

# Institute for Paralegal Studies

## 2009/2010 Student Handbook

### Current Student Login

ID is student

Password is 72779673

This Handbook, along with the Current Student section of the Institute website, is intended as a guide for all paralegal students at Loyola's Institute for Paralegal Studies. It is effective for the 2009/10 academic year. Loyola paralegal students are also subject to the provisions of the Loyola University Chicago Student Handbook ([luc.edu/studentaffairs/index.shtml](http://luc.edu/studentaffairs/index.shtml)).

The primary goal of the Institute for Paralegal Studies is to graduate well-trained paralegals who are ready to perform typical paralegal duties under the supervision of an attorney. To this end, the faculty of the Institute imposes rigorous standards on the students to prepare them for working in the legal community.

Students should not hesitate to contact the Institute Office, 312/915-6820, if they have any questions.



*Preparing people to lead extraordinary lives*

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## **INSTITUTE OFFICE**

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### **Location**

The Institute Office is located in Suite 621 of Lewis Towers at 820 N. Michigan Avenue.

### **Office Hours**

Regular office hours are 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Friday. Later appointments may be requested.

The Office will also be closed for the following holidays:

Labor Day – September 7, 2009

Thanksgiving Day – November 26, 2009

President's Day – November 27, 2009

Christmas Eve – December 24, 2009

Christmas Day – December 25, 2009

New Year's Eve – December 31, 2009

New Year's Day – January 1, 2010

Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday – January 18, 2010

Good Friday – April 2, 2010

Memorial Day – May 31, 2010

Independence Day – July 5, 2010

### **Staff**

Director – Jean Hellman Ryan

Program Assistant – Kelly Barry

Administrative Assistant – Jennifer Gettings

All faculty members other than the Director are adjunct instructors. Your instructors will post either an office telephone number or an e-mail address on their Blackboard account where they can be reached. Each teacher has a mailbox in the Institute office that is checked before each class.

### **Contact Information**

The Institute Office number is 312/915-6820. FAX messages may be sent to 312/915-6508; please be sure to clearly mark the pages for Paralegal Studies, and notify us of incoming messages, as the FAX machine is not located in the Institute office. E-mail messages may be sent to [paralegal@luc.edu](mailto:paralegal@luc.edu).

## **STUDENT SERVICES**

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### **LOCUS**

LOCUS is Loyola's Online Connection to University Services. Students have the ability to access registration, billing and payment information, transcripts, personal contact information, class schedule, and a variety of other resources. In order to access LOCUS students must first obtain their Universal ID and Password.

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### **OFFICE OF REGISTRATION AND RECORDS**

#### **Change of Address**

Address changes can be done online via LOCUS. Students are required to keep their contact information current so there is no disruption of University correspondence and services. Information changed within LOCUS is kept on record with the Registration and Records office. If you have a change of address (US mail or email), in addition to updating your personal portfolio on LOCUS, please also notify the Institute Office as the University does not automatically notify us of these changes.

#### **Change of Name**

Students/Alumni with a name change should submit a Name Change Request form. These requests must be submitted with the supporting documentation. Forms can be found online within the Office of Registration and Records website.

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### **TEXTBOOK LIST**

The Institute textbook list is a comprehensive list of the texts used for all paralegal studies coursework. This list can be found online within the Current Student section of the Institute website. Students should be aware that texts may be subject to change up to one month prior to the start of a session. Also, the University Bookstore only carries texts in use for the current or upcoming session.

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### **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES (ITS)**

<http://www.luc.edu/its/index.shtml>

#### **Universal ID and Password**

Your Universal ID and Password provides access to LOCUS, Blackboard, networked LUC computers, and Groupwise (LUC email). Students having trouble with their ID/Password should contact the helpdesk, 773/508-7190 or [helpdesk@luc.edu](mailto:helpdesk@luc.edu).

#### **Personal Account Manager (PAM)**

PAM allows students to manage their ID and Password. Through PAM students can reset passwords, check their account status, and reroute their LUC email account.

#### **Forgot Your Password?**

Students can set personal identifiers within their PAM account that will allow them to reset their password in the future. Identifiers must be established on PAM before a

password can be reset. Students will need to contact the helpdesk to reset a password if they have not set up their identifiers prior to losing their password.

### **Unable to Login?**

Student passwords will expire:

- after 3 months of inactivity
- after a specified number of incorrect logins
- IDs are deleted 90 days after graduation from the University.

