**PLS 65 Course Outline as of Fall 2019**

# CATALOG INFORMATION

Dept and Nbr: PLS 65                    Title: TECHNOLOGY IN LAW OFFICE
Full Title: Technology in the Law Office: Practice, Procedures & Ethics
Last Reviewed: 5/14/2018

| **Units** | | **Course Hours per Week** | | **Nbr of Weeks** | **Course Hours Total** | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Maximum | 3.00 | Lecture Scheduled | 3.00 | 17.5 | Lecture Scheduled | 52.50 |
| Minimum | 3.00 | Lab Scheduled | 0 | 6 | Lab Scheduled | 0 |
| | | Contact DHR | 0 | | Contact DHR | 0 |
| | | Contact Total | 3.00 | | Contact Total | 52.50 |
| | | Non-contact DHR | 0 | | Non-contact DHR | 0 |

Total Out of Class Hours: 105.00                    Total Student Learning Hours: 157.50

Title 5 Category:  AA Degree Applicable
Grading:              Grade Only
Repeatability:     00 - Two Repeats if Grade was D, F, NC, or NP
Also Listed As:
Formerly:

**Catalog Description:**
This course acquaints students with the various types of legal technology used in a modern-day law office, including software and applications for word processing, spreadsheet and database creation, case management, billing and time-keeping, and trial preparation.

**Prerequisites/Corequisites:**
Course completion or current enrollment in PLS 50 and PLS 51

**Recommended Preparation:**


**Limits on Enrollment:**


**Schedule of Classes Information:**
Description: This course acquaints students with the various types of legal technology used in a modern-day law office, including software and applications for word processing, spreadsheet and database creation, case management, billing and time-keeping, and trial preparation. (Grade Only)
Prerequisites/Corequisites: Course completion or current enrollment in PLS 50 and PLS 51
Recommended:

Limits on Enrollment:
Transfer Credit: CSU;
Repeatability: Two Repeats if Grade was D, F, NC, or NP

## ARTICULATION, MAJOR, and CERTIFICATION INFORMATION:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **AS Degree:** | **Area** | Effective: | Inactive: |
| **CSU GE:** | **Transfer Area** | Effective: | Inactive: |
| **IGETC:** | **Transfer Area** | Effective: | Inactive: |

**CSU Transfer:** Transferable    Effective:    Spring 2012    Inactive:

**UC Transfer:**    Effective:    Inactive:

**CID:**

**Certificate/Major Applicable:**
Major Applicable Course

## COURSE CONTENT

**Student Learning Outcomes:**
At the conclusion of this course, the student should be able to:
1. Recognize major types of legal technology applications in use in the modern law office.
2. Employ one or more of the applications covered to prepare legal documents, conduct legal research, manage case information and litigation files.
3. Discuss relevant topics important to technology in the legal field, conduct research, analyze applications for specific uses, and present their work to a group.

**Objectives:**
At the conclusion of this course, the student should be able to:
1. Identify basic computer terminology frequently used in legal organizations and communicate effectively in class discussions or in written homework assignments about law office technology.
2. Critically analyze and distinguish advantages and disadvantages, including ethical considerations, in any new and emerging technologies influencing the practice of law, with particular emphasis on the growth of hand-held devices and issues unique to mobile law office computing.
3. Demonstrate understanding of, and ability to use, various technologies common in the law office environment, including document processing, spreadsheets, case management, time-keeping and billing, pre-trial and trial applications, and presentation software for litigation support.
4. Recognize significant issues for paralegals in e-discovery and/or the electronic storage of information (ESI), including the paralegal's role in fact and evidence-gathering procedures, meeting disclosure requirements, safeguarding and retention of records and sanctions for noncompliance.
5. Incorporate electronic legal research and e-discovery into a litigation plan.

