

PARALEGAL

pcc.edu/programs/paralegal/

CAREER AND PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The paralegal program offers three program choices: (1) a non-ABA approved less-than-one-year career pathway certificate (the "Legal Assistant Certificate"); (2) an ABA approved Associate of Applied Science degree in paralegal (the "Paralegal AAS degree"); and (3) an ABA approved one-year certificate in Paralegal for those with qualifying prior degrees (the "Paralegal Certificate").

General Differences between Paralegals and Legal Assistants

A paralegal is a legal professional assisting attorneys completing legal work. Paralegals conduct substantive legal work on behalf of attorneys in law firms, government, public institutions, and private businesses. Under the direction of an attorney, paralegals complete various tasks, including, but not limited to, interviewing clients and witnesses, keeping detailed records and managing files, drafting documents, completing factual research, reading and applying prior court decisions, and managing information and technology.

A legal assistant, on the other hand, is a legal professional who provides administrative support to legal practice groups. Such tasks and responsibilities may include, but are not limited to, routing phone calls and taking messages, communicating logistics to clients, opposing counsel, and the courts, formatting and sending letters and emails, filing documents, managing firm filing and information tracking, calendaring deadlines, and assisting the legal team with other administrative tasks.

General Information Applicable to Both Paralegals and Legal Assistants

Legal Professionals, including paralegals and legal assistants, are not attorneys, are not licensed to practice law, and perform all tasks under the supervision of an attorney. Paralegals and legal assistants may not practice law or provide legal services directly to the public except as permitted by law. Paralegals and legal assistants are not licensed or certified by the government in Oregon, and may be employed in a wide variety of job titles.

Requirements in both the Paralegal and Legal Assistant Programs

Proficiency in computer applications is essential for all legal professionals. Before beginning the program, students should be familiar with basic computer and keyboarding skills. Specific legal computer programs are practiced in the legal software and research courses. Students are encouraged to ensure that they can keyboard by touch, and have verifiable skills in Microsoft Office programs by the time they complete the program.

Differences between the Paralegal and Legal Assistant Programs at PCC

The Paralegal degrees and certificates are approved by the American Bar Association ("ABA"), and support student success by delivering quality education focused on practical skills necessary for a career as a legal professional in a rigorous, inclusive and supportive environment. The class schedule for Paralegal students intends to meet the needs of working adults or those who need evening courses for another reason. Most classes are synchronous remote (meaning that students and faculty meet virtually and simultaneously via videoconferencing during scheduled meeting times) and offered in the evening on a once-per-week schedule from 6:30 pm – 9:20 pm. Some courses are fully online and can be completed on the student's timeline. In any event, the ABA requires a student enrolled in either the Paralegal AAS degree program or Paralegal Certificate program complete at least 14 quarter credit hours through synchronous instruction - either in-person or remote (note that most of PCC's Paralegal classes are remote).

Unlike the Paralegal AAS degree and the Paralegal Certificate, the Legal Assistant Certificate is not approved by the ABA because: (1) the ABA does not approve any short-term certificates which can be completed in less than a year; and (2) the Legal Assistant Certificate does not prepare students to work as Paralegals. Any questions about ABA approvals should be posed to the Paralegal Program Director.

The Legal Assistant Certificate delivers the same quality instruction, the same flexible schedules, and the same rigorous, inclusive and supportive environment. Students pursuing the Legal Assistant Certificate will gain skills through practical education in the elements of legal assistant work.

The Legal Assistant Certificate, and the ABA approved Paralegal AAS degree and the ABA approved Paralegal Certificate programs are limited-entry programs so students must satisfy certain criteria and receive approval for entry through an application process. Application information may be obtained at <https://www.pcc.edu/programs/paralegal/>.

Other Information Regarding the Transferability of the Paralegal AAS Degree

Students who complete the Paralegal AAS degree may be eligible to transfer into a four-year degree program. Students wishing to complete a bachelor's degree after completing the Paralegal AAS degree should check with the specific four-year college or university for transferability.

DEGREES AND CERTIFICATES OFFERED

ASSOCIATE OF APPLIED SCIENCE DEGREE

Paralegal

ONE-YEAR CERTIFICATE

Paralegal

LESS THAN ONE-YEAR CERTIFICATE: CAREER PATHWAY

Legal Assistant

ADMISSION PREREQUISITES

Academic Prerequisites

- High school completion or GED.
- Completion of reading, writing and math placement tests unless waived based upon equivalent course work or college degree
- College level course work from an accredited college may be substituted for required degree and/or certificate course work.
- The Paralegal AAS Degree and the Paralegal Certificate are limited entry programs requiring department chair approval. For more details see the Paralegal Department webpage. Completing admission requirements does not guarantee admission into the program.

