

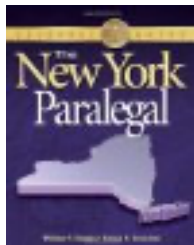


Of The City University of New York
500 Grand Concourse Bronx, N. Y. 10451

Introduction to the Legal System LEG 101

FACULTY	<i>Professor:</i>	Amy Ramson
	<i>Office:</i>	Room
	<i>Office Hours:</i>	TBD and by appointment
CATALOG DESCRIPTION	<i>Phone:</i>	(718) 518- 6568(<i>direct</i>) or <i>secretary</i> Karla Santos 718 518 6781
	<i>E-mail:</i>	aramson@hostos.cuny.edu
COURSE MEETINGS	The student will study the legal system including the organization of the courts, civil and criminal procedures and an overview of the law of torts, crimes, and the U.S. constitution, The three legal concentrations of Family Law, Public Employee Benefit Law, and Immigration Law will be introduced.	
	<i>Co-requisite:</i>	ENG 91 or 110

**REQUIRED
TEXT**



The New York Paralegal by William Statsky and Robert A. Sarachan , 2011

ISBN: 13-1-4180-1302-8

Cengage Learning

The textbook is available in the bookstore and used copies may be purchased at various sites. All supplemental material is on our Blackboard site.

You will have three exams and two projects. Test 1 and Test 2 are not cumulative. The final consists of one of the exams which is cumulative and one of the projects. Exams are in fact pattern analysis form.

1. FIRST PROJECT: A persuasive paper and oral presentation based upon said paper:

Students will create a bill which they would like to see enacted into law in one of the three areas of law: immigration (federal), family (state) or criminal law (state). Students will research the field of law using Lexis-Nexis and other appropriate databases. Students will write a two-page persuasive paper and will orally present the paper in class. (10 minute presentation-answer questions).

Required:

3. SECOND PROJECT: part of the final. Participation in service-learning project. Development of Power point reflective presentation and presentation to class. See below under SERVICE LEARNING

GRADING CRITERIA:	• Service Learning experience and reflective presentation: 20%	A	93 –100
	• Persuasive paper and presentation 10%	A-	90-92
	• Test 1 20 %	B+	87 – 89
	• Test 2 20 %	B	83 – 86
	• Final 30 %	B-	80 – 82
	• Attendance and Completion of written assignments are required	C+	77 – 79
		C	70 – 76
		D	60 –69
		F	59-00

TOPICS:	1. The Constitution-supremacy and concepts
	2. Paralegal functions
	3. Legal jargon
	4. Overview of the three branches of government – chart to be completed as assignment
	5. The Judicial branch in depth
	6. Appellate and trial courts
	7. <u>Marbury v. Madison</u>
	8. Federal Courts-three levels
	9. State courts-Unified Court System
	10. Laws and hierarchy of laws
	11. Attorneys and courts
	12. How to start a law suit in NYS civil and criminal
	13. Legal Citation-overview
	14. How to brief a case-overview
	15. Trip to Law library
	16. Library Class on Lexis-Nexis
	17. Specific areas of law: family law, immigration law, and criminal law.
	18. Reflection exercises

DISCIPLINE RELATED STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES	1. Critically think and learn how to reflect;
	2. Be detail oriented;
	3. Write in an organized and logical manner;
	4. Present (oral and written) a persuasive argument based upon legal authority;
	5. Be exposed to legal citation;

6. Be exposed to the law library;
7. Know basic legal jargon and basic concepts in law;
8. Be exposed to diverse areas of law;
9. Know basic NYS civil procedure-bringing a lawsuit;
10. Learn about the judiciary both federal and NYS courts;
11. Examine the principles and import of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights;
12. Ponder the place of the attorney and paralegal in the American justice system;
13. Explore the need for legal representation for unrepresented and the obligation of the attorney and paralegal
14. Begin to examine the moral and ethical dilemmas faced by attorneys and paralegals;
15. Begin to examine the dilemma of unrepresented litigants
16. Learn about the how the Constitution created a society in which individual rights are paramount;
17. Learn about how the judicial system was established to try to ascertain truth between parties with judge as neutral; and
18. Learn how judicial decisions grapple with and try to solve dilemmas of individuals/groups in society.
19. Learn how to critically reflect
20. Undertake a service learning project

GENERAL EDUCATION CATEGORY

A: SKILLS

This category addresses fluency in reading, writing, and oral communication, mastery of the basic principles of logical, mathematical, and scientific reasoning and literacy in information resources and learning technologies.

