

LEGAL OFFICE PROFESSIONAL— BILINGUAL (ENGLISH/SPANISH)

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES,
BUSINESS, AND HUMANITIES

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DEPARTMENT CHAIR Vacant

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The legal secretary assists attorneys with a wide variety of responsibilities including performing clerical duties; maintaining office files; working closely with attorneys to meet deadlines for court calendars; preparing summonses, complaints, motions, and subpoenas; and filing documents with the courts. In some law offices, legal secretaries review legal reference books, other legal publications or electronic media to identify court decisions pertinent to pending cases.

Southwestern College offers two excellent programs: Legal Office Professional and Legal Office Professional—Bilingual (English/Spanish). These programs provide students with strong legal secretarial skills and focus on developing excellent human relations skills with an awareness of the growing multicultural community in San Diego County. An added feature is that students have an option of working toward a certificate or degree emphasizing one or more legal specialties, including family law; civil litigation; criminal law; business law; international law; immigration law; and wills, trusts, and probate. Students with a specialty and/or knowledge of a frequently used foreign language will have the greatest opportunities for employment.

CAREER OPTIONS

Below is a sample of the career options available for the legal secretary or the legal secretary major. A few of these require a certificate of achievement and most require an associate in science degree: claims examiner, compensation and benefits manager, corporate legal secretary, court clerk, customs agent, forms and procedures specialist, freelance legal secretary, legal aide, legal technician, title examiner, court interpreter, legal documents translator, and entry-level paralegal.

DEGREE/CERTIFICATE OPTIONS

MAJOR CODE

Associate in Science: Career/Technical

Legal Office Professional (English/Spanish) B2165

CERTIFICATES OF ACHIEVEMENT

Legal Office Professional—Bilingual (English/Spanish)—Basic	C2365
Civil Litigation Specialty	A2263
Criminal Law Specialty	A2264
Family Law Specialty	A2266
Immigration Law Specialty	A2267
International Business Law Specialty	A2268
Wills, Trusts, and Estates Specialty	A2269

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

ASSOCIATE IN SCIENCE DEGREE

LEGAL OFFICE PROFESSIONAL— BILINGUAL (ENGLISH/SPANISH)

CAREER/TECHNICAL (MAJOR CODE: B2165)

Prepares students to work in legal offices such as the state and federal court systems, the Immigration and Naturalization Service, and private law firms. Provides a more comprehensive program of study regarding the legal system, English/Spanish legal terminology, and legal office procedures.

Program Student Learning Outcome Statement:

- Work in a legal office setting interacting with supervisors, co-workers, and the public in a variety of ways, including receiving, clarifying, and providing information and direction in both English and Spanish.
- Solve problems posed within the legal office environment by assessing information, including identifying issues, identifying complaints, comparing prices, comparing office systems and software, contacting legal professionals, etc., to determine the best solutions.
- Interact properly and ethically in a legal environment with people of diverse backgrounds at work and in the community providing quality customer service in both English and Spanish.
- Utilize print material and computer/Internet documents such as reports, tables, statistics, and reference materials to produce clear, accurate, and organized documents utilizing word processing applications.

LEGL 225	Law Office Management	3
LEGL 258	Legal Communications	3
Plus completion of one of the following specialty certificates		41.5–43.5

Total units 47.5–49.5

SPECIALTY CERTIFICATES

Civil Litigation Specialty	A2263
Criminal Law Specialty	A2264
Family Law Specialty	A2266
Immigration Law Specialty	A2267
International Business Law Specialty	A2268
Wills, Trusts, and Estates Specialty	A2269

To earn an associate degree, additional general education and graduation requirements must be completed. See page 59.

Note: Certificate of achievement or A.S. degree stating a legal specialty will be granted upon the completion of all requirements plus completion of one of the legal specialties listed above.

- * Native speakers from a Spanish-speaking country who have finished high school or the equivalent in that country will have satisfied the Spanish language requirement. Students who have completed high school in the U.S. and have completed the fourth-year level of Spanish will have satisfied the Spanish language requirement.

CERTIFICATES

⚠️ LEGAL OFFICE PROFESSIONAL— BILINGUAL (ENGLISH/SPANISH)— BASIC

CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT

CAREER/TECHNICAL (MAJOR CODE: C2365)

Prepares students to work in a bilingual (English/Spanish) legal office. Emphasizes the research and preparation of legal documents and court forms. Reviews advanced legal terminology. Improves skills in legal word processing in English and Spanish.

