

# PARALEGAL STUDIES

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## **ASSOCIATE DEGREE PROGRAM**

The Paralegal Studies program provides educational opportunities to individuals that will enable them to succeed as legal assistants while taking care to ensure that Paralegal Studies students understand the legal proscription against the unauthorized practice of law by those not licensed to practice. The general studies component of the curriculum develops written, oral, and computational skills and provides breadth to the curriculum in the areas of humanities, behavioral sciences, and mathematics. The associate degree program provides graduates with opportunities for potential career mobility and facilitates continuing education at the baccalaureate level.

Graduates are eligible to sit for a voluntary national certification exam. Program graduates are to be competent in the areas of communications; mathematics; interpersonal relations; real estate; civil and criminal litigation; legal research and writing; family law, wills, trusts, and probate administration; torts; and contracts. The program is approved by the American Bar Association.

## **CAREER OPPORTUNITIES**

Paralegals help lawyers by conducting factual and legal research and preparing documents. Working under the direction of lawyers, the duties of paralegals include researching and interpreting law sources, interviewing clients and witnesses for information, and preparing legal documents. While some are generalists working in many areas of law, many specialize in one area such as real estate, family law, or general litigation. In Georgia, paralegals may perform any task delegated by the lawyer except to give legal advice, appear in court (except for certain types of cases), accept cases, and set fees.

Graduates function as legal assistants for private law firms, Legal Aid and other government-sponsored legal service providers, privatized legal service providers, corporations, banks, and insurance companies.

## **PROGRAM EXPENSES**

The recent reauthorization of the Higher Education Act requires all colleges and universities to notify students and prospective students of all program costs for which they will be responsible. Students will be responsible for the following expenses:

- Quarterly tuition (\$45 per credit hour)
- Quarterly student activity fees (\$16)
- Quarterly registration fee (\$26)
- Quarterly accident insurance fee (\$4)
- Quarterly instructional and technology supply fee (\$35)
- Program supply fee (\$10 per PLS course)
- Textbooks (Approximately \$2,863 for entire program)

The expenses are based on costs in effect at the time this catalog was published. Prices are subject to change.

## **ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

Applicants must submit the following information to the Admissions Office:

- a. Completed and signed application for admission and a \$20 nonrefundable application fee;
- b. Official high school or GED transcripts and/or official college transcripts from all colleges attended in the past (see *General Admission Requirements*); and
- c. Valid COMPASS, ASSET, SAT, or ACT test scores (see *ASSET and COMPASS Placement Tests*).

## PARALEGAL STUDIES CURRICULUM OUTLINE

Associate of Applied Science Degree Program (Major Code: PSo3)

Credit Required for Graduation: 115 quarter credit hours

			<b>Credits</b>
<b>General Education</b>			<b>30</b>
ECO	2105	Principles of Macroeconomics	
	OR		5
ECO	2106	Principles of Microeconomics	
ENG	1101	Composition and Rhetoric	5
ENG	1102	Literature and Composition	5
MAT	1100	Quantitative Skills and Reasoning	
	OR		
MAT	1101	Mathematical Modeling	
	OR		5
MAT	1111	College Algebra	
	OR		
MAT	1127	Introduction to Statistics	
PSY	1101	Introduction to Psychology	5
SPC	1101	Public Speaking	5
<b>Professional Core</b>			<b>3</b>
SCT	100	Introduction to Microcomputers	3
<b>Paralegal Major*</b>			<b>62</b>
PLS	191	Introduction to Law and Ethics	5
PLS	192	Legal Research	5
PLS	193	Legal Writing	5
PLS	194	Family Law	5
PLS	195	Real Estate Law	5
PLS	196	Criminal Law and Criminal Procedure	5
PLS	197	Civil Litigation	5
PLS	198	Wills, Trusts, Probate, and Administration	5
PLS	199	Tort Law	5
PLS	291	Law Office Management	5
PLS	299	Paralegal Studies Internship	12
<b>Electives</b>			<b>20</b>
(Students must choose two of the following courses as electives. The remaining electives must be chosen from a list of approved electives available from the program faculty.)			
ACC	1101	Principles of Accounting I	6
PLS	292	Business Organizations	5
PLS	293	Contracts and Commercial Law	5

\* The director of registration and records will only consider for transfer credit those paralegal major courses taken at ABA-approved schools.

A student must complete at least 20 quarter credit hours (15 semester credit hours) of PLS coursework in a traditional classroom setting at Athens Technical College. Students must also complete PLS 299/Paralegal Studies Internship at Athens Technical College.

