



FLORIDA NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

The Paralegal/Legal Studies Handbook

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The Paralegal/Legal Studies Handbook

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The purpose of this handbook:

Resource for students interested in Legal Studies
Guide to obtaining key resources
Information on how to approach your legal studies professors
Academic and career planning



The Paralegal/Legal Studies program at Florida National University focuses on developing student's knowledge about the origins, content, operation and consequences of laws and policies. This knowledge should not be restricted solely to legal professionals such as lawyers and judges. The Florida National University Paralegal/Legal Studies programs help its students to think critically, identify and solve practical, intellectual and ethical problems and to communicate their views effectively orally and in writing.

The purpose of the Bachelor of Arts in Legal Studies (LSBA) Program is to expand students' critical and analytical thinking skills, advance students' ability to communicate complex data, both verbally and written, and prepare students for higher-level positions within the legal profession, or gain admission to law school.

The Paralegal program has been designed for those students seeking a career in law. Students will take courses that survey the American legal system, as well as courses in communication, humanities, behavioral science, mathematics, natural science, and computers. Florida National University will award an Associate of Arts in Paralegal upon graduation to those students who complete the necessary requirements. Upon graduating, students may pursue upper-level studies, or commence a career within the legal profession*.

*Note: Employment within the legal profession may require the successful completion of a criminal background check, and character fitness (including credit-worthiness).

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NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION

A day for orientation of new students is conducted for each academic start. New students will learn about procedures from FNU officers, receive their program schedules, and parking information; fulfill entrance test requirements; get acquainted with the use of the FNU Library.

PLACEMENT ASSISTANCE

FNU offers employability training, job referrals, and participation in annual job fairs. This is a lifetime service available to active, withdrawals, and graduate students in good standing. Students are strongly urged to maintain contact with FNU when they obtain employment, change jobs, need further assistance, or relocate to another area. There is a Placement Office at each FNU campus. *NOTE: Florida National University cannot guarantee placement following graduation.*

BOOKSTORE

All students are required to have their textbooks and other materials by the first week of class. Textbooks, workbooks, supplies and materials for all courses are available from the bookstore at each campus during the first ten days of each start. Students are not, however, required to buy their books and supplies at the Florida National University bookstore as this is only a service we provide to the students.

LOUNGE AREA

Soft drinks and snacks are available in vending machines in the lounge area.

HOUSING

FNU does not have residence halls. Assistance with local housing information will be provided on request. The three campuses can be reached using city transportation services.

STUDENT IDENTIFICATION CARD

Students will be issued a picture identification card. This identification card must be worn at all times. The student will not be allowed on the premises without an identification card or a pass. In the event that a student is expelled or suspended from FNU, the student must immediately surrender his/her FNU identification card to the Campus Dean.

STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

Florida National University Student Government Association (FNUSGA) is the self-governing student entity serving as a liaison between the student body, the faculty, and the administration. It seeks to foster professional development in an atmosphere of friendship and participation. The SGA is responsible for assisting the Student Services office in organizing student activities such as dances, sports, parties, picnics, fund-raisers, and other.

CHILD CARE SERVICES

Little Angels Children Development Center provides child care services and after school programs.

Registration is \$55.00 (academic year). The registration fee is non-refundable. The Center accepts children from 0 to 5 years old. A 10% discount for all members of FNU (university students and staff) is offered.

STUDENT GRIEVANCES

Student grievances will be handled according to the student grievance policies and procedures; these procedures are explained in the Student Handbook. The handbook is available on the website.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Graduation is not automatic. To be awarded a baccalaureate degree, associate's degree, diploma or certificate from Florida National University the student must fulfill the following requisites:

1. Successful completion of one of the programs of study as it appears in the Catalog.
2. Achievement of a cumulative grade point average (CGPA) of at least 2.0 (C average).
3. Complete an Exit Interview with each of the following offices. Clearance from each of these offices is required previous to the release of any official document by FNU.

Student Government Association

Florida National University Student Government Association (FNUSGA) is the self-governing student entity serving as a liaison between the student body, the faculty, and the administration. It seeks to foster professional development in an atmosphere of friendship and participation. The SGA is responsible for assisting the Student Services office in organizing student activities such as dances, sports, parties, picnics, fund-raisers, and other.



Alpha Phi Sigma Criminal Justice/legal Studies Honor Society Mu Zeta Chapter

HISTORY

In September, 1941, Dr. Vivian Anderson Leonard was asked by the president of Washington State University if he would accept the directorship of a Police Science Academic Program at Washington State. Dr. Leonard accepted the offer and became responsible for developing a four year curriculum which would lead to a Bachelor's Degree in Police Administration.

Upon his arrival at Washington State, Dr. Leonard began to realize how important it was that a Police Science Honorary be established. The purpose of this honorary would be to promote excellence in scholarship and performance. In January, 1942, Dr. Leonard met with seventeen Police Science majors at Washington State and Alpha Phi Sigma was established. Glenn Hill was elected as the first president and appointed a committee to draft the first Constitution and By-laws.

During its initial years Alpha Phi Sigma experienced only limited growth, but on March 24, 1976 in Dallas, Texas, the Executive Board of the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences voted unanimously to designate Alpha Phi Sigma as the National Criminal Justice Honor Society. At this time, Alpha Phi Sigma had only fourteen chapters; however, since then, Alpha Phi Sigma has continued to grow and prosper at a very rapid rate and there are now over four hundred Chapters.

Over the years the National Officers have been located at Universities across the country, such as, Washington State University, Midwestern State University, Eastern Kentucky University, Texas Woman's University, Fairmont State College, Marshall University, Tarleton State University, Florida International University, Boise State University, University of Houston ~ Downtown, and now Florida National University.

At the 1976 meeting of the Academy of Criminal Justice Science in Dallas, Texas, the Academy recognized Alpha Phi Sigma as the Criminal Justice Honor Society. Since 1978, Alpha Phi Sigma has held its national conference in conjunction with the annual ACJS meeting. The Academy's continued support of Alpha Phi Sigma serves to enhance Alpha Phi Sigma's purpose – the recognition of scholarly achievement in the field criminal justice.

The Association of College Honor Societies was organized October 2, 1925, by a group of college and university teachers, administrators, and representatives of a few well-established honor societies. Its object was then and is now to consider problems of mutual interest such as those arising from the confusion prevailing on college campuses concerning the character, function, standards of membership, multiplicity, and undesirable duplication of honor societies; to recommend action leading to appropriate classification or elimination; and to promote the highest interest of honor societies. Alpha Phi Sigma was granted membership by the Association of College Honor Societies in 1980.

MU ZETA CHAPTER

The Mu Zeta Chapter at Florida National University is the first established Honor Society at this institution. Over 50 students have joined this prestigious organization and have participated in trainings offered by the Miami-Dade Police Department Safety and Training Institute, as well as contributed to community service and fund-raising activities to participate in the Annual Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences.



