

PARALEGAL STUDIES: BILINGUAL

School of Business

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Map: <https://goo.gl/maps/C4E3PnKsdU92> (<https://goo.gl/maps/C4E3PnKsdU92/>)



AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION

ABA Approved Paralegal Program

General Description

Southwestern College offers two American Bar Association (ABA) approved programs, paralegal studies and paralegal studies—bilingual. Both programs are approved to be completed entirely online. As per ABA requirements, students take a minimum of nine semester credits of legal specialty coursework through synchronous instruction (such as courses completed through synchronous videoconferencing format). The department ensures compliance with this through the scheduling process. The Paralegal Studies - Bilingual program provides students with a litigation background and focus on developing an awareness and sensibility to the language, culture, and common legal issues of clients from various ethnic groups within the community. An understanding of international legal issues which impact San Diego due to its geographical location, and other legal and business related activities are also developed.

The goals of the Paralegal Studies Program are to prepare students for employment in the legal field as paralegals, and in administrative positions where a knowledge of the legal system is utilized and to educate its students to perform effectively in a variety of legal settings, including, but not limited to those in our local service area, and to adapt to changes in the legal environment.

The paralegal works under the supervision of an attorney. Responsibilities are broad and varied including preparing and interpreting legal documents, interviewing clients, performing legal research, preparing for trial, and organizing and managing documentation. Paralegals often work with attorneys in specialized areas of law such as immigration, family law, personal injury, contracts, wills, trusts, and probate.

Employment in the field tends to vary. Larger, well-established law firms commonly require a bachelor's degree, and smaller law firms and legal agencies often require a two-year associate degree or its equivalent. Potential employees who have an advanced education level, knowledge

of a frequently used foreign language, and/or an emphasis in a legal specialty will have the greatest opportunities in the job market.

Program Objectives

- Apply legal research, analytical, written, and oral communication skills in the legal setting;
- Understand and uphold ethical and professional rules for paralegals;
- Understand California's rules and regulations for the paralegal profession;
- Gain familiarity with relevant computer software and online resources commonly used in law offices;
- Understand the basic concepts of procedural and substantive law;
- Understand the basic concepts of state and federal court systems.

Career Options

Below is a sample of the career options available for the paralegal studies major. A few require a certificate of achievement, some require an associate in science degree, and some require a bachelor's degree: claims examiner, compensation and benefits manager, corporate legal assistant, court clerk, customs agent, forms and procedures specialist, freelance paralegal, legal assistant, investigator (for local, state, and federal departments and agencies), legal aide, legal research assistant, legal technician, and title examiner. This training can also provide entrance to some careers in administration of justice such as youth authority, probation, and parole officer when a candidate passes appropriate tests and gains related experience.

Degree/Certificate Options	Major Code
Associate in Science Degree:	
Career/Technical	
Paralegal Studies: Bilingual (English/Spanish) (http://catalog.swccd.edu/associate-degree-certificate-programs/paralegal-studies-bilingual/paralegal-studies-bilingual-english-spanish-as/)	A2517
Certificate of Achievement	
Paralegal Studies: Bilingual (English/Spanish) (http://catalog.swccd.edu/associate-degree-certificate-programs/paralegal-studies-bilingual/paralegal-studies-bilingual-english-spanish-certificate/)	A2519

Consult with a counselor to develop a Student Education Plan (SEP), which lists the courses necessary to achieve your academic goals.

Faculty

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