

**INTRODUCTION TO PARALEGAL STUDIES/LAW 1101/Sec. LC01/Class 17105/TTh 10-11:15am
CIVIL LAW AND PROCEDURE/LAW 1103/Sec. LC03/Class 53936/TTh 11:30am-12:45pm**

All classes meet in New Academic Building (285 Jay Street) room A409

Professor Kerin E. Coughlin/kcoughlin@citytech.cuny.edu/Office in Namm Bldg (300 Jay Street) room 622

Office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 12:45-2pm; other times by appointment; on Zoom or in person!

Zoom link for individually scheduled meetings and classes: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81380874817>

LAW 1101 course description: An overview of the legal system and the role of the legal assistant within that system. Includes sources of the law; legal terminology; operation of the court system at state and federal levels; respective roles of attorney, client and paralegal; legal ethics and the Code of Professional Responsibility; interviewing techniques; and a survey of specialized areas of law. Prerequisite: CUNY proficiency in reading and writing. Corequisite: ENG 1101. Three class hours; three credits.

LAW 1103 course description: Theory and application of law and procedure in civil litigation with emphasis on New York State law. Focuses on the role of the paralegal in preparing for litigation, including understanding the court system, steps in the litigation process and time lines, drafting legal documents, trial and post-trial topics, and introduction to the use of computers in litigation. Prerequisite: CUNY proficiency in reading and writing. Pre- or corequisites: LAW 1101 and ENG 1101. Three class hours; three credits.

First Year Learning Community: Legal Eagles: Learn to Fly! These courses are part of a First Year Learning Community (FYLC), which consists of two or more courses with the same students, collaborating through various topics and assignments centered around an interdisciplinary theme. Our theme is "Legal Eagles: Learn to Fly!" We will explore fundamental questions of legal practice, including: WHO are the parties to a case? WHAT are their claims? WHEN is the deadline to file? WHERE should you file? HOW will the court decide who wins? We'll also study different types of legal jobs; visit the courts that decide the cases; and develop skills and knowledge that will enable you to SOAR in the legal profession!

Required texts:

- For 1103: Civil Practice Law and Rules of the State of New York Plus Comprehensive Appendix of Related Statute (Looseleaf Law Publications, Inc., ISBN# 9780930137120) ("CPLR"). **Each student must have a paper copy of the current version in class.** Available for \$59.95 at the City Tech Bookstore or the publisher's website.
- For 1103: Charles E. Coleman, J.D. & Gail Elizabeth Williams, J.D., Civil Practice for Paralegals in New York State (Looseleaf Law Publications, Inc., ISBN # 9781889031903) ("C&W"). Available for \$49.95 through the City Tech bookstore or the publisher's website. Be sure to get the 2021 insert!
- For 1101: R. LeRoy Miller and M. Meinzinger, Paralegal Today: The Essentials (7th ed.) (Delmar Cengage Learning 2017, ISBN # 9781305508743) ("M&M"), paper copy or e-textbook. Available for rental or purchase through the City Tech bookstore website or the publisher's website; new and used paper copies are available at Alibris.com and other sites. Be sure to select the 7th edition.
- A law dictionary and an English language ("regular") dictionary, print or online, to learn the meanings of unfamiliar terms. Online law dictionaries include thelawdictionary.org, dictionary.law.com, and legal-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com. Online English language dictionaries include dictionary.reference.com, merriam-webster.com/dictionary.htm, and thefreedictionary.com.

Learning outcomes & assessments:

LAW 1101 Course-Specific Learning Outcomes include:	Assessments include:
understanding paralegal roles, tasks, and skills	resume/cover ltr; demand ltr; exams & quizzes; class discussions & activities
awareness of paralegal employment opportunities	resume/cover letter; class discussions & activities
understanding and respecting lawyers' and paralegals' ethical duties, and how they intersect	class discussions & activities; exams & quizzes

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understanding the structure and functions of the federal and New York court systems	court observation; exams & quizzes
understanding the purposes and importance of various types of legal research and writing	demand letter; exams & quizzes; class discussions & activities

