

UNDERGRADATE CATALOG, 2016-2018

The Simmons PLAN (**P**urpose **L**eadership **A**ctio**N**)

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The Simmons PLAN (Purpose Leadership ActioN), our core curriculum, applies to all students beginning with the Class of 2019. The PLAN will apply to Transfer and Dix students beginning in fall 2017. Members of the classes of 2017 and 2018 and Transfer and Dix students entering before fall 2017, are required to fulfill general education requirements in place prior to the PLAN.

Under the PLAN, students will substantively engage with the city of Boston, develop their own understanding of leadership, engage in integrative learning across academic disciplines, and design key components of their course of study. The Simmons PLAN brings the College's principles and values into the present day. Students will complete the Simmons PLAN over the entire four years of their college experience.

The Essential Capabilities

Based on national surveys of employers and graduate schools, the faculty determined a set of critical skills, which Simmons students should have upon completion of their undergraduate degree at Simmons, beginning with the class of 2019. The skills include: communications, critical thinking and creative problem solving, data analysis and interpretation, ethical leadership, integrative learning, and the navigation of cultural differences. Each required PLAN course develops one or more of these essential capabilities, which is critical to achieving successful employment and post-graduate education, regardless of a student's major/field of study.

Communication

Effective communication develops through iterative experiences across the curriculum. Students should be able to execute the most challenging communication tasks required by a major, manifesting the knowledge, skills, and attitudes characteristic of the chosen discipline. All communication consists of developing and expressing ideas, as well as understanding and applying meaning-making practices in cultural, historical, and institutional contexts. Written, visual, oral, and sonic forms of communication can be synthesized into an integrated work and

accessed by reading, listening and viewing.

Critical Thinking and Creative Problem-Solving

Critical thinking and creative problem-solving skills help students succeed in their chosen fields and as citizens and community members. These intellectual abilities are developed through learning experiences in the classroom and laboratory and during internships and educational opportunities outside of the classroom. Creative problem-solving applies critical thinking to answer questions or achieve goals in innovative ways.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Students apply data analysis and interpretation skills to locate and use quantitative and qualitative data both as citizens and in their major discipline. Data analysis encompasses distinct ways of thinking and quantitative and qualitative research methodologies and techniques, developed through experiences inside and outside the classroom.

Ethical Leadership

Leadership is situational, relational, and behavioral. Any individual, regardless of title or position, may choose to lead when moved by a sense of purpose to foster positive change. Success is largely dependent upon building relationships across diverse people, grounded in self-knowledge (values, ethics, social identity, and life experiences) and context. Leadership development entails identifying that sense of purpose and fostering collaborative relationships, building commitment to common goals, and cultivating people's ability to contribute.

Integrative Learning

Students' capacity for integrative learning is central to personal success, social responsibility, and civic engagement. Students face a rapidly changing and increasingly connected world where integrative learning has become a necessity. The ability to make connections across courses and disciplines, over time, between campus and community life, and among multiple perspectives enables students to apply their learning across academic, professional, personal, and social boundaries.

Navigation of Cultural Differences

Navigating cultural differences, both domestically and internationally, relies on understanding the implications of historical and contemporary power structures – social, economic, and political – on diversity, inclusion, and inequality. Students will develop the cognitive, affective, and behavioral skills that support appropriate and effective interaction in a variety of cultural contexts.

The Simmons PLAN Requirements

Year One

The Boston Course

Fall Semester, 4 credits

In this writing-intensive first year seminar, students will engage with the City of Boston. Based on faculty passions and expertise, these courses run the gamut of disciplinary focus. They share a focus on the development of writing skills, information literacy, and critical analysis.

The Simmons Course: Explore
Fall Semester, 2 credits

This course supports Simmons students in their transition to college. The primary goals of the course are to introduce students: to Simmons, to navigating cultural differences, to self-management, and to what it means to engage with your community.

The Leadership Course
Spring Semester, 4 credits

This course challenges students to think about themselves as leaders from a leadership model based on engaging others in the quest for positive social outcomes. This course will include skill development in building relationships across differences; communicating a compelling narrative in writing and public speaking; ethical decision making; speaking up in the face of injustice; and creating team leadership and followership.

