

KAPI`OLANI COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Business, Legal and Technology Education Department

Legal Education Program - Cooperative Education
LAW 293P, Cooperative Paralegal Education
LAW 293S, Cooperative Legal Secretary Education
Frequently Asked Questions (Rev. 02.22.13)

1. What is Cooperative Education?

Cooperative education is a required educational credit course that integrates academic study with actual work experience in your chosen major. Paralegal majors take LAW 293P, Cooperative Paralegal Education, and Legal Secretary majors take LAW 293S, Cooperative Legal Secretary Education. If requirements for the course are met, students receive a letter grade and three (3) credits that will be counted towards their degree or certificate.

2. What are the objectives of Cooperative Education?

- Develop general work skills and technical/legal skills
- Integrate theoretical knowledge from the classroom with real-life experience
- Develop professional contacts and potential employment opportunities
- Practice job search skills
- Gain relevant work experience
- Clarify career plans
- Improve organization and time management skills
- Experience working in your chosen field without long-term commitments

3. When should I take Cooperative Education?

Cooperative Education should be taken in your last semester to better integrate your classroom learning in the legal work environment. Prerequisites for the course include the following:

LAW 293P

- Paralegal program major
- LAW 101, The Hawai`i Legal System, with a grade of C or higher
- LAW 105, Law Office Management, with a grade of C or higher
- LAW 111, Litigation, with a grade of C or higher
- LAW 145, Computer Applications in the Law Office, with a grade of C or higher
- LAW 148, Legal Document Preparation, with a grade of C or higher
- LAW 202, Legal Interviewing, Negotiating, and Advocacy, with a grade of C or higher
- LAW 203, Legal Writing, with a grade of C or higher

Recommended Preparation: Student should be in the last semester of the Paralegal degree program

LAW 293S

- Legal Secretary certificate of completion program major
- LAW 105, Law Office Management, with a grade of C or higher
- LAW 111, Litigation, with a grade of C or higher
- LAW 145, Computer Applications in the Law Office, with a grade of C or higher
- LAW 148, Legal Document Preparation, with a grade of C or higher

Recommended Preparation: Student should be in the last semester of the Legal Secretary certificate of completion program

4. What are the requirements?

- 144 hours of internship in a legal work environment
- 1 hour seminar per week or equivalent
- Seminar assignments
- Written reports including Time Log and Daily Journal
- Required forms
- Internship performance evaluation

5. How do I prepare?

- Draft your résumé and obtain feedback from others
- Draft a sample cover letter for a fictitious entry-level paralegal position or for an internship position
- Draft a list of five to ten learning objectives that you would like to accomplish during your internship (See handout)
- Prepare a list and contact information of potential sponsors for your internship
- If possible, begin your internship search a month before the semester and be prepared to explain the internship and the sponsor's responsibilities (See handout)
- Update your cover letter and résumé to personalize it for your potential sponsor

6. How will I be graded?

- Internship performance evaluation(s)
- Seminar assignments, required forms, and final report documenting internship experience and accomplishment of learning objectives

7. Is there a textbook?

Yes. The current textbook is by Bouchoux, Deborah E. and Susan M. Sullivan (2008). *Internships Through Employment: The Paralegal Job Hunter's Handbook*. New York, N.Y.: Aspen Publishers. ISBN: 978-0-7355-6247-9

8. How do I find an internship sponsor?

You are not limited to the following:

- Sponsor List provided by instructor (See handout)
- Current employer
- Current employer's legal department
- Want ads
- Telephone directory
- Networking with friends, relatives, classmates, instructors, or other professionals

9. What kinds of firms can I intern with?

Private law firms
Sole practitioner (attorney)
Government – Local, State, Federal legal departments
Non-profit legal agencies/organizations
Corporate – legal departments
Others – check with instructor for approval; must be supervised by an attorney (paralegal majors)

10. Can I intern with a relative, friend, or spouse?

No. To get the most out of your internship and to avoid any potential conflict, you are required to complete your internship with another sponsor.

11. Do I get paid?

Most internships are nonpaying; however, a few sponsors may offer students compensation. There may be more cons than pros to a paying internship sometimes due to the fact that sponsors might insist that students complete tasks unrelated to their major or learning objectives. Keep in mind that an internship serves as a trial period and may lead to a paid position.

12. I work full-time; how am I supposed to take off from work to do my internship?

Students have been creative in preparing for the internship. Some will take vacation for several weeks and complete their internship hours within one month, while others will take one or two full days off a week, while others will work in the afternoons on certain days of the week, etc.

13. Is it possible to obtain an internship in the evening and/or the weekends?

Yes. Although it is uncommon and difficult to find, students have found sponsors willing to supervise their internship work during the evening and/or on the weekends.

14. Can I secure more than one internship sponsor?

Yes. Although it is not encouraged, students may be allowed to secure up to two internship sponsors with instructor's approval. Although it gives the student more experiences, the written documentation and forms required for the course will double. Final evaluations from both sponsors are required.

15. Can I begin my internship before the first day of class?

Yes. It is possible to begin before the first day of class in the fall semester with the instructor's written approval in the spring semester before the internship. Your résumé and sample cover letter together with 5-10 learning objectives should be completed and submitted for review by April 15 (no extension) for the early Fall semester start. You will also be required to attend a group session to review and obtain instructions for the required forms for both your sponsor and for your internship. See instructor for scheduled date. No more than 70 hours of your internship can be counted prior to the start of class; and all internship activities, time log, daily journal and weekly status reports should be appropriately documented to be submitted on the first day of class.

16. What happens if I don't finish my internship hours and/or course requirements prior to the end of the semester?

At the discretion of the instructor, the instructor may grant an Incomplete grade upon application by the student. The student should have completed approximately 3/4 or 108 hours of his or her internship, completed all assignments, and submitted all required forms up to that date.

If approved, the instructor will note on the Incomplete form the remaining requirements and the due date for submission. Instructor will grade the documents and submit a change of grade for processing through the department chair and KISC.

NOTE: Handouts will be provided at the Orientation Session.