

Program Overview

The M.A. major in Legal Studies is an ABA-approved program that offers career enhancement in law-related fields and helps meet the evolving needs of the legal and business communities and federal and state government entities. It is offered concurrently with the Paralegal Studies Certificate, which is also an ABA-approved paralegal training program. These programs do not qualify graduates to practice law. Legal assistants or paralegals must work under the supervision of a licensed attorney.

Application Requirements

The items listed below are required for admission consideration for applicable semesters of entry during the current academic year. Submission instructions, additional details, and changes to admission requirements for semesters other than the current academic year can be found on The Graduate College's website (<http://www.gradcollege.txstate.edu>). International students should review the International Admission Documents page (<http://mycatalog.txstate.edu/graduate/admission-documents/international/>) for additional requirements.

- completed online application (including the Paralegal Studies Certificate)
- \$20 nonrefundable certificate fee (Paralegal Studies Certificate) **and** \$55 nonrefundable application fee
- or
- \$20 nonrefundable certificate fee (Paralegal Studies Certificate) **and** \$90 nonrefundable application fee for applications with international credentials
- baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited university (Non-U.S. degrees must be equivalent to a four-year U.S. Bachelor's degree. In most cases, three-year degrees are not considered. Visit our International FAQs (<https://www.gradcollege.txst.edu/international/faqs.html>) for more information.)
- official transcripts from **each institution** where course credit was granted
- a 3.0 overall GPA or a 3.0 GPA in the last 60 hours of undergraduate course work (plus any completed graduate courses)*
- GRE not required
- interview with the legal studies graduate advisor
- additional documents not required*

Approved English Proficiency Exam Scores

Applicants are required to submit an approved English proficiency exam score that meets the minimum program requirements below unless they have earned a bachelor's degree or higher from a regionally accredited U.S. institution or the equivalent from a country on our exempt countries list (<http://www.gradcollege.txstate.edu/international/language.html#wave>).

- official TOEFL iBT scores required with a 78 overall
- official PTE scores required with a 52
- official IELTS (academic) scores required with a 6.5 overall and minimum individual module scores of 6.0
- official Duolingo Scores required with a 110 overall
- official TOEFL Essentials scores required with an 8.5 overall

*Additional Information

If the overall GPA or the last-60-hours GPA falls between 2.50 and 2.99, the student must submit the following:

- personal statement explaining any special circumstances which would otherwise qualify the student for admission to the program
- two letters of recommendation from persons who could comment upon the ability to perform in the requested area of study

*Conditional admission is not available to applicants who require "F" or "J" visas.

Degree Requirements

The Master of Arts (M.A.) degree with a major in Legal Studies requires 36 semester credit hours. Students must successfully complete the 36-hour curriculum while maintaining a "B" average and must receive a "B" or better in each required course.

Course Requirements

Code	Title	Hours
Required Courses		
LS 5310	Introduction to the Paralegal Profession and Legal Technology	3
LS 5320	Legal Research	3
LS 5330	Legal Theories and Analysis	3
LS 5340	Litigation	3
LS 5350	Legal Drafting	3
LS 5360	Advanced Litigation	3
LS 5370	Advanced Legal Research & Writing	3
LS 5389	Law Office Internship	3
LS 5399	Applied Research Project	3
Prescribed Electives		
Choose 9 hours from the following:		9
LS 5341	Administrative Law	
LS 5343	Family Law	
LS 5349	Business Organizations	
LS 5351	Estates and Trusts	
LS 5353	Real Estate	
LS 5359	Alternative Dispute Resolution	
LS 5361	Criminal Law and Procedure	
LS 5363	Social Legislation	
LS 5371	Intellectual Property Law	
LS 5373	Contract Law	
Total Hours		36

Students who fail to earn a "B" or better in a required course after a second attempt may be dismissed from the program.

Comprehensive Examination Requirement

The comprehensive exam takes the form of an oral exam administered as part of the Applied Research Project (LS 5399) course in the student's final semester in the program. The oral exam focuses on the applied research project and underlying legal research. Students who perform unacceptably on the exam may take the exam a second time in a subsequent semester.

Students who do not successfully complete the requirements for the degree within the timelines specified will be dismissed from the program.

Master's level courses in Political Science: POSI

Courses Offered

Legal Studies (LS)

LS 5310. Introduction to the Paralegal Profession and Legal Technology.

This course provides an introduction to the paralegal profession and law office technology, including the history of and current issues facing the profession, paralegal associations, paralegal regulation and certification options, paralegal ethics, and the skills necessary to become an effective paralegal, with an emphasis placed on legal technology.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.

Grade Mode: Standard Letter

LS 5320. Legal Research.

This course provides a study of the legal research process, including primary and secondary sources of law and related finding tools and legal citation rules; research using books and online tools; and provides a basic introduction to legal writing, including how to brief cases and prepare legal research memoranda.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.

Grade Mode: Standard Letter

LS 5330. Legal Theories and Analysis.

This course is a study of statutory and case law development of basic legal theory including tort theory, contract theory, and evidence theory. This course is intended to assist students in gaining knowledge of fundamental legal theory, reasoning, and analysis.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.

Grade Mode: Standard Letter

LS 5340. Litigation.

This course is a study of statutory and case law relating to civil procedure in order to develop an understanding of litigation.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.

Grade Mode: Standard Letter

LS 5341. Administrative Law.

This course deals with the origin, development, and theory of Administrative Law as well as the agencies and tribunals that administer the law. Emphasis is on enforcement, quasi-legislative and quasi-judicial powers of federal administrative agencies and state tribunals.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.

