

Course Syllabus

[Jump to Today](#)

 Edit

Course PLS53, Civil Procedure - Pleadings Section 0708 - Course Syllabus

Course Description

An in-depth examination of all phases of civil procedure, from the initial stages of planning and preparing the civil lawsuit to the trial, is presented in this course. Students draft typical pleadings, including complaints, motions, demurrers, answers and cross-complaints from factual situations presented in class. Common means of terminating a suit without trial, such as summary judgments, defaults, dismissals and settlement are also discussed.

Student Learning Outcomes

Student Learning Outcomes:

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

1. Distinguish between form and drafted pleadings.
2. Perform litigation drafting tasks that are typically assigned to paralegals.
3. Manage litigation files.

Topics and Scope (Not Necessarily in this Order / Not all Topics will be Covered)

1. Introduction to Pleadings.
 - a. Types of pleadings
 - b. Causes of action
 - c. Real parties in interest
 - d. Capacity to bring suit
 - e. Litigation file management
2. Complaints and Cross Complaints
 - a. Form pleadings and drafted pleadings
 - b. Format
 - c. Drafting allegations
 - d. Pleading devices
 - e. The prayer
 - f. Verification

- g. Service of summons
 - h. Pleading in federal courts
 - i. Drafting tips
3. Answering the Complaint
 - a. Answering a Superior Court complaint
 - b. Denials to Superior Court complaints
 - c. Affirmative defenses
 - d. Drafting affirmative defenses
 - e. Forms of answers in Superior Court
 - f. Answering a Federal Court complaint
 4. Attacking the Pleadings
 - a. Strategies
 - b. Demurrers and motions of judgment on the pleadings
 - c. Motions to strike
 - d. Attacking the pleadings in Federal Court
 5. Amending the Pleadings
 - a. Amending Superior Court pleadings
 - b. Amending by right
 - c. Amending by leave of court
 - d. Considerations of the court granting leave to amend
 - e. Amending pleadings in Federal Court
 6. Calendaring Pleadings
 - a. Trial timelines
 - b. Calendaring in Superior Court
 - c. State and local rules affecting calendaring
 - d. Statutes of Limitations
 - e. Deadlines for responses to pleadings
 - f. Dismissal statutes
 - g. Calendaring in Federal Court
 - h. California's Trial Delay Reduction Act
 7. Law and Motion
 - a. General format rules
 - b. Motion structure and elements
 - c. Service and filing
 - d. Opposing motions
 - e. Tentative rulings
 - f. Law and motion hearings
 - g. Orders of the court
 - h. Sanctions
 - i. Ex parte motions

- j. Settlement conferences
 - k. Defaults
8. Summary Judgment
- a. Grounds for summary judgment
 - b. Summary adjudication
 - c. Pleading in the alternative
 - d. Advantages and disadvantages of summary judgment motions
 - e. Form and format of motion
 - f. Timing limitations
 - g. Notice requirements
 - h. Memorandum of Points and Authorities
 - i. Supporting evidence
 - j. Separate Statement of Undisputed Fact
 - k. Opposing Motions for Summary Judgment and Summary Adjudication
 - l. Orders
9. Trial Setting Procedures
10. Trial Preparation
- a. Trial binder and pre-trial checklist
 - b. Trial strategy outline
 - c. Witness lists
11. Judgments and Post-Trial Motions
- a. Motions for fees and costs
 - b. Motion for judgment notwithstanding the verdict
 - c. Motion for new trial and to vacate the judgment
 - d. Form and format of post-trial motions
 - e. Post-trial motions in Federal Court
12. Provisional Remedies and Extraordinary Writs
- a. Injunctions, receiverships, and attachments
 - b. Writ of Mandamus
 - c. Writ of Certiorari

Class Meetings

The class meets weekly on Tuesdays via Zoom (6pm-9pm). This is a hybrid course. Class assignments will be posted weekly in module format on Canvas. Students will upload their work to Canvas and grades will be posted via Canvas.

Instructor Contact

Laura D. Pedicini

Email: lpedicini@santarosa.edu

Phone: (530) 330-5907 - You may text me at this number. I am happy to arrange calls with students as needed, but please do not call me without first texting or emailing me in advance to set up a mutually convenient time for a call.

Office Hours: As needed (to be arranged)

I typically respond to emails within 24 hours on weekdays and 48 hours on weekends and holidays.

