

THE PARALEGAL STUDIES HANDBOOK



DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE STUDIES COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY

Effective Date Fall 2008

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Preface...3
Resident Faculty...4
Admissions and Advisement...5
Undergraduate Admissions	
Paralegal Studies Post-Baccalaureate Certificate Admissions	
Advisement	
Paralegal Studies at Montclair University...6
Admissions Criteria	
Admission with Advanced Standing	
Advanced Standing by Challenge Examination	
Program Standards...9
Paralegal Studies Program...10
Course Offerings	
Internships and Cooperative Education	
Program Completion	
Placement	
Justice Studies Major at Montclair University...14
Services Available to Students...16
Courses of Study...17
Paralegal Studies Minor & Post B.A. Curriculum	
• Suggested Paralegal Studies Sequences of Courses	
Justice Studies Major with Paralegal Concentration Curriculum	
• Suggested Justice Studies Sequences of Courses	
Frequently Asked Questions...29
Closing Remarks...31

PREFACE

This handbook has been prepared to state and clarify requirements, policies and procedures that have developed and evolved as part of the Paralegal Studies offerings over the past twenty-five years. All requirements contained in this Handbook have been approved and are currently in effect. If, after reviewing this Handbook, you have further requests or inquiries, please contact the Justice Studies Department at (973) 655-4152.

It should be noted that paralegals are not lawyers and must work under the supervision of an attorney. Paralegals are not permitted to practice law.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE STUDIES RESIDENT & FACULTY

Professor Norma C. Connolly <i>Department Chairperson</i>	Room 347	973-655-5347
Assistant Professor Cary S. Federman	Room 350	973-655-7966
Assistant Professor Jessica S. Henry	Room 326	973-655-3416
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Gale Morganti <i>Department Administrator</i>	Room 331	973-655-7897
Francine Raguso <i>Applied Learning Specialist</i>	Room 346	973-655-7702
Assistant Professor Lisa Zilney	Room 349	973-655-7225
Vicki Toffler <i>Department Secretary</i>	Room 348	973-655-4152

ADMISSIONS & ADVISEMENT

UNDERGRADUATE ADMISSIONS:

In order for undergraduate students to be accepted into the Paralegal Studies Program by either declaring a Justice Studies Major with Paralegal Studies Concentration or a Paralegal Studies Minor, they must contact the Justice Studies Department Administrator, Gale Morganti. Admissions Criteria is set for in this Handbook on page 3.

PARALEGAL STUDIES POST-BACCALAUREATE CERTIFICATE ADMISSIONS:

Post-Baccalaureate students in the Paralegal Studies Program are initially processed through the Graduate Admissions Office. Students are accepted for matriculation into the Post-Baccalaureate Paralegal Studies Certificate Program through the Department of Justice Studies. An interview with the Post-Baccalaureate Certificate Program Coordinator, Professor Lenore M. Molee, is required as part of the admissions process.

ADVISEMENT:

All students should see their advisor at least once each semester regarding their course of study.

Advisors:

Professor N.C. Connolly 973-655-5347

Department Chairperson

Professor Lenore M. Molee 973-655-7963

Paralegal Studies Program Director

Professor Francine Raguso 973-655-7702

Appeared Learning Specialist (all internship placements)

PARALEGAL STUDIES @ MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY

ADMISSION CRITERIA:

PARALEGAL STUDIES CONCENTRATION OF THE JUSTICE STUDIES MAJOR

Students will be admitted if they meet one of the following criteria:

1. Overall G.P.A. of 2.75
2. G.P.A. of 2.75 in first three required or core courses
3. Students who do not meet "1" or "2" will be considered according to a weighting of the following criteria by the Admissions committee. Factors to be considered are:

Group A (weighted up to 50%)

- ✚ Overall college GPA
- ✚ GPA in the first three required or core courses
- ✚ Grades in similar coursework at another institution

Group B (weighted up to 30%)

- ✚ Statement of interest
- ✚ Prior experience in the field

Group C (weighted up to 20%)

- ✚ Leadership positions in extra-curricular activities
- ✚ Evidence of maintaining a good GPA while working
- ✚ References

PARALEGAL MINOR

Students will be admitted if they have:

1. Overall G.P.A. of 2.75

POST BACCALAUREATE CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

Students will be admitted if they meet one of the following criteria:

1. Overall G.P.A. of 2.75
2. Conditional matriculation. You must obtain a minimum of 2.75 in the first three courses in the program.

