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WILLIAM WOODS  
UNIVERSITY

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**Paralegal Studies Annual Assessment 2020-2021**

## Contents

|                                   |    |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| Annual Assessment 2020-2021 ..... | 3  |
| Paralegal Studies .....           | 3  |
| Program Profile .....             | 3  |
| Program Assessment.....           | 4  |
| Curriculum Map.....               | 6  |
| Assessment Findings .....         | 7  |
| Program Activities .....          | 9  |
| Assessment Rubric .....           | 11 |

## Annual Assessment 2020-2021

### Paralegal Studies

#### Program Profile

##### Program Mission Statement

*Please insert your program mission statement here*

Students in the online Paralegal Studies program will be prepared as to all aspects of a professional paralegal.

##### Program Data

##### Delivery Method

Traditional On Campus  
Online (selected)  
Hybrid

##### Students Majors 2019-2020

15

##### Student Minors 2019-20

##### Student Majors 2020-2021

14

##### Student Minors 2020-2021

##### Concentrations 2019-2020

*If your program contains concentrations, please list the concentrations and the number of students identified within each concentration.*

None

##### Concentrations 2020-2021

*If your program contains concentrations, please list the concentrations and the number of students identified with each concentration.*

None

##### Student Demographics

*What are the program goals for student retention, persistence and degree completion? What do the persistence numbers mean to the faculty in the program? Are your persistence numbers what you expected? If not, how could the numbers be improved?*

Paralegal Studies is a difficult major for students. The amount of work expected in each 8 week session can be overwhelming, especially for students who have been out of school for some time and/or who have full time work and family obligations. Attrition in this major have been high historically. Students have unrealistic expectation of the speed in which they can successfully complete the assignments. This program can enroll an infinite number of students as long as the budget and economic support are sufficient to support quality online faculty.

### Optimal Enrollment

*Considering current human and physical resources, what is the optimal enrollment for the program?*

25

### Is the Program Externally Accredited

Yes

No (selected)

### External Accreditation

*Name the Accrediting Agency or entity including the last review/approval. Is there an accrediting body for the field of study? If yes, what is the name of the group? Is the program seeking accreditation? If no, why?*

Not applicable

### Marketing Materials

*Please reflect on the current marketing materials used for the program. Detail what documents you are reviewing and attach a screenshot of any webpages or materials that you cannot include as a document. What changes, if any should be made to the material? Are there recommendations for how or where to market the program?*

The online program description on the website is flat (see attached). Also, the co-marketing with the business degree does not seem consistent with current emphasis. The program description is not dynamic compared to similar programs at other institutions. Particularly for an online only program, it would be better if the marketing would be more interactive. Also, although admissions/marketing does have the program on various search engines, our program's enrollment is a fraction of similar schools based on information from AAfPE. I think highlighting our online faculty (which includes two sitting judges, one appellate and one circuit) as well as many practicing attorneys, would really help make the program look more prestigious. As well as the fact that our program is almost 50 years old! So we have a lot of longevity which should be a huge plus.

### Marketing Material

Marketingattachment.docx

## Program Assessment

### Standard/Outcome

| Identifier | Description   |
|------------|---|
| WWU2016.1  | Major Field Competence: Students will demonstrate excellence in an academic or professional discipline, and engage in the process of academic discovery.  |
| WWU2016.2  | Ethics: Students will exhibit values and behaviors that address self- respect and respect for others that will enable success and participation in the larger society.                              |
| WWU2016.3  | Self-Liberation: Students will develop an honest understanding and appreciation of themselves and others resulting in an ability to make individual decisions.                                      |
| WWU2016.4  | Lifelong Education: Students will possess an intellectual curiosity and desire for continual learning both within and beyond formal education in preparation for participation in a global society. |

### Additional Standards/Outcomes

| Identifier   | Description  |
|--------------|--|
| <b>PRL.1</b> | Students will demonstrate through experiential learning as well as written communication, a basic understanding of the law and legal process by applying relevant skills necessary to perform professional paralegal work.                               |
| <b>PRL.2</b> | Students will demonstrate knowledge of the standards of conduct expected of the legal professional in general and the paralegal professional in particular, as well as an awareness of ethical, moral and social issues that contain legal implications. |

### Alignment to the University Objectives

*Please discuss the program alignment to the University Objectives. We do not need an artifact for each objective, but a discussion on how the program uses the Institutional Objectives as an anchor for their program curriculum.*

WWU2016.1: Paralegal is a professional designation for a member of a legal team.

