ADVANCED LEGAL COMMUNICATIONS
Course Syllabus

Course Number: LOA-A0091       OHLAP Credit: No
OCAS Code: None
Course Length: 180 Hours
Career Cluster: Business, Management & Administration
Career Pathway: Administrative & Information Support
Career Major(s): Legal Office Assistant

Pre-requisite(s): Advanced Computer Applications for the Law Office

Course Description: This course teaches the importance of effective communication in the workplace. It includes skills sets in areas such as Business English, Business Writing, Document Preparation, and other topics that enhance the students’ ability to effectively communicate verbally and non-verbally with coworkers at all levels and external customers.

Textbooks:
- Basic Manual of the Lawyer’s Assistant, 11th ED, by NALS- the association for legal professionals, West Publishing (2011)

Course Objectives:

A. Legal Terminology
   1. Correctly spell, pronounce, and define general legal terms.
   2. Correctly spell, pronounce, and define legal terms related to the courts and legal system.

B. Legal Document Composition
   1. Demonstrate clarity and organization of writing when drafting legal documents.
   2. Demonstrate conciseness of writing.
   3. Demonstrate positive, tactful style and tone.
   4. Demonstrate unity and coherence.
   5. Properly punctuate and express numbers.
   6. Demonstrate appropriate use of grammar, spelling, and vocabulary.
   7. Demonstrate appropriate sentence structure including dangling construction, misplaced modifiers, and parallel structure.
   8. Follow proper procedures for producing, preparing, assembling, and distributing legal documents.
   10. Utilize proofreading skills to ensure content, spelling, punctuation, and format are correct.
C. Communication Services
1. Explain and problem solve situations using different types of teleconferencing and related services including: Audio, Video, Telephone services, Custom calling services, Long-distance calls, Mobile (cellular) service, Operator-assisted calls, Overseas telephone service, Pagers, Voice mail, and Wide-Area Telecommunications Service (WATS).

D. Listening Skills
1. Actively listen.
2. Identify barriers and benefits to effective listening.
3. Develop listening skills and questioning techniques.
4. Understand passive listening.

E. Verbal Communication and Language
1. Discuss barriers, problems, and limitations in verbal communication.
2. Accept criticism and praise through feedback.
3. Provide clear instructions.
4. Practice dialogue and promote effective dialogue.
5. Communicate effectively through presentations.
6. Exhibit high-level telephone etiquette.

F. Non-Verbal Communication and Language
1. Be conscious of body language, expression, gestures, and appearance.
2. Respect time and space.

G. Legal Transcription
1. Operate transcribing equipment (both desktop and digital) efficiently with intermittent listening and continuous keying.
2. Effectively use legal dictionaries and secretarial reference materials.
3. Produce mailable copy from the transcriber in a timely manner.
4. Revise documents from previously transcribed material according to instruction.

H. Citators in Legal Research
1. Explain Shepardizing.
2. Become familiar with electronic citation services.
3. Explain the use of digests.
4. Define headnotes.
5. Discuss the topic and key number system.
6. Become familiar with:
   a. American Law Reports
   b. Legal encyclopedias
   c. Legal texts and treatises
   d. Legal periodicals
   e. Restatements
   f. Uniform Laws Annotated
   g. Annotated statutes
   h. Martindale-Hubbell Law Dictionary
   i. Form and practice books

I. Legal Resources
1. Discuss Westlaw.
2. Explain LexisNexis.
3. Utilize the World Wide Web as a legal research tool.¹
4. Use the Oklahoma State Courts Network (www.oscn.net) to conduct legal research.¹
5. Become familiar with World Wide Web tools used to locate individuals.¹

¹ODCTE objective

Teaching Methods: The class will primarily be taught by the lecture and demonstration method and supported by various media materials to address various learning styles. There will be question and answer sessions over material covered in lecture and media presentations. Supervised lab time is provided for students to complete required projects.

Grading Procedures: 1. Students are graded on theory and shop practice and performance.
2. Each course must be passed with seventy percent (70%) or better.
3. Grading scale: A=90-100%, B=80-89%, C=70-79%, D=60-69%, F=50-59%.

Description of Classroom, Laboratories, and Equipment: Tulsa Technology Center campuses are owned and operated by Tulsa Technology Center School District No. 18. All programs provide students the opportunity to work with professionally certified instructors in modern, well-equipped facilities.

Available Certifications/College Credit: The student may be eligible to take state, national or industry exam after completion of the program. College credit may be issued from Oklahoma State University-Okmulgee or Tulsa Community College. See program counselor for additional information.

College Credit Eligibility: The student must maintain a grade point average of 2.0 or better.