

# Paralegal

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**Associate in Applied Science Degree (4 semesters)**

## At a Glance

The American Bar Association defines a paralegal or legal assistant as a person, qualified by education, training, or work experience who is employed or retained by a lawyer, law office, corporation, governmental agency, or other entity. A paralegal performs specifically delegated substantive legal work for which a lawyer is responsible. Paralegals may not provide legal services directly to the public except as permitted by law.

A paralegal's primary role is to help a lawyer in his or her preparations for trials, business meetings, and hearings. Paralegals help make certain that all aspects of the case have been considered, and gather information and investigate facts. By performing research, paralegals find relevant laws, statutes, and previous judicial decisions that relate to the case. They may be asked to compile all such information into a written report that aids lawyers in deciding the way in which they should proceed with a case. Paralegals assist with the preparation of arguments and court filings and may provide assistance during a trial. They may also make readily available to attorneys any legal documents or files that relate to important cases.

A paralegal's responsibilities may include interviewing clients and witnesses, performing legal research, drafting correspondence, drafting pleadings and discovery, summarizing depositions, assisting during trial, and much more.

## Program Description

Our Paralegal program has provided students with the fundamental skills and training necessary for success. The program provides a balance of legal background and hands-on practical skills through training from lawyers who have practiced in the fields in which they teach.

Our curriculum offers courses to ensure a well-rounded professional with strong writing, speaking and technical skills. Legal specialty courses include legal research and writing, family law, real estate, litigations, and criminal law. Each student is provided an individual password to perform in-depth research for assignments in all classes. A required internship places students in real-world situations to utilize and fine tune their skills. Faculty and Career Services provide regular updates about paralegal employment opportunities.

Our students show their involvement through dedication and commitment. The Paralegal Club participates in pro bono activities and social opportunities. Further, attorneys and civic organization leaders are regular speakers at club meetings.

## Career Path

Employers are trying to reduce costs and increase the availability and efficiency of legal services by hiring paralegals to perform tasks formerly carried out by lawyers. Experienced, formally trained paralegals should have the best employment opportunities.

Salaries depend on education, training, experience, the type and size of employer, and the geographic location of the job.

Start your career as a Paralegal or Legal Assistant. Work in Law Offices, Government, Banking, Business, Industry, and more. Make from \$32,160 - \$82,500 a year in salary.

## Mission Statement

The program goal is to provide a general education with emphasis on substantive and procedural law and ethical principles. Students are required to apply their knowledge in practical assignments which will prepare them for entry-level paralegal positions working under the supervision of an attorney in the private or public sector.

## Paralegal Program Objectives

1. To provide paralegal students with a general education that includes exposure to major areas of substantive law and requires development of communication and analytical skills.
2. To prepare students to perform legal research, using traditional library research as well as electronic research.
3. To prepare students to brief judicial opinions.
4. To prepare students to use forms and models for drafting legal documents and pleadings related to contracts, torts, probate, real property, and domestic law.
5. To enable students to understand the rules of professional conduct governing attorneys' actions and the application of those rules upon paralegals.
6. To develop students' abilities to communicate in writing and orally in a professional manner.
7. To develop students' organizational skills as applied in the legal workplace, including managing and organizing documents, calendaring, and managing time and work assignments.
8. To respond to the needs of the local legal community by providing well-qualified legal assistants.

**Program:** Paralegal

## AAS PARALEGAL – Guided Pathway/Map

**NOTE:** A "C" or higher is required in all major and specialized courses.

**NOTE:** PRL 101 and 102 are prerequisites to all other Paralegal courses and must be taken during the same semester.

\*May be substituted per advisor's approval.

**NOTE:** Online students must complete a minimum of 9 credit hours through remote synchronous instruction. Synchronous learning means that although you will be learning from a distance, you will virtually attend a class session each week, at the same time as your instructor and classmates. Students can meet this requirement by completing at least 3 paralegal courses through remote synchronous attendance.

\*\*PRL 291 Paralegal Internship may be taken once 2/3 of the Paralegal courses are completed. It is strongly encouraged however, that it be completed during the last semester before graduation.

**Paralegals may not give legal advice or counsel clients about legal matters.**

## 1st Semester

Item #	Title	Credits
ORI 110	Freshman Seminar	1
ENG 101	English Composition I	3
MTH 116	Mathematical Applications	3
CIS 146	Computer Applications	3
PRL 101	Introduction to Paralegal Study	3
PRL 102	Basic Legal Research and Writing	3
	Sub-Total Credits	16

## 2nd Semester

Item #	Title	Credits
ENG 102	English Composition II	3
OAD 125	Word Processing	3
PRL 103	Advanced Legal Research and Writing	3
PRL 210	Real Property Law	3
ECO 231	Principles of Macroeconomics	3
POL 211	American National Government	3
	Sub-Total Credits	18

## 3rd Semester

Item #	Title	Credits
BUS 241	Principles of Accounting I	3
SPH 106	Fundamentals of Oral Communication	3
PRL 160	Criminal Law and Procedure	3
PRL 230	Domestic Law	3
PRL 262	Civil Law and Procedure	3
	Sub-Total Credits	15

## 4th Semester

Item #	Title	Credits
BIO 103	Principles of Biology I	4
PHL 206	Ethics and Society	3
BUS 263	The Legal and Social Environment of Business	3
PRL 240	Wills, Trusts, and Estates	3
PRL 291	Internship	3
	Sub-Total Credits	16
	<b>Total credits:</b>	<b>65</b>