## ACCOUNTING

Department Code: ACC

### ACC 1101

#### Principles of Accounting I (4-4-6)

*Banner Title: Principles of Accounting I*

This course introduces the basic concepts of the complete accounting cycle and provides students with the necessary skills to maintain a set of books for sole proprietorships. Topics include accounting vocabulary and concepts, the accounting cycle and accounting for personal service businesses and merchandising enterprises, and cash control. Laboratory work demonstrates theory presented in class.

*Prerequisite: Diploma-level program admission*

*Offered quarterly*

## ECONOMICS

Department Code: ECO

### ECO 2105

#### Principles of Macroeconomics (5-0-5)

*Banner Title: Macroeconomics*

This course provides a description and analysis of macroeconomic operations in contemporary society. Students develop an understanding of macroeconomic concepts, theories, and policies. Topics include basic economic principles; macroeconomic principles, theories, and policies; money and banking; and the United States economy in perspective.

*Prerequisites: ENG 099 with a grade of C\* or better or placement by diagnostic testing, MAT 097 with a grade of C\* or better and MAT 099 with a grade of C\* or better or placement by diagnostic testing*

*Offered quarterly*

### ECO 2106

#### Principles of Microeconomics (5-0-5)

*Banner Title: Microeconomics*

This course provides a description and analysis of microeconomic operations in contemporary society. Students develop an understanding of microeconomic concepts and theories as they apply to daily life. Topics include basic economic principles; theories of the corporate firm; the market system; market structures, pricing, and government regulations; resource markets; and international trade.

*Prerequisites: ENG 099 with a grade of C\* or better or placement by diagnostic testing, MAT 097 with a grade of C\* or better and MAT 099 with a grade of C\* or better or placement by diagnostic testing*

*Offered quarterly*

## ENGLISH

Department Code: ENG

### ENG 1101

#### Composition and Rhetoric (5-0-5)

*Banner Title: Composition and Rhetoric*

Students practice various modes of writing ranging from exposition to argumentation and persuasion. The course also explores the analysis of literature and articles about issues in the humanities and in society. The course includes a review of standard grammatical and stylistic usage in proofreading and editing. An introduction to library resources lays the foundation for research. Topics covered in the course include writing analysis and practice, revision, and research. Students write a research paper using library resources and using a formatting and documentation style appropriate to the purpose and audience.

*Prerequisites: ENG 099 with a grade of C\* or better and RDG 098 with a grade of C\* or better or placement by diagnostic testing*

*Offered quarterly*

### ENG 1102

#### Literature and Composition (5-0-5)

*Banner Title: Literature and*

*Composition*

This course emphasizes the ability of students to read literature analytically and meaningfully and to communicate clearly. Students analyze the form and content of literature in historical and philosophical contexts. Topics include reading and analysis of fiction, poetry, and drama; research, and writing about literature.

*Prerequisite: ENG 1101 with a grade of C or better*

*Offered quarterly*

## MATHEMATICS

Department Code: MAT

### MAT 1100

#### Quantitative Skills and Reasoning (5-2-6)

*Banner Title: Quantitative Skills/Reasoning*

MAT 1100 is an overview course covering algebra, statistics, and the mathematics of finance. Topics include fundamental operations of algebra, sets and logic, probability and statistics, geometry, mathematics of voting and districting, and the mathematics of finance.

*Prerequisite: MAT 097 with a grade of C\* or better and/or MAT 099 with a grade of C\* or better or placement by diagnostic testing*

*Offered annually*

### MAT 1101

#### Mathematical Modeling (5-0-5)

*Banner Title: Mathematical Modeling*

This course is an alternative to *College Algebra* for those who will not take trigonometry, pre-calculus, or calculus. It is an applications-driven course that introduces functions using real-world phenomena as models. Topics include fundamental algebra concepts; functions and graphs; linear, quadratic, polynomial, exponential, and logarithmic functions and models of real-world phenomena; systems of equations; and additional topics in algebra.

*Prerequisite: MAT 097 with a grade of C\* or better and/or MAT 099 with a grade of C\* or better or placement by diagnostic testing*

*Offered quarterly*

### MAT 1111

#### College Algebra (5-0-5)

*Banner Title: College Algebra*

This course emphasizes techniques of problem solving using algebraic concepts. Topics include fundamental concepts of algebra, equations and inequalities, functions and graphs, systems of equations, analytic geometry, and optional topics, including sequences, series, and probability.

*Prerequisite: MAT 097 with a grade of C\* or better and/or MAT 099 with a grade of C\* or better or placement by diagnostic testing*

*Offered Quarterly*

### MAT 1127

#### Introduction to Statistics (5-0-5)

*Banner Title: Introduction to Statistics*

This course discusses the concepts and methods fundamental to utilizing and interpreting commonly used statistics. Topics include descriptive statistics, basic probability, discrete and continuous distributions, sampling distributions, hypothesis testing, chi square tests, and linear regression.