Year Two

The Learning Community
Fall or Spring Semester, 8 credits

The Learning Community will provide students with an opportunity to understand a topic from multiple disciplinary perspectives. This approach to integrative learning will allow students to grasp the habits of mind and intellectual methods of two disciplines (via two 3-credit courses) and how they may be brought to bear on a topic, issue, or problem (via a 2-credit integrative seminar jointly taught by the two course instructors).

The Simmons Course: Experience
Spring Semester, 1 credit

The second year Simmons Course will focus on academic and career planning, further development of self-management skills, and will prepare students to choose their 3D courses in their third year.

Year Three

3D- Design Across Diverse Disciplines
Years 3 and 4, 12 credits

Before spring registration of their second year, students will design and propose a cluster of three courses that address a topic, problem, or issue from various disciplinary perspectives. Students will explain the rationale for their selection of these courses, focusing on the intellectual coherence of the courses they have chosen.

The Simmons Course: Excel
Fall or Spring Semester, 1 credit

In the final segment of The Simmons Course, students will join others in their major to focus on career and life planning, considering internships, research, and service; employment and graduate school; and financial independence and planning.

Year Four

The Capstone (in a student's major; *one* Capstone is required to fulfill PLAN requirements; students with multiple majors may be required to fulfill Capstones in each major, depending on major requirements)

Fall or Spring Semester

All students will take a Capstone experience in their major, which will be designed by individual departments. Regardless of discipline, Capstone experiences will address career and graduate school preparation.

Graduation Requirements

The Language Requirement

The language requirement applies to all students regardless of background. Learning another language develops cognitive skills such as critical thinking, creativity, and flexibility. Furthermore, as students become familiar with a particular language and its literature and culture, they develop knowledge of the intellectual and social history of the people who speak that language. Additionally, the knowledge and experience gained in the critical reading of foreign literature broadens students' perspectives and provides a foundation for further study and travel. In so doing, they become aware of their own cultural assumptions and preconceptions. Finally, fluency in another language provides a significant advantage in the marketplace for students who want to advance in their careers.

Two semesters of coursework in the same foreign language taken sequentially is required of all students, regardless of incoming language proficiency. Students may pursue a previously studied language or start a new one.

• **Exemptions/Alternate Requirement**

- **Dix Scholars are exempted from the language requirement.**
- Students with a documented learning disability, or other disability, affecting their ability to acquire a foreign language will fulfill the language requirement through the completion of two courses related to global perspectives and cross-cultural understanding. Such students should contact the Disabilities Services Office and consult their academic advisor for the list of approved courses.

- **Placement for Language Courses**
 - For students who want to continue their studies of Chinese, French, Japanese, or Spanish, the following methods will be used for placement:
- AP, IB or SAT exam in French or Spanish

AP	IB	SAT
Score of 3: no credit; student is placed into 202	Score of 5: no credit; student is placed into 202	Score of 560 or higher: no credit; student is placed into 202
Score of 4 or 5: 4 general credits; student is placed into 245	Score of 6 or 7: 4 general credits; student is placed into 245	Score of 650 or higher: no credit; student is placed into 245
	No credit or placement for the "ab initio" exam: students are required to take the placement exam	

- Students who have taken the AP or the IB in Chinese or Japanese still need to take the placement exam at Simmons College.
- On-line placement exam for Chinese, French, or Spanish are administered by the Office of Academic Advising.
- Students register for the level indicated based on their test score. Students cannot register for a different level without approval from the Modern Languages and Literatures Department. If the student has studied three or more years of the language, they cannot register for the 101 level, regardless of placement exam results. In that case, the student will be automatically placed into the 102 level.
- For Japanese placement, please consult with Professor Zhigang Liu, Department of Modern Languages and Literatures.
- American Sign Language may be taken to fulfill the Language Requirement.
- Starting a new language
 - **Students who want to start a language which they have not previously studied can register for the 101 level in the following languages at Simmons College:** Chinese, French, Italian, Japanese, and Spanish.
 - Typically, Arabic and American Sign Language are offered through the Colleges of the Fenway. Please visit the Registrar's Office for details.
- **Policies**
 - **Students are strongly encouraged to finish the language requirement within their first two years of study at Simmons College.**
 - Courses taken to fulfill the language requirement
 - may not be taken pass/fail
 - may not be taken on-line