Program Student Learning Outcome Statement:

- Work in a legal office setting interacting with supervisors, co-workers, and the public in a variety of ways, including receiving, clarifying, and providing information and direction in both English and Spanish.
- Interact properly and ethically in a legal environment with people of diverse backgrounds at work and in the community providing quality customer service in both English and Spanish.
- Utilize print material and computer/Internet documents such as reports, tables, statistics, and reference materials to produce clear, accurate, and organized documents utilizing word processing applications.

GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT:

The U.S. Department of Education requires colleges to disclose a variety of information for any financial aid eligible program that “prepares students for gainful employment in a recognized occupation.”

Students who complete this program will have acquired the necessary analytical tools to successfully secure gainful employment in the field of study.

For more information regarding the data provided for this program and what it means to you as a student, please feel free to visit our SWC Gainful Employment website at: www.swccd.edu/gainfulemployment

BUS 74	Keyboarding Speed and Accuracy II	1
BUS 96	Customer Service and Communication Techniques	1
BUS 200A	Microsoft Word: Beginning	2.5
BUS 210	Business English	3
BUS 229	Legal Terminology—Bilingual (English/Spanish)	3
CIS 92	Microsoft Office Suite (3) OR	3–4
CIS 101	Introduction to Computers and Information Processing (4)	
SPAN 215	Spanish for Bilinguals I*	5
LEGL 223	Legal Office Procedures	2.5

Total units

21–22

- * Native speakers from a Spanish-speaking country who have finished high school or the equivalent in that country will have satisfied the Spanish language requirement. Students who have completed high school in the U.S. and have completed the fourth-year level of Spanish will have satisfied the Spanish language requirement.

Note: Students who have completed BUS 36 may waive the following courses: BUS 70, BUS 71, BUS 200A, BUS 229; LEGL 223.

⚠️ CIVIL LITIGATION SPECIALTY

CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT

CAREER/TECHNICAL (MAJOR CODE: A2263)

Prepares students to work in a bilingual (English/Spanish) legal office in the area of civil litigation. Emphasizes the research and preparation of legal documents and court forms. Reviews advanced legal terminology. Improves skills in legal word processing in English and Spanish.

Program Student Learning Outcome Statement:

- Work in a legal office setting interacting with supervisors, co-workers, legal/court professionals, and the public in a variety of ways, including receiving, clarifying, and providing information and direction.
- Interact properly and ethically in a legal environment with people of diverse backgrounds at work and in the community providing quality customer service.
- Utilize print material and computer/Internet documents, including civil litigation software and legal references to produce clear, accurate, and organized documents utilizing word processing applications.

GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT:

The U.S. Department of Education requires colleges to disclose a variety of information for any financial aid eligible program that “prepares students for gainful employment in a recognized occupation.”

Students who complete this program will have acquired the necessary analytical tools to successfully secure gainful employment in the field of study.

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BUS 181	Spanish Computer Skills for Interpretation and Translation	3
BUS 211	Communication in Business and Industry OR	3
BUS 212	Business Communication	
LEGL 261	Civil Litigation I	3
LEGL 269	Civil Litigation Procedures	3
LEGL 270	Computer Skills for Legal Professionals	2.5
LEGL 290–293	Legal Cooperative Work Experience I–IV (2–4)	2
SPAN 216	Spanish for Bilinguals II	5
Plus courses required for the Legal Office Professional— Bilingual (English/Spanish)—Basic certificate		21–22
Total units		42.5–43.5

⚠️ CRIMINAL LAW SPECIALTY

CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT

CAREER/TECHNICAL (MAJOR CODE: A2264)

Prepares students to work in a bilingual (English/Spanish) legal office in the area of criminal law. Emphasizes the research and preparation of legal documents and court forms. Reviews advanced legal terminology. Improves skills in legal word processing in English and Spanish.

Program Student Learning Outcome Statement:

- Work in a legal office setting interacting with supervisors, co-workers, legal professionals, and the public in a variety of ways, including receiving, clarifying, and providing information and direction in both English and Spanish.
- Solve problems posed within the legal office environment by assessing information, including identifying issues, complaints, comparing prices, comparing office systems and software, etc., to determine the best solutions.
- Interact properly and ethically in a legal environment with people of diverse backgrounds at work and in the community providing quality customer service in both English and Spanish.

GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT:

The U.S. Department of Education requires colleges to disclose a variety of information for any financial aid eligible program that “prepares students for gainful employment in a recognized occupation.”

Students who complete this program will have acquired the necessary analytical tools to successfully secure gainful employment in the field of study.

For more information regarding the data provided for this program and what it means to you as a student, please feel free to visit our SWC Gainful Employment website at: www.swccd.edu/gainfulemployment

AJ 151	Concepts of Criminal Law	3
AJ 161	Principles and Procedures of the Justice System	3
BUS 181	Spanish Computer Skills for Interpretation and Translation	3
BUS 211	Communication in Business and Industry OR	3
BUS 212	Business Communication	
LEGL 270	Computer Skills for Legal Professionals	2.5
LEGL 290–293	Legal Cooperative Work Experience I–IV (2–4)	2
SPAN 216	Spanish for Bilinguals II	5
Plus courses required for the Legal Office Professional— Bilingual (English/Spanish)—Basic certificate		21–22
Total units		42.5–43.5

⚠️ FAMILY LAW SPECIALTY

CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT

CAREER/TECHNICAL (MAJOR CODE: A2266)

Prepares students to work in a bilingual (English/Spanish) legal office in the area of family law. Emphasizes the research and preparation of legal documents and court forms. Reviews advanced legal terminology. Improves skills in legal word processing in English and Spanish.

Program Student Learning Outcome Statement:

- Work in a legal office setting interacting with supervisors, co-workers, legal professionals, and the public in a variety of ways, including receiving, clarifying, and providing information and direction in both English and Spanish.
- Solve problems posed within the legal office environment by assessing information, including identifying issues, complaints, comparing prices, comparing office systems and software, etc., to determine the best solutions.
- Interact properly and ethically in a legal environment with people of diverse backgrounds at work and in the community providing quality customer service in both English and Spanish.

GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT:

The U.S. Department of Education requires colleges to disclose a variety of information for any financial aid eligible program that “prepares students for gainful employment in a recognized occupation.”

Students who complete this program will have acquired the necessary analytical tools to successfully secure gainful employment in the field of study.

For more information regarding the data provided for this program and what it means to you as a student, please feel free to visit our SWC Gainful Employment website at: www.swccd.edu/gainfulemployment

BUS 181	Spanish Computer Skills for Interpretation and Translation	3
BUS 211	Communication in Business and Industry OR	3
BUS 212	Business Communication	
LEGL 263	Family Law	3
LEGL 266	Mediation, Negotiation, and Conflict Management	2
LEGL 270	Computer Skills for Legal Professionals	2.5
LEGL 290–293	Legal Cooperative Work Experience I–IV (2–4)	2
SPAN 216	Spanish for Bilinguals II	5
Plus courses required for the Legal Office Professional—Bilingual (English/Spanish)—Basic certificate 21–22		
Total units		41.5–42.5

IMMIGRATION LAW SPECIALTY

CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT**CAREER/TECHNICAL (MAJOR CODE: A2267)**

Prepares students to work in a bilingual (English/Spanish) legal office in the area of immigration law. Emphasizes the research and preparation of legal documents and court forms. Reviews advanced legal terminology. Improves skills in legal word processing in English and Spanish.

Program Student Learning Outcome Statement:

- Work in a legal office setting interacting with supervisors, co-workers, and the public in a variety of ways, including receiving, clarifying, and providing information and direction in both English and Spanish.
- Solve problems posed within the legal office environment by assessing information, including identifying issues, complaints, comparing prices, comparing office systems and software, etc., to determine the best solutions.
- Interact properly and ethically in a legal environment with people of diverse backgrounds at work and in the community providing quality customer service in both English and Spanish.

GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT:

The U.S. Department of Education requires colleges to disclose a variety of information for any financial aid eligible program that “prepares students for gainful employment in a recognized occupation.”

Students who complete this program will have acquired the necessary analytical tools to successfully secure gainful employment in the field of study.

