Submit originals and one copy and electronic copy to Governance/Faculty Senate Office (email electronic copy to fysenat@uaf.edu)

PROGRAM/DEGREE REQUIREMENT CHANGE (MAJOR/MINOR)

SUBMITTED BY:

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<th>Department</th>
<th>Paralegal Studies</th>
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<td>College/School</td>
<td>CRCD/TVC</td>
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<td>Prepared by</td>
<td>Ed Husted, Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>455-2835</td>
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<td>Email Contact</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ffesh@uaf.edu">ffesh@uaf.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Contact</td>
<td>Ed Husted</td>
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See http://www.uaf.edu/uafgov/faculty/cd for a complete description of the rules governing curriculum & course changes.

PROGRAM IDENTIFICATION:

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<th>DEGREE PROGRAM</th>
<th>Paralegal Studies</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree Level: (i.e., Certificate, A.A., A.A.S., B.A.,</td>
<td>A.A.S.</td>
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A. CHANGE IN DEGREE REQUIREMENTS: (Brief statement of program/degree changes and objectives)

1. The first change in the degree requirements is the reduction from three 100-level introductory and prerequisite courses to a single introductory and prerequisite course, the already-existing PLS 102, “Introduction to the Law.” However, the name will be changed to “Introduction to Paralegal Studies” to more accurately indicate that it is the mandatory course for students entering the paralegal degree program. The other two existing introductory courses PLS 103, “Introduction to Paralegal Skills,” and PLS 105, “Introduction to Paralegal Ethics,” will remain as required 100-level courses but will no longer be prerequisites to the program’s 200-level courses; with the exception that PLS 103 will remain a prerequisite for PLS 280, “Intermediate Legal Research and Writing.”

2. Two existing courses will be increased by one credit, making the A.A.S. degree in paralegal studies a 62-credit-hour degree. PLS 102, the prerequisite course, will become four credit hours which is required by the addition of 14 additional contact hours of instruction in the use of computer-assisted legal research. PLS 105 will become a two credit hour course since the current one credit hour ethics course does not allow sufficient time to adequately cover the course material.

3. Outcomes assessment of graduates and employers of graduates, and the paralegal advisory committee, have identified legal writing as a weakness of the program. (Training in legal research is of good quality.) The program will restructure its teaching of legal writing into three levels, introductory, intermediate and advanced. Introduction to legal writing will now become a part of the PLS 102 curriculum and, to a lesser extent, a part of the PLS 103 curriculum. PLS 280, will acquire a new title, “Intermediate Legal Research and Writing, and will be the second level in a student’s sequence of courses. Both PLS 102 and PLS 103 will be prerequisites. Finally, PLS 285, “Advanced Legal Writing,” is already required by the degree program and will remain the same with PLS 280 as a prerequisite.

4. Finally, students will be provided with a choice of courses rather than the existing required PS 303, “Politics and the Judicial Process,” and PS 435 or 436, “Constitutional Law I or II.” Both courses are taught on main campus during the day and are difficult for paralegal students, most of who work during the day, to attend. Past practice has been to freely petition to substitute another 300-level and 400-level political science, justice, or other related courses, usually ones which are distance delivered. In order to avoid the frequent use of petitions to substitute, the curriculum will provide students the option of electing one of the courses which are now most commonly used.
B. CURRENT REQUIREMENTS AS IT APPEARS IN THE CATALOG:

PARALEGAL STUDIES
College of Rural and Community Development
Tanana Valley Campus
907-455-2800
www.tvc.uaf.edu/programs/paralegal/

A.A.S. Degree
Minimum Requirements for Degree: 60 credits

The paralegal studies program trains students for employment as paralegals to assist in the delivery of legal services under the supervision of a practicing lawyer, and provides continuing education and upgrading of skills for paralegals already employed. In addition, the program offers practical law-related topics for UAF students whose main focus is in other areas of study such as political science and justice.

