New York City College of Technology, CUNY

CURRICULUM MODIFICATION PROPOSAL FORM

This form is used for all curriculum modification proposals. See the [Proposal Classification Chart](http://openlab.citytech.cuny.edu/collegecouncil/files/2014/08/2013-10-09-Proposal_Classification_Chart.pdf) for information about what types of modifications are major or minor. Completed proposals should be emailed to the Curriculum Committee chair.

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| --- | --- |
| **Title of Proposal** | **Degree Name Change** |
| **Date** | **2020-10-6** |
| **Major or Minor** | **Minor** |
| **Proposer’s Name** | **Concetta Mennella** |
| **Department** | **Law and Paralegal Studies** |
| **Date of Departmental Meeting in which proposal was approved** | **10-8-2020** |
| **Department Chair Name** | **Concetta Mennella** |
| **Department Chair Signature and Date** | **Concetta Mennella**  **October 5, 2020** |
| **Academic Dean Name** | **David Smith** |
| **Academic Dean Signature and Date** | **2020-10-06** |
| **Brief Description of Proposal**  (Describe the modifications contained within this proposal in a succinct summary. More detailed content will be provided in the proposal body. | **The Department seeks to change the degree name in the Applied Associates of Science and Bachelor of Science to reflect the current professional designation. Currently, the program degree states, “Legal Assistant Studies.”**  **The Program name and degree name should be termed “Paralegal Studies”** |
| **Brief Rationale for Proposal**  (Provide a concise summary of why this proposed change is important to the department. More detailed content will be provided in the proposal body). | **The American Bar Association (ABA) recently changed a paralegal’s definition to reflect the substantive work paralegals perform. The Department is an ABA-approved program, students’ degree must mirror the updated working definition adopted by our accrediting body.** |
| **Proposal History**  (Please provide history of this proposal: is this a resubmission? An updated version? This may most easily be expressed as a list). | **Program students surveyed, petitioned their peers, and presented the proposal to the department. The faculty feels the degree name change will benefit students in their employment and graduate school endeavors.** |

Please include all appropriate documentation as indicated in the Curriculum Modification Checklist.

For each new course, please also complete the New Course Proposal and submit in this document.

Please submit this document as a single .doc or .rtf format. If some documents are unable to be converted to .doc, then please provide all documents archived into a single .zip file.

**ALL PROPOSAL CHECK LIST**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Completed CURRICULUM MODIFICATION FORM including: |  |
| * Brief description of proposal | X |
| * Rationale for proposal | X |
| * Date of department meeting approving the modification | X |
| * Chair’s Signature | X |
| * Dean’s Signature | X |
| Evidence of consultation with affected departments  List of the programs that use this course as required or elective, and courses that use this as a prerequisite. | N/A |
| Documentation of Advisory Commission views (if applicable). | N/A |
| Completed [Chancellor’s Report Form](http://openlab.citytech.cuny.edu/collegecouncil/files/2014/08/2013-10-09-Chancellor_Report_Quick_Reference_Guide1.doc). | X |

**EXISTING PROGRAM MODIFICATION PROPOSALS**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Documentation indicating core curriculum requirements have been met for new programs/options or program changes. | N/A |
| Detailed rationale for each modification (this includes minor modifications) | x |

**Rationale**

Students prepared a compelling petition explaining their reasons for the change this proposal seeks. Students surveyed their peers and invited faculty members to a general meeting to discuss the current proposal. The department held a meeting and unanimously voted to approve the sought degree name change.

Additionally, the program is approved by the American Bar Association (ABA) and should follow the current changes as recommended by its governing body. The program should abide by the change of paralegal definition adopted by the ABA House of Delegates, its policy-making body, as recommended by the Standing Committee on Paralegals. This updated definition removes the term "legal assistant" to reflect terminology representing the type of substantive work that paralegals perform.

The current ABA definition states*: A paralegal is a person, qualified by education, training or work experience who is employed or retained by a lawyer, law office, corporation, governmental agency or other entity and who performs specifically delegated substantive legal work for which a lawyer is responsible.[[1]](#footnote-1)*

The program and degree change honors students’ work in becoming a paralegal.

**Department Minutes**

**New York City College of Technology**

**Law and Paralegal Studies Department Meeting**

**October 8, 2020, 3pm by video and phone conference**

MINUTES

Attendees: Connie Mennella, Lise Hunter, Mary Sue Donsky, Marissa Moran, Gail E. Williams, Jeannette Espinoza, Kerin E. Coughlin

I. Changing degree names from AAS and BS in Legal Assistant Studies to AAS and BS in Paralegal Studies: We voted unanimously in favor of this proposal.

II. Adjournment.

**Chancellor’s Report**

Changes in Degree Programs

The following revisions are proposed for the Law and Paralegal Studies Department

**Program:** Legal Assistant Studies B.S.

**Program Code**: 91269

**Effective Date**:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| From | TO |
| ~~Legal Assistant Studies~~ | Paralegal Studies |

**Program:** Legal Assistant Studies A.A.S

**Program Code:** 86071

**Effective Date:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| From | TO |
| ~~Legal Assistant Studies~~ | Paralegal Studies |

Rationale: Following the change of paralegal definition adopted by the American Bar Association (ABA) House of Delegates, ABA's policy-making body, as recommended by the Standing Committee on Paralegals. This updated definition removes the term "legal assistant" to reflect terminology that represents the type of substantive work that paralegals perform. The program is ABA-approved and should follow the current changes as recommended by its governing body.

1. <https://www.americanbar.org/groups/paralegals/profession-information/current_aba_definition_of_legal_assistant_paralegal/> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)