

Legal Office Professional

School of Social Sciences, Business and Humanities

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Department Chair Vacant

General Description

The legal secretary assists attorneys with a wide variety of responsibilities including performing clerical duties; maintaining office files; working closely with attorneys to meet deadlines for court calendars; preparing summonses, complaints, motions, and subpoenas; and filing documents with the courts. In some law offices, legal secretaries review legal reference books, other legal publications or electronic media to identify court decisions pertinent to pending cases.

Southwestern College offers two excellent programs: Legal Office Professional and Legal Office Professional—Bilingual (English/Spanish). These programs provide students with strong legal secretarial skills and focus on developing excellent human relations skills with an awareness of the growing multicultural community in San Diego County. An added feature is that students have an option of working toward a certificate or degree emphasizing one or more legal specialties, including family law; civil litigation; criminal law; business law; international business law; immigration law; and wills, trusts, and probate. Students that possess a legal specialty and/or knowledge of a frequently used foreign language will have the greatest opportunities for employment.

Career Options

Below is a sample of the career options available for the legal secretary or the legal secretary major. A few of these require a certificate of achievement and most require an associate in science degree: claims examiner, compensation and benefits manager, corporate legal secretary, court clerk, customs agent, forms and procedures specialist, freelance legal secretary, legal aide, legal technician, title examiner, and entry-level paralegal.

Degree/Certificate Options

Associate in Science: Career/Technical

Legal Office Professional	B2155
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Certificates of Achievement

Business Law Specialty	A2252
Civil Litigation Specialty	A2253
Criminal Law Specialty	A2254
Family Law Specialty	A2256
Immigration Law Specialty	A2257
International Business Law Specialty	A2258
Wills, Trusts, and Estates Specialty	A2259

Certificate of Proficiency

Legal Office Professional—Basic	C2355
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Consult with a counselor to develop a Student Education Plan (SEP), which lists the courses necessary to achieve your academic goal.

ASSOCIATE IN SCIENCE DEGREE



Legal Office Professional

Career/Technical (Major Code: B2155)

Prepares students to work in a legal office. Emphasizes a comprehensive program of study regarding the court system, legal terminology, and the preparation of legal documents.

LEGL 225	Law Office Management	3
LEGL 258	Legal Communications	3

Plus completion of one of the following specialty certificates: 32.5–34.5

Total units	38.5–40.5
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Specialty Certificates

Business Law Specialty	(Major Code: A2252)
Civil Litigation Specialty	(Major Code: A2253)
Criminal Law Specialty	(Major Code: A2254)
Family Law Specialty	(Major Code: A2256)
Immigration Law Specialty	(Major Code: A2257)
International Business Law Specialty	(Major Code: A2258)
Wills, Trusts, and Estates Specialty	(Major Code: A2259)

To earn an associate degree, additional general education and graduation requirements must be completed. See page 49.

Note: Certificate of achievement or A.S. degree stating a legal specialty will be granted upon the completion of all requirements plus completion of one of the legal specialties listed above.

CERTIFICATES



Legal Office Professional—Basic

Certificate of Proficiency

Career/Technical (Major Code: C2355)

Prepares students to work in a legal office. Emphasizes structure of the court system, legal terminology, and the preparation of legal documents in the areas of civil litigation, family law, wills and probate, and criminal law. Develops word processing and English language skills.

BUS 96	Customer Service and Communication Techniques	1
BUS 182	Keyboarding for Office Professionals	2
BUS 200A	Microsoft Word: Beginning	2.5
BUS 206	Filing and Records Management	2.5
BUS 210	Business English	3
CIS 92	Microsoft Office Suite (3)	3–4
OR		
CIS 101	Introduction to Computers and Information Processing (4)	
LEGL 223	Legal Office Procedures	2.5

Total units	16.5–17.5
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Some courses within this program may require additional coursework that must be completed prior to enrollment in those courses. Please consult the individual course listings for prerequisites and any other limitations on enrollment.

Business Law Specialty

Certificate of Achievement

Career/Technical (Major Code: A2252)

Prepares students to work in a legal office in the area of business law. Emphasizes the research and preparation of legal documents and court forms. Reviews advanced legal terminology. Improves skills in legal word processing and English.

BUS 74	Keyboarding Speed and Accuracy II	1
BUS 140	Business Law/The Legal Environment of Business	3
BUS 200B	Microsoft Word: Advanced	2.5
BUS 211	Communication in Business and Industry	
	OR	3
BUS 212	Business Communication	
LEGL 270	Computer Skills for Legal Professionals	2.5
LEGL 272	Business Organizations	2
LEGL 290–293		
	Legal Cooperative Work Experience I–IV (2–4)	2
Plus courses required for the Legal Office Professional— Basic certificate		16.5–17.5
Total units		32.5–33.5

Civil Litigation Specialty

Certificate of Achievement

Career/Technical (Major Code: A2253)

Prepares students to work in a legal office. Emphasizes the research and preparation of legal documents and court forms. Reviews advanced legal terminology. Improves skills in legal word processing and English.

