SIMMONS COLLEGE OF KENTUCKY
DIGITAL TEACHING AND LEARNING CENTER

WINTER REPORT

SPECIAL EDITION

2024

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SECTION I: DIGITAL TEACHING AND LEARNING CENTER (DTAL)

Supporting Your Success!

(*Click here* or *Scan the QR code* to learn more)

Since launching in 2021, the Digital Teaching and Learning Center (DTAL) has been working to elevate your learning experience. Here's a look at how DTAL is supporting YOU:

🌐 A Digital Hub Just for You!

DTAL is your one-stop-shop for exploring digital resources, tools, and opportunities. Whether you're in online, in-person, or hybrid classes, DTAL's got you covered with resources to make your college experience more engaging and successful.

🎓 Quality Matters Certified Faculty and Courses

To make sure you're getting the best learning experience, all online courses and instructors are Quality Matters certified. Plus, faculty receive professional development to help make their teaching impactful and relevant across all course formats.

☑ Your Voice Matters: Student Experience Survey

This year, DTAL is rolling out a Student Experience Survey to learn more about *your* experience at Simmons. It'll cover topics like academic advising, resources, and customer service. Your feedback will help us keep improving Simmons to better meet your needs—watch for it during the 2024-2025 school year!

👦💻 Expanding Online Learning

We're excited to offer a 100% online Associate of Arts degree program this fall, along with other online courses and certifications. DTAL's expansion in online learning gives you flexibility to pursue your studies on your terms, whether synchronous or asynchronous.

📑 Updated Institutional AI Policy

We're revamping our AI Policy, which will soon be available in handbooks, course syllabi, and on Canvas. This updated policy will ensure that everyone—students, faculty, and staff—is aligned on best practices for using AI at Simmons.

The DTAL team is here to support you every step of the way, whether you're navigating Canvas, accessing resources, or seeking academic support. Let's make this academic year your best one yet! 💪

Fall 2024 Online Courses

Fall 2024 Online Courses

- Online Asynchronous (OA): 24 Courses (65%)

- Online Synchronous (OS): 13 Courses (35%)

■ OA ■ OS ■ ■
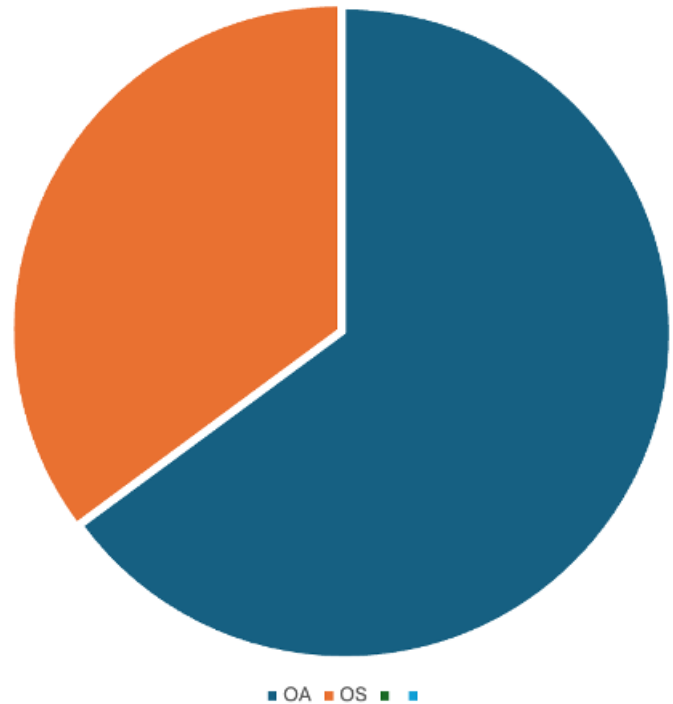
DTAL has been working hard to expand Simmons College's online learning options, making it easier than ever for you to reach your goals! We're now offering a 100% online Associate of Arts degree program, along with other online courses and certifications. With both asynchronous and synchronous formats, you can choose what fits best with your schedule and lifestyle.

These programs give you the flexibility to balance your studies with other commitments while gaining high-quality skills to succeed in today's digital world. Whether you're a traditional college student or earning dual credit, DTAL is here to help you thrive!

WINTERMESTER FALL 2024

December 3rd - January 5th

📅 **Wintermester is here!**

📅 **December 3rd - January 5th**

We are excited to offer a special **Wintermester** session! This is a fantastic chance for you to **boost your GPA**, **get ahead in your college journey**, and stay on track for **graduation**.

�֎ **Why enroll?**
☑ Improve your GPA
☑ Get a head start for the next semester
☑ Available to **current Simmons students only**!

🗃 **Choose from 15 exciting courses:**

- **BUS 101** – Foundations of Business and Society
- **BUS 202** – Foundations of Marketing
- **CIS 100** – Introduction to Computers
- **COM 102** – Interpersonal Skills
- **COM 302** – International Cultures and Communication
- **ELA 312** – Leadership and Motivation
- **ENG 101** – English Composition I
- **ENG 102** – English Composition II
- **ENG 202** – Introduction to Research
- **HIS 207** – African American History
- **PHI 200** – Critical Thinking and Moral Decisions
- **PMN 101** – Spiritual Formation
- **POL 101** – American Government & Politics
- **REL 100** – Introduction to Religious Studies
- **SCI 103** – Environmental Science

🗂 **Learn more by** scanning the QR code on the flyer or by clicking here or this link: https://simmonscollegeky.edu/wintermester/#c3bd0140ccef3342e92c_xJSEz91eJrGw

Don't miss this opportunity to take control of your academic success! 🎓

#SimmonsCollege #Wintermester #BoostYourGPA #AcademicSuccess #StayOnTrack #HigherEducation

EXCITING UPDATES FROM THE DTAL FACULTY AND STAFF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (PD) SERIES

Did you know our faculty and staff are constantly learning new ways to support *your* success? This year's DTAL Professional Development (PD) series is all about making classes more engaging, innovative, and accessible for everyone.