Paralegals and legal assistants are not authorized to provide direct legal services to the public. However, they are qualified to perform rudimentary legal research and produce drafts of letters, office memoranda, pleadings, contracts, wills and similar documents. Paralegals conduct client and witness interviews, engage in basic fact-finding and investigation, and assist in trial preparation and discovery. At all times they remain cognizant of the ethical responsibilities owed by the supervising lawyer to clients, other lawyers and the court system.

The UAF paralegal studies program does not train lawyers or legal administrators. The associate (A.A.S.) degree is approved by the American Bar Association. The minor is not designed to prepare students to work as paralegals and is not approved by the American Bar Association.

Major – A.A.S. Degree

1. Complete ENGL F111X with a grade of C or better prior to admission to the program.

2. Complete the general university requirements (page 86).

3. Complete the A.A.S. degree requirements (page 90).

4. Complete the following:*
   PLS F102 – Introduction to the Law ................................................................. 3
   PLS F103 – Introduction to Paralegal Skills ................................................... 3
   PLS F105 – Introduction to Paralegal Ethics ................................................. 1
   PLS F210 – Civil Procedure ......................................................................... 3
   PLS F260 – Computers in the Law Office ...................................................... 3
   PLS F280 – Introduction to Legal Research and Writing ................................. 3
   PLS F285 – Advanced Legal Writing ............................................................. 3
   PLS F299 – Paralegal Studies Internship ....................................................... 3
   PS F101 – Introduction to American Government ........................................... 3
   PS F303 – Politics and the Judicial Process ..................................................... 3
   PS F435W – Constitutional Law I: Institutions and Government Powers (3); or
   PS F436 – Constitutional Law II: Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (3) ............ 3

5. Complete five of the following:*
   PLS F203 – Torts ......................................................................................... 3
   PLS F213 – Criminal Law for Paralegals .................................................... 3
   PLS F215 – Contracts/Real Property ........................................................... 3
PARALEGAL STUDIES
College of Rural and Community Development
Tanana Valley Campus
907-455-2800 2835
www.tvc.uaf.edu/programs/paralegal/

A.A.S. Degree
Minimum Requirements for Degree: 60 62 credits

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Major – A.A.S. Degree
1. Complete ENGL F111X with a grade of C or better prior to admission to the program.
2. Complete the general university requirements (page 86).
3. Complete the A.A.S. degree requirements (page 90).

4. Complete the following:
   - PLS F102 – Introduction to the Law, Paralegal Studies ........................................... 3 4
   - PLS F103 – Introduction to Paralegal Skills ......................................................... 3
   - PLS F105 – Introduction to Paralegal Ethics ......................................................... 4 2
   - PLS F210 – Civil Procedure .................................................................................. 3
   - PLS F260 – Computers in the Law Office ............................................................ 3
   - PLS F280 – Introduction to Intermediate Legal Research and Writing ................. 3
   - PLS F285 – Advanced Legal Writing .................................................................. 3
   - PLS F299 – Paralegal Studies Internship ............................................................. 3
   - PS F101 – Introduction to American Government ............................................. 3
   - PLS F103 – Introduction to Paralegal Skills ......................................................... 3
   - PLS F210 – Civil Procedure .................................................................................. 3
   - PLS F260 – Computers in the Law Office ............................................................ 3
   - PLS F280 – Introduction to Intermediate Legal Research and Writing ................. 3
   - PLS F285 – Advanced Legal Writing .................................................................. 3
   - PLS F299 – Paralegal Studies Internship ............................................................. 3
   - PS F101 – Introduction to American Government ............................................. 3

5. Complete either:
   - PS F303 – Politics and the Judicial Process (3); or
   - PS 300X - Ethics and Society (3); or
   - JUST 300X – Ethics and Justice (3) .................................................................... 3

6. Complete either:
   - PS F435W – Constitutional Law I: Institutions and Government Powers (3); or
   - PS F436 – Constitutional Law II: Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (3); or
   - JRN 413 – Mass Media Law (3) ........................................................................ 3

7. Complete five of the following:
   - PLS F203 – Torts ................................................................................................ 3
   - PLS F213 – Criminal Law for Paralegals ............................................................ 3
   - PLS F215 – Contracts/Real Property .................................................................. 3
   - PLS F240 – Family Law ..................................................................................... 3
   - PLS F242 – Employment and Administrative Law for Paralegals .................. 3
   - PLS F250 – Probate Law .................................................................................. 3
   - PLS F275 – Business Organizations .................................................................. 3
   - PLS 293 – (special topics course) ...................................................................... 3

   Minimum credits required .................................................................................... 60 62

* Students must earn a C grade or better in each PLS, PS, JUST or JRN and CIOS course.

