

PARALEGAL (PL)

PL 101 Introduction to Law (Same course as PS 106) (GB) (3 credits)

This course introduces students to basic legal concepts, principles, and procedures. It is designed to provide the student with an understanding of the structure of the U.S. legal system including the role of the judicial, legislative, and executive branches; the history of law in the United States; the role of attorneys, law enforcement and other legal professionals; ethical and professional issues facing legal professionals; basic categories of law; litigation principles; and alternative dispute resolutions.

PL 104 Procedural Law and Evidence (3 credits)

The constitutional aspects of arrest, search and seizure are considered, together with interrogation and confession, self-incrimination and right to counsel. Students learn rules of evidence as they apply to law enforcement officers in the performance of their investigatory duties and their testimony in court.

PL 105 Legal Research (3 credits)

This course focuses on the theories, procedures, and resources used for solving legal problems through research. The student becomes familiar with the various legal publications found in a typical law library and learns to use those resources to develop and execute a plan for the solution of legal problems. Students explore electronic research programs. It is recommended that PL 101 be taken prior to or concurrently with Legal Research. This course is only offered in the spring semester.

PL 106 Legal Writing (3 credits)

This course builds on the knowledge students have acquired in Legal Research. The skills developed in that course are applied to the tasks of case analysis and legal writing. Students are exposed to the methods of analyzing and briefing cases and statutes. The principles of technical legal writing are taught and applied in legal correspondence, instruments, office memoranda, pleadings, court memoranda, and appellate briefs. This course is only offered in the fall semester.

Prerequisite(s): (PL 105 and PL 110 and ENG 101)

PL 110 Technology in the Legal Profession (3 credits)

This course provides an overview of the application of technology in the legal setting. Students learn the basics of computer hardware and software as well as purchase considerations. A major emphasis is placed on legal word processing and its applications in pleadings and correspondence. Telecommunications, computer assisted legal research, Internet, and other technology utilized in the law office are explored. Credit for prior learning is available. Students are required to take this course prior to PL 106.

PL 111 Principles of Criminal Law (3 credits)

The substantive law is discussed: how and why laws are created with emphasis on specific offenses against persons and property. Also covered: what constitutes a violation of the law and how police must satisfy the legal requirements imposed by the elements of the statutes so that the state may successfully prosecute a criminal case. Landmark U.S. Supreme Court and selected state court cases are studied.

PL 122 Torts and Insurance (3 credits)

This course covers the areas of unintentional and intentional torts, and torts based on strict liability. Topics include damages, defenses, and the application of insurance law. Emphasis is placed on the academic as well as the practical aspects of a tort practice. This course is only offered in the spring semester.

Prerequisite(s): (PL 101) or (PS 106)

PL 124 Civil Litigation and Procedure (3 credits)

This course focuses on both the procedural and substantive aspects of civil litigation. The student becomes familiar with Maryland and federal court procedure, structure, personnel, pleadings, discovery, and other topics. In addition, students study the issues of jurisdiction and evidence. Emphasis is placed on the typical litigation tasks that paralegals are assigned including drafting pleadings, investigation, preparing witnesses, and reviewing records. This course is only offered in the spring semester.

Prerequisite(s): (PL 101) or (PS 106)

PL 201 Conflict Analysis and Resolution (3 credits)

This course focuses on the study of conflict in both interpersonal and professional contexts. Students examine the sources, symptoms, dynamics, and ramifications of conflict. In addition, the current methods of resolving conflict and disputes are closely examined. Students are given the opportunity to employ specific conflict resolution techniques that can be applied in legal, business, multicultural, and personal settings. Emphasis is placed on examining negotiation, mediation, and arbitration. It is recommended that PL 101 be taken prior to or concurrently with Conflict Analysis and Resolution.

PL 202 Bankruptcy and Collections Law (3 credits)

This course focuses on the paralegal's duties in the area of bankruptcy and collection law. Students become familiar with procedural as well as substantive bankruptcy law. In addition, students learn about the law of debtor/creditor relations, collection of judgments, secured transactions, and electronic filing.

PL 203 Contract Law (3 credits)

This course covers basic issues of the common law of contracts and the Uniform Commercial Code. Subjects covered include conditions precedent and subsequent, statute of frauds, offer, acceptance, consideration, breach, and remedies. The differences in these areas of law between the Uniform Commercial Code and the common law will be highlighted. Basic contract drafting will be learned and practiced. It is recommended that PL 101 be taken prior to or concurrently with this course. This course is only offered in the fall semester.

