

ITT Technical Institute  
**PL299**  
**Paralegal Capstone**  
**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: Completion of a minimum of 80 credits earned in the program of study including PL206 Legal Research and Writing II or equivalent

**Course Description:**

This course provides a culminating experience in the paralegal program. Students are given the opportunity to demonstrate competency and knowledge they have learned throughout the program.

# Syllabus: Paralegal Capstone

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## Major Instructional Areas

1. The paralegal profession and workplace
2. Ethics, regulation, and professional responsibility
3. Civil litigation and trial practice
4. Legal research, writing, and critical legal thinking
5. Application of areas of substantive law to common paralegal projects
6. Technology and critical skills for the paralegal
7. Project design, development, and implementation
8. Writing and general skills assessment

## Course Objectives

1. Produce a personal plan for future advancement in the paralegal field including involvement in associations and achievement of certification.
2. Analyze ethical issues affecting paralegal practice.
3. Integrate skills in legal writing, legal research, and critical legal thinking acquired throughout the program into paralegal practice projects and assignments.
4. Prepare the necessary legal documents needed for paralegal real estate practice.
5. Prepare solutions for paralegal projects and roles in civil litigation and trial practice.
6. Produce effective technological solutions to paralegal practice tasks.
7. Formulate solutions to common paralegal tasks regarding contracts.
8. Evaluate and interpret law and issues for business organizations.
9. Assess theoretical and practical aspects of family law as it relates to projects and assignments encountered in paralegal practice.
10. Evaluate criminal law concepts using skills acquired throughout the program.
11. Evaluate effective paralegal action regarding legal principles in wills, trusts, and estates.
12. Select appropriate research methods and make appropriate critical legal decisions for issues related to tort law.

## SCANS Objectives

SCANS is an acronym for Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills. The committee, created by the National Secretary of Labor in the early 1990s, created a list of skills and competencies that the committee feels are necessary for employees to function in a high-tech job market.

1. Locates, understands, and interprets written information in prose and in documents such as manuals, graphs, and schedules.
2. Communicates thoughts, ideas, information, and messages in writing.
3. Creates documents such as letters, directions, manuals, reports, graphs, and flow charts.
4. Specifies goals and constraints, generates alternatives, considers risks, and evaluates and chooses the best alternative.
5. Uses efficient learning techniques to acquire and apply new knowledge and skills.
6. Chooses ethical courses of action.
7. Acquires, evaluates, organizes, and maintains information.
8. Interprets and communicates information.
9. Uses computers to process information.
10. Suggests modifications to existing systems and develops new or alternative systems to improve performance.
11. Chooses procedures and tools including computers and related technologies.

## Course Outline

### Note:

- Where the start and end of an activity are not specified, the assignment must be completed and submitted in the same unit.
- All graded activities except quizzes are listed below in the pattern of <Unit Number>.<Assignment Number>. For example, Assignments: 2.1 refers to the first assignment in Unit 2.

Unit	Activities
1—The Paralegal Profession, Skills, and Associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content covered: <i>The Paralegal Professional: Essentials</i>:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Chapters 1-10</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Assignments: 1.1</li> <li>• Practice Portfolio Projects: 1.1</li> </ul>
2—Ethical Issues in Paralegal Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content covered: <i>Ethics for the Legal Professional</i>:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Chapters 1-9, Appendices A-E</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Assignments: 2.1</li> <li>• Practice Portfolio Projects: 2.1</li> </ul>
3—Legal Research, Writing, Critical Legal Thinking and Investigative Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content covered: <i>Legal Research, Analysis, and Writing</i>:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Chapters 1-14</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Assignments: 3.1, 3.2</li> <li>• Practice Portfolio Projects: 3.1</li> <li>• Group and individual presentations begin</li> </ul>
4—Real Estate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content covered: <i>Reality of Real Estate</i>:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Chapters 1-11</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Assignments: 4.1</li> <li>• Practice Portfolio Projects: 4.1</li> </ul>
5—Civil Litigation and Trial Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content covered: <i>Civil Litigation: Process and Procedures</i>:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Chapters 1-20</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Assignments: 5.1</li> <li>• Practice Portfolio Projects: 5.1</li> <li>• Quiz 1 (Units 1-4)</li> </ul>
6—Technology in the Law Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content covered: <i>Technology in the Law Office</i>:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Chapters 1-16</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Assignments: 6.1</li> <li>• Practice Portfolio Projects: 6.1, 6.2</li> </ul>
7—Contracts and Business Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content covered: <i>Contract Law for Paralegals, Traditional and E-Contracts</i>:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Chapters 1-15</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Content covered: <i>Business Law: Legal Environment, Online Commerce, Business Ethics, and International Issues</i>:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Chapters 9-17, 34-42</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Assignments: 7.1, 7.2</li> <li>• Practice Portfolio Projects: 7.1, 7.2</li> </ul>
8—Family Law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content covered: <i>Family Law for the Paralegal: Concepts and Applications</i>:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Chapters 1-11</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Assignments: 8.1, 8.2</li> <li>• Practice Portfolio Projects: 8.1</li> <li>• Quiz 2 (Units 5-7)</li> <li>• Group presentations end</li> </ul>

Unit	Activities
9—Criminal Law and Wills, Trusts, and Estates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content covered: <i>Essentials of Criminal Law</i>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Chapters 1-22</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Content covered: <i>The Paralegal Professional: Essentials</i>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Chapter 8</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Content covered: <i>Wills, Trusts, and Probate Law for Paralegals</i>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Chapters 1-10</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Assignments: 9.1, 9.2</li> <li>• Practice Portfolio Projects: 9.1, 9.2</li> </ul>
10—Torts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content covered: <i>Tort Law: Concepts and Applications</i>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Chapters 1-29</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Assignments: 10.1, 10.2</li> <li>• Practice Portfolio Projects: 10.1</li> </ul>
11—Course Review & Practice Portfolio Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assemble Paralegal Practice Portfolio</li> <li>• Quiz 3 (Units 8-10)</li> <li>• Individual presentations end</li> </ul>

## Instructional Methods

The Paralegal Capstone course is designed to promote a variety of teaching strategies that support the outcomes described in the course objectives and that foster higher cognitive skills. Delivery makes use of materials from prior courses in the program and includes discussion, and analysis of relevant, real-world paralegal tasks and situations. This course will demonstrate the knowledge you have acquired throughout the program and will help you apply this knowledge to paralegal practice projects.

This capstone course includes assessment strategies to help measure your grasp of key concepts important for practice as a paralegal. Assessments include assignments, quizzes, presentations, and a Paralegal Practice Portfolio.

## Instructional Materials and References

### Student Textbook Packages

The following textbooks are from the paralegal courses preceding this one. No new books are required for this course. These books will be used for assignments and projects in this course. Quizzes will be based on information in these textbooks.

- Chamelin, Neil C., and Thomas, Andrew. *Essentials of Criminal Law*. 10<sup>th</sup> ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2009.
- Cheeseman, Henry R. *Business Law: Legal Environment, Online Commerce, Business Ethics, and International Issues*. 6<sup>th</sup> ed./7<sup>th</sup> ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2007/2010.
- Cheeseman, Henry R., and Thomas F. Goldman. *The Paralegal Professional: Essentials*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed/3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2008/2011.
- Gibson, Pamela. *Wills, Trusts, and Probate Law for Paralegals*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2009.
- Goldman, Thomas F., and Alice Hughes, *Civil Litigation: Process and Procedures*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2011.

- Goldman, Thomas, F. *Technology in the Law Office*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2010.
- Hames, Joanne Banker, and Yvonne Ekern. *Legal Research, Analysis, and Writing*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2009.
- Michaud, Hillary J. *Tort Law: Concepts and Applications*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2011.
- Nemeth, Charles P. *Reality of Real Estate*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2010.
- Orlik, Deborah K. *Ethics for the Legal Professional*. 6th/7<sup>th</sup> ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2007/2010.
- Reed, Kathleen M., and Henry R. Cheeseman. *Contract Law for Paralegals, Traditional and E-Contracts*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2009.
- Wilson, Mary E. *Family Law for the Paralegal: Concepts and Applications*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2009.

### Other Required Resources

In addition to the textbooks, the following are also required in this course:

Microsoft Office Suite 2003 (or higher)

Adobe Acrobat software or similar software such as CutePDF Writer (freeware)

LexisNexis Academic (access provided by ITT Tech)

### References

#### ITT Tech Virtual Library

Log on to the ITT Tech Virtual Library at <http://library.itt-tech.edu/> to access online books, journals, and other reference resources selected to support ITT Tech curricula.

#### Periodicals

You may click "Periodicals" or use the E-Journal Lookup on the home page to find the following periodicals.

- LexisNexis Academic  
Organized into five categories, this database includes articles from international newspapers, magazines, transcripts, legal research, and medical journals.

#### Reference Resources

You may click "Reference Resources" or use the E-Journal Lookup on the home page to find the following reference resources.

Law>

- Legal Information Institute> Cornell University Law School> WEX> Legal Ethics Professional Responsibility: An Overview
- FindLaw

This website provides a comprehensive set of legal resources for professionals, businesses, and individuals. These resources include Web search utilities, cases and codes, legal news, informational articles, and more.

- GovEngine.com: Federal Courts

This website provides links to federal courts, state courts, and federal and state government links.

- Legal Information Institute  
Maintained by the Cornell Law School, this site provides information on legal topics and links to state and federal law and court decisions.
- LexisNexis Academic access. This database is accessible through the ITT Tech Virtual Library.

## Paralegal&gt;

- Harvard Law School: Research Guides  
This site prepared by the Harvard Law School Library provides guides on a variety of legal topics.
- LLRX.com  
This site offers articles about research as well as a database of state and federal court rules, forms, and dockets.

**Other References**

The following resources may be found **outside** of the ITT Tech Virtual Library, whether online or in hard copy.

Books

- Garner, Bryan A. *Black's Law Dictionary* 9/E. Washington, DC: Thomson/West, 2009.
- Hecht, Henry L. *Effective Depositions*. 2nd ed. Chicago: ABA Publishing, 2010.
- Legal encyclopedias such as *American Jurisprudence* 2nd (Lawyers Cooperative) are alphabetically organized and reference federal rules, uniform laws, and case law by state. *Am Jur Legal Forms* 2nd (West Group) and *Am Jur Pleading and Practice Forms Annotated* (Lawyers Cooperative Publishing) are resources for selected forms.
- Treatises such as Matthew Bender's six-volume *Family Law and Practice*, four-volume *Family Law Litigation Guide with Forms*, three-volume *Valuation and Distribution of Marital Property*, two-volume *Disputed Paternity Proceedings*, three-volume *Adoption Law and Practice*, five-volume *Child Custody and Visitation*, two-volume *Lindey and Parley on Separation Agreements and Antenuptial Contracts 2d Including Forms*
- States generally have state-specific practice manuals and resources on a variety of topics, often published by Bar Associations.

Periodicals

- Weiss, Steven A. *e-Discovery: A Special Publication of the Section of Litigation* (ABA), ABA Publishing, February 2007.

Literally hundreds of law-related periodicals are available, usually published by law schools (such as the *Harvard Law Review*) and organizations and professional associations (such as the American Bar Association's *Family Law Quarterly* and the *Journal of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers*).

Websites—Professional

- American Bar Association (ABA)

<http://www.aba.net>

This is the official site for the American Bar Association and provides current article links within the ABA Newsroom as well as the *ABA Journal*.

- National Association of Legal Assistants (NALA)

<http://www.nala.org>

This site includes information about paralegal careers, continuing education, the Certified Legal Assistant (CLA), and the Certified Paralegal (CP) exam.

- National Federation of Paralegal Associations (NFPA)

<http://www.paralegals.org>

This site provides information about the Paralegal Advanced Competency Exam (PACE), individual state paralegal regulations, legal research resources, and association membership.

- NALS, the Association for Legal Professionals

<http://www.nals.org>

This site includes information about NALS and the Professional Paralegal (PP) certification, as well as continuing education and online training.

#### Websites—Reference

- American Bar Association: Litigation <http://www.abanet.org/litigation/home.html> (accessed 1/7/11)

This page provides links to the ABA resources on litigation.

- Cornell University Law Library

<http://library.lawschool.cornell.edu>

This site offers electronic legal researches and an online legal research guide.

- Dictionary Law.com  
<http://dictionary.law.com/> (accessed 1/7/11)

This online dictionary is a quick reference to a legal term or definition.

- Federal Rules of Civil Procedure (FRCP), Cornell University Law School  
<http://www.law.cornell.edu/rules/frcp/> (accessed 1/7/11)

This page provides links to the complete Federal Rules of Civil Procedure (2009).

- MegaLaw.com  
<http://www.megalaw.com/top/civpro.php> (accessed 1/7/11)

This page is a portal to the FRCP and all 50 states' rules regarding civil procedure.

- The Oyez Project

<http://www.oyez.org> (accessed 1/7/11)

This site offers access to databases on the major constitutional cases heard by the U.S. Supreme Court.

- Paralegal Resource Guide

<http://suffolk.libguides.com/content.php?pid=123255&sid=1059243>

(accessed 1/7/11)

This site provides multiple databases and lists of websites in addition to association information for the paralegal.

- United States Code  
<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/uscode/> (accessed 1/7/11)

This is the main page to search the general and permanent laws of the United States.

#### Websites—Government

- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

[http://portal.hud.gov/portal/page/portal/HUD/program\\_offices/fair\\_housing\\_equal\\_opp](http://portal.hud.gov/portal/page/portal/HUD/program_offices/fair_housing_equal_opp) (accessed 1/7/11)

This site contains federal government reports and information on housing policy and programs, building technology, economic development, and urban planning.

- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

<http://portal.hud.gov/portal/page/portal/HUD/states> (accessed 1/7/11)

This is the portal for state-specific information for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

- Administration for Children and Families (ACF)

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov> (accessed 1/7/11)

From the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, this site provides links to a number of topics related to family law including adoption and foster care, child abuse and neglect, and child support.

- Office of Child Support Enforcement

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cse> (accessed 1/7/11)

A wealth of material available on this site includes a list of and links to child support enforcement (IV-D) agencies in all states.

- U.S. Census Bureau

<http://www.census.gov> (accessed 1/7/11)

A number of statistical reports relevant to family law topics are available on this government site.

- Child Information Gateway

<http://www.childwelfare.gov> (accessed 1/7/11)

This site contains links to federal and state laws, fact sheets, statistics, and publications on a variety of child-related topics including adoption, abuse, termination of parental rights, and safe-haven laws.

- Internal Revenue Service

<http://www.irs.gov> (accessed 1/7/11)

This home page of the Internal Revenue Service provides access to general tax information, forms, and treasury regulations.

#### Websites—Topical

- Child Support

<http://www.supportguidelines.com/main.html> (accessed 1/7/11)

This comprehensive resource on child support guidelines provides links to state material.

- Domestic Violence

<http://www.lrcvaw.org> (accessed 1/7/11)

This is the site for the Legal Resource Center on Violence Against Women. It features links to national and state resources on several topics and provides state-by-state links to child custody jurisdiction statutes (UCCJEA and UCCJA), long-arm statutes, and relocation statutes.

- Ethics: legeethics.com

<http://www.legeethics.com> (accessed 1/7/11)

This site abstracts and provides links to articles on topics related to legal issues associated with the use of technology by legal professionals. It also provides links to other ethics-related sites.

- Ethics: National Association of Legal Assistants

<http://www.nala.org/code.aspx> (accessed 1/7/11)

This page details the NALA Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility.

- Model Code of Ethics

<http://www.paralegals.org/displaycommon.cfm?an=1&subarticlenbr=133> (accessed 1/7/11)

This page details the National Federation of Paralegal Associations (NFPA) Model Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility and Guidelines for Enforcement.

- Ethics: ABA Center for Professional Responsibility

<http://www.abanet.org/cpr> (accessed 1/7/11)

This page provides links to many ethics-related resources from the American Bar Association.

- Forms

At the end of Appendix D in your *Ethics for the Legal Professional* textbook, you will find a number of links to sites in more than three dozen states where selected family law forms can be located.

- Legislation: National Conference of State Legislatures

<http://www.ncsl.org> (accessed 1/7/11)

This site provides summaries of enacted and proposed legislation in the various states.

- Legislation: National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws

<http://www.nccusl.org> (accessed 1/7/11)

This site provides text of the various uniform acts and indicates which states have adopted each in whole or part.

- Research: Divorce Laws: Child Custody, Support, Visitation

<http://www.divorcelinks.com> (accessed 1/7/11)

This site features direct links to state and federal divorce laws by topic.

All links to Web references are always subject to change without prior notice.

