

TULANE UNIVERSITY
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE – COLLEGE OF CONTUING STUDIES
PARALEGAL STUDIES PROGRAM

(Updated May 2007)

Title of Course: Introduction to Paralegal Studies
Course Number: PARA 201-81
Credits: 3 hour credit course
Location: Elmwood
Term:
Day/TIME:
Instructor: Kathryn Clark Beachy
Contact: **Phone #'s: (504) 832-7292 (home) (504) 599-8166 (work)**
Tulane email: Kbeachy@tulane.edu
Office Hours: By appointment and prior to and after class.

Required Texts:

Introduction to Paralegalism, Perspective, Problems & Skills, 6th ed., William P. Statsky

Gideon's Trumpet, Anthony Lewis

Course Description:

Introduction to the study of law and the legal system; the legal assistant in the legal system; an overview of the skills of the paralegal including litigation, legal interviewing, investigation in the law office, law office administration, and litigation; legal trends, and professionalism and ethics, including the unauthorized practice of law.

Course Objectives:

1. To introduce the student to the paralegal profession in the context of the U.S. legal system and current ethical, regulatory, educational and workplace issues.
2. To introduce the student to federal and state court systems.
3. To familiarize the student with basic legal terminology and vocabulary.
4. To develop critical thinking, writing and legal analysis skills.
5. To develop legal analysis skills by teaching case briefing and problem solving.
6. To assist students in entering the paralegal profession, achieving career goals and making them aware of the importance of continuing legal education and lifelong learning.
7. To introduce students to legal research.
8. To provide an overview of criminal and civil litigation.
9. To instruct the student in informal and formal advocacy techniques, including mediation.
10. To provide an introduction to investigative techniques and an overview of evidence rules.

Instructional Methods:

Lecture, case briefing and discussion, small group breakout sessions, written assignments, tests, mock interviews, scenarios presented for class discussion, student visit to court outside of the class time, and guest lectures.

Evaluation of Student Performance:

Grading:	a) Attendance, Class participation, Articles, Punctuality, Preparedness & Timeliness	15%
	b) Gideon quiz/questions	10%
	c) Analysis/Research assignments	10%
	d) Mid-term Exam	20%
	e) Final Exam	30%
	f) Term project (trip to court)	<u>15%</u>
		100%

Exercises from text	3 %
News articles	3 %
Visit to court & 2-3 page paper	15 %
Case brief:	
Written assignment	3 %
Breakout group discussion	3 %
Mock client interview/breakout	3 %
Terminology quizzes	5 %
Three ring binder/portfolio	5 %
Gideon's Trumpet Questions/Quiz	10 %
Midterm	20 %
Final	30 %

A note on deadlines:

All assignments are due on the date specified, at the beginning of the class period. Assignments that are submitted late will be subject to a five (5) point penalty per day up to seven (7) days, after which the assignment will not be accepted.

Grading Scale:

94 – 100	A		73 – 76	C
90 - 93	A-		70 – 72	C-
87 – 89	B+		67 – 69	D+
83 – 86	B		64 – 66	D
80 – 82	B-		60 – 63	D-
77 – 79	C+		00 – 59	F

Professionalism in the Classroom:

Information in class will be presented via lectures, in-class exercises, and other means. Assigned reading is to be accomplished **prior** to class so that you may participate in discussions and exercises. You will be asked to “read ahead”. Don’t worry, we will catch up.

Please use the “buddy system”--get notes from a class buddy if you miss any sessions. If you know that you will be absent on a particular date when an assignment is due or an exam is scheduled, please let me know as soon as possible. Makeup examinations are allowed only in the event of an emergency.

Please refrain from use of cell phones or pagers while in class.

Communication:

To access Blackboard, log on to <http://www.blackboard.tulane.edu>.

Writing Workshop:

When preparing written assignments, students may wish to use the tutoring services available at the Writing Workshop. The Writing Workshop is located in the Educational Resources and Counseling Department, in the Mechanical Engineering Building on the uptown campus. Evening and weekend appointments are available. You may call 865-5103 or access the schedule at <http://erc.tulane/tutoring/index.php>.

Honor Code:

In all work submitted for academic credit, you are expected to represent yourself honestly. Work must be your individual effort unless a specific assignment is designated as a group project. Since this course is writing intensive, you should pay particular attention to the bans articulated in the following sections:

Plagiarism:

The use of the ideas, data or specific passages of others that are unacknowledged or falsely acknowledged, with the purpose of influencing a grade. Any paraphrasing or quotation must be appropriately acknowledged.

