

PARALEGAL

Cascade Campus
Terrell Hall (TH), Room 109
971-722-5212 or 971-722-5258

www.pcc.edu/programs/paralegal/

CAREER AND PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

A paralegal is a trained paraprofessional who assists the attorney in delivery of legal services to the client. Paralegals work under the supervision of an attorney at law firms, corporations, state and federal agencies, non-profits and other sectors. Tasks include: client and witness interviews, document preparation, organization of case materials and data, investigation, research and file management. A paralegal performs these tasks under the supervision of an attorney. The program also provides students with skills which enable them to pursue jobs in alternative careers.

The PCC Paralegal Program is designed to provide students with a high quality background in paralegal studies, including providing development of analytic skills; familiarity with substantive and procedural law; development of various practical skills; familiarity with legal terminology; and research and writing skills. The program has classes that focus on specific skills, such as client counseling, investigation and research, as well as various substantive law classes. Legal research classes are taught in the program's law library located at the Cascade Campus.

The Paralegal program at Portland Community College is approved by the American Bar Association (ABA) effective February 8, 2010. It is the first Paralegal program in the State of Oregon to achieve ABA approved status. ABA approval provides students and the legal community assurance that PCC's program is providing a high quality educational experience grounded in practical paralegal preparation, training and education to its students.

Classes meet primarily on weekday evenings from 6:30 pm to 9:20 pm. Some daytime and Saturday classes are scheduled. Most classes are located at the Cascade Campus or CLIMB Center.

Paralegal courses may transfer to Portland State University. Students interested in transferring to any four-year university should check with that institution regarding transferability status of specific paralegal courses.

REREQUISITES AND REQUIREMENTS

1. High school completion or GED.
2. Completion of reading, writing and math placement tests unless waived based upon equivalent course work or college degree

College level course work from an accredited college may be substituted for required degree and/or certificate course work.

Program advising is required. Students planning to enroll in the program should contact the department for specific eligibility requirements and advising. The Paralegal AAS degree is an open enrollment program. The Paralegal Certificate is a limited entry program. Completing certificate admission requirements does not guarantee admission into the program.

A grade of C or better for all PL core courses is required. An overall GPA of at least 2.0 for all PL courses is required to graduate.

Visit the department web page for details on admission, prerequisites and requirements: www.pcc.edu/programs/paralegal/.

DEGREES AND CERTIFICATES OFFERED

Associate of Applied Science Degree

Paralegal

One-Year Certificate

Paralegal

PARALEGAL AAS DEGREE

Minimum 90 credits. Students must also meet Associate Degree Comprehensive Requirements and Associate of Applied Science Requirements. Some courses specified within the program may be used as General Education. Students should consult with program advisors for course planning.

Paralegal Degree Credit Summary

PL	24
Paralegal Program Electives	21
Paralegal Support Electives	18
<u>Restricted General Education</u>	<u>27</u>
Credit Total	90

Paralegal Courses

PL 101	Introduction to Law-Fundamentals	3
PL 102	Introduction to Law-Substantive Areas	3
PL 103	Introduction to Law-Ethics	3
PL 107	Techniques of Interview	3
PL 130	Legal Software	3
PL 201	Legal Research and Library Use	3
PL 202	Computer Research in Law	3
PL 204	Applied Legal Research and Drafting	3
Paralegal Program Electives ¹		21
Paralegal Support Electives ²		18
Restricted General Education ³		27

¹Courses from other departments, such as BA or CJA may be used as Paralegal electives for up to six credits. Students should consult the department for course approval.

²Any 100 to 299 level course

³Twenty-seven credits must be from a restricted General Education list with at least one class taken in each area (Social Science, Arts and Letters, and Science, Math and Computer Science) as per ABA requirements. Students should consult Department Chair. General Education courses that are **not** approved to be used in the Restricted General Education area are: ART: 115, 116, 117, 131, 141, 142, 143, 181, 197, 198, 220, 231, 237, 240, 243, 248, 253, 256, 270, 271, 277, 279, 281, 284, 287, 291, 292, 293, 294 ESOL: 150, 152, 154, 160, 162, 164, 166, 250, 252, 253, 254, 255, 260, 262, 264, 265, all TA courses, all FN courses, and all CIS courses.

PARALEGAL ONE-YEAR CERTIFICATE

Minimum 45 credits. Students must also meet certificate requirements. The Paralegal Certificate is a related certificate. All courses are contained in the Paralegal AAS Degree.