A2. Develop the acts of speaking, reading, listening, and writing; demonstrate the act of speaking and synthesizing information correctly and effectively with the ability to use context-appropriate vocabulary and communication technology; parse lectures, text, and other educational material.

GENERAL EDUCATION STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

GENERAL EDUCATION CATEGORY C: SYNTHESIS AND APPLICATION

This category addresses logical analysis and synthesis of information and ideas from multiple sources and perspectives. The student's acquisition of knowledge should be considered, as well as the integration of different forms of knowledge and ability to apply it to the student's intellectual, personal, professional and community experience.

C3. Organize, analyze, evaluate, and treat information critically in order to use and present it in a cohesive and logical fashion.

GENERAL EDUCATION CATEGORY D: GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

This category addresses the application of the principles of ethics and governance to the larger society, one's immediate community, and to individual conduct on campus and in society. It addresses valuing the diversity of human experience and recognizing our common human heritage and the interconnectedness in the region, the nation, and the world.

D1. Demonstrate the ability to reason ethically and to apply ethical principles in making decisions.

Weeks 1-4

Assignments will be analysis of US Constitution and concepts; governmental levels and branches chart; learning the federal and NYS court systems; and legal jargon related to the Constitution and NYS civil procedure. Exam #1 will test above topics and will be in fact pattern form. Students will partake in initial reflection exercises in class.

Weeks 5-9

Assignments will be related to hierarchy of laws. Students will have assignment related to citation of cases. Statutory and case analysis will be introduced in assignments. Students will be assigned legal briefs and memoranda, to analyze a case. Assignments on civil procedure-how to start a lawsuit.

Exam #2 will test above topics in fact pattern analysis form.

COURSE OVERVIEW:

Weeks 10-14

Assignments will involve specific areas of law: immigration, family law; and criminal law. Immigration Law: students will examine immigration statutes and policy including two main rationales of family unity and needed skills; how aliens become part of American society-green cards and naturalization; intersection of immigration and law enforcement; Family Law: Topics will include two trial courts in NYC Supreme Court and Family Court and jurisdiction of courts with an emphasis on the Family Court as a court to handle problems of children and families and society. Criminal Law: Topics will include why people commit crime and how to prevent crime including societal changes and police training. Assignments about crime statistics involve learning about voluntary reporting systems; COMPSTAT, use of data to influence law making for criminal and immigration law. Analysis of crime and immigration data. Exam will cover the above topics and will be in fact pattern form.

Students will

Assignments about the role of the attorney and paralegal in society and ethical issues.

Teaching

1. Power point presentations via Blackboard

Methods:

2. Supplementary material via Blackboard
3. Classroom lectures and discussions
4. Guest lecturers to demonstrate practice
5. Library workshops
6. Reflective exercises-group and individual
7. Service learning project

Classroom Policies:

1. Attendance is 5 minutes after hour class begins. Students arriving after that time are to be marked absent.
2. Students arriving after the class has begun should enter the classroom quietly.
3. Cell phones and other electronics must be turned off or placed on "vibrate" mode when in the classroom.
4. During examinations, cell phones must be placed in a central location away from the testing area.
5. Texting is not allowed during class. Texting during class will result in student being marked absent for session.
6. Disruptive behavior may be subject to disciplinary action.
7. Students who interrupt the educational process may be dismissed from the class and referred to the Disciplinary Committee to determine if additional sanctions are warranted.

Students are expected to:**Student Responsibilities:**

- Have access to the Internet, including an active Blackboard account. Blackboard will be used for communication and posting course materials, assignments and web site links.
- Use Blackboard and keep Hostos email accounts active
- Keep Hostos email accounts accessible for new mail. Check and empty email periodically.
- Be prompt.
- Perform all lesson objectives, activities and reading assignments.
- Complete and hand in all written assignments on or before their due date.
- Demonstrate proficiency with all homework and written assignments.
- Quantity and quality of participation is factored into grade.