ADMISSION WITH ADVANCED STANDING:

Students transferring from other accredited institutions may transfer up to a maximum of twelve credits, if courses are found to be applicable and grades meet Montclair State University's standards. Applicable courses are considered to be equivalent legal specialty courses taken at American Bar Association (ABA) approved programs or a law-related course taken at any accredited institution. Accredited institutions are those whose credits are recognized and accepted by Montclair State University.

No legal specialty course transfer credits will be accepted from non-ABA approved institutions except for Criminal Law & Procedure and Business Law. Legal specialty courses from ABA approved institutions will be accepted on the basis of case-by-case equivalence as determined by the academic advisor.

Students may receive approval to apply transfer credits from accredited institutions to the Montclair State University Paralegal Studies Program in the following ways:

- a) Transfer credits for equivalent courses in which a student has received a grade of "C" or better from an approved degree University course and the number of credits transferred into the Paralegal Studies Program can be no greater than would be allowed for the equivalent course at Montclair State University.
- b) Credits which qualify through the National Guide to Education Credit for Training Programs of the American Council on Education;
- c) Credits for life experience received through the evaluation of a student's portfolio by Thomas Edison College may be transferable -granting institution. Course content must be equivalent to the Montclair State to Montclair State University, subject to the limitations described here.

*A student **may not transfer more than nine credits into the Montclair State University Paralegal Studies Minor or Certificate Program. A student may transfer up to twelve credits into the Paralegal Studies Concentration of the Justice Studies Major.***

None of the above statements, however, precludes a student from transferring a greater number of credits as free electives or general education credits at Montclair State. Any student desiring to apply credits to the Paralegal Studies Program in accordance with these guidelines must have his or her credits evaluated within six months of entry into Montclair State University. This time limitation is necessary for purposes of advisement and to avoid possible duplication of courses.

*A student **must obtain an approved waiver and course substitution form in order to receive advanced standing for any courses within the Paralegal Studies Program.***

ADVANCED STANDING BY CHALLENGE EXAM:

A student may earn credits by challenge examination for the following courses in the Montclair State University Paralegal Studies Program:

Family Law	Real Estate Law
Wills, Trust and Probate Law	Immigration Law
Corporations and Partnerships	Personal Injury Law

Research and Writing for Paralegals cannot be challenged.

In order to be able to take any course challenge examination, a student must first present proof of (a) substantial work experience in the field or (b) having completed an equivalent course at another institution with a grade of C+ or higher.

The student must contact Professor Lenore M. Molee who will provide the name of the contact instructor for the examination. The student then pays a designated fee determined by the Bursar's Office. Once paid, the student will receive **two copies** of a receipt for payment. One receipt is provided to Professor Molee, who will then indicate to the instructor that the fee has been paid and the examination can be given.

The instructor will give the student a cumulative examination based upon the course materials. Instructors are obliged to provide the names of books, a copy of the syllabus a general description what kind of exam will be given. Obviously, faculty members teach far more than what is in the books, and it is the responsibility of the student to have sufficient knowledge about the subject beyond what is in the book to have mastered that information on his/her own.

The student must earn a minimum of a grade equivalent to **2.75 (C+/B-)** on the challenge examination to successfully challenge a course. Once a student has successfully challenged the course Professor Molee will prepare an "Undergraduate Academic Program Adjustment Form" or "Substitution on Graduate Work Program Form" so that proper course credit is posted to the student's record. The student does not receive a grade for any course challenged in this manner. The student does not pay for the credits for the course, which is challenged.

A student may challenge additional courses beyond the nine credits accepted in the Department of Justice Studies, and receive free elective credit, to be applied outside the Paralegal Studies Program.

PROGRAM STANDARDS

Students enrolled in any Paralegal Studies programs should not enroll in any Paralegal Studies courses on a Pass/Fail or Audit basis. Students in the Justice Studies major with a concentration in Paralegal Studies must obtain a minimum grade of C- in all the major core courses (JUST 200, JUST 201, JUST 300, JUST 310) in order to be eligible for the Senior Seminar and Field Experience in Justice Studies course (JUST 497). Students in the Paralegal Studies minor and the Post-baccalaureate Certificate in Paralegal Studies must attain a minimum grade of C- in the Research & Writing for Paralegals course (PALG 312) in order to be eligible for the Seminar and Internship or Co-Op Education class (PALG 497).

