

**SYLLABUS**

**Fundamentals of Legal Practice**

**6 CEUs**

**Fall, 2009**

**Instructor: Sheila Malloy Huber**

<b>Contact hours:</b>	Daily from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m.
<b>Phone:</b>	360-280-1771 (cell)
<b>E-mail:</b>	<a href="mailto:hubers@u.washington.edu">hubers@u.washington.edu</a>
<b>Course Web page:</b>	<a href="https://faculty.washington.edu/hubers/uwt_paralegal">https://faculty.washington.edu/hubers/uwt_paralegal</a>
<b>Class meetings:</b>	6 -9 p.m. Mondays & Wednesdays, Oct. 5 – Dec. 14, 2009 (There will be no class on Wednesday, November 11.)  Class meets in CP 334A
<b>Prerequisites:</b>	Acceptance in UWT Paralegal Program or permission of Program Director and Instructor
<b>Technology requirements:</b>	Access to computer with word processing and ability to connect to the internet

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Introduction to the legal system and its institutions, with emphasis on areas relevant to paralegals. Topics covered include:

- Function and origins of law
- Court systems and jurisdiction
- Types of hearings and trials
- Legal reasoning
- Professional ethics
- Overview of selected areas of substantive law

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

This course provides an introduction to the American legal system, legal terminology and legal reasoning. The course is structured to develop the student's critical thinking, communication, organizational skills, and competency to recognize and handle ethical issues encountered in legal work. At the end of this course, students will:

1. Recognize and understand basic legal terminology
2. Understand the sources of American law
3. Understand the structure and basic jurisdiction of the federal and state court systems
4. Understand the basics of civil litigation
5. Demonstrate an ability to analyze statutes and case law
6. Demonstrate an ability to apply legal reasoning to case-specific legal problems
7. Have a broad overview of major substantive areas of law

## COURSE FORMAT

This is a lecture/discussion course in which topics are presented by the instructor and supplemented by class discussion and application of what is learned. Students will work independently and in legal teams to complete 7 assignments. The assignments are designed to help students develop legal reasoning and critical thinking skills, as well as to introduce students to the form and substance of basic legal documents. Students will read and brief cases, draft pleadings and discovery documents, and analyze legal problems and issues.

The class syllabus, assigned readings, class PowerPoint presentations, and the class exercises and assignment details will all be available from the class Web page. Students are required to print -- and bring to class -- all handouts.

## TEXT

**Required text:** *Introduction to Law for Paralegals: A Critical Thinking Approach*. Currier & Eimmermann. Fourth edition. ISBN 978-0-735-56719-1.

## EVALUATION AND GRADING

Your grade in this course will be based on midterm and final exams and on the following assignments.

<b>Assignment 1</b> <u>Due: Oct. 12</u>	Pass/Fail	Analysis of <i>Kuest</i> . This case will be provided to you. You are to read the case and answer the questions on the assignment sheet.
<b>Assignment 2</b> <u>Due: Oct. 19</u>	P/F	Analysis of <i>Fisons</i> . Portions of this case will be provided to you. You are to read the handout and answer the questions on the assignment sheet.
<b>Assignment 3</b> <u>Due Oct. 26</u>	P/F	Draft discovery documents aimed at discovering what topics, format or questions will appear on the
<b>Assignment 4</b> <u>Due: Nov. 9</u>	Graded Assignment	Statutory analysis (team assignment)
<b>Assignment 5</b> <u>Due: Nov. 16</u>	Graded Assignment	Case analysis (team assignment)
<b>Assignment 6</b> <u>Due: Nov. 23</u>	Graded Assignment	Witness interview/declaration (team assignment)
<b>Assignment 7</b> <u>Due Nov. 30</u>	Graded Assignment	Prepare initial documents for filing third party custody lawsuit (team assignment)

## COURSE SCHEDULE

*All readings and preparation for discussion must be done PRIOR to class.*

DATE	DAY	TOPIC
Oct. 5	Mon	<p><b>INTRODUCTION TO LEGAL REASONING THE PARALEGAL PROFESSION</b></p> <p>Read Chapters 1 and 2 <i>Prepare for discussion: Legal Reasoning Exercise on pp. 10-11</i></p>
Oct. 7	Wed	<p><b>FUNCTIONS AND SOURCES OF LAW</b></p> <p>Read Chapter 3, Appendix A (Excerpts from the US Constitution)</p>
Oct. 12	Mon	<p><b>HOW LAWYERS CLASSIFY LAW</b></p> <p>Read Chapter 4</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b><i>Turn in Assignment #1</i></b></p>
Oct. 14	Wed	<p><b>STRUCTURE OF THE COURT SYSTEM</b></p> <p>Read Chapter 5 <i>Read Gardner v. Loomis</i></p>
Oct. 19	Mon	<p><b>CIVIL LITIGATION – PRE-TRIAL</b></p> <p>Read Chapter 6 to page 133 (up to “2. The Trial”) <i>Read CR 26, 30, 33,36</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b><i>Turn in Assignment #2</i></b></p>
Oct. 21	Wed	<p><b>CIVIL LITIGATION – PRE-TRIAL MOTIONS/TRIAL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparation of Initial Pleadings</li> <li>• Recognizing the prima facie case</li> </ul> <p><i>Read CR 12, 56</i></p>
Oct. 26	Mon	<p><b>CIVIL LITIGATION – APPEALS; ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS</b></p> <p>Read Chapter 6 (page 133 to end)</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b><i>Turn in Assignment #3</i></b></p>
Oct. 28	Wed	<p><b>LEGAL ETHICS</b></p> <p>Read Chapter 11</p> <p><b>REVIEW FOR MIDTERM EXAM</b></p>
Nov. 2	Mon	<b>MIDTERM EXAM</b>

Nov. 4	Wed	<b>CLIENT INTERVIEWS STATUTORY INTERPRETATION</b>  <b>Read Chapter 7</b> <i>RCW 26.10 (third party custody statute)</i>
Nov. 9	Mon	<b>CASE ANALYSIS AND BRIEFING</b>  <b>Read Chapter 8</b>  <i>Turn in Assignment #4</i>
Nov. 11	Wed	<b>NO CLASS - VETERANS DAY</b>
Nov. 16	Mon	<b>THIRD PARTY CUSTODY PROJECT</b> <b>*THE PRIMA FACIE CASE</b> <b>*WORKING WITH FORMS</b>  <i>Turn in Assignment #5</i>
Nov. 18	Wed	<b>WITNESS INTERVIEWS</b> <b>*DRAFTING DECLARATIONS</b>
Nov. 23	Mon	<b>FINDING THE LAW</b>  <b>Read Chapter 9</b>  <i>Turn in Assignment #6</i>
Nov. 25	Wed	<b>REVIEW OF RESEARCH AND LEGAL PROCESS</b> <b>*INDIVIDUAL CONSULTATION (AS DESIRED)</b>
Nov. 30	Mon	<b>OVERVIEW OF THE LAW OF TORTS</b>  <b>Read Chapter 12</b>  <i>Turn in Assignment #7</i>
Dec. 2	Wed	<b>OVERVIEW OF THE LAW OF CONTRACTS</b>  <b>Read Chapter 13</b>
Dec. 7	Mon	<b>OVERVIEW OF FAMILY LAW</b>  <b>Read Chapter 16</b>
Dec. 9	Wed	<b>OVERVIEW OF CRIMINAL LAW</b>  <b>Read Chapter 17</b>  <b>REVIEW FOR FINAL EXAM</b>
Dec. 14	Mon	<b>FINAL EXAM</b>