Examination Policies

1. No student may remove an exam from the classroom under any circumstances.
2. Exams are timed; they must be completed within the stated

time frame.

3. Students who arrive late for an exam will not receive extra time to complete the exam.
4. No credit will be given for questions left unanswered regardless of the reason.
5. Students are responsible for correctly completing all test answer sheets.
6. All requests for make-up exams will be determined by the instructor, based upon the merits of the request, on a case-by-case basis. *Submitting a request for a make-up exam does not guarantee that permission will be granted.*

Academic Dishonesty is prohibited in The City University of New York and is punishable by penalties, including failing grades, suspension, and expulsion, as provided within the College Catalogue:

http://www.hostos.cuny.edu/sdem/student_life_aip.html . Students are responsible for upholding the academic integrity of the program by not participating either directly or indirectly in acts of cheating and by discouraging others from doing so.

**Academic
Integrity:**

Students' responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the following.

No student shall:

1. Give or receive any assistance or communicate in any way with another student while an examination is in progress.
2. Use unauthorized notes, books or other materials during an examination.
3. Attempt to obtain or disseminate the content of any examination prior to its distribution by the proctor.
4. Procure or distribute answers to examinations in advance.

**Written
Assignment
Policies:**

1. Written assignments must be the product of the student's own research.
2. No student shall submit work that has been written by someone else or copied from an outside source.
3. No student shall submit work that has been previously submitted in either whole or part for academic credit. This is termed "self-plagiarism."

4. Late assignments may not be accepted; if accepted, points will be deducted.
5. Students who engage in academic dishonesty will receive a grade of zero for the assignment.
6. All violations of the academic integrity policy shall be referred to the Disciplinary Committee to determine if negative incentives or additional sanctions - including suspension or dismissal from the program - are warranted.
7. HCC Library offers workshops and provides assistance on how to avoid plagiarism.

Tutoring

The Hostos Academic Learning Center (HALC), located in C-596, is a complete learning environment that allows students to receive the academic help they need in a setting that is rich in resources and supports academic success. Throughout the academic year, HALC schedules activities that focus on the skills development of students, including tutorial support, self-guided tutorials, Basic Skills Preparatory workshops, and in-center workshops, some of which are offered through the Writing Center. There are two tutors available for the Public Administration Unit. Check the HALC website or visit C-596 to determine the hours of the tutors.

Counseling/ Accessibility Resource Center

Hostos Counseling Center offers a variety of services in English, Spanish, French and German, including individual and group counseling, crisis intervention, consultations and referrals to on- and off-campus resources. Please call (718) 518-4351 if you are in need of any counseling support.

Accessibility Resource Center. The [Americans with Disabilities Act](#) (ADA) prohibits discrimination based on disability and requires the College to be physically and programmatically accessible. Beyond the basic requirements of the ADA, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and New York State and New York City statutes, the college has created an office, Accessibility Resource Center. In order to receive services and accommodations students must identify themselves to the. The most effective way to initiate the process of assessing eligibility for accommodations is to do so prior to or during the admission process. Under the ADA, both the student and the college must carry out their

responsibilities in a timely manner, so the sooner a student self-identifies, the sooner the college can provide needed accommodations. Contact:

The main telephone number is (718) 518-4454. 718) 518-4454 (Voice/TTY)

Staff may be reached via this number or by email at the following addresses:

Ms. Maria Pantoja, Disability Accommodation Specialist mpantoja@hostos.cuny.edu

Ms. Simone Sylvester, CUNY LEADS Specialist ssylvester@hostos.cuny.edu

Mr. Marcus Knox, Assistive Technology Assistant tmknox@hostos.cuny.edu

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Service Learning: (15 hours of service)

Service Learning is a method of teaching and learning that enriches academic life and life-long learning by engaging students in meaningful hands-on service to the community while gaining valuable knowledge and skills that integrate with course objectives. Service learning focuses on critical reflective thinking and experiential learning that address local needs and foster civic responsibility. (Campus Compact)

You can choose from among three experiences in order to fulfill the 15 hours of service requirement: The time spent training is counted towards the 15 hours.