The following is the University's policy regarding repeated courses: A student should repeat a failed course as soon as possible. To repeat a course, a student must register, make payment for that course and file a Repeat Course Card with the Office of the Registrar. There is no special approval required to repeat a course in which a grade of "F" or "D" was received. *A course repeated at another institution does not substitute for a "D" or "F" grade in a course taken at Montclair State University.*

When a course has been repeated, both the original and subsequent courses are included on the permanent record, but the credit is counted only once. The grade received in the repeated course becomes the official final grade for purposes of the GPA at Montclair State University.

A student may not receive credit within the Paralegal Studies Program for a legal specialty course taken more than six years prior to completion of the Program without the special permission of the Paralegal Studies Program director. To receive such permission, the student proficiency in the area must be demonstrated or special circumstances to waive this rule must be shown.

PARALEGAL STUDIES PROGRAM

COURSE OFFERINGS:

Students must begin their course of study with PALG 210 Law and Litigation or JUST 200 Perspectives in Justice Studies I or JUST201 Perspectives in Justice Studies II as these are pre-requisites for any 300 or 400 level legal specialty course (PALG). *In order to take any course in the Paralegal Studies Program, a student must have successfully completed all prerequisites for the course and must be concurrently taking or have completed all co-requisites for the course.* Students who do not meet prerequisites will be dropped from courses. Since all courses are not offered during all semesters, students must plan accordingly. Summer offerings in Paralegal Studies are limited.

INTERNSHIP AND COOPERATIVE EDUCATION:

The Department of Justice Studies Applied Learning Specialist, Professor Francine Raguso, is responsible for processing all internship and cooperative education applications (JUST 497 Senior Seminar and Field Experience in Justice Studies for Justice Studies majors with Concentration in Paralegal Studies and PALG 497/498, Paralegal Seminar and Internship or Co-op. Ed.: Paralegal Studies) for all students in the Paralegal Studies Programs. Professor Raguso will work with each student to obtain an internship placement. Internship applications are found on the Justice Studies Department website. Note deadlines for the filing of internship application. (October 15th for Spring semester, March 15th for Fall semester.

JUST 497 Senior Seminar and Field Experience in Justice Studies

The Senior Seminar and Field Experience in Justice Studies (JUST 497) must be taken by **all** Justice Studies majors with a Concentration in Paralegal Studies. The course is a variable credit course of 3 to 8 credits. Credits above 3 credits are free electives that are not included in the semester hours toward the major. Students must complete a minimum of 90 hours over the course of the semester in the field experience (internship).

PALG 497/498 Paralegal Seminar and Internship and Co-op Ed.: Paralegal Studies

The Paralegal Seminar and Internship (PALG 497) or Co-Op. Ed: Paralegal Studies (PALG 498) must be taken by **all** Paralegal Studies minors and Post-baccalaureate Paralegal Studies Certificate Students. PALG 497 is a three credit course. PALG 498 is a variable credit course of 4 to 8 credits. A student must receive permission of the Applied Specialist and the Office of Career Services and Community-based Learning before enrolling in this course.

When Co-Op Ed. is taken in lieu of the Paralegal Internship, the student must attend all Seminar classes and fulfill all other Paralegal Internship requirements.

Credits above 3 are free electives that are not included in the semester hours toward the minor or certificate. Students must complete a minimum of 90 hours over the course of the semester in the internship.

Purpose of Field Experience/Internship:

The purpose of the internship is to provide the student with hands-on paralegal experience in the legal environment, such as in a law firm, corporate legal department, government agency or the judiciary.

The Applied Learning Specialist, Ms. Raguso, with the student's cooperation, will find a placement, bearing in mind both geographic preferences and areas of particular student interest. A student may find his or her own placement, subject to the express approval of the Applied Learning Specialist. As part of the internship, students must also attend a seminar class (JUST 497 for Justice Studies majors with Paralegal Concentration and PALG 497 for Paralegal Studies minors and Post-baccalaureate Certificate in Paralegal Studies students), which includes resume writing and ethics.

Criteria for Enrollment:

Students in the Justice Studies major with a concentration in Paralegal Studies must obtain a minimum grade of C- in all the major core courses (JUST 200, JUST 201, JUST 300, JUST 310) in order to be eligible for the Senior Seminar and Field Experience in Justice Studies course (JUST 497). Students in the Paralegal Studies minor and the Post-baccalaureate Certificate in Paralegal Studies must attain a minimum grade of C- in the Research & Writing for Paralegals course (PALG 312) in order to be eligible for the Seminar and Internship or Co-Op Education class (PALG 497).