Other Prerequisites

- Program advising is required. Students planning to enroll in the program should contact the department for specific eligibility requirements and advising. For more details see the Paralegal Department webpage.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Academic Requirements

- A letter grade of "C" or better for all PL core courses is required. An overall GPA of at least 2.0 for all PL courses is required to graduate. PL 280A is offered as Pass/No pass only.

Other Requirements

- Visit the department web page for details on admission, prerequisites and requirements: www.pcc.edu/programs/paralegal/.

Non-Academic Prerequisites

- Program advising is required. Students planning to enroll in the program should contact the department for specific eligibility requirements and advising. For more details see the Paralegal Department webpage.

Non-Academic Requirements

- Visit the department web page for details on admission, prerequisites and requirements: www.pcc.edu/programs/paralegal/.

PARALEGAL AAS DEGREE

Minimum 90 credits. Students must also meet Associate Degree Comprehensive Requirements and Associate of Applied Science Requirements. In addition to required courses in the program of study, students must satisfy MTH 58/65 competency. Students should consult with program advisors in the department for course planning.

Paralegal Degree Courses

Code	Title	Credits
CIS 120	Digital Literacy	4
or CIS 125D	Database Application Development I	
PL 101	Introduction to the U.S. Legal System	3
PL 102	Survey of Substantive Law	3
PL 103	Legal Ethics and Professional Responsibility	3
PL 105	Litigation	3
PL 107	Interviewing and Investigating	3
PL 108	Legal Analysis & Writing	3
PL 130	Legal Software	3
PL 203	Basic Legal Research	3
PL 204	Applied Legal Research and Drafting	2
PL 250	Cultural Responsiveness in the Legal Field	2
PL 295	Paralegal Capstone	2
WR 227	Technical Writing (WR227=WR227Z) ^Z	4
or WR 122	Composition II (WR122=WR122Z)	
or BA 205	Business Communication Using Technology	
Any General Education Course in COMM		4
Any General Education Course in PS		4
Any General Education Course in BI, CH, ESR, G, GS, MTH or PHY		4
ABA General Education Electives		15
Paralegal Accounting Electives		3
Paralegal Program Electives		14
Paralegal Support Electives		8
Total Credits		90

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This course is part of Oregon Common Course Numbering. The following courses are equivalent:
WR 122 and WR 122Z
WR 227 and WR 227Z

ABA GENERAL EDUCATION ELECTIVES

Take 15 credits from the General Education list in any of the following disciplines:

- Arts & Letters: ASL, CHLA, COMM, ENG, FR, GER, HUM, J, JPN, NAS, PHL, R, RUS, SJ, SPA, WR, WS
- Science, Math, Computer Science: BI, CH, ESR, G, GS, MTH, PHY
- Social Science: ATH, EC, ES, GEO, HE, HST, IDS, INTL, PS, PSY, SOC

Other courses may be approved by the program on a case-by-case basis if they meet the ABA requirements. Examples of other courses that may be approved include, but are not limited to, courses in art history, music history, music theory, and first-year world languages. Examples of other courses that will generally not be approved include, but are not limited to, courses in studio art, music performance, theater, computer science, and English as a second language. All students must still meet the General Education requirements for the AAS degree.

PARALEGAL ACCOUNTING ELECTIVES

Code	Title	Credits
BA 111	Introduction to Accounting	3
BA 177	Payroll Accounting	3
BA 211	Principles of Financial Accounting	4
BA 212	Principles of Accounting II	3
BA 213	Managerial Accounting	4

PARALEGAL PROGRAM ELECTIVES

Code	Title	Credits
BA 256	Income Tax	3
CJA 114	Introduction to Juvenile Process	3
CJA 210	Arrest, Search and Seizure	3
CJA 212	Criminal Law	3
CJA 213	Evidence	3
CJA 214	Criminal Investigation	3
CJA 220	Mental Health & the Law	3
MP 140	Introduction to Health Law and Ethics	3
PL 100	Professions in the Law	3
PL 104	Investigation Techniques for Paralegals	3
PL 105	Litigation	3
PL 109	Estate Planning	3
PL 111	Probate Practice	3
PL 113	Income Tax Law	3
PL 116	Real Property Law I	3
PL 124	Law Office Systems and Procedures	3
PL 140	Immigration Law for Paralegals	3
PL 206	Intellectual Property Law	3
PL 207	Advanced Legal Research	3
PL 208	Family Law	3
PL 210	Legal Protection for Vulnerable People	3
PL 216	Employment Law	3
PL 219	Contract and Consumer Law	3
PL 220	Worker's Compensation	3
PL 221	Bankruptcy Law	3
PL 222	Corporate Law Practice	3
PL 224	Torts and Personal Injury	3
PL 226	Criminal Law for Paralegal	3
PL 230	Litigation II - E-Discovery	3
PL 235	Litigation III	3
PL 240	Environmental Law	3
PL 260	Administrative Law for Paralegals	3
PL 270	Landlord Tenant Law	3
PL 275	Paralegal Career Development	1