- may fulfill a Key Content Area requirement
 - may be part of a student's 3D cluster
 - may count towards the major or minor in French or Spanish if they are at the 245 level or above; in order to count towards the major or minor, French 245 and Spanish 245 need to be taken at Simmons College
- Language courses taken abroad can be used to fulfill the language requirement. Pre-approval must be obtained from the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures. Please contact the Chair of the Modern Languages and Literatures Department for approval.
 - Language courses transferred from other institutions may fulfill the language requirement pending pre-approval from the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures. Please contact the Chair of the Modern Languages and Literatures Department for approval. This applies also to languages not offered at either Simmons or the Colleges of the Fenway consortium. In that instance, placement will be decided by the host institutions if needed.

Math Competency Requirement

Students will be required to demonstrate competency in mathematics in one of the following ways before they are able to take a Quantitative Literacy course:

- Pass the College's mathematics competency exam administered by the Office of Academic Advising numerous times during the year
- Successfully complete MATH 101 or a higher level mathematics course at Simmons College
- Achieve a sufficiently high score on the mathematics section of the SAT, the mathematics achievement test, or an Advanced Placement exam in Math
- Present evidence of satisfactory completion at another accredited college of a mathematics course at the level of MATH 101, or above, to the Registrar's office
- Students must satisfy the math competency requirement during their first year at Simmons. Students who do not pass the mathematics competency exam during orientation, or who do not meet the math competency requirement in one of the other ways described above, may choose to take MATH 101 in their first semester or to retake the test in November. If they do not pass the November test, they will enroll in MATH 101 in the spring semester. Students who matriculate in January who do not pass the mathematics competency exam, or do not meet the requirements in one of the ways described above, may take MATH 101 during their first semester or retake the exam in March. If they fail the test in March, they will enroll in Math 101 in the following fall semester.

Quantitative Literacy Requirement (QL)

Quantitative Literacy (QL) is a "habit of mind," competency, and comfort in working with numerical data. Courses in this area will develop a student's ability to reason and solve quantitative problems from a wide array of authentic contexts and everyday life situations. QL courses will develop the skills necessary to understand and create sophisticated arguments

supported by quantitative evidence, and to clearly communicate those arguments in a variety of formats (using words, tables, graphs, mathematical equations, etc., as appropriate).

The Simmons PLAN 4 Key Content Area (KCA) Requirements

The key content areas pertain to phenomena as objects of study across the disciplines, rather than modes of inquiry defined by a particular discipline or set of disciplines. Indeed, these categories describe areas of knowledge from multidisciplinary perspectives. The phenomena included under each of the four areas listed below thus admit of a wide variety of ways of knowing or disciplinary approaches. Students must complete one course from each of the following areas:

Scientific Inquiry (SCI)

Courses in this area focus on phenomena in the natural and physical world and on ways of knowing these phenomena, particularly through experimental approaches. This requirement is primarily met by courses in the sciences and psychology; the requirement may also be met by courses in other disciplines providing perspectives on scientific phenomena. All courses meeting this requirement include a "hands on" component providing students the opportunity to understand and appreciate the scientific method.

Global Cultural (GC)

The term "global cultural" is broadly construed; it includes all cultures, past and present, within and beyond the US, and in their multiple forms of manifestation. Courses in this area offer our students the opportunity to understand and learn to appreciate cultural differences as they have made themselves manifest in humankind. This requirement can be met by courses in any discipline—from the liberal arts, to the sciences, and the professions—that provide a multicultural perspective of the world. For example, courses that focus on cross-cultural practices, or on minority cultures in the US, or on non-European cultures, or that provide world surveys of cultures would all meet this requirement.