Paralegal Certificate Credit Summary

PL	24
Paralegal Program Electives	21
Credit Total	45

Paralegal Courses

PL	101	Introduction to Law-Fundamentals	3
PL	102	Introduction to Law-Substantive Areas	3
PL	103	Introduction to Law-Ethics	3
PL	107	Techniques of Interview	3
PL	130	Legal Software	3
PL	201	Legal Research and Library Use	3
PL	202	Computer Research in Law	3
PL	204	Applied Legal Research and Drafting	3

Paralegal Program Electives

PL	104	Investigation Techniques for Paralegals	3
PL	105	Litigation	3
PL	109	Estate Planning	3
PL	111	Probate Practice	3
PL	113	Income Tax Law	3
PL	116	Real Property Law I	3
PL	124	Law Office Management	3
PL	140	Immigration Law for Paralegals	3
PL	206	Intellectual Property Law	3
PL	208	Family Law	3
PL	210	Elder Law	3
PL	216	Employment Law	3
PL	219	Contract and Consumer Law	3
PL	220	Worker's Compensation	3
PL	221	Bankruptcy Law	3
PL	222	Corporate Law Practice	3
PL	224	Torts and Personal Injury	3
PL	226	Criminal Law for Paralegal	3
PL	280A	CE: Paralegal	3

Courses from other departments, such as BA or CJA, may be used as Paralegal electives for up to six credits. Students should consult the department for course approval.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

PL 101 Introduction to Law - Fundamentals 3.00 Covers sources and function of law in the United States, court systems and procedure, introductory legal analysis, and an overview of civil and administrative law. Prerequisite: WR 121. Audit available.

PL 102 Introduction to Law - Substantive Areas 3.00 Continues the study of several substantive areas of law. Prerequisite: PL 101. Audit available.

PL 103 Introduction to Law - Ethics 3.00 Covers Oregon ethics rules and their practical application for the paralegal. Includes application of rules via systems and procedures used in law practice. Prerequisite: PL 101. Audit available.

PL 104 Investigation Techniques for Paralegals 3.00 Explores fundamental techniques of legal investigation from the incident scene to the courtroom. Includes ethics, research techniques, investigative strategies, recordkeeping, information sources, witness location, report writing, subpoenas, physical and demonstrative evidence. Prerequisites: PL 101. Audit available.

PL 105 Litigation 3.00 Covers litigation process with emphasis on civil litigation. Includes a study of tort law principles focusing on the trial process (investigation, discovery and motion practice) emphasizing preparation of documents and pleadings. Prerequisite: PL 101. Audit available.

PL 107 Techniques of Interview 3.00 Students study and conduct simulated interviews. Prerequisite: WR 121. Prerequisite/concurrent: PL 101. Audit available.

PL 109 Estate Planning 3.00 Approaches to estate planning, including wills, trusts, shared ownership, gifts and life insurance are covered. Includes objectives people have for estate planning, probate and the estate, and structures and results of different estate plans. Audit available.

PL 111 Probate Practice 3.00 Covers preparation and filing of necessary papers used to administer an estate under Oregon state law. Audit available.

PL 113 Income Tax Law 3.00 Focuses on three key aspects of income taxation (principally federal income taxation). Includes basic concepts of income taxation, and understand the interaction of various components involved in the determination of the income tax. Covers the audit process, including how a taxpayer may appeal an audit decision and how an appeal may reach various courts. Learn how research differs from other legal research and will understand the implications of various types of authorities regarding tax law and procedure. Prerequisite: PL 101. Audit available.

PL 116 Real Property Law I 3.00 Covers introductory principles and procedures in real and personal property law including possessory interests, estates, deeds, contracts, servitudes, leases, title issues and real estate transactions. Audit available.

PL 124 Law Office Management 3.00 Covers law office organization and management, personnel management, accounting, procedural and automated systems, and other aspects of law office management. Audit available.

PL 128 Legal Correspondence and Forms 3.00 Covers basic forms of legal writing generally required of a paralegal in a general law practice. Uses writing techniques and tools common to internal law office communications as well as communicating techniques between lawyer and client. Prerequisites: WR 121, 122: PL 101, PL 102. Prerequisite/concurrent: PL 203. Audit available.

PL 130 Legal Software 3.00 Provides training in a variety of specialized legal software applications through lecture, discussing and other classroom activities in current legal software applications, which include legal software used for conflict-checking, timekeeping, litigation support and trial preparation. Prerequisite: PL 101 and CAS 133. Audit available.

PL 140 Immigration Law for Paralegals 3.00 Provides students with an overview of United States immigration laws. Includes review and study of many critical immigration law doctrines, including nationality and citizenship, inadmissibility and deportability grounds, the worldwide immigrant selection system, basic administrative law concepts, asylum and refugee law, and defenses to deportation. Students will have an opportunity to analyze fact situations, review caselaw, draft documents and apply remedies, principles and doctrines discussed in the class. Recommended: PL 101. Audit available.

