

# PROGRAM PLANNING GUIDE

## PARALEGAL Associate in Technical Arts

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:** The overall program goal of the Paralegal Associate in Technical Arts Program is to prepare students for careers as paralegals working under the supervision of lawyers. In addition, it is the intent of the program to provide a broad range of skills, depending upon student choices, for positions in a variety of legal settings such as private law firms, government agencies, corporate legal departments, insurance companies, estate and trust departments of large banks, or real estate and title companies. The curriculum consists of a combination of legal specialty, law-related and general education courses. Someone seeking a career as a paralegal must be able to write clearly, communicate effectively, be proficient with office computer systems, and possess a high degree of motivation and analytical reasoning capability.

**PROGRAM OUTCOMES:** South Puget Sound Community College believes that all students need to develop a broad range of abilities that will not only make them more effective in their professional pursuits but will enhance their capacity to relate well to others in their daily lives. Therefore, students who complete an ATA in Paralegal will:

- Demonstrate the following skill standards:
  - ◆ Engage in legal and factual investigation and research using traditional and technology-based tools.
  - ◆ Brief and analyze legal issues in writing.
  - ◆ Understand the court system and the process of civil litigation from the inception of a case through trial and post-trial matters.
  - ◆ Use a variety of current computer applications to efficiently produce, manage, and analyze legal documents.
  - ◆ Interview clients or witnesses.
- Gather information about, understand, and explain clearly to others concepts relevant to successful performance in the legal field.
- Think logically and critically and apply these thinking skills to the legal field.
- Communicate effectively in oral, written, and graphic form.
- Apply fundamental quantitative and computation skills.
- Understand themselves and others as they interact in a global environment.
- Demonstrate skills in dealing with differences and managing interpersonal relationships.
- Understand fundamental ethical issues and their related responsibilities and liabilities.

### PROGRAM INFORMATION/CONTACTS:

#### Admission:

Applications for admission and financial aid are available in Building 25, Office of Enrollment Services, or call (360) 596-5241. Information is also available at the college website: [www.spscc.ctc.edu](http://www.spscc.ctc.edu). The program begins each Fall quarter. Legal core courses are offered in the evening. It is recommended that WRIT 101 and a computer course be taken prior to Fall quarter. BUS 171 should be taken as early as possible in the program if not before.

#### Length of Program:

Because legal courses are offered only in the evening, program completion may require nine quarters.

#### Costs:

Tuition is subject to change by the state Legislature. Detailed tuition information is available in the quarterly class schedule. Tuition and fees do not include the cost of textbooks and supplies.

#### Advisors:

George Darkenwald, (360) 596-5494 or D'Etta Kern, (360) 596-5545.

#### Special Program Note:

Only an attorney can counsel others as to their legal rights or responsibilities. Non-lawyer assistants act under the supervision of a lawyer in compliance with Rule 5.3 according to General Rule 24 Court Rules.

**PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS:** An Associate in Technical Arts degree will be awarded upon successful completion of a minimum of 90 credits in courses numbered 100 or above. All core and general education list requirements must be met, with any additional credits to be selected as electives.

#### Basic Skills Requirements:

English, Reading, or Math may be required based on placement testing. Students are encouraged to complete basic skills requirements at the beginning of their education. Basic skill deficiencies must be completed prior to graduation.

ENGL 097      Basic Writing II

5 credits

|          |                       |           |
|----------|-----------------------|-----------|
| READ 097 | Analytical Reading II | 5 credits |
| MATH 090 | Basic Math II         | 5 credits |

