



PARALEGAL STUDIES

JOB PLACEMENT SERVICES

South Plains College provides a placement service for career positions with law firms and other potential employers. The service is provided at no cost to the student or the employer.

THE PARALEGAL PROFESSION

One of the fastest-growing occupations in the nation is the paralegal profession. Trained paralegals are vital to private law firms, community legal services, corporations, banks, insurance companies, real estate companies, government agencies, and many other law-related entities. Their assistance helps to keep costs down and makes legal services more accessible and affordable to the general public.

A paralegal is a person, qualified through various combinations of education, training, or work experience, who is employed or engaged by a lawyer, law office, governmental agency, or other entity in a capacity or function which involves the performance, under the ultimate direction and supervision of a licensed attorney, of specifically delegated substantive legal work, which work, for the most part, requires a sufficient knowledge of legal principles and procedures that, absent such a person, an attorney would be required to perform the task.

Paralegals work directly under the supervision of an attorney who assumes responsibility for the paralegal's work. A paralegal may perform all the tasks performed by the lawyer other than accepting cases, setting legal fees, giving legal advice or representing a client in court. A paralegal can perform a wide range of duties including conducting client interviews locating and interviewing witnesses, conducting investigations, legal research, drafting documents, correspondence, and pleadings, summarizing depositions, interrogatories, and testimony; and attending executions of wills, real estate closings, depositions, court or administrative hearings, and trials with an attorney.

THE PARALEGAL PROGRAM

SPC has an excellent two-year associate degree program designed to provide students with the knowledge and hands-on experience needed to pursue a career as a paralegal. The program is offered at the SPC Lubbock Center campus only. Students will become familiar with fundamental areas of law, the process of legal research, and the ability to write clearly using the language of law.

Experienced local attorneys and paralegals teach a number of the classes and bring practical applications to the classroom. As a student, you will participate in class discussions and hear special presentations by professionals in the legal field. You will utilize local law libraries and online research sources, and work as an intern in a law office to gain actual paralegal job experience.

Graduates are awarded an Associate of Applied Science degree and are eligible to take the Certified Paralegal Examination administered by the National Association of Legal Assistants.



COURSES IN THE PROGRAM

The paralegal associate degree program consists of 60 semester hours of selected college-level course work. Students enrolled in the program must satisfactorily complete 15 semester hours of general education courses (mathematics, English, social/behavioral science, and humanities/fine arts) and 45 semester hours of paralegal courses.

The following are required program courses:

- *Introduction to Paralegal Studies*
- *Federal Civil Litigation*
- *Texas Civil Litigation*
- *Contracts*
- *Legal Research*
- *Wills, Trusts and Probate Administration*
- *Family Law*
- *Criminal Law & Procedure*
- *Legal Writing*
- *Evidence*
- *Law Office Management*
- *Practicum (Internship)*
- *Three (3) elective paralegal courses chosen by the student*

The following are elective paralegal courses:

- *Administrative Law*
- *Bankruptcy*
- *Business Organizations*
- *Constitutional Law*
- *Real Property*
- *Social/Behavioral Science*
- *Torts and Personal Injury Law*
- *Trial Preparation and Procedures*

PARALEGAL CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

South Plains College also offers an intensive Paralegal Certificate Program, which is designed to introduce students to the paralegal profession. The course requires 24 hours of paralegal courses, which provide a basic knowledge of the legal profession, law office procedures, legal terminology, court systems, document preparation and procedural and substantive rules of law. Graduates can choose to enter the Paralegal Studies Associate Degree Program or find entry-level employment as a legal office worker in a variety of business sectors such as private law offices, governmental agencies, real estate companies, financial institutions, law enforcement agencies, corporations and insurance companies.

FOR MORE INFO:

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2023 NALS Distinguished Educator

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