

# PARALEGAL STUDIES

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# WELCOME TO THE PARALEGAL STUDIES PROGRAM

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The Paralegal Studies program is designed to prepare students for positions as paralegals in the legal and business fields. Individuals who are already employed in the legal field (other than attorneys and paraprofessionals) and seeking advancement opportunities may also select this program of study.



# WHAT IS A PARALEGAL?

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Paralegals work under the supervision of an attorney and their work includes preparing legal documents, researching and compiling information, and communicating with clients. Excellent written and oral communication skills, as well as computer literacy skills, are important to the paralegal.

Paralegals cannot: (i) Argue cases in court; (2) give legal advice to clients; or (iii) render legal opinions.



# WHERE DO PARALEGALS WORK?

Paralegals are very important parts of the legal services delivery system. They are needed in:

- Law Offices
- Bar Associations
- Government Agencies
- Courts
- Business organization legal departments
- Nonprofit organizations legal departments
- Legal Aid Societies
- Public Defenders Offices



# THE PARALEGAL AAS PROGRAM

## Facts About the Yavapai College Paralegal AAS Program:

- **Credit Hours Required: 61**
- **This degree is primarily designed to prepare students for direct employment. Students who are preparing to transfer to a baccalaureate degree-granting institution for an advanced degree in paralegal studies should contact an academic advisor for assistance in establishing an educational plan.**
- **This program can be completed entirely online. Not all general education options or program electives are offered online, however there will be a variety of online classes from which to choose in order to meet the requirements.**



# THE COURSES

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The Paralegal Studies AAS Program is designed to afford the student with an Associates Degree with a major in legal studies. The Program consists of three types of courses, with a minimum of 61 course credits:

1. General Education Requirements – 19 Credits
2. Program Requirements – 27 Credits
3. Elective Courses – 15 Credits

# LEGAL STUDIES AAS COURSES

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## General Education Requirements – 19 Credits

- 6 Credits: College Composition or Applied Communications
- 3 Credits: College Mathematics
- 6 Credits: Arts and Humanities and/or Social and Behavioral Science
- 4 Credits: Physical and Biological Science

# LEGAL STUDIES AAS COURSES

## AAS Specific Program Course Requirements – 27 Credits

- 3 Credits: Microsoft Office for Windows
- 3 Credits: Introduction to Paralegal Studies
- 3 Credits: Legal Computer Applications
- 3 Credits: Ethics and the Law
- 3 Credits: Contracts
- 3 Credits: Legal Research and Writing I
- 3 Credits: Legal Research and Writing II
- 3 Credits: Civil Tort Litigation I
- 3 Credits: Civil Tort Litigation II





# LEGAL STUDIES AAS COURSES

## AAS Program Electives– 15 Credits

- 3 Credits: Criminal Law
- 3 Credits: Criminal Procedure
- 3 Credits: Constitutional Law
- 3 Credits: Wills, Trusts and Probate
- 3 Credits: Law Office Management
- 3 Credits: Real Estate Law
- 3 Credits: Family Law
- 3 Credits: Business Organizations
- 3 Credits: Evidence
- 3 Credits: Administrative Law
- 3 Credits: LP Specialty Area Training



# THE PARALEGAL AAS PROGRAM

**Goals: Upon successful completion of the program, you will be able to:**

- **Interview witnesses; interact with clients; conduct investigative work; manage cases; perform legal research; prepare legal documents; be knowledgeable in many areas of the law**
- **Apply written, oral and interpersonal skills in legal settings**
- **Understand and be proficient in legal technology and software used in legal settings**
- **Be aware of legal ethics and the Code of Professional Responsibility**
- **Be capable of taking the Legal Paraprofessional exam(s) if you are interested in becoming a Legal Paraprofessional**



# THE PARALEGAL CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

## Facts About the Yavapai College Paralegal Certificate Program:

- **Credit Hours Required: 30**
- **This degree is for students who already have an Associates Degree but need additional courses to practice as a paralegal or as a Legal Paraprofessional.**
- **This degree is primarily designed to prepare students positions as paralegals and Legal Paraprofessionals in the legal and business fields.**
- **This program can be completed entirely online. Not all general education options or program electives are offered online, however there will be a variety of online classes from which to choose in order to meet the requirements.**



# LEGAL STUDIES PARALEGAL CERTIFICATE COURSES

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## Specific Certificate Program Course Requirements – 24 Credits

