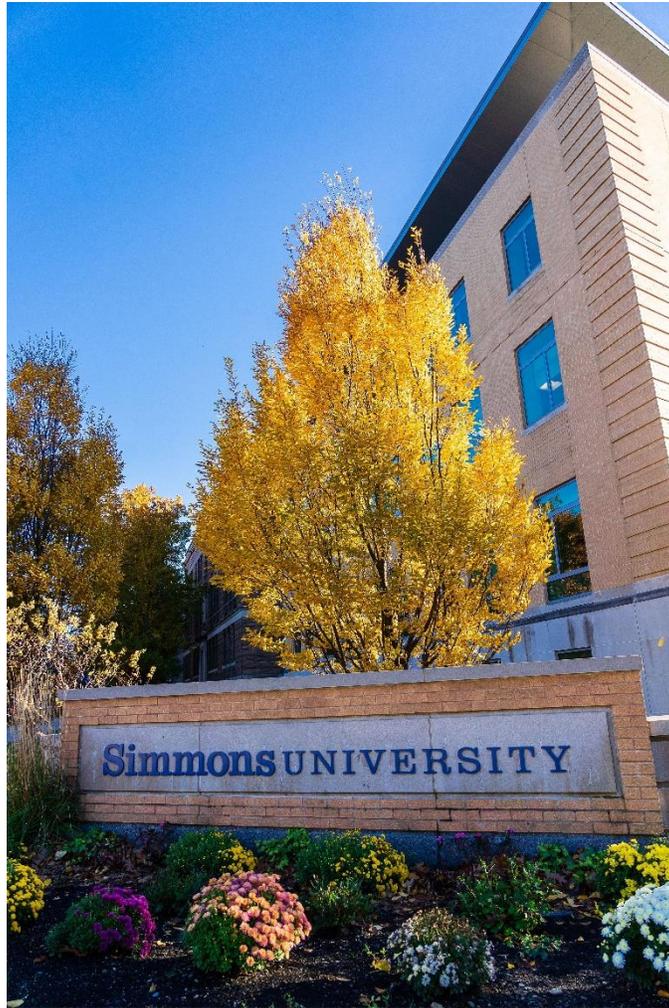


# Simmons

## UNIVERSITY



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This Leadership Profile is intended to provide information about Simmons University and the position of Senior Vice President for Student Engagement. It is designed to assist qualified individuals in assessing their interest.

## Opportunity and Summary of Position

Simmons University seeks a visionary, collaborative, and student-centered leader with a demonstrated commitment to diversity and inclusion to serve as the inaugural Senior Vice President for Student Engagement.

Reporting to President Helen Drinan and leading a newly unified division, the Senior Vice President for Student Engagement will assume an important and highly influential position at Simmons with an opportunity to contribute significantly to the future of a dynamic University. The Senior Vice President for Student Engagement will lead all enrollment and student life activities, furthering the University's ability to recruit, select, enroll, support, retain, and launch a highly qualified and diverse student population. While tending to the needs of all students — undergraduate, graduate, and online — the Senior Vice President for Student Engagement will be empowered to stretch the University to imagine, design, and implement a seamless, positive, and best-in-class student experience.



The successful candidate will enhance the systems and structures to aid in enrollment planning and decision making at all levels and will lead an ongoing institution-wide conversation about the design of a preeminent student development program. The new Senior Vice President for Student Engagement will possess a demonstrated commitment to diversity in all its forms and will advance the University's diversity and inclusion agenda through successful student enrollment, retention, engagement, and support strategies. Leadership, communication, and inclusiveness skills are essential, as is the ability to build bridges and work in partnership with a wide variety of people and offices. The Senior Vice President will also possess analytic and technology depth; a proven capacity for embedding enrollment and student life priorities within institutional values and aspirations; and the ability to keep student welfare always at the forefront by anticipating and responding to matters that influence retention and the student experience.

The Senior Vice President for Student Engagement will join Simmons during a significant period of transformation and progress. Located in Boston, one of America's most dynamic cities, Simmons draws on many of the region's cultural, historical, economic, scientific, and educational resources to offer an unparalleled student experience. Simmons has a cherished history of visionary thinking and social responsibility and a strong mission that has remained constant for over a century: to provide transformative learning that links passion with lifelong purpose. Simmons offers undergraduate programs for women in education in the arts, sciences, and several professional fields and graduate programs online and on the ground open to all at

the master's and doctoral levels. Given the richness and complexity of its offerings, Simmons obtained university designation and officially became Simmons University effective September 1, 2018.