NOTE: A student taking the PALG 497 Paralegal Seminar and Internship or Co-Op Ed. (Paralegal Studies minor or Post-baccalaureate Paralegal Studies Certificate) must have already completed at a minimum: Law and Litigation, Research and Writing for Paralegals, and at least three legal specialty courses before being permitted to enroll in the Internship. (Minor and Certificate) The final required legal specialty and/or law-related course(s) may be taken either before or together with the Internship or Co-Op. It is strongly recommended that the student complete all other Paralegal course work, if possible, before the beginning of the Internship. In this way, the student is best prepared for the Internship and the experience is most beneficial for both the student and the sponsor. A less preferred but permissible alternative is for students to be completing their final one or two legal specialty courses concurrently with the Internship. Thus, all remaining legal specialty courses must be completed concurrently with the Internship. No courses may remain to be completed after the Internship.

Registration:

Permission of the Applied Learning Specialist is required to enroll in any Internship. All students desiring to enroll in JUST 497 or PALG 497/498 must fill out the Internship Application by the application deadline. Applications must be received by Professor Raguso in the Justice Studies office by

October 15 for the Spring semester, March 15 for the Fall semester and March 15th for the Summer term prior to the registration period so that clearance can be obtained for the students to register.

No student will be cleared to register for the Internship unless the student's application form is received and the student has met all the above criteria.

Waiver of PALG 497 Paralegal Seminar and Internship:

A Paralegal Studies minor or Post-baccalaureate Paralegal Studies Certificate student can apply to waive the Internship requirement if he or she has a minimum of one year of full-time paralegal work experience, or equivalent. The student must apply to the Applied Learning Specialist for the waiver. Requirements for the Internship are a minimum grade of C- in "Research and Writing for Paralegals". Students seeking to waive the Internship must meet these requirements. The student must submit the waiver request together with a letter from his/her employer verifying that he/she has worked as a paralegal for a minimum of one-year full time. The letter should specify duties performed by the student, the periods of time worked, and that the work was full-time.

If approved, the waiver permits the student to substitute another legal specialty course for the Internship. The waiver does not permit the student to take three fewer credits for completion of the Program. The student must still complete 24 credits in order to complete the program and receive a Program Certificate.

PROGRAM COMPLETION:

The Registrar's Office of Montclair State University issues a certificate of completion to **post-baccalaureate students** who successfully complete the Paralegal Studies Certificate Program. No post-baccalaureate student may receive a program certificate without being admitted to the Certificate Program as a matriculated student by the Department of Justice Studies. Post-BA students are required to file for final evaluation/audit with the Office of the Registrar according to the following deadlines: October 1 for May graduation, March 1 for August graduation, and June 1 for January graduation. Late filing of the required form will substantially delay the issuance of Certificates of Program Completion. The final evaluation/audit form is available at the Registrar's Office.

The Department of Justice Studies issues a certificate of completion to **undergraduate students** who successfully complete the Paralegal Studies Program (Minor or Concentration within the Justice Studies Major) and the baccalaureate degree. The Registrar's office furnishes the Justice Studies Department with a list of graduates for the issuance of certificates within two months of graduation.

All students are required to fill out a "Paralegal Studies Program Evaluation Form" at the end of JUST 497 or PALG 497/498 course. This is an in-depth evaluation of the Paralegal Studies Program. The form will be provided to students during their seminar class. For students who waive the Internship, the

Program Evaluation Form is obtained from the Applied Learning Specialist, Professor Francine Raguso. The Program Evaluation Form must be completed prior to completion of the Program.

PLACEMENT:

The legal community recognizes the standards and quality of the Montclair State University's Paralegal Studies Program. This has led to excellent employment opportunities for program graduates. Montclair State University Paralegal Studies Program graduates are employed by major law firms in the region, by specialty and general practice law firms, by agencies and organizations in the public sector, and by nationally prominent banks and corporations.

Research materials available through the Office of Career Services and Community-based Learning and the Justice Studies Office can assist Paralegal Studies students with their career exploration and job search. Assistance is available to students completing the program and to alumni.

In JUST 497 and PALG 497/498 courses, paralegal students are provided with information on resume writing, interviewing techniques and how to carry out a paralegal job search. The preparation of a resume is required for that course.

