



## LEGAL STUDIES/PARALEGAL INTERNSHIP INFORMATION & REQUIRED FORMS

### **Legal Studies/Paralegal Associate Degree Program & Legal Studies/Paralegal Post-Baccalaureate Diploma**

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MADISON AREA TECHNICAL COLLEGE

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# LEGAL STUDIES/PARALEGAL INTERNSHIPS INFORMATION & REQUIRED FORMS

## INTRODUCTION

Career Building Techniques (10-110-176) and Legal Studies/Paralegal Internship (10-110-142) are required courses for all Legal Studies/Paralegal Associate Degree students and all Legal Studies/Paralegal Post-Baccalaureate One-Year Diploma students.

Career Building Techniques is designed to prepare students for their internship and employment, and Legal Studies/Paralegal Internship is designed to enhance a legal studies/paralegal student's total academic experience through a period of observation, study, and participation in a law firm, governmental agency, or other law-related organization. Legal Studies/Paralegal Internship is the capstone to a legal studies/paralegal student's academic experience.

Prospective students benefit greatly from the opportunity to observe and work with practitioners in the field. Internships provide students with the opportunity to apply concepts and principles learned in the classroom, to network with professionals in the legal community, and to analyze on-the-job experiences considering academic learning.

If you are enrolled in the Legal Studies/Paralegal Program, you should become thoroughly familiar with the materials provided here.

## APPLICATION MATERIALS

The required application packet materials are prepared as part of the Career Building Techniques course and include:

- Writing Samples. The writing samples should be clean copies of your work. The Career Building Techniques Blackboard Site has the E-portfolio assignment which outlines the required writing samples.
- Current Resume.
- Cover Letters. Prepare a cover letter to be sent to each of the site offices to which you plan to apply. A typical cover letter includes an introductory paragraph introducing yourself, a paragraph explaining why you are interested in securing a placement at the specific site office, and a final paragraph requesting an interview with the office at a time convenient for the office.

## GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR APPLICANTS

To be eligible for the Legal Studies/Paralegal Internship course (10-110-142) and site placement, you must have completed the following courses in the Legal Studies/Paralegal Program, all with grades of at least a "C": Introduction to Law; Civil Litigation 1; Legal Research; and Career Building Techniques. It is strongly suggested that students complete Legal Writing prior to Internship. However, students who have not yet completed Legal Writing may enroll in Legal Writing and take this concurrently with Internship. Students who have not previously completed Legal Writing or are not concurrently enrolled in Legal Writing will not be permitted to enroll in the Internship course without written permission from the Program Director.

Some firms and agencies enforce standards requiring background and records checks. Consequently, you may be required to authorize related investigations and checks as a condition of acceptance.

It is also important to be aware that it is common for hiring managers to check out prospective employees, including interns, online. Begin now to manage your online presence or risk being on the do-not-call list. Know that offices are routinely online searching applicants, and digital dirt can quickly take you out of the running.

## PLACEMENT OPTIONS

Students secure their own internship placements. Internship placement involves a competitive process in which students apply and interview for positions in area law firms, agencies, and organizations. A roster of placement sites that have taken Madison College interns in the past is available on the Career Building Techniques and Legal Studies/Paralegal Internship Blackboard sites. However, students are encouraged to contact law firms, agencies, and organizations not on the list, but which practice in the areas in which the student is interested. Each semester, we have students at sites not on the roster who are pleased to have our interns.

## FAQ'S

### *1. Will I be paid for my internship hours?*

Most internships are unpaid. However, if the site offers to pay you (or you do your internship at your place of employment), this is fine. The Internship Site Agreement will indicate whether your placement is paid or unpaid.

### *2. What should I expect in my internship interview?*

The foremost rule to remember in an interview is to relax and be confident. Be a good communicator. You will practice interviewing in the Career Building Techniques course. The interview is a good opportunity for you to let the firm know that you are a capable and knowledgeable person, even though you may not have had actual job experience in a legal environment. Emphasize what you have learned in Legal Research and Legal Writing, and your other legal specialty classes. Take writing samples or your e-portfolio URL with you to the interview and offer them even if they are not requested. The interview is also the appropriate time for you to discuss specific tasks and projects you would have as an intern. If at the time of the interview you are accepted, you may wish to complete the Internship Site Agreement and Confidentiality Agreement before leaving. These must be submitted to and executed by your Internship instructor before you can begin your site hours.

