

LEX 280
ETHICS AND PROFESSIONALISM

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Prerequisites: LEX 110, LEX 120, LEX 130, LEX 131, LEX 140, LEX 141, LEX 150, LEX 210,
LEX 220, LEX 240, LEX 250, LEX 285

Corequisites: None

This course reinforces legal ethics and the role of the paralegal in a professional work environment. Topics include a review of ethics, employment opportunities, and search techniques; paralegal certification; and other related topics. Upon completion, students should be able to understand the role of a professional paralegal and identify authority that can properly be delegated by an attorney. This course is designed as a capstone course during which the student reviews the various skills acquired during the past three semesters in preparation for graduation and certification. Course Hours Per Week: Class, 2. Semester Hours Credit, 2.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

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

- a. Identify possible ethics violations and suggest solutions
- b. Plan a job search strategy
- c. Prepare for taking the CLA examination

OUTLINE OF INSTRUCTION:

- I. Legal ethics
 - A. The unauthorized practice of law
 - B. Conflicts of interest
 - C. Confidentiality
 - D. The Duty of Diligence/zealous representation
 - E. Financial duties/handling client funds
 - F. Advertising and solicitation
 - G. Reporting attorney and paralegal misconduct
- II. Paralegal certification: the certified legal assistant examination
 - A. Communications skills
 - B. Ethics
 - C. Human relations and interviewing techniques
 - D. Judgment and analytical abilities
 - E. Legal research
 - F. Legal terminology

- G. Substantive law
 - 1) American legal system
 - 2) Administrative law
 - 3) Bankruptcy
 - 4) Contracts
 - 5) Business organizations
 - 6) Criminal law
 - 7) Litigation
 - 8) Estate planning and probate
 - 9) Real Estate

III. Paralegal employment

- A. Locating potential employers
 - 1) Law firms
 - 2) Corporations and business organizations
 - 3) Government agencies
- B. Marketing your skills
 - 1) The application process
 - 2) The interview
 - 3) The follow-up letter
 - 4) Salary negotiation
- C. Advancement in your career
 - 1) Continuing legal education
 - 2) Professional organizations
 - (a.) NALA
 - (b.) NFPA
 - (c.) NCPA

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.