

2007 MASTER PLAN/PROGRESS REPORT

Academic Program: AA Paralegal Studies

Person Responsible: Billy Turner

Date Submitted: May 07

Mission: The purposes of the Associate of Arts degree in Paralegal Studies are:

- Students will broaden their knowledge and increase their understanding of the Paralegal role and skills through an academic understanding of various aspects of the paralegal profession.
- Students will be provided with a solid liberal arts background and program of student learning leading to an Associate of Arts degree in Paralegal Studies which prepares them for careers in the paralegal field. All students will be required to receive instruction in the role of the paralegal, legal research and legal writing and various human/social sciences (EPO3, EPO2).]
- To offer students the opportunity to obtain a minor in paralegal studies and/or acquaint themselves with paralegal studies. The Department offers a minor in paralegal studies to all students.
- To serve the University, the academic community, and Southwest Louisiana through teaching, research, community service and University service.
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Institutional Mission Reference:

- To provide excellent instruction and advising to Paralegal Studies majors and other students accompanied by academic excellence with a personal touch both in and without the classroom setting.
- Emphasize excellence in instruction. Annual Performance Reviews include SEI's to monitor student assessment of faculty classroom performance (AE1, EPO2, EPO3).
- The Department currently has no degree programs that have national accreditation status. However, all Paralegal Studies faculty continue to input to keep each discipline contemporary with Paralegal Studies Associate Degree programs nation wide (AE4, EPO2).
- Foster a climate that enhances student learning, focuses on retention, values advising, and enriches the quality of campus life. All departmental faculty are strongly encouraged to support student learning and high academic standards while maintaining "a personal touch" with students. Students and their advisors know each other and meet frequently in the classroom and advising office (EPO2)
- Utilize technology to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of campus operations. The department continues to write grant proposals to attain technological innovation and replacement of older equipment or attainment of new equipment. (EPO4).
- Support mutually beneficial university/community collaboration. The department and relevant faculty continue to work closely with university and community organizations to include advising, consulting, grant proposal writing assistance and more. (UCA1).

Assessment Methods Utilized:

- Standardized Exam (nationally normed)
- Standardized Exam (state-normed)
- Major Field Examination
- Internally-developed Examination
- Student Opinion Survey (SOS)
- National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)

Data Repository Location:

Kaufman #175_____

Student Learning Outcome 1: Graduates apply critical thinking in academic and professional environments.

<u>Expected Level of Achievement</u>	<u>Actual Data From Assessment</u>	<u>Actions/Decisions</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">100 percent of paralegal majors will take at least one Philosophy course: most will take Phil 102 (Critical Thinking) or Phil 201 (Introduction to Philosophy); Additional Philosophy courses can be taken as electives. All Philosophy courses offered in the Department of Social Sciences assess critical thinking.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Philosophy faculty will use embedded questions on objective exams and examine critical portions of essay requirements to aggregate appropriate data for benchmarking.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Changes in coursework or focus will be implemented as needed based upon data compiled.

Student Learning Outcome 2: Graduates formulate and express ideas effectively through oral, written, and/or technological communications in academic and professional environments.

<u>Expected Level of Achievement</u>	<u>Actual Data From Assessment</u>	<u>Actions/Decisions</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100 percent of paralegal majors will take ENGL 101 and ENGL 102 (English Composition) and earn passing grades. Students must repeat these courses if a passing grade is not earned. No substitutions will be allowed. • 100 percent of paralegal majors will take Spch 201 (or a similar Speech course) and earn passing grades. Students must repeat these courses if a passing grade is not earned. No substitutions will be allowed. • 100 percent of paralegal majors will take OSBC 307 (Excel for Windows) or a similar computer course and earn passing grades. • All paralegal majors will take PLEG 251 (Legal Writing): this course develops practical skills for legal writing and presentation of information. Writing skills development is sequential throughout the course. Students must present legal briefs they have developed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Department Head will compile data for benchmarking. • The Department Head will compile data for benchmarking. • The Department Head will compile data for benchmarking. • The Instructor will brief the Coordinator of Paralegal Studies on student progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students must repeat these courses if a passing grade is not earned. No substitutions will be allowed. • Students must repeat these courses if a passing grade is not earned. No substitutions will be allowed. • Students must repeat these courses if a passing grade is not earned. • Students must earn a grade of “C” or higher or repeat the course.

Student Learning Outcome 3: Graduates analyze the global community to make sound judgments in academic and professional environments.

<u>Expected Level of Achievement</u>	<u>Actual Data From Assessment</u>	<u>Actions/Decisions</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 100 percent of paralegal majors will take PLEG 201 (Administrative Law) and earn a passing grade.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Department Head will compile data for benchmarking.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students must repeat this course if a passing grade of “C” or higher is not earned.

Student Learning Outcome 4: Paralegal majors will self-assess their knowledge acquisition and their level of satisfaction with advisement within the program.

<u>Expected Level of Achievement</u>	<u>Actual Data From Assessment</u>	<u>Actions/Decisions</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 90 percents of Paralegal majors will complete a Departmental Exit Survey for Paralegal majors and address their McNeese experience with regard to advising, professional training, learning, and job preparation.• All Paralegal majors must complete SOSC 400 (Portfolio) and construct a professional quality resume, write an essay to demonstrate college level English competency, and assess their learning experience at McNeese.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Coordinator of Paralegal Studies will compile data for benchmarking.• The Department Head will review student assessments of their McNeese experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Changes in course presentations and instruction will be made as indicated.• Changes in course requirements will be implemented as indicated.

Resources Allocated: Currently, the Department of Social Sciences is dependent on successful grant proposals for most of its equipment and technology. This practice will continue to receive emphasis.
