

Paralegal Studies Program



LSU Paralegal Studies Certificate Program

Approved by the American Bar Association

What is a paralegal?

A paralegal is the “right hand person” of an attorney. Paralegals assist attorneys in many ways—doing legal research, writing briefs and memoranda, interviewing clients and witnesses, summarizing depositions, drafting pleadings, and doing investigative work—just to name a few. Paralegals must work under the supervision of an attorney and are not allowed to give independent legal advice, represent clients in court, or settle claims on behalf of clients. Paralegals who do so may be charged with the crime of unauthorized practice of law. Paralegals work in law firms, corporations and government agencies.



For more information visit us at www.outreach.lsu.edu or contact Charlotte DesHotels at 225-578-6760 or cdeshotels@outreach.lsu.edu.

Description and Objectives of the LSU Paralegal Studies Program

The LSU Paralegal Studies Program began in 1982. It is a college-level, non-credit program leading to a Certificate of Paralegal Studies. Upon completing the curriculum a student should be able to demonstrate certain knowledge and skills, including the following:

1. Understand the structure of both state and federal judicial systems.
2. Analyze (by “briefing”) reported legal opinions.
3. Research legal problems using primary and secondary resources.
4. Write clear, effective legal memoranda, using proper citation form.
5. Interview clients and witnesses.
6. Understand the procedure in a civil suit and draft appropriate pleadings.
7. Be familiar with basic concepts of business organizations and contract law.
8. Recognize the ethical standards of the paralegal profession.

Special features of the LSU Paralegal Studies Program

- This program is the only non-credit paralegal program in Louisiana approved by the American Bar Association.
- All classes are held in Baton Rouge on the LSU campus.
- The program offers the “best of both worlds”: the resources of the state’s largest university and the personal attention of a small, student-friendly program.
- All teachers are experienced lawyers, judges or

paralegals with extensive experience in the classroom and working with paralegals.

- Paralegal students enjoy the following student services: student health center, residential housing, use of the LSU law library and LSU Middleton library.
- The program is guided by an advisory committee of dedicated paralegals, lawyers and other interested people.

The Curriculum

In order to earn the paralegal certificate, a student must take five required courses, three paralegal electives, the internship, the one-day legal ethics seminar, and a court day. The required courses, each of which is offered during every fall and spring semester, are as follows:

- Principles of Paralegal Studies
- Legal Research
- Legal Case Analysis & Writing
- Civil Litigation
- The Practicing Paralegal
- Internship
- Ethics Seminar
- Court Day

Students choose three electives from the following list (not every subject is offered every semester):

- Administrative Law
- Bankruptcy
- Business Organizations/Contracts
- Civil Litigation II

- Computerized Legal Research (Day)
- Criminal Law & Procedures
- Employment Law
- Environmental Law
- Family Law
- Intellectual Property
- Legal Investigation & Interviewing Skills
- Legal Writing
- Mock Trial & Evidence
- Real Estate Law
- Technology Tools for Paralegals (Day)
- Trial Presentation (Day)
- Wills, Successions & Inheritance

What is the paralegal internship?

The internship is a supervised “field” experience in which the student works as a paralegal in a local law office, government agency or corporation. Students do their internship in their final semester of the program and are given a choice of about 40 different sponsors. The internship consists of a total of 150 hours; 140 hours of hands-on work at the internship site and 10 hours of meetings and workshops designed to support and enhance the internship experience.

How long will it take to earn a certificate?

We offer two program-length options:

- The full-time program (students take four or five classes for two regular semesters).
- The part-time program (students take two classes a semester for five regular semesters).

Most classes are conducted at night, with the exception of the Legal Ethics Seminar, Court Day and three of the electives.

What are the admission requirements?

The majority of the paralegal students have already earned a bachelor’s degree, and it is recommended that students complete their bachelor’s degree before earning a paralegal certificate. However, students will be considered for admission without a bachelor’s degree if they meet these requirements:

- At least 45 semester hours of college credit from an accredited college or university (remedial courses do not count).
- At least a 2.3 grade point average.
- 18 of the 45 hours of college credit must be “general education” courses, which means they are from at least three of these disciplines:
 - social sciences
 - natural sciences
 - math
 - humanities
 - foreign languages
 - English
- Successful completion of a standardized aptitude test.