The Office of Career Services and Community-based Learning offers career counseling, online and employer-led workshops, career fairs, and on-campus recruitment for paralegal students. It also has online resources for paralegal students to assist in career placement, including Focus, an interactive, computerized guidance program and Optimal Resume, which helps students throughout the process of creating a resume, offering suggestions on format and phrasing. For those actively seeking employment, the Office offers College Central, an online job bank which posts full- and part-time positions and internships and InterviewStream, a service which offers online video-based practice interviewing. These services are free to all Montclair University students.

The Department of Justice Studies, through the program director and the applied learning specialist, provides job posting for both full-time and part-time positions outside the Justice Studies office.

JUSTICE STUDIES MAJOR @ MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY

Montclair State University's undergraduate major in Justice Studies (JUST) focuses on the policies, procedures, and institutions our society has and should put into practice to achieve justice for all. It approaches issues of justice for children and adults, in civil and criminal matters from a multidisciplinary vantage point that incorporates Psychology, Sociology, Law and other disciplines. Concentrations available to students in the JUST program include Justice Systems and Paralegal Studies. The Justice Studies major is designed to prepare students for rapidly evolving and emerging careers as paralegals, police officers, corrections and parole officials, youth workers, child advocates, and more. Professors present a multidisciplinary course of study to meet the new challenges. A major in Justice Studies provides:

1. a comprehensive grounding in the social, cultural, and political issues relevant to an understanding of the justice system in the United States;
2. the ability to apply theoretical perspectives to issues in Justice Studies;
3. an empirical approach to questions about Justice Studies;
4. an appreciation of ethical issues relating to Justice Studies;
5. competencies in knowledge, methods, and applications needed for careers and professional development in these areas;
6. Field work experience in occupational settings such as child advocacy organizations, law offices, criminal justice agencies, private industry, and the public sector.

The 39 to 40 credit multidisciplinary major consists of a required 15 credit core emphasizing the theoretical and applied aspects which are essential background knowledge for all students in the major. The core is enhanced by a required 24-25 credit applied concentration in one of two areas: Justice Systems or Paralegal Studies.

The Core:

The courses in the common core combine a liberal arts approach with grounding in the theories and methods on the major disciplines involved. They offer a breadth of information and experience. Core courses are:

- JUST 200 Perspective on Justice Studies I
- JUST 201 Perspectives on Justice Studies II
- JUST 300 Research in Justice Studies: Social Science Perspectives
- JUST 310 Theoretical Issues in Justice Studies
- JUST 497 Senior Seminar: Field Experience in Justice Studies (Externship [3-8cr.])

The Concentrations:

Paralegal Studies or Justice Systems

Each 24-25 credit concentration, also multidisciplinary, allows students to study a particular field in depth.

In the **Paralegal Studies Concentration**, students learn about theory and practice in areas of law such as criminal and family law, real estate, corporate, civil litigation, and dispute resolution and learn to approach these areas from a broad societal perspective. Paralegals are not lawyers and must work under the supervision of an attorney. Paralegals are not permitted to practice law.

The Justice Systems Concentration emphasizes the relationships among law, the justice system, and society, with special attention to theories of crime, juvenile delinquency, policing, corrections, and the law.

SERVICES AVAILABLE TO STUDENTS

Sprague Library's excellent collection of legal materials far surpasses American Bar Association requirements for Paralegal Programs. These materials are an essential part of the Research, and writing for Paralegals and other specialty course offerings. Sprague Library also serves as an Official Federal Depository for Government Documents, which provides additional research opportunities not available at many other institutions.

Computer Technology forms an integral part of the Paralegal Studies Program. Instruction in computer-assisted legal research is provided to students through Lexis subscription. As a result, Montclair State Paralegal Studies Program graduates gain the competitive edge in the growing area of legal technology. Additionally, members of the Justice Studies faculty have designed materials to teach computer concepts and applications for the legal specialty and legal technology courses. Students are also prepared for the law office of the twenty-first century through hands-on experience in a fully equipped computer classroom. Professor Regina Judge is the Coordinator of Academic Computing in Justice Studies.

Student Paralegal Association is an organization of the Student Government Association at Montclair State and provides a forum for students to meet, exchange ideas and participate in legal-related and university events.