Monique Abbadie, Mu Zeta Chapter Member
Blood Spatter Analysis Training



Physical Evidence Investigations Training
Sponsored by the Miami-Dade Police
Department Training and Safety Bureau



2012 – 2013 Mu Zeta Chapter Officers
Grace Rodriguez (President)
Mearli Orozo (Vice-President/Secretary)
Gustavo Omana (Treasurer)

Benefits of Membership in Alpha Phi Sigma Honor Society

The ultimate test of the value of any membership organization lies in the accomplishments of its members. In each year of Alpha Phi Sigma's history, more and more members have undertaken graduate studies. Alpha Phi Sigma is well represented in the professional ranks of all areas in the criminal justice and legal fields. The membership directories of the national professional associations, such as The Academy of Criminal Justice

Sciences (ACJS), The American Society of Criminology (ASC), American Correctional Association (ACA) are studded with the names of Alpha Phi Sigma members, both active and alumni. This is only one example demonstrating that Alpha Phi Sigma's purposes are being fulfilled. Furthermore, the contacts made through Alpha Phi Sigma will be valuable throughout the members' educational and professional careers.

Advantages to Becoming a Member of Alpha Phi Sigma

1. Alpha Phi Sigma provides national recognition for academic excellence in criminal justice, an honor which can be noted on employment applications, vitae, and resumes.
2. On the local level, chapter membership facilitates leadership development, interaction with other students who have similar interests and service to the department and college/university.
3. Members receive a membership certificate, pin, and card and through chapter mailings, copies of The Docket, the official publication.
4. Through membership in Alpha Phi Sigma, students gain a sense of community with others in criminal justice and identification with the discipline.
5. Alpha Phi Sigma provides a local and national forum for obtaining information and developing perspectives about the field of criminal justice, learning about educational and career opportunities, and forming meaningful professional networks.
6. Alpha Phi Sigma chapter activities provide students with valuable opportunities to develop one-on-one relationship with professors who can stimulate their interest in criminal justice, involve them in research projects, and write meaningful letters of recommendation for them.
7. Alpha Phi Sigma encourages student research at the national as well as the local level through undergraduate and graduate paper award competitors and provides opportunities for students to present research/papers and receive certificates and other awards recognizing their accomplishments at the national criminal justice conference.
8. Alpha Phi Sigma provides awards, grants and scholarships to its student's members, faculty advisors and chapters on an annual basis.
9. Alpha Phi Sigma sponsors outstanding programs/events at the national conference of The Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences. Students' benefit not only from the programs/panels, but also from the opportunity to meet leading criminal justice professionals and students from other chapters.
10. Membership in Alpha Phi Sigma meets one of the requirements for entrance at the GS-7 level in numerous professional and technical occupations in the United States government.
11. Membership in Alpha Phi Sigma provides recognition, awards, educational opportunities, graduate school preparation, paper/poster awards national conference, speakers (national and local), feeling of community, networking, and more.
12. Membership is for life. The national registration fee of \$50 is the only payment ever made to the national headquarters.



Membership

National Honor Society membership.

- Be a CJ/Paralegal/Legal Studies student with 3.2 GPA or above
 - Students in other academic programs such as Forensic Science, Business Administration, Health Service, or Public Administration may join so long as the program has a minor in Criminal Justice or Legal Studies (4 classes in Criminal Justice or Legal Studies)
- Able to dedicate time to meeting three times per month
- \$50.00 onetime/lifetime membership to the National Criminal Justice Honor Society Alpha Phi Sigma
- \$30.00 per year association membership (you receive a free CJ/Law association T-shirt)
 - Benefits: Participation in all CJ/Law association activities and training
 - Participation in National Conferences and National Association activities (next year's conference will be held in Dallas, Texas)
 - Membership certificate from the National Criminal Justice Honor Society, pin, card, and a copy of official publications from the National Association
 - Awards, scholarship opportunities, and completions for awards with other participating colleges and universities
 - Be part of history: member of the first Honor Society in the history of Florida National University



2012 ACJS Conference in New York, New York
National Officers, Mu Zeta Chapter Officers &
Chapter Members

Criminal Justice/Legal Studies Honor Society
Honor Regalia worn at graduation



Alpha Phi Sigma – Mu Zeta Scholarship

Alpha Phi Sigma – Mu Zeta Presidential Award (\$1,000.00)

- Must be actively enrolled in an **UPPER LEVEL** or **GRADUATE** degree program at Florida National University (Students enrolled in the MBA program may apply).
 - Must be enrolled at least half time in the junior or senior year of one of the following degree programs: Bachelor of Criminal Justice or Bachelor in Legal Studies
- Must be an active member of the Mu Zeta Chapter of Alpha Phi Sigma
 - All dues must be paid for the year
- Must have a 3.5 GPA to qualify
 - Alpha Phi Sigma requires a 3.2 GPA for undergraduate students. You must have a 3.5 GPA to qualify for this scholarship
- Must have participated in a **MINIMUM** of eight (8) Mu Zeta Chapter or Florida National University extracurricular events (ex. fundraisers, meetings, trainings, etc.) during the year prior to applying
 - Must have a letter from the Mu Zeta Chapter Board stating the number of events attended
 - Letter must be signed by the Advisor **AND** one Officer
- Most Recent Transcripts signed by Advisor
- One letter of recommendation from a faculty member
- Must submit a paper, minimum of 6 pages (APA Formatting Style must be followed)
 - Topic: How can an FNU degree assist you in becoming an ethical member within your profession?
 - Cover sheet with the title of paper, student's name, address, phone number, school name, student status (undergraduate/graduate), date initiated into the Mu Zeta Chapter of Alpha Phi Sigma
 - There should be no identification of the student anywhere within the "paper," only on the cover sheet
 - Title page (separate from cover sheet) with the title of the paper only
 - One page abstract and works cited page
 - Papers must be double spaced, 12pt Times New Roman font, and 1" margins
- Deadlines: July 31st and December 31st of every year. Please see Chapter Advisor, Jelenny Hernandez for more information.

Additional Information

Award

If awarded, the \$1000.00 will be applied to the student's tuition at the moment of graduation from a Bachelor or Master Degree program.

All students must meet with the financial aid office for an interview prior to being awarded the scholarship.

Submission

All documents must be turned in, in a sealed envelope to the Advising Office before July 31st, 2012. If mailing, must be postmarked before July 31st, 2012.

JOSÉ REGUEIRO SCHOLARSHIP

The José Regueiro Scholarship, in honor of the President of the institution, is a Florida National University scholarship. The scholarship is to be awarded every year to the winner of an essay contest, open to high school candidates, on the subject of — “The Importance of a College Degree.”

Deadline: June 1

Basis for Selection: The content of the essay and the writing skills exhibited in the essay.

Sum Awarded: The complete tuition cost of the program of his/her choice from the Associate of Arts or Science Degree programs offered by FNU.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE FOR THE J. REGUEIRO SCHOLARSHIP

The applicant must:

1. Be a graduating senior of a Dade County public or private high school.
2. Be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident.
3. Provide two testimonials from school, business, church and/or leaders in the community testifying to good moral character and reputation.
4. Submit an essay on —The Importance of a College Degree.
5. Demonstrate financial need.
6. Submit official high school transcript with the application.