WWU2016.2: Paralegals are held to the same ethical standards as attorneys as set forth in the Code of Professional Responsibility.

WWU2016.3: The study of law and legal processes and their relationship to society involves understanding self and others and requires informed decision-making.

WWU 2016.4: Paralegals are formally required to complete continuing legal education as part of their professional obligations and independently continue to do research as part of their professional duties.

### General Education Alignment to Program

*How do the General Education criteria align with the Program Objectives? What courses within your program build upon skills learned in general education courses (please list the program course and the general education criteria). The General Education clusters are: Critical Analysis, Creative Expression, Quantitative Inquiry, and Society & the Individual. See attached for more detailed breakdown.*

**Quantitative Inquiry:** STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO UNDERSTAND AND USE STATISTICAL DATA TO EVALUATE THE LEGAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS OF LAW. EXAMPLES INCLUDE PRL 302 DATA REGARDING LEGAL OPINIONS; PRL 304 EVALUATING RESEARCH; PRL 450 TORTS EVALUATING DAMAGES.

Society and the Individual: STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO READ VARIOUS FICTION AND NONFICTION TEXTS, WATCH VIDEOS AND OTHER MATERIAL TO ASCERTAIN THE VALUES AND MEANING OF LAW IN SOCIETY. EXAMPLES INCLUDE PRL 302 Law and Para legalism READING VARIOUS ESSAYS AND WATCHING VIDEOS TO DETERMINE ETHICAL AND MORAL QUESTIONS REFLECTED IN LAW; PRL 440-Constitutional law ADDITIONAL OUTSIDE READING ASSIGNMENT TO DETERMINE LEGAL ISSUES AND HOW PORTRAYED IN LITERATURE; STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO UNDERSTAND THE MORAL AND ETHICAL QUESTIONS INVOLVED IN POLITICAL STRUCTURES AND ACTIONS AND IN THE FORCE AND EFFECT OF LAW. EXAMPLES: PRL 309 Ethics and the law Office - assignments dealing with the Code of Professional Responsibility. STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO UNDERSTAND THE HISTORICAL BASIS AND EVOLUTION OF LEGAL PRINCIPLES. EXAMPLES INCLUDE PRL 315 Family Law: legal analysis paper regarding a current topic in family law and THE EVOLUTION OF AMERICAN LEGAL THOUGHT OVER THE PAST 200 YEARS. STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO UNDERSTAND HOW POLITICAL SYSTEMS AND THE LAW ADDRESS DIVERSITY WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF SPECIFIC POLITICAL THEORIES SUCH AS DEMOCRACY OR WITHIN EQUAL TREATMENT UNDER THE LAW. ALL COURSES DEAL WITH THIS ISSUE, AND PARTICULAR EXAMPLES INCLUDE PRL 440 Constitutional law.

CRITICAL Analysis – ALL COURSES REQUIRE STUDENTS TO ENGAGE IN CRITICAL THINKING, ESPECIALLY IN DEVELOPING THE ABILITY TO CONSTRUCT A COHERENT AND WELL-REASONED ARGUMENT AS WELL AS TO

IDENTIFY THE LOGICAL FLAWS IN AN ARGUMENT. ALL PROGRAM COURSES REQUIRE STUDENTS TO ENGAGE IN WRITTEN AND ORAL COMMUNICATION. SPECIFIC EXAMPLES INCLUDE, PRL 304 - Legal Memorandum; PRL 450 -Torts: Client Problem analysis; PRL 440 - Constitutional Law: Case briefs.

CREATIVE Expression – BOTH LAW AND POLITICS ENFORCE SOCIAL CONDUCT RELATED TO WHAT CONSTITUTES "ART" AND WHAT MIGHT INSTEAD BE CRIMINALIZED OR MARGINALIZED AS ILLEGAL OR IMMORAL. STUDENTS ALSO MUST THINK CREATIVELY IN ORDER TO Engage in legal analysis. SPECIFIC COURSE EXAMPLES INCLUDE PRL 440 - Constitutional Law: in-depth paper analysis; PRL 311 Evidence and Fact-Gathering research assignment.