**Topics and Scope:**

I. Technology Used in Law Offices
    A. Introduction to types of legal technology
    B. Introduction to terminology used with legal technology
    C. Future trends in legal technology, including virtual law offices and cloud computing
II. Ethical Issues in Using Legal Technology
    A. Confidentiality and privilege
    B. Work product
    C. Conflicts of interest
    D. Competency issues
    E. Other legal duties
    F. Recent developments, rules and future trends affecting paralegals
III. Specific Applications of Technology in Law Offices
    A. Computers, hardware, other devices
    B. Operating systems
IV. Networks and Cyber-security Issues
    A. Different types of networks
    B. Definition of cyber-crime
    C. Viruses, malware, spyware and more
    D. Backing up duties
    E. Special issues and concerns for paralegals
V. The Internet
    A. Fundamentals
    B. Email
    C. Definition of metadata
    D. Online sharing services, social networking and social media
    E. Special issues and concerns for paralegals
VI. Document Assembly and Processing
    A. Types of programs and software
    B. Manual v. electronic systems
    C. The paralegal's responsibility in document management
VII. Spreadsheets and Database Software
    A. Types of programs and software
    B. Law office applications
    C. Best practices for paralegals
VIII. Office and Case Management Software
    A. Office management software systems
    B. Case management software systems
IX. Law Practice Management
    A. Electronic calendaring
    B. Time-keeping and billing
    C. Paralegal responsibility and ethics
X. Litigation Support Software
    A. Types of programs and software
    B. Pracitcal applications and analysis
    C. What to expect as a paralegal
XI. Trial Preparation and Presentation Software
    A. Types of programs and software
    B. Practical applications and analysis
    C. What to expect as a paralegal
XII. Fundamentals of Online Legal Research
    A. Legal research
    B. Factual research

C. Methods of conducting online research
D. Westlaw, Lexis Nexis
E. Search engines and how they work
F. Updating and validating online research
G. Special issues and concerns for paralegals

XIII. The Paperless Office
A. Electronic filing, storage, and retrieval of documents (ESI)
B. Virtual law offices and cloud computing applications
    1. What is a virtual law office
    2. What does it mean to compute in the clouds
C. Special issues and concerns for virtual paralegals

XIV. Fundamentals of E-Discovery
A. Purpose of discovery
B. Conducting discovery in a technological age
C. Amendments to Federal Rules of Civil Procedure
D. Storage and retention issues, including spoliation of evidence
E. Court intervention and sanctions
F. Role of the paralegal in e-discovery as fact-gatherer and document reviewer

XV. The Electronic Courtroom
A. Types of technology used
B. Procedures
C. Role of the paralegal in assisting attorney to present an electronic case

## Assignment:

1. Reading in textbook and other materials of approximately 25 pages per week
2. Group work, discussion and projects examining the types of legal technology available today and implement related terminology
3. Homework problems and case studies involving utilization of technology applications and software provided to acquire hands-on training in the context of specific issues and problems typical in a law office
4. Legal research on the Internet, including finding primary and secondary authorities as well as validating the research
5. Final project and/or presentation focusing on topics of current importance in the field of legal technology such as ethics and electronic storage of information issues, e-discovery, litigation and case management
6. Midterm and/or 4-6 quizzes

## Methods of Evaluation/Basis of Grade:

**Writing:** Assessment tools that demonstrate writing skills and/or require students to select, organize and explain ideas in writing.

| Homework problems and case studies | Writing 10 - 20% |
|---|---|

**Problem Solving:** Assessment tools, other than exams, that demonstrate competence in computational or non-computational problem solving skills.

| Homework assignments and group work; research | Problem solving 20 - 30% |
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**Skill Demonstrations:** All skill-based and physical demonstrations used for assessment purposes including skill performance exams.

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| Group work, presentations and projects | Skill Demonstrations 30 - 40% |

**Exams:** All forms of formal testing, other than skill performance exams.

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| Midterm and/or quizzes | Exams 10 - 20% |

**Other:** Includes any assessment tools that do not logically fit into the above categories.

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| Attendance and participation | Other Category 5 - 10% |

**Representative Textbooks and Materials:**
Using Computers in the Law Office. 8th ed. Cornick, Matthew. Cengage. 2019
Navigating Legal Research & Technology: Quick Reference Guide to the 1,500 Most Common Legal Questions About Traditional and Online Legal Research. Fishman, Joel and Dittakavi, Rao. Bridge Publishing Group 2010 (classic)
Instructor prepared materials