

## ***PLS 190: Introduction to Paralegal Studies Spring 2020/WEB***

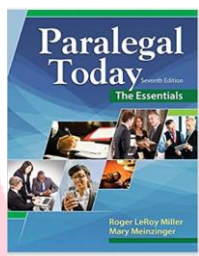
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**Office:** Grise Hall 306

**Office Hours:** As posted or by appointment

### **TEXTBOOK REQUIREMENTS:**

1. Miller, Meinzingler, *Paralegal Today* (7<sup>th</sup> ed., Cengage)  
ISBN# 9781305508743



2. Handouts and online postings as necessary.

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

Introduces students to the law by examining topics as follows: legal profession, legal practice, professional trends and issues. Student will learn about the state and federal judicial systems, paralegal and attorney roles and careers, legal technology, rules of professional conduct, legal ethics, and unauthorized practice of law by non-lawyers.

### **COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES:**

1. Students will have a basic understanding of the legal environment from perspective of paralegal, attorney, court and client;
2. Students will be able to identify the ethical restrictions on attorneys and paralegal as well as the ramifications for violations of ethical rules;
3. Students will be able to diagram the state and federal court systems;
4. Students will be able to identify sources of law and use them effectively in conducting basic legal research;
5. Students will be able to think and write critically regarding selected substantive law topics;
6. Students will have a basic understanding of selected substantive law topics as well as rules of procedure governing practice in state and federal courts; and,
7. Students will understand the legal job market and be able to access and utilize job finding tools.

**IMPORTANT NOTE FOR PARALEGAL MAJORS:** This course is required for all paralegal majors. For this course to count toward your degree, you must receive a final grade of "C" or above. For those majors receiving a final grade of "D" or "F," you must retake this course.

### COURSE DELIVERY AND PARTICIPATION:

1. Web Delivery: This class is to be delivered online via Blackboard. All lecture materials, supplemental viewing materials, exercises, discussions boards and exams will be posted on Blackboard and graded work will be returned utilizing this platform as well. Typically, assignments will be posted on Wednesday of each week unless otherwise indicated on the course calendar above.
2. Students registering for this class **MUST:**
  - a. have regular and reliable access to the Internet; and
  - b. have the ability to create assignments in Microsoft Office Word format; and
  - c. have prior classroom experience with the Blackboard online platform; or
  - d. agree to complete the online Blackboard tutorials BEFORE class begins on 1/27/2020.
3. Participation: Specific reading assignments, discussion boards and exercises will be made on the dates indicated above and posted on Blackboard. Due dates will be posted with each assignment. Participation and submission according to posted deadlines is required. It is the student's responsibility to monitor Blackboard for assignments and associated materials. The Instructor reserves the right to fail any student who fails to timely submit TWO online assignments. No make-up examinations will be administered unless the Student's failure to timely submit has been properly excused.

### HONOR CODE:

Western Kentucky University, Potter College of Arts & Letters, and the Department of Political Science desire to maintain the highest academic integrity. It must be clearly understood that acts of plagiarism or any other form of cheating or dishonesty will not be tolerated. Anyone committing such acts shall be subject to failure of this course and other disciplinary measures.

### AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACCOMMODATIONS (STUDENTS):

In order for the Instructor to make appropriate classroom accommodations for Students with learning or other disabilities, it is requested that the Student contact the Student Accessibility Resource Center regarding his/her disability prior to the beginning of this semester at: <https://www.wku.edu/sarc/>.

### GRADING:

**GRADES ARE WEIGHTED.** In order to calculate your grade in the course, you should multiply your score on a particular assignment by the weight value assigned to get the actual points earned for that assignment. For example, if you receive a "91" on an assignment worth 15%, you will multiply  $91 \times .15$ , earning you 13.65 points for that assignment toward the total of 100 points available for the course. At the end of the semester, add up all actual points earned and final grades will be awarded according to the standard scale: 90-100, A; 80-89, B; 70-79, C; 60-69, D; Below 60, F.

### SPECIFIC GRADE WEIGHTS FOR PLS 190:

Projects	10% each (40 points total)	40
Technology Competencies		15*
Weekly Exercises		15**
Exams	10% each (30 points total)	30
TOTAL POINTS AVAILABLE		100

\*Points for technology competencies will be awarded based on evidence of student knowledge and proficiency in each of the three technology categories. Each competency is worth up to five (5) points toward the weighted grade total set forth above.

\*\*Points for weekly exercises will be awarded based on timeliness and content of the submission. Only three (3) of the five (5) weekly exercises are required and students may select which exercises to complete. Each exercise is worth up to five (5) points toward the weighted grade total set forth above.

#### **ASSIGNMENT FORMAT:**

All written work submitted on Blackboard typed in Microsoft Word, double-spaced, paginated, using 12 point font with one-inch margins. It should be noted that legal citation is vastly different from the standard MLA-APA. Students are encouraged to purchase The Blue Book either online or in paper copy. Although it is not required, students will use this book in many paralegal studies courses.

#### **DUE DATES:**

Due dates/times will be specified on each assignment. If the assignment is turned in late, ten points will automatically be deducted unless the Student has made prior arrangements with the Instructor.

#### **IMPORTANT STUDENT INFORMATION:**

All WKU students may access information relating to the Americans with Disabilities Act classroom/course accommodation requirements, Title IX sexual assault reporting requirements, student complaints and grievances, active shooter preparedness, emergency preparedness, student legal services, counseling services and police services at:

<https://www.wku.edu/syllabusinfo/index.php>

COURSE OUTLINE/CALENDAR		
<b>SECTION 1: The Law and its Processes</b>		
<b>Week 1 (1/29)</b>	Sources of Law; The Courts	Chapters 5, 6; BB Reading Materials Weekly Exercise 1
<b>Week 2 (2/5)</b>	Jurisdiction and Venue	BB Reading Materials <b>PROJECT #1</b>
<b>Week 3 (2/12)</b>	Civil and Criminal Processes	BB Reading Materials Weekly Exercise 2
<b>Week 4 (2/19)</b>		<b>EXAM #1</b>
<b>SECTION 2: The Legal Profession</b>		
<b>Week 5 (2/26)</b>	Legal Education; Attorney and Paralegal Professions	Chapters 1, 2; BB Reading Materials Weekly Exercise 3
<b>Week 6 (3/4)</b>	Business Forms, Professional Office Organization	Chapter 4; BB Reading Materials Weekly Exercise 4
<b>Weeks 7, 8 (3/11, 3/18)</b>	Resumes/Cover Letters; Interviewing	BB Reading Materials <b>PROJECT #2</b>
<b>Week 9 (3/25)</b>		<b>EXAM #2</b>
<b>SECTION 3: The Practice</b>		
<b>Weeks 10, 11 (4/1, 4/8)</b>	Legal Ethics	BB Reading Materials <b>PROJECT #3</b>
<b>Weeks 12, 13 (4/15, 4/22)</b>	Legal Technology	Technology Competencies 1, 2, 3
<b>SECTION 4: Evidence and Argument</b>		
<b>Weeks 14, 15 (4/29, 5/6)</b>	IRAC	BB Reading Materials <b>PROJECT #4</b>
<b>Week 16 (5/13)</b>		<b>FINAL EXAM</b>

PARALEGAL  
STUDIES