Lambda Epsilon Chi is the National Paralegal Honor Society. Montclair State University's Chapter inducts paralegal students each spring who satisfy the following criteria: minimum overall grade point average of 3.25, minimum paralegal studies grade point average of 3.5, completion of at least five legal specialty courses and written statement. Professor Lenore Molee is the advisor to the Student Paralegal Association and Lambda Epsilon Chi.

COURSE OF STUDY

PARALEGAL STUDIES MINOR & POST B.A.:

(Effective Fall 2007)

Group I. Required Courses (6 credits)

- PALG 210 Law and Litigation
- PALG 312 Research and Writing for Paralegals

Group II. CHOICE of four of the following; (12 credits)

A. Students must include at least one course from the following group:

- PALG 304 Real Estate Law
- PALG 306 Contract Law for Paralegals
- PALG 322 Wills Trusts and Probate Law
- PALG 330 Family Law
- PALG 336 Corporations and Partnerships

B. Students may include up to three courses from the following group:

- PALG 301 Criminal Law and Procedure
- PALG 305 Immigration Law
- PALG 308 Negotiation, Mediation and Arbitration
- PALG 310 Fundamentals of Patent, Trademark and Copyright Law
- PALG 317 Evidence
- PALG 318 Computer-Assisted Research in the Legal Environment
- PALG 320 Bankruptcy Law
- PALG 331 Administrative Law
- PALG 332 Personal Injury Law
- PALG 339 Computer Applications in the Legal Environment
- PALG 378 Employment Law
- PALG 390 Independent Study in Paralegal Studies
- PALG 398 Selected Topics in Paralegal Studies
- PALG 411 Advanced Patent, Trademark and Copyright Law
- PALG 412 Consumer Law
- PALG 413 Elder Law
- PALG 420 Advanced Civil Litigation

- PALG 437 Entertainment Law
- PALG 438 Trademark Law
- PALG 441 Advanced Computer Systems in Legal Environment
- PALG 450 Law Office Management and Technology

C. Students may include one law-related course from the following:

- PALG 316 Skills for Bilingual Legal Personnel (Fluency in Spanish required)
- JUST 351 Juries and Justice
- JUST 360 Rights, Liberties, and American Justice
- POLS 321 Law in Society: Criminal Law (instead of PALG 301)

Group III. Student must complete one of the following (3 credits):

- PALG 497 Paralegal Seminar and Internship (3 credits) **OR**
- PALG 498 Co-op.Ed.: Paralegal Studies (4 or 8 cr.)

Montclair State University
Department of Justice Studies
Paralegal Studies Minor & Post B.A. Certificate Program

Sample Recommended Sequences of Time Frames for Program Completion

NOTE: Legal Specialty courses have different prerequisites. Students taking Legal Specialty courses early in their course of study should select courses which do not have prerequisites.

PROGRAM COMPLETION IN TWO SEMESTERS

- I.** Law and Litigation PALG 210
Research and Writing for Paralegals PALG 312
Three Legal Specialty Courses**
- II.** One Legal Specialty Course** PALG
Paralegal Seminar and Internship PALG 497 or Co-Op Ed PALG 498

PROGRAM COMPLETION IN THREE SEMESTERS

- I.** Law and Litigation PALG 210
Research and Writing for Paralegals PALG 312
- II.** Two Legal Specialty Courses**
- III.** One Legal Specialty Course**
Paralegal Seminar and Internship PALG 497 or Co-Op Ed: PALG 498

PROGRAM COMPLETION IN FOUR SEMESTERS

- I.** Law and Litigation PALG 210
Research and Writing for Paralegals PALG 312
- II.** One Legal Specialty Course*
- III.** Two Legal Specialty Courses**
- IV.** One Legal Specialty Course**
Paralegal Seminar and Internship PALG 497 Co-Op Ed: PALG 498

Montclair State University

Department of Justice Studies

Justice Studies Major with Concentration in Paralegal Studies Program

TWO-YEAR PROGRAM COMPLETION GUIDE

For Transfer Students Beginning the Program as Juniors

Year One Fall

- JUST 200 Perspectives on Justice Studies I **or**
- JUST 201 Perspectives on Justice Studies II
(minimum of C grade required to take JUST 497)
- Two Concentration Courses

Consult with your advisor every semester

Year One Spring

- JUST 201 Perspectives on Justice Studies II **or**
- JUST 200 Perspectives on Justice Studies I
(minimum of C grade required to take JUST 497)
- JUST 300 Research in Justice Studies: Social Science Perspectives
(Not open to freshmen; minimum of C- grade required to take JUST 497)
- Two Concentration Courses