Social and Historical (SH)

Courses in this area focus on phenomena in society and history as well as ways of knowing these phenomena. This requirement can be met by courses in the social sciences, including economics, political science, sociology, social psychology, social work, and history. Courses in other disciplines that provide perspectives of social and historical phenomena as defined above also meet this requirement. For example, a course that focuses on the social applications of management principles would provide such perspectives.

Aesthetic, Literary, and Artistic (ALA)

Courses in this area focus on phenomena in art and literature as well as ways of knowing or creating original works or aesthetic approaches to these phenomena. This requirement can be met by courses in any of the creative and performing arts as well as in any courses in the study of literature, art, and music. Courses in other disciplines that provide perspectives of aesthetic,

literary, and artistic phenomena as defined above also meet this requirement. For example, a course that studies the digital or computational aspects of artistic creation would meet this requirement.

THE SIMMONS PLAN REQUIREMENTS, PURPOSE, AND DOUBLE COUNTING

	PLAN Requirement	Purpose of Requirement	Double Counting
Year 1	The Boston Course (fall, 4 credits)*	Engagement with Boston; communication essential capability	
	The Simmons Course: Explore (fall, 2 credits)	Engagement with Simmons Communities; academic skill-building	
	The Leadership Course (spring, 4 credits)	Leadership, team work	
Year 2	Learning Community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 courses (3 credits each) • 1 integrated seminar (2 credits) 	Interdisciplinary and integrated learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning Community courses may count as a KCA • One Learning Community course may count in major/minor. For students with multiple majors/minors, one LC course may count in each. • One 3-credit course from the LC may be included in a student's 3D cluster
	The Simmons Course: Experience (spring, 1 credit)	Academic skill building; 3D planning	
Years 3 and 4	3D – Design Across Diverse Disciplines	3 courses that are topically connected; interdisciplinary and integrated learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each 3D course may count as a KCA • One 3D course may count in each major/ minor/ program of study • 3D courses must be drawn from different disciplines • One 3D course may have been taken during first or second year • The Capstone is in the major
	Capstone	Expertise in student's field of study	
	The Simmons Course: Excel (1 credit)	Post-graduation support/planning; careers, graduate school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Simmons Course: Excel is in the major
Any year	Key Content Areas (4 courses) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social/Historical • Artistic, Literary Aesthetic • Global/Cultural • Scientific 	Exposure to content across disciplines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each KCA may be fulfilled through the Learning Community; 3D; in a major/ minor/course of study (if applicable)
	Quantitative Literacy (1 course)	Critical thinking and problem solving; literacy in numeric systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The QL requirement may be fulfilled through a course in your major/ minor/ course of study (if applicable)
	Language Requirement (2 courses in the same language)	Linguistic and cultural skill development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language requirement courses may fulfill a KC

*Students in the Honors Program take a Boston Learning Community during the fall semester of their first year.

The Simmons PLAN: Majors and Minors

Students may elect a major after completion of 32 semester hours. A major must be declared upon completion of five semesters (80 semester hours) of full-time study. Students take a minimum of 28 semester hours in a major field, as determined by each department. Please note that some majors require prerequisite courses. The College's programs also offer fieldwork or internships through which students may apply their knowledge and explore opportunities in a career field related to their area(s) of study. Students may elect a single department major or a combination of majors.

The curriculum offers the following options:

- A single major – a coherent sequence of courses administered by a single department.
- A double major – the student fulfills two complete majors.
- A joint major – a sequence of courses drawn from two departments and advised and administered with the cooperation of both.
- An interdepartmental major – an interdisciplinary program involving two or more departments or programs.
- The Option for Personalized Education (OPEN) program offers an opportunity to design a major with the assistance of a faculty advisor. Participation in the OPEN program enables a student to work out an individualized major in accordance with their own educational needs and goals. For more information, please contact the Office of the Dean, College of Arts and Sciences.

A minor is an integrated group of courses designed to give a student significant exposure to a subject area other than one's major. This is different than the 3D Cluster part of the Simmons PLAN. All minors are twenty credits (five courses). A minor is not required for graduation, but can be elected by those students who wish to indicate an area of interest that complements and refines their major, that suggests a distinct area of concentration, or that expresses a particular passion or avocation.