SIU Southern Illinois University
CARBONDALE

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Paralegal Studies

The SIU Carbondale Paralegal Studies major is an American Bar Association approved program leading to the Bachelor of Science degree. A paralegal is qualified by specialized education, training, and experience to assist an attorney in non-clerical, substantive legal work. Paralegals may research law and facts, interview witnesses and clients, draft and file court documents, and prepare for and assist with trials. Paralegals work under the supervision and direction of an attorney and may not provide legal services or advice except as permitted by law. Most paralegals work as vital members of legal teams in small and large law firms; medical or government offices; legal departments of corporations, insurance agencies, and banking or financial institutions; and, local, county, state, and federal administrative agencies. Many students major in Paralegal Studies as a preferred path to law school.

The program's goals and objectives reflect the Core Competencies for Paralegal Programs as stated by the American Association for Paralegal Education. Core competencies include essential knowledge of substantive and procedural law and practical legal skills developed from programmatic research, writing, and oral communication. Together these competencies demonstrate outstanding organizational, interpersonal, critical thinking, and analytical thinking skills. Also, program faculty and staff model and teach students to exemplify professionalism and the high ethical standards of the legal profession.

The program's curriculum and degree requirements build on general education requirements in the University Core Curriculum. Students majoring in Paralegal Studies must complete 34 credit hours of core legal specialty courses. These courses are: PARL 105, PARL 300A, PARL 300B, PARL 310, PARL 320, PARL 330, PARL 350, PARL 360, PARL 370, PARL 380, and PARL 405. A minimum of 15 credit hours of coursework defined as legal specialty coursework below must be completed at SIU Carbondale, at least 9 credit hours of which must come from PARL 300A, PARL 300B, PARL 310, PARL 320, PARL 330, PARL 350, PARL 360, PARL 370, or PARL 380. Nine credit hours must be completed through synchronous (i.e., face to face or live online) instruction. Additionally, PARL 300A, PARL 300B, and PARL 310 require a grade of C or higher to satisfy program major requirements. For students who desire to begin their program of study with a basic paralegal skills course, PARL 295 is recommended but not required.

In addition to the 34 credit hours of core legal specialty course requirements, the major requires at least 12 credit hours of elective courses. There are two options for completing this requirement: the general option and the pre-law specialization option. The general option is an excellent choice for students planning to work in a law-related occupation upon graduation. The pre-law specialization is an excellent path for students planning to pursue law school after graduation. For the general option, students must complete at least 12 credit hours of coursework chosen from the paralegal skills course list. For the pre-law specialization, students must complete 12 credit hours of 300-400 level Paralegal Studies, Criminology & Criminal Justice, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology, Philosophy, English, History, Africana Studies, Mass Communication and Media Arts, Journalism, and/or Women, Gender & Sexuality Studies courses, at least 3-credit hours of which must be selected from a list of law-related courses provided by the program.

As a capstone experience, majors are required to complete PARL 405, a 4-credit hour course with an internship component that provides on-the-job training, and a classroom component that assists students with career planning. The complete program encourages the spirit of inquiry; embraces a range of social sciences, humanities, and communication skills; and develops confidence and knowledge of legal ethics.

Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Paralegal Studies Degree Requirements

Degree Requirements	Credit Hours
University Core Curriculum Requirements	39
Requirements for Major in Paralegal Studies	46
Core Legal Specialty Courses: PARL 105, PARL 300A, PARL 300B, PARL 310, PARL 320, PARL 330, PARL 350, PARL 360, PARL 370, PARL 380, and PARL 405	34
Four office support/management-related electives chosen from a program list [1]	12
Electives	35
Total	120

[1] *ACCT 220, ECON 240, ECON 241, ECON 350, ENGL 291, ENGL 391, FIN 200, FIN 270, FIN 320, FIN 280, FIN 380, MGMT 304, MGMT 350, MGMT 474, MKTG 304, MKTG 450, WGSS 320I, or any 300/400-level Paralegal Studies (PARL) elective.*

B.S. Paralegal Studies - Pre-Law Specialization Degree Requirements

Degree Requirements	Credit Hours
University Core Curriculum Requirements	39
Requirements for Major in Paralegal Studies	46
Core Legal Specialty Courses: PARL 105, PARL 300A, PARL 300B, PARL 310, PARL 320, PARL 330, PARL 350, PARL 360, PARL 370, PARL 380, and PARL 405	34
Four 300/400-level approved courses, at least one of which must be chosen from a program list of law-related courses [1]	12
Electives	35
Total	120