Consult with your advisor every semester

Year Two Fall

- JUST 310 Theoretical Issues in Justice Studies
(Not open to freshmen; minimum of C- grade required to take JUST 497)
- Two Concentration Courses

* File for graduation (Deadline: Oct 1 for May graduation; March 1 for August Graduation; August 1 for January graduation)

** Meet with Prof. Francine Raguso, Applied Learning Specialist to plan for your Externship, JUST 497, next semester (Note that prerequisites must be completed prior to enrolling in the Externship; permission of instructor is required to enroll)

Consult with your advisor every semester

Year Two Spring

JUST 497 Senior Seminar in Justice Studies (Externship)

CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR GRADUATION!

THREE-YEAR PROGRAM COMPLETION GUIDE

For Transfer Students Beginning the Program as Sophomores

Year One Fall

- JUST 200 Perspectives on Justice Studies I **or**
- JUST 201 Perspectives on Justice Studies II
(minimum of C grade required to take JUST 497)
- One Concentration Course

Consult with your advisor every semester

Year One Spring

- JUST 201 Perspectives on Justice Studies II **or**
- JUST 200 Perspectives on Justice Studies I
(minimum of C grade required to take JUST 497)
- JUST 300 Research in Justice Studies: Social Science Perspectives
(Not open to freshmen; minimum of C- grade required to take JUST 497)
- One Concentration Course

Consult with your advisor every semester

Year Two Fall

- JUST 310 Theoretical Issues in Justice Studies
(Not open to freshmen; minimum of C- grade required to take JUST 497)
- Two Concentration Courses

Consult with your advisor every semester

Year Two Spring

- Two Concentration Courses

Consult with your advisor every semester

Year Three Fall

- Two Concentration Courses

* File for graduation (Deadline: Oct 1 for May graduation; March 1 for August Graduation; August 1 for January graduation)

** Meet with Prof. Francine Raguso, Applied Learning Specialist to plan for your Externship, JUST

497, next semester (Note that prerequisites must be completed prior to enrolling in the Externship; permission of instructor is required to enroll)

Consult with your advisor every semester

Year Three Spring

JUST 497 Senior Seminar in Justice Studies (Externship)

CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR GRADUATION!

FOUR-YEAR PROGRAM COMPLETION GUIDE

For Transfer Students Beginning the Program as Freshmen

Year One Fall

- JUST 200 Perspectives on Justice Studies I **or**
 - JUST 201 Perspectives on Justice Studies II
- (minimum of C grade required to take JUST 497)*

Consult with your advisor every semester

Year One Spring

- JUST 201 Perspectives on Justice Studies II **or**
 - JUST 200 Perspectives on Justice Studies I
- (minimum of C grade required to take JUST 497)*

Consult with your advisor every semester

Year Two Fall

- JUST 300 Research in Justice Studies: Social Science Perspectives
- (Not open to freshmen; minimum of C- grade required to take JUST 497)*
- One Concentration Course

Consult with your advisor every semester

Year Two Spring

- JUST 310 Theoretical Issues in Justice Studies
- (Not open to freshmen; minimum of C- grade required to take JUST 497)*
- One Concentration Course

Consult with your advisor every semester

Year Three Fall

- Two Concentration Courses

Consult with your advisor every semester

Year Three Spring

- Two Concentration Courses

Consult with your advisor every semester

Year Four Fall

- Two Concentration Courses

* File for graduation (Deadline: Oct 1 for May graduation; March 1 for August Graduation; August 1 for January graduation)

** Meet with Prof. Francine Raguso, Applied Learning Specialist to plan for your Externship, JUST 497, next semester (Note that prerequisites must be completed prior to enrolling in the Externship; permission of instructor is required to enroll)

Consult with your advisor every semester

Year Four Spring

JUST 497 Senior Seminar in Justice Studies (Externship)

CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR GRADUATION!

PARALEGAL STUDIES MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1) Are career opportunities promising in the paralegal field?

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. We believe that graduates of American Bar Association approved Paralegal Studies Programs, such as the Montclair State University Program, are best prepared for the competitive job market.

2) Do I have to have a Bachelor's Degree to enter into the Paralegal Studies Program at Montclair State University?

