

Department of Justice Studies

JUSTICE STUDIES MAJOR; PARALEGAL STUDIES CONCENTRATION

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The Paralegal Concentration within the Justice Studies major prepares students for careers in law-related fields. In addition to gaining both theoretical and practical exposure to the role of the paralegal in the practice of law, this concentration will introduce students to broad social and cultural issues of justice and justice systems. Students will also learn about issues such as psychopathology, jury selection, and forensic psychology.

Students study litigation, legal research, legal writing, document drafting, and a choice of areas of law such as real estate law, criminal law, family law, patent and trademark law, and estate practice, to name a few. Paralegal Studies graduates work in such diverse positions as: investigators, claims analysts, compliance officers, human resource officers, criminal justice professionals, legal advocates, and dispute resolution practitioners. With the exception of giving legal advice, making court appearances, and setting fees, a paralegal may carry out many tasks traditionally performed by an attorney.

Paralegals are not limited to law offices; corporations, the judiciary, and the public sector also provide job opportunities. In the public sector, paralegals are employed in a variety of interesting and challenging positions. In prosecutor's offices, they may act as interviewers or investigators; their counterparts in the public defender's office offer assistance in preparing defenses of those accused of crimes. On the civil side, they may work in the area of social services and serve as advocates in administrative law settings.

The paralegal profession continues to be one of the fastest growing professions in the country, according to the United State Department of Labor. Paralegals, sometimes referred to as legal assistants or legal analysts, work under the supervision of an attorney in a variety of areas. Paralegals have come to be recognized as an essential part of the legal team, assuming a key role in the effort to provide more efficient and economical service both to the public and the legal community. The Montclair State Paralegal Studies Program is the only undergraduate program at a four-year college or university in New Jersey to be approved by the American Bar Association.

Justice Studies Major; Paralegal Studies Concentration

Required Common Core: 15 Credits

JUST 200 Perspectives on Justice Studies I

JUST 201 Perspectives on Justice Studies II

JUST 300 Research in Justice Studies: Social Science Perspectives

JUST 310 Theoretical Issues in Justice Studies

JUST 497 Senior Seminar and Field Experience in Justice Studies (Externship) *

* Variable credit allowed up to 8 credits. Credits above 3 credits are free electives, not included in the semester hours toward the major.

I. Additional Required Courses: 9 credits

PALG 210 Law and Litigation

PALG 312 Research and Writing for Paralegals

PALG 339 Computer Applications in the Legal Environment

II. Choice of 5 courses from among the following: 15 credits

A. Students MUST include at least one course from this group:

PALG 304 Real Estate Law

PALG 306 Contract Law for Paralegals

PALG 310 Fundamentals of Patent, Trademark, & Copyright Law

PALG 322 Wills, Trusts, and Probate Law

PALG 330 Family Law

PALG 336 Corporations and Partnerships

B. Students may include up to three courses from this group:

PALG 301 Criminal Law & Procedure

PALG 305 Immigration Law

PALG 308 Negotiation, Mediation and Arbitration

PALG 317 Evidence

PALG 318 Computer Assisted Legal Research

PALG 320 Bankruptcy Law

PALG 331 Administrative Law

PALG 332 Personal Injury Law

PALG 378 Employment Law
PALG 398 Selected Topics in Paralegal Studies
PALG 411 Advanced Patent, Trademark, & Copyright Law
PALG 412 Consumer Law
PALG 413 Elder Law
PALG 420 Advanced Civil Litigation
PALG 437 Entertainment Law
PALG 438 Trademark Law
PALG 441 Advanced Computer Systems in the Legal Environment
PALG 450 Law Office Management and Technology

C. Students may include up to two courses from this group:

JUST 101 Criminology
JUST 232 Introduction to Criminal Justice
JUST 314 Environmental Justice
JUST 315 Restorative Justice (precludes PALG 308 major credit)
JUST 317 Race & the US Legal System
JUST 319 Hate Crimes
JUST 321 White Collar Crime
JUST 322 Juvenile Delinquency and Juvenile Justice
JUST 326 Death Penalty Perspectives
JUST 351 Juries and Justice
JUST 360 Rights, Liberties, and American Justice
JUST 398 Selected Topics in Justice Studies
JUST 496 Peer Mentoring for Justice Studies
PALG 316 Skills for Bilingual Legal Personnel
PSYC 330 Forensic Psychology

JUSTICE STUDIES MAJOR W/ CONCENTRATION IN PARALEGAL STUDIES:

39 - 40 TOTAL CREDIT HOURS