Additional information about Simmons University is available at [www.simmons.edu](http://www.simmons.edu). The national executive search firm Witt/Kieffer has been retained to assist Simmons University with this recruitment. All inquiries, nominations, and applications should be directed to the search firm as indicated at the end of this document.

## The Role of the Senior Vice President for Student Engagement

This is a role for an educational leader and innovator. The Senior Vice President for Student Engagement will be a collaborative, inclusive, and experienced professional who is excited about the opportunity to build a fully integrated model for enrollment and student life. As a key and highly visible institutional leader, the Senior Vice President for Student Engagement will partner with an inspired senior group that has come together in support of a common and enthusiastic vision for the University's future.



The Senior Vice President for Student Engagement will provide transformational leadership for a forward-thinking and dynamic enrollment and student life operation and will be responsible for developing, articulating, and implementing an ambitious and thoughtful strategic plan for enhancing the way students experience Simmons outside the classroom. Key responsibilities will include enrollment positioning, planning, and retention. In

creating a new and connected model for enrollment and student life, the Senior Vice President for Student Engagement will achieve the University's goal of supporting a seamless, integrated, and inclusive student experience across undergraduate, graduate, and online student populations, providing the direction, leadership, and strategy to optimize Simmons's current and future enrollment and student engagement programs.

In overseeing this new division, the Senior Vice President for Student Engagement will advocate and advance the student life cycle and welfare, including a strong focus on the matters that influence student retention. The Senior Vice President for Student Engagement will be responsible for key revenue management of approximately \$100 million, including \$120 million in gross tuition, \$15.7 million in room and board, and \$49 million in financial aid. In addition, the Senior Vice President will provide leadership for a team of approximately 77 full-time staff and will manage a budget of about \$8 million in the following areas:

### Division of Student Affairs

- Athletics
- Multicultural Student Affairs
- Residence Life
- Student Counseling Services
- Student Disability Services
- Student Engagement
- Student Health Services
- Student Spiritual Life

### Division of Enrollment Management

- Bursar
- Financial Aid
- Graduate Admissions
- Undergraduate Admissions

## Key Relationships and Collaborations

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

Among the key collaborations and partnerships for this position is work with the office of OCIE, which is leading the work to make Simmons University the most inclusive campus in New England — one of six strategic priorities outlined in the University's 2022 Strategic Vision. 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 for the Simmons community, the United States, and the world.



## Professional Qualifications and Leadership Competencies

The new Senior Vice President for Student Engagement will have an unwavering commitment to students and take an authentic interest in the lives and development of pre-college and college students (undergraduate, graduate, and online, including first-generation students and second-career students). The successful candidate will have expertise in retention, challenges facing women's colleges, and either student life or enrollment. The ability to establish a dynamic vision for a new division, to motivate and inspire colleagues, and manage priorities

while maintaining forward momentum is essential. Experience with appropriate technology and the use of sophisticated data analysis to inform strategic decisions is important, as is experience with marketing and leveraging financial aid for recruitment and retention.

The ideal candidate will have the following professional qualifications and personal characteristics:

**Vision and leadership:** The ability to lead the creation of future student bodies with optimism and creativity and to envision and execute on an optimal student experience; an entrepreneurial outlook and eye to new possibilities and emerging challenges; the ability to develop and manage relationships with a diverse array of partners; and an ability to manage, motivate, and develop synergies and a sense of team among a highly diverse professional staff;

**Dedication to diversity, equity, access, and inclusion:** Demonstrated commitment to diversity, equity, access, and inclusion applied to enrollment and student success as well as hiring and developing a diverse staff; a portfolio of meaningful contributions to building a multicultural student community; and a track record of enhancing numerical and qualitative diversity among students and University staff; demonstrated cultural intelligence and appreciation of difference, understanding of nuance, and the ability to think intentionally with an awareness of the various ways in which the University can be experienced differently by different students;

**Proven effectiveness and expertise in enrollment management and/or student life:** Demonstrated ability to develop and implement successful enrollment and/or student life strategies and initiatives; a track record of success in leading or working closely with enrollment is highly desired;

**Exceptional analytical and technological skills:** The ability to engage in constant strategic and financial analysis of opportunities and challenges; the ability to produce forward-looking, transparent plans and revenue budgets that link expenditures to outcomes; analytic capacity to assess the effectiveness of how funds are employed to achieve enrollment and student life goals; ability to produce regular and systematic comparative reports that detail month-to-month as well as annual progress toward goals; capability to use predictive analytics to inform recruitment and student success initiatives; and the ability to support the use of new technology, including digital content and mobile media, to engage prospective as well as current students and their parents;