### **Want your LUC email sent to another email account?**

Email communication sent from the Institute Office is sent to the address provided by students on their application at the time of admission to the program. If this email changes, students should update this with the office. Emails sent from faculty (via Blackboard) or from any other University Office (Bursar, Registration and Records, etc.) will be sent to the student's LUC email account (username@luc.edu).

If you prefer to use another email service as your default email, be sure to re-route your Loyola email to that account. Messages sent to your Loyola address will instead show up in your preferred account, ensuring you do not miss important Loyola mail.

Only messages sent to your Loyola account after you re-route will be forwarded.

### **Computer Labs**

The Water Tower Campus has several open access labs. These labs are available for drop-in use by Loyola students, faculty, and staff. Information regarding lab location, hours available, printing capabilities, and other computer lab rules and information can be found online at [http://www.luc.edu/labs/wtc/lab\\_wtc.shtml](http://www.luc.edu/labs/wtc/lab_wtc.shtml)

### **Bulk/Junk Folders**

The Institute Office sends important notification via email. These notices are sent to all current students and can sometimes include up to 150 or more email addresses. Due to the large number of recipients these emails can sometimes be rerouted to your bulk/junk folder by default. If your email account has a bulk/junk folder feature be sure to check that these emails are not placed into this folder. If possible include [paralegal@luc.edu](mailto:paralegal@luc.edu) as a secured email address. If for any reason you are in doubt about receiving emails from our office be sure to check your bulk/junk folder first.

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## **LEXIS & WESTLAW SUBSCRIPTIONS**

Students enrolled in any section of Legal Research and Writing will be provided access to LEXIS and Westlaw and assessed a fee for access to these services. Students receive their access information for both services within their second week of class. Information is typically distributed in class by the Legal Research and Writing Instructor.

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## **STUDENT VIEWPOINTS**

Students are welcome to express their views and make suggestions about the program to the Director. Teacher/course evaluations are conducted via e-mail at the end of every 8-week course.

An online suggestion box is available in the Current Student section of the Institute website. Also, from time to time the Institute conducts brief surveys on various topics relating to the program.

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## OFFICE OF THE BURSAR

[www.luc.edu/bursar](http://www.luc.edu/bursar)

Students can view a summary of their account activity through their LOCUS accounts. Billing is based on registration. Once a semester's billing cycle has begun, electronic statements are generated on the 15<sup>th</sup> of every month with a due date of the 5<sup>th</sup> of the following month. Please contact the Office of Student Financial Assistance if you are expecting financial assistance that is not shown as anticipated aid on your statement.

### Tuition Due Dates

| Term   | Statement Generated | Tuition Due Date |
|--------|---------------------|------------------|
| Fall   | July 15th           | August 5th       |
| Spring | December 15th       | January 5th      |
| Summer | April 15th          | May 5th          |

### Electronic Billing

The e-Bill is a snapshot in time of how an individual student financial account appears on the day it is generated. E-Bills replaced paper bills in January 2007, and paper bills are no longer available. Students with account balances are notified monthly to review their LOCUS accounts at: [www.luc.edu/locus](http://www.luc.edu/locus) where they also will find their e-Bills.

### Payment Options/Payment Plans

The Office of the Bursar does provide several payment options and plans. Complete information can be found on the Bursar's website at [www.luc.edu/bursar/payment.shtml](http://www.luc.edu/bursar/payment.shtml).

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## ACTIVITY FEE

All Loyola students are charged an activity fee. The fee is used by the University to support various services: the Wellness Center, the Counseling Center, the Learning Assistance Center, recreational sports facilities (except for Halas Center), shuttle bus, and University-wide community events. Fees are assessed for every session a student is registered within and are based on the number of hours a student is registered for that session.

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## TECHNOLOGY FEE

The technology fee is for all students to fund and refresh student technology, student experience, and classroom-related programs. Fees are assessed for every session a student is registered within and are based on the number of hours a student is registered for that session.

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## **STUDENT HEALTH INSURANCE**

Paralegal Studies students are not automatically enrolled in the student health insurance program. Any students interested in participating in the University Health Insurance program should visit their website at [www.luc.edu/bursar/insurance](http://www.luc.edu/bursar/insurance).

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## **FINANCIAL AID**

[www.luc.edu/finaid](http://www.luc.edu/finaid)

Students can access their personal financial aid information (from point in process to reward information) through their LOCUS accounts.