PL 280A	Cooperative Education: Paralegal	3
PL 281A	Paralegal Community Law Clinic	3
PL 281B	Paralegal Community Law Clinic II	3

WR 227	Technical Writing (WR227=WR227Z) (or equivalent) ^Z	4
or WR 122	Composition II (WR122=WR122Z)	
or BA 205	Business Communication Using Technology	

PARALEGAL SUPPORT ELECTIVES

Code	Title	Credits
BA 116	Microsoft Word for Workplace Communications	4
BA 131	Introduction to Business Technology	4
BA 216A	Data Analytics with Excel and Tableau	4
BA 285	Human Relations-Organizations	3
CG 100	College Survival and Success	3
CG 112	Managing Test Anxiety	1
CG 191	Exploring Identity and Diversity for College Success	4
CG 209	Job Finding Skills	1-2
CIS 120	Digital Literacy	4
CIS 125D	Database Application Development I	4
COMM 140	Introduction to Intercultural Communication	4
MP 111	Medical Terminology	4
MSD 105	Workplace Communication Skills	3
MSD 107	Organizations & People	3
MSD 194	Effective Presentation Skills Using PowerPoint	2
MSD 279	Project Management - Intro	4
SJ 210	Social Justice: Theory & Practice	4
WR 121	Composition I (WR121=WR121Z) ^Z	4

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This course is part of Oregon Common Course Numbering. WR 121 and WR 121Z are equivalent.

ONE-YEAR CERTIFICATE

Paralegal (p. 3)

LESS THAN ONE-YEAR CERTIFICATE: CAREER PATHWAY

Legal Assistant (p. 4)

PARALEGAL CERTIFICATE ONE-YEAR CERTIFICATE

Minimum 59 credits. Students must meet all certificate requirements.

Paralegal Certificate Courses

Code	Title	Credits
CIS 120	Digital Literacy [§]	4
or CIS 125D	Database Application Development I	
PL 101	Introduction to the U.S. Legal System [§]	3
PL 102	Survey of Substantive Law	3
PL 103	Legal Ethics and Professional Responsibility	3
PL 105	Litigation	3
PL 107	Interviewing and Investigating	3
PL 108	Legal Analysis & Writing [§]	3
PL 130	Legal Software	3
PL 203	Basic Legal Research [§]	3
PL 204	Applied Legal Research and Drafting [§]	2
PL 250	Cultural Responsiveness in the Legal Field	2
PL 295	Paralegal Capstone	2

Paralegal Accounting Electives	3
Paralegal Program Electives	9
Paralegal Support Electives	9
Total Credits	59

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Course contains Related Instruction and cannot be substituted with another course; Related Instruction details can be viewed here.

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This course is part of Oregon Common Course Numbering. The following courses are equivalent:
WR 122 and WR 122Z
WR 227 and WR 227Z

PARALEGAL ACCOUNTING ELECTIVES

Code	Title	Credits
BA 111	Introduction to Accounting	3
BA 177	Payroll Accounting	3
BA 211	Principles of Financial Accounting	4
BA 212	Principles of Accounting II	3
BA 213	Managerial Accounting	4

PARALEGAL PROGRAM ELECTIVES

Code	Title	Credits
BA 256	Income Tax	3
CJA 114	Introduction to Juvenile Process	3
CJA 210	Arrest, Search and Seizure	3
CJA 212	Criminal Law	3
CJA 213	Evidence	3
CJA 214	Criminal Investigation	3
CJA 220	Mental Health & the Law	3
MP 140	Introduction to Health Law and Ethics	3
PL 100	Professions in the Law	3
PL 104	Investigation Techniques for Paralegals	3
PL 105	Litigation	3
PL 109	Estate Planning	3
PL 111	Probate Practice	3
PL 113	Income Tax Law	3
PL 116	Real Property Law I	3
PL 124	Law Office Systems and Procedures	3
PL 140	Immigration Law for Paralegals	3
PL 206	Intellectual Property Law	3
PL 207	Advanced Legal Research	3
PL 208	Family Law	3
PL 210	Legal Protection for Vulnerable People	3
PL 216	Employment Law	3
PL 219	Contract and Consumer Law	3
PL 220	Worker's Compensation	3
PL 221	Bankruptcy Law	3
PL 222	Corporate Law Practice	3
PL 224	Torts and Personal Injury	3
PL 226	Criminal Law for Paralegal	3
PL 230	Litigation II - E-Discovery	3
PL 235	Litigation III	3
PL 240	Environmental Law	3