PL 201 Legal Research and Library Use 3.00 Covers function of the law library and develops research skills through the use of digests, encyclopedias, reporter systems and practice manuals. Prerequisites: PL 101. Audit available.

PL 202 Computer Research in Law 3.00 Covers how and when to use computers for legal research and operational content differences between Westlaw and Lexis. Includes retrieving specific documents, checking citations, and practice research. Prerequisite: PL 201. Audit available.

PL 204 Applied Legal Research and Drafting 3.00 Students practice legal research skills and draft legal memoranda common to the practice of law. Prerequisite: PL 203. Audit available.

PL 206 Intellectual Property Law 3.00 Introduces the basic terms, concepts, laws, and administrative rules necessary to interpret and accomplish tasks typically assigned to paralegals by attorneys in intellectual property (IP) law practices. Emphasizes patent and trademark prosecution (filing documents with the United States Patent and Trademark Office), copyrights, and to lesser extent, unique facets of IP litigation. Audit available.

PL 208 Family Law 3.00 Covers theory, procedure, and practical aspects of a domestic relations practice. Includes dissolution of marriage, issues of custody, visitation, property and debts, adoption, paternity, domestic violence, and prenuptial and cohabitation agreements. Audit available.

PL 210 Elder Law 3.00 Explores and provides strategies for preserving clients' quality of life as they age in the field of elder law, including important planning issues, such as where to live; financial management; health care; protection; insuring against risk of high costs of care; and planning for serious illness and death. Covers various tools, including elder abuse protection, long term care, Medicare and Medicaid, insurance, trusts, social security, guardianships and conservatorships and other planning issues. Prerequisite: PL 101 and PL 109. Audit available.

PL 214 Fiduciary Tax and Accounting 3.00 Covers basic federal and Oregon income taxation of estates and trusts and skills necessary to prepare required documents. The basic form of fiduciary accounting for filing of accounts with the court is also covered. Prerequisite: PL 113. Audit available.

PL 215 Employee Benefits Programs 3.00 Introduces various types of employee benefits programs emphasizing tax qualified retirement plans. Non-qualified plans and other types of employee benefits are covered as time allows. Audit available.

PL 216 Employment Law 3.00 Overview of Employment Law and remedies under state and federal law, including employment at will doctrine; wrongful discharge claims; discrimination based upon disability, age, gender and other claims; retaliation claims; Equal Pay Act, Family Medical Leave Act; health and safety issues; BOLI process; and other relevant issues. Audit available.

PL 217 Real Property Law II 3.00 Covers key real estate transactions documents and concepts, including earnest money agreements, deeds, title insurance escrow instructions, financing documents and closing documents. Audit available.

PL 219 Contract and Consumer Law 3.00 Provides an overview of contract law and selected consumer law claims and defenses. Includes understanding the basics of contract information, contract provisions, contract claims and defenses. Covers selected consumer law issues, including lemon law, warranties and fair debt collection. Prerequisite: PL 101. Audit available.

PL 220 Worker's Compensation 3.00 Covers principals and procedures that exist in the Oregon's worker's compensation system. Familiarization with a general understanding of the rules and concepts that control the right to compensation in the system as well as the procedural skills. Audit available.

PL 221 Bankruptcy Law 3.00 Covers Bankruptcy Code, Rules of Procedure, types of bankruptcy relief, exempt and non-exempt property, dischargeability of debts, and bankruptcy forms. Audit available.

PL 222 Corporate Law Practice 3.00 Covers most significant state corporation law, how to assist in preparation and filing of documents necessary to form a corporation, how to draft resolutions for corporate shareholders and directors' meetings, and how to pay dividends to shareholders or to terminate business and distribute property. Audit available.

PL 224 Torts and Personal Injury 3.00 Provides an overview of tort law and handling personal injury claims, including paralegal's role. Includes study of international torts, negligence and strict liability claims; defenses; vicarious liability; tort claims act; damages; analyze fact situations; review case law; draft pleadings; evaluate damages; discovery issues; and apply principles discussed in class. Prerequisite: PL 101 and PL 102. Audit available.

PL 225 Advanced Law Office Management 3.00 Examines practical solutions to law office management problems through application of theory and concepts discussed using a case study approach. Audit available.

PL 226 Criminal Law for Paralegal 3.00 Covers general criminal law and procedure to gain a basic understanding of the criminal justice system as well as the Paralegal's role in the criminal justice system. Audit available.

PL 280A Cooperative Education: Paralegal Students work at approved job sites to receive as varied and complete a job experience as possible under job conditions. Designed to meet the needs of the individual student and the conditions of the work site. Goals for each student are established by written Learning Objectives between the student and work site, approved by the Instructor or program. Department approval and completion of 18 credits hours in Paralegal Program (unless waived by the Department) are required. Audit available.