### **Eligibility**

For financial aid purposes, the paralegal program is a professional program. In order for paralegal students to qualify to receive financial aid they must be registered for a minimum of 6 semester hours (3 classes) or more during a standard 16-week semester. The Financial Aid Office looks at both 8-week sessions within a semester (i.e., Fall I and II, Spring I and II or Summer I) when determining eligibility. The three-class minimum (6 s.h.) can be spread out over Fall I and Fall II or over Spring I and Spring II if a student chooses. However, the 8-week summer session is considered a semester by itself, and you must be registered for three classes in the summer session in order to be eligible to receive financial aid during the summer.

### **Scholarships**

While Loyola does not offer any paralegal scholarships at the present time, some scholarship opportunities are available each through various paralegal and bar groups. Information and application forms are available online.

### **Veterans Benefits**

The Institute for Paralegal Studies has been approved by the federal Veterans Administration for benefits to qualified veterans. Information regarding benefits and the application process is available at [http://www.luc.edu/finaid/specialprograms\\_armedservices.shtml](http://www.luc.edu/finaid/specialprograms_armedservices.shtml)

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## **(SSWD) SERVICES for STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Loyola is committed to providing equal access for all students with disabilities including, but not limited to, direct assistance, promotion of an accessible physical environment, education of all Loyolans regarding disability issues, and student advocacy.

If you are new to Loyola, we encourage you to make an appointment with the Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities **at least four weeks** prior to the start of your first session. This will give Loyola time to evaluate your needs and identify available resources.

Every student with a disability is unique and her or his requests for services will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Services for Students with Disabilities works closely with several Loyola departments and outside agencies to ensure that your educational needs are met.

The Office of Services for Students with Disabilities is part of the Learning Assistance Center, which offers individual and group sessions for improving learning, tutorial services, and in-class workshops. Many students with disabilities work closely with both the Coordinator and a

Learning Assistance Counselor. In this way, we seek to enhance your entire academic experience at Loyola.

Interested students should contact the SSWD office to set up an appointment.  
<http://www.luc.edu/sswd/students.shtml>

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## **CAMPUS SAFETY**

<http://www.luc.edu/depts/safety/>

For any on-campus police, fire or medical emergency, call Public Safety at 44-911 from any Loyola telephone. The non-emergency number is 773/508-6039. The 24-hour security post is in the lobby of the 25 East Pearson Building.

### **Lost and Found**

Lost and found items may be given to a front desk attendant in any of the campus buildings at any time. Property will be held for 60 days before it is disposed of. Contact the campus security non-emergency number, 773/508-6039, if you need to locate a lost item.

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## **CAREER RESOURCE CENTER**

### **Location**

Institute for Paralegal Studies Office  
 Lewis Towers - 621  
 820 N. Michigan Avenue  
 Chicago, IL 60611  
 312/915-6820

### **Office Hours**

#### While classes are in session

Monday - Thursday; 8:30 a.m. - 5:45 p.m.  
 Friday; 8:30 p.m. - 5 p.m.

#### In between sessions

Monday - Friday; 8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.

The Career Resource Center houses a collection of books on the paralegal and legal profession, including some law school information. The Institute maintains subscriptions to *Legal Assistant Today*, *NFPA's Paralegal Reporter*, *NALA's Facts & Findings*, *IPMA Paralegal Manager*, *American Bar Association Journal*, *Law Office Computing* and *Chicago Daily Law Bulletin*.

### **Employment Assistance**

Students may start a paralegal job search at any time. Students are more attractive to employers as they approach graduation. Students should start a job search early in the semester in which they plan to graduate.

You may use the Institute's career assistance service in either or both of these methods:

1. Browse the online Job Board section periodically and reply directly to any notice that interests you.
2. Submit a resume for the Institute's electronic resume database. Resumes will be critiqued by the Director and/or Program Assistant, who then forwards suitable resumes from this database to employers on request. Almost all employers also ask that a notice be posted. We will alert the employers that they may receive some duplicate resumes in this situation. Please send your resume as a Word attachment.

Students who are enrolled in Institute classes after completing a paralegal certificate degree at another program are allowed limited access to career assistance services provided by the Institute. These students are welcome to use the materials in the Institute's Career Resource Center and those posted online, including the job board, and to attend group presentations on career matters. Other career services, such as individual consulting with the Institute director or staff, and the inclusion of resumes in the program's resume database, are not available.

Students who are completing a Loyola paralegal certificate after earning a previous paralegal certificate or degree at another program will have access to all career assistance services at the Institute once they have completed two-thirds of their required credit hours toward the Loyola certificate.