DIAZ-BALART SCHOLARSHIP

The Díaz-Balart Scholarship has been established by Florida National University to honor the Díaz-Balart family. Political immigrants from Cuba, the Díaz-Balart family has continued in the United States its long history of public service, which began many years ago in their homeland. The scholarship is awarded to a student who is an immigrant to the United States of America.

The scholarship is to be awarded every year to the winner of an essay contest, written by high school candidates on the subject of “Educational Opportunities within the American Democracy”.

Deadline: June 1

Basis for Selection: Must be an immigrant to the United States of America. The content of the essay and the writing skills exhibited in the essay.

Source of the Díaz-Balart Scholarship: University revenue.

Sum Awarded: The complete tuition cost of the program of his/her choice from the Bachelor of Science, Associate of Arts or Science Degree programs offered by FNU.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE FOR THE DIAZ-BALART SCHOLARSHIP

THE APPLICANT MUST:

1. Be a graduating senior of a Dade County public or private high school.
2. Be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident.
3. Provide two testimonials from school, business, church and/or leaders in the community testifying to good moral character and reputation.
4. Demonstrate financial need.
5. Submit official high school transcript with the application.

FNU / GOVERNMENT SCHOLARSHIP

The FNU/Government Scholarship is a Florida National University scholarship. The scholarship is to be awarded every year to a government employee.

Basis for Selection: Must be a government employee; referral must be from a government agency.

Source of the Scholarship: University revenue.

Sum Awarded: The scholarship covers 15% of the tuition cost for baccalaureate and associate degree programs offered by FNU.

UPWARD BOUND SCHOLARSHIP

The Upward Bound Scholarship is a Florida National University scholarship. The scholarship is to be awarded every year to students graduating from the Upward Bound Program sponsored by FNU.

THE APPLICANT MUST:

1. Be a student who has participated in the program for at least two years.
2. Have a 2.5 GPA at the time of graduation.
3. Be a first generation or low income student.
4. Graduate from Florida National University's Upward Bound Program.
5. Maintain a 2.5 GPA at Florida National University.

DR. MANUEL VIAMONTE SCHOLARSHIP

The Dr. Manuel Viamonte Scholarship is a Florida National University scholarship to be awarded to a Radiology Technology student. The scholarship will be awarded every year to the winner of an essay contest, open to high school candidates, on the subject of —The Importance of studies in Radiology.”

Deadline: June 1

Basis for Selection: The content of the essay and the writing skills exhibited in the essay.

Source: University revenue.

Sum Awarded: The complete tuition cost of the Radiology Technology program.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE FOR THE DR. VIAMONTE SCHOLARSHIP

The applicant must:

1. Be a graduating senior of a Dade County public or private high school.
2. Be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident.
3. Provide two testimonials from school, business, church and/or leaders in the community testifying to good moral character and reputation.
4. Submit an essay on —The Importance of studies in Radiology.
5. Demonstrate financial need.
6. Submit official high school transcript with the application.



What to expect in the Paralegal/Legal Studies Program

The Paralegal/Legal Studies program at Florida National University focuses on developing student's knowledge about the origins, content, operation and consequences of laws and policies. This knowledge should not be restricted solely to legal professionals such as lawyers and judges. The Florida National University Paralegal/Legal Studies programs help its students to think critically, identify and solve practical, intellectual and ethical problems and to communicate their views effectively orally and in writing.

The purpose of the Bachelor of Arts in Legal Studies (LSBA) Program is to expand students' critical and analytical thinking skills, advance students' ability to communicate complex data, both verbally and written, and prepare students for higher-level positions within the legal profession, or gain admission to law school.

Legal Studies (LS), Bachelor of Arts Degree

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS (A MINIMUM OF 120 CREDITS)

REQUIRED COURSES

General Education Requirements (39 Credits)

COMMUNICATIONS (9 CREDITS)		Credit Hours
ENC 1101	English Composition I **	3
ENC 1102	English Composition II **	3
SPC 1040	Fundamentals of Oral Communication	3
HUMANITIES (6 CREDITS)		Credit Hours
6		
BEHAVIORAL/ SOCIAL SCIENCE (6 CREDITS)		Credit Hours
6		
NATURAL SCIENCE (7 CREDITS includes 1 Lab. hour)		Credit Hours
7		
MATHEMATICS (7 CREDITS)		Credit Hours
MAC 1105	College Algebra I **	3
STA 2014	Introduction to Statistics**	4
COMPUTERS (4 CREDITS)		Credit Hours
CGS 1030	Introduction to Information Technology	4
SLS 1501	College Study Skills	0
CORE REQUIREMENTS (48 CREDITS)		
Lower Level Courses (12 CREDITS)		Credit Hours
PLA 2104	Legal Research & Writing I	3
PLA 2114	Legal Research & Writing II	3
PLA 2201	Introduction to Civil Procedure	3
PLA 2700	Ethics and Professional Responsibility	3

Lower Level Electives (9 CREDITS)

Upper Level Courses (30 CREDITS)		Credit Hours
PLA 3304	Criminal Law	3
PLA 3115	Legal Research & Writing III (**)	3
PLA 3223	Civil Litigation	3
PLA 3308	Criminal Procedure	3
PLA 3274	Tort Law	3
PLA 4880	Constitutional Law	3
PENDING	Logic and the Law	3
PENDING	The Law of Contracts	3
PENDING	Property Law	3

PLA 4950	Legal Studies Capstone	3
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ELECTIVES (33 CREDITS)

Suggested Electives

	Credit Hours
PLA 4116	Legal Research & Writing IV (**)
CCJ 3011	Juvenile Justice
PLA 3570	International Law
PLA 4410	Intellectual Property
PLA 4844	Immigration Law
PENDING	Bankruptcy Law
PENDING	Health Law & Ethics
PENDING	Evidence Law
PLA 3434	Business Organizations
PLA 3803	Domestic Relations Law

Paralegal Studies (PLS), Associate of Arts Degree

This program has been designed for those students seeking a career in law. Students will take courses that survey the American legal system, as well as courses in communication, humanities, behavioral science, mathematics, natural science, and computers. Florida National University will award an Associate of Arts in Paralegal upon graduation to those students who complete the necessary requirements. Upon graduating, students may pursue upper-level studies, or commence a career within the legal profession*. ***Note:** Employment within the legal profession may require the successful completion of a criminal background check, and character fitness (including credit-worthiness).

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS (A MINIMUM OF 60 CREDITS)

REQUIRED COURSES

General Education Requirements (39 Credits)

COMMUNICATIONS (9 CREDITS)		Credit Hours
ENC 1101	English Composition I **	3
ENC 1102	English Composition II **	3
SPC 1017	Fundamentals of Oral Communication	3
HUMANITIES (6 CREDITS)		Credit Hours
6		
BEHAVIORAL/ SOCIAL SCIENCE (6 CREDITS)		Credit Hours
6		
NATURAL SCIENCE (7 CREDITS)		Credit Hours
7		
MATHEMATICS (7 CREDITS)		Credit Hours

MAC 1105	College Algebra I **	3
STA 2014	Introduction to Statistics**	4
COMPUTERS (4 CREDITS)	Credit Hours	
CGS 1030	Introduction to Information Technology	4
CORE REQUIREMENTS (12 CREDITS)		
PLA 2104	Legal Research and Writing I	3
PLA 2114	Legal Research and Writing II	3
PLA 2700	Professional Ethics and Liability	3
PLA 2201	Introduction to Civil Procedure	3
SUGGESTED ELECTIVES (9 CREDITS)		
PLA 1426	Contracts and Business Entities	3
BUL 2131	Business Law	3
PLA 2303	Criminal Law and Procedure	3
PLA 2273	Introduction to Torts	3



Why major in Legal Studies? What do Legal Studies Majors do?

