

PARALEGAL STUDIES

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Paralegals, also known as legal assistants, are an indispensable part of a legal team. **Although paralegals cannot provide legal services directly to the public, except as permitted by law, they engage in an increasingly wide range of tasks.** Under the supervision of an attorney, paralegals frequently conduct client and witness interviews, engage in investigations and legal research, draft legal documents and general correspondence, assist in trial preparation and at a trial, and prepare documents for real estate, probate and corporate matters. Paralegals also work in a wide variety of settings, including law firms, corporate law departments, government agencies and business organizations, such as banks, title companies and insurance companies.

The Paralegal Studies program at College of DuPage provides students with the knowledge, training, skills, values, and attitude they need to become highly competent, ethical paralegals who will make a positive contribution to the advancement of the paralegal profession. Students gain knowledge and skills in a broad range of topics, including criminal law and procedure, ethics, law office organization and technology, legal research and writing, and litigation. In addition, a required paralegal practicum provides students with crucial hands-on practical experience in the paralegal profession.

For a complete list of courses in this program visit:
cod.edu/catalog

View program goals and objectives at
cod.edu/programs/paralegal/pdf/plgl-goals_obj.pdf

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“Don’t be afraid to put yourself out there. The professors and staff are there to help you reach your goals.”

— Leena Oudin,
Paralegal Studies Graduate

WHY COLLEGE OF DuPAGE IS RIGHT FOR YOU

Whether you are preparing for a career as a paralegal, planning to transfer to a four-year baccalaureate-granting institution, or updating your skills, College of DuPage has the right program for you. We offer:

- A paralegal program that is approved by the American Bar Association (ABA).
- Dedicated instructors with years of professional experience, certification and licensing.
- Flexible schedules with day, evening and online learning.
- Practical, hands-on experience as well as classroom-based studies.
- Affordable programs that get you on the fast track to success without breaking the bank.
- Articulated transfer agreements that provide students an affordable educational option with seamless transfers to prestigious universities.
- A law library and a subscription to Westlaw, the premier legal research database.
- An Advisory Council made up of industry professionals that ensures the Paralegal program stays current with the ever-evolving business of law.
- Opportunities to develop long-lasting friendships at the Paralegal Club and alumni gatherings.



PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Students must complete prerequisite coursework and a program application before official admission into the Paralegal Studies A.A.S. degree or certificate programs at College of DuPage. Visit our website at cod.edu/programs/paralegal for more information.

ASSOCIATE IN APPLIED SCIENCE (A.A.S.) IN PARALEGAL STUDIES

The Paralegal Studies A.A.S. degree program prepares students for careers in a variety of legal areas, including litigation, corporate, real estate and insurance. The curriculum covers law office organization and technology, legal document drafting, litigation, legal ethics, and legal research and writing, as well as a variety of specialized areas of practice such as corporate and contract law, criminal law, environmental law and immigration law. In addition to classroom requirements, a practicum provides students with real-world experience. Students are required to complete a minimum of 64 credits of coursework, which includes 33 credits in core requirements, 12 credits in approved elective classes, and 19 credits in general education classes.

CERTIFICATE IN PARALEGAL STUDIES

The post-degree certificate in paralegal studies is available to students who have earned an associate's degree (A.A. or A.S.) or higher. The certificate prepares students for work in a variety of legal areas, including litigation, corporate, real estate and insurance. The curriculum covers business law, civil litigation, law office organization, legal document drafting, legal ethics, legal research and writing, and MS Office for professionals. Students are required to complete 36 credits of coursework, which includes 30 credits in core required classes and 6 credits in approved electives.

AVAILABLE SCHOLARSHIPS

Students who are planning to enroll in the Paralegal program at College of DuPage may be qualified to receive a financial award through a variety of supported scholarships.

- The Honorable William J. Bauer Scholarship for Paralegal and Criminal Justice Studies
- Capper and Marilou Grant Paralegal Scholarship
- Linda and Robert Jenkins Endowed Paralegal Studies Scholarship

Visit cod.edu/scholarships for requirements and a full list of available scholarships.

TRANSFER OPPORTUNITIES

The College of DuPage Paralegal program has articulated agreements with several prestigious universities located throughout Illinois.

Visit cod.edu/programs/paralegal/articulation.aspx to learn more.

The Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI) facilitates the transfer of students from one Illinois institution to another. Both a general education core curriculum and a lower-division major recommendation course listing have been developed.

For more information on transfer opportunities at College of DuPage, visit cod.edu/academics/transfer_programs.

PARALEGAL PRACTICUM

The required paralegal practicum, PLGL 2600, is an excellent way to obtain job experience. The student performs 120 hours of paralegal work during the semester (approximately eight hours per week during the fall and spring semesters), working in a law office under the supervision of an attorney. In addition, required seminars on campus provide students with information about resume writing, interviewing skills, creating a professional portfolio, and creating a personal website for posting an electronic portfolio. The program culminates in a “Portfolio Expo” in which area attorneys, practicing paralegals, and other career professionals review and critique the students’ portfolios, ask mock interview questions, and provide constructive information about obtaining employment as a paralegal.