## **ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

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### **Academic Calendar**

The Institute for Paralegal Studies offers five 8-week sessions per year, two in the fall and spring and one in the summer. New students are admitted for each session. Schedules for upcoming sessions are available on the Institute web site and in the Institute office. Final exams generally are scheduled for the last week of classes and at the usual class meeting time.

### **Credit Hours**

Each Institute course awards 2 semester hours of credit. The *ABA Guidelines for the Approval of Paralegal Education Programs* require that a 2-s.h. course include 25 instructional hours. Therefore, in addition to the 24 hours of classroom instruction (class meetings three hours each week for eight weeks), each class will include an additional hour of instruction, determined at the teacher's discretion. For example, a teacher may schedule a review session before an exam, a Discussion Board posting assignment on Blackboard, or something similar. Teachers will include this extra hour of instruction in their syllabi each session.

### **Paralegal Computer Skills**

The Institute's required course, PLST 345 Law Office Computer Applications, is intended to help you develop computer skills specifically for the legal workplace. The course is not intended as an introduction to basic computer programs, such as those in Microsoft Office, which all college graduates are expected to know these days.

We strongly recommend that, if you are not confident of your knowledge of the fundamentals of the Microsoft Office programs, you complete the free online tutorials offered by Microsoft or attend the Office Applications Workshops offered by Loyola's Information Technology Services (ITS). Look for information on these options in the Training Central section of the ITS website: [http://www.luc.edu/its/training\\_central.shtml](http://www.luc.edu/its/training_central.shtml).

### **Registration**

Students register for Institute classes through LOCUS. Institute students may register for both Fall I and Fall II sessions together, and for both Spring I and Spring II sessions together.

Changes may be made to a student's registration up until the start of the Session date without incurring any late fees.

A student must be officially registered for a course before attending any classes. No student may register for a course after the late registration period.

### **Registration Changes (Add/Drop/Swap)**

Students can add, drop, or swap courses before the official session start date with no financial impact. Students making changes via LOCUS after the session start date should be mindful of the financial impact of these changes (see “Withdrawal Refund Schedule” below). Once a session begins, students may make changes to their schedule via LOCUS during the late/change registration period (the 1st week of classes) and receive 100% tuition credit. Classes cannot be dropped after the 7th class session.

### **Registration Aids**

Students can access schedules and program requirement lists online within the Current Student section.

### **Registration Holds**

Students can view detailed information regarding their holds within their LOCUS account. If you are having difficulty with registration, please be sure to check your holds on LOCUS prior to contacting the Institute Office.

### **Auditing**

Auditing Institute classes is not permitted, and only PLST 398/399 Internship is taken on a pass/fail basis.

### **Withdrawal From a Course or From the Institute**

A student who wishes to withdraw from a course or from the Institute must notify the Director either **in writing (an e-mail message to [paralegal@luc.edu](mailto:paralegal@luc.edu) is acceptable)**. A student is considered to be in attendance until this formal written notice has been received by the Director. **University policy requires all financial obligations to be dated from the date of the formal notice of withdrawal and not from the date of the last class attended.**

### **Schedule Change and Withdrawal Refund Schedule**

A schedule change is defined as adding and dropping any number of courses but maintaining enrollment. There is no financial impact for schedule changes made before the official session start date. A withdrawal from class after the session start date through the 7<sup>th</sup> class session will result in a “W” grade. Classes cannot be dropped after the 7<sup>th</sup> class session. If you stop attending a class but do not officially withdraw from it, your grade will be computed on the basis of what work you did complete. Exact withdrawal dates are posted to the Academic Calendar on the Registration and Records website.

A complete withdrawal from all classes before the beginning of the session start date results in no financial responsibility and no assignment of grade. Students who withdraw during the late and change of registration period receive a 100% tuition credit.

Any changes to your schedule or to withdraw from classes after the late/change registration period must be done through the Institute Office.

Tuition and fee charges will be based on the beginning of the session, not on the class start date. For students who withdraw after the official session start date, charges will be based on the following adjustment schedule.

| <b>WITHDRAWAL SCHEDULE</b>              |                      |
|---|----------------------|
| Effective date of withdrawal            | Tuition Credit given |
| <b>First week of session</b>            | <b>100%</b>          |
| <b>Second week of session</b>           | <b>80%</b>           |
| <b>Third week of session</b>            | <b>40%</b>           |
| <b>Fourth week of session and after</b> | <b>0%</b>            |

The Office of Student Financial Aid (OSFA) is required to recalculate financial aid eligibility for students who withdraw, drop out, are dismissed or take a leave of absence prior to completing more than 60% of a term, and for those who do not successfully complete at least one course in a term. Please check with the OSFA for your continued financial aid eligibility should you change your enrollment.

