

# PLG - PARALEGAL STUDIES

## PLG 100 Introduction to the Paralegal Profession

This course provides an overview of the paralegal profession while focusing on the role of the paralegal in the legal profession, the legal and ethical rules that determine unauthorized practice of law, and key legal terminology used in the profession. While developing critical thinking and legal reasoning skills, students will be introduced to such concepts as common law, constitutional foundation in the American legal system, federalism, and differences between the federal and state court systems. *Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:*  
*Describe the role of the paralegal in trial preparation and proceedings, and settlement negotiations.*

*Describe and analyze the situations of unauthorized practice of law both from the ethical and legal point of view and other relevant legal issues.*  
*Identify the different government structures and judicial courts at the federal, state, and local level.*

Prerequisite: Successful Placement Test Scores or (ENG 050 and REA 050) or ENG 099\* or REA 075 (\*may be taken concurrently).

### 3 Credits3 Weekly Lecture Hours

## PLG 110 Legal Research and Writing I

This course introduces basic legal research and writing skills. Students are taught the basics of researching issues of substantive and procedural law as well as how to draft basic legal documents. This course also introduces students to traditional law library resources, such as Black's Law Dictionary, U.S. Code, the Pennsylvania Code, Federal Reporter, Pennsylvania Reporter, Atlantic Reporter, and legal treatises. In addition, students will learn about online research sources including Lexis® and the official federal and Pennsylvania State Courts websites. Students need to obtain a C or higher in the course in order to take any course that requires PLG 110 as a prerequisite.

*Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:*  
*Differentiate between the various sources and methods used to research the law.*

*Conduct and identify different methods of legal research.*

*Identify and analyze legal issues.*

*Use critical thinking to apply the law to facts presented in hypothetical case scenarios.*

*Write legal memoranda that demonstrates an understanding of legal issues.*

*Discuss relevant ethical issues.*

Prerequisite: PLG 100 (May be taken concurrently).

### 3 Credits3 Weekly Lecture Hours

## PLG 120 Legal Research and Writing II

This course builds upon the knowledge and skills acquired in Legal Research and Writing I to research substantive and legal issues with more complexity and greater depth. Students will draft more intricate and varied legal documents including different forms of discovery, motions, and memoranda in support, orders, trial briefs, final pretrial orders, and appellate briefs. NOTE: Prerequisites: PLG 120 with grade "C" or better.

*Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:*

*Apply principles of legal research and writing to drafting discovery documents, motions, memoranda of law, trial and appellate briefs, and various other legal documents.*

*Properly format legal documents and cite legal references.*

*Compose written communications with attorneys, courts, and clients.*

*Discuss relevant ethical issues.*

Prerequisite: PLG 110 with grade of 'C' or better.

### 3 Credits3 Weekly Lecture Hours

## PLG 130 Technology in the Law

This course is a general introduction to the use and the application of legal specialty software programs in the modern practice of law. Covers law office applications of client management software, billing software, LexisNexis® Academic, and various state and federal websites. Students will use appropriate software to perform client conflicts checks, for timekeeping and file management, to prepare and maintain a database for each client, to organize and safeguard documentary evidence, and to assist during trial preparation and trial.

*Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:*  
*Identify and use productivity software applicable to various business and legal environments.*

*Comprehend the impact of modern technologies on law office and courtroom procedures and apply such technologies and management software to assigned hypothetical legal work and tasks.*

*Apply the relevant computer software and applications applicable to legal environments.*

*Apply communication and collaboration applications commonly used in the legal and business environments.*

*Identify the ethical and privacy issues that arise from the use of technology and the law.*

*College Academic Learning Goal Designation: Information Technology (TC)*

Prerequisite: Successful Placement Test Scores or (ENG 050 and REA 050) or ENG 099\* or REA 075 (\*may be taken concurrently).

### 3 Credits3 Weekly Lecture Hours

## PLG 140 Contract Law

This course provides in-depth analysis of contract law including contract formation and the elements of an enforceable contract, rights and obligations of the parties to a contract, contract performance and discharge, elements of breach of contract, defenses to a claim of breach, remedies for breach, implied-in-law contracts, implied-in-fact contracts, promissory estoppels, and secured transactions. Included in the course is a study of the Sales and Commercial paper provisions of the Uniform Commercial Code. Specific contracts that are subject to much litigation are examined and discussed. Application of contract drafting techniques will be stressed. Ethical issues related directly to contract law will be discussed.

*Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:*  
*Discuss the elements of a contract.*

*Discuss relevant ethical and constitutional issues.*

*Compare and/or contrast different contractual agreements.*

*Explain the various modes of discharging a contract and the remedies available for breach of contract.*

*Analyze and draft contracts that comply with the provisions of the Uniform Commercial Code with emphasis on Article 2 (Sales) and Article 3 (Commercial Paper).*

Prerequisite: PLG 110\* (\*May be taken concurrently.)

### 3 Credits3 Weekly Lecture Hours

**PLG 197 Paralegal Practicum and Legal Ethics**

This course is specifically designed for part-time/evening students that need to satisfy the internship requirement for the Paralegal Studies Program, and will meet in a traditional classroom setting. As with the traditional internship, there are two components to this course. The first component involves a practicum where students work directly under the direction and supervision of an attorney and/or experienced paralegal in a traditional classroom setting. In a controlled environment, students will learn how to interview clients, prepare and monitor client files, set up interview schedules, and perform various administrative duties relating to practical work operations in a legal office. The second component covers the fundamental principles governing the ethical practice of law for both lawyers and paralegals. In addition, this segment of the course provides students with the necessary tools to identify and resolve ethical problems as well as provide practical tips to implement in everyday practice. Students will also examine the rules of ethics peculiar to the practice of law and the crucial role they play in the profession of a paralegal. This course cover the regulation of the legal profession, the unauthorized practice of law, client confidentiality, conflicts of interest, advertising and solicitation, client fees and fee sharing, and specific examples of Pennsylvania's Rules of Professional Conduct. NOTE: Need to obtain Director of Paralegal Studies approval and "C" or better in prerequisites.

*Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:*  
*Develop professional level skills in oral and written communications.*  
*Develop a first-hand understanding of law-related office organizations and their internal systems, such as for timekeeping, billing and file management.*  
*Acquire a sound, contextual understanding of legal and professional ethics, including, but not limited to, regarding client confidentiality, conflict of interest, and the unauthorized practice of the law.*

*Create a portfolio of work samples (or writing samples).*

Prerequisites: PLG 110 and PLG 120 with grades of C or better, PLG 140, PLG 210, and PLG 240. Approval of Director required.

**3 Credits3 Weekly Lecture Hours**

**PLG 199 Paralegal Experience and Legal Ethics**

This course is designed for the day/full-time students that need to satisfy the internship requirement for the Paralegal Studies Program. There are two components to this course. The first component involves an internship with a local law firm, corporate law department, government agency, or non-profit. With the assistance of the Director of Paralegal Studies and the Office of Student Employment Services and Coops, students will need to secure an internship. Students are required to intern a minimum of 180 hours in the paralegal field. The second component requires students to meet one hour per week to discuss job related issues and cover the fundamental principles governing the ethical practice of law for both lawyers and paralegals. In addition, this segment of the course provides students with the necessary tools to identify and resolve ethical problems as well as provide practical tips to implement in everyday practice. Students will also examine the rules of ethics peculiar to the practice of law and the crucial role they play in the profession of a paralegal. This course covers the regulation of the legal profession, the unauthorized practice of law, client confidentiality, conflicts of interest, advertising and solicitation, client fees and fee sharing, and specific examples of Pennsylvania's Rules of Professional Conduct. NOTE: Prerequisites: PLG 110 and PLG 120 with grades "C" or better, PLG 140, PLG 210, and PLG 240. Need to obtain Director of Paralegal Studies approval.

*Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:*  
*Develop professional level skills in oral and written communications.*  
*Develop a first-hand understanding of law-related office organizations and their internal systems, such as for timekeeping, billing, and file management.*  
*Acquire a sound, contextual understanding of legal and professional ethics, including, but not limited to, regarding client confidentiality, conflict of interest, and the unauthorized practice of the law.*

*Create a portfolio of work samples (or writing samples).*

Prerequisites: PLG 110 and PLG 120 with grades of C or better, PLG 140, PLG 210, and PLG 240. Approval of Director required.

