

PARALEGAL

ASSOCIATE DEGREE & CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

2023-2024 CATALOG

DESCRIPTION

The Cuesta College Paralegal Degree Program is designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills needed to become a successful paralegal. A paralegal is a trained specialist who performs a wide variety of legal tasks, including legal research, assisting with clients, assisting with case investigation, assisting with witness preparation, assisting at trial, law office management, and legal document preparation in a variety of legal and business settings.

The Cuesta College Paralegal Degree Program fully complies with the California Business and Professions Code requirements for employment as paralegals and legal document assistants. The Paralegal Program is also designed to help students prepare for NALA (National Association of Legal Assistants) certification and is a first step towards CACPS (Commission for Advanced California Paralegal Specialization) certification as well.

ASSOCIATE DEGREE AND CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

An Associate Degree, depending on the focus of study, is designed to prepare students for transfer into upper division course work in a bachelor's degree program, or, to prepare students to enter the workforce in a particular vocational field. To qualify for an Associate's Degree, a student must: (1) complete each intraspecific course required for the degree with at least a "C" grade or better, (2) complete all Cuesta College general education, graduation and residency requirements, and (3) achieve an overall grade point average of 2.0 for all courses attempted (major, general education, elective).

A Certificate Program is designed for students who desire specific training to meet an immediate occupational or personal goal, or for promotion or lateral transfer within their existing field of employment. To qualify for a Certificate of Achievement or a Certificate of Specialization, a student must 1) complete all courses required for the Certificate with an overall grade point average of 2.0.

DEGREES, CERTIFICATES & AWARDS

- Associate in Arts (A.A.)
- Certificate of Achievement (C.A.)

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

- Law Offices
- Other Legal Service Providers
- Independent Contractor Paralegals
- Legal Document Assistants
- Local, State, and Federal Government Banking
- Corporate Legal Departments
- Finance
- Insurance
- Real Estate

CONTACT

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ASSOCIATE DEGREE PROGRAM

Paralegal — Associate in Arts

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ASSOCIATE DEGREE AND CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT The Paralegal Program offers both an Associate of Arts (AA) degree for those students who do not already possess a college degree and a Certificate of Achievement (CA) primarily for those students who do already possess a college degree. The Paralegal AA degree may be earned by successfully completing the Paralegal coursework plus the Cuesta College general education requirements. The Paralegal CA may be earned by successfully completing the Paralegal coursework minus the general education coursework required for the AA degree.

CAREER AND TRANSFER OPPORTUNITIES The primary goal of the Cuesta College Paralegal Degree and Certificate Program is to offer a comprehensive program where students will acquire paralegal skills that will prepare them for a variety of different career opportunities, including employment in law offices and with other legal service providers, as independent contractors (such as legal document assistants), in local, state, and federal agencies, and in businesses (such as banking, finance, insurance, real estate, and corporate legal departments) where paralegal skills are desirable. In addition, the Paralegal AA degree provides a sound foundation for transfer to baccalaureate pre-law and legal studies programs and is also an excellent first step for students considering law school.

The Cuesta College Paralegal Degree and Certificate Program fully complies with the California Business and Professions Code requirements for employment as paralegals and legal document assistants. The Paralegal Program is also designed to help students prepare for NALA (National Association of Legal Assistants) certification and is a first step towards CACPS (Commission for Advanced California Paralegal Specialization) certification as well.

TRANSFER PREPARATION

Courses that fulfill major requirements for an associate degree may differ from those needed to prepare to transfer. Students who plan to transfer to a four-year college or university should schedule an appointment with a Cuesta College counselor to develop a student education plan (SEP) before beginning their program.

TRANSFER RESOURCES:

CSU and UC Articulation Agreements and Majors Search Engine:

www.ASSIST.org

CSU System Information:

www2.calstate.edu

FINANCIAL AID

Paying for the cost of a college education requires a partnership among parents, students and the college. As the cost of higher education continues to rise we want you to know that Cuesta College offers a full array of financial aid programs—grants, work study, scholarships, federal loan programs, and fee waivers. These programs are available to both full- and part-time students who are seeking a degree or certificate. For those who qualify, financial aid is available to help with tuition, fees, books and supplies, food, housing, transportation, and childcare. Please log onto our website for additional information:

www.cuesta.edu/student/student-services/financial-aid

Required Courses (29 credits)

BUS 218. Business Law	4
BUS 227. Business Communications.	4
LGL 217. Introduction To Law	3
or CJ 208. Legal Aspects Of Evidence	(3)
PLGL 131. Current Ethical Issues For Paralegals	1
PLGL 201. Introduction To Paralegal Studies.	3
PLGL 203. Paralegal Internship	3
PLGL 205. Civil Procedure And Litigation	4
PLGL 209. Technology In The Law Office	3
PLGL 220. Legal Research And Writing.	4
Plus 6 credits from the following:	
PLGL 206. Business Organizations	3
PLGL 207. Family Law	3
PLGL 208. Estate Planning And Administration.	3
Total Credits:	35

[Click Here For Program Student Learning Outcomes](#)

CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

Paralegal — Certificate of Achievement

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