In addition, a student may be required by the Director to withdraw from the Institute because of academic deficiency, lack of sufficient progress toward completion of certificate requirements, failure to adhere to University requirements and/or certificate requirements, failure to adhere to University requirements and regulations for conduct, or failure to meet financial obligations to the University.

### **Registration in Non-Institute Courses**

Students admitted to the Institute for Paralegal Studies, as a rule, may register for Institute courses only. Dual registration is possible, however, if the student is also admitted to another college in the University. Institute students should notify the Director of their intention to register for non-Institute courses.

### **Semester Hour Limitation**

**No Institute student may register for more than 6 semester hours of courses (3 classes) in one 8-week session.**

### **Program Completion**

All students are expected to complete their studies within three calendar years of entering the program. Students who plan not to register for an upcoming session should notify the Director in writing of their intended return date.

### **Required Courses**

All students must successfully complete the requirements for at least one area of concentration or a generalist curriculum approved by the Director. The Director may approve some variation from the concentration requirements if circumstances warrant doing so.

A student who receives a grade below "C-" in any required course may be obliged, at the Director's discretion, to repeat that course (see the "Repeated Courses" section).

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| <p><b>Required of All Paralegal Students (14 s.h.):</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 331 Introduction to Paralegal Studies (2 s.h.)</li> <li>2. 332 Legal Research &amp; Writing I (2 s.h.)</li> <li>3. 333 Legal Research &amp; Writing II (2 s.h.)</li> <li>4. 334 Legal Research &amp; Writing III (2 s.h.)</li> <li>5. 335 Legal Ethics (2 s.h.)</li> <li>6. 336 Basic Business Organizations &amp; Contracts (2 s.h.)</li> <li>7. 345 Law Office Computer Applications (2 s.h.)</li> </ol>   |
| <p><b>Required for Paralegal Concentration (6 s.h.):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Civil Litigation</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8. 340 Civil Litigation I (2 s.h.)</li> <li>9. 341 Civil Litigation II (2 s.h.)</li> <li>10. 342 Civil Litigation III (2 s.h.)</li> </ol> </li> <li>• <i>Corporations</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8. 337 Advanced Business Organizations (2 s.h.)</li> <li>9. 338 Commercial Transactions I: UCC Articles 2 &amp; 2A (2 s.h.)</li> <li>10. 339 Commercial Transactions II: Article 9 &amp; Bankruptcy (2 s.h.)</li> </ol> </li> <li>• <i>Real Estate</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8. 343 Real Estate Transactions I (2 s.h.)</li> <li>9. 344 Real Estate Transactions II (2 s.h.)</li> <li>10. 337 Advanced Business Organizations (2 s.h.)</li> </ol> </li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Paralegal Electives (4 s.h.):</b></p> <p>11-12. Any other courses, including additional computer courses and internship</p>  |

### **Graduation and Certificates**

The University awards the Certificate in Paralegal Studies 3 times within each academic year after every semester, i.e., in December, May, and August.

Graduates should submit the following:

- an [ABA Certificate Audit Form](#),
- a \$60 Graduation Fee (cash or check made payable to Loyola University Chicago), and
- an online application to [LOCUS](#) (instructions for completing the application can be found at [www.luc.edu/regrec/graduation](http://www.luc.edu/regrec/graduation)).

Deadlines for the online application are as follows:

Fall graduation: August 1

Spring graduation: December 1

Summer graduation: December 1

Students missing the online application deadline can still apply for graduation by submitting a Certificate Audit Form and a graduation fee.

A student who finishes classes at the end of the Fall I or Spring I session may request a letter from the Director confirming that the student has completed all coursework for a certificate and will receive it at the specified times.

All financial obligations to the University must be satisfied before the certificate can be awarded. Certificates will be sent to graduates four to six weeks after final grades have been submitted to LOCUS.

The Institute certificate indicates "with honors" if appropriate, but does not indicate the student's concentration.

No school can award the status of "certified paralegal," which is a designation given only by professional associations (such as NALA and NFPA) to persons who meet their qualifications. Employers who ask for "certified paralegals" are almost always seeking paralegals with certificates; we know of no exceptions to this practice locally.