No. A student can enter the Paralegal Studies Program at Montclair State University as an undergraduate taking either a Major in Justice Studies with Paralegal Studies Concentration or a Minor in Paralegal Studies. A student holding a Bachelor's Degree enters as a post-baccalaureate Certificate student. A Certificate is issued by the Department of Justice Studies to undergraduate students who have completed the Paralegal Studies Concentration or Minor upon their graduation from the University. A Certificate is issued by the Registrar's Office to matriculated post-baccalaureate students upon satisfactory completion of the Paralegal Studies Program.

3) Why is it necessary for me to have a Bachelor's Degree when I complete the Paralegal Studies Program?

Market surveys plus the experience of our own graduates lead to the conclusion that a Bachelor's Degree plus a Certificate of Completion in Paralegal Studies from a program approved by the American Bar Association provide the best career preparation for a paralegal.

4) How long is the Paralegal Studies Program?

Paralegal Studies Minor and Certificate Students must complete 24 credits or 8 courses (3 credits each) within the Program. The Paralegal Concentration in the Justice Studies Major is 24 credits within the 39- credit Justice Studies Major. The length of time necessary to complete the Paralegal Studies Program will depend upon the amount of time that a student is able to commit to his or her studies. A minimum of ten months is required to complete the post-baccalaureate Certificate program. However, it is recommended that the course of study be taken over a minimum of three semesters.

5) When are the courses offered?

Courses are offered in the Spring, Fall and Summer semesters. There are day and evening offerings. However, not all courses are offered every semester. Students should check the Schedule of Courses issued each semester.

6) Can I take the courses at my own pace?

Yes, a student may even take one course per semester. However, courses must be taken in the prescribed sequence.

7) Is there a minimum grade point average requirement?

There are admission standards for the Paralegal Studies Program which are determined by the Justice Studies Department.

8) Can't I just take one particular course at Montclair State, even though I do not have the correct prerequisites?

No. All students must follow the prescribed sequence in taking course work. A student who meets the prerequisites for a course can take a course as (1) an undergraduate at Montclair State; (2) a post-B.A. student at Montclair State; or (3) a visiting student from another institution. However, a visiting student is not eligible to receive a program certificate.

9) How long will it take me to receive a Certificate of Program Completion if I do not have a Bachelor's Degree?

A certificate cannot be issued until you graduate with a Bachelor's Degree. However, you can enroll as an undergraduate and complete your Paralegal Studies courses prior to receiving your degree.

10) Does prior experience in the legal field or course work at another institution count toward the program?

With departmental permission, a student may receive a maximum of nine credits toward the Montclair State Paralegal Studies Program by challenge examinations and/or advanced standing in appropriate courses.

11) How do I register?

If you want to enroll at Montclair State as an undergraduate, you should ask the Undergraduate Admissions Office for an application (973) 655-4444. If you already hold a Bachelor's Degree you apply to the Paralegal Studies Program as a post-baccalaureate student; you should call the Graduate Admissions Office (973) 655-5147.

12) What are the differences between Paralegal Studies and Pre-Law Studies?

The Pre-Law Studies Program is an interdisciplinary selection of courses designed to develop the reasoning, writing, analytical and critical thinking skills required for law school and for a career as an attorney. These kinds of skills are also applicable to any number of careers. There is no single major in particular that is especially recommended for Pre-Law students.

The Paralegal Studies Program is recommended for the following individuals: students who are interested in a career as a paralegal/legal assistant; students who may want to attend law school but would like to prepare themselves for an alternative career in law in case they decide not to attend law

school; students who would like to focus upon the more applied and practical aspects of law; students who would like to support themselves in a law- related career while attending law school; and students who are unsure of their interest in the legal field and would like to test their interest through the Paralegal Studies Program.

CLOSING REMARKS

This manual was created as a tool for students seeking information on different areas of study within the Justice Studies Department. The material contained in this handbook is current as of Fall 2007. Please do not use this information as complete. The department is continuously modifying the requirements within each respective program of study. For the latest information on any material included herein you must stop by the Justice Studies office in Dickson Hall, Room 348.

The faculty would like to thank you for viewing the many different areas of law taught within the Justice Studies Department. The faculty has also provided you with individual curricula program guides if you would prefer which are downloadable from the website. Please take the time to browse around the departmental website if you need more information on any of the courses. Should you have any further questions or would like to request additional information on any legal studies program, feel free stop by the Justice Studies Department office in Dickson Hall, Room 348.



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