Falsification of Research:

The fraudulent or deceptive generation of data or the knowing use of data gathered in such a manner. You may view the entirety of Tulane's Honor Code at <http://www.tulane.edu/~uc/honorcode.htm>.

Disability Accommodations:

The University makes available reasonable accommodations in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Any student with specific questions about Office of Disability Services (ODS) procedures and policies should contact the Director of ODS for additional information or view the ODS website at <http://www.tulane.edu/~erc/disability>.

Semester overview: *Gideon's Trumpet* quiz: February 14, 2007
Mid-term exam: March 8, 2007
Spring Break: March 21, 2007
Term Project Due: April 11, 2007
Gideon Questions Due: April 18, 2007
Final Exam: May 2, 2007
Quizzes/ Writing Assignments/ Guest Lecturers

Detailed Class Schedule & Course Outline

CLASS #1 3 Hours
Introduction to the course
Common and civil law; history of the development of each
Introduction to Louisiana's "Hybrid" System
Assignment for next class: Begin reading *Gideon's Trumpet*

CLASS #2 – 3 Hours
Continue lecture on Louisiana's "Hybrid" system
American legal system and trial terminology
Assignment for next class: Read Chapter 6, *Statsky*

CLASS #3 – 3 Hours
Continue: American legal system and trial terminology
Discuss: civil trial process, & ethical role of the paralegal at pre-trial and trial stages in the litigation process
Assignment for next class: Read 1st half Chapter 10, *Statsky* – Legal Odyssey of Michael Brown - Civil Litigation, trial terminology.

CLASS #4 – 3 Hours

Continue: civil trial process, & ethical role of the paralegal at pre-trial and trial stages in the litigation process

Legal Odyssey of Michael Brown

Assignment for next class: Read Chapters 1-3, *Statsky*

CLASS #5 - 3 Hours

Quiz: *Gideon's Trumpet* -

NOTE: Gideon questions - due April 18. .

Chapter 1 The paralegal and the legal system

Chapter 2 Employment & resume writing

Assignment for next class: Read Chapter 4, *Statsky*

CLASS #6 – 3 Hours

Chapter 3 Practicalities and realities

Chapter 4 Regulation of paralegals & ethical responsibilities

Licensure & Certification

Assignment for next class: Read Chapter 5, *Statsky*

CLASS #7 – 3 Hours

Continue Chapter 4 – Regulation

Tort liability

Chapter 5, Legal Ethics. ABA Model Code; ABA Code of Professional

Responsibility; Canons; Fees; Confidentiality; Conflicts of Interest; Solicitation; Communications

REVIEW: MID-TERM EXAM

CLASS #8 – 3 Hours

MID-TERM EXAM

Assignment for next class: Read Chapter 7, *Statsky*

CLASS #9 – 3 Hours

Chapter 5, Legal Ethics. ABA Model Code; ABA Code of Professional

Responsibility; Canons; Fees; Confidentiality; Conflicts of Interest; Solicitation; Communications - Privilege

Chapter 7 - Legal Analysis; Facts, definitions, elements, application

IRAC

Written assignment – case brief

Assignment for next class: Read Chapters 8 and 9, *Statsky*

CLASS #10 – 3 Hours

Chapter 8 - Legal Interviewing. Fact Particularization; Ethical aspects of conducting interviews and investigations for the paralegal; mock interview, breakout sessions

Chapter 9 – Legal Investigation, maintaining client confidentiality.

Assignment for next class: Read 2nd half Chapter 10, *Statsky*: - Criminal Litigation; & Alternative Dispute Resolution.

***Begin reading Chapter 11, *Statsky*, Legal Research) (WARNING: IT IS VERY LONG!!!!!!)

CLASS #11 – 3 Hours

Lecture on Chapter 10, Litigation Assistantship- Criminal Litigation - trial terminology and process

Alternative Dispute Resolution.

Ethical responsibilities at trial and mediation

Assignment for next class: Continue reading Chapter 11- Legal Research

CLASS #12 – 3 Hours

Lecture on Chapter 11, Legal Research

DUE: Paper on Term Project -Typewritten, double-spaced, 5 pages.

Assignment for next class: Read Chapter 12, *Statsky*

CLASS #13 – 3 Hours

Continue lecture on Chapter 11, Legal Research.

DUE: Answers to Gideon's Trumpet questions - Typewritten, double-spaced, 5 pages - 1 page per question.

CLASS #14 – 3 Hours – last class

Lecture Chapter 12 – Legal Writing

REVIEW FOR FINAL EXAM

Date to be assigned by University - **FINAL EXAM**