

LEX 110
INTRODUCTION TO PARALEGAL STUDY

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Prerequisites: None

Corequisites: None

This course introduces the paralegal profession and the legal system. Topics include regulations and concepts, ethics, case analysis, legal reasoning, career opportunities, certification, professional organizations, and other related topics. Upon completion, students should be able to explain the role of the paralegal and identify the skills, knowledge, and ethics required of legal assistants. Course Hours Per Week: Class, 2. Semester Hours Credit, 2.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to:

- a. Identify skills and attributes of successful paralegals
- b. Identify potential employers of paralegals
- c. Identify areas of specialization of paralegals
- d. Explain the regulation and certification of legal professionals
- e. Recognize areas of ethical concerns
- f. Analyze and apply court opinions

OUTLINE OF INSTRUCTION:

- I. The paralegal profession
 - A. History of the profession
 - B. Paralegal education
 - C. Paralegal skills
 - 1) Organizational
 - 2) Analytical
 - 3) Computer
 - 4) Interpersonal
 - 5) Communication
 - D. Personal attributes
 - 1) Responsibility and reliability
 - 2) Commitment
 - 3) Objectivity
 - 4) Ability to keep confidences

- I. Careers in the legal community
 - A. Employers of paralegals
 - 1) Law firms
 - 2) Corporations and other business organizations
 - 3) Government agencies

- A. Paralegal specialties
 - 1) Litigation
 - 2) Criminal law
 - 3) Corporate law
 - 4) Bankruptcy
 - 5) Employment and labor law
 - 6) Estate planning and administration
 - 7) Intellectual property
 - 8) Environmental
 - 9) Real estate
 - 10) Family

I. The regulation of legal professionals

- A. The regulation of attorneys
 - 1) Licensing requirement
 - 2) Ethical codes and rules
- A. The regulation of paralegals
 - 1) The unauthorized practice of law
 - 2) The indirect regulation of paralegals
 - (a) Paralegal ethical codes
 - (b) Guilds for the utilization of paralegals
 - 3) The direct regulation of paralegals
- A. Certification: the Certified Legal Assistant examination
- B. Paralegal profession organizations

I. Ethics and professional responsibility

- A. Conflicts of Interest
- B. Confidentiality
 - 1) Attorney-client privilege
- C. The duty of competence
- D. The duty of diligence
- E. Billing practices
- F. Advertising and solicitation
- G. Reporting professional misconduct

I. Case Analysis and legal reasoning

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS AND MATERIAL:

To be announced.

STATEMENT FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

Students who require academic accommodations due to any physical, psychological, or learning disability are encouraged to request assistance from a disability services counselor within the first two weeks of class. Likewise, students who potentially require emergency medical attention due to any chronic health condition are encouraged to disclose this information to a disability services counselor within the first two weeks of class. Counselors can be contacted by calling 686-3652 or by visiting the Student Development Office in the Phail Wynn Jr. Student Services Center, room 1309.