

LEGAL ASSISTING

This program prepares students to be a legal assistant (paralegal) with responsibility for assisting the attorney in preparation of cases for trial or arbitration, researching existing laws, and doing a moderate degree of investigation.

Career Opportunities

Legal Assistant
Paralegal

Legal Office Manager

Faculty

Part-Time

Tom Brooks
Nancy Johnson
Michael Rodriguez

Alice Huston
Diana Needham
Mike Sment

Legal Assisting

Associate in Science Degree

Certificate of Achievement

Required Courses:

		Units
LA R001	Legal Assisting Fundamentals	3
LA R002A	Torts	3
LA R002B	Contracts	3
LA R003	Legal Research and Drafting I	3
LA R005	Legal Research and Drafting II	3
LA R007	Civil Litigation	3
LA R009	Evidence for Legal Assistants	3
Total Core Units		21

Complete at least six (6) units from the following:

BUS R111A	Business Law I	3
CIS R041	Computer Applications for Legal Assistants	3
LA R008	Law Office Operations	1½
LA R010	Crimes and Criminal Procedures	3
LA R011	Real Estate Law	3
LA R012	Legal Assisting Ethics	2
LA R013	The Law of Sex Discrimination	3
LA R014	Immigration Law	3
LA R015	Family Law	3
LA R017	Probate	3
LA R018	Personal Injury Litigation	3
LA R019	Workers' Compensation Law	3
LA R020	Debtor-Creditor Relations	3
LA R022	Bankruptcy	3
LA R023	Internship in Legal Assisting	3
Total Required Units		27

Legal Assisting Courses

LA R001—Legal Assisting Fundamentals 3 units

3 hours lecture weekly

Course covers paralegalism as a career and includes relationship of attorney and paralegal in decision-making and systems procedures, introduction to law, legal terminology, bibliography, and brief history of law. (2)

LA R002A—Torts 3 units

Prerequisites: LA R001.

3 hours lecture weekly

Study of legal concepts of duty, breach, causation, and damages. Course explores traditional torts such as negligence and fraud and includes newer torts such as "wrongful life." Students expected to draft "complaints" and instructed on investigative techniques. (2)

LA R002B—Contracts 3 units

Prerequisites: LA R001.

3 hours lecture weekly

Study of formation, interpretation, and breach of contracts, both written and oral. Students expected to draft "complaints" for breach of

contract lawsuits. Class explores investigative techniques commonly used. (2)

LA R003—Legal Research and Drafting I 3 units

Prerequisites: LA R001, LA R002A or LA R002B.

3 hours lecture weekly

General introduction to basic legal research and drafting tools and their use to accomplish research requirements of a legal practice. Concentration on legal writing is aimed to improve techniques. Students will learn to write technically in legal terms. (2)

LA R005—Legal Research and Drafting II 3 units

Prerequisites: LA R003.

3 hours lecture weekly

Continuation of coursework from LA R003. Students will spend time in legal library and will research and draft documents representative of those required for legal assistants. (2)

LA R007—Civil Litigation 3 units

Prerequisites: LA R001, LA R002A or LA R002B, LA R003.

3 hours lecture weekly

Deals with role of paralegals in preparation and filing of civil law suits. Subject includes determination of proper form and major Code of Civil Procedure sections, court rules, as well as general principles of pleading, joinder, discovery, and adjudication through trial. (2)

LA R008—Law Office Operations 1½ units

Prerequisites: LA R007.

1½ hours lecture weekly

Course is designed to provide the student with a working understanding of the day-to-day operations of a law office including the latest law office technology. Skills to be developed include general law office etiquette, interviewing techniques, telephone skills, file organization, calendar management and trial preparation, as well as an understanding of the attorney's duty of client confidentiality, the attorney-client privilege, and other ethical considerations. (2)

LA R009—Evidence for Legal Assistants 3 units

Prerequisites: LA R001, LA R002A or LA R002B, LA R003.

3 hours lecture weekly

Examines rules of civil and criminal evidence. Emphasis on theory and principles of evidence as utilized and applied to the civil discovery process. (2)

LA R010—Crimes and Criminal Procedures 3 units

Prerequisites: LA R001.

