

ONLINE PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATE
in
Paralegal Studies



*A comprehensive online program
led by the nation's leading paralegal
educators and authors*

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ONLINE PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATE

in Paralegal Studies

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Recognizing the need to increase and improve access to the legal system, the American Association for Paralegal Education (AAfPE) promotes quality paralegal education, develops educational standards and encourages professional growth in order to prepare graduates to perform a significant role in the delivery of legal services.

Thomas Edison State College is an affiliate member of the American Association for Paralegal Education.

The curriculum of the Professional Certificate in Paralegal Studies program has been created by leading paralegal educators and authors to provide a quality paralegal educational experience and to insure that the student completing the program possesses the knowledge and skills demanded by today's paralegal employers.

WHAT IS A PARALEGAL?

Paralegals perform a wide variety of substantive and procedural legal work, which, in the absence of a paralegal, would be performed by an attorney. Paralegals, who are also known as legal assistants, possess a solid understanding of the law and adhere to recognized ethical standards and rules of professional responsibility.

In the United States, approximately seven out of 10 paralegals work for law firms; others work for corporate legal departments, government agencies, hospitals and insurance companies.

Paralegals are prohibited from practicing law without a license; however, they perform many important functions critical to the legal process and the work of attorneys, such as:

- ▶ Interviewing clients and witnesses and investigating the facts of a case to ensure all relevant information is considered;
- ▶ Identifying appropriate laws, judicial decisions, legal articles and other materials that are relevant to a case;
- ▶ Conducting statistical, documentary and legal research;
- ▶ Drafting and preparing legal briefs and correspondence and summarizing depositions, interrogatories and testimony;
- ▶ Coordinating litigation support and technology;
- ▶ Helping lawyers prepare for closings, hearings, trials and corporate meetings; and
- ▶ Attending legal proceedings with attorneys, such as administrative hearings and trials.

JOB OUTLOOK FOR PARALEGALS

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment for paralegals is projected to grow at a rate of more than 27 percent from 2004-2014 (much faster than average).

The online Professional Certificate in Paralegal Studies at Thomas Edison State College is designed to prepare future paralegals to work in law firms, corporate legal departments, government agencies and various other legal entities.

Online Professional Certificate in Paralegal Studies

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The online Professional Certificate in Paralegal Studies at Thomas Edison State College is a comprehensive, cutting-edge program led by the nation's leading paralegal educators and authors.

Students are immersed into the core subjects required to succeed in this dynamic profession, such as contracts, torts, legal research and writing, litigation and administrative law. The 45-week program also has a strong emphasis on the role of technology in the legal field and how today's paralegals must understand its impact and how to best utilize it.

With a comprehensive curriculum led by nationally renowned paralegal educators, and exposure to the latest in technology and litigation software programs, the online Professional Certificate in Paralegal Studies empowers students with an in-depth knowledge of the skills that paralegal professionals need to succeed in this rapidly growing profession. The courses have been developed with Thomas Edison State College's award-winning course development team to bring students a winning combination of legal expertise delivered with academic excellence.

The program's online format gives course mentors and students access to the latest texts and information from the field as it develops, which sets the program apart from traditionally delivered programs. Technological currency is critical for paralegals today, and learning about technological advances in the legal field by studying in an online format adds currency to the program as students learn the skills needed to succeed in today's increasingly high-tech paralegal profession.

PROGRAM FEE:
(does not include textbooks)

\$3,920

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

To earn a Professional Certificate in Paralegal Studies, students work online in cohorts with other students through a 45-week program that includes seven courses. Cohorts begin three times each year: winter (January), spring (April) and fall (September).

The courses are structured in five- and 10-week formats.

- ▶ **INTRODUCTION TO PARALEGALISM** (five weeks)
- ▶ **CONTRACTS** (five weeks)
- ▶ **TORTS** (five weeks)
- ▶ **LEGAL RESEARCH AND WRITING** (10 weeks)
- ▶ **LITIGATION** (10 weeks)
- ▶ **ADMINISTRATIVE LAW** (five weeks)
- ▶ **INTRODUCTION TO TECHNOLOGY IN THE LAW** (five weeks)

WHO SHOULD APPLY TO THIS PROGRAM?

Students entering the online paralegal certificate program should be strongly motivated adult learners that have either:

- ▶ earned an associate degree or higher;
- ▶ completed college course work that demonstrates a level of oral and written communications skills and the ability to think critically; or
- ▶ have several years of work experience where these skills have been developed.

The online format requires that students have access to a computer and are proficient with using e-mail, communicating online, learning new software programs and conducting online research.

If you have any questions regarding admissions expectations to the program, please contact the School of Professional and Continuing Studies at spcs@tesc.edu.