### *3. What should I expect during the internship?*

Above all else, remember that you are involved with a professional team delivering quality legal services to real people. The goal of the internship is to give you an orientation and exposure to how a legal setting operates. You should conduct yourself and dress professionally. If you have a cell phone, keep it in your purse or bag, turned off, during the hours that you are on site. Confidentiality cannot be overemphasized. As an intern, you are bound by this rule just as are the attorneys, paralegals, and other employees of the site. You should receive an orientation to the office so that you are comfortable being there. If this is not offered to you, politely ask for it. You should have a clear understanding of the lines of communication between yourself and others in the office, e.g., to whom you are accountable, from whom you will receive projects, where to go with your questions, etc. Initiative and self-starting are essential qualities for paralegals, but do not be afraid to ask questions when necessary. Most attorneys and paralegals enjoy the opportunity to "teach" you. They would prefer to answer questions about your assigned projects at the beginning or while it is in progress, rather than to end up with an unsatisfactory work product, which in turn leads to frustration for the attorney and you, as well as reflecting negatively on our interns in general. Although initiative and self-starting are important, you must always also keep in mind that everything you do in the office should have attorney approval and supervision. Thus, do not undertake tasks on your own without prior approval. Remember the prohibition against the unauthorized practice of law. Do not expect to receive assignments or requests in writing from your

supervisor, as you are used to written assignments in your classes. Most instructions are given orally; this will help your listening and communication skills. Try to get experience in as many paralegal tasks as possible, but keep in mind that because your time is limited, you may not get to do everything you would like to. The firm that takes you on as an intern is not compensated for its time in mentoring you and supervising your work. Your supervisors provide a valuable teaching service for you. Do not forget to thank the attorneys and staff for giving you the opportunity to learn.

#### *4. What tasks and soft skills should be expected of a Madison College intern?*

##### Legal Studies/Paralegal Interns – Tasks

- Proof documents
- Organize electronic and hard copy documents and files
- Cite check documents for Bluebook compliance and currency of sources
- Perform legal research, both electronic and hard copy
- Perform fact research
- Prepare IRAC research memoranda
- Prepare correspondence
- Assist in the preparation of legal documents
- Conduct client intakes
- Perform interviews
- Prepare written office procedures for tasks given
- Update library resources
- Work competently in Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Adobe
- Work with office devices (copier/printer/scanner/fax/telephones)
- Docket and meet deadlines
- Keyboarding speed of at least 50wpm
- Assist site supervisor or other designated person with other tasks as requested

##### Legal Studies/Paralegal Interns – Soft Skills

- Strong work ethic
- Arrives on time and stays until work is completed
- Contacts site ahead of time if arrival may be delayed or in event of an absence
- Works independently and as part of a team
- Initiates requests for additional work
- Assists supervisor in problem solving
- Asks questions as needed
- Does not whine or complain
- Does not engage in office politics
- Upholds standards of confidentiality
- Upholds standards of office professionalism

#### *5. How many hours do I have to work to satisfy the Internship course requirement?*

A minimum of 140 on-site hours of legal studies/paralegal work is required. This work must be supervised, although each of the 140 hours need not be completed on-site. Hours spent in the law library, in court, in the field doing interviews, at the clerk of courts office, for example, count toward your hours.

#### *6. I already work at a legal setting. Can I serve my internship there?*

Generally, yes.

*7. If I already work full time, how do I do an internship?*

Experience has shown that 10-12 hours per week, in the form of one long day and one-half day (or two 6-hour days), over the course of a semester, will be needed for a successful internship. Block this time for internship or taking the class when you can do so.

*8. Will I be graded on my performance as an intern?*

Yes. You will be evaluated by your site supervisor, and you will have the opportunity to evaluate the site.