Here's what's happening:

☑ Innovative Training & Workshops
Through our PD series, Simmons faculty and staff are diving into topics like tech integration, course design, and student support. This fall, there are 19 sessions, with 21 more coming in spring 2025. Each one brings new ideas to make your learning experience better than ever!

☑ Big Highlights
On October 24, Simmons teamed up with Tennessee State University for a special Artificial Intelligence workshop at LCCC! Nearly 50 attendees learned all about Open Educational Resources (OER) and digital learning tools that can benefit HBCU communities. Faculty earned badges for completing this event and will bring new AI insights into your classrooms soon.

☑ New Tools in Canvas
We've just added *PinPoint* to Canvas! This tool helps professors identify students who may need extra support, so they can step in early to keep you on track. Plus, *TurnItIn* is still here to help detect plagiarism, and we're exploring new tools to address AI-generated content fairly.

📇 More Ways to Engage
The DTAL team is expanding digital literacy workshops for special community groups, including the unhoused and incarcerated, ensuring everyone has access to essential digital skills.

🌐 International Opportunities
As Simmons applies for SEVIS approval, we're preparing to welcome international students and offer study abroad opportunities in the future. Stay tuned for global learning experiences on the horizon!

With all these efforts, DTAL is focused on supporting faculty and staff to deliver top-notch teaching experiences for every student, whether online or in person. Keep an eye out for these exciting developments in your classes! 🚀

From left to right (left photo): Bernice Brown with Simmons, and our TSU and HBCU C2 Partners and facilitators: Dr. Denise Malloy, Ms. Chasitie Goodman, and Dr. Quinetta Crawford-Bartley

Right photo: Simmons faculty, staff, and CIS students engaged in an AI-focused exercise with TSU/HBCU C2.

CELEBRATING OUR ANCHOR COMMUNITIES

BUILDING DIGITAL SKILLS WITH OUR ANCHOR COMMUNITIES: A SIMMONS COLLEGE OF KENTUCKY INITIATIVE

Simmons College of Kentucky is committed to making digital learning accessible to everyone in our community. Through the Anchor Communities Initiative, we're working with local partners to bring tech skills and resources to underserved neighborhoods in Louisville. With major support from the Connecting Minorities and Communities (CMC) grant, our Digital Teaching and Learning (DTAL) Center has launched digital literacy projects with organizations like and the Louisville Central Community Center (LCCC).

Simmons Senior Tech Hub at ElderServe: Digital Literacy Workshops
This fall, the DTAL Center teamed up with ElderServe, an adult day care service in Louisville's Russell neighborhood, to host a series of digital literacy workshops specifically for senior citizens. Running from August to November 2024, these workshops provided seniors ages 60 and up the tech skills to safely and confidently use the internet, email, and other digital tools.

We celebrated the first cohort with a special ceremony for our ElderServe graduates on **November 15, from 11 am-1 pm**.

Looking Forward to Spring 2025
In Spring 2025, we're launching a new series of workshops for a second group of ElderServe participants. This group will follow a similar schedule and curriculum, covering everything from computer basics to using mobile technology and Google.

Upcoming Spring 2025 Workshop Dates

- January 22, 2025: Computer Basics
- February 5, 2025: Learning About Websites and Browsers
- February 19, 2025: Staying Safe Online
- March 5, 2025: Learning About Important Government Sites
- March 19, 2025: Mobile Technology, Part 1
- April 2, 2025: Mobile Technology, Part 2
- April 16, 2025: All About Google

How We're Measuring Success

At the end of each semester, we gather feedback from both ElderServe participants and our Simmons Tech Scholars. This data helps us understand the impact of the program and make improvements for future workshops. According to our data, we had seven participants representing four neighborhoods— Shawnee, Russell, Shively, and California.

Get Involved!

Do you know someone aged 60+ who could benefit from learning new tech skills? Contact Mrs. Andrea Cook at ElderServe at **acook@elderserveinc.org** or **502-778-7418** for details on how to enroll them in our workshops. You can also visit online to sign up at: https://simmonscollegeky.edu/simmonslearningcenter/

Check Out Our Story in the News!

Recent articles and videos highlight the excitement around this partnership:

- Louisville Public Media - Senior Tech Workshops
- Workshop Video on YouTube
- Participant Experiences on YouTube
- By working with local communities and building tech confidence in seniors, Simmons College is building a bridge to a more connected Louisville.

MEET OUR 2024-2025 SIMMONS TECH SCHOLARS

Our four Simmons Technology Scholars—students who received $5,000 scholarships—are the heart of these workshops. They provide one-on-one support, guiding seniors through each session and answering questions. The Scholars, made possible through a partnership with AT&T, help seniors gain practical skills like navigating websites and sending emails.

Camaria Young

Justin Damis

Relonda Kirby

Relonda Kirby

SPOTLIGHT: RELONDA KIRBY

A Simmons Tech Scholar

Relonda Kirby, *a Junior as of the upcoming Spring semester, is majoring in Sociology at Simmons College. Her experience as a facilitator for digital literacy workshops at EldersServe has been transformative, teaching her the importance of approaching learning and teaching with an open heart, mind, and soul. Since becoming a Simmons Tech Scholar, she has realized that with willingness, God can work wonders beyond anything she could have hoped for or imagined.*

After graduating from Simmons, Relonda plans to continue her journey of teaching and empowering others. Her mission is to share what she has learned with those eager to grow, fostering liberation through digital literacy and intellectual, educational, and personal development. She is committed to using her knowledge and skills to inspire growth and transformation in others, always with an open hand, heart, and mind.