## Course Evaluation and Grading

This course consists of assignments, quizzes, presentations and projects for the Paralegal Practice Portfolio. Quizzes are designed to test your knowledge of concepts learned throughout the paralegal program. Quiz questions and answers are taken from the textbooks used throughout the program and listed in this syllabus.

### Evaluation Criteria Table

The final grades will be based on the following categories. Specific point values for assignments, presentations, quizzes and the portfolio projects will be assigned by the instructor.

CATEGORY	WEIGHT
Assignments	40%
Group/Individual Presentation(s)	10%
Quizzes	30%
Practice Portfolio Projects	20%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

Note: Students are responsible for abiding by the Plagiarism Policy.

### Grade Conversion Table

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

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

## PL299—COURSE SNAPSHOT

Grading Category	Grade Book Category Weight (% of Course Total)	Unit	Activity/Graded Deliverable	Grade Allocation (% of Course Total)	Measuring Rubric* (Subcategory)
A. Presentation	10%	3-11	Presentations Evaluations Group and Individual	10%	A-2-2 Present and Defend Projects (5% for Individual Presentation and 5% for Group Presentation)
B. Assignments	40%	1	Assignment 1.1	5%	B-7-1 Advancement, Certification, and Associations
		2	Assignment 2.1	2.5%	B-6-1 Ethical Issues
		3	Assignment 3.1	3%	B-2-1 Legal writing, legal

					research, and critical thinking
		3	Assignment 3.2	3%	B-2-1 Legal writing, legal research, and critical thinking
		4	Assignment 4.1	3%	B-1-1 Real Estate
		5	Assignment 5.1	3%	B-1-2 Civil Litigation
		6	Assignment 6.1	3%	B-5-1 Technological Solutions
		7	Assignment 7.1	3%	B-1-3 Contracts
		7	Assignment 7.2	2.5%	B-6-1 Ethical Issues
		8	Assignment 8.1	3%	B-1-4 Family Law
		9	Assignment 9.1	3%	B-1-5 Criminal Law
		9	Assignment 9.2	3%	B-3-2 Wills, Trusts, and Estate
		10	Assignment 10.1	3%	B-3-2 Wills, Trusts, and Estate
O. Quizzes	30%	5	Quiz 1	10%	N/A
		8	Quiz 2	10%	N/A
		11	Quiz 3	10%	N/A
R. Projects	20%	1	Paralegal Profession, Skills, and Associations - PPP 1.1	1.5%	D-7-1 Advancement, Certification, and Associations
		2	Ethical Issues in Paralegal Practice - PPP 2.1	1.5%	D-6-1 Ethical Issues
		3	Legal Research, Writing, Critical Thinking and Investigative Skills - PPP 3.1	2%	D-2-1 Legal Research, Writing and Critical Thinking Skills
		4	Real Estate - PPP 4.1	1.5%	D-1-1 Real Estate Practice
		5	Civil Litigation and Trial Practice - PPP 5.1	1.5%	D-1-2 Civil Litigation and Trial Practice
		6	Technology in the Law Office - PPP 6.1	1.5%	D-5-1 Technological Solutions
		6	Presentation Software Comparison - PPP 6.2	1.5%	D-5-1 Technological Solutions
		7	Contracts - PPP 7.1	1.5%	D-1-3 Contracts
		7	Business Organizations - PPP 7.2	1.5%	D-3-1 Business Organizations
		8	Family Law - PPP 8.1	1.5%	D-1-4 Family Law
		9	Criminal Law - PPP 9.1	1.5%	D-1-5 Criminal Law
		9	Wills, Trusts, and Estates - PPP 9.2	1.5%	D-3-2 Wills, Trusts, and Estate
		10	Torts - PPP 10.1	1.5%	D-4-1 Tort Law
Total	100%			100%	

## COURSE GRADING RUBRIC

## PL299—PLS Capstone

Campus: \_\_\_\_\_

Faculty Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Please assign a percentage grade on the line for each subcategory.

### A. Presentations (10% of total grade)

#### Units 3-11—Presentation Evaluations 5% Individual

##### \_\_\_\_\_ *A-2-2 Present and Defend Projects:*

- 90-100%: Accurate and concise message effectively delivered through writing and/or speech with clarity, logical organization of thoughts and appropriate format/style for expected understanding by targeted audience.
- 80-89%: Accurate message delivered through writing and/or speech with appropriate format/style for expected understanding by the target audience.
- 70-79%: Intended message gets across to the target audience in writing or speech with necessary modification and/or polishing.
- 60-69%: Most of the intended message gets across to the audience in writing and/or speech with some degree of ambiguity; lack of consistent format/style.
- Below 60%: Disorganized thoughts with little evidence of logical structure in writing and/or speech; failure to get the intended message across to the audience.

#### Units 3-11—Presentation Evaluations 5% Group

##### \_\_\_\_\_ *A-2-2 Present and Defend Projects:*

- 90-100%: Accurate and concise message effectively delivered through writing and/or speech with clarity, logical organization of thoughts and appropriate format/style for expected understanding by targeted audience.
- 80-89%: Accurate message delivered through writing and/or speech with appropriate format/style for expected understanding by the target audience.
- 70-79%: Intended message gets across to the target audience in writing or speech with necessary modification and/or polishing.
- 60-69%: Most of the intended message gets across to the audience in writing and/or speech with some degree of ambiguity; lack of consistent format/style.
- Below 60%: Disorganized thoughts with little evidence of logical structure in writing and/or speech; failure to get the intended message across to the audience.