[1] *Students must take four 300/400-level courses from Paralegal Studies, Criminology & Criminal Justice, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology, Philosophy, English, History, Africana Studies, Mass Communication and Media Arts, Journalism, and/or Women, Gender & Sexuality Studies, at least one of which must be selected from the following list: PARL 315, PARL 325, PARL 335, PARL 340, PARL 345, PARL 355, PARL 375, FIN 380, PHIL 310 or any other 300/400-level law/Paralegal-related elective approved by the PARL coordinator.*

Undergraduate Certificate in Paralegal Studies

The Paralegal Studies Undergraduate Certificate is designed for students who want to earn a credential demonstrating their completion of paralegal-related coursework without completing all requirements of the Bachelor's degree in the field. The 60-credit hour option is available for students who have not earned any prior degree. It provides students with a foundation in oral and written communication skills and general education as well as significant background in legal research, writing, and substantive law. The 33-credit hour option is intended for students who possess a Bachelor or Associate of Art or Science degree. The oral and written communication skills and general education requirements are reduced.

Students must complete PARL 300A, PARL 300B, and PARL 310 with a grade of C or better. A minimum of 15 credit hours of coursework, defined as legal specialty coursework below, must be completed at SIU Carbondale, at least 9 credit hours of which must come from PARL 300A, PARL 300B, PARL 310, PARL 320, PARL 330, PARL 350, PARL 360, PARL 370, or PARL 380. Nine credit hours must be completed through synchronous (i.e., face to face or live online) instruction. Coursework used to complete the certificate program may be counted toward the Paralegal Studies Bachelor's degree program if a student subsequently decides to pursue a B.S. in Paralegal Studies. Both certificates are American Bar Association-approved program offerings.

Paralegal Studies Certificate Requirements (No Earned Bachelor or Associate of Arts/Science Degree)

Degree Requirements	Credit Hours
Writing Proficiency	6
ENGL 101	3
ENGL 102	3
Oral Communication Proficiency	3
CMST 101	3
General Education: 18 credit hours chosen from at least three of the following areas: social science, humanities, fine arts, quantitative reasoning, or science. [1]	18
Paralegal Studies Specialty Courses	30
PARL 105, PARL 300A, PARL 300B, PARL 310, PARL 320, PARL 330, PARL 350, PARL 360, PARL 370, PARL 380	
Paralegal Studies Electives	3
Choose a minimum of 3 credit hours from: PARL 295, PARL 315, PARL 325, PARL 340, PARL 345, PARL 355, PARL 375, PARL 395, PARL 405, PARL 420	
Total	60

[1] *For a listing of classes in social sciences, humanities, quantitative reasoning, and science, see SIU Carbondale University Core Curriculum requirements.*

Paralegal Studies Certificate Requirements (Earned Bachelor or Associate of Arts/ Science Degree)

Degree Requirements	Credit Hours
Paralegal Studies Specialty Courses [1]	30
PARL 105, PARL 300A, PARL 300B, PARL 310, PARL 320, PARL 330, PARL 350, PARL 360, PARL 370, PARL 380	
Paralegal Studies Electives	3
Choose a minimum of 3 credit hours from: PARL 295, PARL 315, PARL 325, PARL 340, PARL 345, PARL 355, PARL 375, PARL 395, PARL 405, PARL 420	
Total	33

[1] *Students who already possess a Bachelor or Associate of Arts/Science degree from an accredited college/university will not need to complete the writing proficiency, oral communication proficiency, and general education requirements. Students who already possess an Associate of Applied Arts or Science degree may have some or all the writing proficiency, oral communication proficiency, and general education requirements waived with demonstrated equivalent coursework from an accredited college/ university.*

Paralegal Studies Minor

A minor in Paralegal Studies requires 15 credit hours at SIU Carbondale, of any core Paralegal Studies legal specialty courses except PARL 405. The paralegal studies minor is not approved by the American Bar Association and is not intended to prepare a student for a career as a paralegal.

Dual B.S./J.D. Degree

Motivated, high achieving students interested in continuing their studies may save time and money by applying for entry to professional school during the 3rd Year through the dual Paralegal Studies B.S./ School of Law J.D. program. The program allows students to earn both degrees in as few as six years. Students should refer to the School of Law Catalog for full details. Consult an academic advisor for minimum admissions requirements and undergraduate course planning. Admission to the School of Law must be earned prior to graduation with the undergraduate degree.

Capstone Option for Transfer Students

The SIU Carbondale Capstone Option may be available to eligible students …who have earned an Associate in Applied Science (A.A.S.) degree or the equivalent. The Capstone Option reduces the University Core Curriculum requirements from 39 to 30 hours, therefore reducing the time to degree completion. See the Capstone Option section for more information on this option.