**Core Requirements:**

|          |  |           |
|----------|--|-----------|
| BUS 171  | Business Law I (S, F, W, Sp)                               | 5 credits |
| CIS 106  | Business English (W)                                       | 5 credits |
| CIS 108  | Introduction to Microsoft Office                           | 3 credits |
| CIS 136  | Word Processing I Using Microsoft Word                     | 4 credits |
| LEGL 102 | Legal Forms (W)  | 4 credits |
| LEGL 151 | Introduction to Legal Systems and Procedures (F)           | 3 credits |
| LEGL 152 | Civil Procedure (F)  | 5 credits |
| LEGL 153 | Computerized Litigation Support (Sp)                       | 3 credits |
| LEGL 154 | Tort Law (Sp)  | 5 credits |
| LEGL 155 | Fundamentals of Legal Writing and Case Analysis (Sp)       | 5 credits |
| LEGL 156 | Legal Research (W)   | 5 credits |
| LEGL 158 | Investigation and Interviewing (Sp, Even, or W, Odd Years) | 3 credits |
| LEGL 252 | Public Law and Administration (F, Odd Years)               | 5 credits |
| LEGL 259 | Career Readiness for the Paralegal                         | 1 credit  |

**Electives: Choose at least 3 courses from the electives listed below.**

|          |   |           |
|----------|---|-----------|
| BUS 172  | Business Law II (F, W, Sp)                    | 5 credits |
| LEGL 157 | Criminal Law (W, Odd Years)                   | 5 credits |
| LEGL 251 | Civil Litigation (F, Even Years)              | 5 credits |
| LEGL 253 | Domestic Relations (F, Even Years)            | 3 credits |
| LEGL 255 | Estate Planning (Sp, Odd Years)               | 3 credits |
| LEGL 256 | Real Estate and Property Law (F, Odd Years)   | 3 credits |
| LEGL 257 | Corporations and Partnerships (W, Even Years) | 3 credits |
| LEGL 258 | Bankruptcy and Collections (W, Even Years)    | 3 credits |

**General Education List Requirements:**

Complete five credits from each of the four categories: Reading/Writing, Listening/Speaking, Computation, and Human Relations. For the Paralegal Associate in Technical Arts degree, a minimum of 30 credits must be taken from the General Education List for the associate of arts or associate of science degrees. At least 15 credits must be distributed among three of the four areas: communication, humanities, social science and math. The remaining 15 credits may be taken in any combination within the three areas to satisfy the general education course requirements.

|                           |   |           |
|---------------------------|---|-----------|
| <b>Reading/Writing</b>    |   | 5 credits |
| ENGL& 101                 | English Composition I (formerly WRIT 101)     |           |
| <b>Speaking/Listening</b> |   | 5 credits |
| CMST& 220                 | Public Speaking (formerly SPCH 101)           |           |
| <b>OR</b>                 |   |           |
| CMST& 230                 | Small Group Communication (formerly SPCH 115) |           |
| <b>Computation</b>        |   | 5 credits |
| BUS 104                   | Business Math                                 |           |
| <b>OR</b>                 |   |           |
| MATH&107*                 | Math in Society (formerly MATH 107)           |           |
| <b>Human Relations</b>    |   | 5 credits |
| PSYC 116                  | Psychology of Human Relations                 |           |

\*If MATH& 107 or above is chosen to satisfy the computation requirement, only 10 additional general education courses are needed. Consider taking PHIL 102 Ethics as part of the 15 credits.

**DIVERSITY REQUIREMENT:** South Puget Sound Community College requires all new students seeking an Associate Degree to complete a “diversity” course, which meets the college criteria for listing as a diversity course and has been approved for such listing by the college Instruction Council prior to the student enrolling in the class.

The diversity requirement may be completed within the General Education requirements by choosing one of the bolded courses listed under the Human Relations category.

**OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS COMPLIANCE STATEMENT:** South Puget Sound Community College’s equal opportunity policy prohibits discrimination in our services and in employment against any person on the basis of race or ethnicity, creed, color, national origin, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, age, religion, Vietnam-era or disabled veteran status,

or the presence of any sensory, physical or mental disability except in the case of a bona fide occupation qualification. South Puget Sound Community College is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer and complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

**Effective:** Summer 2008

**Revised:** April 15, 2008