

Course Syllabus

Department : Legal Assistant

Course Title : Introduction to Paralegal Studies

Section Name : LGLA 1313.102

Start Date : 08/27/2012

End Date : 12/07/2012

Modality : FACE-TO-FACE

Credits : 3 hours

Instructor Information

Name : Kayla Zeigenbein

OC Email : kzeigenbein@odessa.edu

OC Phone # : 432-335-6485

Office Hours for Fall 2012

Monday – 10:00 – 12:00; 5:00 – 6:00

Tuesday – 8:30 – 11:00

Wednesday – 10:00 – 12:00

Thursday – 8:30 – 11:00

Friday by appointment only

Monitored and open labs available daily. Help from the instructor is available at your request. Appointments can be set up or you may contact instructor during office hours. Tutoring is available through the LRC.

Course Description

This course provides an overview of the paralegal profession including ethical obligations, professional regulation, trends and issues, and the paralegal's role in assisting the delivery of legal services.

Prerequisites/Corequisites

None.

ICO's

(1, 2, 4, 5)

Course Objectives

- 1.1 Describe the historical origins of the legal process.
- 1.2* Identify key legal terms as used in the legal process.
- 1.3* List the computer hardware used in the law office setting and explain its function.
- 1.4* Identify major components of the litigation process and explain.
- 1.5 Define the role of the paralegal in the legal process.
- 1.6* List and explain the key documents in the legal process.
- 1.7* List and explain the function of the court system.
- 1.8* Compare and contrast the civil and criminal law.
- 1.9 Define the role of the attorney in the legal process.
- 1.10 Define the existence of a cause of action.
- 1.11 List the techniques for interviewing a witness.
- 1.12 List and discuss the key motions and pleadings.
- 1.13* Prepare and serve subpoenas.
- 1.14 Discuss overview of the American law process.
- 1.15. Define and discuss the deposition process.
- 1.16. Define and discuss the ethics of the legal profession.
- 1.17 List and understand the key computer programs used in a law office setting.

*INDICATES INTEGRATED, CORE CURRICULUM SKILLS
(Math, Reading, Communication, Technological Literacy and/or Critical Thinking)

Required Readings/Materials

The Paralegal Professional Essentials, 3rd Edition, Cheeseman/Goldman; Pearson Prentice Hall; 2011

Spiral Notebook

Course Requirements (Lectures, Assignments and Assessments)

Dates	Assignments	Description
8/27 8/29	Class Orientation Video – Today's Paralegal	
9/3 9/5	Holiday Chapter 1 – HW – Legal Terminology Critical Thinking & Writing Questions Odd #'s 1-20	The Paralegal Professional
9/10 9/12	Guest Speaker (Paralegal) Chapter 2 – HW – Legal Terminology Working the Web #1 & #3	Ethics & Professional Responsibility
9/17 9/19	Chapter 2 continued Test Review	
9/24 9/26	TEST #1 – CHAPTERS 1&2 Guest Speaker (Personnel Ofc.)	Chapters 1 & 2
10/1 10/3	Chapter 3 – HW – Legal Terminology Paralegal Portfolio Exercise pg. 120 (Prepare a Resume)	The Paralegal Workplace
10/8 10/10	Chapter 3 continued Test Review	
10/15 10/17	TEST #2 – CHAPTER 3 Chapter 4 – HW – Legal Terminology Working the Web #3	Technology and the Paralegal
10/22 10/24	Chapter 4 Continued Chapter 6 – HW – Legal Terminology Working the Web #3	The Court System and Alternative Dispute Resolution
10/29 10/31	Chapter 6 Continued Video Situation Clips and Test Review	Watch & Discuss
11/5 11/7	TEST #3 – CHAPTERS 4&6 Chapter 7 HW Critical thinking & Writing Questions 1-15	Civil Litigation
11/12 11/14	Chapter 7 continued	
11/19 11/21	Chapter 9 – HW Legal Terminology Working the Web #5, 6, 7 Holiday - Thanksgiving	Interviewing & Investigation Skills

11/26 11/28	Chapter 9 continued	
12/3 12/5	Tour of Ector County Courthouse Review for Final Exam	Field Trip
12/10 8:00 – 10:30	FINAL EXAM	COMPREHENSIVE

Grading Scales	Grading Percentages
A = 90-100	Assignments – 40%
B = 80-89	Tests – 40%
C = 70-79	Final Exam – 20%
D = 60-69	
F – Below 59	

DEPARTMENTAL POLICY:

NO LATE WORK ACCEPTED OR MAKE UP TESTS GIVEN.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Class attendance and preparation are essential in order to gain a full understanding of this course. Student attendance at EVERY class is expected. More than **FIVE** absences will jeopardize your grade. Your final grade average will drop one point for every absence over **FIVE**.