Paralegal Studies Courses

PARL105 - Introduction to Law (University Core Curriculum) This course will familiarize students with legal fundamentals and a variety of legal practice areas, including, but not limited to, criminal law, family law, estates and probate, property law, contract law, business law, and tort law (with focus on negligence). Federal and state court systems and balance of powers within our governmental system will be covered. Legal and paralegal skills will be developed through participation and assignments designed to sharpen analytical and other skills required in the legal profession and which are transferable into a variety of other professions. Also featured are legal ethics and professional responsibility along with legal terminology, litigation procedure basics, and substantive and procedural practices. Students are encouraged to reflect upon the legal practice area(s) they find most compelling and in which they and others might make the greatest contributions to society. Credit Hours: 3

PARL295 - Basic Paralegal Skills This course focuses on essential skills for successful paralegals. The style of grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, and analytical progression in legal writing is emphasized. Course assignments expand students' reading comprehension, legal vocabulary, and proofreading and editing skills. Other skills practice includes using office machines, improving typing speed, and taking instruction and direction. The course prepares students to render a common core of legal knowledge into practical law office practice. Credit Hours: 3

PARL300A - Legal Analysis, Research, and Writing I After examining the litigation process and structure of the federal and state court systems, students are introduced to a wide variety of legal research techniques and sources. Students will learn how to perform legal research using books within the law library and will learn computer-assisted legal research. Students will learn how to use and write proper legal citations, as students begin a process of analytical legal writing. Students will analyze legal-related articles, prepare case briefs, and multiple case analyses. Professional responsibilities will be stressed throughout the course. Restricted to PARL majors and minors or special approval needed from the program. Credit Hours: 3

PARL300B - Legal Analysis, Research, and Writing II Students will continue to develop their analytical skills and will learn how to conduct effective legal writing using policy arguments; identifying fallacious arguments; and systematically using IRAC, CRAC, IREAC, and CREAC. Students will use computer-assisted legal research techniques to find and validate cases, statutory annotation, and secondary sources. Students will prepare legal correspondence, case briefs, motions, memoranda of law, and trial briefs. Proper legal citation and professional responsibilities will be stressed throughout the course. Prerequisite: a grade of C or better in PARL 300A. Restricted to PARL majors and minors or special approval needed from the program. Credit Hours: 3

PARL301 - Readings in Paralegal Studies In-depth, introductory and advanced readings in areas not covered in other Paralegal Studies courses. The student must submit a statement describing the topic and relevant reading materials to the faculty member sponsoring the student's readings. Students may re-enroll for a maximum of six credits (maximum 3 semester hours per term). Prerequisite: consent of instructor. Credit Hours: 1-3

PARL310 - Civil Procedure Students will examine the roles of lawyers and paralegals in handling civil cases, and the means by which the objectives of litigation may be achieved. Strategies and mechanics of civil procedure will be explored in depth, and students will be required to prepare a complaint, discovery requests, and initial appellate documents. PARL 310 requires a grade of C or higher to satisfy program major requirements. Credit Hours: 3

PARL315 - Introduction to Criminal Law (Same as CCJ 310) An examination of the general principles that apply to all criminal offenses and the specific elements of particular crimes that prosecutors must prove beyond a reasonable doubt. Topics include actus reus, mens rea, concurrence, causation, and harmful result; the defenses of justification and excuse; the doctrines of complicity and inchoate (unfinished) crimes; and the elements of major crimes against persons, property, habitation, public order and morals, and the state. Credit Hours: 3

PARL320 - Wills, Trusts, and Estates Students will study the more common forms of wills and trusts and the fundamental principles of law applicable to each. The course will analyze administration of

estates under the Illinois Probate Act. Students will be required to prepare a will, trust, power of attorney, and an estate project. Credit Hours: 3

PARL325 - Contracts This course will introduce students to basic principles of contract law, including required elements for a valid and enforceable contract. The various remedies for breach of contract will be analyzed and applied to contractual obligations. Students will develop skills required to interpret contractual language and draft contractual clauses. A variety of simple contracts will be drafted during the semester. Credit Hours: 3

PARL330 - Business Entities Includes a review of the lawyer's role in the formation of business entities, including sole proprietorships, partnerships, and corporations, with a survey of the fundamental principles of law applicable to each and the preparation of documents necessary to the organization and operation of each. The student will be prepared to draft articles of incorporation and other legal documents relevant to the role of a paralegal in a modern law office. Credit Hours: 3

PARL335 - Property This course will introduce students to basic principles of Property Law and assist them in developing skills for drafting documents for the purchase, sale, and transfer of real estate; understanding a variety of types of estates in real property and rights associated with real property; and other real estate-related matters. Credit Hours: 3

PARL340 - Internship in Paralegal Studies This course involves supervised on-the-job training and experience in public or private offices typically employing paralegals. Students must work 50 hours per credit hour. A typical internship placement requires 150 hours for 3 credit hours. Only 3 credit hours of internship credit may be applied toward major requirements. Prerequisite: PARL 300A and 300B with minimum grade of C. Restricted to PARL majors and minors or special approval from the department. Credit Hours: 1-6

