

LSTD100

STUDENT WARNING: This course syllabus is from a previous semester archive and serves only as a preparatory reference. Please use this syllabus as a reference only until the professor opens the classroom and you have access to the updated course syllabus. Please do NOT purchase any books or start any work based on this syllabus; this syllabus may NOT be the one that your individual instructor uses for a course that has not yet started. If you need to verify course textbooks, please refer to the online course description through your student portal. This syllabus is proprietary material of APUS.

Course Summary

Course : LSTD100 **Title :** Introduction to Law for Paralegals

Length of Course : 8

Prerequisites : N/A **Credit Hours :** 3

Description

Course Description: This is the foundation course for the program. This course requires no previous legal background and introduces the student to the paralegal profession, the legal system, legal research, writing, and analysis, and other aspects of the law and the law office. This course will provide practical problem exercises of the type faced in an office environment; help the student develop the requisite paralegal skills; and presents a variety of the ethical issues and perspectives that paralegals face today. The overall theme is to address a broad range of paralegal topics in a contemporary law office environment.

Course Scope:

This course will provide practical problem exercises of the type faced in an office environment; help the student develop the requisite paralegal skills; and presents a variety of the ethical issues and perspectives that paralegals face today. Topics include careers, an introduction to substantive law, pretrial preparation, trial procedures, criminal law, legal interviewing and investigation, legal research, legal analysis and writing, and other aspects of the law office. The overall theme is to address a broad range of paralegal topics in a contemporary law office environment.

Objectives

At the conclusion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Outline the structure of the American Legal System.
2. Differentiate between the various courts in the federal court system.
3. Examine the legal process and the role the paralegal has in that process.
4. List the various types of legal organizations in which a paralegal can work.
5. Identify the type of activities a paralegal may perform.
6. Present an overview of the types of law in the American legal system.

7. Understand the spectrum of tasks a paralegal can be assigned from billing to managing the filing system.

Outline

Week 1: Intro to Law/Constitutional Law

Topics

Chapter 1: There Are No Secret Books: You Can Understand the Law

Chapter 2: Constitutional Law and Constitutional Politics: Interpreting and Analyzing the Constitution

Chapter 3: First Freedoms: Constitutional Rights

Course/Learning Objectives

CO-1: Outline the structure of the American Legal System.

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LO-1: Explain the origins of the legal system in the United States.

LO-2: Describe the importance of English common law in the development of American substantive law.

LO-3: Identify the basic sources of law.

LO-4: List and explain the purposes of the three branches of government.

LO-5: Identify the two basic types of jurisdiction.

LO-6: Explain the requirements for personal and subject matter jurisdiction.

LO-7: Discuss the significance of the Constitution in today's legal landscape.

Readings

Review the Weekly Lessons for week 1 located under the Lessons tab in the classroom. Click on the Readings and Resources link to access the readings.

Forums

Introduce yourself on the Forum. Please tell some of your background and why you are interested in paralegal studies. Your introduction should be posted by Wednesday and you need to reply to two classmates for full credit.

Respond to Part 2 of the Forum for Week 1. Your initial post is due **Wednesday** and 2 replies to classmates are due Sunday of this week. Initial posts to the Forum must be a minimum of 500 words, and follow up posts in Forum are 250 words minimum. ALL posts should have sources and citations in bluebook format.

Week 2: The Litigation Process

Topic

Chapter 4: Your Day in Court: The Litigation Process

Course/Learning Objectives

CO-2: Differentiate between the various courts in the federal court system.

CO-3: Examine the legal process and the role the paralegal has in that process.

LO-8: Define the goals of classifying cases before undertaking legal research.

LO-9: Explain the 3 steps involved in categorizing cases.

LO-10: Describe the importance of legal precedent in the reasoning process.

LO-11: Identify the parts of a court opinion.

LO-12: Explain the importance of judicial precedent.

LO-13: Explain the process of briefing cases.

LO-14: Apply a statute to hypothetical fact patterns.

Readings

Review the Weekly Lessons for week 2 located under the Lessons tab in the classroom. Click on the Readings and Resources link to access the readings.

Forum

Week 2 Forum: Initial Post due Wednesday and 2 replies due Sunday of this week.

Week 3: Criminal Procedure

Topic

Chapter 9: Protecting the Innocent, Freeing the Guilty: Criminal Procedure

Course/Learning Objectives

CO-4: List the various types of legal organizations in which a paralegal can work.

CO-5: Identify the type of activities a paralegal may perform.

LO-15: Identify the stages of the litigation process prior to trial.

LO –16: Discuss the importance of voir dire.

LO-17: Describe the stages of a trial.

LO-18: Explain the significance of the Federal Rules of Evidence.

LO-19: Identify the qualifications a paralegal ought to possess.

LO-20: Distinguish the typical places in which paralegals might be employed and the respective advantages of each type of employer.

LO-21: Describe the ideal character traits of a successful paralegal.

Readings

Review the Weekly Lessons for week 3 located under the Lessons tab in the classroom. Click on the Readings and Resources link to access the readings.

