PLS 50 Course Outline as of Fall 2022

CATALOG INFORMATION

Dept and Nbr: PLS 50 Title: INTRO- PARALEGAL STUDIES
Full Title: Introduction to Paralegal Studies
Last Reviewed: 2/28/2022

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 is the required initial course for students in the Paralegal program. Students will receive an introduction to the legal field, the role of the paralegal, an overview of the legal system, ethics, a survey of procedural law, and a survey of selected substantive areas of the law including contracts, torts, property, and business.

Prerequisites/Corequisites:

Recommended Preparation:
Eligibility for ENGL 100 or ESL 100

Limits on Enrollment:

Schedule of Classes Information:
Description: This is the required initial course for students in the Paralegal program. Students will receive an introduction to the legal field, the role of the paralegal, an overview of the legal system, ethics, a survey of procedural law, and a survey of selected substantive areas of the law including contracts, torts, property, and business. (Grade Only)
Prerequisites/Corequisites:

Recommended: Eligibility for ENGL 100 or ESL 100
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 2010	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. Compare and contrast the professional and ethical responsibilities and duties of attorneys and paralegals
2. Discuss the difference between substantive and procedural law, and analyze the different areas of law, including tort, contract law, and criminal law
3. Diagram the state and federal court systems

Objectives:
At the conclusion of this course, the student should be able to:
1. Demonstrate how legal cases move through the court systems
2. Explain the differences between tort, contract, and criminal law
3. Prepare case briefs
4. Perform preliminary case analysis
5. Utilize correct legal terminology in document preparation
6. Develop checklists as a "best practice" for tracking document preparation

Topics and Scope:

I. Historical Basis of American Law
II. The Modern Legal System
    A. Sources of law
    B. Hierarchy of law
III. The Courts
    A. Purpose and effect of judicial law
    B. Structure of the judicial system
    C. Trial and appellate courts
    D. Federal court system

- E. Special federal courts
- F. California court system

IV. Legislation - State and Federal
- A. Legislation process
- B. Bills
- C. Constitutional amendments
- D. Publication of legislation

V. Executive Branch and Administrative Authority
- A. Powers and authority of the President
- B. Role of the administrative agency
- C. Agencies today
- D. Operation and authority of administrative agencies

VI. Substantive and Procedural Issues
- A. Criminal law versus civil law
- B. Substantive law
- C. Procedural law

VII. Jurisdiction and Venue
- A. Types of jurisdiction
- B. Federal jurisdiction
- C. Other jurisdictional considerations
- D. Corporations
- E. Establishing jurisdiction

VIII. Contract Law
- A. Elements of a valid contract
- B. Third party involvement in contracts
- C. Problems in creating or enforcing contracts
- D. Defenses to allegations of breach of contract
- E. Remedies for breach of contract

IX. Property Law
- A. Real property
- B. Rights and duties of ownership
- C. Types of ownership
- D. Condominiums
- E. Easements
- F. Fixtures
- G. Personal property
- H. Abandoned property
- I. Bailment
- J. Actions to recover property or its value

X. Torts
- A. Development of tort law
- B. Terminology of torts
- C. Increase of tort claims
- D. Negligence
- E. Strict liability
- F. International torts
- G. Products liability
- H. Employment and torts
- I. Tort defenses
- J. Damages in tort actions

XI. Business Law
- A. The law of agency

B. Sole proprietorships
C. Partnerships
D. Limited partnerships
E. Corporations
F. Other business entities

XII. Estate and Probate
A. Intestate succession
B. Testate succession
C. Requirements of a valid will
D. Will contests
E. Probate of estates
F. Estate planning
G. Trust Administration

XIII. Criminal Law
A. Definitions and categories of crime
B. Parties to crime
C. Elements of serious crimes
D. Punishment
E. White collar crime
F. Internet crime
G. Defenses to charges of criminal conduct
H. The insanity defense

XIV. Criminal Procedure
A. Criminal procedure and the constitution
B. Stages of criminal procedure
C. Arrest and interrogation
D. Bail
E. Preliminary hearing and arraignment
F. Trial, appeal, and sentencing

XV. Legal and Professional Ethical Obligations
A. The judge
B. The attorney
C. The paralegal
D. Support personnel

XVI. Case Analysis and Briefing
A. Preliminary case analysis
B. Briefing technique and terminology
C. Preparing briefs
D. Document preparation checklist

Assignment:

1. Read textbook and outside sources of approximately 50 pages per week.
2. Read, study and memorize legal terminology
3. Participate in weekly discussions based on reading assignments.
4. Research procedural and substantive law and prepare written case briefs.
5. Quizzes, midterm, and final exam.

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.

Written case briefs	Writing 30 - 40%

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

Legal terminology homework. Research procedural and substantive law.	Problem solving 20 - 30%

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

None	Skill Demonstrations 0 - 0%

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

Quizzes, midterm, and final exam.	Exams 20 - 30%

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

Attendance and participation	Other Category 20 - 30%

Representative Textbooks and Materials:
Introduction to Law for Paralegals: A Critical Thinking Approach. 7th Ed. Katherine Currier and Thomas Eimermann. Aspen Publishing. 2019
Introduction of Law for Paralegals. Beth Wiston-Dunham. Cengage Learning. 2002 (classic)