For more information regarding the data provided for this program and what it means to you as a student, please feel free to visit our SWC Gainful Employment website at: www.swccd.edu/gainfulemployment

BUS 181	Spanish Computer Skills for Interpretation and Translation	3
BUS 211	Communication in Business and Industry OR	3
BUS 212	Business Communication	
BUS 233	Interpretation and Translation—Immigration (3) OR	2–3
LEGL 267	Interviewing and Investigation for Paralegals (2)	
LEGL 262	Immigration Law and Procedure	3
LEGL 270	Computer Skills for Legal Professionals	2.5
LEGL 290–293	Legal Cooperative Work Experience I–IV (2–4)	2
SPAN 216	Spanish for Bilinguals II	5
Plus courses required for the Legal Office Professional—Bilingual (English/Spanish)—Basic certificate 21–22		
Total units		41.5–43.5

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS LAW SPECIALTY

CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT**CAREER/TECHNICAL (MAJOR CODE: A2268)**

Prepares students to work in a bilingual (English/Spanish) legal office in the area of international business law. Emphasizes the research and preparation of legal documents and court forms. Reviews advanced legal terminology. Improves skills in legal word processing in English and Spanish.

Program Student Learning Outcome Statement:

- Work in a legal office setting interacting with supervisors, co-workers, legal professionals, and the public in a variety of ways, including receiving, clarifying, and providing information and direction in both English and Spanish.
- Solve problems posed within the legal office environment by assessing information, including identifying issues, complaints, comparing prices, comparing office systems and software, etc., to determine the best solutions.
- Interact properly and ethically in a legal environment with people of diverse backgrounds at work and in the community providing quality customer service in both English and Spanish.

GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT:

The U.S. Department of Education requires colleges to disclose a variety of information for any financial aid eligible program that “prepares students for gainful employment in a recognized occupation.”

Students who complete this program will have acquired the necessary analytical tools to successfully secure gainful employment in the field of study.

For more information regarding the data provided for this program and what it means to you as a student, please feel free to visit our SWC Gainful Employment website at: www.swccd.edu/gainfulemployment

BUS 177	Principles of International Business	3
BUS 181	Spanish Computer Skills for Interpretation and Translation	3
BUS 211	Communication in Business and Industry OR	3
BUS 212	Business Communication	
LEGL 256	International Law for Business	3
LEGL 270	Computer Skills for Legal Professionals	2.5
LEGL 290–293	Legal Cooperative Work Experience I–IV (2–4)	2
SPAN 216	Spanish for Bilinguals II	5
Plus courses required for the Legal Office Professional—Bilingual (English/Spanish)—Basic certificate		21–22
Total units		42.5–43.5

Program Student Learning Outcome Statement:

- Work in a legal office setting interacting with supervisors, co-workers, legal professionals, and the public in a variety of ways, including receiving, clarifying, and providing information and direction in both English and Spanish.
- Solve problems posed within the legal office environment by assessing information, including identifying issues, complaints, comparing prices, comparing office systems and software, etc., to determine the best solutions.
- Interact properly and ethically in a legal environment with people of diverse backgrounds at work and in the community providing quality customer service in both English and Spanish.

GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT:

The U.S. Department of Education requires colleges to disclose a variety of information for any financial aid eligible program that “prepares students for gainful employment in a recognized occupation.”

Students who complete this program will have acquired the necessary analytical tools to successfully secure gainful employment in the field of study.

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BUS 121	Financial Planning and Money Management OR	3
RE 101	Real Estate Principles	
BUS 181	Spanish Computer Skills for Interpretation and Translation	3
BUS 211	Communication in Business and Industry OR	3
BUS 212	Business Communication	
LEGL 264	Wills, Trusts, and Estates	3
LEGL 270	Computer Skills for Legal Professionals	2.5
LEGL 290–293	Legal Cooperative Work Experience I–IV (2–4)	2
SPAN 216	Spanish for Bilinguals II	5
Plus courses required for the Legal Office Professional—Bilingual (English/Spanish)—Basic certificate		21–22
Total units		42.5–43.5

⚠️ WILLS, TRUSTS, AND ESTATES SPECIALTY

CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT

CAREER/TECHNICAL (MAJOR CODES: A2269)

Prepares students to work in a bilingual (English/Spanish) legal office in the area of wills, trusts, and estates. Emphasizes the research and preparation of legal documents and court forms. Reviews advanced legal terminology. Improves skills in legal word processing in English and Spanish.

Some courses within this program may require additional coursework that must be completed prior to enrollment in these courses. Please consult the individual course listings for prerequisites and any other limitations on enrollment.  