LAW 1101 City Tech Gen Ed Student Learning Outcomes include:	Assessments include:
<u>Knowledge</u> : value knowledge and learning; show curiosity and desire to learn	court observation; book review; class discussions & activities
<u>Skills</u> : communicate in diverse settings and groups, using written and oral means; derive meaning from experience, gather information from observation.	FYLC collaborative assignments; court observation; client interview exercise
<u>Integration</u> : understand and navigate systems.	court observation; exams & quizzes
<u>Values, Ethics and Relationships</u> : demonstrate social and civic knowledge; understand organizations and histories of government; analyze social and political issues.	FYLC collaborative assignments; court observation; exams & quizzes

LAW 1103 Course-Specific Learning Outcomes include:	Assessments include:
understanding paralegals' role in the civil litigation process	class discussion & activities; homework; exams & quizzes
knowledge of the federal and New York State court systems	class discussion & activities; homework; exams & quizzes
understanding steps in litigation and their time lines	class discussion & activities; homework; exams & quizzes; summons & complaint assmt
ability to draft civil litigation documents	summons & complaint assmt

LAW 1103 City Tech Gen Ed Student Learning Outcomes include:	Assessments include:
<u>Knowledge</u> : value knowledge & learning; study values & ethical principles; curiosity & desire to learn; tools for lifelong learning.	class discussion & activities
<u>Skills</u> : communicate in diverse settings and groups, written and orally; derive meaning from experience, gather info from observation.	class discussion & activities; summons & complaint assmt
<u>Integration</u> : understand and navigate systems.	homework; exams & quizzes;
<u>Values, Ethics and Relationships</u> : demonstrate social and civic knowledge; understand organizations.	class discussion and activities

Course grades will be calculated as follows (each item addressed below):

For LAW 1101 (Intro):

Uniform final exam	40%
Midterm exam	20%
Quizzes	10%
Court observation assignment	5%
Book review	5%
Homework and other assignments	15%
Participation and professionalism	5%

For LAW 1103 (Civ Pro):

Final exam	25%
Midterm exam	20%
Quizzes	20%
Summons and complaint assignment	5%
Homework and other assignments	25%
Participation and professionalism	5%

Exams and quizzes: LAW 1101 requires students to pass a departmental uniform final exam with a grade of 70 or better. If this minimum grade is not achieved then the student fails the course and cannot advance in the Legal Studies program until she/he repeats the course successfully, then the previous grade of "F" will be replaced with the new grade. (See attached department policy, "Repeating Courses.") In both 1101 and 1103, the midterm and final exams are cumulative, and quizzes will be announced and unannounced. There will be no make-up exams or quizzes without prior arrangement. In calculating course grades, I generally drop each student's lowest quiz grade; however, if you miss a quiz, that is your "lowest grade" that will be "dropped," and I will average all of your other quiz grades. See attached college policy, "Accessibility," regarding exams missed for medical reasons.

Homework and other assignments: Students will complete a variety of homework and other assignments, some of which are listed in the Class Schedule that follows, and others that will be announced during the semester. Details will be provided on each of them. Each written assignment should be submitted in the manner specified, such as paper copy, or by email to me, or by posting on our course OpenLab site. Except as noted, if an assignment is due on a day we meet for class, it is due at or before the start of class. If you submit an assignment late without advance permission, it may be penalized or rejected. Grammar and spelling always count—proofread everything! Retain copies of all graded work; if you believe there was a grading error, or if you appeal a grade, you will be required to support your claim with such evidence.