- 3 Credits: Introduction to Paralegal Studies
- 3 Credits: Legal Computer Applications
- 3 Credits: Ethics and the Law
- 3 Credits: Contracts
- 3 Credits: Legal Research and Writing I
- 3 Credits: Legal Research and Writing II
- 3 Credits: Civil Tort Litigation I
- 3 Credits: Civil Tort Litigation II



# LEGAL STUDIES PARALEGAL CERTIFICATE COURSES

## Certificate Program Electives– 6 Credits

- 3 Credits: Criminal Law
- 3 Credits: Criminal Procedure
- 3 Credits: Neuroscience and the Law
- 3 Credits: Constitutional Law
- 3 Credits: Wills, Trusts and Probate
- 3 Credits: Law Office Management
- 3 Credits: Real Estate Law
- 3 Credits: Family Law
- 3 Credits: Business Organizations
- 3 Credits: Administrative Law
- 3 Credits: Evidence
- 3 Credits: LP Specialty Area Training



# THE PARALEGAL CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

**Goals: Upon successful completion of the program, you will be able to:**

- Interview witnesses; interact with clients; conduct investigative work; manage cases; perform legal research; prepare legal documents; be knowledgeable in many areas of the law
- Apply written, oral and interpersonal skills in legal settings
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# THE NEW ARIZONA RULES ON BECOMING A LEGAL PARAPROFESSIONAL

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The State of Arizona, through the addition of Section 7-210 to the Arizona Code of Judicial Administration, has become the first state in the United States to license qualified paralegals to become a “LEGAL PARAPROFESSIONAL.”



# WHAT IS A LEGAL PARAPROFESSIONAL

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A Legal Paraprofessional is an individual licensed to provide legal services without the supervision of an attorney in the area or areas of the law that the individual becomes qualified.

In other words, a Legal Professional is permitted to practice law!



# HOW DO YOU QUALIFY TO BE A LEGAL PARAPROFESSIONAL?

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## General Requirements:

1. Must be a citizen of the United States
2. Must be fingerprinted and undergo a background check
3. Must be at least 21 years of age
4. Must be of good moral character and be vetted for character and fitness
5. Must comply with all the laws and rules applicable to Legal Paraprofessionals in Arizona
6. **Must successfully pass the examination for each area of practice in which they seek licensure**



# HOW DO YOU QUALIFY TO BE A LEGAL PARAPROFESSIONAL?

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Those seeking licensure as a Legal Paraprofessional must either:

1. Meet the education requirements; or
2. Meet the work experience requirements



# HOW DO YOU QUALIFY TO BE A LEGAL PARAPROFESSIONAL?

The Education Requirements can be met in a number of ways:

1. **Possess an associate-level degree in paralegal studies, or in another major plus a certificate in paralegal studies, in each case in a program either approved by the American Bar Association or which is accredited by an educational agency recognized by the US Department of Education or the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA).**
2. Possess a 4-year bachelor's degree for an accredited college or university that has been approved by the Arizona Supreme Court
3. Complete a certification program endorsed by the Arizona Judicial Council
4. Possess a Master of Legal Studies from an accredited law school
5. Possess a Juris Doctor from an accredited law school.



# HOW DO YOU QUALIFY TO BE A LEGAL PARAPROFESSIONAL?

To practice **Family Law or Civil Litigation**, you need a minimum of 24 semester units in legal specialization courses, of which a minimum must be in the following areas:

1. Family Law - 3 credits
2. Civil Procedure – 6 credits
3. Evidence - 3 credits
4. Legal Research and Writing – 3 credits
5. Professional Responsibility (Ethics) – 3 credits

You must all satisfy the following professional practice requirements:

- a. You also need 120 hours of experiential learning either (i) under the supervision of an attorney that includes content on advocacy, or (ii) in the classroom, such as a Moot Court competition or similar experiential course.
- b. One year of substantive law-related experience under the supervision of an attorney in the area of specialization **BEFORE** you can sit for the LP examination.



# HOW DO YOU QUALIFY TO BE A LEGAL PARAPROFESSIONAL?

To practice **Criminal Law**, you need a minimum of 24 semester units in legal specialization courses, of which a minimum must be in the following areas:

1. Criminal Law - 3 credits
2. Evidence - 3 credits
3. Legal Research and Writing – 3 credits
4. Professional Responsibility (Ethics) – 3 credits

You must all satisfy the following professional practice requirements:

- a. You also need 120 hours of experiential learning either (i) under the supervision of an attorney that includes content on advocacy, or (ii) in the classroom, such as a Moot Court competition or similar experiential course.
- b. One year of substantive law-related experience under the supervision of an attorney in the area of specialization BEFORE you can sit for the LP examination.