PL 260	Administrative Law for Paralegals	3
PL 270	Landlord Tenant Law	3
PL 275	Paralegal Career Development	1
PL 280A	Cooperative Education: Paralegal	3
PL 281A	Paralegal Community Law Clinic	3
PL 281B	Paralegal Community Law Clinic II	3

PARALEGAL SUPPORT ELECTIVES

Code	Title	Credits
BA 116	Microsoft Word for Workplace Communications	4
BA 131	Introduction to Business Technology	4
BA 216A	Data Analytics with Excel and Tableau	4
BA 285	Human Relations-Organizations	3
CG 100	College Survival and Success	3
CG 112	Managing Test Anxiety	1
CG 191	Exploring Identity and Diversity for College Success	4
CG 209	Job Finding Skills	1-2
CIS 120	Digital Literacy	4
CIS 125D	Database Application Development I	4
COMM 140	Introduction to Intercultural Communication	4
MP 111	Medical Terminology	4
MSD 105	Workplace Communication Skills	3
MSD 107	Organizations & People	3
MSD 194	Effective Presentation Skills Using PowerPoint	2
MSD 279	Project Management - Intro	4
SJ 210	Social Justice: Theory & Practice	4
WR 121	Composition I (WR121=WR121Z) ^Z	4

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This course is part of Oregon Common Course Numbering. WR 121 and WR 121Z are equivalent.

LEGAL ASSISTANT CAREER PATHWAY CERTIFICATE

Minimum 35 credits. Students must meet all certificate requirements.

Legal Assistant Certificate Courses

Code	Title	Credits
BA 116	Microsoft Word for Workplace Communications	4
BA 216A	Data Analytics with Excel and Tableau	4
CIS 120	Digital Literacy	4
or CIS 125D	Database Application Development I	
PL 101	Introduction to the U.S. Legal System	3
PL 130	Legal Software	3
PL 203	Basic Legal Research	3
WR 121	Composition I (WR121=WR121Z) ^Z	4
Paralegal Accounting Electives		4
Paralegal Program Electives		6
Total Credits		35

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This course is part of Oregon Common Course Numbering. WR 121 and WR 121Z are equivalent.

PARALEGAL ACCOUNTING ELECTIVES

Code	Title	Credits
BA 111	Introduction to Accounting	3
BA 177	Payroll Accounting	3
BA 211	Principles of Financial Accounting	4
BA 212	Principles of Accounting II	3
BA 213	Managerial Accounting	4

PARALEGAL PROGRAM ELECTIVES

Code	Title	Credits
BA 256	Income Tax	3
CJA 114	Introduction to Juvenile Process	3
CJA 210	Arrest, Search and Seizure	3
CJA 212	Criminal Law	3
CJA 213	Evidence	3
CJA 214	Criminal Investigation	3
CJA 220	Mental Health & the Law	3
MP 140	Introduction to Health Law and Ethics	3
PL 100	Professions in the Law	3
PL 104	Investigation Techniques for Paralegals	3
PL 105	Litigation	3
PL 109	Estate Planning	3
PL 111	Probate Practice	3
PL 113	Income Tax Law	3
PL 116	Real Property Law I	3
PL 124	Law Office Systems and Procedures	3
PL 140	Immigration Law for Paralegals	3
PL 206	Intellectual Property Law	3
PL 207	Advanced Legal Research	3
PL 208	Family Law	3
PL 210	Legal Protection for Vulnerable People	3
PL 216	Employment Law	3
PL 219	Contract and Consumer Law	3
PL 220	Worker's Compensation	3
PL 221	Bankruptcy Law	3
PL 222	Corporate Law Practice	3
PL 224	Torts and Personal Injury	3
PL 226	Criminal Law for Paralegal	3
PL 230	Litigation II - E-Discovery	3
PL 235	Litigation III	3
PL 240	Environmental Law	3
PL 260	Administrative Law for Paralegals	3
PL 270	Landlord Tenant Law	3
PL 275	Paralegal Career Development	1
PL 280A	Cooperative Education: Paralegal	3
PL 281A	Paralegal Community Law Clinic	3
PL 281B	Paralegal Community Law Clinic II	3