

Tompkins Cortland Community College
Master Course Syllabus

Course Discipline and Number: PARA 101
Course Title: Introduction to Paralegalism

Year: 2018-2019
Credit Hours: 3

Attendance Policy: *To maintain good grades, regular attendance in class is necessary. Absence from class is considered a serious matter and absence never excuses a student from class work. It is the responsibility of all instructors to distribute reasonable attendance policies in writing during the first week of class. Students are required to comply with the attendance policy set by each of their instructors. Students are not penalized if they are unable to attend classes or participate in exams on particular days because of religious beliefs, in accordance with Chapter 161, Section 224-a of the Education Law of the State of New York. Students who plan to be absent from classroom activity for religious reasons should discuss the absence in advance with their instructors. See college catalog for more information.*

Services for Students with Disabilities: *It is the College's policy to provide, on an individual basis, appropriate academic adjustments for students with disabilities, which may affect their ability to fully participate in program or course activities or to meet course requirements. Students with disabilities should contact the Coordinator of Access and Equity Services, to discuss their particular need for accommodations. All course materials are available in alternate formats upon request.*

Course Description

An examination of the role of paralegals in the legal system, with a particular emphasis on the New York State court system. Topics studied include an overview of the court system and administrative agencies, legal terminology, law office management, and ethical and professional practice standards. Prerequisites: RDNG 116 if required by placement testing; prior completion or concurrent enrollment in ENGL 100. 3 Cr. (3 Lec.) Fall and spring semesters.

Course Context/Audience

This course is a required course for the Paralegal AAS Degree. It is the first class in the sequence of Paralegal classes. It is also a prerequisite for all 200 level Paralegal classes. This course introduces a student to the legal system and to the roles of lawyers and paralegals. Further, this course may be of interest to anyone with an interest in law including pre-law students, criminal justice students and the like.

Basic Skills/Entry Level Expectations

Writing: WC College level writing skills are required. See course co-requisites or pre-requisites.

Math: M0 Course requires very little or no math.

Reading: R4 Before taking this course, students must satisfactorily complete RDNG 116 or have assessment indicating that no reading course was required.

Course Goals

A student will develop an ability to recognize legal problems, distinguish between relevant and irrelevant information in legal problem situations, apply legal concepts and rules to unfamiliar as well as familiar situations, communicate legal concepts and procedure in written form and critically analyze other legal information.

Course Objectives/Topics

Objective/Topic	% Course
Introduction to Paralegal	7%

Lawyers	7%
Ethics	7%
Sources of Law: Cases	7%
Sources of Law: Legislation	7%
Trial and Appellate Courts	7%
State and Federal Courts	7%
Procedure in Civil Cases	7%
The Law of Criminal Procedure	7%
Criminal Law	7%
Torts and Personal Injury	7%
Contracts and Commercial Law	7%
The Law of Property	7%
Family Law	7%
Administrative Law/ Paralegals in the Law Office	7%

General Education Goals - Critical Thinking & Social/Global Awareness

CRITICAL THINKING OUTCOMES	HOW DOES THE COURSE ADDRESS THE OUTCOMES (Include required or recommended instructional resources, strategies, learning activities, assignments, etc., that must or could be used to address the goal/outcomes)
<p>Students will be able to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ develop meaningful questions to address problems or issues. ➤ gather, interpret, and evaluate relevant sources of information. ➤ reach informed conclusions and solutions. ➤ consider analytically the viewpoints of self and others. 	<p>Students need to develop critical thinking in order to understand the legal issues rose in the course. These issues include the functioning of the legal system, how the legal system relates to the function of government, and how it relates to society. By their nature, legal issues present opposing points of view, each backed by different legal arguments, and often legal precedents, and responses from the class and the instruction, assignment and exam completion, review of instructor feedback on submissions. Reading module material and the textbook, participation in discussions with students need to be able to review relevant information and understand how conclusions are drawn.</p>
SOCIAL/GLOBAL AWARENESS OUTCOMES	HOW DOES THE COURSE ADDRESS THE OUTCOMES (Include required or recommended instructional resources, strategies, learning activities, assignments, etc., that must or could be used to address the goal/outcomes)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Students will begin to understand how their lives are shaped by the complex world in which they live. ➤ Students will understand that their actions have social, economic and environmental consequences. 	<p>Students will learn about the various ways the legal system impacts almost every facet of society. In particular, students recognize the impact of their actions on society and the social consequences of certain behaviors in their study of topics such as civil law, criminal law, torts, contracts, commercial law, property law, family law and administrative law.</p> <p>Reading module material and the textbook, participation in discussions with responses from the class and the instruction, assignment and exam completion, review of instructor feedback on submissions.</p>

Instructional Methods

Methods to teach this class include written lecture, reading assignments, which include reading materials in the class, from the text and from outside sources, and weekly assignments and periodic exams. Weekly discussions are conducted throughout the semester.

Methods of Assessment/Evaluation

Method	% Course Grade
Weekly assignments (typically 14 of 15)	50%
Four exams	30%
Participation in module discussions, Current Events discussions, asking questions, and other Web interaction	20%

Text(s)

(Required)

Foundations of Law-Cases Commentary and Ethics, Pyle, 5th Edition, © 2011 West Pub.

(Optional)

The New York Paralegal, Statsky & Sarachan, 1st Ed., © 2011

Black's Law Dictionary, West, 4th, 2011

Bibliography

The Basics of Paralegal Studies, Goodrich, 4rd Edition, © 2003 Prentice Hall.

West's Paralegal Today-The Legal Team at Work Miller & Urisko, 6th edition, © 2000.

Paralegal Studies- An Introduction Jordan, West Pub., © 2014.

A Practical Introduction to Paralegal Studies, Bouchoux, 2nd Ed., Wolters Kluwer, © 2008

Dictionary of Legal Terms, Gifis, Barron's, 4th Edition, 2008

Other Learning Resources

Audiovisual No resources specified
Electronic No resources specified
Other Internet, WESTLAW, LEXIS