**4 Credits1 Weekly Lecture Hour**

**PLG 200 Family Law**

This course introduces students to the procedural and substantive law affecting the family and domestic relations. The law affecting prenuptial agreements, post-nuptial agreements, separation, divorce, spousal support, alimony, spousal abuse, custody, child support, and adoption is discussed. Emphasis is placed on the preparation of relevant legal documents and procedures for filing.

*Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:*  
*Discuss the basic principles of family and domestic relations law.*  
*Research family law and domestic relations issues.*

*Analyze specific divorce remedies.*

*Prepare legal documents applicable to court rules and regulations in a family or domestic relations case.*

*Discuss the role of human relations, emotional sensitivity, in domestic relations cases.*

*Discuss the relevant ethical issues.*

*Apply relevant modern technologies.*

Prerequisite: PLG 110.

**3 Credits3 Weekly Lecture Hours**

**PLG 210 Civil Litigation and Tort Principles**

This course focuses on the applications of the principles of tort law and civil litigation, and emphasizes the paralegal's role in the civil and litigation process. Students will receive a thorough overview of the applicable constitutional issues that arise in tort law, rules of civil procedure, and rules of evidence as well as an introduction to different resolution methods available through the state and federal court systems; in particular, alternative dispute resolution methods applicable to negligence cases. Lastly, this course provides students with the necessary foundation to prepare and write pleadings and other applicable court documents, prepare for discovery, and assemble proper documentation for trial. NOTE: Prerequisites: PLG 120 with grade "C" or better and PLG 140\*. \* Course marked with a star may be taken concurrently with Director of PLG approval.

*Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:*  
*Conduct legal research of basic negligence liability concepts applied to various intentional and unintentional torts and the applicable defenses, and then use critical thought to analyze the results of such research.*  
*Comprehend fundamental constitutional issues surrounding tort law.*  
*Discuss the theories of damage recovery applicable to tort matters.*  
*Discuss negligence problem resolution through court litigation and alternative remedies of negotiation, arbitration, and mediation, as well as the paralegal's role in each scenario.*  
*Discuss relevant ethical issues.*

Prerequisite: PLG 120 with grade of 'C' or better.

**3 Credits3 Weekly Lecture Hours****PLG 211 Civil Litigation and Tort Applications**

This course focuses on the application of the principles of tort law and civil litigation learned in Civil Litigation and Tort Principles, with an emphasis placed on deepening the student's understanding of the paralegal's role in the civil and litigation process. Students will be taught the role of the paralegal in writing briefs and researching the law in the trial and appellate process. In addition, students will learn how to properly prepare and draft appellate briefs and other documents to be filed with an appellate court.

*Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:*  
*Accurately apply Court Rules of Civil Procedure and rules of evidence when filing and drafting trial and appellate court documents.*  
*Prepare and write pleadings and other documents with trial court practice.*  
*Prepare and draft appellate briefs.*

Prerequisite: PLG 210.

**3 Credits3 Weekly Lecture Hours****PLG 220 Real Estate Law**

This course provides an introduction to real-property law. Emphasis is placed on real estate fundamentals, material devoted to the legal concepts of ownership, the laws that govern real estate transactions, and material that discusses brokerage and related activities. In addition, this course examines the tasks performed by lawyers and their representatives in representing buyers and sellers in the transfer of real property interest and the relationships of between landlords and tenants. Discussion and analysis of real-property law includes possession, ownership and transfer of real property, land-use controls, environmental issues, contracts, agreements and financing, federal and state laws and regulations, taxes and liens, land title issues, ethics, and the business of real estate. NOTE: Prerequisites: PLG 140\*. \* Course marked with a star may be taken concurrently with Director of PLG approval.

*Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:*  
*Analyze the basic principles of property law.*  
*Apply principles of real property law to the preparation of forms common to real estate transactions.*

*Discuss relevant ethical and constitutional issues.*

Prerequisite: PLG 140.

