



COURSE OUTLINE

Course Number LEG 143	Course Title Family Law	Credits 3
Hours: Lecture/Lab/Other 3/0/0	Co- or Pre-requisite None	Implementation Semester & Year Spring 2022

Catalog description:

Survey of procedures and pleadings in domestic relations. Emphasis on writing and document drafting. This course does not instruct or teach law for the purposes of practicing law in the jurisdiction.

General Education Category: **Not GenEd**

Course coordinator:

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Required texts & Other materials:

Required Access to Online Law Simulation:

Aspen/Wolters Kluwer *Family Law Simulation* by R.S. Ehrlich, ISBN: 9781454837145
Students will use the “access only” option for LEG 143.

Required Textbook:

None

Legal Specialty Course Notice:

This course is a legal specialty course (LS) as designated in the college’s American Bar Association (ABA) approval reports for the legal studies degree and certificate programs.

This course does not constitute the teaching of law for the purpose of practicing law; in the State of New Jersey only a licensed attorney may practice law.

Legal Specialty Course Transfer Notice: The following legal specialty courses must be completed at MCCC and may not be transferred: LEG 129, LEG 130, LEG 132, LEG 133, LEG 143, LEG 255.

Legal Specialty Teaching Modality Notice: LEG 143 may be completed in an asynchronous or synchronous learning modality, which may vary depending on the college’s current schedule.

Per the ABA Guidelines for legal education courses, LEG 130, LEG 132 and LEG 133 are offered as synchronous learning modalities only for a required total of nine (9) credits per program.

Course Student Learning Outcomes (SLO):

Upon successful completion of this course the student will be able to:

1. Explain the role and responsibilities of the paralegal in a family law setting, which may include employment within a law firm, legal aid office and applicable state agencies. [Supports ILG # 4, 10; PLO #1, 3]
2. Analyze hypothetical family law scenarios and formulate meaningful analysis of the correct application of law. [Supports ILG # 4, 10; PLO #1, 2]
3. Organize and manage tasks with a focus on timeliness and effective communication .[Supports ILG # 10, 11 ; PLO # 4 , 5]
4. Demonstrate best practices by drafting documents and practical legal analyses. [Supports ILG # 1, 10, 11 ; PLO #1, 4]
5. Apply ethics and professional standards to work in a law setting, within the scope of a paralegal's role. [Supports ILG # 1, 10, 11 ; PLO #1, 4, 3]

Course-specific Institutional Learning Goals (ILG):

Institutional Learning Goal 1. Written and Oral Communication in English. Students will communicate effectively in both speech and writing.

Institutional Learning Goal 4. Technology. Students will use computer systems or other appropriate forms of technology to achieve educational and personal goals.

Institutional Learning Goal 10. Information Literacy: Students will recognize when information is needed and have the knowledge and skills to locate, evaluate, and effectively use information for college level work.

Institutional Learning Goal 11. Critical Thinking: Students will use critical thinking skills understand, analyze, or apply information or solve problems.

Program Learning Outcomes for:

Paralegal A.A.S. degree and Paralegal Certificate (post-degree credential)

1. Understand the roles and responsibilities of legal professionals in a variety of legal employment settings;
2. Identify and implement standards of legal ethics and professionalism;
3. Demonstrate practical skills in a range of substantive legal areas;
4. Engage in effective written and verbal professional communication;
5. Develop appropriate methods for embarking on a legal career.

Units of study in detail – Unit Student Learning Outcomes:

Unit I Family Law Foundations

Learning Objectives [Supports SLO # 1, 5]

The student will be able to...

- Explain the basic stages of a divorce case and the role of paralegal at each stage, as applicable.
- Define the role of the paralegal in a typical family law case.
- Define the essential family law terminology and concepts, and can accurately define and apply these concepts.
- Discuss the ethical obligations of the paralegal and attorney when relating to the family law client.
- Discuss the principles of family law, and communicate the guiding principles of working with family law cases.

Unit II Case Law and Emerging Topics in Family Law

Learning Objectives [Supports SLO # 1, 2, 5]

The student will be able to...

- Explain the role of alternative dispute resolution (ADR), and how mediation is used in family law
- Explain the role of the state courts and administrative agencies in family law.
- Discuss the practical role and responsibilities of the family law paralegal within a variety of legal employment settings.
- Draft a case brief for a landmark case of significant historical value.
- Locate, discuss, and analyze prominent family cases and/or news articles.
- Discuss the practical role and responsibilities of the family law paralegal within a variety of legal employment settings.

Unit III The Law of Divorce

Learning Objectives [Supports SLO # 1, 3, 5]

The student will be able to...

- Observe a client intake interview and/or initial client interview, and provide the appropriate documentation as assigned, from the perspective of a non-lawyer.
- Read an initial draft of a divorce complaint from the perspective of a non-lawyer
- Work with a hypothetical file over a period of many course weeks, with progressive responsibilities and duties, from the perspective of a non-lawyer.
- Locate, analyze and discuss news articles and/or prominent cases in the area of family law from the perspective of a non-lawyer.
- Describe the paralegal's role when working with divorce cases including research and accessing document templates via state government websites.

Unit IV The Law of Child Custody, Adoption & Child Support

Learning Objectives [Supports Course SLO # 3, 4]

The student will be able to...

- Discuss the principles of child custody, child support and adoption.
- Describe the paralegal's role when working with cases concerning child support including research using public-facing state government websites and formulas.
- Analyze a hypothetical practical legal task and determine the appropriate next steps to complete the task.
- Apply best practices to draft documents used in child support, child custody and/or adoption.
- Describe the process of draft review, revision and editing to ensure content accuracy in legal documents.

Evaluation of student learning:

Assignments: Written research assignments, legal document drafting assignments and practical legal tasks designed to assess preparedness for practical legal writing and research work.

Quizzes: Essay, mechanics and grammar writing exercises and multiple-choice assessments designed to measure understanding of objective legal research and writing concepts.

Discussions: Course-related conversations in a live setting or via discussion board to support and assess concepts presented in the unit.