GE\_Cluster\_Descriptions\_FINAL\_Version\_Approved.docx

## NSSE Objectives Discussed Fall 2019

### Program Alignment to NSSE Objectives

*How did your program integrate the three NSSE objectives determined by the faculty this fall. The objectives were to 1) integrate more interdisciplinary work within the curriculum, 2) to connect learning to societal problems or issues, and 3) to examine the strengths and weaknesses of their (students) own views on a topic or issue. Please articulate which courses, and what assignments were assigned and how the work was assessed. Were the assignments successful? What could have made them more successful?*

## Curriculum Map

A - Assessed  
R - Reinforced  
I - Introduced  
M - Master

### Paralegal Studies

|   | PRL 217 | PRL 302 | PRL 306 | PRL 309 | PRL 311 | PRL 315 | PRL 318 | PRL 321 | PRL 420 | PRL 430 | PRL 450 | PRL 475 |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| <b>PRL.1</b> Students will demonstrate through experiential learning as well as written communication, a basic understanding of the law and legal process by applying relevant skills necessary to perform professional paralegal work.                               | I       | I       | I, A    | I       | R       | R       | R       | R       | R, A    | R       | R       | A       |
| <b>PRL.2</b> Students will demonstrate knowledge of the standards of conduct expected of the legal professional in general and the paralegal professional in particular, as well as an awareness of ethical, moral and social issues that contain legal implications. | I       | I       | I       | I, A    | R       | R       | R       | R       | R, A    | R       | R       | A       |

### Changes to Curriculum

Are there any changes made to the curriculum map for this academic year? If so, please describe the program changes made along with the rationale for why and the impact the change should have on student learning?

NA

## Assessment Findings

### Assessment Findings for the Assessment Measure level for Paralegal Studies

PRL.1 Students will demonstrate through experiential learning as well as written communication, a basic understanding of the law and legal process by applying relevant skills necessary to perform professional paralegal work.

#### Assessment Measures

##### PRL 306

| Assessment Measure        | Criterion   | Summary | Attachments of the Assessments | Improvement Narratives |
|---------------------------|---|---------|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| Direct - Class Assignment | Has the criterion Faculty expect 75% of students to be proficient in this standard after completing the assignment? Been met yet? |         |                                |                        |

##### PRL 420

| Assessment Measure        | Criterion   | Summary | Attachments of the Assessments | Improvement Narratives |
|---------------------------|---|---------|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| Direct - Class Assignment | Has the criterion Faculty expect 80% of students to be proficient in this standard after completing the assignment? Been met yet? |         |                                |                        |

##### PRL 475

| Assessment Measure        | Criterion  | Summary | Attachments of the Assessments | Improvement Narratives |
|---------------------------|--|---------|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| Direct - Class Assignment | Has the criterion Faculty expect 80% of students to be proficient in completing this assignment? Been met yet? |         |                                |                        |

PRL.2 Students will demonstrate knowledge of the standards of conduct expected of the legal professional in general and the paralegal professional in particular, as well as an awareness of ethical, moral and social issues that contain legal implications.

Assessment Measures

**PRL 309**

| Assessment Measure        | Criterion   | Summary | Attachments of the Assessments | Improvement Narratives |
|---------------------------|---|---------|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| Direct - Class Assignment | Has the criterion Faculty expect 75% of students to be proficient in this standard upon completion of the assignment? Been met yet? |         |                                |                        |

**PRL 420**

| Assessment Measure        | Criterion   | Summary | Attachments of the Assessments | Improvement Narratives |
|---------------------------|---|---------|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| Direct - Class Assignment | Has the criterion Faculty expect 80% of students to be proficient in this standard after completing the assignment? Been met yet? |         |                                |                        |

**PRL 475**

| Assessment Measure        | Criterion  | Summary | Attachments of the Assessments | Improvement Narratives |
|---------------------------|--|---------|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| Direct - Class Assignment | Has the criterion Faculty expect 80% of students to be proficient in completing this assignment? Been met yet? |         |                                |                        |



### **Analysis of the Assessment Process**

*Describe your assessment process; clearly articulate how the program is using course work and or assessment day activities for program assessment. Note any changes that occurred to that process since the previous year. Discuss what activities were successful at assessment and which ones were not as helpful and why. Please include who met to discuss the changes (unless you are a program of one person) and when you met. – Include a discussion on the process for collection and analysis of program data.*

### **Improvement Narrative List**

#### **Assessment Findings for the Assessment Measure level**

No improvement narratives have been added.