### **Commencement**

Paralegal students participate with the School of Continuing and Professional Studies in the University's graduation ceremonies held at the end of the spring semester in May. Preliminary information can be found online at the University's Commencement website, [www.luc.edu/commencement](http://www.luc.edu/commencement).

### **Graduation Fee**

The graduation fee for all Loyola students (whether attending the commencement ceremony or not) is currently \$60.

### **Class Attendance & Student Accountability**

Regular class attendance is required. Absences are excused only for serious, unavoidable situations, and you are expected to notify the instructor in advance of your absence. If you stop attending a class but do not officially withdraw from it, your grade will be computed on the basis of what work you did complete; you may receive an F if that is the resulting grade. Failure to attend class regularly may be considered grounds for refusal to allow a student to take a final examination, and may result in a failing grade. Students should inform the Director of prolonged absences due to illness or other serious cause. Instructors occasionally have to reschedule a class for other than its usual time, and will attempt to accommodate student schedules.

This accelerated program of study requires a heavy commitment of time and energy. We are all balancing personal and professional demands. Our responsibility to you is specifically to prepare you for a paralegal career. When you miss a class, you lose the benefit of our knowledge and experience in the legal workplace, as well as our personal interest in your progress. Your absence may also be unfair to a group project.

In particular, your absence from class generally cannot be excused because of your job responsibilities. You are expected to register for a reasonable course load in light of other demands on your time.

Your success in this program will depend heavily on your attendance and participation in the classroom. The instructor has the discretion to decide whether to accept a late assignment or

allow a makeup assignment, and if so to impose a deduction in the grade for that assignment. Also, the value placed on class participation as a component of the final grade in any course is at the discretion of the individual instructor.

**Any student who has more than three absences, including excused absences, in a single 8-week session course will not be allowed to take the final exam in that course. The student will receive a final course grade calculated on the basis of a zero score on the final exam. In courses without a final exam, the final major assignment will not be accepted, nor any assignments due at the time of the third absence or thereafter, and zero scores will be used in the final course grade calculation.**

**If some of the student's absences are excused, the student will have the opportunity to withdraw from the course without a grade penalty, as long as the deadline for dropping a course has not yet passed (usually the seventh week in each 8-week session). The student's grade will then be recorded as W. However, the student is still responsible for the course tuition in accordance with the University's official withdrawal schedule. Also, an absence from a rescheduled class (i.e., not at the regular time) will generally be considered an excused absence.**

Please note that teachers may continue to use class attendance as part of the grading criteria. Also, it is at the teacher's discretion to consider absent a student who arrives late to class or leaves early.

If you cannot attend a class, you are expected to make arrangements to obtain notes and assignments from other students, and to submit any assignments due by the appropriate deadline. It is not appropriate to expect your teacher to give you his or her class notes; this would be unfair to the students who attended the class. Nor is it appropriate to ask the teacher to review or summarize the class for you. Of course, you may ask the teacher questions after you have reviewed the material.

### **Absence from Exams or Quizzes**

Students who miss exams or quizzes will be allowed to make them up only on agreement of the Director and instructor that a serious, unavoidable situation caused the absence. The Director and instructor have the discretion to impose a deduction in the grade for that exam or quiz. The exam or quiz must then be taken as soon as possible and **during regular office hours**, as the Institute does not have staff to proctor exams at other times. To schedule a makeup exam or quiz, please contact the Institute Office, 312/915-6820. Students should contact their instructor about the makeup prior to scheduling it with the Institute Office.

Institute students are expected to take quizzes and exams at the time they are scheduled. Excused absences are limited to serious, unavoidable situations, such as illness or family emergencies, or religious holidays, and must be approved by your teacher and the Director.

You may be asked to provide documentation of the reason for your absence before you will be allowed to make up any quiz or exam. A request to make up more than one missed quiz or exam within two 8-week sessions generally will not be approved by the Director.

### **Grading System**

Instructors include an explanation of the grading criteria for each course on the syllabus. Late assignments, if accepted, and exams or quizzes taken late may be marked down, at the instructor's discretion.

If an instructor chooses to offer extra credit assignments, they will be noted on the course syllabus distributed at the beginning of the course. Students should not expect to make up poor grades entirely through extra credit assignments.

The chart below shows the University's quality and grade points for each grade level (for calculation of grade point averages), as well as the standardized grading scale used by all School of Continuing and Professional Studies faculty for converting numerical scores into letter grades:

No "A+" or "D-" grade is available. Students who complete the program with a cumulative grade point average of 3.5 or higher receive their certificate with honors.

