

**ITT Technical Institute**  
**PL103**  
**Technology in the Law Office**  
**Onsite Course**

**SYLLABUS**

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**Credit hours:** 4

**Contact/Instructional hours:** 50 (30 Theory Hours, 20 Lab Hours)

**Prerequisite(s) and/or Corequisite(s):**

Prerequisites: PL101 Introduction to Paralegal Studies, TB150 Computing and Productivity Software

**Course Description:**

This course introduces students to computer technology and applications commonly used in law offices. Students will receive hands-on instruction with emphasis on software common to paralegal/legal assistant.

# Course Summary

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## Major Instructional Areas

1. Function and components of computer operations, hardware, and software in the law office
2. Relationship of legal ethics and technology
3. Impact of federal and court rules on computer usage
4. The paperless legal world
5. Use of Web-based resources

## Course Objectives

This course has the following instructional objectives:

1. Evaluate the impact that security, ethical, and legal issues have on the use of technology within the field of law.
2. Evaluate the impact that federal and court rules have on electronic discovery.
3. Formulate a recommendation for establishing technology systems within a new law firm.
4. Use appropriate technology to prepare legal documents, store and sort client data, and present client and/or case information for a law office.
5. Discuss the elements of a paperless environment within the legal system.
6. Create an electronic presentation to use at trial.
7. Analyze the advantages of case management via specialty software.
8. Research legal issues using the Internet.

## Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students are expected to:

1. Describe how the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure affect technology use in a law office.
2. Articulate ethical and security issues that must be considered when employing technology in a law office.
3. Describe potential ethical issues related to the use of various types of software in a law office.
4. Outline ethical considerations related to a paperless office.
5. Analyze how recent changes in the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure affect electronic discovery.
6. Describe ethical methods for processing documents for delivery to an opposing legal team.
7. Identify types of technology that are often used to complete specific tasks in a law office.
8. Prepare a list of emerging technologies that could be used to improve operations within a law office.

9. Prepare a checklist for installation and licensing requirements to consider when purchasing technology components.
10. Identify online resources appropriate for locating legal information.
11. Describe common uses of the Internet in law offices.
12. Describe how specific software tools are used in law offices.
13. Describe the functions of menus, tools, and commands that are used to create and save documents.
14. Identify help resources of the various software tools used to create legal documents.
15. Prepare legal documents using appropriate software tools.
16. Describe the significance of case organization.
17. Locate information about a specific legal issue using search queries.
18. Describe the process of filing legal documents electronically.
19. Describe the susceptibility of electronic evidence to spoliation.
20. Identify ethical issues related to electronic discovery.
21. Prepare a discovery plan for electronic evidence as required under the Federal Rules.
22. Describe the electronic discovery process.
23. Identify appropriate file formats for a response to a discovery request.
24. Explain how various types of software can be used to facilitate electronic discovery efforts of the legal team.
25. Describe the elements of an electronic courtroom.
26. Explain the purpose of backup plans necessary for a paperless environment.
27. List the electronic courtrooms, resources, and technology staff in your jurisdiction.
28. Develop a plan to respond to a discovery request.
29. Create graphic exhibits to be presented at trial.
30. Prepare an electronic presentation for trial.
31. Create listing of the basic technology needed to manage the needs of a law office.
32. Provide an assessment of the type of technology needed for telecommuting professionals.

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## Learning Materials and References

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### Required Resources

| Textbook Package  | New to this Course | Carried over from Previous Course(s) | Required for Subsequent Course(s) |
|---|--------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Goldman, T. (2013). <i>Technology in the law office</i> (3rd ed.)<br>Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall. | ■                  |                                      | ■                                 |

## Recommended Resources

- ITT Tech Virtual Library:

<http://myportal.itt-tech.edu/library/Pages/HomePage.aspx>.