Special Needs

Odessa College complies with Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. If you have any special needs or issues pertaining to your access to and participation in this or any other class at Odessa College, please feel free to contact me to discuss your concerns. You may also call the Office of Disability services at 432-335-6861 to request assistance and accommodations.

Learning Resource Center (Library)

The Library, known as the [Learning Resources Center](#), provides research assistance via the [LRC's catalog \(print books, videos, e-books\)](#) and [databases \(journal and magazine articles\)](#). [Research guides](#) covering specific subject areas, [tutorials](#), and the ["Ask a Librarian "](#) service provide additional help.

Student E-mail

Please access your [Odessa College Student E-mail](#), by following the link to either set up or update your account: <http://www.odessa.edu/gmail/>. **All correspondence will be submitted using your Odessa College email.**

Student Portal

Please access your [Odessa College Student E-mail](http://www.odessa.edu/gmail/), by following the link to either set up or update your account: <http://www.odessa.edu/gmail/>. **All correspondence will be submitted using your Odessa College email.**

Technical Support

For Blackboard username and password help and for help accessing your online course availability and student email account contact the Student Success Center at 432-335-6878 or online at https://www.odessa.edu/dept/ssc/helpdesk_form.htm.

Important School Policies

For information regarding student support services, academic dishonesty, disciplinary actions, special accommodations, or student's and instructors' right to academic freedom can be found in the [Odessa College Student Handbook](#).

Expectations for Engagement – Face to Face Learning

To help make the learning experience fulfilling and rewarding, the following Expectations for Engagement provide the parameters for reasonable engagement between students and instructors for the learning environment. Students and instructors are welcome to exceed these requirements.

Reasonable Expectations of Engagement for Instructors

1. As an instructor, I understand the importance of clear, timely communication with my students. In order to maintain sufficient communication, I will
 - provided my contact information at the beginning of the syllabus;
 - respond to all messages in a timely manner through telephone, email, or next classroom contact; and,
 - notify students of any extended times that I will be unavailable and provide them with alternative contact information (for me or for my supervisor) in case of emergencies during the time I'm unavailable.
2. As an instructor, I understand that my students will work to the best of their abilities to fulfill the course requirements. In order to help them in this area, I will
 - provide clear information about grading policies and assignment requirements in the course syllabus, and
 - communicate any changes to assignments and/or to the course calendar to students as quickly as possible.
3. As an instructor, I understand that I need to provide regular, timely feedback to students about their performance in the course. To keep students informed about their progress, I will
 - return classroom activities and homework within one week of the due date and

- provide grades for major assignments within 2 weeks of the due date or at least 3 days before the next major assignment is due, whichever comes first.

Reasonable Expectations of Engagement for Students

1. As a student, I understand that I am responsible for keeping up with the course. To help with this, I will
 - attend the course regularly and line up alternative transportation in case my primary means of transportation is unavailable;
 - recognize that the college provides free wi-fi, computer labs, and library resources during regular campus hours to help me with completing my assignments; and,
 - understand that my instructor does not have to accept my technical issues as a legitimate reason for late or missing work if my personal computer equipment or internet service is unreliable.
2. As a student, I understand that it is my responsibility to communicate quickly with the instructor any issue or emergency that will impact my involvement with or performance in the class. This includes, but is not limited to,
 - missing class when a major test is planned or a major assignment is due;
 - having trouble submitting assignments;
 - dealing with a traumatic personal event; and,
 - having my work or childcare schedule changed so that my classroom attendance is affected.
3. As a student, I understand that it is my responsibility to understand course material and requirements and to keep up with the course calendar. While my instructor is available for help and clarification, I will
 - seek out help from my instructor and/or from tutors;
 - ask questions if I don't understand; and,
 - attend class regularly to keep up with assignments and announcements.

This course, INTRODUCTION TO PARALEGAL STUDIES, has been identified as a course by Career, Technical, and Workforce Education as one in which teaching and learning strategies adopted by AVID will be implemented. As a student in the legal program, you will be expected to develop an understanding of the strategies, to model the strategies, to maintain fidelity of implementation, and to examine how these strategies may impact your effectiveness as a professional in your chosen area of occupation, either through coursework or practicum experience as outlined by the course instructor.

Disclaimer

***Students are responsible for checking for changes frequently as this syllabus may be updated often, as needed. If you have any complaints about this course and do not feel comfortable discussing the issues with me, please contact my Department Chair, Nancy Stewart at 432-335-6486 or at nstewart@odessa.edu.**