

Paralegal Studies

ACCOUNTING BUSINESS AND LEGAL STUDIES DEPARTMENT

Associate in Applied Science (A.A.S.) Degree

Paralegals are trained specialists who, under the supervision of an attorney, perform a wide variety of legal tasks. These tasks may include legal research, law office management and preparation of legal documents. Only an attorney may provide legal services directly to the public. Students can earn the Associate in Applied Science which prepares graduates for employment in law offices, corporate legal departments, legal services corporations, state government offices, title companies and federal and state courts. Students who have already earned an A.A., A.S., A.A.S., B.A. or B.S. degree can earn the certificate. Students with one of these degrees plus three years of full-time paralegal work experience can earn the **Certificate of Achievement.**

Can students who major in Paralegal Studies transfer to a four-year college or university?

Articulation agreements with public and private institutions offer students who earn the A.A.S. degree the opportunity to transfer all of their coursework to the four-year institution. Students in specialized programs, or who earn an A.A.S. degree should discuss the transfer process with an advisor.

Are there any requirements that must be satisfied before taking courses in the major?

Students must either have a high school diploma or have passed an equivalency examination. Algebra I is a prerequisite for all majors. Algebra I competency may be verified with a passing score on the College's placement test or completion of the appropriate course.

How long will it take to complete this degree?

Once students complete developmental coursework (if needed), the degree can be completed in two years of full-time study. They can shorten the amount of time by taking courses in the summer and winter sessions.

What are the objectives of this program?

1. Provide a rigorous, flexible program for the quality education of the occupationally competent paralegal.
2. Provide a paralegal education program that leads to the opportunity for employment of its graduates by a wide range of employers.
3. Provide paralegals with a well-rounded, balanced education founded on a beneficial mix of general education, theory, and practical courses, stressing understanding and reasoning rather than rote learning of facts.
4. Support the general principle of ethical legal practice, professional responsibility and the prohibitions against the unauthorized practice of law by non-lawyers.
5. Provide an educational program that is responsive to the needs of the State of New Jersey and contributes to the advancement of legal professionals.
6. Provide a program that instills respect for the legal profession and its foundations, institutions, and quest for justice.
7. Maintain equality of opportunity in the educational program without discrimination or segregation on the grounds of race, color, religion, national origin or sex. The program's overall objective is to provide quality education for paralegals so that they might assist the legal profession in rendering more personal, economical services to a greater number of persons.

How are these objectives met?

1. Through flexible curriculum planning which stresses a balance among General Education courses, law related courses, legal specialty courses, and electives.
2. Through continual assessment of the need for the program as evidenced by the legal profession's response to regular surveys and the ability of the program to place graduates.
3. By keeping the enrollment of the program to a size that will ensure a good student-teacher ratio and give graduates a good chance for paralegal employment. This is determined in the same method as number 2 above.
4. By providing the program with a well qualified full-time director with the necessary time to devote to the extensive administrative duties of the position.

When students complete the program, what skills will they have ?

1. Use the law library, including encyclopedias, reporter systems, digests, and practice manuals, including updating sources; utilize computer-assisted research including WESTLAW, reporter systems, statutes, administrative codes, updating sources and extended databases.
2. Understand and use rules governing courts and basic litigation procedures including telephone technique, client interviews, complaints, interrogatories, and motions.
3. Use forms and filing procedures relevant to typical legal proceedings.
4. Use forms and filing procedures in real and personal property transactions, including Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act.

NOTE: For students matriculating in this program, degree credit will not ordinarily be given for any course designated PLS which was completed more than six years prior to completion of the degree program.

Questions?

Contact Name: Professor Nancy Bailey, department chair / Professor Jean Volk, assistant chair

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Department Web: <http://www.middlesexcc.edu/departments/bam>

PARALEGAL STUDIES

Associate in Applied Science (A.A.S.) Degree - PL.AAS

*Below are required courses and recommended course groupings and sequences for program completion.
Courses may have prerequisite and corequisite requirements. Check course descriptions for details.*

Courses	Credits	Requisites/Comments
<i>Semester I</i>		
CSC 105 Computer Applications and Systems	3	Students may select an alternate Computer Science (GE MST) course for which they have appropriate academic advisement and preparation in mathematics, such as CSC 106.
ENG 121 English Composition I	3	A passing score on the College's placement test or a grade of "C" or better in ENG 010.
PLS 100 Introduction to the Paralegal Profession	2	
PLS 101 Legal Research	3	Prerequisite(s) or corequisite(s): ENG 121 & PLS 100
PLS 113 Legal Writing	2	Prerequisite(s) or corequisite(s): ENG 121, PLS 100 and PLS 101
____ General Education Social Science Elective (GE SS)	3	
<i>Semester II</i>		
PLS 121 Advanced Legal Research	2	Prerequisite(s): PLS 100, PLS 101, PLS 113, CSC 105 or CSC 106
ENG 122 English Composition II	3	A grade of "C" or better in ENG 121
PLS 104 Property Transactions	4	PLS 100, PLS 101, PLS 113 Prerequisite(s) or corequisite(s): PLS 121
PLS 110 Litigation Procedure	4	PLS 100, PLS 101, PLS 113 Prerequisite(s) or corequisite(s): PLS 121
PLS 111 Contracts & the Uniform Commercial Code	3	PLS 100, PLS 101, PLS 113 Prerequisite(s) or corequisite(s): PLS 121
PLS 123 Advanced Legal Writing	2	PLS 100, PLS 101, PLS 113
<i>Semester III</i>		
PLS 108 Torts	3	PLS 100, PLS 101, PLS 113 Prerequisite(s) or corequisite(s): PLS 121
PLS 112 Business Organizations & Government Regulation	3	PLS 100, PLS 101, PLS 111, PLS 113 and PLS 121
____ Paralegal Electives	3	
<i>Choose one of the following courses required -3 credits each:</i>		
PLS 105 Family Law		PLS 100, PLS 101, PLS 113 Prerequisite(s) or corequisite(s): PLS 121
PLS 106 Wills and Estate Administration		Prerequisite(s): PLS 100, PLS 101, PLS 113 Prerequisite(s) or corequisite(s): PLS 121
PLS 109 Criminal Law and Procedure		Prerequisite(s): PLS 100, PLS 101, PLS 113 Prerequisite(s) or corequisite(s): PLS 121
PLS 208 Paralegal Field Experience		Prerequisite(s): PLS 100, PLS 101, PLS 110, PLS 113, PLS 121, and PLS 104 or PLS 108 or PLS 109 and permission of the program director.
SPE 121 Fundamentals of Public Speaking	3	
____ Physical/Health Education Elective	1-3	
BUS 115 Mathematics of Finance	3	BUS 115 will satisfy the math requirement. Students considering transfer to a baccalaureate program should consult an academic advisor as to other math choices.

<i>Semester IV</i>		
ECO 201 Economics I	3	A passing score on the algebra portion on the College's placement test or MAT 013.
PLS 225 Portfolio Project for Paralegals	1	PLS 100, PLS 101, PLS 104, PLS 108, PLS 110, PLS 111, PLS 112, PLS 113, PLS 121. Prerequisite(s) or corequisite(s): PLS 121
____ Paralegal Electives	3	
Choose one of the following courses - 3 credits each:		
PLS 105 Family Law		PLS 100, PLS 101, PLS 113 Prerequisite(s) or corequisite(s): PLS 121
PLS 106 Wills and Estate Administration		Prerequisite(s): PLS 100, PLS 101, PLS 113 Prerequisite(s) or corequisite(s): PLS 121
PLS 109 Criminal Law and Procedure		Prerequisite(s): PLS 100, PLS 101, PLS 113 Prerequisite(s) or corequisite(s): PLS 121
PLS 208 Paralegal Field Experience		Prerequisite(s): PLS 100, PLS 101, PLS 110, PLS 113, PLS 121, and PLS 104 or PLS 108 or PLS 109 and permission of the program director.
____ General Education Humanities Elective (GE HUM)	3	
____ General Education Science Elective (GE MST)	3-4	

Total Credits: 63-66

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PARALEGAL STUDIES CERTIFICATE - PLC.CER

*The Paralegal Studies Certificate is designed for the person who already has a college degree - Associate's, Bachelor's or higher.
The Program is approved by the American Bar Association and the College is a member of the American Association for Paralegal Education.*

Courses	Credits	Requisites/Comments
<i>Semester I</i>		
ENG 121 English Composition I	3	A passing score on the College's placement test or a grade of "C" or better in ENG 010.
ENG 122 English Composition II	3	A grade of "C" or better in ENG 121
PLS 100 Introduction to the Paralegal Profession	2	
PLS 101 Legal Research	3	Prerequisite(s) or corequisite(s): ENG 121 (or waiver) and PLS 100
PLS 113 Legal Writing	2	Prerequisite(s) or corequisite(s): ENG 121 (or waiver), PLS 100 and PLS 101
PLS 121 Advanced Legal Research	2	Prerequisite(s): PLS 100, PLS 101, PLS 113
PLS 123 Advance Legal Writing	2	Prerequisite(s): PLS 100, PLS 101, PLS 113
PLS ___ Electives (see below)	14	
Total Credits: 31**		

PARALEGAL ELECTIVES

Select one of the following electives - students may choose to take more than 14 credits of electives.

Courses	Credits	Requisites/Comments
PLS 104 Property Transactions	4	Prerequisite(s): PLS 100, PLS 101, PLS 113 Prerequisite(s) or corequisite(s): PLS 121 and PLS 123
PLS 105 Family Law	3	Prerequisite(s): PLS 100, PLS 101, PLS 113 Prerequisite(s) or corequisite(s): PLS 121 and PLS 123
PLS 106 Wills and Estate Administration	3	Prerequisite(s): PLS 100, PLS 101, PLS 113 Prerequisite(s) or corequisite(s): PLS 121 and PLS 123
PLS 108 Torts	3	Prerequisite(s): PLS 100, PLS 101, PLS 113 Prerequisite(s) or corequisite(s): PLS 121 and PLS 123
PLS 110 Litigation Procedure	4	Prerequisite(s): PLS 100, PLS 101, PLS 113 Prerequisite(s) or corequisite(s): PLS 121 and PLS 123
PLS 111 Contract and the Uniform Commercial Code	3	Prerequisite(s): PLS 100, PLS 101, PLS 113 Prerequisite(s) or corequisite(s): PLS 121 and PLS 123
PLS 112 Business Organizations and Government Regulations	3	Prerequisite(s): PLS 100, PLS 101, PLS 113, PLS 111 Prerequisite(s) or corequisite(s): PLS 121 and PLS 123
PLS 109 Criminal Law and Procedure	3	Prerequisite(s): PLS 100, PLS 101, PLS 113 Prerequisite(s) or corequisite(s): PLS 121 and PLS 123
PLS 225 Portfolio Project for Paralegals	3	Prerequisite(s): PLS 100, PLS 101, PLS 113, PLS 121, PLS 123 and 15 additional credits of paralegal courses (PLS courses) and permission of the PLS program director of department chair

* Holders of A.S. and A.A.S. degrees must show that they have taken 18 credits of general education courses.

Holder of A.A. degrees are presumed to have satisfied the general education requirement.

** For students who are granted transfer credits, total will be reduced

NOTE: Not all PLS courses are offered every semester, both day and evening. Please call the department chairperson at 732.906.2576 to discuss course offerings for future semesters.

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