

PALOMAR COLLEGE
COURSE OUTLINE OF RECORD FOR
DEGREE CREDIT COURSE

Transfer course A.A. degree applicable course
(check all that apply)

COURSE NUMBER AND TITLE:

PLS 120 Introduction to Paralegal Studies and Ethics

UNIT VALUE: 3

MINIMUM NUMBER OF SEMESTER HOURS: 48

BASIC SKILLS REQUIREMENTS: Appropriate language and writing skills.

ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

PREREQUISITE: None.

COREQUISITE: None.

RECOMMENDED PREPARATION: None.

SCOPE OF COURSE: An overview of the role of the paralegal/legal assistant. Introduction to legal terminology, ethics in the law office, management of legal data, and research methods.

SPECIFIC COURSE OBJECTIVES: Successful students will

1. understand the role and functions of a legal assistant in the public and private sectors as well as in legal specialties in law offices and in industry;
2. identify legal assistant employment opportunities and areas of specialization;
3. understand the organization, structure and management of various types of law offices;
4. understand the general law office management, billing, timekeeping, filing and docketing procedures;
5. explain the general principles of ethical legal practice as defined by the American Bar Association standing committee on Ethics and Professional Responsibility and the scope of professional responsibilities and requirements for the legal assistant;
6. understand the organization and structure of the American legal system;
7. identify where the law can be found and examine the legal reasoning process used to

- interpret it;
8. identify the procedures followed for the initiation of a civil lawsuit;
 9. identify the major steps in a criminal prosecution;
 10. compare and contrast litigation and administrative adjudication procedures;
 11. apply techniques and procedures for legal interviewing, investigation, summarizing and document preparation.

CONTENT IN TERMS OF SPECIFIC BODY OF KNOWLEDGE:

1. Legal terminology in the following areas:
 - A. Business Law
 - 1.) Torts
 - 2.) Professional ethics
 - 3.) Contracts
 - 4.) Civil Procedure
 - 5.) Property
 - 6.) Evidence
 - 7.) Criminal Law
 - 8.) Wills and Trusts
 - 9.) Corporate Law
 - B. Constitutional Law
 - C. Family Law
 - D. Bankruptcy
 - E. Administrative Law
2. Standards of professional ethics
3. Preparation of basic legal pleadings
4. Conduct elementary legal research

REQUIRED READING:

Miller, Roger and Mary Urisko. West's Paralegal Today: The Essentials. 2nd edition. West, 2000.

Cannon. Concise Guide to Paralegal Ethics. 2nd edition. Prentice Hall, 2002.

SUGGESTED READING:

Any major current Legal Dictionary.

REQUIRED WRITING:

Minimum of five one page legal article reviews, one three page legal pleading, and one five page research report.

OUTSIDE ASSIGNMENTS:

Students are expected to spend a minimum of three hours per unit per week in class and on outside assignments, prorated for short term classes.

In addition to textbook readings, the student will be encouraged to pursue additional areas of interest or increase his/her skill in various stylistic formats and/or substantive areas of law by submission of extracurricular writing projects for grading and critique.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODOLOGY:

Check all that apply:

- lecture
- laboratory
- lecture-laboratory combination
- directed study

This course may be offered as a distance education course and meets Title 5 regulations 55370, 55372, 55374, 55376, 55378, and 55380.

Yes No

If yes, check all that apply.

- Television Course (Video one-way, e.g. ITV, video cassette, etc.)
- Online Course (Text one-way, e.g. newspaper, correspondence, electronic file, etc.)
- Two-Way Video Conferencing (Two-way interactive video and audio)
- One-Way Video Conferencing (One-way interactive video and two-way interactive audio)
- Computer Assisted Instruction (A specialized form of mediated instruction relying primarily on student access to information and prepared lessons or teaching materials through a computer terminal, but not under immediate supervision of a qualified instructor.)

GRADING POLICY AND STANDARDS (include methods of determining whether the stated objectives have been met by students):

Students are graded on the basis of written assignments, weekly quizzes, two mid-term examinations and a final examination.

GRADING:	Assignments.....80	=	10%
	Quiz.....70	=	10%
	Tests (2)200	=	50%
	Final Exam.....150	=	30%

TOTAL Points Available.....500

IS COURSE REPEATABLE FOR REASON(S) OTHER THAN DEFICIENT GRADE?

Yes No Number of times course may be taken for credit: 1.

If yes, identify specific provision of Title 5 Division 2 section(s) 55761-55763 and 58161 which qualifies course as repeatable:

CONTACT PERSON: Angelo J. Corpora, x2501

SIGNATURES ON FILE: