

INSTITUTE OF PARALEGAL STUDIES (PLST)

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PLST 331 Introduction to Paralegal Studies (2 Credit Hours)

Required of all students in their first session of study. An introduction to the function and sources of American law (including the U.S. Constitution), the American legal system, the civil litigation process, and legal practice, focusing on the role of the paralegal. Trends in the paralegal field, including regulation and career issues.

Outcomes:

Students will recognize typical paralegal responsibilities in various areas of legal practice and be aware of recent developments in the field, especially regulatory proposals affecting paralegals

PLST 332 Legal Research and Writing I (2 Credit Hours)

Required of all students. An introduction to the fundamentals of legal research, focusing on locating, analyzing and updating case law (court opinions). Practice in researching case law in hard copy and online, and in writing case briefs.

Outcomes:

Students will be able to use various reference books and online services (LEXIS and WESTLAW) to locate, analyze, and update case law, and will be able to write case briefs

PLST 333 Legal Research and Writing II (2 Credit Hours)

Pre-requisites: PLST 332

Required of all students. Further instruction in legal research skills, focusing on locating, analyzing and updating statutory and administrative law. Practice in researching statutory and administrative law in hard copy and online. Drafting routine legal correspondence.

PLST 334 Legal Analysis: Practical Applications (2 Credit Hours)

Pre-requisites: PLST 332 and PLST 333

This writing intensive course will provide extensive practice analyzing factual scenarios, summarizing and applying legal authority and developing written legal arguments. Drafts and rewrites are required.

Outcomes:

To demonstrate comprehension of legal texts of varying levels of complexity; To apply legal rules to factual situations to predict legal outcomes; To use typical legal analytical tools to develop solutions to legal issues; To write clear explanations of the process of analysis used to resolve legal issues

PLST 335 Legal Ethics (2 Credit Hours)

Pre-requisites: PLST 331

Required of all students. Ethical considerations in the practice of law that paralegals are likely to encounter, especially the unauthorized practice of law, client confidentiality and conflicts of interest. Review of ethical codes for attorneys and paralegals.

PLST 336 Corporate Topics for Litigation Paralegals (2 Credit Hours)

Required for the Litigation Practice Certificate. An introduction to the basic principles of agency law, contract law, and the forms of business organizations: sole proprietorships, partnerships (general, registered limited liability and limited), limited liability companies, and corporations.

PLST 339 Secured Transactions and Bankruptcy (2 Credit Hours)

Pre-requisites: PLST 336 or PLST 362; Required for the Corporate Practice Certificate (Water Tower Campus)

An introduction to transactions under Uniform Commercial Code Article 9 (Secured Transactions) and federal bankruptcy law, primarily as it applies to businesses.

Outcomes:

Students will be able to draft UCC forms to perfect security interests as well as bankruptcy forms

PLST 340 Civil Litigation I (2 Credit Hours)

Required for the Litigation Practice Certificate. An introduction to the civil litigation process in state (Illinois) and federal courts, and proceedings in administrative agencies generally, focusing on the initial phases. Instruction in client interviews and pre-litigation investigations, evidentiary issues, and practice in drafting pleadings initiating lawsuits and proceedings through pre-trial motion practice.

Outcomes:

Students will understand the structure and basic operations of these courts, and will be familiar with the rules of procedure governing civil litigation proceedings

PLST 341 Civil Litigation II (2 Credit Hours)

Pre-requisites: PLST 340

Required for the Litigation Practice Certificate. Further instruction in the litigation process, focusing on the discovery, trial, and post-trial stages. Topics include interrogatories, depositions, document production and inspection requests, other discovery tools, settlement negotiations, organization of case files, document control systems, trial preparation, trial procedure, and post-trial proceedings. Overview of alternative dispute resolution.

Outcomes:

Students will be able to conduct client interviews and pre-litigation investigations, and to draft the pleadings initiating lawsuits and proceeding through pre-trial motion practice

PLST 342 Litigation Technology & eDiscovery (2 Credit Hours)

Pre-requisites: PLST 340 and PLST 341; Previous completion of PLST 345 strongly recommended

Required for the Litigation Practice Certificate. Hands-on instruction in software programs (Relativity) commonly used for litigation support, including electronic court filing, eDiscovery, case management, document control and trial presentation.

Outcomes:

Students will be able to assist attorneys in preparing for and conducting trials

PLST 343 Real Estate Transactions I (2 Credit Hours)

Pre-requisites: PLST 336 or PLST 362

An introduction to the concepts of real estate ownership and real estate sales transactions. Practice in preparing standard documents required for real estate transactions: purchase/sale agreements, deeds and other closing documents, title insurance commitments and policies, and surveys.

Outcomes:

Students will be able to draft documents for basic real estate transactions and to assist attorneys in conducting real estate closings

PLST 344 Real Estate Transactions II (2 Credit Hours)

Pre-requisites: PLST 343

Further instruction in real estate transactions, examining issues that arise in all real estate transactions and especially the documentation and closing of these transactions. Commercial real estate leasing.

Outcomes:

Students will be able to prepare documents for these transactions, and to assist attorneys in conducting commercial real estate closings and other transactions

PLST 345 Law Office Computer Applications (2 Credit Hours)

Required of all students. Hands-on instruction in software programs commonly used in law offices: word processing (templates, redlining, tables), spreadsheets (financial data, charts and graphs), pdf management (creating and combining pdfs, creating a portfolio, redacting, adding security) and presentation graphics.

Outcomes:

Students will be proficient in the fundamentals of word processing (templates, redlining, tables), spreadsheets (financial data, charts and graphs), database management (organizing, sorting, and retrieving information), and presentation graphics

PLST 346 Advanced Litigation Technology (2 Credit Hours)

Pre-requisites: PLST 340, PLST 341, PLST 342

Additional instruction in online resources and software typically used in litigation support (e.g. Relativity).

Outcomes:

Students will be prepared to use typical litigation resources and software at a basic to intermediate level

PLST 348 Advanced Online Research Skills (2 Credit Hours)

Pre-requisites: PLST 332

This course focuses on research strategies for paralegals and specifically develops skills in the area of online public database research. Students practice researching within publically available online resources in a wide variety of subject areas including court procedure and docketing, business entities, real property, criminal law, environmental compliance, etc. Multiple practical assignments as well as one main research assignment.

Outcomes:

Students will research and write memoranda in support of motions, and will be familiar with the mechanics of appellate court briefs

PLST 349 Torts (2 Credit Hours)

An introduction to civil tort liability, including the intentional torts, negligence, strict liability, and product liability. Role of the paralegal in personal injury litigation. Practice in client interviewing techniques. Basic factual investigation techniques.

Outcomes:

Students will be familiar with the paralegal's role in personal injury litigation from both the plaintiff's and defendant's viewpoints, including typical pleadings and other documents

PLST 350 Medical Malpractice (2 Credit Hours)

Negligence lawsuits brought against health care organizations and health care professionals, from both the plaintiff's and defendant's viewpoints. Illinois law and rules of procedure for medical malpractice cases. Practical skills for locating and organizing medical information.

Outcomes:

The student will be familiar with Illinois law and rules of procedure governing medical malpractice lawsuits and will be able to draft a malpractice complaint as well as locate and organize medical information

PLST 351 Intellectual Property: Patents and Trade Secrets (2 Credit Hours)

An introduction to the terminology, basic principles and documentation requirements of patent protection. Subject matter of patents, the concept of patentability, the patent application process and patent infringement litigation. Trade secret misappropriation.

Outcomes:

Students will be familiar with the concept of patentability, the patent application process (including preparation of basic forms and documents), and patent infringement litigation

PLST 352 Intellectual Property: Trademarks and Copyrights (2 Credit Hours)

An introduction to the terminology, basic principles and documentation requirements of trademark and copyright protection. Registration procedures and infringement disputes.