CELEBRATING AN UPCOMING PARTNERSHIP WITH LOUISVILLE CENTRAL COMMUNITY CENTER (LCCC)

Simmons College of Kentucky is teaming up with the Louisville Central Community Center (LCCC) to bring **free, hands-on AI workshops** to the community starting in **Spring 2025**!

These workshops are open to everyone—from students to seniors! Whether you're new to technology or curious about AI's impact on different industries, this is your chance to explore the basics of **Artificial Intelligence** and learn how it can shape the future.

💻 **Led by Experts:** Workshops will be taught by Apple Certified Teachers from Simmons College of Kentucky, who are committed to making AI learning accessible and engaging for all. These teachers are specially trained to break down AI concepts and make digital literacy fun and practical!

Stay tuned for registration details and workshop dates! 📅

For more info, keep an eye on our page. Let's learn, grow, and lead in the tech world together!

NEW TECH SPACES OPEN ON CAMPUS:
Technology Lab and Apple Lab (Steward Hall)

Thanks to a partnership with Apple, Simmons College of Kentucky now has two incredible new spaces for students, faculty, and staff to explore, learn, and create!
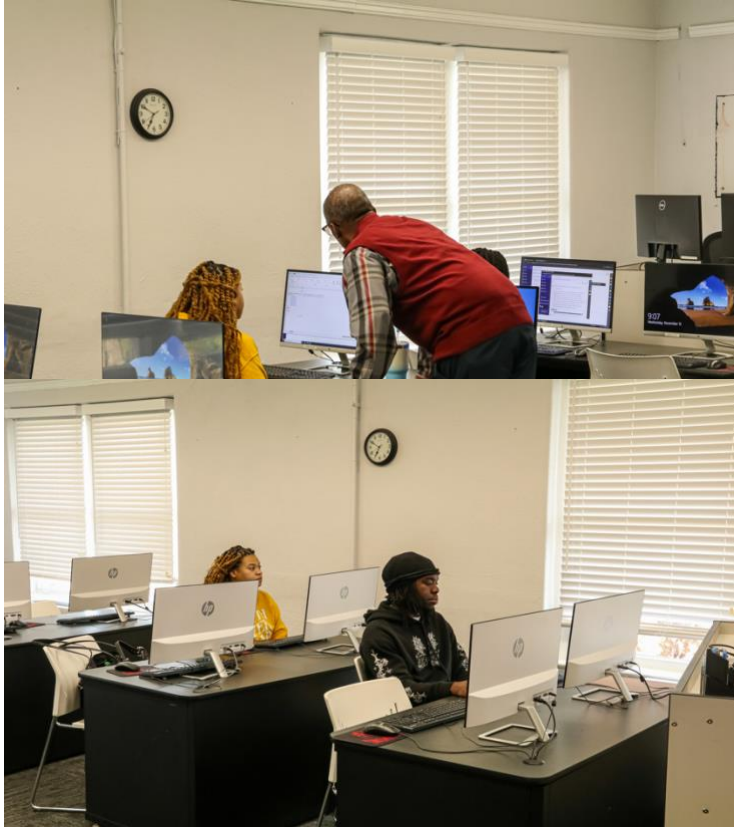
Check them out:

🎬 **Apple Lab** in Steward Hall, Room 204:

Whether you're interested in filmmaking or just want hands-on experience with audio and visual tech, the Apple Lab is designed for you! It's the perfect place to collaborate, work across departments, or dive into film projects. This is also the home base for anyone studying in the Black Film Institute (BFI). The art installation is now complete, so it's open and ready for you!

💻 **Tech Lab** in Steward Hall, Room 304:

Looking for a focused study spot or a collaborative workspace? The Tech Lab has it all! With individual pods equipped with desks, computers, and seating areas, plus designated accessible spaces, it's ideal for any Simmons student. There's also a shared area with charging stations for group work.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NEW LAB TECHNICIANS

AZARIAN BACON AND JUSTIN DAMIS

Azarian Bacon, originally from Muncie, Indiana, moved to Jeffersonville in 2013 and is currently a Simmons College of Kentucky student. One of Azarian's favorite aspects of Simmons is the open discussions in classes, which foster engaging and thoughtful learning experiences. Beyond academics, Azarian serves as the lab technician for the Tec Lab in Steward Hall, Room 304, where responsibilities include assisting students in the lab and maintaining equipment. Known for strong computer skills, Azarian supports peers in the lab. After completing studies at Simmons, Azarian plans to pursue a doctorate in Religious Studies. Azarian can be reached at azarian.bacon@simmonscollegeky.edu

Justin Damis, from Bridgeport, Connecticut, values the family-like support at Simmons College of Kentucky. As the lab technician for the Apple Lab, Room 204, he provides students with a quiet, private workspace, complete with five pods for focused work. Available all day on Tuesdays and Thursdays, Justin brings a friendly demeanor, positive energy, and technical expertise to make the lab a productive space for students. Reach him at justin.damis@simmonscollegeky.edu

Both labs are open and available to Simmons Nation beginning this Spring 2025, Mondays-Fridays, during campus hours from 9 am - 5 pm, and are great spots for students in BFI, CIS, and other student organizations. Lab assistants will be on hand if you need any help. For more information, please send an email to our new Lab Technicians!

