

CUYAMACA COLLEGE
COURSE OUTLINE OF RECORD

Paralegal Studies 140 – Introduction to Criminal Law and Procedures

1 hour lecture, 1 unit

Catalog Description

The California Penal Code and Rules of Criminal Procedure will be the foundation of this preliminary examination of the substantive and procedural laws in a criminal case. Students will be exposed to the basics of the criminal justice system from the elements of offenses through post-conviction remedies. The drafting of documents associated with criminal matters will be included.

Prerequisite

None

Course Content

- 1) Substantive Criminal Law
 - a. Felonies
 - b. Misdemeanors
 - c. Infractions
 - d. Statutory Violations
 - e. Defenses
- 2) Criminal Procedures
 - a. California Criminal Procedure
 - b. Constitutional rights and procedures
 - c. Participants in the Criminal Justice System
- 3) Fundamental Steps in Criminal Prosecution
 - a. Pre-trial arraignment
 - b. Plea
 - c. Preliminary hearing
 - d. Discovery
 - e. Criminal trial steps and procedures
 - f. Pleadings and Motions
 - g. Verdicts and sentencing
 - h. Grand Jury
- 4) The Paralegal's Role and Ethical Responsibilities

Course Objectives

Students will be able to:

- 1) Define various legal terms used in a criminal case.
- 2) Describe what is meant by burden of proof.
- 3) Identify the following kinds of law:
 - a. Statutory
 - b. Common
 - c. Procedural
 - d. Substantive
 - e. Case
- 4) Identify the major classifications of offenses in the California Penal Code.
- 5) Compare the elements of an offense with the facts presented in a hypothetical situation to determine if an offense has been committed.

- 6) Obtain and analyze discovery (police reports, search warrant, affidavit).
- 7) Draft court documents, internal memorandum or other forms necessary to support a criminal case.
- 8) Locate witnesses and conduct interviews.
- 9) Identify the various steps in a criminal case starting from arrest to conviction.
- 10) Explain the Grand Jury system.

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 skills demonstration. Skills Demonstration

- 1) Participation
- 2) Exams (written, aural, subjective, objective)

Special Materials Required of Student

Access to internet

Minimum Instructional Facilities

Smart classroom, Canvas LMS

Method of Instruction

- 1) Lecture and case study
- 2) Written assignments and document drafting
- 3) Class discussions on hypotheticals

Out-of-Class Assignments

- 1) Reading assignments
- 2) Short writing assignment(s)
- 3) Student discussions on hypotheticals

Texts and References

- 1) Required (representative example): Paul Bergman and Sara J. Berman, *The Criminal Law Handbook: Know Your Rights, Survive the System*. 18th edition., NOLO, 2024.
- 2) Supplemental: None

Student Learning Outcomes

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

- 1) Distinguish between the following types of law: Common, Statutory, Procedural, Substantive, Case.
- 2) Compare the elements of an offense with the facts presented in a hypothetical situation to determine if an offense has been committed.
- 3) Draft documents and obtain discovery integral to a criminal case in order to demonstrate understanding of the role of a paralegal. (Work Based Learning Outcome).
- 4) Explain the professional and ethical responsibilities of the paralegal in a criminal case.