

PARALEGAL CERTIFICATE

Program code: PARL-CC

Location: Housatonic, Manchester, Naugatuck Valley, Norwalk, Tunxis

Program Description

The Paralegal Certificate Program is designed for students who have or will concurrently receive an educational (not vocational) associate or baccalaureate degree in a major other than paralegal or legal studies from an accredited institution. The certificate program provides them with the opportunity to enroll in a paralegal studies program that meets guidelines set by the American Bar Association. Students must submit an official transcript, evidencing an undergraduate degree, to the Admissions office for review.

A paralegal is 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 and who 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. Paralegals may not give legal advice or engage in the unauthorized practice of law.

The paralegal curriculum prepares qualified individuals to carry out complex tasks involved in rendering skilled assistance to lawyers, including in banks, insurance companies, private law firms, corporate offices, and public and agencies. Paralegals may be asked to conduct research and prepare memoranda; to draft pleadings and motions, deeds or contracts; to interview clients or witnesses; to prepare responses to discovery requests; or to digest depositions. Paralegals may prepare inventories, accounts and tax returns in connection with estates and trusts; perform real estate title searches and UCC searches; calendar and track important deadlines; or organize and maintain client files. An option in the program is a cooperative education/work experience course in which students gain practical experience in a legal setting while earning academic credit.

The Paralegal Program offers a new career opportunity in a rapidly expanding field for people who have had no previous experience with legal work. For people already employed in legal work, the program will deepen their knowledge and upgrade their skills. Professional ethics and the paralegal's role within the legal profession are emphasized throughout the curriculum.

The CT State - Manchester Paralegal Certificate Program is currently approved by the American Bar Association and has been since 1998. Effective July 1, 2023, Manchester Community College has become a campus of CT State Community College and the Paralegal Certificate Program is offered at CT State - Manchester as well as at the additional locations of Housatonic, Naugatuck Valley, Norwalk, and Tunxis.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of all Paralegal Certificate requirements, graduates will be able to:

1. Recognize and describe the proper role of the paralegal in the delivery of legal services to the public and apply the ethical rules that govern the conduct of the legal profession.
2. Demonstrate critical thinking, reasoning and analytical skills; conduct factual and legal research using print and computerized methods;

and organize and present information effectively, both orally and in writing.

3. Describe the organization of the American legal system, apply procedural law to litigation and administrative agency law, and demonstrate substantive knowledge of principles of law.
4. Draft and interpret legal documents, including pleadings, deeds, mortgages, probate documents, court forms, business documents, and contracts for review by the supervising attorney.
5. Perform file and case management tasks in accordance with office policy and court procedures, using problem-solving, organizational and computer skills.
6. Recognize opportunities for professional development through continuing education and affiliation with professional organizations.

Legal Specialty Transfer Credit Policy

Legal Specialty Credits Earned at a College Outside of the State of Connecticut Community College System

Up to six (6) credits of legal specialty coursework may be transferred toward the requirements of the Paralegal Certificate. Students must have earned a minimum grade of "C" in order to transfer these credits. These courses must be the equivalent of a paralegal course offered at the Connecticut State Community College, and they must be from an accredited institution that is approved by the American Bar Association or in substantial compliance with ABA Guidelines.

Legal specialty credits earned at an institution other than Connecticut State Community College or the former Manchester Community College, Naugatuck Valley Community College, Norwalk Community College or Tunxis Community College can only be transferred by approval of the Paralegal Program Director. The Paralegal Program Director will review the course descriptions, outlines, and/or syllabi supplied by the student to determine if the course to be transferred meets the transfer criteria.

All students seeking to transfer legal specialty credits must provide documentation that will show the format in which the intended transfer course was taken - traditional (face-to-face), online, hybrid, accelerated, compressed or other. If documentation cannot be provided, the Program Director has the discretion to not accept the transfer of legal specialty credits.

Synchronous Instruction Requirement for Legal Specialty Courses

Pursuant to American Bar Association guidelines, students are required to take at least nine (9) credits of legal specialty courses through synchronous instruction. At CT State, legal specialty courses taught in the TRAD and LRON formats satisfy the synchronous instruction requirement.

Admission Requirement

Students in the Paralegal Certificate Program must have an undergraduate degree before they can receive the certificate. Students must submit an official copy of their undergraduate transcript, showing that they have been awarded an undergraduate degree.

Certificate Requirements

Code	Title	Credits
LGL 1001	Introduction to Legal Studies	3
or POLS 1020	Introduction to Law	

2 Paralegal Certificate

LGL 1002	Legal Research and Writing	3
LGL 2008	Litigation	3
LGL 2020	Computer Applications in Law	3
Choose two of the following:		6
LGL 1004	Real Estate Practice	
LGL 2009	Probate Practice and Estate Admin	
LGL 2011	Business Organization	
Choose two of the following Legal Electives:		6
LGL 1004	Real Estate Practice	
LGL 2004	Criminal Procedure	
LGL 2006	Bankruptcy Law	
LGL 2009	Probate Practice and Estate Admin	
LGL 2010	Family Law	
LGL 2011	Business Organization	
LGL 2012	Contract Law	
LGL 2016	Administrative Law	
LGL 2090	Advance Legal Issues Seminar	
LGL 2190	Legal Studies Capstone	
LGL 2095	Coop Ed Work Experience	
LGL 2195	Legal Internship	
Total Credits		24