Course Web Site

Students will use the Canvas course web site for assignment instructions, submitting assignments, viewing classmate's work, sharing resources, and viewing grades.

Textbook

Fundamentals of California Litigation for Paralegals, Eighth Ed., ISBN: 979-8-8890-6275-2

Required Software

You will need the following software for this course. **[If linking to PDF or Word documents, QuickTime or Flash videos, put in a link to the helper applications in your Syllabus or Getting Started section of your course materials.]**

- [Adobe Reader](http://get.adobe.com/reader/)  [\(http://get.adobe.com/reader/\)](http://get.adobe.com/reader/)
- [Open Office](https://www.openoffice.org/download/index.html)  [\(https://www.openoffice.org/download/index.html\)](https://www.openoffice.org/download/index.html)

Important Dates

Date Class Begins: 8/19/25

Date Class Ends: 12/9/25

Last Day Drop for Refund: 8/31/25

Last Day Add w/o add code: 8/24/25

Last Day Drop w/o W: 9/7/25

Last Day Add with add code: 9/7/25

Last Day Drop with W: 11/16/25

Date Midterm Roster: 10/20/25-11/16/25

Date Final Exam: 12/16/25

Date Final Grades Due: 12:00 AM on 1/2/26

Dropping the Class

If you decide to discontinue this course, it is your responsibility to officially drop it to avoid getting no refund (after 10% of course length), a W symbol (after 20%), or a grade (after 60%). Also, for several consecutive, unexplained absences, the instructor may drop a student.

Instructor Announcements and Q&A Forum

The instructor will post announcements on the “Instructor Announcements” page in Canvas throughout the semester. Canvas notifies students according to their preferred Notification Preferences as soon as the instructor creates an Announcement. A “Q&A Forum” is also on Canvas to ask for assistance of your classmates or of instructor.

It is your responsibility to ensure that SRJC has your current contact information to receive announcements. I will only post announcements if something important is being communicated; therefore, it is very important that you are signed up at a valid address to timely receive them. If information about an assignment is sent via an announcement and you don't complete the work because you didn't receive the announcement, you will not receive credit. I apologize if this directive sounds "harsh," but I need to be able to trust that my announcements will reach you and that you will prioritize their content.

Attendance

Students who fail to attend the first class (face-to-face courses) or do not log-in to an online class after the second day of the semester will be dropped from the class. It is strongly advised that if you need to miss more than one class/homework deadline in a row that you contact me to avoid being dropped from the class.

Late Policy

Assignments will typically be due each Tuesday by midnight, with a new course module posting each Tuesday - typically by noon. There may be exceptions; for example, assignments that are due in two weeks. A late submission will receive a 20% penalty. Submissions more than one week late are not accepted without prior arrangement. Late work will not be graded unless student sends instructor an email with URL for late work.

Exams

There will be occasional quizzes and a final exam. There will also be writing-focused projects that will be given as much value as quizzes. The material comes from the textbook, class lectures and supplemental

materials. If any exam is missed, a zero will be recorded as the score. It is your responsibility to take the online exams by the due date.

Grading Policy

Visit the “Grades” in Canvas to keep track of your grades. I grade [**once a week**] and post grades and comments on the online Canvas gradebook.

Grades will be assigned as follows:

A	90%	90 points or more
B	80%	80 to 89 points
C	70%	70 to 79 points
D	60%	60 to 69 points

Standards of Conduct

Students who register in SRJC classes are required to abide by the SRJC Student Conduct Standards. Violation of the Standards is basis for referral to the Vice President of Student Services or dismissal from class or from the College. See the [Student Code of Conduct page. \(https://student-conduct.santarosa.edu/\)](https://student-conduct.santarosa.edu/)

Collaborating on or copying of tests or homework in whole or in part will be considered an act of academic dishonesty and result in a grade of 0 for that test or assignment. I encourage students to share information and ideas, but not their work. See these links on Plagiarism:

[SRJC Writing Center Lessons on avoiding plagiarism](http://srjcestaff.santarosa.edu/~jroyal/research/plagiarism/plagiarism.html)

[\(http://srjcestaff.santarosa.edu/~jroyal/research/plagiarism/plagiarism.html\)](http://srjcestaff.santarosa.edu/~jroyal/research/plagiarism/plagiarism.html)

[SRJC's policy on Academic Integrity. ↗\(http://www.boarddocs.com/ca/santarosa/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=A63TMC78051C\)](http://www.boarddocs.com/ca/santarosa/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=A63TMC78051C)

Other Important Policies and Practices

Avoid Plagiarism Like the, er, Plague

Although most students have likely heard about plagiarism during their years of schooling, it still is prevalent-even in higher education.