### B. Assignments (40% of total grade)

#### Unit 1—Assignment 1.1

##### \_\_\_\_\_ *B-7-1 Advancement, Certification, and Associations:*

- 90-100%: Student has a keen understanding of the legal concepts and is able to apply them to given scenarios with the best possible outcome for the law office. Student has a strong plan for developing specialized skills for advancement in the paralegal field as well as a plan to obtain paralegal certification in the near future.
- 80-89%: Student has an understanding of the legal concepts and can apply them in most cases. Student has a personal plan for advancement including either joining associations or achieving certification.

- 70-79%: Student has an understanding of the legal concepts and can apply them in some cases. Student has a plan to obtain certification.
- 60-69%: Student is unable to evaluate legal concepts in most cases. Student understands the value of legal certification but does not know where to begin to become certified.
- Below 60%: Student is unable to evaluate legal concepts within the law office scenarios. Student has no plan for involvement in associations and does not understand the value of certification.

### Unit 2—Assignment 2.1

#### ***B-6-1 Ethical Issues:***

- 90-100%: Student demonstrates an understanding of the ethical issues surrounding the paralegal profession and can provide guidance on how to avoid unauthorized practice of law in detail.
- 80-89%: Student applies ethical judgment in most decisions.
- 70-79%: Student uses ethical judgment in some decisions.
- 60-69%: Student seems unable to determine the best ethical course of action for a given scenario.
- Below 60%: Student frequently makes the wrong ethical decision as applied to the practice of law and working as a paralegal in a law office setting.

### Unit 3—Assignment 3.1

#### ***B-2-1 Legal Writing, Legal Research, and Critical Thinking:***

- 90-100%: Effective decision making based on analysis of data and convincing reasoning; evidence of original creativity in providing solutions for challenging problems. Student demonstrates outstanding legal research and legal writing skills when given just basic facts and can apply these skills into paralegal practice projects and assignments. The student would likely be able to succeed in a fast paced legal environment.
- 80-89%: Making decisions based on adequate research and reasoning that require a fair amount of analytical reading and critical thinking; capable of solving problems. Student can perform legal research and legal writing skills and apply same to their paralegal practice projects and assignments.
- 70-79%: Evidence of making decisions based on some research and analysis; able to solve normal problems. Student can manage typical legal research and legal writing techniques.
- 60-69%: Making decisions by following the status quo; lack of evidence of strenuous research, analysis and reasoning in making a decision or solving problems. Poor legal research and legal writing skills when applied to paralegal practice projects and assignments.
- Below 60%: No evidence of making any decision based on critical thinking analysis; incapable of solving specific problems. Student cannot perform satisfactory legal research and legal writing skills into paralegal practice projects and assignments.

### Unit 3—Assignment 3.2

#### ***B-2-1 Legal Writing, Legal Research, and Critical Thinking:***

- 90-100%: Effective decision making based on analysis of data and convincing reasoning; evidence of original creativity in providing solutions for challenging problems. Student demonstrates outstanding legal research and legal writing skills when given just basic facts and can apply these skills into paralegal

practice projects and assignments. The student would likely be able to succeed in a fast paced legal environment.

- 80-89%: Making decisions based on adequate research and reasoning that require a fair amount of analytical reading and critical thinking; capable of solving problems. Student can perform legal research and legal writing skills and apply same to their paralegal practice projects and assignments.
- 70-79%: Evidence of making decisions based on some research and analysis; able to solve normal problems. Student can manage typical legal research and legal writing techniques.
- 60-69%: Making decisions by following the status quo; lack of evidence of strenuous research, analysis and reasoning in making a decision or solving problems. Poor legal research and legal writing skills when applied to paralegal practice projects and assignments.
- Below 60%: No evidence of making any decision based on critical thinking analysis; incapable of solving specific problems. Student cannot perform satisfactory legal research and legal writing skills into paralegal practice projects and assignments.

**Unit 4—Assignment 4.1*****B-1-1 Real Estate Law:***

- 90-100%: Student is able to prepare the appropriate real estate law legal documentation in nearly all cases as assigned. Student demonstrates an understanding of real estate law and the legal concepts that relate to this specialty area of legal practice.
- 80-89%: Student is able to prepare the appropriate real estate law legal documentation in most cases. Student can determine the best course of action for real estate law cases in most situations.
- 70-79%: Student is able to prepare the appropriate real estate law legal documentation and action in some cases. However, the legal documentation is not as professional as it should be.
- 60-69%: Student is unable to provide appropriate real estate law legal documentation or articulate appropriate real estate law legal action in most cases.
- Below 60%: Student demonstrates little to no understanding of real estate law and the appropriate legal documentation necessary to represent real estate law clients in the law office setting.

**Unit 5—Assignment 5.1*****B-1-2 Civil Litigation:***

- 90-100%: Student is able to prepare the appropriate civil litigation and trial practice legal documentation in nearly all cases as assigned. Student demonstrates an understanding of civil litigation and trial practice and the legal concepts that relate to this specialty area of legal practice
- 80-89%: Student is able to prepare the appropriate civil litigation and trial practice legal documentation in most cases. Student can determine the best course of action for litigation cases in most situations.
- 70-79%: Student is able to prepare the appropriate civil litigation and trial practice legal documentation and action in some cases. However, the legal documentation is not as professional as it should be.
- 60-69%: Student is unable to provide appropriate civil litigation and trial practice legal documentation or articulate appropriate litigation legal actions in most cases.
- Below 60%: Student demonstrates little to no understanding of civil litigation and trial practice and the appropriate legal documentation necessary to represent litigation clients in the law office setting.

**Unit 6—Assignment 6.1*****B-5-1 Technological Solutions:***

- 90-100%: Student is able to produce technological solutions for tasks as assigned in the paralegal environment. Student demonstrates a keen understanding of the types of technology needed to be serve the clients in the law office today.
- 80-89%: Student is able to produce effective technological solutions to most tasks as assigned.
- 70-79%: Student is able to produce effective technology solutions to some tasks as assigned.
- 60-69%: Student is unable to provide effective technological solutions in most cases.
- Below 60%: Student does not demonstrate understanding of the technological needs of the law office.