Forum

Week 3 Forum: Initial Post due Wednesday and 2 replies due Sunday of this week.

Assignment

See the Assignments Tab in the classroom for details on the Library Writing assignment. In this assignment you will research a legal topic (the death penalty is just an example, you can pick a different topic), pick a peer-reviewed article, and write a short paper on that article. You should turn in your research log as well as your essay. Your essay should have footnotes in Bluebook format.

Week 4: Midterm

Topic

Midterm Exam

Readings

Review the Midterm Review for week 4 located under the Lessons tab in the classroom. Click on the Readings and Resources link to access the readings.

Assignment

Midterm covering chapters 1-6

Optional Forum

Extra credit forum on Paralegal Employment and Resumes

Week 5: Criminal Law

Topic

Chapter 8: From Insanity to In Cold Blood: Criminal Responsibility and Criminal Law

Course/Learning Objectives

CO-4: Differentiate between the various courts in the federal court system.

CO-5: Examine the legal process and the role the paralegal has in that process.

LO-22: Explain the significance of the Model Penal Code.

LO-23: Distinguish between general intent and specific intent.

LO-24: Identify the two essential elements of a criminal offense.

LO-25: Describe the defenses available in most criminal cases.

Readings

Review the Weekly Lessons for week 5 located under the Lessons tab in the classroom. Click on the Readings and Resources link to access the readings.

Forum

Week 5 Forum: Initial Post due Wednesday and 2 replies due Sunday of this week.

Week 6: Personal Injury, Torts, and Contracts

Topics

Chapter 5: Personal Injury and Tort Law

Chapter 6: When is a Deal a Deal? Businesses, Consumers, and Contract Law

Course/Learning Objectives

CO-6: Present an overview of the types of law in the American legal system.

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LO-26: Identify and distinguish four common forms of business organizations.

LO-27: Explain the advantages and disadvantages of each form of business organization.

LO-28: Discuss the role of the paralegal in the business law field.

LO-29: Describe the elements necessary for intentional torts against property and against persons.

LO-30: Explain the elements of negligence.

LO-31: Define res ipsa loquitur.

LO-32: Define a contract and what it means to have a "meeting of the minds."

LO-33: Explain the elements of a contract.

LO-34: Describe the defenses to valid contracts.

LO-35: Explain the purpose of the Uniform Commercial Code.

Readings

Review the Weekly Lessons for week 6 located under the Lessons tab in the classroom. Click on the Readings and Resources link to access the readings.

Forum

Week 6 Forum: Initial post due Wednesday, 2 replies to classmates due Sunday of this week.

Assignment

Supreme Court Essay due. Please see the assignment tab for further explanation.

Week 7: Property Law

Topic

Chapter 7: You Are What You Own: The Law of Property

Course/Learning Objectives

CO-7: Demonstrate the spectrum of tasks a paralegal can be assigned from billing to managing the filing system.

LO-36: Distinguish between real and personal property.

LO-37: Describe the methods of transferring real property.

LO-38: Identify and distinguish the categories of personal property.

LO-39: Explain the methods of transferring personal property.

LO-40: Discuss the types of leases in landlord-tenant relationships.

Readings

Review the Weekly Lessons for week 7 located under the Lessons tab in the classroom. Click on the Readings and Resources link to access the readings.

Forum

Week 7 Forum: Initial Post due Wednesday and 2 replies due Sunday of this week.

Week 8: Final Exam

Topic

Final Comprehensive Examination

Readings

Review the Review Lesson for week 8 located under the Lessons tab in the classroom. Click on the Readings and Resources link to access the readings.

Assignment

Final Comprehensive Examination covering entire course with emphasis on weeks 5-8.

Evaluation

The grading will be based on Forums, written assignments and open book midterm and final examinations.

1. **Forums:** There will be Forums due during the course and will count as 20% of the final grade. The initial posting on Forums is due by **WEDNESDAY**, midnight EST and should be comprised of at least **500 words** and include citation to relevant sources. You are required to submit **TWO** follow on posts to your classmates' postings by **SUNDAY**, midnight, EST and these should be at least **250 words each**. Please include sources and citations in bluebook format in your replies to classmates. Students are strongly encouraged to review the Forum Rubric for grading expectations. ALL forum postings should list sources used.
2. **Assignments:** This class has two written assignments. All necessary information can be found in the classroom under the Assignments tab.
3. **Exams:** The Midterm and Final examinations are open book essay and multiple choice exams. These examinations will cover selected sections of the textbook and assigned reading.