## **Program Activities**

### **Student Performance Review**

*Describe the department assessment day activities if not already described previously. Please articulate the nature of the assessments are conducted, explain the process for assessment that happens on these two days. Include the schedule of assessment day for your program. What does the data and outcomes tell you? What changes will you make as a result of the data? What areas are successful for the program?*

None - online program

### **Student Performance Review Schedule**

*Upload the program schedule for students during Performance Reviews.*

### **Senior Showcase**

*Describe program Senior Showcase activities if not detailed previously in the report? What benefit does the program gain from the activities? What if any assessment of students happens during this event? What changes if any will occur due to what is learned by faculty on Senior Showcase?*

None - online program

### **Assessment Rubrics**

*Upload rubrics used for Senior Showcase or Student Performance Reviews for student assessment.*

### **Service Learning**

*Does the Program include projects/ course content that uses the philosophy of service learning?*

Yes

No (selected)

### **Service Learning Component**

*If so, how is service learning infused in the coursework within your department? Is service or community engagement in the program mission? Describe the Service Learning Activities that your students and department engaged in this past year. How did the activities improve student learning? How did the activities benefit the community?*

### **LEAD Events**

*Highlight lead events sponsored by program faculty that are connected to program or general education objectives for the past academic year. Include a total number of lead events program faculty sponsored.*

None - online program

**Student Accomplishments**

*Highlight special examples of student successes in the field (academic: mentor-mentee, conference presentations, competitive internship, journal acceptance; extra-curricular: horse show championship, art exhibit). This is for any accomplishments that a student achieved outside of course work or the normal expectations of student success.*

**Alumni Accomplishments**

*Please highlight special examples of any successes of recent graduated alumni (acceptance or graduation graduate school, employment or professional milestones. Include recent graduates.*

**Faculty Accomplishments**

*Highlight special examples of faculty success in the profession/field/content area. This is for any accomplishment of a faculty activity/research/professional nature.*

## Assessment Rubric

|  | 3.00 <b>Exceeds</b>  | 2.00 <b>Meets</b>   | 1.00 <b>Falls Below Expectations</b>   | <b>N/A</b> |
|--|--|---|--|------------|
| Mission Statement Clearly Articulated<br>weight: 1.000         | ✓ The mission statement for the program is insightful and forward thinking. It aligns with the University Mission and learning objectives showing a clear alignment between the University and the program.  | ✓ The mission statement for the program clearly articulated and aligned with the University mission.  | ✓ The mission statement is minimal at best.  | ✓ N/A      |
| Comment:   |  |   |  |            |
| Reflection on Retention<br>weight: 1.000                       | ✓ The program provides a detailed description on the retention numbers. The program provides new ideas on how to improve retention of their program students or articulates what they are currently doing to keep students in their program.                                 | ✓ The program provides a basic reflection on the retention data provided.   | ✓ The program does not reflect on retention data in a detailed way.  | ✓ N/A      |
| Comment:   |  |   |  |            |
| Defines External Accreditation Standards<br>weight: 1.000      | ✓ The program provides a detailed explanation of the accreditation organizations within the field along with all the timeline and supplemental information required for accreditation.   | ✓ The program provides a basic explanation of the accreditation organizations in the field.   | ✓ The program fails to provide any accreditation information.  | ✓ N/A      |
| Comment:   |  |   |  |            |
| General Education alignment clearly explained<br>weight: 1.000 | ✓ The program provides a detailed explanation of the General Education criteria and how the basic skills learned are expanded upon in the program. Details include but are not limited to: specific courses, or activities that stretch the knowledge of the specific areas. | ✓ The program provides a basic explanation of the General Education curriculum and how the skills learned are expanded in program courses.  | ✓ The program provides a minimal explanation of the General Education curriculum and how the skills learned are expanded in program courses.                               | ✓ N/A      |
| Comment:   |  |   |  |            |
| Curriculum Map alignment<br>weight: 1.000                      | ✓ The curriculum map is detailed and complete.   | ✓ The curriculum map is complete  | ✓ The curriculum map is not complete   | ✓ N/A      |
| Comment:   |  |   |  |            |
| Assessment of Objectives<br>weight: 1.000                      | ✓ Assessment of objectives are spread out across the curriculum with a variety of assessment measures and each program objective is assessed a minimum of twice a year.  | ✓ Each objective is assessed a minimum of 2 times a year or an assessment rotation is explained so that all objectives are assessed. The assessments are not concentrated in one class. | ✓ The assessment map is not complete or much of the assessment happens in only one course. Not all objectives are assessed annually, nor is a plan provided on assessment. | ✓ N/A      |
| Comment:   |  |   |  |            |
| Data Driven Decision-making is explained<br>weight: 1.000      | ✓ Curricular and assessment changes are articulated and validated through data based decisions. Faculty discuss the data that lead to curricular decisions being made.   | ✓ Curricular and assessment decisions are made based on data provided in assessment, but detailed alignment is not provided as justification for the change.                            | ✓ Changes are proposed and brought forth with little explanation on the data included in the decision, if data was included in the decision.                               | ✓ N/A      |
| Comment:   |  |   |  |            |