**Unit 7—Assignment 7.1*****B-1-3 Contracts:***

- 90-100%: Student is able to prepare the appropriate contract law legal documentation in nearly all cases as assigned. Student demonstrates an understanding of contract law and the legal concepts that relate to this specialty area of legal practice.
- 80-89%: Student is able to prepare the appropriate contract law legal documentation in most cases. Student can determine the best course of action for contract law cases in most situations.
- 70-79%: Student is able to prepare the appropriate contract law legal documentation and action in some cases. However, the legal documentation is not as professional as it should be.
- 60-69%: Student is unable to provide appropriate contract law legal documentation or articulate appropriate contract law legal action in most cases.
- Below 60%: Student demonstrates little to no understanding of contract law and the appropriate legal documentation necessary to represent contract law clients in the law office setting.

**Unit 7—Assignment 7.2*****B-6-1 Ethical Issues:***

- 90-100%: Student demonstrates an understanding of the ethical issues surrounding the paralegal profession and can provide guidance on how to avoid unauthorized practice of law in detail.
- 80-89%: Student applies ethical judgment in most decisions.
- 70-79%: Student uses ethical judgment in some decisions.
- 60-69%: Student seems unable to determine the best ethical course of action for a given scenario.
- Below 60%: Student frequently makes the wrong ethical decision as applied to the practice of law and working as a paralegal in a law office setting.

**Unit 8—Assignment 8.1*****B-1-4 Family Law:***

- 90-100%: Student is able to prepare the appropriate family law legal documentation in nearly all cases as assigned while applying appropriate theoretical and practical aspects for each individual family dynamic. Student

demonstrates an understanding of family law and the legal concepts that relate to this specialty area of legal practice. Student recognizes that family law is not a routine practice and each case requires extensive and exceptional critical thinking and legal research and writing skill sets.

- 80-89%: Student is able to prepare the appropriate family law legal documentation in most cases. Student can determine the best course of action for family law clients based on their understanding of the theoretical and practical aspects of the family dynamic in most situations.
- 70-79%: Student is able to prepare the appropriate family law legal documentation and recognizes the appropriate theoretical and practical aspects or action needed in some cases. However, the legal documentation is not as professional as it should be.
- 60-69%: Student is unable to provide appropriate family law legal documentation or articulate appropriate family law legal action in most cases. Student has little understanding of the impact of the theoretical or practical aspects of the family dynamic and how this can be disturbed through the court process.
- Below 60%: Student demonstrates little to no understanding of theoretical or practical aspects of family law and the appropriate legal documentation necessary to represent family law clients in the law office setting.

### Unit 9—Assignment 9.1

#### ***B-1-5 Criminal Law:***

- 90-100%: Student is able to prepare the appropriate criminal law legal documentation in nearly all cases as assigned. Student demonstrates an understanding of criminal law and the legal concepts that relate to this specialty area of legal practice.
- 80-89%: Student is able to prepare the appropriate criminal law legal documentation in most cases. Student can determine the best course of action for criminal law cases in most situations.
- 70-79%: Student is able to prepare the appropriate criminal law legal documentation and action in some cases. However, the legal documentation is not as professional as it should be.
- 60-69%: Student is unable to recognize or provide appropriate criminal law legal documentation or articulate appropriate criminal law legal action in most cases.
- Below 60%: Student demonstrates little to no understanding of criminal law and the appropriate legal documentation necessary to represent criminal law clients in the law office setting.

### Unit 9—Assignment 9.2

#### ***B-3-2 Wills, Trusts, and Estates:***

- 90-100%: Student is able to prepare the appropriate wills, trusts, and estate law legal documentation in nearly all cases as assigned. Student demonstrates an understanding of probate law and the legal concepts that relate to this specialty area of legal practice.
- 80-89%: Student is able to prepare the appropriate wills, trusts, and estate law legal documentation in most cases. Student can determine the best course of action for probate law cases in most situations.
- 70-79%: Student is able to prepare the appropriate wills, trusts, and estates law legal documentation and action in some cases. However, the legal documentation is not as professional as it should be.
- 60-69%: Student is unable to provide appropriate wills, trusts, and estates law legal documentation or articulate appropriate probate law legal action in most cases.

- Below 60%: Student demonstrates little to no understanding of wills, trusts, and estates (probate law) and the appropriate legal documentation necessary to represent probate law clients in the law office setting.

### Unit 10—Assignment 10.1

#### ***B-3-2 Wills, Trusts, and Estates:***

- 90-100%: Student is able to prepare the appropriate wills, trusts, and estate law legal documentation in nearly all cases as assigned. Student demonstrates an understanding of probate law and the legal concepts that relate to this specialty area of legal practice.
- 80-89%: Student is able to prepare the appropriate wills, trusts, and estate law legal documentation in most cases. Student can determine the best course of action for probate law cases in most situations.
- 70-79%: Student is able to prepare the appropriate wills, trusts, and estates law legal documentation and action in some cases. However, the legal documentation is not as professional as it should be.
- 60-69%: Student is unable to provide appropriate wills, trusts, and estates law legal documentation or articulate appropriate probate law legal action in most cases.
- Below 60%: Student demonstrates little to no understanding of wills, trusts, and estates (probate law) and the appropriate legal documentation necessary to represent probate law clients in the law office setting.