*9. What are the Site Agreement and Confidentiality Agreement?*

The Internship Site Agreement and Confidentiality Agreement are completed and signed by you and your site supervisor after you discuss your projected activities. These agreements are then submitted to your Internship instructor prior to commencement of the internship. You will not be allowed to begin your internship hours prior to approval of these agreements by your Internship instructor. These agreements are part of this Handbook. Students are reminded that every piece of information concerning clients, whether it is written or unwritten, which comes to their attention during their internship must be treated with the utmost confidentiality. If this confidentiality is not observed strictly, the result will not only be extremely injurious to the client, but it may also subject the lawyer to possible disciplinary action for breach of the Rules of Professional Responsibility.

*10. What are the 35 Hour Reports?*

Interns are required to prepare detailed, typed reports of work performed at the site office using the 35 Hour Reports form. 35 Hour Reports are submitted after every 35 hours of your Internship. Do not use client names or identifying information on the 35 Hour Reports. Remember the rule on confidentiality. Your Internship instructors are not part of the legal team, and thus should not see or hear such information. Note that your 35 Hour Reports do not have to be reviewed and approved by your site supervisor prior to submission.

*11. What is the site visit and when will the site visit occur?*

Your Internship instructor will at some point during the semester (usually after about 70 hours of Internship) visit with you and your supervisor at the internship site to do an interim progress evaluation. The intern is to coordinate this visit.

*12. What are the course requirements for the Internship (10-110-142) class?*

Internship students are responsible for the following:

- Internship Site Agreement (Signed by all parties – Contains intern's site schedule – Contained in this Handbook)
- Internship Confidentiality Agreement (Signed by all parties – Contained in this Handbook)
- 35 Hour Report: Detailed timekeeping of 140 site hours
- Written Exit Report by Intern: A final written report must be submitted to your Internship instructor. The typed report should be double-spaced and not more than 4 pages in length. This report gives the intern the opportunity to reflect on the experience and allows evaluation by the Internship instructors. The report will not be shared with your supervising attorney or with others at the internship site without your consent. The final report should be in narrative form and must include the following points:
  - a. Summarize the types of cases, projects, and issues you handled. If there were one or more cases which were especially interesting or involved, you may wish to discuss those in more detail.

- b. Your thoughts on whether you were adequately prepared for the internship. Which parts of the Legal Studies/Paralegal curriculum were most valuable? Were there courses you wish you would have taken before doing the internship? Were there courses you took outside of the Legal Studies/Paralegal curriculum which were especially helpful?
  - c. What changes do you plan to make in the remainder of your Legal Studies/Paralegal education, if any, because of having had your internship experience?
  - d. What suggestions, if any, do you have for changes in the Legal Studies/Paralegal program, or specifically in the internship course?
  - e. What are your observations about the use of paralegals (or those with similar titles) as professional members of the legal services delivery team in the office where you worked?
  - f. How would you evaluate your supervising attorney/paralegal? Did that person provide you with a good experience? If you worked more directly with other office staff person, answer the same questions as to that person. Would you recommend your internship site to other students? Explain.
  - g. Discuss the impact of the internship on your choice of legal studies/paralegal as a career.
  - h. Any other comments, suggestions, or observations that you wish to convey to your Internship instructor. They will be much appreciated.
- Intern's Feedback Form (Contained in this Handbook)
  - Confirmation of the submission by the site supervisor of the Madison College Paralegal Internship Site Supervisor Evaluation of intern completed through Survey Monkey – The URL will be provided each semester on the Internship Blackboard Site

# CAREER BUILDING TECHNIQUES COURSE NUMBER 10-110-176

## COURSE OUTLINE

Title and Description: Career Building Techniques

This course will focus on internship and career strategies; effective portfolios; resumes; and cover letters; the internship experience; interview techniques; finding an internship site including sites for students interested in receiving the Program's International Certificate; job hunting resources and alternative career paths; strategies for success in the work place; advancing in your career; and getting your next job.

Credits: 2-Credit Course (36 contact hours) Required Course – Associate Degree and Post- Baccalaureate Diploma

Course Competencies:

1. Gain practical insight into the “real world” of a law office or other legal setting
2. Discuss the duties of paralegal in a professional setting
3. Demonstrate competency regarding law office policies and procedures
4. Assemble a portfolio suitable for use in job searches
5. Create a resume and template cover letter suitable for use in job searches
6. Demonstrate effective job interviewing skills
7. Expand personal networks within the legal community
8. Identify potential internship sites



# LEGAL STUDIES/PARALEGAL INTERNSHIP COURSE NUMBER 10-110-142

## COURSE OUTLINE

Title and Description: Legal Studies/Paralegal Internship

Students gain practical experience working in a legal environment under the supervision of an attorney or other qualified professional for a minimum of 140 hours.