You will contact me at aramson@hostos.cuny.edu by date and I will arrange for you to be placed with one of the three community partners to provide service to that particular community organization.. Since service learning also consists of reflection. Reflection can lead to deeper knowledge and insights about your ideas and views about society. Since reflection is a skill that can be learned, we will engage in various class and individual exercises in order to develop your skill of critical reflection. You will be required to keep a journal from the time that you interact with the community organization through the time you provide your service.

1. The NYC Civil Court, Bronx County:

The Court Navigator Program is a court sponsored volunteer program available to undergraduate college students, law students and other approved volunteers who provide non-legal assistance to persons who appear in court without a lawyer, also known as unrepresented persons. Court Navigators cannot give any legal advice but they can provide information concerning various resources, assistance filling out court documents/using DIY (do-it-yourself) programs and support unrepresented persons during court proceedings/negotiations. The two areas that are available is nonpayment of rent proceedings and consumer credit card debt proceedings.

Training: All navigators must attend a 2 1/2 hour training seminar before working in the courts.

2. CUNY Citizenship Now

CUNY Citizenship Now provides free, high quality, and confidential immigration law services to help individuals and families on their path to U.S. citizenship. Our attorneys and paralegals offer one-on-one consultations to assess participants' eligibility for legal benefits and assist them in applying when qualified. We also coordinate community, educational, and volunteer initiatives to help expand opportunities for New York City's immigrant population. Depending on the semester you take LEG 101, if this is the spring semester, you would help with the CUNY/Daily News Call-In in April or you would help with the naturalization assistance events. The annual CUNY/ Daily News Citizenship NOW! Call-In helps callers with free, confidential information on immigration issues ranging from U.S. citizenship to residency to family petitions.

<http://www.cuny.edu/about/resources/citizenship/volunteer/volunteerreg-1.html>

Training: A full day of training is available at the CUNY Graduate Center. Once you register as a volunteer, you will receive an invitation to register for the training and call-in in one email.

3. NYS Family Court:

The NYC Family Court Internship Program provides experience in both the substantive and procedural areas of Family Court practice. Those areas include child protective services, child support, paternity, custody, guardianship, visitation, and family offenses. Students will assist both clerical staff and litigants with the filing of petitions, courtroom filings, and drafting of court orders. If you wish, you can continue with the Family Court as your internship site when you take LEG 240 and LEG 241.

Training: You will receive a full day of training.

Reflection exercises

Throughout the semester, you will be required to complete reflective essays and engage in discussions via the discussion board, which will guide you and help you develop critical reflection.

Journal:

Use any notebook you wish, which you can easily carry wherever you go.

Journal entries: This is an exploratory writing, a record of your reflections, activities, and progress throughout the semester. I will not look at the entries-they are for you only and should be true to you. You should make entries at least once a week and place a date on each entry. When you are performing the service learning, you should write in the journal each time you provide service. Look at the discussion board questions, and in your journals write some reactions so you can engage in the discussions.

Weeks 1-4

In class essay: Why did you choose to study paralegal studies?

Discussion board forum: Tell the class something about you that would surprise us about a hobby, interest or talent you have or an experience you had that deeply affected you.

Discussion board forum: Have you ever volunteered before? Describe your experience.

Discussion board forum: Do you know what service learning is? Which service learning experience did you choose?

Class discussion: The lack of legal representation for many communities in New York City.

Weeks 5-9

Discussion board forum: What are you expecting from your service learning experience?

Discussion board forum: What do you expect the community members to need?

Discussion board forum: Do you feel properly trained to interact with members of the community?

Discussion board forum: How was your initial encounter with a community member? How did you feel about providing service?

Weeks 10-14:

Discussion board forum: After you had several encounters with community members, how did you feel about providing service? How did they react to you?

Discussion board forum and class discussion: Now that you have completed your community service, how would describe your experience?

Discussion board forum: Are you able to see how you are helping serve people who have to navigate the justice system without representation or information? How does it make you feel?

Discussion board forum: Will you continue serving the community?

Second presentation: Part of the final

Prepare a creative Power point presentation (10 minutes) about your service learning experience:

1. Where did you provide service learning?
2. What were your tasks?
3. Whom did you help?
4. How did you feel about your experience?
5. Did any of your ideas about the community you served change after your experience?