Possible Career Options *(Practice areas supporting lawyers)*

Bankruptcy
Business/Corporate
Collections
Family Law
Foreclosures
Immigration
Intellectual Property
Litigation
Probate and Estate Planning
Real Estate
Securities Law
Criminal Law
Personal Injury
Claim Examiner
Law Clerk
Legal Aide
Legal Assistant
Legal Research Assistant
Legal Technician
Occupational Safety and
Health Worker
Paralegal
Patent Agent
Title Examiner
Compensation and Benefits
Manager

All students have questions about their proposed field of study and what their future will hold professionally and personally. At the moment, you may not have your entire life planned out; however, it could be useful to have some basic information to consider when thinking about what you want to do when you leave school. Therefore, the following comments are to help paralegal/legal studies majors think about the variety of career options that await them upon graduation.

Paralegal/Legal Studies is an inherently interesting field. Legal Studies is also a very useful foundation for obtaining satisfying employment. Our graduates are highly regarded by employers in the public and private sector. Legal Studies provides a good grounding in legal knowledge required in many other areas of employment and helps to educate and prepare students for careers in such areas those listed below. The U.S. Department of Labor's survey lists the paralegal profession as one of the fastest growing in the country for the next decade. According to the 2008 National Association of Legal Assistants survey, paralegals earned an average salary of over \$50,000 last year, including bonuses. Some higher-level paralegals made over \$80,000. According to the Medical-Legal Consulting Institute, many legal nurse consultants charge \$125 to \$150 per hour and court reporters earn a median salary of \$50,380.

Compliance and
Enforcement Inspector
Contract Consultant
Forms and Procedures
Specialist
Freelance Paralegal
Labor Relations Specialist

Skills that students will develop in the Paralegal/Legal Studies Program

Critical Thinking Skills

- Analyze a problem; identify and evaluate alternative solutions
- Formulate logical solutions to problems; construct logical arguments in support of specific positions; evaluate solutions and arguments
- Determine which areas of law are relevant to a particular situation
- Apply principles of professional ethics to specific factual situations
- Identify interrelationships among cases, statutes, regulations, and other legal authorities
- Apply recognized legal authority to a specific factual situation
- Analyze factual situations to determine when it is appropriate to apply exceptions to general legal rules
- Apply exceptions to general legal rules; Distinguish evidentiary facts from other material and/or controlling facts
- Identify factual omissions and inconsistencies

Organizational Skills

- Sort information by category
- Prioritize assignments and client needs
- Manage information manually and through computerized databases
- Utilize time efficiently

Communication Skills

- Interact effectively, in person, by telephone and in written correspondence with lawyers, clients, witnesses, court personnel, co-workers, and other business professionals
- Conduct effective interviews with clients, witnesses and experts
- Exhibit tact and diplomacy; distinguish between assertive and aggressive behavior; apply assertive behavior techniques
- Adapt to situations as they arise
- Multi-task
- Understand the need to ask questions and seek guidance when appropriate
- Identify attributes of a team player; work effectively as part of a team
- Work independently and with a minimal amount of supervision when appropriate

Legal Research Skills

- Prepare and carry out a legal research plan; analyze and categorize key facts in a situation
- Use both print and electronic sources of law to locate applicable statutes, administrative regulations, constitutional provisions, court cases and other primary source materials
- Use both print and electronic sources of law to locate treatises, law review articles, legal encyclopedias, and other secondary source materials that help explain the law
- Read, evaluate and analyze both print and electronic sources of law, and apply them to issues requiring legal analysis
- Properly cite both print and electronic sources of law
- "Cite check" legal sources; and
- Identify, locate and appropriately use both print and electronic resources to update and verify the reliability of cited legal authority

Legal Research Skills

- Understand and apply principles of writing and rules of English grammar to all writing tasks
- Write in a style that conveys legal theory in a clear and concise manner
- Read and apply a court opinion to a fact situation
- Report legal research findings in a standard interoffice memorandum or other appropriate format
- Cite print and electronic primary and secondary sources in proper form
- Draft client correspondence and legal documents, using proper format and appropriate content
- Locate and modify standardize forms found in formbooks, pleadings files, form files, or a computer data bank to fit a particular situation.

Interviewing and Investigation Skills

- Identify and locate witnesses, potential parties to a suit and experts
- Develop a list of questions for an interview, conduct an effective interview; record the interview accurately
- Locate and prepare request documents to obtain information that is commonly maintained by government entities; obtain such information; read and interpret the information contained in such records and apply to a given situation;
- Prepare releases and requests to obtain medical, corporate and other non-governmental records; obtain such records; read and interpret the information contained in such records and apply to a given situation
- Use the Internet to obtain relevant and reliable information pertaining to a given situation

Ethical Skills

- Understand the legal process and the nature of law practice, emphasizing the role of the paralegal in the delivery of legal services
- Understand the ways in which paralegal services are used in the delivery of legal services, including functions and tasks commonly performed by paralegals; the place of the paralegal in the delivery services team; the respective roles and responsibilities of the members of the legal team
- Understand the evolving role of the paralegal and other non-lawyers in the delivery of legal services and in increasing access to legal services
- Identify the professional associations that serve and promote the paralegal profession; understand the importance of participation in professional activities
- Understand the legal and ethical principles that guide paralegal conduct
- Demonstrate the ability to identify and resolve ethical dilemmas that may be confronted in the workplace
- Understand the importance of continuing legal education for paralegals

Paralegal/Legal Studies Resources

Black's Law Dictionary
Ref KF156 .B53 1999

Legal Research : How to Find and Understand the Law
Ref KF240 .E35 2003

Martindale-Hubbell Law Directory
Ref KF190 .M273 (16 vol.)

The Bluebook : A Uniform System of Citation
Ref KF245 .U55 17th ed.