PL 204 Constitutional Law (3 credits)

This course covers the basic concepts of American government and civil rights and liberties as seen from the application of the Constitution of the United States. Landmark decisions regarding judicial review, separation of powers, and the freedoms guaranteed and protected by the Bill of Rights are discussed. Questions of balance of constitutional rights to privacy and national security are covered. This course is only offered in the spring semester.

Prerequisite(s): (PL 101) or (PS 106) or (PS 101) or (HIST 103)

PL 205 Business Law (3 credits)

This course focuses on a study of the Uniform Commercial Code as it applies to negotiable instruments and secured transactions. This course emphasizes agency, business organizations, and employment law. It examines creditors' rights, bankruptcy, property law (real and personal), and estates.

PL 233 Probate Practice and Procedure (2 credits)

This course covers the areas of estate planning and probate procedure. The student becomes familiar with the ways an estate can be planned through the use of wills, trusts, and powers of attorney. Medical decisions are discussed through the use of the living will and medical power of attorney. Probate procedure is covered with an emphasis on Maryland procedure. Tax considerations of both estate planning and probate are considered.

Prerequisite(s): (PL 101) or (PS 106)

PL 238 Law Practice and Professional Conduct (3 credits)

This course covers the fundamentals of law office management and professional conduct. Subjects include basic principles and structure of management, employment opportunities for paralegals, timekeeping and accounting systems, marketing issues, administrative and substantive systems in the law office and law library, employee and client relations, law practice technology, and paralegal and attorney ethics. This course is only offered in the fall semester.

PL 242 Real Estate Transactions (3 credits)

This course covers issues related to the ownership of real property, real estate finance, and the landlord/tenant relationship. Emphasis is on the practical aspects of real estate and landlord/tenant practice, including settlement, title search, recordation, zoning, lease drafting, and lease enforcement. This course is only offered in the spring semester.

Prerequisite(s): (PL 101) or (PS 106)

PL 244 Family Law and Litigation (2 credits)

This course covers the rights and responsibilities of parents, children, and spouses in the context of the family. Topics include the traditional areas of divorce, custody, support, and adoption. Newer areas such as pre-nuptial agreements, surrogacy, the legal rights of women, and divorce mediation are also considered. Litigation issues related to all topics will be addressed. This course is only offered in the fall semester.

Prerequisite(s): (PL 101 or PS 106 and PL 124)

PL 245 Legal Environment of Business (3 credits)

The student is introduced to the legal environment in which businesses operate. The course covers sources of law and the application of law to business. Areas examined include business crimes, contracts (under common law and the Uniform Commercial Code), sales torts (including product liability), administrative, antitrust, environmental, and consumer protection laws.

PL 246 Administrative Law and Procedure (3 credits)

This course provides an overview of the functions and procedures of federal and state administrative law. Special focus is placed on using the Internet and legal research in various state and federal agencies. Topics include the Administrative Procedure Act, rulemaking, hearing procedure, state and federal applications, privacy issues, and the Freedom of Information Act. This course is only offered in the spring semester.

Prerequisite(s): PL 124

PL 248 Internship in Paralegal Studies (3 credits)

The internship is designed to provide students with experiences typical of those encountered by paralegals in the work setting. Students work 135 hours as interns in law offices, governmental agencies, or the court system and spend 5 hours in the classroom. Permission of the coordinator is required.

Prerequisite(s): (PL 101 or PS 106) and (PL 105) and (PL 106) and (PL 124 (may be taken concurrently))

PL 273 Cooperative Education III: Paralegal (3 credits)

Cooperative Education experiences are work-based learning experiences with an employer for a specific period of time. The experience may be paid and must be related to the career and specific curriculum in which the student is enrolled. It is an opportunity for the student to supplement/integrate classroom learning with learning from a related work setting. A student registers for one to four credits of Cooperative Education in the curriculum in which he/she is enrolled. Permission of the coordinator is required. Students must have completed 12 credits prior to co-op, and have a GPA of 2.0 or higher. Please see the Coordinator for Career Services in Advising, Career & Transfer Services for approval.

Prerequisite(s): (PL 101 or PS 106) and (PL 105) and (PL 106) and (PL 124)