Grade Mode: Standard Letter

LS 5343. Family Law.

This course examines Texas law, dealing with pre-marital contracts, marriage relationships, annulment, abortion, adoption, juveniles, Family Code, divorce, support for children, custody, and separation agreements.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.

Grade Mode: Standard Letter

LS 5349. Business Organizations.

This course is a study of the federal and Texas law relating to corporations with particular emphasis on the preparation of initial and amended articles of incorporation, satisfaction of state filing requirements, the drafting of employment agreements, and other activities necessary to the maintenance, merger, and the closing of corporations.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.

Grade Mode: Standard Letter

LS 5350. Legal Drafting.

This course is a study of legal drafting styles, forms and techniques, including legal document drafting, objective, informative document drafting, and persuasive-style drafting of trial and appellate briefs. Prerequisite: LS 5320 with grade of "B" or better.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.

Grade Mode: Standard Letter

LS 5351. Estates and Trusts.

This course is the study of Texas laws relating to estates and trusts with emphasis on the preparation of documents regarding the administration of estates.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.

Grade Mode: Standard Letter

LS 5353. Real Estate.

This course is a study of Texas laws concerning real properties, conveyances, recordation, taxation, and sales regarding real property. Students are familiarized with various records dealing with real property maintained by public officials and develop an understanding of the procedures by which titles are searched. Repeatable with different emphasis for a maximum of 6 credit hours.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.

Course Attribute(s): Exclude from 3-peat Processing

Grade Mode: Standard Letter

LS 5359. Alternative Dispute Resolution.

This course is an in-depth study of procedural and substantive legal principles of alternative dispute resolution. Emphasis will be placed on procedures and practical applications of negotiation, mediation, arbitration, and alternative adjudicative processes with integration of ethical and policy issues.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.

Grade Mode: Standard Letter

LS 5360. Advanced Litigation.

This course is a study of the use of the American legal system to resolve disputes between individuals and entities. Emphasis is on trial advocacy planning, analysis, preparation, and strategy. Students develop skills necessary to understand and to participate as an advocate in the trial process. Prerequisite: LS 5320 and LS 5340 both with grades of "B" or better.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.

Grade Mode: Standard Letter

LS 5361. Criminal Law and Procedure.

This course is a study of the state and federal statutory and common law relating to the criminal justice system. This course includes the study of the criminal litigation process and procedure with emphasis on theory and practical legal assistant skill development.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.

Grade Mode: Standard Letter

LS 5363. Social Legislation.

This course is a study of Texas and federal laws established by statute to remedy various social problems including worker's compensation, unemployment compensation, bankruptcy, and commercial transactions. This course includes a study of statutory and case law development. May be repeated with different emphasis for a maximum of 6 credit hours.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.

Course Attribute(s): Exclude from 3-peat Processing

Grade Mode: Standard Letter

LS 5370. Advanced Legal Research & Writing.

This course has four components: (1) refinement of skills in computer-assisted and manual legal research; (2) legal analysis, legal writing, and organizing, complex legal documents; (3) techniques of persuasive argument; and (4) applied research project. Prerequisite: LS 5350 with a grade of "B" or better.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.

Grade Mode: Standard Letter

LS 5371. Intellectual Property Law.

This course covers principal tenets of intellectual property, including trademarks, copyrights, patents, and trade secrets. Students analyze a wide variety of intellectual property issues, the impact of intellectual property in our current society, and the practical and theoretical concerns raised by the interplay of state and federal laws.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.

Grade Mode: Standard Letter

LS 5373. Contract Law.

This course is a study of contracts (e.g., real estate contracts, employment contracts; contracts for services; construction contracts; e-contracts); the common law and statutory law of contracts (e.g., Statute of Frauds; Uniform Commercial Code; Uniform Computer Information Transactions Act; Uniform Electronic Transactions Act), and contract drafting.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.

Grade Mode: Standard Letter

LS 5380A. Texas Water Law.

This course examines the chief legal issues that will determine the future of water policy in Texas, with a focus on how state and local agencies administer the state's ground and surface water legal regimes and regulatory framework.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.

Course Attribute(s): Exclude from 3-peat Processing|Topics

Grade Mode: Standard Letter

LS 5380B. Environmental Litigation.

This course conducts an in-depth examination of researching, filing, and litigating claims under federal and state environmental statutes. The course focuses on the aspects of environmental litigation that make it different than its non-environmental counterparts.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.

Course Attribute(s): Exclude from 3-peat Processing|Topics

Grade Mode: Standard Letter

LS 5388. Directed Reading and Research.

This course is an advanced reading and/or research on various topics in legal studies under the direction of a graduate faculty member. May be repeated once with different emphasis and professor for a maximum of 6 credit hours. Prerequisite: Instructor approval.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.

Course Attribute(s): Exclude from 3-peat Processing

Grade Mode: Standard Letter

LS 5389. Law Office Internship.

This course emphasizes problems, procedures, and ethics in the legal-working environment. Students are involved in internship consisting of approximately 10-15 hours a week to gain experience in the legal-working environment. Course is required unless the student has related experience and has, with program director permission, elected to take a practicum. Prerequisite: Instructor approval.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.

Grade Mode: Credit/No Credit

LS 5399. Applied Research Project.

This course is the applied research project for the Master of Arts in Legal Studies degree. Students work with the supervising instructor to complete an applied research project to submit for oral examination. Prerequisite: LS 5370 with a grade of "B" or better and instructor approval.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.

Grade Mode: Standard Letter