Outcomes:

Students will be familiar with registration procedures (including preparation of basic forms and documents) and infringement disputes

PLST 353 Securities Regulation (2 Credit Hours)

Pre-requisites: PLST 336 or PLST 362

Federal and state regulation of securities transactions. The stock market and the roles of brokers, specialists and underwriters. Requirements for public offerings of stock, notably the registration statement and prospectus, as well as the anti-fraud provisions.

Outcomes:

Students will be familiar with the requirements for public offerings of stock, notably the registration statement and prospectus, and will be able to complete basic forms required under these laws

PLST 355 Estates, Trusts & Wills (2 Credit Hours)

An introduction to basic principles of estate and trust administration. Practical aspects of administration of estates and trusts for the paralegal. Probate proceedings in Illinois, including the preparation of probate court pleadings, inventories, collection and valuation of assets, distribution of assets to beneficiaries, and accountings. Overview of tax considerations.

Outcomes:

Students will be familiar with wills and will be able to prepare the documents required to administer estates in Illinois

PLST 357 Family Law (2 Credit Hours)

An introduction to the laws governing family relationships, specifically the Illinois Marriage and Dissolution of Marriage Act and related statutes. Factual investigation, preparation of pleadings and other documents, court procedures, settlement agreements, and post-decree modifications. Brief overview of adoption and paternity proceedings.

Outcomes:

Students will be able to prepare pleadings, notices, settlement agreements, and other documents, and to assist the attorney in domestic relations court proceedings

PLST 358 Criminal Law and Litigation (2 Credit Hours)

An introduction to the purpose and scope of substantive criminal law, considering various crimes against persons and property, criminal liability and punishment, and defenses to crimes. Procedural topics, including court forms and pleadings commonly used in the Illinois criminal trial process.

Outcomes:

Students will be able to prepare court forms and pleadings commonly used in the criminal trial process, and to assist attorneys preparing for trial

PLST 359 Environmental Law (2 Credit Hours)

An introduction to federal environmental statutes regulating water quality, waste management and remediation of hazardous substances (Superfund). Issues leading to enforcement proceedings. Research strategies for this technical area.

Outcomes:

Students will be familiar with permit applications, enforcement proceedings, and research strategies for this technical area

PLST 360 Employment Law (2 Credit Hours)

An overview of the legal relationship between employers and employees, including the employment-at-will doctrine, employment contracts, federal and state anti-discrimination laws, and worker's compensation proceedings. Administrative procedures and trial court actions.

Outcomes:

Students will be familiar with federal and Illinois law regulating employment status, employment contracts, anti-discrimination claims, and worker's compensation, and will be able to assist attorneys in administrative agency proceedings and civil lawsuits

PLST 361 Immigration Law (2 Credit Hours)

An overview of U.S. immigration law with emphasis on the paralegal's role. History of immigration law and current policy considerations. Preparation of visa applications, admission and removal of immigrants and non-immigrants, citizenship and naturalization, and humanitarian relief. Document organization and preparation, working with clients, litigation assistance, legal research, and ethical dilemmas.

Outcomes:

Students will be able to prepare various visa applications

PLST 362 Business Organizations (2 Credit Hours)

Required for Corporate Practice Certificate (Water Tower Campus and Cuneo Cohort). This course focuses on the formation and operation of sole proprietorships, partnerships (general, limited, and limited liability), limited liability companies, and corporations. Preparation of standard forms and agreements will be emphasized. Due diligence procedures for mergers and acquisitions and other transactions will be covered.

PLST 363 Contract Administration & Analysis (2 Credit Hours)

Required for Corporate Practice Certificate (Water Tower Campus and Cuneo Cohort). This course focuses on both common-law and Uniform Commercial Code (UCC) Article 2 contracts. The elements of a valid contract will be studied, as well as standard contractual provisions and basic principles of contract interpretation. Students will work with several sample contracts: a confidentiality/nondisclosure agreement, a licensing agreement, and a general trade agreement.

PLST 364 Topics in Corporate Practice (2 Credit Hours)

Pre-requisites: PLST 362 Business Organizations

This course provides an overview of laws relating to business operations, including secured transactions (Uniform Commercial Code Article 9), federal bankruptcy law, and employment law. Compliance with various regulatory requirements will also be covered.

PLST 366 Litigation Topics for Corporate Paralegals (2 Credit Hours)

Required for Corporate Practice Certificate (Water Tower Campus and Cuneo Cohort). This course introduces the civil litigation process in state (Illinois) and federal courts, from the initial phases of pre-litigation investigations and pleadings through the discovery, trial, and post-trial phases. Technological innovations affecting civil litigation, such as electronic court filing and e-discovery procedures, will be given special emphasis.

PLST 368 Corporate Compliance Topics (2 Credit Hours)

Pre-requisites: PLST 362 or PLST 336

This course provides an overview of various regulatory provisions applicable to the financial services industry, including the Anti-Money Laundering (AML) and Business Continuity Plans (BCP) rules, the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act, and insider trading prohibitions. Compliance with the requirements of these laws will be the focus of the course.

Outcomes:

Students will learn practices and procedures to monitor and document compliance with these laws

PLST 369 Advanced Topics in American Law (3 Credit Hours)

Pre-requisites: CPST 200; Enrollment is limited to students in the BA in PLST degree program

This course will build on students' knowledge of the American legal system, examining the role of law in 21st century American society. The course will focus on the interpretation of selected portions of the U.S. Constitution and their effect on American life.

Outcomes:

Students will learn how the US Constitution governs the American legal system and protects individual rights

PLST 370 Advanced Legal Analysis & Writing I (3 Credit Hours)

Pre-requisites: UCWR 110; Enrollment is limited to students in the BA in PLST degree program

This course will provide students with extensive practice in reading and summarizing case law, with particular attention to the rationale for court decisions and the use of precedent, as well as statutory and administrative law. This course will focus on analysis rather than retrieval of legal reference sources.

Course equivalencies: PLST334/PLST370

Outcomes:

Students will learn how to prepare summaries of court decisions, statutes, and administrative regulations

PLST 371 Advanced Legal Analysis & Writing II (3 Credit Hours)

Pre-requisites: PLST 370; Enrollment is limited to students in the BA in PLST degree program

This course will focus on the interaction of case law, statutory law, and administrative law in resolving legal issues. Students will learn to develop legal arguments and write a legal memorandum.

Outcomes:

Students will learn how to use court decisions, statutes, and administrative regulations to develop legal arguments

PLST 395 Applied Paralegal Study (1 Credit Hour)

Pre-requisites: Director's permission required; this course is limited to students in the BA in Paralegal Studies program

This course will require students to explore a contemporary issue in the paralegal field or the practice of law generally. Students will be expected to participate in a minimum of two class meetings and several online activities, concluding with a presentation of their research.

PLST 398 Internship (2 Credit Hours)

Consent of Director and completion of 14-16 semester hours of study. Limited to student's last or second-last term of study. Practical experience (120 hours on site) for advanced students in applying paralegal skills within selected law firms, corporate law departments and governmental agencies. One mandatory class meeting, online journal, online discussions, and final paper. All internships are unpaid; only one internship may be completed for credit toward certificate.

PLST 399 Internship (3 Credit Hours)

Consent of Director and completion of 14-16 semester hours of study. Limited to student's last or second-last term of study. Practical experience (160 hours on site) for advanced students in applying paralegal skills within selected law firms, corporate law departments and governmental agencies. One mandatory class meeting, online journal, online discussions, and final paper. All internships are unpaid; only one internship may be completed for credit toward certificate.