- Books> eBooks on EbscoHost> Elias, S., & Levinkind, S. *How to find and understand the law* (14<sup>th</sup> ed.). Berkley, CA: Nolo, 2007.
- Periodicals> Web Collections and Indexes
  - Law Journals
- School of Study> School of Criminal Justice> Recommended Links
  - General> LLRX: Law and Technology Resources for Legal Professions
  - Law> American Law Sources On-line
  - Law> FindLaw
- School of Study> School of Criminal Justice> Databases
  - LexisNexis Academic

## Information Search

Use the following keywords to search for additional online resources that may be used for supporting your work on the course assignments:

- Interrogatories
- Paperless office
- Federal Rules of Civil Procedures
- Electronic discovery
- Electronic courtroom

**NOTE:** All links are subject to change without prior notice.

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## Course Plan

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### Suggested Learning Approach

In this course, you will be studying individually and within a group of your peers. As you work on the course deliverables, you are encouraged to share ideas with your peers and instructor, work collaboratively on projects and team assignments, raise critical questions, and provide constructive feedback.

Use the following advice to receive maximum learning benefits from your participation in this course:

| DO  | DON'T  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Take a proactive learning approach.</li> <li>▪ Share your thoughts on critical issues and potential problem solutions.</li> <li>▪ Plan your course work in advance.</li> <li>▪ Explore a variety of learning resources in addition to the textbook.</li> <li>▪ Offer relevant examples from your experience.</li> <li>▪ Make an effort to understand different points of view.</li> <li>▪ Connect concepts explored in this course to real-life professional situations and your own experiences.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Assume there is only one correct answer to a question.</li> <li>▪ Be afraid to share your perspective on the issues analyzed in the course.</li> <li>▪ Be negative about the points of view that are different from yours.</li> <li>▪ Underestimate the impact of collaboration on your learning.</li> <li>▪ Limit your course experience to reading the textbook.</li> <li>▪ Postpone your work on the course deliverables – work on small assignment components every day.</li> </ul> |

## Course Outline

| Unit #   | Unit Title                                    | Grading Category | Activity/Deliverable Title                                       | Grade Allocation<br>(% of all graded work) |
|--|---|------------------|--|--|
| 1  | Technology and Legal Ethics in the Law Office | Assignments      | Unit 1 Assignment 1: Memo: Ethics in the Law Office              | 2%   |
|  |   |                  | Unit 1 Assignment 2: Memo: The Good and Bad of Legal Websites    | 2%   |
|  |   | Labs             | Unit 1 Lab 1: Technology Systems for the New Firm                | 2%   |
| <i>Unit 1 Reading Assignment: Goldman, Chapters 1, 2, and 3</i>                                  |   |                  |  |  |
| 2  | Email, Internet, and Electronic Research      | Assignments      | Unit 2 Assignment 1: Memo: Password Procedures in the Law Office | 2%   |
|  |   | Quizzes          | Quiz 1   | 3%   |
|  |   | Labs             | Unit 2 Lab 1: Multi-Collision Case Research                      | 2%   |
| <i>Unit 2 Reading Assignment: Goldman, Chapter 4, and Appendix II, Case Study B, pp. 520-533</i> |   |                  |  |  |
| 3  | Word Processing                               | Assignments      | Unit 3 Assignment 1: Memo: Microsoft Word                        | 2%   |

