The Paralegal Studies Program Practicum is a three credit-hour course in which eligible paralegal students report to an assigned site and work under the supervision of an attorney for a minimum of 120 hours over the course of a semester in exchange for course credit. The Practicum has a class room component with periodic seminars conducted by the Program Coordinator over the course of the semester. The work schedule for performing work at the work site shall be agreed upon between the individual student and host site at the start of the semester.

To ensure that students participating in the Practicum possess a certain level of skill and knowledge, students must have been admitted to the paralegal program and have completed the following paralegal and business law courses: PLGL 1100, Introduction to Paralegal Studies, BUSLW 2211, Introduction to Business Law, PLGL 1200, Civil Litigation, and PLGL 1500, Introduction to Legal Research and Writing. Thus, before participating in the practicum, eligible students have learned the basics of our local legal system; they can conduct legal research; can draft documents, memoranda and motions, and have an understanding of the ethical principals important to the practice of law. Most Practicum students are in their last semester of the program and will have also completed specialty courses in areas such as family law, real estate, torts, criminal law and procedure, or corporate law.

It is expected that a law firm or agency supervising a student shall provide the student with the opportunity to engage in meaningful paralegal work within the normal bounds of the organization’s business under the supervision of an attorney. It is further expected that the supervising attorney will provide feedback to the student and Program Coordinator regarding the performance of tasks assigned, by way of editing/correcting student work and completing a brief evaluation form at the end of the semester. In cases where the student is currently employed at the practicum site, the supervising attorney agrees to assign paralegal tasks to the student that are outside the student’s ordinary scope of duties in order to broaden the student’s experience while enrolled in the Practicum.

Students will be assigned to a site by the Program Coordinator based on a personal interview with the individual student, review of the student’s resume and academic record, consent of the site host, and based on site availability. Students will sign agreements regarding client confidentiality, professional conduct and liability.

We are very grateful to our site hosts for giving our students the opportunity to grow professionally under their supervision and prepare to enter the workforce with practical experience as a contributing member of a legal team. Thank you very much for your support of our program.

Sally N. Fairbank, J.D., M.S.Ed.
Paralegal Studies Program Coordinator
College of DuPage
425 Fawell Blvd.
Glen Ellyn, IL 60137
(630) 942-2955
E-mail: fairbank@cod.edu