



PARALAEAL PROGRAM - COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

EVENING PROGRAM

CORE COURSES

BASIC LEGAL PRINCIPLES/E-RESEARCH 1 (PEP-4001-90/4050-90)

This course is designed to give the future paralegal the introductory legal background. It provides an overview of the federal and state legal systems and their structure, litigation procedures, alternative dispute resolution and constitutional law. E-Research introduces students to techniques for electronic searching and includes a discussion of Boolean and natural language searching. Basic searching and navigation in Westlaw will be covered.

CONTRACTS (PEP-4039-90)

This course teaches the student the basic elements of contract law. The students will learn the necessary elements of a valid contract including offer, acceptance, consideration, legal capacity and legality. Factors invalidating a contract such as duress, undue influence, misrepresentation, fraud and mistake are reviewed. Statute of Frauds, damages and contract interpretation are also included. In addition, Article 2 of the Uniform Commercial Code dealing with Sale of Goods will be reviewed.

LEGAL RESEARCH AND WRITING/E-RESEARCH 2 (PEP-4003-90/4003-90)

Introduces prospective paralegals to methods of finding the facts and the law applicable to legal problem solving. Students learn how to find state and federal cases, statutes, and regulations. Law library exercises are used to take the mystery out of law books. Students learn how to analyze cases, to organize findings, and to write effectively. E-Research focuses on research for searching in electronic databases such as Westlaw and Lexis.

LITIGATION/LEGAL SUPPORT SYSTEMS 1 (PEP-4034-90/4034-90)

Provides an overview of the litigation process and a basic understanding of certain major areas of substantive law necessary to prepare students to assist lawyers in a lawsuit. Students will learn how to assist lawyers in taking a case from initial action to final resolution. The following subjects are covered in this course: client interviewing, preparation of pleadings and discovery materials, file construction and maintenance, docket control, settlement, trial, enforcement of judgment, and motion practice. Legal Support Systems 1 covers computer-based programs that can be utilized in the litigation process.

TORTS (PEP-4030-90)

Provides an in-depth academic and practical overview of the law of torts. In addition to learning the substantive law of torts, students will be taught applicable areas that paralegals routinely handle such as case selection, case investigation, Pennsylvania Financial Responsibility (limited tort vs. full tort), insurance declaration sheet, contingent fee agreements, medical authorization forms, first party benefits vs. third party benefits, uninsured (UM) & underinsured (UIM) arbitration, letters of protection, Collateral Source Rule, subrogation, inner office insurance subrogation, binding arbitration vs. compulsory arbitration, drafting settlement demand letters, drafting excess bad-faith letters, releases and joint tortfeasor releases, drafting schedules of distribution, structured settlements, drafting minors compromise petitions and ethical issues that arise in tort cases for the plaintiff, defendant or insurance company.

ETHICS SEMINAR (PEP-4007-90)

This course provides an overview of the role of ethics in general, its place in the legal system, and in particular, how legal ethics affect paralegals. Students will learn about the Canons of Ethics and the disciplinary process. Emphasis will be placed on students determining an appropriate response to specific ethical problems. Topics will include the nature of the paralegal to lawyer and paralegal to client relationships in the context of one's ethical obligations. This Seminar is offered three times during the year: (fall, winter and spring).

COMPUTER COURSES:

Each evening student is required to take 4 computer classes: **All computer classes are scheduled on Thursday Evenings.**

1. E-Research 1 (must take with Basic Legal)
2. E- Research 2 (must take with Legal Research)
3. Legal Information Systems 1 (must take with Litigation)
4. Legal Information Systems 2 (must take with an elective)

Computer classes are offered on Thursday nights. E-Research 1 must be taken during the same session as Basis Legal Principles. E-Research 2 must be taken during the same session as Legal Research and Writing. Legal Information Systems 1 must be taken the same session as Litigation. Legal Information Systems must be taken, but with any specialty course of your choice.