The video below reviews what plagiarism is and how not to do it.

[Plagiarism: How to avoid it](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2q0NIWcTq1Y)  (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2q0NIWcTq1Y>)



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2q0NIWcTq1Y>

Netiquette, or Why Is It Harder to Be Polite Online?

Netiquette refers to using common courtesy in online communication. All members of the class are expected to follow netiquette in all course communications. Use these guidelines:

- Use capital letters sparingly. THEY LOOK LIKE SHOUTING.
- Forward emails only with a writer's permission.
- Be considerate of others' feelings and use language carefully.
- Cite all quotations, references, and sources (otherwise, it is plagiarism).
- Use humor carefully. It is hard to "read" tone; sometimes humor can be misread as criticism or personal attack. Feel free to use emoticons like :) for a smiley face to let others know you are being humorous.
- Use complete sentences and standard English grammar to compose posts. Write in proper paragraphs. Review work before submitting it.
- Text speak, such as "ur" for "your" or "ru" for "are you" etc., is only acceptable when texting.

Special Needs

Students with disabilities who believe they need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact Disability Resources (527-4278), as soon as possible to better ensure such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

Course Summary:

Date	Details	Due
Tue Aug 26, 2025	 Discussion Week 1 - Class Introductions (https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/79811/assignments/1396120)	due by 11:59pm



Date	Details	Due
	 Weekly Overview	to do: 11:59pm
	 Discussion - Week 13 (https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/79811/assignments/1396112) 	
	 Discussion - Week 2 (https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/79811/assignments/1396119) 	
	 Discussion - Week 3 (https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/79811/assignments/1396118) 	
	 Discussion - Week 4 (https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/79811/assignments/1396117) 	
	 Discussion - Week 6 (https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/79811/assignments/1396116) 	
	 Discussion - Week 7 (https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/79811/assignments/1396115) 	
	 Discussion - Week 8 (https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/79811/assignments/1396114) 	
	 Discussion Group - Week 10 (https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/79811/assignments/1396113) 	
	 Extra Credit Assignment - Thanksgiving Break (Wholly Voluntary) (https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/79811/assignments/1396121) 	

Date	Details	Due
	<p> Final Exam (https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/79811/assignments/1396111)</p> <p></p>	
	<p> Quiz - Week 12 - Posts at the Beginning of Class on 11/12 (https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/79811/assignments/1396109)</p> <p></p>	
	<p> Quiz - Week 2- Posts After Class on 9/3. (https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/79811/assignments/1396110)</p> <p></p>	
	<p> Reading Assignment (https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/79811/assignments/1396122)</p> <p></p>	
	<p> Reading Assignment - Week 10 (https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/79811/assignments/1396123)</p> <p></p>	
	<p> Reading Assignment - Week 11 (https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/79811/assignments/1396124)</p> <p></p>	
	<p> Reading Assignment - Week 14/15 (https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/79811/assignments/1396125)</p> <p></p>	
	<p> Reading Assignment - Week 2 (https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/79811/assignments/1396126)</p> <p></p>	
	<p> Reading Assignment - Week 3 (https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/79811/assignments/1396127)</p> <p></p>	
	<p> Reading Assignment - Week 4 (https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/79811/assignments/1396128)</p>	

Date	Details	Due
		
	 Reading Assignment - Week 6 (https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/79811/assignments/1396129)	
		
	 Reading Assignment - Week 7 (https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/79811/assignments/1396130)	
		
	 Reading Assignment - Week 8 (https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/79811/assignments/1396131)	
		
	 Reading Assignment - Week 9 (https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/79811/assignments/1396132)	
		
	 Writing Assignment (https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/79811/assignments/1396133)	
		
	 Writing Assignment # 1 - Week 14/15 (https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/79811/assignments/1396134)	
		
	 Writing Assignment #2 Week 14/15 (https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/79811/assignments/1396135)	
		
	 Writing Assignment - Week 10 (https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/79811/assignments/1396136)	
		
	 Writing Assignment - Week 11 (https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/79811/assignments/1396137)	
		

Date

Details

Due



[Writing Assignment - Week 8](#)

<https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/79811/assignments/1396138>