BUS 74	Keyboarding Speed and Accuracy II	1
BUS 200B	Microsoft Word: Advanced	2.5
BUS 211	Communication in Business and Industry	
	OR	3
BUS 212	Business Communication	
LEGL 261	Civil Litigation I	3
LEGL 269	Civil Litigation Procedures	3
LEGL 270	Computer Skills for Legal Professionals	2.5
LEGL 290–293		
	Legal Cooperative Work Experience I–IV (2–4)	2
Plus courses required for the Legal Office Professional— Basic certificate		16.5–17.5
Total units		33.5–34.5

Criminal Law Specialty

Certificate of Achievement

Career/Technical (Major Code: A2254)

Prepares students to work in a legal office. Emphasizes the research and preparation of legal documents and court forms. Reviews advanced legal terminology. Improves skills in legal word processing and English.

AJ 151	Concepts of Criminal Law	3
AJ 161	Principles and Procedures of the Justice System	3
BUS 74	Keyboarding Speed and Accuracy II	1
BUS 200B	Microsoft Word: Advanced	2.5
BUS 211	Communication in Business and Industry	
	OR	3
BUS 212	Business Communication	
LEGL 270	Computer Skills for Legal Professionals	2.5
LEGL 290–293		
	Legal Cooperative Work Experience I–IV (2–4)	2
Plus courses required for the Legal Office Professional— Basic certificate		16.5–17.5
Total units		33.5–34.5

Family Law Specialty

Certificate of Achievement

Career/Technical (Major Code: A2256)

Prepares students to work in a legal office in the area of family law. Emphasizes the research and preparation of legal documents and court forms. Reviews advanced legal terminology. Improves skills in legal word processing and English.

BUS 74	Keyboarding Speed and Accuracy II	1
BUS 200B	Microsoft Word: Advanced	2.5
BUS 211	Communication in Business and Industry	
	OR	3
BUS 212	Business Communication	
LEGL 263	Family Law	3
LEGL 266	Mediation, Negotiation, and Conflict Management	2
LEGL 270	Computer Skills for Legal Professionals	2.5
LEGL 290–293		
	Legal Cooperative Work Experience I–IV (2–4)	2
Plus courses required for the Legal Office Professional— Basic certificate		16.5–17.5
Total units		32.5–33.5

Immigration Law Specialty

Certificate of Achievement

Career/Technical (Major Code: A2257)

Prepares students to work in a legal office in the area of immigration law. Emphasizes the research and preparation of legal documents and court forms. Reviews advanced legal terminology. Improves skills in legal word processing and English.

BUS 74	Keyboarding Speed and Accuracy II	1
BUS 200B	Microsoft Word: Advanced	2.5
BUS 211	Communication in Business and Industry	3
	OR	
BUS 212	Business Communication	2–3
BUS 233	Interpretation and Translation: Immigration (3)	
	OR	3
LEGL 267	Interviewing and Investigation for Paralegals (2)	
LEGL 262	Immigration Law and Procedure	3
LEGL 270	Computer Skills for Legal Professionals	2.5
LEGL 290–293	Legal Cooperative Work Experience I–IV (2–4)	2
Plus courses required for the Legal Office Professional— Basic certificate		16.5–17.5
Total units		32.5–34.5

Wills, Trusts, and Estates Specialty

Certificate of Achievement

Career/Technical (Major Codes: A2259)

Prepares students to work in a legal office in the area of wills, trusts, and estates. Emphasizes the research and preparation of legal documents and court forms. Reviews advanced legal terminology. Improves skills in legal word processing and English.

BUS 74	Keyboarding Speed and Accuracy II	1
BUS 121	Financial Planning and Money Management	3
	OR	
RE 101	Real Estate Principles	2.5
BUS 200B	Microsoft Word: Advanced	
BUS 211	Communication in Business and Industry	3
	OR	
BUS 212	Business Communication	3
LEGL 264	Wills, Trusts, and Estates	
LEGL 270	Computer Skills for Legal Professionals	2.5
LEGL 290–293	Legal Cooperative Work Experience I–IV (2–4)	2
Plus courses required for the Legal Office Professional— Basic certificate		16.5–17.5
Total units		33.5–34.5

International Business Law Specialty

Certificate of Achievement

Career/Technical (Major Code: A2258)

Prepares students to work in a legal office in the area of international business law. Emphasizes the research and preparation of legal documents and court forms. Reviews advanced legal terminology. Improves skills in legal word processing and English.

BUS 74	Keyboarding Speed and Accuracy II	1
BUS 177	Principles of International Business	3
BUS 200B	Microsoft Word: Advanced	2.5
BUS 211	Communication in Business and Industry	3
	OR	
BUS 212	Business Communication	3
LEGL 256	International Law for Business	
LEGL 270	Computer Skills for Legal Professionals	2.5
LEGL 290–293	Legal Cooperative Work Experience I–IV (2–4)	2
Plus courses required for the Legal Office Professional— Basic certificate		16.5–17.5
Total units		33.5–34.5



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