Stop by to check out these amazing new spaces, and let your creativity run wild! 🎨🎦🎞️

Section II:

NEW & EXCITING OPPORTUNITIES FOR SIMMONS STUDENTS

INTRODUCING WILD ACADEMY

🚀 Calling All Aspiring Simmons Entrepreneurs! 🚀

Ready to kickstart your business idea? Simmons College has partnered with Wild Accelerator to offer its students the Wild Academy incubator program
! Here's what you need to know:

About the Program:

- A **6-week virtual program** tailored for very early-stage, idea-stage entrepreneurs
- Gain access to **masterclasses, coaching, mentoring sessions,** and **peer support**
- Hands-on assignments, templates, and resources to bring your business idea to life
- Collaborate with fellow students from Simmons College and the University of Memphis in the first cohort

Why Join?

- Learn from top-notch entrepreneurs and mentors
- Build connections with other ambitious students
- Flexible e-learning platform with live and pre-recorded content

Details:

- **Start Date:** January 21, 2025
- **Simmons Slots:** 8 spots for the first cohort; 5 for the second
- **Requirement:** Must have a business idea and be committed to the full 6 weeks

Interested? Don't wait! **Contact Dr. Wayne Meaux at wmeaux@simmonscollegeky.edu** by **November 30** to apply. Let's make your entrepreneurial dreams a reality! 🛫

THE APPLE CHALLENGE

🎉 Calling All Simmons Coders and Creators! 🎉

Exciting news: Applications for the **Swift Student Challenge 2025** open in **February 2025**! This is your chance to shine, develop a unique app playground, and showcase your coding creativity with Swift. Here's what's at stake:

✨ **Top 350** winners earn recognition and prizes. ✨ **50 Distinguished Winners** will get an all-expenses-paid trip to Apple's HQ in Cupertino, with exclusive sessions from Apple experts! ✨ All winners receive **one year of Apple Developer Program membership**, a special gift, and more.

🎛 **Get Ready Now!** Start brainstorming app ideas that make an impact, whether that's tackling sustainability, mental health, or other important issues. Apple will be providing resources and Swift Coding Clubs to help you prepare!

▦ **Eligibility**: Open to students aged 13+, registered Apple developers, and enrolled in school or recent graduates. Check the full eligibility criteria before applying.

Interested in applying? Reach out to Dr. Wayne Meaux at wmeaux@simmonscollegeky.edu by **November 30** to get support and guidance!

Dream big, build bold, and put your coding skills to the test! ✲ #SwiftStudentChallenge #SimmonsCollege #FutureDevelopers

Cisco Networking Academy

Ready to begin, change, or propel your career?

For over 25 years, Cisco Networking Academy has offered certification-aligned courses in topics like cybersecurity, networking, and Python — **at no cost** to individuals and academic institutions. Our skills-to-jobs program allows students to learn through innovative, practice-oriented courses that prepare them with real, job-ready skills.

Skills-to-Jobs Impact

24 million
Learners since our start in 1997[1]

191
Countries where we serve learners[1]

99%
of organizations surveyed use technical certifications to make hiring decisions[2]

96%
of learners say Cisco Networking Academy helped them obtain a job or new educational opportunity[3]

50 HBCUs
Partnering with Cisco Networking Academy

Investment in HBCUs

Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) foster a culture of resilience and brilliance, resulting in remarkable achievements like cultivating 24% of all STEM-related bachelor's degrees earned by Black students in the U.S. and graduating 40% of all Black Engineers.[4]

Cisco recognizes the tremendous value of HBCUs. In 2022, Cisco made a $150 million commitment to preserve the legacy and sustainability of HBCUs, becoming the largest corporate donor in HBCU history.[5]

Learn with us

netacad.com

Free, self-paced courses

Find an academy

[1] Through end of fiscal 2024
[2] 2019 Tech Manager Survey, Cisco
[3] Based on student outcome surveys of student participants who took Cisco certification aligned courses between fiscal 2005 and through the end of fiscal 2024
[4] How HBCUs Can Accelerate Black Economic Mobility, McKinsey, 2021
[5] 2022 Cisco Purpose Report

Jonathan | United States

Featured Alumnus
North Carolina A&T State University

Jonathan took cybersecurity courses from Cisco Networking Academy at North Carolina A&T State University and simultaneously gained experience through summer internships and working at the university's Help Desk. With the skills he gained, Jonathan secured a cybersecurity job as an Incident Protection Advisor.

Gina Bullock, PhD | United States

Assistant Professor
North Carolina A&T State University

"North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University thanks Cisco for providing our students and faculty members with opportunities and endless resources that have increased the student knowledge in Information Technology and increased job placement in numerous companies.

Cisco has provided equipment, faculty training, learning resources, student competitions, certification opportunities, badges, Cisco Instructors, Cisco mentors, and learning platforms."

SIMMONS DUAL CREDIT PROGRAM:

Preparing Students for Success

Fall 2024 Dual Credit Review

We're thrilled to see that over 77% of students in Simmons College's dual credit program feel prepared for their future careers and college majors! This fall, we kicked off our dual credit courses for high school students across Kentucky, working toward the state's 2030 goal of having 50% of high schoolers complete at least one dual credit course with a grade of C or better. This program is part of Simmons College's commitment to providing accessible education, especially for underserved students.

Current Enrollment and Courses

This semester, 23 high school students from schools like Grace James Academy, W.E.B. DuBois Academy, J. Graham Brown School, and even one homeschool student joined us for dual credit classes. Courses offered include:

- CIS – Computer Information Systems (8 weeks)
- BFI – Black Film Institute (8 weeks)

What Students and Parents Are Saying

We gathered feedback from students and parents to make sure we're delivering the best experience:

- **Course Length**: Many students would prefer 16-week courses instead of the current 8-week format.
- **Support and Engagement**: Students loved the immediate support and in-person meetings with professors. They highlighted how responsive and helpful everyone has been.
- **Course Variety**: Partner schools have asked for more options, like a writing-focused course to support students' skills.