**Commitment to retention and student success and a holistic understanding of student life:** The ability to recruit and retain students through engagement and in the delivery of positive and educational and personal experiences and a commitment to assuring the success of all



students from diverse backgrounds and experiences; an understanding of student development that is aligned with the University's mission; ability to build programs that anticipate moral, social, and psychological concerns of a talented, contemporary, and diverse student body; familiarity with residential education and other student affairs functions; and knowledge of and ability to use best practices, prior experience, professional standards, and research literature to guide and support both enrollment and student affairs work;

**Ability to market an institution so as to achieve superior levels of enrollment performance:** Proven success in innovative thinking and risk-taking combined with excellent execution of both complex and routine marketing strategies; ability to carry out marketing functions with close attention to the needs of the University and the match between it and its potential students; and an ability to think creatively and to leverage technology;

**Ability to inhabit a high-visibility role with grace:** A genuine and visible enjoyment and understanding of college students in the widest and deepest sense, with the ability to build trust and mutually respectful relationships with students and also with those who influence students such as high school counselors and parents; the capacity to interact directly and positively with a wide range of constituents including students, alumni, trustees, faculty, administrative colleagues, staff, parents of current and prospective students, community leaders, and the public and to serve as a frequent and articulate spokesperson for the University as a highly visible member of the University's leadership team;

**Personal qualities and characteristics:** Mature communication skills with the ability to articulate a vision effectively to all constituencies; a sense of urgency and engagement; honesty, integrity, and a strong internal moral compass; resilience; optimism, confidence, and managerial courage and excitement about change; a genuine interest in forming a team with key University leaders, particularly those in academic affairs; an eagerness to develop a team and collaborate cross-functionally; a personal presence that is inclusive; and an ability to observe, listen, learn, and clarify needs while engendering trust quickly among various constituencies.

**Academic credentials:** Senior level experience at a complex organization with significant experience and expertise in either student life or enrollment is required. Bachelor's degree required; master's degree strongly preferred.

## Simmons at a Glance

### The Simmons Mission

To provide transformative learning that links passion with lifelong purpose. For more than 100 years, Simmons has put the needs of our students first. Through an education that combines intellectual leadership with professional preparation, we help students lead meaningful lives and build successful careers for the 21st century.

## Uniquely Simmons

Located in the heart of Boston, Simmons University is a private university, home to a respected women's undergraduate program, as well as coeducational graduate programs in nursing and 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's *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 the 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

## Structure and 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's 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 more than 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.

entered a crisis of a scale not seen since the Great Depression. At Simmons, declining revenues and a lack of investment in the school's faculty, physical plant, and student experience resulted in a challenging time.

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 school 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.

## **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, and multi-racial combined. In 2017, the undergraduate community at Simmons was 7% African American; 11.1% Asian; 6.9% Latinx; and 5% multiracial
- Simmons students can participate in over 80 clubs and organizations
- 91% of graduates are employed or in grad 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 transfer to Simmons
- 3% of Simmons undergraduates are international students
- Simmons has 10 NCAA Division III varsity teams

- Consummated in 2012, Simmons’s 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 the University can continue to offer innovative online graduate degree programs and enjoy the market reach, additional student enrollments, and revenues that come with them — well into the future.

## 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 or terminal degrees in their fields
- Faculty have received research awards from the Ford Foundation, Freeman Foundation, the National Science Foundation, and United States Institute of Peace

## 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’s 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 up new inter-professional opportunities and pathways to meaningful work.

### **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 Simmons 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, the University 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 identification and expression, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, veteran status, or any other status protected by law.

The 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 for the University community, the United States, 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 the 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, as well as 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 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.

## Procedure for Candidacy

Inquiries, nominations, and applications are invited. Consistent with our goals to achieve diversity at all levels of University leadership, Simmons welcomes nominations and applications from individuals in traditionally underrepresented groups and those dedicated to building a culture of inclusive excellence at Simmons.

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

Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled. Candidates should provide, as two separate documents, a resume and a letter of application that addresses the responsibilities and requirements described in this Leadership Profile. These materials should be sent electronically via e-mail to Simmons University's consultants Amy Crutchfield and Shelley Arakawa at [Simmons@wittkiewfer.com](mailto:Simmons@wittkiewfer.com). The consultants can also be reached through the desk of Paula Verace at [pverace@wittkiewfer.com](mailto:pverace@wittkiewfer.com).

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