EVENING SPECIALTY COURSES

BUSINESS CONCENTRATION

BUSINESS ORGANIZATIONS (PEP-4035-90)

An overview of common forms and legal entities by which business is conducted. Subjects covered include some of the advantages and disadvantages of various types of partnerships and corporations. The legal aspects of organizing, operating, transferring, and dissolving a business enterprise will be examined. Additionally, agency and securities law will be reviewed.

BUSINESS REGULATIONS (PEP-4037-90)

This course will review the major federal and state law, both statutory and case law concerning intellectual property, environmental law, antitrust, consumer protection, and international business law.

BUSINESS TRANSACTIONS/CREDITOR-DEBTOR LAW(PEP-4036-90)

This course will include the topics of secured transactions, bankruptcy, and the creation of debt both commercial and consumer. Students will become thoroughly familiar with Articles 3, and 9 of the Uniform Commercial Code. Topics covered will include loan documentation, representation of creditors and enforcement of creditors' rights; representation of debtors in bankruptcy and non bankruptcy setting; secured creditors, unsecured creditors, judicial and non-judicial real property foreclosures; Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, and ethical issues in collecting the debt.

EMPLOYMENT LAW (PEP-4015-90)

Students will be taught laws regulation the employment relationship. This course examines the developing laws of at-will employment, age discrimination, race and sex discrimination, sexual harassment, equal pay, affirmative action, minimum wage and overtime, unions and unfair labor practices, disabilities in employment, plant shutdown notification, and family and medical leave legislation.

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS (PEP-4042-90)

This course explores the numerous legal factors and concepts surrounding health and retirement including, *inter alia*, retirement plans, ESOPs, pension and various other deferred compensation plans, group health insurance, self-insured benefits, stock options and others. Also, this course will examine the role of government regulations and the laws, particularly, the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, as amended.

GENERAL CONCENTRATION

BUSINESS GENERAL (PEP-4038-90)

An overview of common forms and legal entities by which business is conducted. Subjects covered include some of the advantages and disadvantages of various partnerships and corporations. The legal aspects of organizing, operation, transferring, and dissolving a business enterprise will be examined.

ESTATES AND TRUSTS (PEP-4016-90)

The prospective paralegal will learn the law concerning administration of estates and trusts, and how to prepare documents related to the creation, administration, and disposition of trusts and estates. Estate planning and drafting of wills, probate and administration and related tax issues (state inheritance, federal estate and gift taxes) are covered.

FAMILY LAW (PEP-4017-90)

Laws covering marriage and family relationships and responsibilities are the focus of this course. Procedures covering issues of adoption, marriage, separation, divorce, annulment, guardianship, and child custody are explained. Students will learn to prepare the required papers for property settlements, preliminary and emerging relief, jurisdiction, and service of process.

REAL ESTATE (PEP-4019-90)

Students will develop skills in drafting and recording the necessary documents for commercial and residential real estate transactions, including agreements of sale, deeds, mortgages, and bonds and warrants. Students will also acquire the skills to close real estate settlements. Topics will include ownership of interests in property zoning, transfer of interests, title insurance, and relevant documents.

CRIMINAL LAW (PEP-4040-90)

Provides an overview of the formal criminal processes from arrest to sentencing. Students will learn the basic principles of criminal law, including the limitations on law enforcement authorities in their investigative duties. Students will learn to deal with specific issues from both the defense and prosecution points of view, which will enable them to work in the offices of private practitioners or public agencies.

Legal Support Systems 2: Students must take once when taking a Specialty Course. This course will focus on and cover computer-based programs important to support law office practice. This will complete the requirement for Computers.

PORTFOLIO/EXIT EXAM - *NEW*

Portfolio/Exit Exam/Day and Evening Program Requirement

All students are required to submit a Portfolio of their written work and complete a Program Exit Exam before their Paralegal Certificate can be released upon completion of the Program.