Based on this input, we're considering adding courses like Public Speaking, a lab component for Black Film Institute, Foundations of Success, and Foundations of Business.

Looking Ahead

We're already planning for future opportunities! For Fall 2025, we're exploring dual credit enrollment in our Aviation program with W.E.B. DuBois Academy and meeting with additional high schools like Shawnee, Valley, and Seneca to expand pathways to student success.

Hear from Our Simmons Dual Credit Program Parents/Guardians and Students!

"I loved the communication. It felt very personal, and each time I spoke with someone from SCKY, they seemed focused on my needs and my daughter's needs. She's earning her degree now!"

-Parent/Guardian Feedback

"I think this is a good program! I loved the communication from the school and enjoyed the course a lot!"

-Student Feedback

Join Us on this Journey!

Simmons College is dedicated to making a difference for high school students by providing dual credit courses that set them up for success. Want to learn more? Contact Mr. Kevin Garner, our Dual Credit Coordinator, at kgarner@simmonscollegeky.edu or visit us at simmonscollegeky.edu/dualcredit

We can't wait to see what's next for our dual credit students!

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP ACADEMY
Goes 100% Online in 2025

Upcoming: *Zeta Cohort*

Executive Leadership Academy Goes 100% Online Starting Fall 2025!
The Executive Leadership Academy (ELA) is thrilled to announce that, beginning in Fall 2025, we will offer our complete program 100% online! This new format is designed to provide flexible, high-quality education to adult learners worldwide, making completing a B.A. in Business Administration with a Concentration in Organizational Leadership easier than ever. The online program will bring together a vibrant community of professionals, fostering global connections and deeper learning experiences for everyone involved.

Why go online with the ELA program?
By offering ELA online, we are able to extend our reach and accommodate busy professionals and learners, regardless of location. This fully online experience is tailored to working adults who want a rigorous, career-boosting education that fits into their schedules.

Program Details

- **Flexible Learning Options.** Courses are available in both asynchronous and synchronous formats, allowing you to attend live sessions in the evenings or complete coursework at times that best suit your schedule.

- **18-Month Timeline.** The 100% online program launches in Fall 2025 and is designed to be completed in as little as 18 months, for those who transfer 45 credits or more.

- **Tuition.** We offer competitive tuition rates with financial aid opportunities available to qualifying students. Please visit our landing page for detailed tuition and financial aid information.

We encourage current students and alumni to share this exciting opportunity with colleagues and friends who may be interested in a high-quality, flexible education that prepares them for

leadership roles. This program will continue to maintain the integrity and rigor that the ELA is known for while enabling a broader range of students to participate.

To learn more, visit our website at [Executive Leadership Academy (ELA) - Simmons College of KY](#) or contact the director directly at [sledet@simmonscollegeky.edu](#) or (502) 776-1443 ext. 5197. Start your journey toward earning your leadership degree!

JOIN THE COMPUTER INFORMATION SYSTEMS (CIS) CLUB

Are you curious about a career in tech, data science, or app development? The CIS Club is your space to dive into these fields, connect with like-minded students, and build skills that will set you up for success—whether you dream of becoming a programmer, project manager, or a leader in the tech world. In the CIS Club, you'll get hands-on experience solving real-world challenges and learn how tech can greatly impact business, government, and beyond.

What You'll Gain as a CIS Club Member:

- **Problem-Solving & Critical Thinking:** Learn to analyze, evaluate, and implement technology solutions for real-world issues.
- **Career-Ready Skills:** Get ongoing support and guidance for professional growth, preparing you to make a difference in your future career and community.
- **Hands-On Experience:** Develop skills in analyzing computing problems, designing solutions, and making ethical decisions in tech—all while sharpening your communication skills for the professional world.

Ready to start your tech journey? Connect with Dr. Samantha Betton, Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs and Chair of the Department of Computer Information Systems (CIS) at 502.776.1443 ext. 5141 or sbetton@simmonscollegeky.edu

Section III:

Simmons Faculty & Staff Bring Their A-Game

A QUALITY TEACHING AND LEARNING EXPERIENCE

The DTAL remains dedicated to empowering faculty and students through continuous professional development. The center's commitment to excellence is eviden t in its adoption of Quality Matters (QM) standards for online course design.

The Digital Teaching and Learning (DTAL) Center at Simmons College is all about supporting you and your instructors with the best tools and resources for a great learning experience! We're committed to helping faculty deliver high-quality, engaging courses that make learning easier for you, whether you're in the classroom or studying online.

Did You Know?
66% of all Simmons online courses meet or exceed the top Quality Matters (QM) standards, scoring over 85% in accessibility, interactivity, and learner engagement! This means your courses are designed to be easy to follow and navigate, giving you a consistent experience across all of your classes in Canvas. Big shoutout to our amazing faculty and staff for their dedication to making your education as smooth and engaging as possible!

What This Means for You:
Every course you take, whether online or in person, is crafted with care, patience, and a focus on your success. These efforts ensure you can easily access, understand, and interact with course content, making your path to success that much clearer.

Quality Matters at Simmons
Simmons faculty and staff go through a specialized, 2-week training to meet these high standards, which requires both time and financial commitment. We're proud to now have 9 trained peer reviewers—including department chairs—who help keep course content engaging and up to standard. Starting in November, we'll be conducting reviews to ensure every course meets our quality benchmarks.

