

**Title:** Paralegal Studies Proficiency Certificate

**Description:** This American Bar Association Approved Paralegal Studies certificate is designed to provide students who have earned an associate's or bachelor's degree from an institution accredited by a regional member of the Commission of Higher Education with the skills and knowledge required to work as entry level paralegals. Community College of Philadelphia trains paralegals who must operate under the supervision of a licensed attorney and are prohibited from practicing law.

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

Upon successful completion of the Paralegal Studies Proficiency Certificate, students will be able to:

- Work successfully as entry-level paralegals.
- Apply ethical concepts to hypothetical examples and real-life situations.
- Draft legal documents, conduct legal research both manually and through computer-assisted research and undertake the full scope of tasks assumed by entry-level paralegals.
- Demonstrate legal analytical skills and legal writing skills.
- Cultivate a supportive professional network and learn how to remain current in the legal profession.
- Demonstrate an understanding of legal terminology in civil litigation and a variety of practice areas.
- Demonstrate practical skills in a variety of practice areas.
- Understand the role of technology in the modern law office and have practical experience using legal technology programs.

**Entrance Requirements:**

This certificate is open to students who have earned a BA, BS, AA or AS degree from an institution accredited by a regional member of the Commission of Higher Education prior to beginning this proficiency certificate program. Students who have earned an AAS degree will also be eligible, providing that the Coordinator of Paralegal Studies certifies that the student's transcript reflects compliance with all general education requirements mandated by the ABA.

**Program of Study:**

Students may follow the Accelerated Paralegal Studies curriculum (as follows) and/or may also attend the College 15 week semester. Students must meet with an advisor to ensure that the number of online courses taken do not exceed the maximum number allowed by the American Bar Association.

**Session One Accelerated Paralegal Studies Program:**

*(Early fall, mid-fall, spring and summer)*

PLS 101 Introduction to Paralegal Studies  
 PLS 111 Legal Research & Writing I or PLS elective  
 PLS 121 Civil Litigation I

**Session Two Accelerated Paralegal Studies Program:**

*(Fall, mid-fall, spring and summer)*

PLS 115 Legal Technology

Three paralegal electives (TBA) or PLS 111 and two paralegal electives

**Session Three Accelerated Paralegal Studies Program:**

*(spring, summer and fall)*

PLS 211 Legal Research & Writing II

PLS elective (TBA)

PLS elective (TBA)

**Courses:**

<b>Course Number</b>	<b>Course Name</b>	<b>Prerequisite or Corequisite</b>	<b>Credits</b>
PLS 101	Introduction to Paralegal Studies	English 101 readiness	3
PLS 121	Civil Litigation I	PLS 101	3
PLS 111	Legal Research and Writing	PLS 101	3
PLS 115	Legal Technology	CIS 103, PLS 101	3
PLS 211	Legal Research and Writing II	PLS 111 and ENGL 102	3
Note: Students must select four courses from the electives that follow below:			
<b>Course Number:</b>	<b>Course Name:</b>	<b>Prerequisite or Corequisite</b>	<b>Credits</b>
PLS 221	Civil Litigation II	PLS 101 and PLS 121	3
PLS 231	Family Law	PLS 111 and PLS 121	3
PLS 241	Tort Law	PLS 121	3
PLS 251	Real Estate Law for the Paralegal	PLS 111	3
PLS 255	Business Organizations	PLS 111, Engl 101	3
PLS 261	Wills, Trusts and Estates for the Paralegal	PLS 111	3
PLS 265	Intellectual Property	PLS 111	3
PLS 271	Bankruptcy Law	PLS 121	3
PLS 275	Employment Law	PLS 111	3
PLS 281	Environmental Law	PLS 111	3
PLS 285	Immigration Law	PLS 121	3
PLS 295	Legal Internship	111,121, completion of 36 credits and a GPA of 2.5 or better	3

**Successful Completion:**

A grade of "C" or better in the five required courses and four electives is required to earn the certificate. Students whose behavior is viewed as inconsistent with professional standards may be dropped from the certificate program pending the results of a departmental hearing. All students are required to sign an integrity statement in all Paralegal Studies courses agreeing to abide by standards of ethics and integrity in all assignments and undertakings.

Students pursuing the Paralegal Studies Proficiency Certificate are advised that it is important to have current knowledge in order to successfully compete in today's legal environment and are urged to complete all Paralegal Studies courses within five years of graduation. To ensure that graduates possess current knowledge and skills, the following requirements apply:

- Because of the need to possess current knowledge of technology, **PLS 115** (Legal Technology) must be taken within five calendar years of graduation.
- Any student who has taken Introduction to Paralegal Studies, (**PLS 101**), Civil Litigation, (**PLS 121**), Legal Research and Writing I, (**PLS 111**) and / or Legal Research and Writing II, (**PLS 211**) more than five academic years before his / her proposed graduation date must demonstrate current knowledge. The student must meet with the Program Coordinator and develop a plan to demonstrate current knowledge and skills.

**For More Information Contact:**

The Division of Liberal Studies, Room BR-21, 1700 Spring Garden Street, Philadelphia, Pa. 19130. Telephone (215) 751-8450; or call the College Information Center (215) 751-8010.