NOTE: Students interested in the paralegal studies degree should consult the program coordinator before enrolling in paralegal classes courses. Transfer credits for paralegal courses completed at other institutions are subject to approval by the program coordinator. No more than 15 credit hours of paralegal courses completed at other institutions will be applied toward completion of the A.A.S. degree in paralegal studies.

Minor

1. Complete the following:
   - PLS F102 – Introduction to the Law, Paralegal Studies ........................................... 3
   - PLS electives ..................................................................................................... 15

2. Minimum credits required .................................................................................... 18
D. **ESTIMATED IMPACT**

**WHAT IMPACT, IF ANY, WILL THIS HAVE ON BUDGET, FACILITIES/SPACE, FACULTY, ETC.**

There will be no impact on budget or facilities resulting from these changes. The courses are already being taught. The only change is in the number of credit hours assigned to each course and to the sequence of courses required for the A.A.S. degree in paralegal studies.

E. **IMPACTS ON PROGRAMS/DEPTS:**

What programs/departments will be affected by this proposed action? Include information on the Programs/Departments contacted (e.g., email, memo)

No other program or department will be affected by the proposed actions.

F. **IF MAJOR CHANGE - ASSESSMENT OF THE PROGRAM:**

Description of the student learning outcomes assessment process.

The paralegal program has designed and put in place an outcomes assessment program which has been approved by its accrediting agency, the American Bar Association. The assessments are taken of paralegal students in a focus group led by a facilitator other than the instructor at the conclusion of each course. Assessment of graduates is also taken annually by means of a focus group. A third assessment format covers employers of program graduates and is taken every two years, or more frequently if warranted.

**JUSTIFICATION FOR ACTION REQUESTED**

The purpose of the department and campus-wide curriculum committees is to scrutinize program/degree change applications to make sure that the quality of UAF education is not lowered as a result of the proposed change. Please address this in your response. This section needs to be self-explanatory. If you drop a course, is it because the material is covered elsewhere? Use as much space as needed to fully justify the proposed change and explain what has been done to ensure that the quality of the program is not compromised as a result.

1. The program has developed problems with requiring beginning students to take three separate 100-level introductory courses as prerequisites to the more advanced 200-level courses. The proposed changes will create a single introductory course and use it as a single prerequisite to all other courses required for the A.A.S. degree.

2. Course materials in two of the introductory courses have become too substantial to justify their present format. PLS 102, “Introduction to Paralegal Studies,” will be increased from three to four credits by adding 14 additional contact hours for the teaching of computer-assisted legal research. PLS 105, “Introduction to Paralegal Ethics,” will be expanded from one to two credits to allow sufficient time to cover the course content. These two changes will increase the degree requirements from 60 credit hours to 62 credit hours. However, there are no new courses being added to the degree requirements, only one additional credit hour of work to each of two courses.

3. The changes will allow the program to restructure the manner in which it teaches the important skill of legal writing. Introductory legal writing will be taught in PLS 102, “Introduction to Paralegal Studies,” while the course content of PLS 280, “Introduction to Legal Research and Writing,” will be upgraded and the course renamed PLS 280, “Intermediate Legal Research and Writing.” A new course added last year, PLS 285, “Advanced Legal Writing,” will complete the new format.

4. Students will have additional choices for the two required upper division courses, focusing more on 300 and 400-level courses which are offered by distance delivery.
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<th>Approval Section</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Signature, Chair, Program/Department of:</th>
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<th>Signature, Chair, College/School Curriculum Council for:</th>
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