Testing Center News
Soon, you'll be able to take proctored exams on campus with the launch of our new Testing

IT'S ALL ABOUT THE
Certification
This infographic shows QM certified faculty and instructional staff and QM certified courses.

CERTIFIED INSTRUCTORS
36 out of 58 of our faculty are QM certified. That is 62% of our faculty.

CERTIFIED COURSES
66%
20 online courses are certified out of 30 online courses. This about 66% of our offerings.

Certified Courses by Department
Number of certified courses out of number of online courses per department.

Rel Studies 10%
Business 15%
Sociology 15%
English 20%
Science 5%
Math 5%
History 20%

Certified Instructors by Department
Number of full-time certified instructors by department.

Center! We'll even be offering standardized tests like CLEP and GMAT. Stay tuned for more updates as we welcome a new Test Center Director to support you.

Keeping Textbooks Affordable
To keep costs low, we're working closely with faculty to choose Open Educational Resources (OER) or Cengage materials whenever possible. This fall, 88.46% of courses used free resources, and 53.85% included Cengage Unlimited. For Cengage help, remember you can reach their support team anytime at 1-800-354-9706!

Thank you for being part of our journey toward making Simmons College courses more accessible, engaging, and affordable for you! We're here to support your success every step of the way!

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR QM-CERTIFIED FACULTY!

Ashley Mack	*Ibrahim Salem*
Chad Sloss	*Nancy Seay*
Chad White	*Chelsi Sloan*
Chris Caldwell	*Ebony Stubbs*
Darvin Adams	*Jemar Tisby*
Jecorey Arthur	*Brendan Wilson*
Ingrid Bowman-Thomas	*Derek Allen*
Annette Bridges	*Leroy Smith*
Stewart Burns	*Christian Lucas*
Holly Fling	*Samantha Betton*
Joel Goza	*Ebony Mason*
Roger Veliquette	*Charles Lawrence*
Deborah Carlton	*Kathy Stovall*
Johnny Jones	*Jacqueline Williams*
Sherrod LeDet	*Toni Stringer*
Robert Metcalf	*Dartanya Hill*
Wayne Meaux	*Joel Williams*
Janice Poston	*Merle Thornton*
Javan Reed	*Alana Stevenson*
Tytianna Ringstaff	*Shandrea Williams*

SIMMONS REPRESENTED AT THE

2024 CONVERGENCE CONFERENCE

Dr. Janice Poston, our Curriculum Designer, recently attended and presented at the Convergence Conference, held at the University of Louisville's Shelbyhurst campus on November 7. Here's a peek into what she experienced and learned—knowledge she's excited to bring back to campus to enhance your learning!

🧠 Highlights from the Conference

The Convergence Conference was packed with insights on using technology, tools, and innovative teaching strategies in the classroom. Attendees included librarians, faculty, course designers, and administrators—all focused on finding new ways to improve your learning experience!

👩‍🏫 Dr. Poston's Presentation: "Instructor Presence Matters in Online Courses"

Dr. Poston shared her research on the importance of *instructor presence* in online and hybrid classes. Her study dives into how having active, engaged instructors can make a big difference in online learning. You can check out her full presentation here.

📷 Team Simmons Representing!

Dr. Poston was joined by Dr. Alana Stevenson and Ms. Tia Spence-Gigger, who also presented. Dr. Stevenson spoke about engaging students in online courses, while Ms. Spence-Gigger covered data policies and procedures. Together, they're bringing back valuable insights to make our online courses more engaging and effective!

🖥️ USDA Conference Presentation Recap

Dr. Poston also attended the USDA Conference in June, where she presented on how course templates can support high-quality online learning. This tool can make your courses more organized and accessible, helping you focus on learning.

Stay tuned as Dr. Poston and the team at Simmons continue to explore new ideas to support you in both online and in-person classes! 📚💻

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AN UPCOMING OPPORTUNITY FOR SIMMONS FACULTY AND STAFF

SPRING 2025

Become a Certified Apple Teacher!

Enhance your teaching toolkit and learn how to integrate Apple technology into your classroom seamlessly! This workshop will guide you through skills and strategies to engage students with Apple's powerful tools.

MORE DETAILS COMING SOON!!

Location: In-person in the Apple Lab, Steward Hall, Room 204

Facilitator: Dr. Denise Malloy

- Apple Learning Coach
- Certified Apple Teacher
- MagicSchool Certified Pioneer

What You'll Learn:

- **Mastering Apple Tools**: Get hands-on with iPad, Mac, Pages, Keynote, and more for an enriching teaching and learning experience!

Note: Please bring your own Apple device if possible; limited iPads will be available.

✉ **For more information, email** Dr. Tytianna Ringstaff at tringstaff@simmonscollegeky.edu

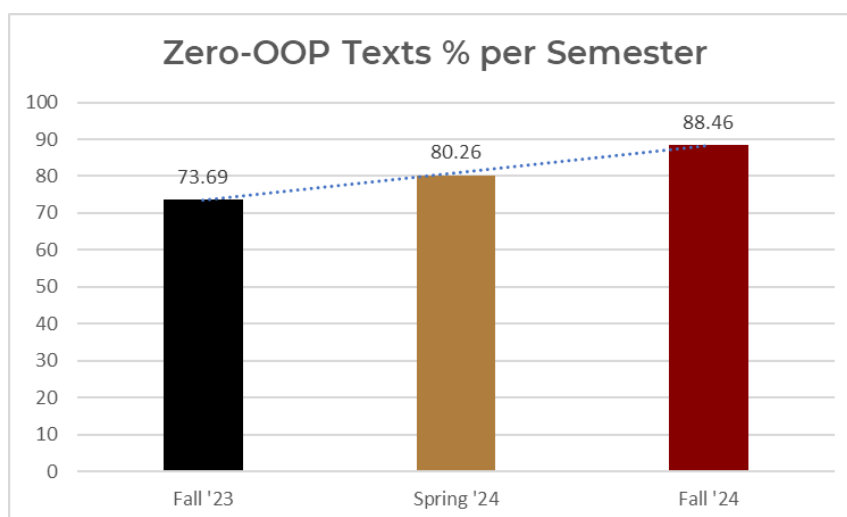Join us to elevate your digital teaching skills with Apple certification!

