

Hagerstown Community College
MASTER SYLLABUS DOCUMENT

COURSE: PLS 104 – Principles of Litigation, 3 credits, Mondays, 6:45 P.M.-9:15 P.M.

INSTRUCTOR: Donald E. Beachley

SEMESTER/YEAR: Spring 2016

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course provides students with a working knowledge of civil procedure from pleadings practice to discovery techniques along with an overview of the rules of evidence, pretrial procedures, and court proceedings. Emphasis is given to the paralegal's role in each stage of the litigation process. This course also stresses ethics as well as attitudes, skills and behaviors in a professional setting.

TEXTBOOK: The Litigation Paralegal, James W.H. McCord, 6th Edition (2016)

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES: Upon conclusion of this course students should be able to:

- * demonstrate knowledge of basic civil litigation terms
- * demonstrate knowledge of Maryland and Federal Rules of Civil Procedure
- * apply knowledge to prepare complaints, motions, and other pleadings
- * identify problems and develop solutions (including case briefs)
- * demonstrate professional and ethical behavior

COURSE CONTENT OBJECTIVES: This course will assist the student to:

1. Conduct an interview and learn procedures for investigation of a case.
2. Prepare pleadings.
3. Be familiar with the discovery process.
4. Know the frameworks of a trial and the basic rules of evidence.
5. Track a case through the court system and be able to assist in each stage.

Total Hours of Coursework:

To earn one academic credit at HCC, students are required to complete a minimum of 37.5 clock hours (45 fifty-minute “academic” hours) of coursework per semester. Those hours of coursework may be completed through a combination of hours within the classroom and hours outside the classroom. Certain courses may require more than the 37.5 minimum hours of coursework per credit.

For most classes, students should expect to do at least 2 hours of coursework outside of class for each hour of in-class coursework. For this class, the 2 hours of coursework outside of class will be satisfied by readings in preparation for class, out-of-class assignments, and legal research and/or case analysis.

ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Breakdown</u>
Final:	20%
Midterm	20%
Participation/Attendance	20%
Assignments/Projects	20%
Quizzes	20%

1. There will be two announced exams (midterm and final). The exams will be primarily short answers and essays. The questions on the exam will be **representative** of the material covered. The scores on the midterm and final exams will each constitute 20% of your final grade. Grading scale: 90-100 A, etc.
2. There will be periodic quizzes on your reading assignments. These may be unannounced; the purpose is to ensure that you do your reading. I will allow you to make-up one quiz.
3. I will give assignments throughout the semester. These assignments are due one week from the date they are assigned, unless specifically stated otherwise. Even if you are absent you should forward the work by e-mail. Everything counts: content, format, spelling, punctuation, timeliness, etc. The grade on these assignments will constitute 20% of your final grade.
4. Since attendance is a key factor in success I will take attendance each day. Please note that being on time for class as well as staying for the whole class are considered in the attendance grade. Each student starts with an attendance grade of 100%. Because this class only meets once weekly, 10% is deducted for each full absence.

Meaningful participation is also an important factor and therefore this will also be recorded in the grade book. The participation grade will be merged with the attendance grade and that total will be 20% of your final grade for the course.

Again, regular attendance and class participation are essential.

COURSE POLICIES: In order to make things run smoothly, I ask that you honor the following:

1. Please don't be tardy. Class will start in a timely fashion. In addition, tardiness will be factored into your attendance/participation grade. Leaving class early is also a factor.
2. The college attendance policy can be found in the 2015-2016 catalog.
3. If you miss a class it is your responsibility to find out what we covered in class and get the notes and assignments from a classmate.
4. You are expected to take the announced tests on the day they are scheduled. If there is a sufficient reason to miss the exam, such as a business trip or an illness, please let me know before the exam.

5. Generally you may not make up missed quizzes. However, if there is sufficient good cause, I will allow you to make up one quiz.
6. You may not bring your small children to class.
7. If you have any special classroom needs, please see me privately.
8. Listen to the radio for announcements of school closings due to inclement weather.
9. Don't assume you are withdrawing from class by not coming. You must follow college policies and procedures.
10. Please turn all cell phones or other electronic items to vibrate or off during class. Please do not have cell phones or other electronic devices out during class and especially not during exams.
11. Bring your book to class.
12. The instructor has the right to modify the course content and/or the evaluation (testing) procedures as deemed necessary.
13. All work in this class is done under the HCC Academic Integrity Policy.

CONTACT INFORMATION: debeachley@hagerstowncc.edu. You may attempt to reach me Monday – Friday at (240) 313-2555, but you will probably need to leave a message with my administrative assistant. Please use this phone number sparingly. Upon request, I would be happy to meet with any student prior to class.

SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: Students may receive reasonable accommodations if they have a diagnosed disability and present appropriate documentation. Students seeking accommodations are required to contact the Disability Support Services (DSS) office as early as possible. Students may contact a DSS staff member for an appointment at dss@hagerstowncc.edu or at 240-500-2530.