Paralegal

Note: This fact sheet does not include the program specific curriculum. To access the curriculum from the program's webpage, click one of the links below the section titled "Degrees Offered."

The Paralegal Associate of Science degree at Newman University prepares students to enter the legal profession as a legal assistant, a profession experiencing record job growth in the United States. Legal assistants, or paralegals, can be found in an array of settings from private law firms to corporate legal departments to government agencies.

DEGREES OFFERED

- Paralegal Associate of Science

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Links

- ABA - American Bar Association
- AAfPE - American Association for Paralegal Education
    - The two sites above contain valuable information on selection of a paralegal program
- KALA - Kansas Association of Legal Assistants
- KPA - Kansas Paralegal Association
- NALA - National Association of Legal Assistants
- NFPA - National Federation of Paralegal Associations
- WBA - Wichita Bar Association
- KBA - Kansas Bar Association
- IPMA - International Paralegal Management Association
- ALA - Association of Legal Administrators
- NALS - Association for legal professionals
- Legal Assistant Today Magazine
- Law Crossing, nationwide legal employment website

Accreditation

The Paralegal Studies Program is seeking Approval by the American Bar Association, Standing Committee on Paralegals located at 321 North Clark Street - 19FL, Chicago, IL 60610-4714

Newman University is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools located at 30 N. LaSalle St., Suite 2400, Chicago, IL 60602-2504; (800) 621-7440.

Search for Paralegal Jobs

http://www.legalweekjobs.com/jobs/paralegal/

PROMINENT CAREERS

The mission

The mission of the paralegal studies program is to provide a sound program of education for the training of paralegals that is sensitive to emerging concepts of the role of the paralegal in the effective delivery of legal services, both in the private and public sectors, and consistent with the principles of ethical legal practice and legal restrictions on the practice of law by laymen; to provide a program which is responsive to the needs of the legal profession, including the paralegal career field, and which is committed to the advancement of the legal profession through more effective methods and techniques of law practice.

What is a paralegal?

In the practice of law, many tasks formerly done by attorneys are now performed by paralegals, also called legal assistants. Often these tasks can be completed more promptly, efficiently and economically by paralegals.

By virtue of education, training or experience, paralegals assist attorneys in a wide variety of tasks which may include:

- Gathering facts from clients and witnesses
- Researching cases and statutes
- Writing trial and appellate briefs
- Preparing corporate instruments
- Drafting pleadings
- Preparing trial notebooks
- Handling a multitude of procedural matters that require independent judgment, challenge and responsibility

Attorneys supervise paralegals and assume ultimate responsibility for the paralegals' work. Paralegals may not carry out duties which are considered to be the practice of law such as accepting clients, giving legal advice, setting legal fees or representing clients in the courtroom.

Where do paralegals work?

Many paralegals work in private law firms, corporate legal departments or various government agencies. They can work in many different areas of the law, including:

- Civil litigation
- Personal injury
- Workers' compensation
- Corporate law
- Criminal law
- Employment law
- Family law
- Bankruptcy
- Estate administration
- Property law

Paralegal duties vary extensively depending on the type of organization in which they are employed. Check out the USAJOBS website for job openings and salaries.

What do paralegals make?

Nationally, according to the 2010-11 US Department of Labor Occupational Outlook Handbook, the middle 50 percent earned between $36,080 and $59,310. Employment outlook for paralegals is expected to grow 28% between 2008 and 2018, much faster than average.

A variety of annual incomes have been reported by our graduates. Annual starting salaries ranged from $16,000 to $33,000 with an average of $21,421. Five years after earning the paralegal degree, annual salaries ranged from $19,000 to $47,000 with an average of $29,848.

Licensure or Certification

At present, paralegals are not required to be licensed or certified in order to be employable. A voluntary certification examination is sponsored by the National Association of Legal Assistants. Successful completion of the exam entitles a paralegal to use the designation Certified Legal Assistant (CLA).

The National Federation of Paralegal Associations sponsors the Professional Advanced Competency Exam which is also a voluntary exam. Paralegals who pass this exam may use the designation Registered Paralegal (RP).

EXPERT, ACCESSIBLE FACULTY

The Paralegal program consists of a group of carefully selected scholarly and professional practitioners who creatively introduce students to emerging theory and current best practices.

Newman Graduates regularly cite close collaboration with talented, dedicated faculty as one of their most meaningful experiences at Newman.

Newman faculty members are more than just leaders in their field. They take an active and personal role in students' studies and progress, forming strong relationships with students through coursework, special projects and informal out of class discussions.

ACCREDITATION

Newman University is accredited by The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, www.ncahigherlearningcommission.org.

FINANCIAL AID

With many scholarships, grants, work-study and company tuition assistance programs available, the cost of a degree from Newman University is comparable to that of state universities.

PROGRAM CONTACT

For more information about this program, visit the program's webpage on the Newman University website and click the link "Request more info".

To contact Newman University Admissions, office hours are 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday-Thursday and 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Friday. For a personal appointment call 316-942-4291, ext. 2144 or e-mail admissions@newmanu.edu. Call us Toll-Free at 877-NEWMAN (639-6268) or visit our website at www.newmanu.edu.