SIMMONS LIBRARY

Here's some exciting news about how our library is making getting the books you need easier (and cheaper!). So far this fall, our library's book checkouts are up! In the first three months of 2024, students checked out 91 print books, compared to 70 last year, and downloaded 290 eBooks. That's 381 books in total—an awesome number for a college our size!
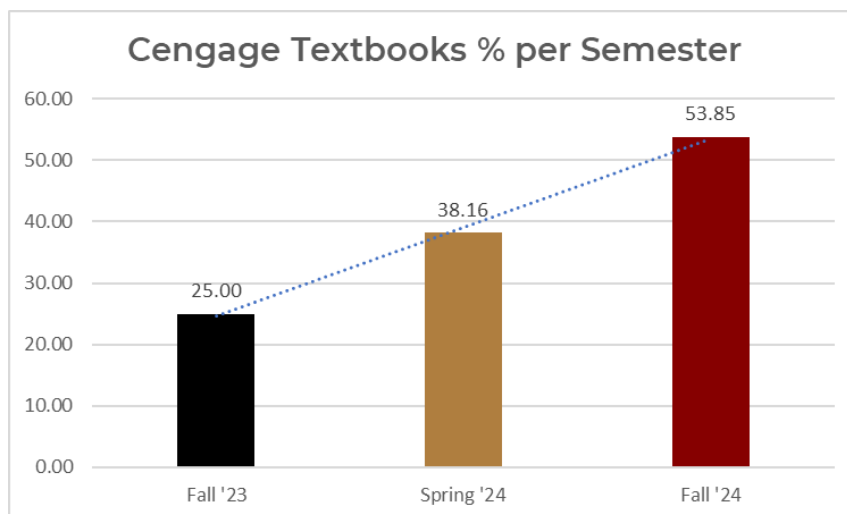
And there's more: our library is now part of a pilot program with JSTOR, giving us free access to a growing collection of eBooks for at least the next three years! This aligns with our commitment to keeping your book costs low (or even zero). Along with Cengage Unlimited and other eBook subscriptions, we're also promoting OER (Open Educational Resources) to ensure you have affordable access to textbooks.

In fact, zero out-of-pocket (OOP) options are on the rise here. This fall, 88.46% of classes used zero-OOP primary texts, and over half of those used Cengage Unlimited books. Not only does this save money, but it also means you have access to the material from Day One, so professors can dive right into teaching!

The one area where zero-OOP texts are still a challenge is Religious Studies, due to the unique focus on African American history, Black Church history, and social justice topics, which aren't widely available in typical eBook or OER options. We're working with Tennessee State University on an OER initiative for HBCUs to help solve this. This is a great example of the strength of HBCU partnerships to create resources that really meet our needs.

Keep an eye out for more updates, and happy studying! 📚

Zero-OOP Texts % per Semester

- Fall '23: 73.69
- Spring '24: 80.26
- Fall '24: 88.46

Cengage Textbooks % per Semester

	Value
Fall '23	25.00
Spring '24	38.16
Fall '24	53.85

Library traffic has stabilized following significant growth over the past two semesters (15.71 per day in Fall 2024; 17.23 in Spring 2024; 16.65 in Fall 2023; 11.18 in Spring 2023), while traffic to the library computer lab has increased mightily since the Writing Center took over operations of this space (3.55 per day in Fall 2024, up from 1.91 per day in Fall 2023). Library traffic is even steadier when judging by median attendance rather than average, accounting for large events driving up averages (15 for Fall 2024; 15.5 for Spring 2024; 14.5 for Fall 2023; 8 for Spring 2023). The library will continue to balance the desire to increase in-person traffic with providing convenient services that keep our commuter students from ever needing to visit the library in person.

The library continues its upward trajectory and seeks new ways to grow. A college's library is foundational to its success, and the Simmons Library is a solid rock on this foundation.

ONLINE LEARNING AT SIMMONS:

Your Canvas and Cengage Guide

Two Ways to Take Your Online Courses
At Simmons, we offer **Synchronous** and **Asynchronous** online classes.

- **Synchronous** classes meet online with your instructor on set days and times, so you'll have live interaction through Canvas.
- **Asynchronous** classes are more flexible—you work through materials at your own pace, which is perfect if you have a busy schedule.

Why Accelerated Courses Are Different
Online courses in accelerated formats move fast! Expect to read about 100 pages weekly and actively participate in discussions, group work, and projects. Each week requires 10-15 hours of commitment. Don't worry—technical support and your classmates are here to help!

Using Canvas: Our E-Learning Platform
Canvas is your go-to for assignments, grades, discussions, and course resources. Once you log in, you'll find tools like:

- **Cengage** for digital textbooks and activities
- **Pinpoint** for targeted learning resources
- **Canvas Studio** for video-based learning
- **TurnItIn** for assignment submissions and feedback
- **Grammarly** for writing help
- **LinkedIn Learning** for professional development

If you ever need help navigating Canvas, check out the **Canvas Guides** or **Canvas Chat Support** (24/7) at **877-356-9405**. You can also email the DTAL Center at **dtal@simmonscollegeky.edu**.

