



CONTINUING EDUCATION

Course Outline

Paralegal Certificate Part 2: Research, Investigation and Discovery

Researching, investigating and writing are critical skills utilized by Paralegals. In this hands-on course you will be introduced to criminal law and dive deeper into civil law. You will investigate evidence, conduct legal research utilizing LexisNexis®, and write complex legal memoranda. You will also learn how to cite legal materials, process eDiscovery, and evaluate fact patterns in a real criminal case. Crafting resumes and cover letters will also be covered. This is the second required course in the Paralegal Certificate Program.

Who Should Take This Course?

This certificate program will benefit junior paralegals, legal secretaries, paralegal clerks, legal receptionists, and document or file clerks interested in increasing their knowledge or advancing their careers as well as anyone interested in law, investigation, legal research or legal writing.

Course Objectives

- Perform investigations
- Identify various forms of evidence and determine relevance
- Conduct legal research
- Write complex legal memoranda
- Exhibit proper citation formatting
- Process e-Discovery
- Recognize available privileges
- Review a well-known criminal case for potential appealable errors
- Prepare resumes, draft cover letters and conduct job searches

Course Info

- Length: 30 hours
- Format: Classroom instruction, group exercises and homework assignments
- Prerequisite: Paralegal Certificate Part 1: Paralegal Essentials

Course Content

- Perform investigations
- Gather and investigate the facts
- Conduct electronic background searches and property searches
- Review materials to determine key records and “hot docs”
- Uncover additional sources of information

Identify various forms of evidence and determine relevance

- Distinguish between circumstantial evidence, direct evidence and hearsay
- Request, receive and track evidence
- Organize documents for production
- Make necessary redactions, notating responsiveness

Conduct legal research

- Discuss the various legal reference sources available
- Identify primary, secondary, mandatory, persuasive and non-authority and determine when they should/should not be used
- Utilize LexisNexis® to conduct legal research by topic and jurisdiction
- Analyze case law and statutes

Write complex legal memoranda

- Review a case and relating law
- Prepare a memo for an attorney, utilizing the IRAC method, regarding the likely outcome; suggest follow-up items

Exhibit proper citation formatting

- Read and decipher a legal citation
- Validate legal authority utilizing Shepards
- Cite check a brief for errors

Process e-Discovery

- Receive and produce documents
- Code and summarize documents
- Determine need for digital forensics

Recognize available privileges

- Attorney-client privilege
- Work-product privilege
- Clergy-penitent privilege
- Spousal privilege
- Fifth Amendment privilege

Review a well-known criminal case for potential appealable errors

- Compile case facts
- Determine potential appealable errors
- Construct “natural language” phrasing for legal research
- Test “natural language” phrasing

Prepare resumes, cover letters and job search

- Prepare a job appropriate resume
- Draft a cover letter
- Conduct a job search

Homework

Students should anticipate spending 5-15 hours a week on homework assignments, which will include reading, researching, writing and various other assignments.

Assessment /Evaluation

This course is not assigned a letter or numerical grade. However, in some cases, skill assessments may be administered during the course to gauge progress and comprehension.

Course Completion/Continuing Education Unit (CEU) Letter

If your company requires proof of course completion, or if you would like to have proof for your own records, you may request a Course Completion/Continuing Education Unit (CEU) letter **after the final session of your course**. You must attend* 80 percent of the course to qualify for the letter. You can [request a Course Completion/CEU letter online](#).

Certificates of Completion for Certificate Programs

To receive a Certificate of Completion for the Paralegal Certificate, you must attend* 90 percent of the entire certificate program (81 course hours); regularly participate in class; complete all assignments by the deadline given; and receive a minimum score of 75 percent on all assignments, quizzes and tests. For those who qualify, certificates will be sent within three weeks of completing the final course.

*Attendance for CEU letters and certificate programs is verified via the sign-in sheets provided at each class session. It is your responsibility to sign-in.

Green River College is committed to providing access to all who visit, work and study on campus. The College will provide reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities, with advance notice of need. If you require accommodations, please contact Disability Support Services as soon as possible to determine eligibility and/or request accommodations. Accommodations are determined on a case-by-case basis. Please contact Disability Support by email at dss@greenriver.edu; by phone at 253-833-9111, ext. 2631; TTY 253-288-3359; or in person at the Student Affairs and Success Center, Room 210, to request accommodations. For additional information, please visit www.greenriver.edu/dss.

The accommodations authorized on your forms should be discussed with your instructor. All discussions will remain confidential. Accommodations are not provided retroactively, so it is essential to discuss your needs at the beginning of the quarter. Additionally, only accommodations approved by Disability Support Services will be provided. This syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. Green River College is an equal opportunity educator and employer. Learn more at www.greenriver.edu/accessibility.