

Paralegal Studies

The SIU 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 trial. 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 credits of coursework defined as legal specialty coursework below must be completed at SIU Carbondale, at least 9 credits 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 credits 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

Degree Requirements	Credit Hours
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 1 ACCT 220, ACCT 240, ECON 240, ECON 241, ECON 350, ENGL 291, ENGL 391, FIN 200, FIN 270, FIN 320, FIN 323, FIN 280, FIN 380, MGMT 304, MGMT 345B, MGMT 450, MGMT 474, MKTG 304, MKTG 350, PARL 325, PARL 335, PARL 345, WGSS 320I, WGSS 468, or any other course approved by the PARL coordinator.

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 Liberal Arts 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

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 minor is not approved by the American Bar Association and is not intended to prepare a student for a career as a paralegal.

Last updated: 02/26/2021

Southern Illinois University

Carbondale, IL 62901

Phone: (618) 453-2121

Catalog Year Statement:

Students starting their collegiate training during the period of time covered by this catalog (see bottom of this page) are subject to the curricular requirements as specified herein. The requirements herein will extend for a seven calendar-year period from the date of entry for baccalaureate programs and three years for associate programs. Should the University change the course requirements contained herein subsequently, students are assured that necessary adjustments will be made so that no additional time is required of them.