

**PLS 56 Course Outline as of Fall 2024****CATALOG INFORMATION**

Dept and Nbr: PLS 56 Title: CIVIL LIT/DISCOVERY PROC  
 Full Title: Civil Litigation and Discovery Practices and Procedures  
 Last Reviewed: 11/22/2021

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 or P/NP

Repeatability: 00 - Two Repeats if Grade was D, F, NC, or NP

Also Listed As:

Formerly:

**Catalog Description:**

This course is intended for students interested in becoming legal secretaries or paralegals, as well as individuals interested in learning the practices and procedures for commencing a civil lawsuit and preparing civil discovery (the most important component of a lawsuit). The students will learn law office secretarial procedures and preparation of legal documents, including, without limitation: a complaint; summons; answer; and proof of service. Different discovery methods will also be explored, including using interrogatories, production of documents, subpoenas, depositions, preparation, processing, and production of discovery documents and responses. Legal calendaring requirements and time frames, trial court delay reduction requirements, local rules of court, service of process, and dismissal of a lawsuit will also be covered.

**Prerequisites/Corequisites:****Recommended Preparation:**

Eligibility for ENGL 100 OR EMLS 100 (formerly ESL 100) and Course Completion of CS 60.11A

**Limits on Enrollment:**

## **Schedule of Classes Information:**

Description: This course is intended for students interested in becoming legal secretaries or paralegals, as well as individuals interested in learning the practices and procedures for commencing a civil lawsuit and preparing civil discovery (the most important component of a lawsuit). The students will learn law office secretarial procedures and preparation of legal documents, including, without limitation: a complaint; summons; answer; and proof of service. Different discovery methods will also be explored, including using interrogatories, production of documents, subpoenas, depositions, preparation, processing, and production of discovery documents and responses. Legal calendaring requirements and time frames, trial court delay reduction requirements, local rules of court, service of process, and dismissal of a lawsuit will also be covered. (Grade or P/NP)

Prerequisites/Corequisites:

Recommended: Eligibility for ENGL 100 OR EMLS 100 (formerly ESL 100) and Course Completion of CS 60.11A

Limits on Enrollment:

Transfer Credit: CSU;

Repeatability: Two Repeats if Grade was D, F, NC, or NP

## **ARTICULATION, MAJOR, and CERTIFICATION INFORMATION:**

<b>AS Degree:</b>	<b>Area</b>	Effective:	Inactive:
<b>CSU GE:</b>	<b>Transfer Area</b>	Effective:	Inactive:

<b>IGETC:</b>	<b>Transfer Area</b>	Effective:	Inactive:
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<b>CSU Transfer:</b> Transferable	Effective:	Fall 2022	Inactive:
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<b>UC Transfer:</b>	Effective:	Inactive:
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**CID:**

**Certificate/Major Applicable:**

Both Certificate and Major Applicable

## **COURSE CONTENT**

### **Student Learning Outcomes:**

At the conclusion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Explain the procedures for commencing a civil lawsuit.
2. Discuss legal calendaring, local rules of court, and service of process.
3. Create and process legal documents to commence a lawsuit.
4. Discuss the procedures and prepare discovery documents.

### **Objectives:**

At the conclusion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Define and analyze the participants and parties to a lawsuit and identify methods for obtaining and gathering information prior to commencement of a lawsuit.
2. Compare and differentiate between a civil case, criminal case, and family law case.
3. Demonstrate use of legal software and special word processing features to prepare legal documents including a complaint, summons, answer, and proof of service.
4. Manage court process from filing a lawsuit to obtaining a judgment or dismissal.

4. Explain the various methods of serving a lawsuit, including publication.
5. Calculate statutory time periods according to the requirements for legal calendaring, including time frames for service of discovery documents and responses.
6. Generate documents required by Sonoma County for the trial court delay reduction program.
7. Outline and cite rules of the Sonoma County Courts relating to civil litigation.
8. Examine and analyze the purpose of discovery and interpret the Discovery Act in the Code of Civil Procedure.
9. Compare the various discovery documents and their purposes and examine the legal requirements of each discovery document according to California law.

## **Topics and Scope:**

- I. Brief Comparison of Civil, Criminal, and Family Law Cases
- II. Pre-lawsuit Client Intake and Procedure
- III. Overview of Calendaring Considerations
- IV. Initial Informal Discovery from Client, Professionals, and Witnesses
- V. Civil Litigation Process from Commencement of a Lawsuit to Judgment or Dismissal
- VI. Terminology relative to Civil Litigation and Discovery
- VII. Methods of Service of Process
- VIII. Preparation of Civil Litigation Legal Documents using Legal Software and Special Word Processing Features
  - A. Summons
  - B. Complaint
  - C. Answer
  - D. Cross-Complaint
  - E. Proof of Service
  - F. Notice of Motion
  - G. Memorandum of Points and Authorities
  - H. Verification
- IX. Overview of Trial Court Delay Reduction Requirements
- X. Overview of Sonoma County Local Rules relating to Civil Litigation
- XII. Service of Documents other than Summons and Complaint
- XIII. Discover Purpose and Discovery Act in Code of Civil Procedure
- XIV. Discovery Methods (under the Discovery Act)
  - A. Interrogatories
  - B. Depositions
  - C. Demand for inspection and production of documents
  - D. Request for admissions
  - E. Demand for physical or mental examinations
  - F. Compliance with statutory laws and timelines
- XV. Calendaring Considerations
  - A. Time frames
  - B. Calendaring requirements
- XVI. Responses to Discovery Demands
- XVII. Discovery Documents
  - A. Interrogatories
  - B. Production of documents
  - C. Subpoenas
  - D. Notice of Taking Depositions
- XVIII. Response Document
  - A. Answers to interrogatories and requests for admission
  - B. Response to request for production of documents

## Assignment:

1. Read textbook and outside resources of approximately 30 pages per week
2. Use simulated case to work through civil proceedings and discovery procedures
3. Practice calendaring, including tickle dates
4. Prepare written legal documents, including discovery documents using word processing software
5. Create, organize, and index case files
6. Three to five 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.

Drafts of legal and discovery documents using word processing software

Writing  
10 - 20%

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

Practice calendaring, including tickle dates; use simulated case to work through civil proceedings and discovery procedures

Problem solving  
40 - 50%

**Skill Demonstrations:** All skill-based and physical demonstrations used for assessment purposes including skill performance exams.

Create, organize, and index case files

Skill Demonstrations  
20 - 30%

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

Quizzes

Exams  
20 - 30%

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

None

Other Category  
0 - 0%

## Representative Textbooks and Materials:

Litigation by the Numbers. Soren, Julie. Lawdable Press. 2021