Course Descriptions

▶ INTRODUCTION TO PARALEGALISM

This course provides a general introduction to a paralegal career, the legal system and the opportunities available to paralegal graduates, including an analysis of paralegal skills such as interviewing, investigation, legal analysis, legal writing, basic ethical principles and the impact of technology in paralegalism.

▶ CONTRACTS

This course provides an introduction to the law of contracts, including an analysis of the basic elements of contract law, including the principles of contract formation, enforceability, breach of contract and appropriate remedies.

▶ TORTS

This course provides an introduction to the law of torts, including an analysis of the basic elements of tort and personal injury law, including concepts of liability, legal analysis, negligence, special topics, defenses to negligence, damages and remedies.

▶ LEGAL RESEARCH AND WRITING

This course provides an introduction to the basic principle of legal research and writing, including the skills needed to perform basic interpretation and analysis of legal authority found in case and statutory law as applied to factual situations. The course also covers an introduction to library and online sources, legal analysis, preparation of legal memos, proper citation methods and computer assisted legal research principles and methods.

▶ LITIGATION

This course provides an introduction to basic litigation principles and methods, including an examination of litigation principles, federal and state rules of procedure, jurisdiction, venue, initiation and conduct of a lawsuit, document preparation, motions, evidence and trial and appellate preparation, as well as an introduction to litigation support technology.

▶ ADMINISTRATIVE LAW

This course provides an introduction to administrative law and procedure, including an analysis of administrative law and procedure, administrative agencies, due process, delegation, rule making, investigation, adjudication and judicial review. The course also examines the Administrative Procedures Act and ethical principles of administrative law.

▶ INTRODUCTION TO TECHNOLOGY IN THE LAW

This course provides an introduction to technology and computer functions in the contemporary law office, including an understanding of the use of legal specific software programs and the impact of court rules and procedures concerning electronic filings and discovery procedures. Students explore and understand issues of legal ethics and professional liability related to technology as well as concepts of computer network security and the interface of paralegals and other technology users. Students will understand computer use in researching factual and legal issues and also in locating and using specific software programs.

Course Mentors

PROGRAM DIRECTOR

WILLIAM J. MULKEEN, program director, is a graduate of Seton Hall University School of Law. He has been active in legal education for more than 30 years and has most recently served as the president of the American Association for Paralegal Education (AAfPE). Mulkeen remains a member of the AAfPE Board of Directors and is also a member of the AAfPE Technology Task Force. He has been an active team member with various national paralegal accrediting agencies that are part of the Council of Higher Education Accreditation of the United States Department of Education and has served as a civilian and military paralegal program reviewer with the American Council on Education (ACE). Mulkeen is also the president of the Academic Council at Thomas Edison State College.



RAQUEL Y. BRISTOL is a graduate of Rutgers Law School and is currently an appellate attorney with the Office of the Public Defender of the State of New Jersey. She has significant experience teaching English composition and legal research and writing at both introductory and advanced levels and has served as an editor at a national legal publishing company. She will be mentoring the Legal Research and Writing course.

CHARLOTTE RISER HARRIS is a graduate of Virginia Tech and the Southwestern Paralegal Institute. She has been a paralegal for more than 10 years and is currently the manager of Practice Support at Vinson & Elkins, an international law firm, where her duties include coordination of the firm's litigation support technology, electronic discovery, data and document management, trial presentation and internal training. She is currently serving as president of the Houston Association of Litigation Support managers. She will be mentoring the Litigation course.

COURSE AUTHORS AND MENTORS

WILLIAM P. STASKY is a graduate of Columbia Law School and is the author of 16 textbooks on paralegal subjects. Many of his textbooks, including *Introduction to Paralegalism*, *Torts*, and *Family Law* are used in leading paralegal programs throughout the nation. He will be mentoring the Introduction to Paralegalism course.

LISE HUNTER is a graduate of Brooklyn Law School and has been teaching paralegal courses both in the classroom and online for many years at the New York City College of Technology, where she has also served as chair of Legal Assisting Studies. She is a former member of the Board of Directors of the American Association for Paralegal Education (AAfPE) and will be mentoring the Contracts course.

MICHAEL C. KING is a graduate of George Mason School of Law and is currently chair of the Business Division at Essex County College. He has been involved in legal education for more than 20 years and is currently a member of the Thomas Edison State College Business Advisory Board and the Manhattan College School of Business Advisory Board. He will be mentoring the Torts course.

WILLIAM JENSON is a graduate of the Suffolk University Law School and is the judicial officer of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The judicial officer is the final deciding officer in administrative adjudicatory proceedings conducted by the USDA. He is also vice-chair of the American Bar Association's section on Administrative Law and Regulatory Practice in Agriculture and has taught administrative law at the USDA Graduate School for many years. He will be mentoring the Administrative Law course.