Participation and professionalism:

- *Participation.* "Participation" includes completing readings and assignments before class and discussing them intelligently during class; being present, attentive and engaged in all class discussions and activities; taking notes; listening and responding respectfully to everyone; and having all necessary materials. You will be expected participate voluntarily, and you will be called on during class to participate. All these factors will be considered in your grade.
- *Professionalism.*¹ A unique demand on Legal Studies students involves managing the fluid boundary between being a student and a working professional. Every interaction with faculty, staff, employers, and alumni involves developing your personal brand, reputation, and professionalism. Therefore, the Law and Paralegal Studies Department expects students to act with the highest standards of integrity, good judgment, and professionalism at all times, and will consider the following in your final grades for all our courses:
 - being punctual, present, prepared and engaged
 - submitting professional-quality work (such as proofreading and neatness)
 - taking responsibility for your learning and progress (such as seeking assistance from tutors and faculty)
 - interacting appropriately with peers, instructors, college personnel, and outside visitors
 - respecting diversity among all individuals
 - honoring the confidentiality, privacy, and dignity of all persons
 - collaborating/participating actively in team environments
 - learning, including giving and receiving constructive feedback
 - behaving in an ethical manner (including college/academic as well as outside/interpersonal settings).

When communicating via the Internet, please keep in mind the following "Netiquette" rules:

- Writing should be formal, using applicable professional/technical language.
- Writing should be clear and precise.
- Writing should avoid emoticons and "texting" or short-hand language/phrases.
- Writing should explain and justify your opinion.
- Writing should stay on topic; irrelevant tangents are confusing, so make sure every comment you post stays within the scope of the question/discussion topic.
- Writing which includes the intellectual property of others requires you to cite your sources, e.g. websites, books, blogs, journal articles, etc.

¹ This section is adapted from City Tech's Dental Hygiene Department syllabi and the University of Ohio College of Business, "Student Professionalism Policies: Building Your Professional Reputation While Building Your Career," https://business.ohio.edu/media/530713/ocm-student-professionalism-policies_2016-2017.pdf.

Class sessions: Except as announced in advance, all classes will be conducted in-person, in the New Academic Building, room A409. Attendance will be taken during each class. Occasionally, there may be a need to meet by videoconference on Zoom. Zoom sessions will be announced in advance. If any student does not have access to Zoom, please contact me as early in the semester as possible to discuss other options for participating in online class sessions.

Individual meetings: Each student will meet with me individually in person or on Zoom at least twice during the semester: once in September, to address general issues relating to the courses and the college, and once in late November/early December, to discuss your work on a specific assignment. You may meet with me as often as you'd like, but these two meetings are required.

OpenLab and Blackboard: All students are required to join and learn to use our course OpenLab and Blackboard sites. Both sites will be used extensively to assign work and to provide materials and information, some of which may not be provided in class. You are responsible for all information provided through OpenLab and Blackboard.

Technology: Students are expected to have basic competencies in (a) word processing, including Microsoft (MS) Word and Adobe (pdf); (b) City Tech email; and (c) the Internet. Students will be introduced to OpenLab and Blackboard. Per college policy, please use only your City Tech account to email me. Allow 24 hours for a response, and longer if you email me on weekends or when classes are not in session. The Atrium Learning Center can assist with email and other technical issues. CUNY provides MS Office 365 for Education (including MS Word, Powerpoint, Excel and other programs) to City Tech students.

See the Addendum for additional college and department policies.

Note regarding these challenging times: We continue to live in circumstances even more stressful than our usually-very-stressful lives. COVID-19, racial injustice, natural disasters, and economic difficulties are just a few challenges facing the world, plus each of us have our own unique stressors. I do not want this course to be yet another source of stress for you. Certainly, you should work as hard as you can and take your education seriously. BUT if you find yourself facing difficulties in or outside school that may affect your academic performance, please contact me as soon as possible to figure out the best way to proceed. We will get through this! We just need to work together, and *communicate*. 😊

CLASS SCHEDULES START ON NEXT PAGE.

CLASS SCHEDULES

Below are general outlines of topics, assignments, and deadlines in each course. They are subject to change. "M&M" refers to the required text for 1101, Miller & Meinzinger's Paralegal Today: The Essentials 7th ed. "C&W" refers to the required text for 1103, Coleman & Williams' Civil Practice for Paralegals in NYS. Except as noted, all readings and assignments are due before the start of each class for which they are listed. (See "Homework and other assignments" above.) Additional work will be assigned throughout the semester, in class sessions and on OpenLab and Blackboard; check them frequently.

