

Paralegal Studies

The Paralegal Studies curriculum leads to the Associate in Applied Science (A.A.S.) degree. This curriculum provides students with a varied and general grounding in the practical skills necessary to be a paralegal along with a strong liberal arts background. The program is suitable for students seeking either to transfer to a four-year institution in a law-related program or to enter the work force as a paralegal, particularly in small to mid-sized law firms, businesses, government, and public and private agencies.

Community College of Philadelphia trains paralegals who must operate under the supervision of a licensed attorney and are prohibited from practicing law. This program has been approved by the American Bar Association.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Upon completion of this program graduates will be able to:

- Work successfully as entry-level paralegals.
- Apply ethical concepts to hypothetical examples and real-life situations.
- Draft legal documents, conduct legal research both manually and through computer-assisted research and undertake the full scope of tasks assumed by entry-level paralegals.
- Demonstrate legal analytical skills and legal writing skills.
- Cultivate a supportive professional network and learn how to remain current in the legal profession.
- Demonstrate an understanding of legal terminology in civil litigation and a variety of practice areas.
- Demonstrate practical skills in a variety of practice areas.
- Understand the role of technology in the modern law office and have practical experience using legal technology programs.

PROGRAM ENTRY REQUIREMENTS:

This program is open to interested students who have demonstrated readiness for English 101 either by passing the English placement examination or by successfully completing English 098. New students are normally required to take the College's placement tests at their time of admission.

Students who are identified as needing developmental course work must complete satisfactorily the appropriate English and mathematics courses as part of their degree program, even though certain of these courses will not count toward the degree.

Students may transfer paralegal courses from accredited degree-granting institutions with paralegal programs approved by the American Bar Association subject to the approval of the program coordinator and the Office of Student Records and Registration. Students may also petition to receive credit by examination for paralegal courses taken elsewhere.

PROGRAM OF STUDY AND GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS:

A minimum of 60 credits, a grade of "C" or better in all Paralegal Studies courses and a grade point average of 2.0 are required for graduation. Certain courses required for graduation may be substituted with the approval of the program coordinator and the dean of Liberal Studies. Students must complete all of the paralegal courses within five academic years prior to graduation. Students whose behavior is viewed as inconsistent with professional standards may be dropped from the curriculum pending the results of a departmental hearing.

ACCELERATED PROGRAM:

Designed primarily for students who have already completed most or all of their general education requirements (either at the College or by transfer), the Paralegal Studies Accelerated Program sequences the ten Paralegal Studies courses required for graduation in three 10-week trimesters as follows:

Session One

(Early fall, mid-fall, spring and summer)

PLS 101 Introduction to Paralegal Studies

PLS 111 Legal Research & Writing I
or PLS elective

PLS 121 Civil Litigation I

Session Two

(Fall, mid-fall, spring and summer)

PLS 115 Legal Technology

Three paralegal electives (TBA) or

PLS 111 and two paralegal electives

Session Three

(Spring, summer and fall)

PLS 211 Legal Research & Writing II

PLS elective (TBA)

PLS elective (TBA)

Courses in the Accelerated Program are four hours long with some online options. Students may take courses in both the Accelerated Program and the regular semester format provided there are no conflicts.

INTERNSHIP:

A legal internship is offered to students enrolled in the program who have completed at least 36 credits toward the degree and who have attained a grade point average of at least 2.5 at that time. The internship is a 3-credit course requiring the student to perform without pay at least 120 hours of paralegal tasks in a legal employment setting approved by the program coordinator. Students who receive a grade of less than "C" are ineligible to retake this course. Those students who are ineligible for or who do not select the internship will be required to take another course from the concentration courses selections.

LAW LIBRARY AND COMPUTERS:

The College Library maintains a complete law library which exceeds American Bar Association guidelines. Students are also exposed in class to computer-assisted legal research sources, such as online databases, the Internet and legal materials available on CD-ROM and are introduced to discipline-specific legal software in all advanced courses.

(continued on next page)

PARALEGAL STUDIES

Course Number and Name	Prerequisites and Corequisites	Credits	Gen Ed Req.
FIRST SEMESTER			
ENGL 101 – English Composition I		3	ENGL 101
MATH 118 – Intermediate Algebra		3	Mathematics
PLS 101 – Introduction to Paralegal Studies		3	
CIS 103 – PC Applications		3	Tech Comp
Social Science Elective		3	Social Sciences
SECOND SEMESTER			
ENGL 102 – English Composition II	ENGL 101	3	ENGL 102, Info Lit
PLS 111 – Legal Research & Writing I	PLS 101	3	Writing Intensive
PLS 115 – Legal Technology	CIS 103	3	
Natural Science Elective		3/4	Natural Science
PLS 121 – Civil Litigation I	PLS 101	3	
THIRD SEMESTER			
Social Science Elective		3	
Humanities Elective ²		3	Humanities
PLS 211 – Legal Research & Writing II	PLS 111, ENGL 102	3	
Concentration Course – Select one from the following ¹ :		3	
PLS 221 – Civil Litigation II	PLS 121		
PLS 231 – Family Law	PLS 111		
PLS 241 – Tort Law	PLS 121		
PLS 251 – Real Estate Law for Paralegals	PLS 111		
PLS 255 – Business Organizations for Paralegals	PLS 111 & ENGL 101		
PLS 261 – Wills, Trusts & Estate Administration	PLS 111		
PLS 265 – Intellectual Property	PLS 111		
PLS 271 – Bankruptcy Law	PLS 121		
PLS 275 – Employment Law	PLS 111		
PLS 281 – Environmental Law	PLS 111		
PLS 285 – Immigration Law	PLS 121		
PLS 295 – Legal Internship	PLS 111, 121, completion of 36 credits and GPA of 2.5 or better		
JUS 241 – Criminal Law	JUS 101 or permission of curriculum coordinator		
Concentration Course – Select one from the list above		3	
FOURTH SEMESTER			
General Elective		3	
General Elective		3	
Concentration Elective – Select one from the list above		3	
Concentration Elective – Select one from the list above		3	
Concentration Elective – Select one from the list above		3	
MINIMUM CREDITS NEEDED TO GRADUATE		60	

General Education Requirements

All General Education requirements are met through required courses (as indicated above) except for the Interpretive Studies requirement and the American/Global Diversity requirement. Therefore, in order to graduate, students in this program must choose one course that is designated Interpretive Studies and one course that is designated American/Global Diversity. The same course may be used to fulfill both requirements. A list of courses that fulfill these requirements and a more detailed explanation of the College's general education requirements appear elsewhere in this Catalog and on www.ccp.edu.

1 The curriculum has been designed so that any five of the following 13 courses will provide a coherent course of study in preparation for employment as a paralegal.

2 See a Paralegal Studies academic advisor.

For More Information Contact:

The Division of Liberal Studies, Room BR-21, 1700 Spring Garden Street, Philadelphia, PA 19130, Telephone (215) 751-8450; or the College Information Center (215) 751-8010.