|  |   |   |   |       |
|--|---|---|---|-------|
| Documentation provided on assessment findings<br>weight: 1.000           | ✓ The program uploads all rubric and support information to support the claims in the assessment findings along with detailed instructions on the assessment process and data analysis. | ✓ The program uploads all rubric and support information to support the claims in assessment findings.  | ✓ The program did not upload the data to support assessment claims in the assessment findings.  | ✓ N/A |
| Comment:   |   |   |   |       |
| Analysis of Assessment is complete<br>weight: 1.000                      | ✓ The program completed assessment findings for each component identified, and provided a comprehensive summary of each assessment measure identified in the report.                    | ✓ The program completed the assessment findings for each component and provided a summary for each assessment measure.                          | ✓ The program did not provide a completed assessment findings for each component, nor did they complete the summary for each measure. | ✓ N/A |
| Comment:   |   |   |   |       |
| Improvement narratives are selected with intentionality<br>weight: 1.000 | ✓ The program identified Improvement Narratives that appear to move the program forward and see the bigger picture than only the specific program curriculum options                    | ✓ The program used the provided Improvement Narratives and selected options that made sense to the objectives and issues within the assessment. | ✓ The program did not use any improvement narratives, or the ones chosen are not aligned with assessment results.                     | ✓ N/A |
| Comment:   |   |   |   |       |
| Student Performance Review<br>weight: 1.000                              | ✓ The program described and provided a detailed account of Student performance Review activities. Data evidence provided and detailed.  | ✓ The program provided the schedule and a brief description of Student Performance Review with data of the results.                             | ✓ The program did not provide complete explanation on Student Performance Review nor did they provide data results.                   | ✓ N/A |
| Comment:   |   |   |   |       |
| Senior Showcase<br>weight: 1.000   | ✓ The program had all senior students participate in Senior Showcase and provided a detailed explanation of their expectation and the presentations presented.                          | ✓ The program described the Senior showcase activities and provided some evidence of what was presented.  | ✓ Little to no content of Senior showcase was provided.   | ✓ N/A |
| Comment:   |   |   |   |       |
| Co Curricular activities<br>weight: 1.000                                | ✓ The program detailed the activities of LEAD and other co-curricular programing that was provided throughout the year. They provided numerous events for students.                     | ✓ The program provided a listing of LEAD events and activities provided.  | ✓ The program provided little to no description of the Co-curricular activities provided throughout the year.                         | ✓ N/A |
| Comment:   |   |   |   |       |
| Faculty, alumni, and Student accomplishments<br>weight: 1.000            | ✓ The program provided detail updates on successes on Students, Alumni and Faculty with added information explaining the kinds of success that were experienced.                        | ✓ The program provided a listing of information on Students, Alumni, and faculty accomplishments.   | ✓ The program provided little to no data on students, alumni, faculty accomplishments.  | ✓ N/A |
| Comment:   |   |   |   |       |