*Prerequisite: MAT 097 with a grade of C\* or better and/or MAT 099 with a grade of C\* or better or placement by diagnostic testing*

*Offered quarterly*

## PARALEGAL STUDIES

Department Code: PLS

### PLS 191

#### Introduction to Law and Ethics (5-0-5)

*Banner Title: Intro to Law and Ethics*

This course introduces the American legal system, the role of the lawyer and legal

assistant within that system, and the ethical obligations of lawyers and legal assistants. Topics include the American common law system, federal and state court systems, case and statutory analysis, legal reasoning and problem-solving, ethical standards and concerns, and a brief introduction to substantive areas of law.

*Prerequisite: Program admission-level English competency*  
*Offered quarterly*

**PLS 192**  
**Legal Research** (5-0-5)

*Banner Title: Legal Research*

Program instructors teach legal, research methodology, computerized legal research techniques, and proper citation form. Topics include reporters, digests, statutes, legislative history, administrative regulations, citators, American Law Reports, secondary sources, computerized legal research, and citation form. Students must complete library assignments as part of this course. Students must pay a \$10 supply fee when registering for this course.

*Prerequisite: ENG 1101*

*Corequisite: PLS 191*

*Offered Winter terms annually and Fall term during odd-numbered years*

**PLS 193**  
**Legal Writing** (5-0-5)

*Banner Title: Legal Writing*

PLS 193 improves students' basic writing skills, familiarizes them with types of writing typically engaged in by lawyers and legal assistants, and prepares them for legal writing tasks. Topics include general writing skills, business letters, legal memoranda formats, advisory writing, and persuasive writing. Students write business letters and advisory and persuasive documents. Students must engage in legal research as part of their writing assignments. Students must pay a \$10 supply fee when registering for this course.

*Prerequisite: PLS 192*

*Offered Spring term annually and Winter and Fall terms during even-numbered years*

**PLS 194**  
**Family Law** (5-0-5)

*Banner Title: Family Law*

This course teaches the principles of family law. Topics include formation and dissolution of marriage, child custody, child support, alimony, division of property, family violence, legal separation, legal status of children, adoption, and ethical considerations. Students must pay a \$10 supply fee when registering for this course.

*Prerequisite/Corequisite: PLS 191*  
*Offered Fall and Winter terms*

**PLS 195**  
**Real Estate Law** (5-0-5)

*Banner Title: Real Estate Law*

This course introduces the basic concepts of real property law as related to common types of real estate transactions. Instructors emphasize practical skills such as document preparation. Topics include titleholders, real estate contracts, surveys and legal descriptions, deeds, title insurance, real estate mortgages, settlement and closing, recording statutes, and ethical considerations. Students must pay a \$10 supply fee when registering for this course.

*Prerequisite/Corequisite: PLS 191*

*Offered Fall term annually and Winter term during odd-numbered years*

**PLS 196**  
**Criminal Law and Criminal Procedure** (5-0-5)

*Banner Title: Criminal Law/Procedures*

This course introduces the concepts of criminal law and criminal procedures. Topics include crimes against the person, crimes against property, elements of a crime, inchoate and group criminality, defenses, arrest, search and seizure, police interrogation, pretrial identification procedures, the exclusionary rule, right to counsel, post-conviction remedies, and ethical considerations. Students must pay a \$10 supply fee when registering for this course.

*Prerequisite/Corequisite: PLS 191*

*Offered Winter and Spring terms annually and Fall term during even-numbered years*

**PLS 197**  
**Civil Litigation** (5-0-5)

*Banner Title: Civil Litigation*

This course emphasizes civil litigation in both Georgia and federal courts from initial client contact to final appeal. Topics include the initial client interview and fact investigation, personal and subject matter jurisdiction, venue, commencing and defending the lawsuit, discovery, pretrial motions, judgments, settlement, the appellate process, and ethical considerations. Students complete several litigation drafting projects. Students must pay a \$10 supply fee when registering for this course.

*Prerequisite: PLS 191*

*Offered Fall term annually, Winter term during odd-numbered years, and Spring term during even-numbered years*

**PLS 198**  
**Wills, Trusts, Probate, and Administration** (5-0-5)

*Banner Title: Wills/Trusts/Probate Admin*

This course introduces the principles of wills, trusts, estates, and forms commonly used in the probate and administration

processes. Topics include wills, trusts, powers of attorney, estate planning and estate taxation, disposition of remains, organ donation, living wills, benefits, probate, heirs at law, procedures without a will, and ethical considerations. Students must pay a \$10 supply fee when registering for this course.