### C. Quizzes (30% of total grade) Units 5, 8, and 11 Use Answer Keys for Grading – No Rubric Needed

### D. Projects (20% of total grade)

#### Unit 1—Paralegal Profession, Skills, and Associations – PPP 1.1

##### ***B-7-1 Advancement, Certification, and Associations:***

- 90-100%: Student has a keen understanding of the legal concepts and is able to apply them to given scenarios with the best possible outcome for the law office. Student has a strong plan for developing specialized skills for advancement in the paralegal field as well as a plan to obtain paralegal certification in the near future.
- 80-89%: Student has an understanding of the legal concepts and can apply them in most cases. Student has a personal plan for advancement including either joining associations or achieving certification.
- 70-79%: Student has an understanding of the legal concepts and can apply them in some cases. Student has a plan to obtain certification.
- 60-69%: Student is unable to evaluate legal concepts in most cases. Student understands the value of legal certification but does not know where to begin to become certified.
- Below 60%: Student is unable to evaluate legal concepts within the law office scenarios. Student has no plan for involvement in associations and does not understand the value of certification.

#### Unit 2—Ethical Issues in Paralegal Practice – PPP 2.1

##### ***B-6-1 Ethical Issues:***

- 90-100%: Student demonstrates an understanding of the ethical issues surrounding the paralegal profession and can provide guidance on how to avoid unauthorized practice of law in detail.

- 80-89%: Student applies ethical judgment in most decisions.
- 70-79%: Student uses ethical judgment in some decisions.
- 60-69%: Student seems unable to determine the best ethical course of action for a given scenario.
- Below 60%: Student frequently makes the wrong ethical decision as applied to the practice of law and working as a paralegal in a law office setting.

### **Unit 3—Legal Research, Writing, Critical Thinking and Investigative Skills– PPP 3.1**

#### ***B-2-1 Legal Writing, Legal Research, and Critical Thinking:***

- 90-100%: Effective decision making based on analysis of data and convincing reasoning; evidence of original creativity in providing solutions for challenging problems. Student demonstrates outstanding legal research and legal writing skills when given just basic facts and can apply these skills into paralegal practice projects and assignments. The student would likely be able to succeed in a fast paced legal environment.
- 80-89%: Making decisions based on adequate research and reasoning that require a fair amount of analytical reading and critical thinking; capable of solving problems. Student can perform legal research and legal writing skills and apply same to their paralegal practice projects and assignments.
- 70-79%: Evidence of making decisions based on some research and analysis; able to solve normal problems. Student can manage typical legal research and legal writing techniques.
- 60-69%: Making decisions by following the status quo; lack of evidence of strenuous research, analysis and reasoning in making a decision or solving problems. Poor legal research and legal writing skills when applied to paralegal practice projects and assignments.
- Below 60%: No evidence of making any decision based on critical thinking analysis; incapable of solving specific problems. Student cannot perform satisfactory legal research and legal writing skills into paralegal practice projects and assignments.

### **Unit 4—Real Estate– PPP 4.1**

#### ***B-1-1 Real Estate Law:***

- 90-100%: Student is able to prepare the appropriate real estate law legal documentation in nearly all cases as assigned. Student demonstrates an understanding of real estate law and the legal concepts that relate to this specialty area of legal practice.
- 80-89%: Student is able to prepare the appropriate real estate law legal documentation in most cases. Student can determine the best course of action for real estate law cases in most situations.
- 70-79%: Student is able to prepare the appropriate real estate law legal documentation and action in some cases. However, the legal documentation is not as professional as it should be.
- 60-69%: Student is unable to provide appropriate real estate law legal documentation or articulate appropriate real estate law legal action in most cases.
- Below 60%: Student demonstrates little to no understanding of real estate law and the appropriate legal documentation necessary to represent real estate law clients in the law office setting.

**Unit 5—Civil Litigation and Trial Practice— PPP 5.1*****B-1-2 Civil Litigation:***

- 90-100%: Student is able to prepare the appropriate civil litigation and trial practice legal documentation in nearly all cases as assigned. Student demonstrates an understanding of civil litigation and trial practice and the legal concepts that relate to this specialty area of legal practice
- 80-89%: Student is able to prepare the appropriate civil litigation and trial practice legal documentation in most cases. Student can determine the best course of action for litigation cases in most situations.
- 70-79%: Student is able to prepare the appropriate civil litigation and trial practice legal documentation and action in some cases. However, the legal documentation is not as professional as it should be.
- 60-69%: Student is unable to provide appropriate civil litigation and trial practice legal documentation or articulate appropriate litigation legal actions in most cases.
- Below 60%: Student demonstrates little to no understanding of civil litigation and trial practice and the appropriate legal documentation necessary to represent litigation clients in the law office setting.

**Unit 6—Technology in the Law Office— PPP 6.1*****B-5-1 Technological Solutions:***

- 90-100%: Student is able to produce technological solutions for tasks as assigned in the paralegal environment. Student demonstrates a keen understanding of the types of technology needed to be serve the clients in the law office today.
- 80-89%: Student is able to produce effective technological solutions to most tasks as assigned.
- 70-79%: Student is able to produce effective technology solutions to some tasks as assigned.
- 60-69%: Student is unable to provide effective technological solutions in most cases.
- Below 60%: Student does not demonstrate understanding of the technological needs of the law office.

**Unit 6—Presentation Software Comparison— PPP 6.2*****B-5-1 Technological Solutions:***

- 90-100%: Student is able to produce technological solutions for tasks as assigned in the paralegal environment. Student demonstrates a keen understanding of the types of technology needed to be serve the clients in the law office today.
- 80-89%: Student is able to produce effective technological solutions to most tasks as assigned.
- 70-79%: Student is able to produce effective technology solutions to some tasks as assigned.
- 60-69%: Student is unable to provide effective technological solutions in most cases.
- Below 60%: Student does not demonstrate understanding of the technological needs of the law office.