Suggested Courses

The paralegal profession demands excellent writing and computer skills. We suggest the following courses as prerequisites to help prepare you for the paralegal curriculum:

- Business Communication (Page 6)
- Introduction to Word 2007 (Page 30)
- Mastering Word 2007 (Page 30)
- Introduction to Excel 2007 (Page 31)
- Mastering Outlook 2007 (Page 32)



If you would like to speak with an advisor regarding these prerequisite courses, contact Charlotte DesHotels at 225-578-6760 or cdeshotels@outreach.lsu.edu.

LSU Paralegal Studies Program Advisory Committee Members

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Paralegal, Private Sector

President, Baton Rouge Paralegal Association

Citizen Representative

Student Representative

LSU Paralegal Studies Program

Spring/Summer 2010 Courses

Principles of Paralegal Studies

This course is an introduction for students interested in entering the paralegal profession. It offers basic information concerning the legal profession in general and the paralegal profession in particular. Topics include the American legal system, legal ethics, legal research sources and authority, interviewing, and preparation of legal documents. It also introduces material in various substantive areas of the law, such as bankruptcy, family law, successions and wills, real estate, business organizations, and Louisiana civil procedure. The focus of the course is the paralegal's role in the legal system.

Course Code: LCPRI **Fee:** \$450

Session 10-1: Jan. 11-May 3; Mon.; 6 8:30 P.M. (13 mtgs.)

Session 10-2: June 7-July 29; Mon. & Thu.; 6 8:30 P.M. (16 mtgs.)

Legal Case Analysis

This course develops skills necessary to read and understand legal opinions. Emphasis is on legal analysis, using cases focusing on key facts and legal issues. A legal memorandum is assigned as a final project.

Course Code: LCCAS **Fee:** \$450

Session 10-1: Jan. 12-May 4; Tue.; 6 8:30 P.M. (14 mtgs.)

Legal Research

This course covers the basic techniques and methods of legal research using both primary and secondary resources such as statutes, legal digests, treatises, Shepard's legal periodicals, and law encyclopedias. Emphasis is on development of the research skills necessary to use a law library effectively, as well as the use of the proper citation form. Students complete a legal research project in the law library as a final project.

Course Code: LCRES **Fee:** \$450

Session 10-1: Jan. 13-May 5; Wed.; 6 8:30 P.M. (14 mtgs.)

Notary Public Preparatory Course

Interested in becoming a Notary Public? LSU's preparatory course can help prepare you for the State Notary Public exam. The course fee includes tuition and the Study Guide. Visit the Secretary of State's Web site for information on how to apply to take the test in your parish at www.sos.louisiana.gov. Please note: There are two exam dates each year—the first Saturday in June and the first Saturday in December.

Course Code: LONOT
Fee: \$695
CEUs: 4.8

Session 10-1: Jan. 27-May 19; Wed.; 6-9 P.M. (16 mtgs.)



For more information, contact Charlotte DesHotels at 225-578-6760 or cdeshotels@outreach.lsu.edu.

Civil Litigation I

This course provides an overview of Louisiana civil procedural rules. Students will learn how to locate Louisiana procedural statutes, draft pleadings and other litigation-related documents, utilize a docket control system, draft discovery documents and responses, coordinate a discovery schedule, and assist the attorney in final preparation for jury and bench trials. It follows a case from inception through discovery.

Course Code: LCLIT **Fee:** \$450

Session 10-1: Jan. 14-May 6; Thu.; 6 8:30 P.M. (14 mtgs.)

The Practicing Paralegal

This course offers instruction and practical experience in a wide spectrum of on-the-job paralegal duties. Students apply their legal knowledge to mastering routine work tasks performed by practicing paralegals, such as summarizing depositions, producing and managing documents, organizing and maintaining a client's file, filing court records, and scheduling procedures for trial, hearings and discovery. The course also focuses on administrative duties often assigned to paralegals such as library maintenance, calendar and docket control, tickler system, professional correspondence, and the intra-office memo.