3 hours lecture weekly

Basic course in substantive and procedural law covering crimes and public offenses. Major areas of criminal procedure commonly encountered in law practice covered, such as indictments and complaints, motions to dismiss, plea bargaining and trial in criminal cases. (2)

LA R011—Real Estate Law 3 units

Prerequisites: LA R001, LA R002B.

3 hours lecture weekly

Analysis of laws of real property, estates in land, landlord-tenant, leases, deeds, and contracts; identification of problems in real property transactions; recording and searching public documents.

LA R012—Legal Assisting Ethics 2 units

Prerequisites: LA R001.

2 hours lecture weekly

This course is an introduction to the issues and rules that govern the legal profession, oriented to the paralegal or legal assistant. Students will gain an appreciation for the importance of ethics to the law, understand the major issues in ethics and the rules governing those issues and apply that developing ethical sensitivity and knowledge to a variety of situations. (2)

LA R013—The Law of Sex Discrimination 3 units

3 hours lecture weekly

Course studies and evaluates the evolution of sex-based laws in the United States in terms of the preferences they reflect and the rationales used to justify them. (2)

LA R014—Immigration Law 3 units

Prerequisites: LA R001.

3 hours lecture weekly

Course examines the rights of noncitizens of the United States (or “aliens”) to enter and remain in this country as temporary visitors and as immigrants. (2)

LA R015—Family Law **3 units**

*Advisory: LA R001.
3 hours lecture weekly*

A basic overview of community property law and an examination of the applicable forms and procedures in the area of marital dissolution including property settlements, child custody, support and temporary orders. Other areas may include adoption, co-habitation, rights of privacy, mediation as an alternate in dispute resolution, nullity and legal separation, and contested versus uncontested proceedings. (2)

LA R017—Probate **3 units**

*Prerequisites: LA R001.
3 hours lecture weekly*

Overview of basic law of wills and trusts and community property including basic probate and summary procedures. All necessary forms and procedures examined and explained from client interview to closing of the estate. (2)

LA R018—Personal Injury Litigation **3 units**

*Prerequisites: LA R001, LA R002A, LA R003, LA R005.
3 hours lecture weekly*

Course covers responsibilities and duties of legal assistants dealing with personal injury cases. Students study steps for establishing files from plaintiff’s and defendant’s viewpoint, special statutes of limitations, pleadings, discovery, interrogatories, and requests for admission as well as other topics pertinent to this area of law. (2)

LA R019—Workers’ Compensation Law **3 units**

*Prerequisites: LA R001, LA R002A.
3 hours lecture weekly*

Relevant statutory and case law, substantive and procedural issues including compensability, benefit structure, and tort law relationships of Workers’ Compensation. Students will learn to use technical procedures and forms through trial before the Workers’ Compensation Appeals Board. (2)

LA R020—Debtor-Creditor Relations **3 units**

3 hours lecture weekly

An in-depth overview of laws and procedures relating to debtor rights and remedies including bankruptcy and creditor rights and remedies in debtor/creditor litigation. Subjects covered include judgments, liens, wage garnishment, collection of judgments, executions, and bankruptcy. (2)

LA R022—Bankruptcy **3 units**

*Advisory: LA R001.
3 hours lecture weekly*

Overview of principles of bankruptcy law. Examination of available types of bankruptcies, required filing procedures, appropriate pleadings and forms, and various problems resolved through a bankruptcy case. The bankruptcy court system, remedies available to creditors, and new developments will be discussed. (2)

LA R023—Internship in Legal Assisting **3 units**

*Prerequisites: Successful completion of a minimum of 12 units of Legal Assisting classes to include LA R001 and LA R003.
Advisory: LA R005 and LA R007.
1 hour lecture, 6 hours lab weekly*

Course is designed to assist legal assisting students bridge the gap between the classroom and the world of legal offices, corporations, public agencies, and organizations--the legal assistant's "work world."

LA R098—Short Courses in Legal Assisting **½-10 units**

Lecture and/or lab hours as required by unit formula

Specialized short courses to update legal assistants; content designed specifically for participants. Total short course credit is 10 units. (2)