**3 Credits3 Weekly Lecture Hours****PLG 230 Estates, Trusts and Wills**

This is a task-oriented course that emphasizes the terminology, forms and procedures of probate and estate administration. Students also learn to draft a simple trust and a will.

*Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:*  
*List and describe the duties of an estate paralegal.*  
*Construct a family tree for the decedent and determine which of the decedent's surviving relatives are entitled to share (and to what degree) in the decedent's estate.*  
*Gather necessary information to complete and file petitions for Letters.*  
*Apply the rules concerning advertising of the grant of Letters and identify the reasons for and advantages of advertising.*  
*Complete the renunciation form.*  
*Gather information, complete and file inventory.*  
*Identify and differentiate between various grounds for contesting a will.*  
*Calculate the surviving spouse's elective share.*  
*Identify and differentiate between survival actions and wrongful death options.*  
*Gather information, complete and file various State and Federal tax returns.*  
*Draft and file a basic accounting with the Probate Court.*  
*Draft and file Satisfaction of Reward/Receipts and Releases.*  
*Identify procedures for handling small estates and ancillary administration.*  
*Draft a simple trust.*  
*Apply relevant modern technologies.*  
*Discuss relevant ethical issues.*

Prerequisite: PLG 110.

**3 Credits3 Weekly Lecture Hours**

**PLG 240 Criminal Law and Procedure**

This criminal law and procedure course introduces the foundations of criminal law and rules of criminal procedure. Students will be introduced to the elements of crimes against persons and property as well as legal defenses to criminal prosecution. This course also covers evidentiary issues and constitutional concerns, along with pretrial considerations and procedures, trial, sentencing, punishment, and appellate review. There is an emphasis placed on the preparation of legal documents relevant to criminal cases and the proper preparation of case files.

*Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:*  
*Discuss the basic principles of criminal law.*

*Prepare legal documents relevant to criminal cases and procedures.*

*Prepare a case file that requires documentation of key facts, and the maintenance and organization of applicable case file documents.*

*Identify ethical and constitutional law issues.*

Prerequisite: PLG 100 (May be taken concurrently).

**3 Credits3 Weekly Lecture Hours****PLG 241 Administrative Law**

This course introduces the paralegal student to the laws involving administration of government by various departments, agencies, boards and commissions that implement and enforce government law and policy. The student will be taught to laws and procedures affecting the administrative decision-making processes on a local, state and federal government level.

*Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:*

*Describe the scope and application of Administrative Law.*

*Describe the constitutional and statutory legal bases of administrative law and administration agencies on a local, state and federal level of government.*

*Describe and analyze the rules, procedures and practices of government departments, agencies, boards and commissions for making rules, conducting hearings and making decisions.*

*Describe and analyze the scope of authority and jurisdiction for various governmental departments, agencies, boards and commissions.*

*Analyze the administrative, quasi-legislative and quasi-judicial functions of administrative departments.*

*Analyze the role of legislative body, courts, statutory limits on governmental immunity and the constitution in limiting the exercise of power and authority by state, federal, and local government departments, agencies, boards and commissions.*

*Analyze the procedures to be followed pursuant to specific statutes: Workmen's Compensation Act for Commonwealth of Pennsylvania; Public Utility Commission; Bureau of Professional and Occupational Affairs; Securities Commission; and the Human Relations Commission.*

*Analyze the procedures to be followed with regard to the US Social Security Administration (claims and appeals); various environmental protection statutes; acts involving wages and benefits; various labor protection acts; acts that prohibit discrimination, viz, Equal Pay Act, Age Discrimination Employment Act, Civil Rights Act, Title VII.*

*Analyze the procedures to be followed with regard to local zoning, licensing, and building codes.*

*Describe statutes that protect the public from the government including Freedom of Information Acts, Sunshine Laws (including municipal sunshine laws) and Privacy acts.*

*Discuss relevant ethical issues.*

*Apply relevant modern technologies.*

Prerequisite: PLG 110.

**3 Credits3 Weekly Lecture Hours****PLG 242 Business Organizations**

This course focuses on the law of business organizations. Emphasis in the course is on corporations from formation to dissolution.

*Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:*

*Differentiate between a sole proprietorship and different types of partnerships.*

*Create a corporation and identify the characteristics of a corporation that make it an important and separate legal entity.*

*Describe the financial structure of a corporation.*

*Describe the formalities of the operation of a corporation.*

*Differentiate between a corporation which operates in one state and multi-state corporations.*

*Describe the way in which corporate structure can be changed and the reasons that may precipitate such a change.*

*Discuss relevant ethical issues.*

*Apply relevant modern technologies.*

Prerequisite: PLG 110.

**3 Credits3 Weekly Lecture Hours****PLG 243 Bankruptcy Law**

This specialized paralegal course focuses on what the paralegal needs to know about bankruptcy. Emphasis is on the preparation of the various forms required in the processing of the different types of bankruptcy cases. Emphasis is also on learning the terminology applicable and unique to bankruptcy law.

*Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:*

*Identify the terminology applied to bankruptcy law and practice.*

*Investigate and prepare bankruptcy petitions and schedules.*

*Describe and prepare forms necessary to process a bankruptcy case.*

*Identify and describe in detail the ordinary steps in the process of filing and administering a bankruptcy case.*

*Identify the different types of bankruptcy proceedings and the forms necessary for filing each type.*

*Distinguish between personal bankruptcy and corporate bankruptcy.*

*Describe the effects of a bankruptcy filing on an individual and on a corporation.*

*Identify the exemptions which may be claimed in a bankruptcy.*

*Contrast the differences between a bankruptcy and a reorganization plan and be able to process them accordingly.*

*Find, analyze and follow the local bankruptcy court rules.*

*Discuss relevant ethical issues.*

*Apply relevant modern technologies.*

Prerequisite: Successful Placement Test Scores or (ENG 050 and REA 050) or ENG 099\* or REA 075 (\*may be taken concurrently).

**3 Credits3 Weekly Lecture Hours**

**PLG 244 Labor and Employment Law**

This course focuses on the identification and application of laws regulating the interactions among employers, employees, and labor organizations representing employees. Emphasis is on the paralegal's role in labor contract negotiations, administrative and alternative dispute resolution proceedings concerning labor disputes, and the civil litigation process that arises from such disputes in both federal and state courts.

*Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:*

*Identify and discuss the labor and employment laws applicable to employer/employee relationships.*

*Discuss the rules and procedures and evidence applicable to administrative proceedings, labor arbitration, and court proceedings involving labor disputes.*

*Describe the role of the paralegal in providing litigation support in administrative proceedings, arbitration, and court proceedings involving labor disputes.*

*Identify the role of the paralegal in providing support for collective bargaining negotiations.*

*Prepare and write contract negotiation proposals, grievances and demands for arbitration, unfair labor practice charges, employment discrimination claims, and post-arbitration letter briefs.*

*Discuss relevant ethical issues.*

*Apply relevant modern technologies.*

Prerequisite: Successful Placement Test Scores or (ENG 050 and REA 050) or ENG 099\* or REA 075 (\*may be taken concurrently).

**3 Credits3 Weekly Lecture Hours**

**PLG 246 Elder Law**

This course will cover various aspects of law that have particular application to the elderly client. The course is designed to familiarize the student with the practical and theoretical aspects of elder law. As more and more Americans age, legislators, jurists, and other legal professionals have to address the social and legal needs of the elderly including healthcare, employment, housing, guardianship, and elder abuse problems.

*Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:*

*Discuss the basic concept of the legal definition of "elder".*

*Evaluate the legislative responses to the aging population.*

*Discuss the various types of health care problems that face the elderly.*

*Discuss employment and income issues as they affect the elderly.*

*Analyze the various statutes that have been enacted to assist the elderly with housing problems.*

*Discuss the concept of guardianship.*

*Identify effective estate planning.*

*Analyze the concept of elder abuse and apply remedies for abuse.*

*Discuss the agencies that provide assistance to the elderly.*

*Discuss relevant ethical issues.*

*Apply relevant modern technologies.*

Prerequisite: Successful Placement Test Scores or (ENG 050 and REA 050) or ENG 099\* or REA 075 (\*may be taken concurrently).

**3 Credits3 Weekly Lecture Hours**