Basic Legal Citation : LII (2007 ed.)
by Peter W. Martin
<http://www.law.cornell.edu/citation/>

Department of Justice

- DOJ Home Page <http://www.usdoj.gov/>
- Department of Justice Career Opportunities <http://jobsearch.usajobs.opm.gov/a9dj.aspx>

Journals

- *The Business Lawyer*
- *Law and Contemporary Problems*
- *United States Code Congressional and Administrative News*

Judicial and Sentencing Agencies

- U.S. Supreme Court <http://www.supremecourtus.gov/>
- U.S. Federal Judiciary <http://www.uscourts.gov/>
- Federal Judicial Center <http://www.fjc.gov/>
- Federal Magistrate Judge Association <http://www.fedjudge.org/>
- U.S. Sentencing Commission <http://www.ussc.gov/>
- Fedcrimlaw.com: A Guide to Federal Criminal Law <http://www.fedcrimlaw.com/>
- United States Commission on Civil Rights <http://www.usccr.gov/>
- Human Rights & Equal Opportunity Commission <http://www.hreoc.gov.au/>
- The Courts: Due Process and Civil Liberties <http://criminology.fsu.edu/p/cjl-due.php>

Law Databases

- United States Supreme Courts Cites <http://www.romingerlegal.com/supreme.htm>
- U.S. Supreme Court <http://supct.law.cornell.edu/supct/>
- U.S. Supreme Court Decisions <http://supcourt.ntis.gov/>
- FindLaw: Supreme Court Opinions <http://www.findlaw.com/cascode/supreme.html>
- U.S. Constitution:
Doesn't everyone carry a copy in their pocket? <http://library.law.emory.edu/index.php?id=3080>
- Avalon Project: Historical Law Documents <http://avalon.law.yale.edu/default.asp>
- A Century of Lawmaking for a New Nation
<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/lawhome.html>
- The Law Library of Congress <http://www.loc.gov/law/index.php>
- The U.S. Government Printing Office: <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/index.html>
Includes access to Bills currently being considered by Congress
- The U.S. Court of Appeals, Eleventh Circuit Cases <http://library.law.emory.edu/11circuit/>
- Faris Law Multiple Law Search Engine Forms on One Page <http://www.farislaw.com/?dl=1>
- FedLaw http://www.usa.gov/Topics/Reference_Shelf.shtml
- State and Territorial Laws <http://www.lawguru.com/ilawlib/index.php?id=17>
- Florida Statutes
<http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Welcome/index.cfm?CFID=113986957&CFTOKEN=97550858>
- LawResearch <http://www.lawresearch.com/>
- HIEROS GAMOS – <http://www.hg.org/index.html>
The Comprehensive Legal and Government Site
- Meta-Index for U.S. Legal Research <http://gsulaw.gsu.edu/metaindex/>
- LawGuru.com: Search 200+ Legal Search Engines and Tools <http://www.lawguru.com/>
- Find Law: You can also receive Abstracts and Updates via e-mail <http://www.findlaw.com/>
- Divorce Source: <http://www.divorcesource.com/>
family law , custody, alimony, support, and visitation
- Legal Job Openings <http://www.nationjob.com/legal>
- The Code of Hammurabi <http://www.justlawlinks.com/REGS/codeham.htm>
- Boston College Law Library <http://www.bc.edu/schools/law/library/>
- Doing Business <http://www.doingbusiness.org/>
- Legal Information Institute @ Cornell Law School <http://www.law.cornell.edu/>



Paralegal/Legal Studies Internship Information

PLA 2941 Internship in Legal Assisting
PLA 4950 Legal Studies Capstone

Internship Objectives

- Provide the student with a meaningful, practical work experience in a professional law setting
- Assist the student in clarifying career goals
- Assess readiness to enter the law profession
- Provide the student an opportunity to refine professional skills and apply classroom skills and knowledge
- Acquire specific task-related skills for inclusion in the student's resume
- Develop skills and experience in conducting a job search, including identifying career goals, preparing a resume, interviewing, and gathering information on prospective employers
- Become thoroughly acquainted with business, legal, or governmental work environments
- Gain an understanding of attitudes and work habits that ensure a successful paralegal career
- Develop professional-level skills in oral and written communication
- Acquire a sound, contextual understanding of legal and professional ethics, such as client confidentiality, conflict of interest, and the unauthorized practice of law
- Learn to interact effectively with supervisors, co-workers, clients, and professionals outside of the internship office
- Develop a first-hand understanding of law-related office organization and internal systems, such as timekeeping, billing, and file management
- Gain first-hand insight into current career options
- Acquire a wider range of professional contacts for future career development
- Create a portfolio of work samples (or writing samples) for the student's job search
- Learn to manage time effectively and to account for time worked in an office setting
- Obtain a professional reference and recommendation for future employment

Internship Eligibility

1. You must be a paralegal/legal studies student.
2. You must be in good academic standing (minimum 2.5 overall GPA).
3. You must have completed all lower level core paralegal/legal studies courses.

Internship Application Process

1. Students are responsible for arranging their own internships. Students interested in an internship should first choose an agency (see Internship Sponsor Agencies or find a relevant one on your own). Discussing the various options with your Academic Advisor can facilitate this process.

2. After selecting an agency, you should contact the agency directly to make sure that they are willing and interested in having you as an intern. Once you gain agency approval, complete the online Internship Application Form. The Academic Advisor will email you once your application is approved.

3. In order for students to receive full credit, the student must submit via e-mail a weekly journal of activities completed at the agency to Department Chair: Elizabeth Barcena along with a Supervisor Evaluation of Intern Form (obtain from your Academic Advisor or Department Chair).

Internship Requirements

1. Course syllabus - The expectations, submission requirements, and deadlines are discussed in the course syllabus.

2. Internship hours – Students are expected to work a specific number of hours per week at the agency: 3 credits = 6 hours per week, 6 credits = 12 hours per week.

3. Supervisor evaluation – Students are responsible to make sure that your internship supervisor completes the Supervisor Evaluation of Intern Form and student submits it to the Academic Advisor or Department Chair.



Internship Site Options

Conventional Law Offices

These offices include large and medium-sized firms, small firms, sole practitioners, and publicly funded law offices. The easiest way to find an internship in a law office is to start with the “Florida Bar Journal Directory”. You also may look in the yellow pages under Lawyers or Attorneys. Another great resource is the “Martindale-Hubbell Law Directory.”

Large law firms have thirty or more lawyers, whereas medium firms have eleven to thirty lawyers. These offices tend to have a formal, often complex organizational structure. Typically, these lawyers work in specialized fields and therefore want paralegals with specialized expertise and extensive experience within their specialization. The advantage to working in a large or medium-sized law firm is that they offer challenging work in a well-defined, respected role. These firms offer top compensation levels and a wide range of benefits. There are also significant opportunities for job offers. The disadvantage to seeking out these firms is the limited availability for entry-level paralegal positions and the strict educational requirements.

Small law offices employ two to ten lawyers. Students considering an internship in small firms may find an exciting environment consisting of a variety of experiences. Many small firms have yet to employ paralegals; for this reason, the small firm offers greater opportunity for the entry level paralegal. The work will require the paralegal to be adaptable and flexible. The atmosphere tends to be less formal than in the larger firms.

The solo practice is the office that constitutes the largest single segment of American law offices. The advantage to interning or working in this size office is that the solo practitioner has a greater willingness to train. The work is all encompassing with the opportunity to learn all aspects of law office operations and to work in diverse subject areas. There tends to be close, personal ties to the community in this setting. On the down side, there will be more interruptions, no opportunities for promotion, limited salaries, less space and equipment.

