

**CUYAMACA COLLEGE**  
COURSE OUTLINE OF RECORD

**Paralegal Studies 130 – Legal Research and Writing**

3 hours lecture, 3 units

**Catalog Description**

Includes in-depth legal research, writing research reports and subject matter reports on legal issues, case briefings, and citations using the uniform system of citation The Bluebook.

**Prerequisite**

“C” grade or higher or “Pass” in PARA 100 or equivalent

**Entrance Skills**

Without the following skills, competencies and/or knowledge, students entering this course will be highly unlikely to succeed:

- 1) Knowledge of the state and federal judicial systems.
- 2) Legal vocabulary.
- 3) Low level skill at briefing and analyzing cases.
- 4) Understanding of the areas of substantive and procedural law.
- 5) Familiarity with a law library.
- 6) Understand the structure of the administrative system.

**Course Content**

- 1) Introduction to legal research
  - a. Overview
  - b. Theory versus practice including the paralegal's ethical responsibilities
  - c. New lexicon
- 2) Foundations of legal research
  - a. Background and history of legal research
  - b. Importance of legal research
  - c. Locating resources
- 3) Techniques of legal research
  - a. Law libraries
  - b. Understanding annotations and other editorial enhancements.
  - c. Using indexes and tables of contents
  - d. Checklists for using the major search resources
- 4) Developing research methodology
  - a. Reading and finding case law
  - b. Reading and finding statutes
  - c. Researching legislative history
  - d. Monitoring proposed legislation
  - e. Reading and finding constitutional law
  - f. Researching administrative law
  - g. Researching local laws and regulations
  - h. Finding and understanding court rules
  - i. Researching international law
  - j. Validating research findings
- 5) Research assignments
- 6) Introduction to legal writing

- a. Overview
  - b. Theory versus practice
  - c. New lexicon
- 7) Integration of legal research into legal writing
    - a. Authority in research and writing
    - b. Writing style
    - c. Citation form
  - 8) Memorandum of law
    - a. Preparing research and writing
    - b. Structure and style of legal writing
    - c. Writing assignment
  - 9) Legal correspondence
    - a. Preparing research and writing
    - b. Structure and style of appellate writing
    - c. Writing assignment
  - 10) Final research and writing assignment

### **Course Objectives**

Students will be able to:

- 1) Locate and research general areas of the law.
- 2) Conduct legal research and use correct legal terminology in law office communications.
- 3) Draft various legal documents including memoranda of law and legal correspondence.
- 4) Complete basic research and writing assignments independently.

### **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.

- 1) Observation of student
- 2) Attendance
- 3) Exams (written, aural, subjective, objective)

### **Special Materials Required of Student**

None

### **Minimum Instructional Facilities**

Smart classroom

### **Method of Instruction**

- 1) Lecture and discussion
- 2) Library and computer research
- 3) Case study and assignments

### **Out-of-Class Assignments**

- 1) Reading assignments
- 2) Projects and reports

### **Texts and References**

- 1) Required (representative example): *Legal Research and Writing For Paralegals*, Tenth Edition 2024. Deborah Bouchoux.
- 2) Supplemental: All supplemental materials provided for students

**Student Learning Outcomes**

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

- 1) Conduct basic legal research of general areas of the law independently and use correct writing terminology.
- 2) Draft various legal documents including memoranda of law and legal correspondence. (Work Based Learning Outcome)
- 3) Describe a paralegal's ethical duties in legal research and writing.