The official grades of record for Institute courses are letter grades; the only exception is the internship course (PLST 398/399), which is taken on a pass-fail basis. Credit is given for the internship course, but it is not included in the calculation of the grade point average.

| Values for 2 semester hour courses<br>(for all 2 s.h. courses taken in Fall 04 or later) |             |                     |                   |
|--|-------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Letter Grade   | Point Range | Quality Point Value | Grade Point Value |
| A  | 95-100      | 4.0                 | 8.00              |
| A-   | 92-94       | 3.67                | 7.34              |
| B+   | 89-91       | 3.33                | 6.66              |
| B  | 86-88       | 3.0                 | 6.00              |
| B-   | 83-85       | 2.67                | 5.34              |
| C+   | 80-82       | 2.33                | 4.66              |
| C  | 77-79       | 2.0                 | 4.00              |
| C-   | 74-76       | 1.67                | 3.34              |
| D+   | 71-73       | 1.33                | 2.66              |
| D  | 65-70       | 1.0                 | 2.00              |
| F  | <65         | 0                   | 0.00              |
| P  |             | 0                   | 0                 |
| W  |             | 0                   | 0                 |
| I  |             | 0                   | 0                 |

A grade of "W" indicates official withdrawal from a course with permission of the student's dean through the allowed withdrawal period (week 7 of each 8-week session). The grade "W" is not counted in computation of academic standing.

A grade of "I" indicates the course is still incomplete. "I" grades are assigned by the student's instructor with the approval of the Director if justified by a serious, unavoidable situation. An Incomplete grade must be removed within eight weeks of the start of the subsequent term; otherwise the incomplete is converted into an "F" grade.

### **Computation of Academic Averages**

The academic average at the end of a semester is determined by dividing the total number of credit points earned by the total number of attempted credit hours carried in the semester, less hours attempted under the pass-fail option (i.e., internships). For example, a student who earned 12 credit points while carrying a total of 6 credit hours has an academic average of 2.0.

Courses with the grade of "F" are counted in the total attempted credit hours. Courses with the grade of "I" are not counted in the total credit hours until they have been replaced by a permanent final grade.

No grades earned in non-Institute courses, whether at Loyola University or elsewhere, will be computed into the academic average. Students can view their current GPA in LOCUS on their unofficial transcript. GPAs can also be calculated using the online GPA calculator at

[http://www.luc.edu/las/gpa\\_calculator.html](http://www.luc.edu/las/gpa_calculator.html). Students can use this online calculator to determine their GPA based on the grade they may expect to receive.

### **Grade Reports / Review of Final Exams**

Final grades are available online via LOCUS. Faculty are required to post final grades to LOCUS no later than the second Friday after the end of the session. The Institute Office cannot give grades by telephone or via email.

Final exams may be reviewed in the Institute office, with advance notice and during regular office hours, after the instructor returns them, usually at the beginning of the next session; they are kept on file for one year. No copies may be made of in-class exams. Take-home portions of exams as well as assignments are returned to students.

### **Academic Grievance Procedure**

In any case in which a student disputes a grade, the grade will be changed by the Director only if the grading is found to be (1) capricious, (2) in significant violation of clearly established written college policies, or (3) a result of improper procedures. Capricious grading is the assignment of a grade that is (a) based partially or entirely on criteria other than the student's performance in the course; (b) based on standards different from those applied to other students registered in the same course; or (c) based on a substantial departure from the announced grading standards for the course.

A complaint about an instructor's evaluation of the student's performance in assigning a grade is not a basis for a grievance procedure.

### **Transfer Credit Policy**

Transfer credit may be available for courses taken at another paralegal program, or at an ABA-accredited law school, before applying to the Institute. The courses must be comparable to specific Institute paralegal courses, including instruction in practical paralegal skills.

Transfer credit is limited to 6 semester hours. University policy requires that the institution offering the paralegal program be regionally accredited and that the student have earned a grade of C- or higher. The student must submit an official transcript confirming the grade, and may be required to provide documentation of the course content.

Students currently enrolled in the Institute will not receive transfer credit for courses taken elsewhere except with the advance approval of the Director, which is granted only in unusual situations and at the Director's discretion.

**Special Note:** Students with transfer credit will have access to all career assistance services at the Institute once they have completed two-thirds of their required credit hours toward the Loyola Certificate.