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LEX is a national honor society founded by the American Association for Paralegal Educators. Club members distinguish themselves through academic excellence, community service, and leadership skills. The first induction ceremony was held in June 2013. Please visit <http://sites.google.com/site/codparalegalclub/lex-1> for more information.

PARALEGAL CLUB

The Paralegal Club at College of DuPage is a student-run organization whose aim is to unite COD paralegal students in an environment where they can discuss current events and issues in the paralegal field, as well as help to create a network between the legal community and prospective paralegals. Visit sites.google.com/site/codparalegalclub for more information.

EMPLOYMENT OUTLOOK

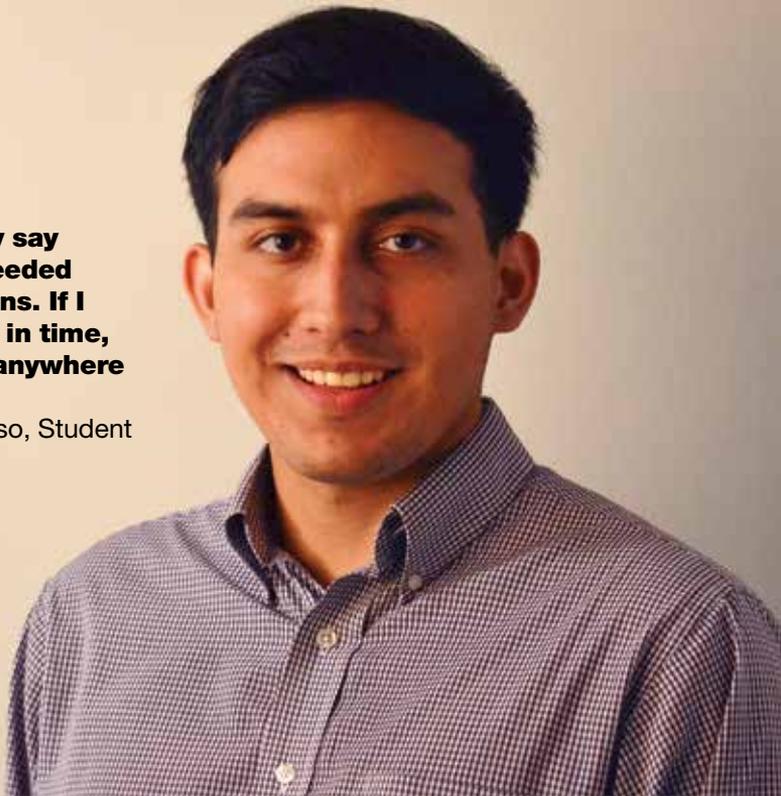
The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reports that the median yearly wage for paralegals was \$50,410 in 2017, with top earners bringing in more than \$81,180. Entry level salaries at smaller suburban law firms tend to be lower. Employment of paralegals is expected to grow by 15 percent through 2026. Paralegals can be a less costly alternative to lawyers and typically perform a wider variety of duties. Demand for paralegals is expected to increase as employers try to reduce costs and increase the efficiency of legal services. Many large corporations are increasing their in-house legal departments to cut costs which will lead to an increase in the demand of legal workers in a variety of settings, such as finance and insurance firms, consulting firms, and health care providers. For more information and employment statistics from the legal industry, visit www.bls.gov.

COMMON CAREERS FOR GRADUATES OF THE PARALEGAL STUDIES PROGRAM

- **Corporate Paralegals:** Help lawyers prepare employee contracts, shareholder agreements, stock-option plans, and companies' annual financial reports, and may also monitor and review government regulations to ensure that a corporation is aware of new legal requirements.
- **Litigation Paralegals:** Maintain documents received from clients, conduct research for lawyers, and retrieve and organize evidence for use at depositions and trials.
- **Title Examiners:** Search real estate records, examine titles, or summarize pertinent legal or insurance documents or details for law firms, real estate agencies or title insurance companies.
- **Court Clerks:** Organize and maintain the records of the court for which they work.

“I can honestly say that COD exceeded my expectations. If I could go back in time, I wouldn’t go anywhere else—period.”

—Daniel Alonso, Student



GETTING STARTED

If you are considering this program as an area of study:

- Visit our website at cod.edu/programs/paralegal.
- Consult with a faculty advisor, program advisor or program specialist:

Sally N. Fairbank, Program Coordinator

Berg Instructional Center (BIC), Room 1471A, (630) 942-2955

Monica Miller, Program Support Specialist

Technical Education Center (TEC), Room 1008, (630) 942-3074

Anika Collins, Program Advisor

Berg Instructional Center (BIC), Room 1454D, (630) 942-3961

- Contact the Business and Technology Division Office:
Technical Education Center (TEC), Room 1034, (630) 942-2592

The College will not discriminate in its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, arrest record, military status or unfavorable military discharge, citizenship status, or physical or mental handicap or disability.

For ADA accommodations, call (630) 942-2141 (voice) or (630) 858-9692 (TDD).
Please call two weeks in advance.

For individuals who need language assistance, please contact Campus Central at (630) 942-2380.



 **College of DuPage**

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