Prerequisite: Civil Litigation

Course Code: LCPRA **Fee:** \$450

Session 10-1: Jan. 13-May 5; Wed.; 6 8:30 P.M. (14 mtgs.)

Court Day for Paralegals

This is a one-day course designed to help students understand in practice the theories they have learned in the classroom. Students will tour and observe proceedings such as hearings, trials and oral arguments in a variety of local courts, such as the 19th Judicial District Court, the Baton Rouge City Court, the United States District Court for the Middle District of Louisiana, and the First Circuit Court of Appeal. Depending on the court's schedule, meetings with one or more judges may also be conducted during which students will have the opportunity to ask questions. Students exposed to this "real-life" work of legal professionals will better understand the role of the paralegal in preparing for court appearances. After leaving each courtroom, there will be a class discussion on the proceedings they just witnessed. The final grade in this course will be based on a writing assignment covering the events they attended. At the conclusion of the course, students will understand the layout of the courtrooms, will know how to read court docket sheets, will understand the role of the various court employees, and will have a better understanding of what will be expected of them as paralegals.

Please note: This course is required for students who began the paralegal program in Summer 2008 and after. Students who began the program before Summer 2008 may take this course, but Court Day cannot be substituted for any other course in the curriculum.

Course Code: LCCOU **Fee:** \$75

Session 10-1: Feb. 8; Mon.; 8:30 A.M.-12 P.M. (1 mtg.) Courthouse location TBA

Session 10-2: Apr. 19; Mon.; 8:30 A.M.-12 P.M. (1 mtg.) Courthouse location TBA

Paralegal Internship

Prerequisite: This course should be taken in your last semester as a paralegal student, after the first four required courses have been successfully completed. Visit our Web site for the full course description at www.outreach.lsu.edu.

Course Code: LCINT **Fee:** \$450

Session 10-1: Jan. 11; Mon.; 1:30 2:30 P.M.

Session 10-2: June 1; Mon.; 1:30 2:30 P.M.

Other meeting dates will be announced at the first meeting. After you register for this course, you will receive an internship packet with information on how to choose your sponsor.

Legal Ethics Seminar

This one-day seminar familiarizes students with the Louisiana State Bar Association Rules of Professional Conduct for Attorneys. Various court decisions interpreting the ethics code are examined in detail. The course covers a paralegal's relationship with attorneys, clients, legal secretaries and law clerks, and emphasizes the parameters of a paralegal's duties. The seminar is an all-day course offered once each regular semester, usually on a Friday.

Please Note: Because it is not offered in the summer, students who plan to graduate in the summer should schedule this seminar in the preceding spring semester.

Course Code: LCETH **Fee:** \$130 (includes box lunch)

Session 10-1: Mar. 19; Fri.; 9 A.M.-4 P.M. (1 mtg.)

Computerized Legal Research

This course offers hands-on experience in computer-assisted legal research. Students will learn to use Westlaw (an online research tool), for statutory and case law research.

Prerequisite: You must already have completed Legal Research (LCRES) in order to take this class, and you must have basic computer skills.

Course Code: LCCOM **Fee:** \$450

Session 10-1: Mar. 4-9; Thu.-Fri. & Mon.-Tue.; 8:30 A.M. 5 P.M. (4 mtgs.)

NEW! Contract Law for Paralegals

Students will use statutory and case material to study the formation and use of contracts including liability, breach and damages.

Course Code: LCCON **Fee:** \$450

Session 10-1: Jan. 12-May 4; Tue.; 6-8:30 P.M. (13 mtgs.)

Federal Civil Procedure

This course will cover the structure of the federal court system; jurisdiction and venue rules in the federal court system, and specifically the federal district courts; parties in federal lawsuits; drafting and filing the complaint; service of process; removal and remand; forms and drafting of pleadings (complaints, answers to complaints, motions and incidental demands); electronic filing in the federal district courts; the discovery process (including voluntary disclosures) in federal court and drafting and responding to written discovery; status and pre-trial conferences; subpoenas in federal court; trials (bench and jury) – including electronic discovery presentation; and judgments (including default judgments). It will be structured as a combination of classroom and online instruction and many, if not all, of the materials to be used in the course are available online.