**Unit 7—Contracts— PPP 7.1*****B-1-3 Contracts:***

- 90-100%: Student is able to prepare the appropriate contract law legal documentation in nearly all cases as assigned. Student demonstrates an

understanding of contract law and the legal concepts that relate to this specialty area of legal practice.

- 80-89%: Student is able to prepare the appropriate contract law legal documentation in most cases. Student can determine the best course of action for contract law cases in most situations.
- 70-79%: Student is able to prepare the appropriate contract law legal documentation and action in some cases. However, the legal documentation is not as professional as it should be.
- 60-69%: Student is unable to provide appropriate contract law legal documentation or articulate appropriate contract law legal action in most cases.
- Below 60%: Student demonstrates little to no understanding of contract law and the appropriate legal documentation necessary to represent contract law clients in the law office setting.

#### **Unit 7—Business Organizations– PPP 7.2**

##### ***B-3-1 Business Organizations:***

- 90-100%: Student is able to prepare the appropriate business organization legal documentation in nearly all cases as assigned. Student demonstrates an understanding of business law and the legal concepts that relate to this specialty area of legal practice.
- 80-89%: Student is able to prepare the appropriate business organization legal documentation in most cases. Student can determine the best course of action for business law cases in most situations.
- 70-79%: Student is able to prepare the appropriate legal documentation for business organizations in some cases. However, the legal documentation is not as professional as it should be. Student has some understanding of business law actions necessary based on case scenario.
- 60-69%: Student is unable to provide appropriate business organization law legal documentation or articulate appropriate business law legal action in most cases.
- Below 60%: Student demonstrates little to no understanding of business law and issues for business organizations and the appropriate legal documentation necessary to represent business law clients in the law office setting.

**Unit 8—Family Law– PPP 8.1*****B-1-4 Family Law:***

- 90-100%: Student is able to prepare the appropriate family law legal documentation in nearly all cases as assigned while applying appropriate theoretical and practical aspects for each individual family dynamic. Student demonstrates an understanding of family law and the legal concepts that relate to this specialty area of legal practice. Student recognizes that family law is not a routine practice and each case requires extensive and exceptional critical thinking and legal research and writing skill sets.
- 80-89%: Student is able to prepare the appropriate family law legal documentation in most cases. Student can determine the best course of action for family law clients based on their understanding of the theoretical and practical aspects of the family dynamic in most situations.
- 70-79%: Student is able to prepare the appropriate family law legal documentation and recognizes the appropriate theoretical and practical aspects or action needed in some cases. However, the legal documentation is not as professional as it should be.
- 60-69%: Student is unable to provide appropriate family law legal documentation or articulate appropriate family law legal action in most cases. Student has little understanding of the impact of the theoretical or practical aspects of the family dynamic and how this can be disturbed through the court process.
- Below 60%: Student demonstrates little to no understanding of theoretical or practical aspects of family law and the appropriate legal documentation necessary to represent family law clients in the law office setting.

**Unit 9—Criminal Law– PPP 9.1*****B-1-5 Criminal Law:***

- 90-100%: Student is able to prepare the appropriate criminal law legal documentation in nearly all cases as assigned. Student demonstrates an understanding of criminal law and the legal concepts that relate to this specialty area of legal practice.
- 80-89%: Student is able to prepare the appropriate criminal law legal documentation in most cases. Student can determine the best course of action for criminal law cases in most situations.
- 70-79%: Student is able to prepare the appropriate criminal law legal documentation and action in some cases. However, the legal documentation is not as professional as it should be.
- 60-69%: Student is unable to recognize or provide appropriate criminal law legal documentation or articulate appropriate criminal law legal action in most cases.
- Below 60%: Student demonstrates little to no understanding of criminal law and the appropriate legal documentation necessary to represent criminal law clients in the law office setting.

**Unit 9—Wills, Trusts, and Estates– PPP 9.2*****B-3-2 Wills, Trusts, and Estates:***

- 90-100%: Student is able to prepare the appropriate wills, trusts, and estate law legal documentation in nearly all cases as assigned. Student demonstrates an understanding of probate law and the legal concepts that relate to this specialty area of legal practice.
- 80-89%: Student is able to prepare the appropriate wills, trusts, and estate law legal documentation in most cases. Student can determine the best course of action for probate law cases in most situations.

- 70-79%: Student is able to prepare the appropriate wills, trusts, and estates law legal documentation and action in some cases. However, the legal documentation is not as professional as it should be.
- 60-69%: Student is unable to provide appropriate wills, trusts, and estates law legal documentation or articulate appropriate probate law legal action in most cases.
- Below 60%: Student demonstrates little to no understanding of wills, trusts, and estates (probate law) and the appropriate legal documentation necessary to represent probate law clients in the law office setting.

**Unit 10—Torts— PPP 10.1****B-4-1 Tort Law:**

- 90-100%: Student is able to prepare the appropriate tort law legal documentation in nearly all cases as assigned. Student demonstrates an understanding of tort law and the legal concepts that relate to this specialty area of legal practice.
- 80-89%: Student is able to prepare the appropriate tort law legal documentation in most cases. Student can determine the best course of action for tort law cases in most situations.
- 70-79%: Student is able to prepare the appropriate tort law legal documentation and action in some cases. However, the legal documentation is not as professional as it should be.
- 60-69%: Student is unable to provide appropriate tort law legal documentation or articulate appropriate tort law legal action in most cases.
- Below 60%: Student demonstrates little to no understanding of tort law and the appropriate legal documentation necessary to represent tort law clients in the law office setting.

*(End of Syllabus)*