### **Academic Standing/Probation**

Graduation from the Institute requires at least a "C" average (2.00) for all course work attempted. A grade point average of at least 2.00 must be maintained for a student to be progressing toward graduation and to be in good academic standing.

A student whose cumulative grade point average falls below 2.00 will be placed on academic probation. **A student on academic probation may be required to reduce the number of credit hours in which he or she is enrolled.** A student on academic probation must improve the cumulative grade point average each session, and reach a minimum of 2.00 within the four subsequent sessions. If the student does not do so, he or she will be dismissed for poor scholarship.

A second probationary period is not allowed. A student in this situation is also dismissed for poor scholarship.

### **Repeated Courses**

A student may repeat a course in only two situations: (1) the student received a failing grade; or (2) the student is required by the Director to repeat a required course because the student received a grade below C-. A grade for a repeated course does not replace the original grade earned. No additional credit hours toward graduation will be awarded when the original grade was passing.

### **Graduation Honors**

A student whose cumulative grade point average is at least 3.5 at the end of the semester in which the student is graduating will be graduated with honors. This designation will appear on the program certificate.

For the purpose of calculating the cumulative GPA, grades are not rounded to nearest tenth of a point (i.e., 3.49 is not rounded to 3.50). Also, only Institute courses will be included in the computation of the cumulative grade point average.

### **Lambda Epsilon Chi (LEX)**

In July 1998 the Institute received a charter establishing a chapter of Lambda Epsilon Chi (LEX), the National Honor Society in Paralegal/Legal Assistant Studies sponsored by the American Association for Paralegal Education.

Students who have completed two-thirds of the program requirements toward their original certificate are eligible for induction into LEX if they demonstrate "superior academic performance." The Institute faculty has defined this standard as a minimum of a 3.7 cumulative grade point average and placement in the top 20% of eligible students. Two-thirds of the program requirements is calculated as 16 s.h.

The Institute inducts students into LEX once a year, at the end of the spring semester (i.e., May of each year). They receive a certificate from AAFPE in addition to their Institute certificate.

Only students working on their original paralegal certificates will be considered for LEX membership, and no more than the first 28 hours of paralegal courses will be considered in determining the student's GPA for this purpose. Also, only Institute paralegal courses will be included in this GPA calculation.

### **Courtesy Expectations**

Students are expected to treat their classroom obligations as they would treat any serious professional engagement. This includes:

- Preparing thoroughly for each session in accordance with the instructor's request.
- Arriving promptly for the start and remaining until the end of each class meeting.
- Participating fully and constructively in all class activities and discussions.
- Ensuring that cell phones and other electronic media do not interfere with class activities.
- Displaying appropriate courtesy to all involved in the class sessions. Courteous behavior specifically entails communicating in a manner that respects, and is sensitive to, the cultural, religious, sexual, and other individual differences in the University community.
- Adhering to deadlines and timetables established by the instructor.
- Providing constructive feedback to faculty members regarding their performance.

### **Academic Integrity**

The University is a community of learning whose effectiveness requires an environment of mutual trust and integrity, such as would be expected at a Jesuit, Catholic institution. As members of this community, students, faculty and staff members share the responsibility to maintain this environment. Academic dishonesty violates it.

Plagiarism is a serious violation of academic integrity standards. Plagiarism is the appropriation for gain of ideas, language, or work of another without sufficient public acknowledgment that the material is not one's own. Plagiarism may include: (1) submitting, as one's own, material copied from a published source (print, Internet, CD-ROM, audio, video, etc.); (2) submitting, as one's own, another person's unpublished work or examination material; (3) submitting, as one's own, a rewritten or paraphrased version of another person's work; (4) allowing another or paying another to write or research a paper for one's own benefit; (5) purchasing, acquiring, and using for course credit a pre-written paper.

Violations of the integrity and honesty standards of the examination process include the following: (1) obtaining, distributing, or communicating examination materials prior to the scheduled examination, without the instructor's consent; (2) providing information to, or obtaining information from, another student during the examination; or (3) attempting to change answers after the examination has been submitted.

Plagiarism on the part of a student in academic work, or dishonest examination behavior, will result in the minimum of the assignment of the grade of "F" for that assignment or examination. In addition, all instances of academic dishonesty must be reported to the Director and the Dean of the School of Professional Studies. The student may be subject to further discipline, including expulsion from the University.

Theft or damage of University property is a similar violation of conduct regulations and will subject the student to University disciplinary procedures.

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