*Prerequisite/Corequisite: PLS 191*

*Offered Winter term annually, Fall term during odd-numbered years, and Spring term during even-numbered years*

**PLS 199**  
**Tort Law** (5-0-5)

*Banner Title: Tort Law*

Program instructors teach the general principles of tort law. Topics include intentional torts, negligence, defenses to tort actions, damages, vicarious liability, strict liability, product liability, workers compensation, and ethical considerations. Students must pay a \$10 supply fee when registering for this course.

*Prerequisite/Corequisite: PLS 191*

*Offered Fall and Winter terms annually and Summer term during odd-numbered years*

**PLS 291**  
**Law Office Management** (5-0-5)

*Banner Title: Law Office Management*

This course emphasizes the various principles of law office management. Topics include organizational and management skills applicable to both small and large law offices; methods of filing and indexing legal matters; legal fees, billing, accounting procedures, and timekeeping procedures; law office technology; client relationships; and ethical considerations. Students must pay a \$10 supply fee when registering for this course.

*Prerequisite/Corequisite: PLS 191*

*Offered Spring term annually and Fall and Winter terms during even-numbered years*

**PLS 292**  
**Business Organizations** (5-0-5)

*Banner Title: Business Organizations*

Students develop an understanding of various business organizations, including their formation, dissolution, and tax consequences of choosing a particular form of organization. Topics include corporations, partnerships, limited partnerships, limited liability companies, professional corporations, and ethical considerations. Students must pay a \$10 supply fee when registering for this course.

*Prerequisite/Corequisite: PLS 191*

*Offered Spring term annually and Summer term during even-numbered years*

## **PLS 293**

### **Contracts and**

### **Commercial Law**

**(5-0-5)**

*Banner Title: Contracts and Commercial Law*

This course teaches legal principles applicable in a variety of business settings. Topics include elements of a valid contract, parole evidence, statute of frauds, defenses to contract actions, the Uniform Commercial Code, sales, commercial paper, secured transactions, insurance law, antitrust law, and ethical considerations. Students must pay a \$10 supply fee when registering for this course.

*Prerequisite/Corequisite: PLS 191*

*Offered Spring term*

## **PLS 299**

### **Paralegal Studies**

### **Internship**

**(6-24-12)**

*Banner Title: Paralegal Studies*

*Internship*

Students work in an office setting where they are engaged in paralegal tasks under the supervision of an attorney. As part of their internship, students write a paper detailing the internship and the particular cases or projects they worked on and must compile a portfolio of work completed in Paralegal Studies and in the internship. Students are also introduced to time keeping by keeping track of their time as would be required for a paralegal doing legal work. Students must pay a \$10 supply fee when registering for this course.

*Prerequisites: Completion of all course-work prior to internship, a 2.0 cumulative grade point average, no unresolved grades of F or I from previous courses, and good academic standing*

*Offered quarterly*

## **PSYCHOLOGY**

*Department Code: PSY*

### **PSY 1101**

### **Introduction to Psychology (5-0-5)**

*Banner Title: Introduction to Psychology*

This course emphasizes the basics of psychology. Topics include the science of psychology; social environments; life stages; physiology and behavior; personality; emotions and motives; conflicts, stress, and anxiety; abnormal behavior; and perception, learning, and intelligence.

*Prerequisites: ENG 099 with a grade of C\* or better and RDG 098 with a grade of C\* or better or placement by diagnostic testing*

*Offered quarterly*

## **SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

*Department Code: SCT*

### **SCT 100**

### **Introduction to**

### **Microcomputers**

**(1-4-3)**

*Banner Title: Intro to Microcomputers*

This course introduces the fundamental concepts and operations necessary to use microcomputers. Course content emphasizes basic functions and familiarity with computer use. Topics include computer terminology and an introduction to the Windows environment, networking, word processing, spreadsheets, presentation graphics, and databases.

*Prerequisite: Provisional admission*

*Offered quarterly*

## **SPEECH**

*Department Code: SPC*

### **SPC 1101**

### **Public Speaking**

**(5-0-5)**

*Banner Title: Public Speaking*

This course introduces the fundamentals of oral communication. Topics include selection and organization of materials, preparation and delivery of individual and group presentations, and analysis of ideas presented by others, and professionalism.

*Prerequisites: ENG 099 with a grade of C\* or better and RDG 098 with a grade of C\* or better or placement by diagnostic testing*

*Offered quarterly*