PARALEGAL STUDIES

The Paralegal Studies program prepares students for careers in the legal profession. Paralegals are skilled professionals who perform substantive legal tasks under the supervision of a licensed attorney. While paralegals typically do not provide legal services directly to the public, paralegal responsibilities can include interviewing and assisting clients and witnesses, conducting investigation and data analysis, drafting legal documents, researching legal issues as well as supporting litigation efforts.

The Paralegal Studies program offers a 61 credit program for an Associates of Applied Science degree in Paralegal Studies as well as a 29 credit program for a Legal Assistant Certificate. Both programs prepare students for careers in the legal profession. The Legal Assistant Certificate prepares students in basic legal office skills. Upon completion of the Legal Assistant Certificate program, students may enter the career field or apply their courses to an Associates of Applied Science degree in Paralegal Studies.

Upon completion of the Legal Assistant Certificate program, students may enter the career field and prepare to take Certified Paralegal Exam offered by the National Association of Legal Assistants. Successful completion of that exam and one year of substantive law-related experience under the supervision of a licensed attorney qualifies the graduate as a paralegal under Rule 20-115(E) of the New Mexico Rules Governing Paralegal Service. The NALA certification is also accepted in many other states.

Paralegal Studies - Associate of Applied Science (http://catalogs.nmsu.edu/alamogordo/degrees-certificates/paralegal-studies/paralegal-studies-associate-applied-science)

Legal Assistant - Certificate (http://catalogs.nmsu.edu/alamogordo/degrees-certificates/paralegal-studies/legal-assistant-certificate)

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