Class	Date	LAW 1101 Intro	LAW 1103 Civil Procedure
1	Th Aug 26	Course introduction!	Course introduction!
2	Tu Aug 31 <i>Last day to add a class, or drop without WD grade</i>	Paralegal roles & skills! <i>For today: Read M&M ch. 1 (on BB).</i>	What is Civil Procedure? <i>For today: Read C&W Intro & ch. 1 (on BB).</i>
3	Th Sept 2	Paralegal roles & skills <i>continued!</i>	The Jurisdictional Bases
	<i>F Sept 3 – W Sept 8</i>	<i>NO CLASSES: Rosh Hashanah & Labor Day (M Sept 6 college closed)</i>	The Parties and Their Claims
4	Th Sept 9	Career opportunities: where paralegals work!	Causes of Action and Remedies
5	Tu Sept 14	<i>NO 1101 CLASS MEETING</i> – individual meetings this week instead!	Quiz #1 on Blackboard! (no 1103 class meeting)
	<i>W-Th Sep 15-16</i>	<i>NO CLASSES: Yom Kippur</i>	
6	Tu Sept 21	Quiz #1; Structure of the Courts: the NYS Court System!	<i>... both sessions!</i>
7	Th Sept 23	Structure of the Courts cont'd: Walking tour of Brooklyn courts!	<i>... both sessions!</i>
8	Tu Sept 28	Structure of the Courts cont'd: the US (Federal) Court System!	<i>... both sessions!</i>
9	Th Sept 30	Structure of the Courts cont'd: Walking tour of Manhattan courts!	<i>... both sessions.</i>
10	Tu Oct 5	Career opportunities <i>continued</i> : resume and cover letter assignment; how to write a resume!	Statutes of Limitations!
11	Th Oct 7	Career opportunities <i>continued</i> : peer review resumes!	Statutes of Limitations continued!
12	Tu Oct 12	<i>NO 1101 CLASS MEETING</i> – Quiz #2 on Blackboard!	<i>NO 1103 CLASS MEETING</i> – remote assignment: cover letters!

13	Th Oct 14	Career opportunities <i>continued</i> : peer review cover letters! **Final resumes & cover letters due by email Fri. Oct. 15!	Quiz #2; review for 1101 & 1103 midterm exams!
14	Tu Oct 19	Intro MIDTERM EXAM <i>both sessions!</i>	Intro MIDTERM EXAM <i>continued!</i>
15	Th Oct 21	Civ Pro MIDTERM EXAM <i>both sessions!</i>	Civ Pro MIDTERM EXAM <i>continued!</i>
16	Tu Oct 26	Workings of a law office!	Commencing the Action; Summons; Pleadings!
17	Th Oct 28	Workings of a law office <i>continued</i> ; practical assignment: timekeeping!	Summons & complaint assignment!
18	Tu Nov 2	Sources of law!	Venue; Gaining Personal Jurisdiction!
19	Th Nov 4	Quiz #3; Ethics & professional responsibility!	Gaining Personal Jurisdiction continued!
20	Tu Nov 9	Ethics & professional responsibility continued!	Preparation, Service, and Filing of Papers!
21	Th Nov 11 <i>Veterans' Day— classes meet!</i>	Legal research & analysis!	Quiz #3; Preparation, Service, and Filing of Papers continued!
22	Tu Nov 16	Legal writing: Demand Letter assignment!	Motions!
23	Th Nov 18	Peer review demand letters!	Disclosure!
24	Tu Nov 23	Quiz #4; Legal writing <i>continued</i> : other forms of legal writing! Final demand letter due by email Wed. Nov. 24!	Trial; Post-trial activities!
	<i>Th Nov 25 – Sun Nov 28</i>	<i>College closed – Thanksgiving!</i>	<i>College closed – Thanksgiving!</i>
25	Tu Nov 30	NO CLASS MEETING – individual meeting #2 this week instead!	<i>...both sessions!</i>
26	Th Dec 2	Interviews & investigations: client interview exercise!	Quiz #4; Alternative dispute resolution!
27	Tu Dec 7	Interviews & investigations continued: client interview exercise!	Court observation oral presentations <i>and</i> leftovers!
28	Th Dec 9	Court observation oral presentations <i>and</i> leftovers! <i>"Law in Culture" assignment due (OL).</i>	Review for 1101 & 1103 final exams!
29	Tu Dec 14	LAW 1101 FINAL EXAM!!	<i>...both sessions!</i>
30	Th Dec 16	LAW 1103 FINAL EXAM!!	<i>...both sessions!</i>

Addendum: College and Department Policies

NEW YORK CITY COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY POLICIES

Academic Integrity

Students are responsible for understanding and following CUNY's and New York City College of Technology's policies on academic integrity.