Suggested prerequisite: Civil Litigation I (Louisiana), LSU Paralegal Studies Program certificate, or equivalent.

Course Code: LCFED **Fee:** \$450

Session 10-1: Jan. 11-May 3; Mon.; 6 8:30 P.M. (13 mtgs.)

Bring LSU to Your Workplace

Let us train your employees at your selected location. Courses are tailored to meet the specific needs of your business or organization. We have a long record of successful presentations of on-site courses for selected groups. Our staff and instructors are experts at matching educational programs to client needs.



For more information about course topics, pricing and scheduling, contact Lisa Verma at 225-578-4316 or lverma@outreach.lsu.edu.

In addition to the courses listed in this bulletin, we can tailor the following programs and others to meet the needs of your professional, technical and support staff members:

- **Review of Business English**
- **Proposal Writing for Engineers and Other Technical Professionals**
- **Writing Procedures and Instructions**
- **Memo, Letter and E-mail Writing**
- **Evaluating Employee Performance**
- **Delivering Superior Customer Service**

Family Law

This course surveys the laws concerning marriage, divorce, child custody, child support, alimony, community property, and adoption. Students will learn how to interview clients, calculate child support payments, draft pleadings (including community property settlements), manage a case, and assist the attorney in discovery and preparation for trial.

Course Code: LCFAM **Fee:** \$450

Session 10-1: Jan. 13-May 5; Wed.; 6 8:30 P.M. (14 mtgs.)

Real Estate Law for the Paralegal

This course offers an overview of laws concerning real estate transactions. Students learn the mechanics of preparing for and closing commercial and residential real estate transactions, including how to read a legal property description, how to do a title search and prepare an abstract, and how to prepare closing documents for sales and financing. Other topics, such as surveys, leases, title examination, and title insurance will also be discussed.

Course Code: LCREA **Fee:** \$450

Session 10-1: Jan. 14-May 6; Thu.; 6 8:30 P.M. (14 mtgs.)



LSU Certificate Programs

Energize your career, expand your knowledge and skills, update your professional expertise, explore new fields, or justify promotion with a LSU certificate program.

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Trial Presentation

This course is designed to give students the skills necessary to handle the presentation of evidence during trials in electronic courtrooms. Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to prepare a case for electronic presentation by loading and organizing documents and depositions, creating exhibit folders, presenting exhibits, annotating exhibits and creating video clips. Students will be trained in Trial Director, and will be introduced to alternative ways to present evidence electronically using PowerPoint, Adobe Acrobat and others. Students must have basic knowledge of Windows Operating System, including but not limited to tasks such as how to open folders, create folders, and navigate in the computer.

Prerequisite: Principles of Paralegal Studies; Legal Case Analysis; Legal Research; and Civil Litigation I.

Course Code: LCDIR **Fee:** \$450

Session 10-1: May 20-28; Thu. & Fri.; 8:30 A.M.-5 P.M. (4 mtgs.)

Employment Law for Paralegals

Sexual harassment, discrimination charges and employee drug testing are all issues arising in today's work place. Students will become familiar with federal and state employment laws and will learn how to assist attorneys in many ways, including the everyday practice of employment law, preparing for administrative hearings before the Equal Opportunity Commission, and litigation in court.

Course Code: LCEMP **Fee:** \$450

Session 10-1: June 7-July 29; Mon. & Thu.; 6 8:30 P.M. (16 mtgs.)

Technology Tools for the Paralegal

This class will introduce you to Summation—the state-of-the-art case management and litigation support software program. You'll get hands-on experience with this program and learn how using it can make you a more efficient, effective paralegal. Class size is limited. Registration is on a first come, first served basis.

Prerequisite: You must already have basic computer skills to take this class.

Course Code: LCTEC **Fee:** \$450

Session 10-1: June 10-18; Thu. & Fri.; 8 A.M. 5 P.M. (4 mtgs.)