Using Cengage for Your E-Books and Activities
Many of your textbooks and assignments will be on **Cengage Unlimited**. Once you're set up in Canvas, you may need to create a Cengage account the first time. For help with Cengage, turn off pop-up blockers in your browser, or contact Cengage support anytime at **1-800-354-9706**. Here's a quick guide to using Cengage:

- Student Cengage Access: Student Guide
- Faculty Cengage Access: Faculty Guide

Stay engaged, ask questions, and reach out for support if you need it!

CANVAS (LMS)
Your Essential Guide to Online Resources

Ready to make the most of your online learning experience at Simmons? Here's everything you need to know for easy access to all the resources and support available to you!

1. Access All Your Platforms with Falcon Net
Falcon Net is your gateway to all things Simmons! Just go to the Simmons website, click on Falcon Net at the top right, and log in with your Simmons email and password to access:

- **Canvas** for course content
- **Outlook** for email
- **Falcon Portal** for grades and course evaluations
- **Library resources** and **Simmons Hub**

Make sure you save your log-in information securely so you can always stay connected!

2. Writing Center Hub
Need help with assignments? Visit the **Writing Center Hub** for online writing support: Writing Center Hub

3. Computer Labs and Study Spaces
Want a place to work on assignments, explore media, or study? We've got you covered:

- **Apple Lab (Steward Hall, Rm. 204)** – Ideal for students in the Black Film Institute, CIS Club, and creative tech enthusiasts. Experiment with Apple technology and media tools.
- **Tech Lab (Steward Hall, Rm. 304)** – Equipped with soundproof pods for focused work and charging stations for group projects.

4. Cengage Unlimited Textbooks
Most textbooks are available online through Cengage! Just check Canvas for your Cengage Unlimited materials. Need help?

- **Email:** CUIescalations@cengage.com
- **Call:** 1-800-354-9706, available anytime

5. Canvas Training and Support
Canvas has everything you need for a smooth learning experience! Before the semester starts, or anytime you need a refresher, check out the **Canvas Training Videos for Students** or use these resources:

- **Canvas Support Team (24/7):** 877-356-9405
- **Email DTAL** with questions at dtal@simmonscollegeky.edu

6. Tech Support

If you have any tech-related questions about Falcon Net or Simmons apps, reach out to our Helpdesk at dtal@simmonscollegeky.edu

Stay Connected: Download These Apps

Keep up with course updates and campus events with these apps:

- **Canvas Student App** (Red Canvas symbol)
- **Simmons Hub App** (Simmons logo)

You can download both from the **Apple Store** (iPhone) or **Play Store** (Android or iOS).

Got questions or need more info? Our Online Learners Reference Guide has all the details for your academic journey. Dive in, stay connected, and make this semester your best one yet at Simmons!

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:
Simmons Online Courses

What is Distance Learning? Who can take these classes?
Distance Learning offers flexible, fully-accredited online courses that are equivalent to on-campus classes. If you're eligible for regular classes, you can also enroll in Distance Learning. Check the Simmons Class Schedule for registration details.

How do these courses work? How will I interact with my instructor?
In online classes, you'll connect with instructors and classmates through Canvas. Your instructor posts lectures, assignments, and announcements, and you can respond with questions or comments.

Will I need to come to campus?
Nope! These classes are entirely online. However, you're always welcome to stop by campus for access to additional student services.

How are exams given?
Exams vary by course. Your instructor will provide the details in your syllabus.

What tech do I need to get started?
Here's what you need:

- Regular internet access
- A computer with an updated web browser like Chrome
- Simmons email account
- Word processing software (e.g., Microsoft Word)

If you're missing any tech, Chromebooks are available for checkout from the campus library, and computer labs are open for student use.

Can I take an online course if I don't have a personal computer?
Yes! Just make sure you'll have reliable access to a computer with internet, either at home or on campus.

What computer skills should I have?
Basic computer skills are a must! You'll need to know how to use word processing software, send and receive emails, and navigate the web. These skills help you focus on learning instead of troubleshooting.

How can I tell if online learning is right for me?
Success in online classes requires self-motivation and strong time management. If you're a good reader and writer and can stay on top of assignments without in-person meetings, Distance Learning could be a great fit.

Do I have to be online at specific times?
Some courses may have scheduled times for quizzes or discussions. Contact your instructor to find out.

What should I do if I need help?
If you run into any issues, reach out to your instructor first! They're available via email or phone and may also hold virtual office hours. You can also get academic support through Simmons' Falcons Academic Center of Excellence. Call **502-776-1443 ext-5902** for info about free tutoring.

What if I can't access my course online?
For technical issues, contact your instructor or submit a help ticket to the Simmons Instructional Technology Helpdesk: [Tech](#) [Assistance](#) [Form](#).

Course Textbooks and Cengage
Some classes use Cengage Unlimited for e-books and activities. Look for the Cengage link in Canvas to access materials, and make sure to complete only the activities assigned in your Canvas module.

Can online courses transfer to other schools?
It's best to confirm with the school you're transferring to. Simmons transcripts don't show if a course was online or on-campus.

What if I need to withdraw from my course?
If you need to drop a class, make sure to do so before the deadline to avoid any issues with your grade. You can find withdrawal deadlines in the Simmons Class Schedule.

Staying on Track with Your Catalog Requirements
You're allowed to follow the Catalog requirements for your first year as long as you stay continuously enrolled. If you take a break, you'll follow the requirements from the Catalog in effect when you return.

Got more questions? Don't hesitate to reach out! We're here to help you succeed.

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