Publicly funded law offices come under two categories: the public defender and legal aid offices. The public defender provides free legal representation to criminal defendants whose income is below certain levels. Legal Aid offices serve indigent clients in civil matters. These offices are supported by federal and state tax money. Many of these offices are turning to paralegals to carry the workload because of funding and staffing constraints. Students who intern in these offices will find dedicated and competent coworkers, active involvement with clients, and opportunities to think and work quickly.

Alternative Types of Legal Offices

Nonprofit organizations rely on dues, donations, and grants for their funding. Examples of these organizations are environmental protection groups, consumer protection organizations, health and counseling associations, senior citizen centers, labor unions, teachers’ unions and organizations promoting the legal and political rights of different segments of the population. Students who are activists at heart would benefit greatly from working in this area. To find an internship in this area, the white pages of the phone book is a good starting point. Another technique is to check the periodical section of a public library for specialty magazines, trade journals, and publications of special-interest groups. These publications frequently contain ads and news about an association’s local and regional chapters and offices. The “Encyclopedia of Associations” is published annually by Gale Research, Inc., in Detroit, Michigan. This four volume directory is a comprehensive source of detailed information on thousands of nonprofit American membership organizations.

Court offices are a great place to intern for those students who are interested in litigation. The Clerk's Office ensures that deadlines are met and that appropriate steps are taken when deadlines are missed. It organizes and maintains court documents and schedules court proceedings. Students will become familiar with all kinds of litigation documents. They will also get a clear picture of procedural strategies available to litigants. Interns may have frequent contact with attorneys. The best way to obtain information about Florida courts is through the "Florida Bar Journal Directory".

Government agencies, whether state or federal, tend to fall within two categories: regulatory agencies and service agencies. Some regulatory agencies are Environmental Regulation, Education, Taxation, Prison and Corrections, Public Utilities, Civil Rights, Labor, Workers' Compensation, and Occupational Licensing. Examples of service agencies are legislative services, child welfare, economic development, public health, human services, elder affairs, community services, cultural affairs, and drug counseling. An intern may have the opportunity to do investigative work, monitor compliance among businesses and other groups, enforce agency regulations, make rules and adjudicate in out-of court administrative hearings. Students with specific career goals that relate to the subject matter the agency addresses should pursue this internship avenue. The best source of information about state, county, and municipal offices in Florida is "The Florida Bar Journal Directory".

Municipal offices may use paralegals in municipal court pretrial procedures and prosecutions, corporate issues, building or planning departments, zoning and subdivision boards, property tax issues, eminent domain issues and the sale or acquisition of municipal land, and researching and drafting ordinances.

Law Enforcement Offices may employ paralegals in the State Attorney General's Office, County Prosecutor's Office, Regional Office of the U.S. Department of Justice, County Sheriff's departments, state or local police department headquarters, parole offices and corrections facilities. Students in these settings may become familiar with legal principles, terminology, research and procedures. Students looking for an internship in law enforcement may find a copy of the "National Directory of Law Enforcement" in their library. This directory is published annually by the National Police Chiefs and Sheriffs' Information Bureau in Steven Point, Wisconsin.

Legislative offices, located in state capitals, may use interns to work directly with elected lawmakers in researching the law, gathering data and helping to create new legislation. Students may also intern in offices of individual state senators and representatives or with the state's Office of Legislative Services. Another possibility is to intern with a state senator or congressional representative. All U.S. legislators maintain at least one office in their home state.

Researching Law Offices on the Web

Florida State's Home Pages:

www.state.fl.us
www.leg.state.fl.us/
www.doi.state.fl.us/
U.S. Government Agencies:
www.lib.lsu.edu/gov/fedgov.html
www.uscourts.gov
State Bar Association Home Pages:
www.flabar.org
www.jaxbar.org/
www.jaxdailyrecord.com/public/links.html
www.fl-a-law.com/organiza.htm

Lawyers and Law Firms:

www.martindale.com
www.westpub.com/htbin.wld
www.yahoo.com/business-and-economy/companies/law/firms
www.legal.net/attorney.viewlist.html
www.attorneyweb.net/us/fl/fl.html
Business and Nonprofit Organizations:
www.bigbook.com
http://altavista.digital.com
www.yahoo.com

INTERNSHIP APPLICATION FORM

This application is to be completed when you have an agency agreeing to sponsor you. You are responsible for making your own arrangements directly with the agency.

Student ID	<input type="text"/>	Last Name	<input type="text"/>
First Name	<input type="text"/>	E-mail	<input type="text"/>
Phone Number	<input type="text"/>	Agency Placement	<input type="text"/>
Supervisor	<input type="text"/>	Supervisor's Phone Number	<input type="text"/>
Supervisor's E-mail	<input type="text"/>	Internship Credit Hours	<input type="text"/>
Semester	<input type="text"/>	Student Signature	<input type="text"/>

Approval Entity	<input type="text"/>	Date	<input type="text"/>
Signature of Department Chair or Academic Advisor			



SUPERVISOR EVALUATION OF INTERN FORM

Intern's Name

Internship
Agency

Supervisor Name

Supervisor
Phone

Supervisor E-mail

Please rate by bubbling in how well the intern performed in the areas listed below:

I. Oral Communication

- ☐ Excellent
- ☐ Above Average
- ☐ Average
- ☐ Improvement Needed
- ☐ Poor
- ☐ Not Applicable

IV. Computer Skills

- ☐ Excellent
- ☐ Above Average
- ☐ Average
- ☐ Improvement Needed
- ☐ Poor
- ☐ Not Applicable

II. Written Communication

- ☐ Excellent
- ☐ Above Average
- ☐ Average
- ☐ Improvement Needed
- ☐ Poor
- ☐ Not Applicable

V. Interpersonal/Teamwork Skills

- ☐ Excellent
- ☐ Above Average
- ☐ Average
- ☐ Improvement Needed
- ☐ Poor
- ☐ Not Applicable

III. Ability to Meet Deadlines

- ☐ Excellent
- ☐ Above Average
- ☐ Average
- ☐ Improvement Needed
- ☐ Poor
- ☐ Not Applicable

VI. Problem Solving/Decision Making Skills

- ☐ Excellent
- ☐ Above Average
- ☐ Average
- ☐ Improvement Needed
- ☐ Poor
- ☐ Not Applicable

VII. Attitude Toward Assignments

- ☐ Excellent
- ☐ Above Average
- ☐ Average
- ☐ Improvement Needed
- ☐ Poor
- ☐ Not Applicable

VIII. Punctuality

- ☐ Excellent
- ☐ Above Average
- ☐ Average
- ☐ Improvement Needed
- ☐ Poor
- ☐ Not Applicable

IX. Judgment

- ☐ Excellent
- ☐ Above Average
- ☐ Average
- ☐ Improvement Needed
- ☐ Poor
- ☐ Not Applicable

X. Dependability

- ☐ Excellent
- ☐ Above Average
- ☐ Average
- ☐ Improvement Needed
- ☐ Poor
- ☐ Not Applicable

XI. Quality

- ☐ Excellent
- ☐ Above Average
- ☐ Average
- ☐ Improvement Needed
- ☐ Poor
- ☐ Not Applicable

XII. Overall Performance

- ☐ Excellent
- ☐ Above Average
- ☐ Average
- ☐ Improvement Needed
- ☐ Poor
- ☐ Not Applicable

How many hours did the intern complete per week during the semester?