| Unit #   | Unit Title   | Grading Category | Activity/Deliverable Title   | Grade Allocation<br>(% of all graded work) |
|--|--|------------------|--|--|
|  |  | Labs             | Unit 3 Lab 1: Client Contingent Fee Agreement                          | 2%   |
|  |  |                  | Unit 3 Lab 2: Office Staff Table                                       | 2%   |
| <i>Unit 3 Reading Assignment: Goldman, Chapter 6</i>   |  |                  |  |  |
| 4  | Electronic Spreadsheets                                      | Quizzes          | Quiz 2   | 3%   |
|  |  | Labs             | Unit 4 Lab 1: Payroll  | 2%   |
|  |  |                  | Unit 4 Lab 2: Expense Report   | 2%   |
| <i>Unit 4 Reading Assignment: Goldman, Chapter 7</i>   |  |                  |  |  |
| 5  | Electronic Databases   | Assignments      | Unit 5 Assignment 1: Memo: How Can Databases Prevent Client Conflicts? | 2%   |
|  |  | Quizzes          | Quiz 3   | 3%   |
|  |  | Labs             | Unit 5 Lab 1: Access Database  | 2%   |
| <i>Unit 5 Reading Assignment: Goldman, Chapter 8</i>   |  |                  |  |  |
| 6  | The Paperless Office, Case Management, and Case Organization | Assignments      | Unit 6 Assignment 1: Memo: Electronic Filing                           | 2%   |
|  |  | Labs             | Unit 6 Lab 1: Timeline   | 2%   |
|  |  |                  | Unit 6 Lab 2: Calendaring  | 2%   |
|  |  |                  | Unit 6 Lab 3: Billing Time   | 2%   |
| <i>Unit 6 Reading Assignment: Goldman, Chapters 5, 9, and 10</i>   |  |                  |  |  |
| 7  | Electronic Discovery   | Quizzes          | Quiz 4   | 3%   |
|  |  | Labs             | Unit 7 Lab 1: Memo: Discovery Request                                  | 2%   |
|  |  |                  | Unit 7 Lab 2: Interrogatories  | 2%   |
| <i>Unit 7 Reading Assignment: Goldman, Chapters 11, 12, and 13</i>   |  |                  |  |  |
| 8  | E-Discovery Analysis   | Assignments      | Unit 8 Assignment 1: Memo: Discovery Request Plan                      | 2%   |
|  |  | Assessments      | Quiz 5   | 3%   |
| <i>Unit 8 Reading Assignment: Goldman, Chapter 14</i>  |  |                  |  |  |
| 9  | Presentation and Trial Graphics                              | Assignments      | Unit 9 Assignment 1: Memo: Electronic Trial Presentations              | 2%   |
|  |  | Quizzes          | Quiz 6   | 3%   |
|  |  | Labs             | Unit 9 Lab 1: Accident Diagram   | 2%   |
| <i>Unit 9 Reading Assignment: Goldman, Chapter 16</i>  |  |                  |  |  |
| 10   | The Electronic Courtroom                                     | Assignments      | Unit 10 Assignment 1: The Electronic Courtroom and Its Attributes      | 2%   |
| <i>Unit 10 Reading Assignment: Goldman, Chapters 15 and 17</i>   |  |                  |  |  |
| 11   | Course Review and Final Examination                          | Exams            | Final Exam   | 18%  |
|  |  | Course Project   | Final Course Project (Submission & Presentation)                       | 20%  |
| <i>Unit 11 Reading Assignment: Review of all previously assigned readings, Chapters 1–16 (Specifically</i> |  |                  |  |  |

| Unit #                                | Unit Title | Grading Category | Activity/Deliverable Title | Grade Allocation<br>(% of all graded work) |
|---------------------------------------|------------|------------------|----------------------------|--|
| <i>reread all chapter summaries.)</i> |            |                  |                            |  |

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## Evaluation and Grading

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### Evaluation Criteria

The graded assignments will be evaluated using the following weighted categories:

| Category       | Weight      |
|----------------|-------------|
| Assignments    | 18%         |
| Labs           | 26%         |
| Quizzes        | 18%         |
| Course Project | 20%         |
| Exams          | 18%         |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>100%</b> |

### Grade Conversion

The final grades will be calculated from the percentages earned in the course, as follows:

| Grade | Percentage | Credit |
|-------|------------|--------|
| A     | 90–100%    | 4.0    |
| B+    | 85–89%     | 3.5    |
| B     | 80–84%     | 3.0    |
| C+    | 75–79%     | 2.5    |
| C     | 70–74%     | 2.0    |
| D+    | 65–69%     | 1.5    |
| D     | 60–64%     | 1.0    |
| F     | <60%       | 0.0    |

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## Academic Integrity

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All students must comply with the policies that regulate all forms of academic dishonesty, or academic misconduct, including plagiarism, self-plagiarism, fabrication, deception, cheating, and sabotage. For more information on the academic honesty policies, refer to the Student Handbook and the Course Catalog.

*(End of Syllabus)*