

LEX 270
LAW OFFICE MANAGEMENT & TECHNOLOGY

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Prerequisites: None

Corequisites: None

This course provides an overview of law office management and organization. Topics include office forms, filing systems, billing/time keeping, computer systems, calendar systems, library administration, case management, office and personnel procedures, ethics, and technology. Upon completion, students should be able to set up and maintain various law office systems, monitor case progress, and supervise non-lawyer personnel. Course Hours Per Week: Class, 1. Lab, 2. Semester Hours Credit, 2.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

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

- a. Identify the basic principles of organization and management of law offices
- b. Provide information and alternative systems to resolve law office problems
- c. Establish and maintain client contacts
- d. Establish time and record keeping procedures for clients
- e. Monitor contacts for effective use of attorney's time

OUTLINE OF INSTRUCTION:

- I. Forms of practice
 - A. The sole practitioner
 - B. Partnerships and professional corporations
 - C. Financial management considerations
 - D. Distinction between clerical and supervisory personnel
- II. The systems approach to law office management
 - A. The advent of the legal assistant in law office management
 - B. The Law Research Institute Economics model of law office management
 - C. Timekeeping systems
 - 1) Manual systems
 - 2) Computer systems, including Timeslips
 - D. Fees
 - 1) The criteria of a "fair fee"
 - 2) Minimum fee schedules
 - 3) Economics of various timekeeping systems

- 4) Timekeeping techniques
 - 5) Ethical considerations and Bar rulings
- III. Billing practice and bookkeeping
 - A. Accounting in the modern law firm
 - B. Billing practices and billing cycles
 - C. Establishing a functional financial management system
 - D. Ethic dilemmas, e.g. embezzlement and reporting to authorities
 - IV. Client files
 - A. Opening a client file, indexing and cross checking for conflicts
 - B. Maintaining client files and establishing procedures for disposal
 - C. Establishing a retrieval system for client files
 - V. Calendar and monitor systems
 - A. Delays and deadlines by default
 - B. Purpose of monitoring system
 - C. Monitoring calendar system to avoid malpractice claims
 - VI. Library and retrieval systems
 - A. Library set up and maintenance
 - B. Use of on-line services and CD-ROM technology
 - VII. Professional development
 - A. Participation in local, state, and national organizations
 - B. Preparation of a law office procedures manual
 - C. Participation in continuing legal education
 - D. Education by reading and subscriptions
 - E. Maintaining notary qualifications

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK:

To be determined

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.