Are there any other comments you would like to make?

This form was completed by the Internship Supervisor.

Supervisor Signature

Academic Advising

Upon entering FNU, each freshman is advised to see their Academic Advisor. In addition, each of the offices listed below provides advisement in its field of responsibility to all students as appropriate. These offices are:

The Admissions Office The Financial Aid Office
The Campus Dean The Student Services Office
The Registrar's Office The Advising Center

The Academic Advising Center

- Advising new and current students who are in a career/program.
- Explain and review academic requirements.
- Once student has completed successfully their first 4 terms they are transferred to a faculty advisor of their chosen career.

What is the purpose of Academic Advising?

The primary purpose of academic advising is to assist students in the development of meaningful educational plans that are compatible with their life goals.

Based on their program of studies, students should contact their Division Head for advisor's name and contact information. The instructors advise their student's concerning academic progress as well as academic matters. The Office of Student Services has information on other colleges, universities, and scholarship

The ultimate responsibility for making decisions about life goals and educational plans rests with the individual student. The academic advisor assists by helping to identify and evaluate the alternatives and the consequences of decisions. The academic advisor will be able to direct the student in the right direction depending on his/her life goals and offer recommendations in the following areas:

- Career options
- Program Choice
- Course Scheduling

Set up an appointment as soon as possible with your Criminal Justice Academic Advisor:

Jelenny Hernandez MS, MPA
Criminal Justice & Paralegal Academic Advisor
Military Education Specialist
Florida National University
4425 West 20th Ave
Hialeah, FL 33012
(305) 821-3333 x. 1013
jhernandez@mm.fnc.edu

All Paralegal/Legal Studies Degree program students are strongly encouraged NOT to engage in "self advising" (this happens when students **do not** meet with their advisors on a regular basis and take it upon themselves to make course and career decisions and end up failing classes).

Please visit your academic advisor on a regular basis. *

How to Succeed as a University Student

If you remember the **Number One Rule**, nothing else will matter: Plan as if anything that could go wrong will go wrong! Never assume that things will go according to plan. The only thing that is certain in life is uncertainty. Prepare yourself for power outages, computer-crashes, jammed printers, lost Internet connections, hurricanes, changes in work schedule, lost pets, sick children, hospitalized parents, illnesses, dead car batteries, natural disasters, and any other catastrophe that our creative imagination can concoct. The point is: No “emergency” in the world, well, other than death, should prevent a college student from meeting his/her obligations to instructors. The most successful students are the ones who never once have to explain their “emergency” to faculty. Those are the students who prepared and planned in advance to ensure that all deadlines were met, no matter what. That’s right, no matter what! You must always be on top of your game as a student!

In case you are just learning how to plan in advance for catastrophes, here are some pointers:

COMMUNICATING

- The best form of communication is through email. You should provide an accurate email address to your instructors in the first week of every term. Check your emails daily. Use that email address as the primary form of communication with your instructors, advisors, and department head. The email addresses to all CJ and Legal faculty members, the department head, and your advisor are provided in the Handbook.
- Phone calls and messages can be used to supplement an email, but should never be the primary form of communicating with instructors, advisors, or department heads. If you wish to speak with someone, the best approach would be to send an email asking for an appointment. That way you will have a specific day and time to speak with someone and a confirmation to rely upon for your records should something go array.
- Remember, in the real world it is always your word against everyone else. The best way to ensure results is to protect yourself and your interests. Things that are in writing are reliable and will always serve as proof; things that are spoken can never be used to resolve a conflict. This is true for your education, but your careers as well.

ASSIGNMENTS

- Keep electronic copies of every assignment, email, and communication between you and educational personnel.
- A good way to store your files is to save them to the desktop or documents, then email them to yourself as attachments. Email servers rarely, if ever, crash. So storing your documents in an email folder ensures that you can retrieve them from any computer that has Internet access. This is the free way to store.
- Another method would be to invest in an online storage locker. Those sites allow you to upload your files to a “cloud”, and then retrieve them from any computer that has Internet access.

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- Another, but not so reliable method would be to save your files to a USB flash drive. Remember, plan for catastrophes. What happens if you spill your coffee or cocktail on it? Yes, that's right; you will lose your assignments. Since you've been warned, you are now not permitted to use the "my flash drive got damaged" excuse for missing a deadline.
 - A final and horrible way to save your files would be to your computer. Guess what, computers crash! Yes, I know it's hard to believe, but even your Mac can have a seizure and lose your files. Never, ever, ever save your files to a computer expecting them to be safe. Always back them up to a secondary source. Again, you've been warned, so assignments lost through computer crashes are never a valid excuse for missing a deadline.

ATTENDANCE

- Always contact your instructor before you miss a class, or as soon as possible after class. However, absent some extreme circumstance, you should never wait more than 24 hours to contact an instructor after missing a class.
- In today's connected society, there is no valid reason, other than death or a serious health condition requiring sedation and hospitalization, for waiting more than 24 hours to contact an instructor after missing class.
- Make plans now. What plan will you have in place to contact instructors in case of an illness, lost phone, damaged computer, or any other event that prevents you from making contact with your instructor? Make a plan now so that you don't have to excuse yourself later. Remember, you're here to succeed, no matter what!

LEARNING

- Any issues you are having with a course must be directed to the instructor.
- Not only are your instructors there to help you, but several departmental faculty members have various office hours every term. You can reach out to them for assistance as well. Just contact the department head for more details on those hours.
- You also have academic advisors at each campus who are there to assist. You can reach out to them for help with your assignments.
- Every campus has tutors who are available to help you free of charge. There is tutoring in English, math, and science. Check with Student Services for the days and times.
- Online resources are also a great tool for students. The use of Google can provide students with resources on absolutely any topic that is covered in your courses. Students ultimately bear the responsibility of learning. Take charge, and learn. The information you need is out there, you just have to grab it.

TEXTBOOKS

- In an accelerated program like ours, students must have the textbook by the first day of class. We provide textbooks for sale in the bookstore or for in-house use at our libraries. Students opting to purchase books from outside sources bear the sole responsibility for receiving them by the first day.
- Extensions cannot, and will not, be granted to students who do not have the book on time. If you're book is late, and this is something that should be planned for (right?), then you must make arrangements to use the books on reserve in the libraries. This might include spending less time with your family, waking up earlier, or going to bed later. The point is that late deliveries of books are never a reason for missing deadlines. Plan in advance to work around any delays that may arise.

TECHNOLOGY

- Whether you're pro or against technology the fact is that it is here to stay. No credible educational program in the world today will offer a degree without the implementation of technology.
- Students must bear the responsibility of learning how to use the technological resources that are needed to succeed academically and professionally.
- The basics are: email, Internet searches, library database searches, Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, and Microsoft Power Point. Paralegal and Legal Studies students must also master Westlaw, which will be covered in your core classes.

