COURSE INFORMATION FORM

DISCIPLINE
Paralegal Practice

COURSE TITLE
Introduction to Paralegal Practice

CR.HR 3.0  LECT HR 3.0  LAB HR  CLIN/INTERN HR  CLOCK HR

CATALOG DESCRIPTION

PREREQUISITES
An introduction to the American legal system and the role of the paralegal. Students will examine the philosophical and historical background of law, legal context, organization, purpose and ethics. Paralegal career requirements, opportunities and responsibilities are presented. Systems approaches to law office management including billing practices, timekeeping and law office library systems are reviewed.

EXPECTED STUDENT OUTCOMES IN THE COURSE
Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Describe the American legal system (state and federal, civil and criminal).
2. Define a paralegal and explain the requirements to become a paralegal.
3. Summarize the role of the paralegal in our legal system.
4. Describe the responsibilities of the paralegal (professionally and ethically) in various work environments.
5. Demonstrate the ability to perform basic paralegal functions.

GENERAL EDUCATION OUTCOMES (ESO)
Specify which general education outcomes, if any, are substantially addressed by the course. Numbers in parentheses identify the Expected Student Outcomes linked to the specific General Education Outcome.

Outcomes (ESO)

1. Communication
   A. Listening and Speaking Skills
      6. Demonstrate basic communication delivery skills both vocally (volume, rate, articulation, variety) and non-verbally (posture, eye contact, use of face and hands) (1,2,3,4)
   C. Writing Skills
      4. Gather information, evaluate its credibility, analyze and synthesize sources (3, 4,5)

2. Critical Thinking
   B. Define, analyze, and evaluate information, materials and data
      2. Construct valid inferences from facts, credible sources, experiences, anecdotes, and values and belief systems (4,5)
PROGRAM-LEVEL OUTCOMES

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION PROGRAM OUTCOMES
Specify which Career and Technical program outcomes, if any, are substantially addressed by the course by completing the “Career and Technical Education template” to show the relationship between course and program outcomes to assessment measures.

The student will demonstrate:

1. Knowledge of what a paralegal is and what a paralegal does in the American legal system
2. Knowledge of what is required to become a paralegal, and obtain and maintain legal related employment
3. An ability to communicate clearly and cogently, both orally and in writing, with attorneys, staff, clients and third parties
4. Ability to perform basic paralegal functions

CLASS-LEVEL ASSESSMENT MEASURES
Student accomplishment of expected student outcomes will be assessed using the following measures. (Identify which measures are used to assess which outcomes.)

1. Examinations (1,2,3,4)
2. Written assignment (5)
3. Oral participation in class (5)
Individual instructors may order this outline as fits the needs of their individual courses. In addition, they may place more emphasis on some areas than on others. What is assured is that this particular list is covered in the course. Other topics may be added to a course as the instructor sees fit, and as time and interest allow. An *asterisk can be used to mark an item as optional.

I. The American Legal System
   A. Sources of Law
   B. Court system and procedural law (state and federal)
   C. Civil and Criminal Law
   D. Substantive Law (contracts, torts, real estate, etc).

II. Role of the Paralegal in the Legal System
    A. Historical development of paralegalism
    B. Paralegal employment and career opportunities, including specialties
    C. Professional Development, professional associations

III. Regulations for the Paralegal
    A. Definitions of paralegal/legal assistant
    B. Types of regulations
    C. Paralegal Education

IV. Management Concepts and Definitions
    A. Trends in Law Practices and Law Practice Management
    B. Management Applicable in various Legal Settings

V. Organization and Structure of Law Offices and other Legal Related Employment
    A. Types of Legal Related Employment
    B. Types of Management

VI. Roles and Responsibilities in the Law Office
    A. Lawyers
    B. Paralegals and other professionals
       1. Legal research
       2. Legal writing
    C. Administrative personnel
    D. Support Personnel

VII. Client Relationships

VIII. Law Office Accounting
    A. Timekeeping
       1. Billable hours
       2. Staff time
    B. Bookkeeping
    C. Trust Accounts
    D. Ethics in billing and Code of Professional Conduct

IX. Marketing
    A. Trends in Law Office Marketing
    B. Strategic Planning

X. Administrative Systems
    A. Personnel Systems
    B. Client Systems