PARL345 - Labor and Employment Law This course will introduce students to the basic principles of Labor and Employment Law and deals with the definition of employer and employees and the nature of the employment relationship, and the course deals with the laws relating to employment in the union setting and employment discrimination. Credit Hours: 3

PARL350 - Family Law This course is a review of the law as it relates to the various aspects of domestic relations including marriage, divorce and separation, alimony, child custody and support, taxes, and illegitimacy and adoption. Students will be required to draft a petition for dissolution of marriage, marital settlement agreement, judgment for dissolution of marriage, and to prepare a child support calculation. Credit Hours: 3

PARL355 - Criminal Law and Procedure This course covers causes of action of criminal liability on the misdemeanor and felony level. Some constitutional law issues raised by a criminal practice will also be addressed. Students will study the procedures of the criminal system from arrest through post-trial motions, sentencing, and appeal. Students will be required to draft a criminal complaint and motions commonly used in the practice of criminal law. Students will also engage in an interviewing exercise. Credit Hours: 3

PARL360 - Torts This course will provide an introduction to the broad area of civil wrongs and their appropriate remedies. Traditional areas of tort law principles will be discussed including intentional torts, negligence, absolute liability, product liability, nuisance and commonly employed defenses. Mock interviews of a client and a witness will be conducted. Students will prepare a complaint, request for production of documents, and other commonly used documents in the law of personal injury litigation. Credit Hours: 3

PARL370 - Bankruptcy and Creditors' Rights This course will provide an introduction to bankruptcy and the debtor-creditor relationship. The main purpose of this course is to give a basic understanding of the laws that apply to debtors and creditors, as a foundation to unraveling the intricacies of the bankruptcy process. Students will prepare a Chapter 7 Bankruptcy and Schedules, and a Chapter 13 Plan. Credit Hours: 3

PARL375 - International Law Meets a need for increased global awareness in education, business, and society. The study of International Law looks at systems of values common to diverse societies, with a focus on treaties and laws regulating the relationships and trade between the United States and

foreign nations and agreements between countries and their effects on American society. Topics may include, but not be limited to, human rights, group rights, and treatment of aliens. Romano-Germanic civil law and Anglo-American common law will be presented, as will cross-border disputes. The course will also address laws and policies governing the European Union and its business practices. Students will be introduced to sources of international law and where to begin research, depending on what is at issue; litigation and arbitration for civil and criminal proceedings, including the extradition process; various parties who could become involved in an international dispute, including military, diplomats, and businesses; and develop practical skills for applying international law to businesses of varied sizes and diverse backgrounds. Credit Hours: 3

PARL380 - Technology in the Law Office This course will introduce the paralegal student to various law office technology, including case management programs, database development, and billing software. Restricted to PARL majors and minors or special approval from the department. Credit Hours: 3

PARL395 - Special Topics in Paralegal Studies An in-depth study of topics selected from current issues in paralegal studies. Examples include LSAT preparation, immigration law, cannabis law, and advanced legal analysis. May be repeated for a maximum of six credits. Credit Hours: 3

PARL405 - Advanced Internship Familiarization and direct experience in applied settings providing supervised on-the-job training experience in public or private offices or in justice agencies. Interns must complete 120 hours of field experience plus instructor required assessments. An extra credit hour may be earned for each additional 40 hours of field experience. Only 3 credit hours of internship credit may be applied toward major requirements. Prerequisites: PARL 300A and PARL 300B with a minimum grade of C. Restricted to PARL majors and minors or special approval of the program. Requires consent of instructor. Credit Hours: 3-6

PARL420 - Cannabis Law The purpose of this course is to study the fundamentals of cannabis law, focusing on Illinois law, and we will also cover the impact of federal law and developments in other states. We will cover hemp and marijuana and related commercial and criminal law. There may be speakers who are professional legal practitioners or engaged in commercial production or dispensing. Skills and knowledge will be developed through participation in class, exercises, and assignments. Professional and ethical responsibilities are stressed throughout the course. Credit Hours: 3

Paralegal Studies Faculty

Bronke, Daniel, Assistant Professor of Practice, Law, J.D., Florida Coastal School of Law, 2006; 2023.

Hughes, Kenneth, Senior Lecturer, J.D., Southern Illinois University School of Law, 1982.

Meyer, Zachary, Clinical Assistant Professor, Law, J.D., Southern Illinois University School of Law, 2019; 2023.

Silver, Daniel, Clinical Associate Professor, Law, J.D., Southern Illinois University School of Law, 1993; 1991.

Ting, Timothy, Clinical Assistant Professor and Distinguished Teacher, Law, J.D., Southern Illinois University School of Law, 2008; 2011.

Last updated: 07/30/2025