ENGLISH SKILLS

- English communication skills, both written and oral, are the number one asset you can possess in today's competitive job market.
- Students must invest a substantial amount of time to developing English skills. The use of proper grammar and spelling is crucial to your success. Speaking well is as important.
- The best way to master these skills is through practice, practice, practice, and more practice. There is no shortcut, so just put the time in and you will get results!
- We offer tutoring and assistance through the Writing Lab. Online resources are also available through a simple "Google" search, for example, the Purdue OWL site.

RULES OF CITATION

- College and university students must master the art of citing. This means nothing more than letting readers know where your information came from. The goal of the university is to prepare well-rounded, analytically-sound individuals. You cannot support your points of view with a statement that sounds like this: "I'm right because I said so". That is the building block for ignorance, and it has no place in a civilized world.
- Criminal Justice students will format citations to APA (American Psychological Association). Assistance can be found through Purdue's OWL.
- Paralegal and Legal Studies students will format citations to the Uniform Bluebook of Citations. Assistance can be found through Cornell's Law Institute.

RESOURCES

Purdue OWL: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>

Cornell Law Institute: <http://www.law.cornell.edu/>

Westlaw Learning / Tutorials: <http://www.westlearning.com/rc2/login.asp?>

Approaching your professors

The following information should be used to help you to communicate effectively and comfortably with your professors during in-class and outside of class communication

When should you meet with your professors?

- Before class
- After class
- During office hours
- By appointments

Professors not only teach courses, they also work on research in their respective field, prepare for class lecture, and grade assignments. Most are involved with professional associations/organizations, write books and articles, work on committees and projects on campus, and last but not least, advise students. To do your part in class, you should complete the homework assignments, read your text, show up for class, ask questions, take notes, seek help when needed, follow the syllabus, take responsibility for learning the information, and participate in meaningful and scholarly conversations.

Few students make it through college without seeking assistance from a professor for help at one time or another. In fact, it's important to seek help rather than let problems fester and intensify. So, how do you approach a professor for a meeting?

Why Seek Help?

What are common reasons why you might seek out professors for assistance?

- You've fallen behind in class because of illness
- You've failed a test or assignment and do not understand the course material
- You have questions about the requirements of a given assignment
- You need advice on the subject of your major
- You cannot reach the class teaching assistant during his or her posted hours
- You need clarification on policies and/or schedules

Why Do Students Avoid Seeking Professors' Help?

Sometimes students avoid asking for assistance or meeting with their professors because they're embarrassed or intimidated. What are common anxieties experienced by students?

- Feeling "out of the loop" after missing several classes
- Fear of asking a "dumb question"
- Fear of confrontation
- Shyness

-
- Discomfort over approaching a professor of a different age, gender, race, or culture
 - Tendency to avoid interactions with those in authority

Approach Your Professor (Politely and Respectfully)

- **Contact** – Determine the preferred mode of contact; check the course syllabus as professors indicate their preferred methods of contact and related information. Ask yourself: Is this urgent? If so, then contact by phone or stopping by his or her office during office hours is probably the most logical step. Otherwise, you can try e-mail. Wait a few days for a response (remember that teaching is a professor's job, so don't expect replies over evenings, weekends, or holidays).
- **Plan** – Check the syllabus for the professor's office hours and policies before you make your request so that you are already familiar with their schedule. If the professor requests that you return at another time, do your best to meet at a time which is convenient for him or her (e.g., during office hours). Don't ask a professor to go out of his or her way to meet you at a time that is inconvenient because professors have many more responsibilities than teaching (e.g., lots of meetings within the department, university, and community).
- **Ask** – Asking is the only way to learn your professor's preferences.

Prepare for Your Meeting

Pull your thoughts together beforehand (as well as all of your course materials). Preparation will permit you to remember to ask all of the questions that you need answered and arrive with confidence to your meeting.

- **Questions** – If you are anxious at all about talking with your professor, prepare a list of your questions beforehand. Be efficient and try to accomplish everything in one meeting, rather than coming back time and time again with further questions.
- **Materials** – Bring your class notes and syllabus with you to refer to, if you have questions specifically related to course materials, so that you have all the details you need. If you need to refer to a text book, bookmark the pages that you will need to refer to so you can get to them quickly.
- **Notes** – Come prepared to take notes (i.e., bring a pen and paper to your meeting). Notes will help you record and remember the responses to your questions and prevent you from asking the same questions later in the course.

At the Meeting

- **Be punctual** – Punctuality signifies respect for your professor's time. Do not arrive early or late. Most professors are pressed for time. If you need to meet with your professor again, ask him or her if you can set up another appointment, following the suggestions above.
- **Address** – Unless your professor has indicated otherwise, address him or her by last name and with the appropriate title (e.g., Professor, Doctor).
- **Gratitude** – Always thank the professor for his or her time and express any gratitude that you feel is appropriate for the specific help that he or she has provided. This rapport will leave the door open for future appointments.

Graduate School Information

Graduate School Information

FNU's Paralegal and Legal Studies Program is designed to provide graduates the solid foundational knowledge needed to advance to law school or graduate school, or to pursue a variety of careers in the legal field, government, and the corporate world. You should begin studying for your Graduate Record Examinations (GREs) in your junior year of undergraduate studies if you plan to attend graduate school. This will give you plenty of time to read, complete GRE example exams, and re-take GRE example exams. In other words, you want to complete practice exams as often as possible so you will score high enough to be accepted into most graduate degree programs. Information pertaining to GREs can be found online at <http://www.gre.com>. In addition, you should start reviewing different graduate programs that meet your interests. You can use <http://www.Google.com> or <http://Graduateschools.com> to review graduate programs (e.g., rankings, tuition, degree offerings, etc.).

What is the LSAT?

The Law School Admission Test (LSAT) is a half-day, standardized test administered four times each year at designated testing centers throughout the world. Most law schools in the United States and Canada use LSAT results as part of their admission process. All LSAC member schools require applicants to take the LSAT.

The LSAT is designed to measure skills considered essential for success in law school: the reading and comprehension of complex texts with accuracy and insight; the organization and management of information and the ability to draw reasonable inferences from it; the ability to think critically; and the analysis and evaluation of the reasoning and arguments of others.

The test consists of five 35-minute sections of multiple choice questions. Four of the five sections contribute to the test taker's score. These sections include one reading comprehension section, one analytical reasoning section, and two logical reasoning sections. The unscored section, commonly referred to as the variable section, typically is used to pretest new test questions or to pre-equate new test forms. The placement of this section in the LSAT will vary for each administration of the test. The LSAT is scored on a scale of 120 to 180, with 180 being the highest possible score. A 35-minute writing sample is administered at the end of the test. LSAC does not score the writing sample, but copies are sent to all law schools to which a candidate applies.

For more information about law school entrance requirements, please visit www.lsac.org.



Conclusion

It is our hope that you are now well prepared to start your academic career. We have provided you with the academic and personal interest(s) related resources that you will need in your future endeavors. If at any time you need assistance, please do not hesitate to contact the faculty and staff members. Again, welcome aboard!



“No man is above the law and no man is below it; nor do we ask any man's permission when we ask him to obey it”

Theodore Roosevelt