# HOW DO YOU QUALIFY TO BE A LEGAL PARAPROFESSIONAL?

To practice **Administrative Law**, you need a minimum of 24 semester units in legal specialization courses, of which a minimum must be in the following areas:

1. Administrative Law - 3 credits
2. Evidence - 3 credits
3. Legal Research and Writing – 3 credits
4. Professional Responsibility (Ethics) – 3 credits

You must all satisfy the following professional practice requirements:

- a. You also need 120 hours of experiential learning either (i) under the supervision of an attorney that includes content on advocacy, or (ii) in the classroom, such as a Moot Court competition or similar experiential course.
- b. One year of substantive law-related experience under the supervision of an attorney in the area of specialization **BEFORE** you can sit for the LP examination.



# HOW DO YOU QUALIFY TO BE A LEGAL PARAPROFESSIONAL?

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The Experience Requirements (in lieu of the Education Requirements) are met one if you:

1. Have completed seven (7) years of full-time substantive law-related experience within the last 10 years
2. For licensing in Family Law, Civil Practice or Criminal Practice, 2 years of substantive experience in that area
3. For licensing in Landlord-Tenant Law, Debt Collection, or Administrative Law, 2 years of substantive experience in that area



# HOW DO YOU QUALIFY TO BE A LEGAL PARAPROFESSIONAL?

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Whether you meet the Education Requirements or the Experience Requirements, you must also:

Within a year of being licensed, complete the state bar course on professionalism



# WHAT SERVICES CAN BE PERFORMED BY A LEGAL PARAPROFESSIONAL?

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A Legal Paraprofessional may, without an attorney's supervision:

1. Prepare and sign legal documents
2. Provide specific advice, opinions and recommendations about possible legal rights, remedies, defenses options or strategies
3. Draft and file documents, including pleadings, motions, discovery, orders, and arrange for service of process
4. Appear before a court or tribunal, mediation, arbitration, and settlement conferences (unless prohibited by the particular forum)
5. Negotiate legal rights and responsibilities of a client



# LEGAL PARAPROFESSIONAL PRACTICE AREAS

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## Family Law:

Legal Paraprofessionals may represent parties in domestic disputes, including the following services if you meet the following additional requirements as may be established by the Arizona Supreme Court:

1. Preparation of a Qualified Domestic Relations Order (QDRO) and supplemental orders respecting retirement assets
2. Division or conveyance of formal business entities or commercial property
3. Make appeals to the Arizona Court of Appeals or the Arizona Supreme Court



# LEGAL PARAPROFESSIONAL PRACTICE AREAS

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## **Limited Jurisdiction Civil:**

Legal Paraprofessionals may engage in authorized services in any civil matter that is or may be before a municipal or justice court in the State of Arizona.

## **Limited Jurisdiction Criminal:**

Legal Paraprofessionals may engage in authorized services in criminal misdemeanor actions before a municipal or justice court in the State of Arizona where, upon conviction, either by law or agreement, the client will serve no jail time.



# LEGAL PARAPROFESSIONAL PRACTICE AREAS

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## **Administrative Law:**

Legal Paraprofessionals may engage in authorized services before any administrative agency that permits it. Legal Paraprofessionals are not authorized to represent any party in an appeal of the decision of the administrative agency, except to file the notice of appeal. Legal Paraprofessionals are not authorized to represent any attorney or other Legal Paraprofessional before the court, the presiding disciplinary judge, or a hearing panel.

# LEGAL PARAPROFESSIONAL DESIGNATION

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**Once qualified as a Legal Paraprofessional, the Legal Paraprofessional may include the following, along with the person's license number, on all documents:**

- 1. Arizona Legal Paraprofessional**
- 2. LP**



# THE PARALEGAL STUDIES PROGRAMS

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**The Yavapai College Paralegal AAS Program and the Paralegal Certification Program are each designed to qualify under Arizona law to allow the graduate to meet the educational requirements to become a Legal Paraprofessional in the State of Arizona**



# THE PARALEGAL STUDIES PROGRAMS

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**CONGRATULATE YOURSELVES ON CHOOSING AN EXCITING AND REWARDING AREA OF STUDY AND CAREER, WHICH ENRICHES THE LIVES OF MANY AND PROMOTES SOCIAL JUSTICE.**



# THE PARALEGAL STUDIES PROGRAM

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AT YAVAPAI COLLEGE, OUR GOAL IS TO DO OUR PROFESSIONAL  
BEST TO MAKE YOU YOUR PROFESSIONAL BEST

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

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