

Course Outcomes Guide

Directions: Please complete this form to document your progress toward improving student learning. For each item, indicate your progress and your anticipated next steps. Thank you!

Course/Program Title: PLS 103 Legal Writing and Documents

Date: Fall 2009

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Expected Learning Outcomes:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of terms and facts of this subject
(These include various forms of legal correspondence, legal documents, and legal pleadings; continued development of legal vocabulary; document form and content are also emphasized. The proper use of citations is also included. Additional research skills are also included.)
2. Apply basic knowledge to new situations
3. Solve problems
4. Communicate solutions
5. Demonstrate professional and ethical behavior

Assessment (How do or will students demonstrate achievement of each outcome?)

Students demonstrate achievement of the outcomes almost entirely on production of work. Students work on seven major units throughout the semester and these units are intended to give practice in drafting letters, documents, and pleadings; in doing legal research on both the computer and in books; in developing professional behaviors and attitudes through independent work and the production of a high volume of work. Mastery of subject matter, practice and procedure is demonstrated by completion of a professional portfolio of work.

Validation (What methods have you used or will you use to validate your assessment?)

The portfolios are included in mock interviews that are a requirement of the class. Students go into the legal community for interviews with attorneys or working paralegals. The portfolio is given a cursory review. The interviewer also provides feedback on the student's professional appearance and demeanor during the mock interview.

Results (What do your assessment data show? If you have not yet assessed student achievement of your learning outcomes, when is assessment planned?)

Learning outcomes assessments indicate that students are weak in writing skills.

Also, assessments indicate that students are not prepared for the workplace through a lack of professional attitudes and behaviors.

Follow-up (How have you used or how will you use the data to improve student learning?)

It has been recommended by the Paralegal Studies Advisory Committee that we re-instate ENG 101 as a pre-requisite or concurrent registration. More writing assignments should be

given for additional practice. Also, all instructors in all Paralegal courses should incorporate discussions and exercises to focus on the need to dress professionally, demonstrate good manners, and demonstrate self-motivation and initiative. Finally, the speaker series should be continued to expose our students to working professionals to focus on expectations and realities in the legal field.

Budget Justification (What resources are necessary to improve student learning?)