Students and all others who work with information, ideas, texts, images, music, inventions, and other intellectual property owe their audience and sources accuracy and honesty in using, crediting, and citing sources. As a community of intellectual and professional workers, the College recognizes its responsibility for providing instruction in information literacy and academic integrity, offering models of good practice, and responding vigilantly and appropriately to infractions of academic integrity. Accordingly, academic dishonesty is prohibited in The City University of New York and at New York City College of Technology and is punishable by penalties, including failing grades, suspension, and expulsion. The complete text of the College policy on Academic Integrity may be found in the catalog: http://www.citytech.cuny.edu/academics/docs/academic_integrity_policy.pdf.

Everyone is expected to do his/her own work and carefully cite the work of others. Plagiarism is taking another's work and using it as your own. This class will hold a ZERO tolerance policy for plagiarism. Evidence of plagiarism may result in failing a test, assignment and /or the course. Internet plagiarism includes submitting downloaded term papers or parts of term papers, paraphrasing or copying information from the internet without citing the source and "cutting and pasting" from various sources without proper attribution.

Accessibility: Reasonable Accommodations

City Tech is committed to supporting the educational goals of enrolled students with disabilities in the areas of enrollment, academic advisement, tutoring, assistive technologies and testing accommodations. If you have or think you may have a disability, you may be eligible for reasonable accommodations or academic adjustments as provided under applicable federal, state and city laws. You may also request services for temporary conditions or medical issues under certain circumstances. If you have questions about your eligibility or would like to seek accommodation services or academic adjustments, please contact the Center for Student Accessibility (CSA) at 300 Jay Street room L-237, 718 260 5143, or <http://www.citytech.cuny.edu/accessibility/>.

Students who miss a scheduled presentation or exam due to illness or medically related emergencies will be referred to the CSA. The CSA will review any documentation requested and give the student a letter to share with the relevant instructor if accommodations need to be made.

NYCCT LAW & PARALEGAL STUDIES DEPARTMENT POLICIES

Attendance

It is the conviction of the Law & Paralegal Studies Department that a student who is not in a class for any reason is not receiving the benefit of the education being provided. Missed class time includes not just absences but also late arrivals, early departures, and time outside the classroom taken by students during class meeting periods. Missed time may affect any portion of the final grade overtly allocated to participation and/or any grades awarded for activities that relate to presence in class. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to get the notes and assignments you missed from a classmate.

Bluebook (Citation)

The Department of Law and Paralegal Studies acknowledges the variety of citation styles, however, it is the department's policy that all citations are done in the format of The Uniform System of Citation (also known as The Bluebook).

Repeating Courses

Entrance into paralegal studies courses requires CUNY proficiency in reading and writing. All students admitted without such proficiencies will be required to complete necessary remediation and to obtain proficiency before progressing into paralegal studies courses. A minimum grade of "C" in each course with the prefix LAW is required for progression within the paralegal studies major. Students may repeat a LAW course once (1) if they have received a "D" or "F" grade.

Electronic Devices (including mobile phones and texting devices)

Electronic devices, including mobile phones and texting devices, must be turned off and/or silenced and put away during class. Laptop computers may be used with the permission of the professor.

Computer Lab

Do not leave your work on the hard drive in the computer lab. Print your work, save it on a flash drive and delete it from the hard drive. You are responsible for protecting your own work, in the event that two students turn in the same paper, both will receive an F. There is **absolutely NO** eating and drinking in the Law & Paralegal Studies Computer Lab.