

Course Outcomes Guide

Course/Program Title: PLS 203 Domestic Relations
and SPRING 2014 (at bottom)

Date: Spring 2013

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Student Learning Outcomes:

- *develop and implement analytical skills
- *solve problems and communicate solutions
- *demonstrate professional and ethical behavior
- *apply basic knowledge to new situations
- *demonstrate fundamental functions of the domestic law paralegal
- *increase written and verbal communication skills

Assessment:

1. Students demonstrate achievement of the outcomes through exams, take-home written assignments and a project.

2. The Paralegal Studies program has an active advisory committee which meets at least once annually. One of the topics of discussion is always an assessment of our students, the courses and the program. The following are a constant topic for discussion:

- *a deficit in writing skills
- *a deficit in proofreading skills
- *lack of professionalism

3. In the Fall semester 2012 we launched a pilot assessment tool. Each paralegal professor was asked to select at least one major assignment which would demonstrate skills and knowledge expected to be mastered by the students. The course outcomes assessments consisted of three parts:

- *a common grading rubric
- *a common grading sheet
- *a common data collection sheet

Based on the data we are able to assess whether students have successfully met desired outcomes. The data also indicates where we need to modify course content to improve achievement of learning outcomes. This tool will be used this spring 2013 semester for the first time in this class.

Validation: to be determined.

Results: Learning outcomes assessments indicate that students are weak in writing and proofreading

skills.

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

Follow up: More practice writing assignments will be given. 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.

SPRING 2014

Assignment: A take home exam containing a number of questions with fact scenarios where the students had to analyze both the facts and the law and provide a written answer.

Assessment data: 10 As
5 Bs

Results: Compared to prior domestic relations classes, this body of students wrote well. Only one spelling error was noted in review of the exams. Improvements could be had in sentence structure by writing a complete sentence, rather than unstructured thoughts or words. Some students need to write in greater depth and detail.

Follow up: Stress the need to proofread and use correct spelling, grammar and punctuation. Students might be referred to the LSC for additional assistance, as indicated.