultural institutions. The Boston Public Library, Massachusetts Historical Society, and John F. Kennedy Library offer unmatched opportunities for research and professional experience for undergraduate and graduate students alike, while institutions such as the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum and Museum of Fine Arts host internships for Simmons students, providing rich material for experiential learning.

As with Simmons, Boston has grown considerably in the past few decades. Though it once might have been viewed as a small, even provincial city, Boston now is a booming and global metropolis, with almost five million people in the metro area. With that growth has come a welcomed diversity in racial, ethnic, religious, sexual orientation, and national origin. And, as home to more than a quarter of a million college students, Boston is a center of higher education and a community of educators, administrators, and student service professionals unlike anywhere else in the world.

## The College

The College of Natural, Behavioral, and Health Sciences (“CNBHS” or “the College”) was named in 2017 when the following units were combined:

- School of Nursing;
- Department of Behavior Analysis;
- Department of Biology;
- Department of Chemistry and Physics;
- Department of Nutrition;
- Department of Physical Therapy; and
- Department of Psychology.

The College’s mission is to “create and sustain a learning community of scientist practitioners” and its vision statement is to “envision a College community in which faculty, staff, and students in the natural, behavioral, and health sciences are working together and across disciplines to advance practice and research.” Its core values are the following:

- Excellence in research, teaching, and practice;
- Integration of research, teaching, and practice/application in the natural, behavioral, and health sciences;
- Student-centered learning; and
- Collaboration and a sense of community.

CNBHS is the largest college at Simmons, offering an education at the intersection of life and science and cultivating innovative practices and procedures required to advance the scientific future and save lives. The College prepares the next generation of STEM leaders, broadly defined to include everyone from bench scientists to health care leaders, to provide an education that links passion with lifelong purpose.

CNBHS is a community in which all faculty, staff, and students work together and across disciplines to advance both practice and research. The College produces leaders for careers in such fields as STEM research, nursing, health professions, neuroscience, behavioral science, biotech, and engineering. CNBHS prepares graduates to serve the communities in which they live and equips them with the skills, knowledge, perspective, and confidence to become effective and principled leaders, build successful careers, and lead meaningful lives.

The College includes a broad range of disciplines, all aligned with the institution’s historical mission of advancing women’s professional livelihoods. Some departments offer baccalaureate education, including

minors and concentrations; others offer master's and doctorates with concentration, while some offer a combination of undergraduate and graduate programs.

Members of the College's faculty are leaders in their fields and pride themselves on serving as caring mentors. The total number of students enrolled in courses in the College is 2,720, including 1,960 graduate students.

Students work with faculty to master the fundamentals and put knowledge into practice through hands-on learning in interactive labs. Together, CNBHS faculty and students consider the natural world from every angle, blending social, mathematical, and life science to address intriguing issues related to behavior and experience.

The Simmons campus is surrounded by world-renowned teaching hospitals and research facilities including Brigham and Women's Hospital, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, Boston Children's Hospital, and Massachusetts General Hospital. Known for being especially well prepared, Simmons students are highly sought after for clinical rotations, research, and employment opportunities with leading experts in the industry.

## The Role

Reporting to the Provost, the Dean of CNBHS is responsible for supporting, strengthening, and advancing the diversification of a strong faculty, promoting innovative teaching and engaged learning and building a culture of research, scholarly productivity, inclusion, and equity. The Dean collaborates closely with the deans of the other three colleges.

Reporting to the Dean are the following:

- Associate Dean for Natural Sciences;
- Associate Dean for Health Sciences; and
- The department chairs and faculty of the College.

The Dean oversees an operating budget of approximately \$15 million and works with the Vice President of Strategic Initiatives who oversees an operating budget for the Nursing@Simmons program, which is about \$7.6 million.

## Priorities

During this transformative time in the history of the University, the next Dean will have the chance to focus on the following exciting opportunities in the development of the next generation of leaders while advancing diversity and inclusion in all areas of focus.

