



Paralegal Studies



"The paralegal program at HCC provided me with the right education to start my career as a legal professional. Learning from a staff of experienced professionals, attorneys, and faculty lent to my education the real world knowledge that has been vital to my success."

—Gina Raynor

A.A. Business Administration, HCC
A.A. Paralegal Studies, HCC
B.A. Government and Politics,
University of Maryland

What is a paralegal?

A paralegal is a person who has received specialized training through formal education or many years of work experience; works under the supervision and direction of an attorney; and performs non-clerical, substantive legal work in assisting an attorney (source: National Association of Legal Assistants).

Individuals who excel as paralegals possess excellent computer, interpersonal, organizational, research, speaking, and writing skills.

What is the employment outlook for this career?

According to the U.S. Department of Labor Occupational Outlook Handbook, employment of paralegals and legal assistants is projected to grow 17 percent from 2012 to 2022, faster than average for all occupations" (source: www.bls.gov/ooh).

Where do paralegals work?

Paralegals are found in all types of organizations, but most work for law firms, corporations, and government agencies. The industries that employed most paralegals and legal assistants in 2012 were as follows:

- Legal services 72%
- Federal government, excluding post office 5%
- Local government, excluding education and hospitals 5%
- State government, excluding education and hospitals 4%
- Finance and insurance 3%

(source: www.bls.gov/ooh)

What do paralegals earn?

Earnings depend on experience, education, geographical area, and area of specialized practice. The median pay for paralegals was \$46,990 in May 2012 (source: www.bls.gov/ooh).

Why should I come to HCC?

- HCC's Paralegal Studies Program is an established program of study with small classes taught by either attorneys or paralegals
- Tuition is reasonable at HCC
- HCC credits transfer to some four-year institutions. For example, many students in the paralegal studies program at HCC have transferred to UMUC, which accepts

most of the HCC credits. Transfers depend on the policies of the receiving institutions

For more information about HCC graduation rates, the median debt of students who completed the program, and other important information, visit www.hagerstowncc.edu/paralegal.

What are the options?

The program offers multiple options: You may take only selected courses to further your career; you may enroll in a 30-credit certificate program; or you may apply those 30 credits to the associate degree.

**A.A. Degree
Arts and Sciences Option in
Paralegal Studies**

The Paralegal Studies Program provides a sequence of courses for students who plan to continue in paralegal studies at an upper division institution. The program includes electives in administration of justice, business, history, and political science. Students should identify an intended transfer institution as early as possible and complete appropriate courses.

General Education Requirements 31-33 credits Arts/Humanities

Select two courses in different disciplines from approved General Education course list..... 6

Behavioral/Social Sciences

PSY 101 General Psychology 3
SOC 101 Introduction to Sociology 3

Biological/Physical Science

Select two courses from approved General Education course list —one must be a laboratory course 7-8

Diversity

Select one course from the approved General Education course list..... 3

English

ENG 101 English Composition 3
ENG 102 Composition and Literature 3
OR
ENG 112 Technical Writing I (3)

Mathematics

MAT 101 College Algebra 3
OR
Another MAT course from approved list(3-4)

Program Requirements 21 credits

PLS 101 Introduction to Paralegal Studies 3
PLS 102 Legal Research 3
PLS 103 Legal Writing and Documents 3
PLS 104 Principles of Litigation..... 3

PLS	105	Contracts and Torts	3
PLS	203	Domestic Relations.....	3
PLS	207	Real Estate Law.....	3

Restricted Electives 6 credits

Electives should be selected in consultation with the coordinator of the Paralegal Program to satisfy career goals or a transfer advisor and the transfer institution. Select two courses in different disciplines from the following list:

ADJ	203	Criminal Law	(3)
BUS	104	Legal Environment of Business	(3)
HIS	201	United States History I	(3)
HIS	202	United States History II	(3)
PLS	269	Internship I	(3)
POL	101	American Government	(3)
POL	102	State and Local Government	(3)
POL	202	Constitutional Law	(3)

Free Electives 1-2 credits

In order to meet the degree requirements of 60 credits, some students may need an additional 1 or 2 credits of free electives. Electives should be selected in consultation with the coordinator of the Paralegal Program to satisfy career goals or a transfer advisor and the transfer institution. Some recommended courses to consider are listed below.

BUS	145	Customer Service	(1)
IST	100	Computer Basics	(1)
IST	101	Basic Keyboarding	(1)
IST	103	Presentation Software	(1)
PED	107	Basic Self Defense.....	(1)
PED	132	Yoga: Beginning	(1)
STU	106	Professionalism in the Workplace	(1)

Degree Requirement.....60

Note:

Students who have been convicted of certain crimes may be precluded from employment in this field and may affect internship placement. Please discuss concerns with the program coordinator.

Certificate Paralegal Studies

The paralegal studies certificate consists of specialized courses as well as general education offerings. It has two basic goals: first, to upgrade the job performance of the paralegal practitioner, and second, to initiate the professional career development of those entering the paralegal field.

Students who opt for a degree may apply the 30 credits from this one-year certificate program to the associate of arts degree in paralegal studies program.

Program Requirements 24 credits

ENG	101	English Composition.....	3
PLS	101	Introduction to Paralegal Studies	3
PLS	102	Legal Research.....	3
PLS	103	Legal Writing and Documents	3
PLS	104	Principles of Litigation.....	3
PLS	105	Contracts and Torts	3
PLS	203	Domestic Relations.....	3
PSY	101	General Psychology	3

Electives 6 credits

Select two courses from the following list:



ADJ	201	Law Enforcement and the Community.....	(3)
ADJ	203	Criminal Law	(3)
BUS	104	Legal Environment of Business	(3)
POL	101	American Government.....	(3)
PLS	207	Real Estate Law.....	(3)
PLS	269	Internship I.....	(3)

Certificate Requirement30

Note:

Students who have been convicted of certain crimes may be precluded from employment in this field and may affect internship placement. Please discuss concerns with the program coordinator.

Contact Information:

*Andrew B. Kramer, J.D.
Instructor,
Administration Justice and
Paralegal Studies
240-500-2481
abkramer@hagerstowncc.edu*

Recommended Professional Resources

National Association of Legal Assistants:

www.nala.org

National Federation of Paralegals

Association:

www.paralegals.org