In order for this course to count toward the International Certificate issued by the Madison College Legal Studies/Paralegal Program, a student must intern at least 70 hours at a site where s/he is involved in international matters as determined by the Internship instructor in consultation with the student's site supervisor.

Credits: 3-Credit Course (140 site hours) Required Course – Associate Degree and Post- Baccalaureate Diploma

Course Competencies:

1. Secure an internship site placement
2. Demonstrate effective legal writing skills in a legal environment
3. Demonstrate effective oral communication skills in a legal environment
4. Demonstrate effective use of technology in a legal environment
5. Demonstrate ethical behavior in a legal environment

Outside Written Assignments:

1. "35 Hour Reports" detailing and documenting the student's work (140 hours) at their internship site
2. Discussion Board assignments
3. Site Supervisor's Evaluation of Intern
4. Intern's Written Exit Report
5. Intern's Feedback Form
6. Professional Portfolio

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## Internship Site Agreement

\_\_\_\_\_ (Internship Site) agrees to accept \_\_\_\_\_ (Student Intern) at its place of business as a Legal Studies/Paralegal Intern for at least 140 hours to be completed at such times and hours as are mutually agreed to by the Internship Site and the Student Intern. The following stipulations are understood and will be part of this agreement.

1. The Student Intern is at least 18 years of age, enrolled in the Legal Studies/Paralegal Internship course, and is in good standing at Madison Area Technical College.
2. A definite time schedule for completion of the internship is planned and will be supervised. A copy of the tentative site hours schedule is attached to this Agreement.
3. Observation and assistance in this extended classroom experience are considered part of the educational program. Specific obligations of the Instructor-Coordinator are outlined on a page attached to and made part of this Agreement.
4. The Student Intern agrees to perform to the best of his/her ability, to abide by all rules of ethics and confidentiality of the legal profession, and to conform to the policies of the internship site and the standards of conduct required of students at Madison Area Technical College. Specific obligations of the Student Intern are outlined on a page attached to and made part of this Agreement.
5. The Internship Site agrees to cooperate with the Instructor-Coordinator to offer verified training experiences and confer with the Instructor-Coordinator at periodic intervals to report on the Student Intern's performance. Specific obligations of the Internship Site are outlined on a page attached to and made part of this agreement.
6. The Student Intern is not an employee of Madison Area Technical College.
7. The Student Intern is /is not an employee of the Internship Site.
8. If the Internship Site chooses to pay the Student Intern for internship hours worked, the Internship Site will provide the Student Intern with a written agreement stipulating the rate of pay.
9. The Student Intern acknowledges that Madison Area Technical College does not provide workers compensation coverage in the event of injury.
10. The Internship Site is under no obligation to offer part or full-time employment to the Student Intern prior to or after graduation. The Student Intern is under no obligation to the Internship Site after completion of the internship.

Student Intern: \_\_\_\_\_ Name

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_ (Signature)

Site Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_ Name

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_ (Signature)

Instructor Coordinator: Norma J. Kropp

Address: Madison Area Technical College 1701 Wright Street Madison, WI 53704-2599

Phone: 608.246.6520

e-mail: nkropp @madisoncollege.edu

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_ (Signature)

Internship Schedule

Day/Hours	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENT INTERN

As the Student Intern begins interning at the Internship Site, the Student Intern is expected to assume, as much as possible, the role of a regular staff member. The responsibilities include:

1. Adhering to scheduled work hours, policies, procedures, and rules governing professional staff behavior.
2. Adhering to company policies governing the observation of confidentiality and the handling of confidential information.
3. Assuming personal and professional responsibilities for his/her actions and activities.
4. Maintaining professional relationships with company employees and customers/clients.
5. Utilizing a courteous, enthusiastic, open-minded, critical approach to policies and procedures within the profession.
6. Relating and applying knowledge acquired in the academic setting to the Internship Site setting.
7. Developing self-awareness regarding attitudes, values, and behavior patterns.
8. Preparing for and utilizing conferences and other opportunities of learning afforded by the Internship Site.
9. Being consistent and punctual in the submission of all work assignments to the site supervisor and the Instructor-Coordinator.
10. Providing the Instructor-Coordinator with periodic progress reports, both written and oral.
11. Timely notifying the Site Supervisor and Instructor-Coordinator of absences and tardiness.
12. Participating in any scheduled internship group sessions and completing course projects.