Grading:

Name	Grade %
Mid-term Exam	20.00 %
Mid-term Exam (due end of week 4)	20.00 %
Final	20.00 %
Final (due end of week 8)	20.00 %
Forums	39.00 %
Week 1 Forum	5.57 %
Week 2 Forum	5.57 %
Week 3 Forum	5.57 %
Week 5 Forum	5.57 %
Week 7 Forum	5.57 %
Week 6 Forum	5.57 %
Week 8 Forum	5.57 %
Assignments	20.00 %
Week 3 Library Assignment	10.00 %
Week 6 (Case Essay)	10.00 %
Forum Introduction	1.00 %
Introduction	1.00 %
Extra Credit	3.00 %
Week 4 Forum	3.00 %

Materials

Book Title: Bluebook: Uniform System of Citation, 20th ed. - available online through the APUS Online Library: <http://ezproxy.apus.edu/login?url=https://www.legalbluebook.com>

Author: Harvard, Columbia Law Review

Publication Info: Harvard, Columbia Law Review

ISBN: 9780692400197

Book Title: Law 101: Everything You Need to Know About American Law, 4th ed. - e-book available in the APUS Online Library; link also provided in the classroom Lessons section

Author: Feinman, Jay

Publication Info: Oxford University Press

ISBN: 9780199341696

Recommended but not Required

*Recommended, but not required: *The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation*, 20th ed., (2015). This is available in hard copy or as an e-text and may be purchased at:

<http://www.legalbluebook.com/Purchase/Products.aspx> You can also access the bluebook through APUS. See class announcements for information.

Course Guidelines

Writing Expectations

All written submissions should be submitted in a font and page set-up that is readable and neat. It is recommended that students try to adhere to a consistent format, which is described below. Written assignments should be submitted in Microsoft Word format.

Citation and Reference Style

The central function of legal citation is to allow the reader to efficiently locate the cited source. All courses in the Legal Studies program require that any narrative essay or composition format follow the legal citation guidelines set forth in *The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation*. You do not need to purchase *The Bluebook*, as it is available at the APUS library. Use this link to access:

<http://ezproxy.apus.edu/login?url=https://www.legalbluebook.com>

Late Assignments

Students are expected to submit classroom assignments by the posted due date and to complete the course according to the published class schedule. As adults, students, and working professionals, I understand you must manage competing demands on your time. Should you need additional time to complete an assignment, please contact me before the due date so we can discuss the situation and determine an acceptable resolution.

Deductions

Late forum posts, assignments, and exams may be penalized five (5) points per day.

Netiquette

Online universities promote the advancement of knowledge through positive and constructive debate – both inside and outside the classroom. Forums on the Internet, however, can occasionally degenerate into needless insults and “flaming.” Such activity and the loss of good manners are not acceptable in a university setting – basic academic rules of good behavior and proper “Netiquette” must persist. Remember that you are in a place for the rewards and excitement of learning which does not include descent to personal attacks or student attempts to stifle the Forum of others.

- **Technology Limitations:** While you should feel free to explore the full-range of creative composition in your formal papers, keep e-mail layouts simple. The Sakai classroom may not fully support MIME or HTML encoded messages, which means that bold face, italics, underlining, and a variety of color-coding or other visual effects will not translate in your e-mail messages.
- **Humor Note:** Despite the best of intentions, jokes and especially satire can easily get lost or taken seriously. If you feel the need for humor, you may wish to add “emoticons” to help alert your readers: ;-), :), J

Disclaimer Statement

Course content may vary from the outline to meet the needs of this particular group.

Online Library

The Online Library is available to enrolled students and faculty from inside the electronic campus. This is your starting point for access to online books, subscription periodicals, and Web resources that are designed to

support your classes and generally not available through search engines on the open Web. In addition, the Online Library provides access to special learning resources, which the University has contracted to assist with your studies. Questions can be directed to librarian@apus.edu.

- **Charles Town Library and Inter Library Loan:** The University maintains a special library with a limited number of supporting volumes, collection of our professors' publication, and services to search and borrow research books and articles from other libraries.
- **Electronic Books:** You can use the online library to uncover and download over 50,000 titles, which have been scanned and made available in electronic format.
- **Electronic Journals:** The University provides access to over 12,000 journals, which are available in electronic form and only through limited subscription services.
- **Tutor.com:** AMU and APU Civilian & Coast Guard students are eligible for 10 free hours of tutoring provided by APUS. [Tutor.com](http://tutor.com) connects you with a professional tutor online 24/7 to provide help with assignments, studying, test prep, resume writing, and more. Tutor.com is tutoring the way it was meant to be. You get expert tutoring whenever you need help, and you work one-to-one with your tutor in your online classroom on your specific problem until it is done.

Request a Library Guide for your course (<http://apus.libguides.com/index.php>)

The AMU/APU Library Guides provide access to collections of trusted sites on the Open Web and licensed resources on the Deep Web. The following are specially tailored for academic research at APUS:

- Program Portals contain topical and methodological resources to help launch general research in the degree program. To locate, search by department name, or navigate by school.
- Course Lib-Guides narrow the focus to relevant resources for the corresponding course. To locate, search by class code (e.g., SOC111), or class name.

If a guide you need is not available yet, please email the APUS Library: librarian@apus.edu.

University Policies

[Student Handbook](#)

- [Drop/Withdrawal policy](#)
- [Extension Requests](#)
- [Academic Probation](#)
- [Appeals](#)
- [Disability Accommodations](#)

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