

**CUYAMACA COLLEGE**  
**COURSE OUTLINE OF RECORD**

**PARALEGAL STUDIES 100 – INTRODUCTION TO PARALEGAL STUDIES**

3 hours lecture, 3 units

**Catalog Description**

This course provides a historical perspective of the law and the profession of paralegal. The main focus is the role of the paralegal in the law office including client contact, ethical responsibilities, investigative fact finding, law office management, and legal restrictions. Students will be introduced to legal research and writing, substantive and procedural law, the court systems, and legal terminology.

**Prerequisite**

None

**Course Content**

- 1) Paralegal Profession
- 2) Ethics and Unauthorized Practice of Law
- 3) Civil and Criminal Procedure and Alternative Dispute Resolution
- 4) Legal Research and Writing
- 5) Client and Witness Interviewing and Evidence
- 6) Substantive Areas of the Law

**Course Objectives**

Students will be able to:

- 1) Identify and explain the dimensions of the paralegal's role in the legal field including the statutory requirements to be a paralegal, the ethical responsibilities, and the unauthorized practice of law.
- 2) Recognize, compare, differentiate, explain and use legal terminology.
- 3) Analyze statutes and cases and think critically by evaluating case law, differentiating legal concepts with the cases, extracting relevant issues and using the IRAC method.
- 4) Describe the structure of state and federal court systems, compare and distinguish the subject matter and personal jurisdiction in state and federal court systems, and apply that knowledge to fact patterns presented.
- 5) Distinguish and synthesize major legal topics including but not limited to Torts, Criminal Law, Contracts, Property and Administrative Law.
- 6) Identify the various steps in civil litigation from pre-lawsuit interviews and investigations to appeals; limitations on seeking judicial relief; evidence as collected by the paralegal; and available legal remedies. Apply these steps to model various real world scenarios presented in class.
- 7) Identify the various elements of a contract, criminal action, tort action, real property, and an administrative action.
- 8) Identify legal resources as primary or secondary authority and use each type to research various hypotheticals.
- 9) Describe Alternative Dispute Resolution and identify and explain the various forms it can take in the context of various fact patterns.

**Method of Evaluation**

A grading system will be established by the instructor and implemented uniformly. Grades will be based on demonstrated proficiency in subject matter determined by multiple measurements for evaluation, one of which must be essay exams, skills demonstration or, where appropriate, the symbol system.

- 1) Quizzes and exams that measure students' ability to appropriately use legal terminology and identify legal concepts.
- 2) Homework assignments that measure students' ability to produce various legal documents used in law offices.
- 3) In-class activities in which students analyze and discuss ethical situations.
- 4) Written assignments that measure students' ability to analyze actual cases by applying legal concepts.
- 5) Conduct team activities to test skills in gathering pertinent information, analyzing a case opinion, or critical thinking in a team environment.

**Special Materials Required of Student**

None

**Minimum Instructional Facilities**

Smart classroom with writing board

**Method of Instruction**

Lecture and discussion

**Out-of-Class Assignments**

- 1) Discovery memorandum
- 2) Research and analysis exercises
- 3) Job seeking skills such as resumes
- 4) Miscellaneous letters to clients, witnesses, opposing counsel

**Texts and References**

- 1) Required (representative example): *Introduction to Paralegal Studies: A Critical Thinking Approach*, Currier, Eimermann, Campbell, 7th ed, 2021
- 2) Supplemental: As assigned by instructor

**Exit Skills**

Students having successfully completed this course exit with the following skills, competencies and/or knowledge:

- 1) Understand the judicial system as to Federal and state court structure and the administrative system.
- 2) Demonstrate knowledge of the major substantive areas of the law and how they differ from procedural law.
- 3) Demonstrate the ability to find their way around a law library, and write interoffice memorandum and various types of letters.
- 4) Understand the importance of keeping track of billable hours and the ability to do so.
- 5) Identify the various types of software and technology used in a law office.
- 6) Understand the importance of ethics and the rules of Professional Responsibility.
- 7) Identify the Unlawful Practice of Law.
- 8) Describe the requirements for being a Paralegal in the State of California.

**Student Learning Outcomes**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- 1) Communicate both verbally and in written form, their understanding of the judicial system, both federal and state systems.
- 2) Identify, explain, and give examples of the major areas of substantive law, procedural aspects of the law in both criminal and civil cases, and the difference between common law, civil law and equity.

- 3) Utilize paralegal skills such as conducting modest research assignments, keeping track of billable hours, using technology in the law office, and gathering evidence with various discovery tools (Work Based Learning Outcome).
- 4) Explain the rules of professional responsibility as they affect a paralegal, including the different voluntary ethical standards suggested by NALA, NFPA, ABA and the California Rules of Professional Responsibility, Unauthorized Practice of Law, and the requirements for using the title of Paralegal in the State of California.