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF SITE SUPERVISOR

It is the responsibility of the Site Supervisor to provide direct, on-the-job supervision of the Student Intern which includes the following:

1. Identifying work activities which will be provided for the Student Intern.
2. Providing legal studies/paralegal appropriate work experience for a minimum of 140 hours.
3. Orienting the Student Intern to the Internship Site's structure and operations.
4. Orienting the Student Intern to the Internship Site's policies and procedures regarding appropriate dress, work hours, reporting absences from work, etc.
5. Introducing the Student Intern to the appropriate professional and clerical staff.
6. Providing the Student Intern with adequate resources to accomplish job assignments.
7. Affording the Student Intern, the opportunity to identify with the Site Supervisor as a professional staff person by jointly participating in meetings, conferences, projects, and other functions.
8. Assigning and supervising the completion of tasks and responsibilities that are consistent with the Student Intern's role at the Internship Site.
9. Consulting the Instructor-Coordinator in the event the Site Supervisor becomes aware of personal, communication, or other problems that are disrupting the Student Intern's learning and performance.
10. Providing scheduled meetings to discuss the behavior assessment and final evaluation of the Student Intern with the Student Intern.
11. Completing a behavior assessment and final evaluation of the Student Intern's performance and personal behavior.

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF INSTRUCTOR-COORDINATOR

The Instructor-Coordinator assumes overall responsibility for consultation with the Internship Site and the Student Intern on objectives, agreements, and other job-related tasks. The Instructor-Coordinator is available

to the Student Intern in an advisory capacity with respect to assisting the Student Intern to achieve the stated objectives of the internship. The role of the Instructor- Coordinator involves:

1. Verifying the Student Intern's eligibility to enroll in the Paralegal Internship course.
2. Orienting and introducing the Student Intern to the nature and purpose of the internship.
3. Orienting and introducing the Site Supervisor to the purpose and objectives of the internship.
4. Consulting with the Site Supervisor and the Student Intern as necessary regarding the Student Intern's performance.
5. Assuming responsibility for the removal of a Student Intern from the Internship Site whenever necessary.
6. Assuming responsibility for assigning the final grade for the internship course.
7. Implementing program improvements per Student Intern and/or Site Supervisor input.

**MADISON AREA TECHNICAL COLLEGE  
LEGAL STUDIES/PARALEGAL INTERNSHIP**

**STUDENT INTERN CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT**

\_\_\_\_\_ Student Intern has agreed to complete an internship at the office of \_\_\_\_\_, Internship Site. Legal work performed at this office is sensitive in nature and strictly confidential. As part of the Internship Agreement, the Student Intern agrees to hold legal information, procedures, client lists, and client information inviolate and not to disclose by words, actions, or intimation any information learned at the office of the internship.

The Student Intern understands that such disclosure is a violation of federal and state privacy laws and is punishable by criminal penalties. In addition, failure to abide by this confidentiality agreement subjects the student to disciplinary action as outlined in the Madison Area Technical College Student Code of Conduct.

\_\_\_\_\_ (Student)

Date \_\_\_\_\_



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4) Would you recommend this internship placement to other students? Why or why not?

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5) Do you have any advice for other students who are going to be completing the Legal Studies/Paralegal internship?

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6) Do you have any suggestions for improving the Legal Studies/Paralegal Internship course at Madison College?

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7) Which of your courses did you find to be most helpful during your internship?

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8) Is there any other course work or training which you did not have, and which would have been helpful to you during your internship? If yes, please describe.

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9) Would you be willing to discuss your internship experience with other students?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Can this feedback form be made available to assist other students who are choosing an internship site?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

\_\_\_\_\_ Signature of Student Intern \_\_\_\_\_ Date Signed