THOMAS GOLDMAN is a graduate of Temple Law School and is the author of several leading paralegal textbooks, including *The Paralegal Profession*. He has served as a paralegal program director for many years and as a member of the Board of Directors of the American Association for Paralegal Education (AAfPE). He is currently the chair of the AAfPE Technology Task Force and is also currently completing a paralegal technology text. He will be mentoring the Introduction to Technology in the Law course.

Program Advisory Board

WILLIAM J. MULKEEN is the paralegal program director of the School of Professional and Continuing Studies at Thomas Edison State College; the president of the Academic Council at Thomas Edison; and the immediate past president of the American Association for Paralegal Education (AAfPE).

PAMELA BAILEY is a paralegal and an educator. She is also program director of the Paralegal Institute at Duquesne University; a member of the Board of Directors and the Publications Committee Chair of the American Association for Paralegal Education; and a past president of the National Association of Legal Assistants (NALA).

GARY BAUER is senior paralegal editor with Prentice Hall Publishing and has been active in paralegal education for a number of years. He is also a member of the AAfPE Editorial Board.

SHELLEY ESPOSITO is senior acquisitions editor, West Legal Studies and Thomson Delmar Learning in Clifton Park, N.Y. She is also a member of the AAfPE Editorial Advisory Board and has contributed to the association's publication, *The Educator*.

THOMAS F. GOLDMAN is an educator and practicing attorney; a leading paralegal textbook author with Prentice Hall Publishing and chairman of the Technology Task Force of the American Association for Paralegal Education.

CHARLOTTE RISER HARRIS is a paralegal and the manager of Practice Support for Vinson & Elkins, LLP in Houston Texas; and a member of the Board of Directors of the Houston Association of Litigation Support Managers. She has extensive experience in training and educational presentations.

ANITA G. HAWORTH RP is a PACE Registered Paralegal; president of the National Federation of Paralegal Associations (NFPA); and senior litigation paralegal with Campbell Kyle Proffitt LLP in Carmel, Ind.

RONALD M. HENRY is the executive director of Wilentz, Goldman and Spitzer of Woodbridge, N.J., the past president of the International Association of Legal Administrators; and co-chair of the New Jersey State Bar Association's Law Office Management Committee.

JUDD KESSLER is an attorney admitted to practice in California. He has previously chaired the California Bar's Law Practice Management and Technology section. He is currently president of Abacus Data Systems. Abacus Software provides a leading practice management software system that is used in many law firms and in more than 100 educational programs.

LINDA S. KOSNIK, RN, MSN, APN, is vice-president clinical services with Vistaar Health Solutions. She is a nationally recognized authority on capacity management and risk management issues in healthcare and technology and is the former chief nursing officer of Overlook Hospital, a member of the Atlantic Health System.

KAREN GREER MCGEE, CLAS is a certified legal assistant; vice-president of the National Association of Legal Assistants (NALA); and civil litigation specialist with the Second Circuit Court of Appeals in Shreveport, La.

WILLIAM P. STATSKY is an experienced attorney and educator and nationally recognized author with West Delmar Publishing. He is the author of several of the leading paralegal textbooks in use at educational institutions throughout the country including *Introduction to Paralegalism, Torts and Family Law*.

DON SWANSON is a paralegal and a nationally recognized litigation technology consultant; he is also president of Five Star Legal Compliance in Los Angeles, Calif., a company that offers extensive legal staffing, consulting, technology and training services. He presents at numerous educational and corporate seminars throughout the country.

ROBERT WISS is president of Lexis-Nexis Casesoft. Casesoft develops software tools used primarily by investigators, litigators, and litigation paralegals. Casesoft products are in use in law firms, government investigative and prosecutorial agencies and private investigation and forensic accounting firms. He lectures extensively at educational and technology conferences throughout the nation.

DAVID M. GROSSMAN (ex-officio) is the vice provost and dean of the School of Professional and Continuing Studies at Thomas Edison State College.

You *can* do this.

ENROLL TODAY!

REGISTER ONLINE by visiting www.tesc.edu and clicking on "Professional Certificates."

Several new professional certificates are under development in the paralegal area, including:

- ▶ **NURSE PARALEGAL AND CONSULTANT CERTIFICATE**
- ▶ **ADVANCED LITIGATION SUPPORT TECHNOLOGY CERTIFICATES**

CHECK FOR NEW ANNOUNCEMENTS

by visiting www.tesc.edu and clicking on "Professional Certificates" or e-mail spcs@tesc.edu to receive updates.

For more information about the online Professional Certificate in Paralegal Studies, contact the Information Center at (888) 442-8372.


ABOUT THE SCHOOL OF PROFESSIONAL AND CONTINUING STUDIES

The School of Professional and Continuing Studies at Thomas Edison State College offers a broad array of high-quality professional certificates, seminars, workshops and other noncredit programs specifically designed for the working adult to develop and enhance knowledge, skills and competencies in the workplace. In addition to programs available for individual enrollment, the School works with corporations, government agencies and nonprofit organizations to develop customized professional development programs.

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