



COURSE OUTLINE

Course Number LEG 255	Course Title Legal Ethics	Credits 3
Hours: Lecture/Lab/Other 3/0/0	Co- or Pre-requisite None	Implementation Semester & Year Spring 2022

Catalog description:

Foundational concepts in legal ethics including confidentiality, legal fees, unauthorized practice of law and best practices in effective communication. The course does not include the instruction or teaching of 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 Textbook:

Legal Ethics 4th edition by K. Kauffman and E. Rybicki, Cengage Publishers (2022)
ISBN: 9780357620540 (hard copy) or ISBN: 9780357620588 (e-book)

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 255 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. Apply best practices concerning professionalism and legal ethics to practical paralegal scenarios. [Supports ILG 1, 11; PLO 1]
2. Identify professional scenarios and applicable rules of Unauthorized Practice of Law (UPL) and permissible exemptions. [Supports ILG 10; PLO 1, 2]

3. Demonstrate best practices concerning client confidentiality, financial matters, solicitation, advertising and conflict of interest. [Supports ILG 10; PLO 3]
4. Distinguish between and identify practical legal work and the practice of law in a legal employment setting. [Supports ILG 10; PLO 4, 5]
5. Apply legal research and writing skills to prepare CIRAC, IRAC or correspondence-based legal analysis of ethical matters. [Supports ILG 1, 4; PLO 4, 5]

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 Regulation of the Legal Field

Learning Objectives [Supports SLO 1]

The student will be able to...

- Describe the historical evolution of the paralegal profession.
- Explain the laws and rules governing lawyers, including licensure rules, CLE, sanctions and pro bono work.
- Compare and contrast the various jurisdictions' approaches regulating paralegals.
- Describe the Limited License Legal Technicians (LLLT) role and the emerging concepts for licensed paralegals within the scope of increasing access to justice.
- Apply NFPA Model Guidelines to hypothetical legal employment scenarios.
- Apply NALA Model Guidelines to hypothetical legal employment scenarios.
- Apply the ABA Model Guideline for the Utilization of Paralegals and ABA Model Rules of Professional Responsibility.

Unit II Ethical Practices for Law Practice

Learning Objectives [Supports SLO 2, 3]

The student will be able to...

- Describe the general principles of the practice of law and how UPL statutes regulate the practice of law.

- Analyze potential UPL violations and accurately determine whether the violation occurred.
- Distinguish actions constituting the practice of law from actions that a paralegal may independently manage.
- Apply best practices for paralegals to avoid UPL outside the legal employment setting.
- Explain best practices for paralegal utilization, per the ABA Guide to the Utilization of Paralegals.
- Formulate CIRAC/IRAC documents or similar legal analyses concerning UPL scenarios.

Unit III Ethics in Action

Learning Objectives [Supports SLO 3, 4]

The student will be able to...

- Communicate and apply the rules of confidentiality in law practice
- Recognize a conflict of interest and how it applies to paralegals and lawyers.
- Determine the correct course of action when a conflict of interest is recognized.
- Analyze legal advertisements and apply the jurisdiction's rules on advertising.
- Communicate the rule of legal fees and how this applies to lawyers and paralegals
- Communicate and apply the rules of legal case solicitation.
- Analyze and assess the rules of client funds, and determine how client funds can be handled.
- Apply the rules and appropriate solutions to special issues in advocacy.
- Maintain professional competence after graduation, and understand how the rules of professional competence and competent representation of clients apply to paralegals.
- Apply best practices of professionalism in the legal office, court, and with clients.

Unit IV Analysis and Application of Legal Concepts to Paralegal Work

Learning Objectives [Supports SLO 5]

The student will be able to...

- Research and analyze the hypothetical scenarios involving paralegals, lawyers, and judges in ethics and professionalism scenarios.
- Communicate and compare the various rules of law regarding legal ethics.
- Apply and select the correct rules or code to professional tasks, including confidentiality, rules affecting fees, solicitation and the practice of law.
- Demonstrate an understanding of current approaches to paralegal licensure, exceptions at the federal and state level for specific roles including representation and related matters concerning UPL.

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.