### *Provide Visionary Leadership*

- Cultivate a climate of intellectual and creative vitality that unifies constituents around a shared vision for the College;
- Ensure, as the goals of the College evolve, that they continue to align with the University-wide goals outlined in *Strategy 2022*;
- Foster an integrated academic community, collaborating with the deans of the other three colleges to enhance interdisciplinary opportunities, such as in inclusive leadership, social justice, global engagement, and inter-professional preparation, through joint academic appointments and new academic programs and ventures;
- Support the key partnerships that maintain and provide access to high-quality practitioners and opportunities for distance learning, clinical learning, and research; and
- Keep the College focused on the future of undergraduate and graduate and professional education.

### *Build Institutional Capacity*

- Encourage synergistic research and student-focused teaching opportunities among faculty members across the College;
- Foster and advance a culture of diversity and inclusive excellence in every way, through engagement with affinity groups and through all of the College's endeavors;
- Support, nurture and promote distinguished programs such as Dotson Mentor Program and Operation House Call;
- Improve operational effectiveness by such measures as integrating traditional and online learning offerings, strengthening the infrastructure to support interdisciplinary collaboration, and enhancing the sharing of departmental budgets; and
- Help departments to own a CNBHS identity while also taking pride in distinct departmental identities.

### *Raise Recognition and Resources*

- Build and promote the reputation and name recognition of CNBHS around a clear set of priorities and outcomes;
- Ensure the continuous accreditation of the behavior analysis, chemistry, nursing, nutrition, and physical therapy programs;
- Proactively engage, develop and strengthen external relationships and community partnerships in the greater Boston area, and beyond, which are critical to advancing clinical placements and internships;
- Activate network for purchasing and investments in services and resources from diverse business owners;
- Develop an ambitious fundraising strategy to support the College's mission, including strengthening alumni engagement and growing corporate and foundation relations efforts;
- Serve as a vital partner in the recruitment and retention of students, utilizing both data-based decision-making and high-touch personal interaction; and
- Build and strengthen external relationships and industry partnerships in the greater Boston area and beyond.

## **Key Relationships and Collaborations**

To advance the mission, vision, and goals of Simmons University, the Dean will work collaboratively and intently with senior leaders, including the President, the Provost, fellow Deans, the Senior Vice President of Institutional Advancement, Senior Vice President and General Counsel, the Senior Vice President of Organizational Culture, Inclusion, and Equity, the Vice President of Strategic Initiatives, and the Chief of Staff.

## **Key Qualifications**

The next Dean of CNBHS will have either an academic background, with advanced academic credentials, including a terminal degree in a relevant field and deep experience as an educator and administrator in natural, behavioral, or health sciences, or will have demonstrated experience leading either complex corporate or nonprofit organizations through significant change and innovation. Strong candidates will also demonstrate excellence in the following:



- Track record of hiring, developing, and retaining talented and culturally diverse employees and diverse faculty, staff and students; ability to mentor and support faculty and staff from underrepresented groups;
- Experience managing the budget and finances for a complex institution;
- Knowledge of both residential and online learning;
- Demonstrated history of creating and supporting a workplace committed to collaboration, teamwork, diversity, equity and inclusion;
- Ability to seize opportunities for the College to advance;
- Known as a creative problem solver;
- Demonstrated experience building consensus, nurturing relationships, and collaborating across campus units;
- Ability to manage change deftly, including comfort leading within an evolving institutional environment;
- Demonstrated commitment to the education and empowerment of women and to social justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion;
- Track record of fostering innovation and collaboration across disciplines;
- Fundraising track record or the interpersonal skills that would suggest potential to effectively cultivate, solicit, and steward donors; and
- Strong communication skills, both in writing and public speaking, with a variety of audiences, both external and internal.

### Procedure for Candidacy

Consistent with University's goals to achieve diversity at all levels of university leadership, Simmons encourages nominations and applications from individuals in traditionally underrepresented groups and those dedicated to building a culture of inclusive excellence at Simmons.

The University is committed to equal opportunity for all persons regardless of age, ancestry, class, color, disability, ethnicity, gender identify and expression, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, veteran status or any other status protected by law.

Inquiries, nominations, and applications are all welcome and should be directed to Simmons University's consultants at Russell Reynolds at [SimmonsCNBHS@russellreynolds.com](mailto:SimmonsCNBHS@russellreynolds.com).

