

Official Program Outline



HERZING
— UNIVERSITY —

Associate of Science/Associate of Applied Science in Legal Studies

Program Description

The Associate of Science in Legal Studies program provides students with a strong foundation in law, legal systems, and the skills necessary to support attorneys and legal professionals. This degree is designed for individuals seeking entry-level positions in legal environments or planning to continue their education toward a bachelor's degree or law school. Students will gain knowledge in areas such as legal research, writing, ethics, contracts, torts, family law, and civil and criminal procedures. The curriculum emphasizes critical thinking, attention to detail, and effective communication, which are skills essential for success in the legal field. Additionally, students will explore the growing role of technology, including artificial intelligence (AI), in legal research, document review, and case analysis, preparing them to navigate evolving technologies in modern legal practice.

Program Outcomes

Upon completion of this program, the student should be able to:

1. Describe the U.S. legal system, including court structures and key legal principles.
2. Use technology effectively to manage cases, documents, data, and office operations in compliance with professional standards.
3. Apply legal research and writing methods, including the responsible use of AI, to create documents that are accurate, clearly written, and that use correct terminology and standards to locate, analyze, and interpret statutes, case law, and legal sources.
4. Explain ethical standards and professional responsibilities within legal practice.
5. Analyze civil and criminal procedures to support case preparation and litigation processes.
6. Utilize critical thinking, communication, and problem-solving skills to address legal issues and support attorneys effectively.

Program Content

A minimum of 60.00 semester credit hours is required for graduation.

Required Courses

All courses, 31.00 semester credit hours, are required.

Course Number and Name	Prerequisites/Corequisites	Semester Credit Hours
BU 106 Introduction to Business	None	3.00
PL 101 Introduction to Legal Studies	None	3.00
PL 105 Legal Research and Writing	None	4.00
PL 145 Ethics and Professional Responsibility	None	3.00
PL 150 Law Office Management and Technology	None	3.00
PL 200 Civil Litigation and Procedure	PL 105	3.00
PL 205 Torts and Liabilities	PL 105	3.00
PL 210 Contracts	PL 105	3.00
PL 255 Criminal Law and Procedure	PL 105	3.00
PL 260 Family Law Practice	PL 105	3.00

Open Elective Courses

A minimum of 3.00 semester credit hours is required.

Required Courses in General Education

Students enrolled in this associate's degree must complete a minimum of 24.00 semester credit hours in general education distributed among the following disciplines. Refer to the General Education section of the catalog for specific information about courses within each discipline. Courses transferred from other accredited colleges may also be used to meet these requirements.

- EN 104 English Composition I, Semester Credit Hours: 3.00
- EN 111 Information Literacy, Semester Credit Hours: 3.00
- EN 116 Speech, Semester Credit Hours: 3.00
- HU 140 Cultural Diversity, Semester Credit Hours: 3.00
- HU 240 Introduction to Humanities, Semester Credit Hours: 3.00
- MA 109 College Algebra, Semester Credit Hours: 3.00
- SC 270 Environmental Literacy, Semester Credit Hours: 3.00
- PS 101 Psychology, Semester Credit Hours: 3.00

Personal and Professional Development Courses

All courses, 2.00 semester credit hours, are required.

Course Number and Name	Prerequisites/Corequisites	Semester Credit Hours
PD 121 Professional Development I	None	1.00
PD 202 Professional Development II	None	1.00

Distribution of Contact Hours by Course					
Course	Lecture Hours	Lab Hours	Internship Hours	Total Contact Hours	Credits
BU 106	45.00	0.00	0.00	45.00	3.00
PL 101	45.00	0.00	0.00	45.00	3.00
PL 105	60.00	0.00	0.00	60.00	4.00
PL 145	45.00	0.00	0.00	45.00	3.00
PL 150	45.00	0.00	0.00	45.00	3.00
PL 200	45.00	0.00	0.00	45.00	3.00
PL 205	45.00	0.00	0.00	45.00	3.00
PL 210	45.00	0.00	0.00	45.00	3.00
PL 255	45.00	0.00	0.00	45.00	3.00
PL 260	45.00	0.00	0.00	45.00	3.00
PD 121	15.00	0.00	0.00	15.00	1.00
PD 202	15.00	0.00	0.00	15.00	1.00
Electives	45.00	0.00	0.00	45.00	3.00
Gen Ed - Communications	135.00	0.00	0.00	135.00	9.00
Gen Ed – Humanities	90.00	0.00	0.00	90.00	6.00
Gen Ed – Mathematics	45.00	0.00	0.00	45.00	3.00
Gen Ed - Science	45.00	0.00	0.00	45.00	3.00
Gen Ed – Social and Behavioral Sciences	45.00	0.00	0.00	45.00	3.00
Totals	900.00	0.00	0.00	900.00	60.00

New Courses

PL 101 Introduction to Legal Studies	This course introduces students to the foundations of the American legal system and the essential role paralegals play within it. Students will explore the structure of the courts, the basics of substantive law, and develop an understanding of the foundations of legal research, writing, and analytical reasoning. Students will understand core legal concepts and the professional tools and methods used throughout the legal field.
PL 105 Legal Research and Writing	This course establishes the fundamental skills necessary for success in a legal environment: efficient research, critical analysis, and clear, professional legal communication. Students will demonstrate the core Issue Rule Application Conclusion (IRAC) processes of identifying the issue, researching and defining the rule, interpreting and applying the legal authorities to resolve client problems and construct persuasive well-researched legal arguments.
PL 145 Ethics and Professional Responsibility	This course introduces students to the foundational principles of legal ethics and professional responsibility. Students will learn how to recognize and apply ethical standards through the study of the Model Rules of Professional Conduct. The course emphasizes practical judgment, critical thinking, and the development of ethically sound workplace practices.
PL 150 Law Office Management and Technology	This course provides an exploration of the business, financial, technological, and ethical principles essential for the effective management of a law practice. Students will review legal technology systems for case management, e-discovery and data privacy while utilizing financial and time management skills to maintain good client relationships. Students will understand the core operational skills required to launch, manage, and grow a successful legal organization while navigating ethical AI and data privacy concerns.
PL 200 Civil Litigation and Procedure	This course provides an overview of the civil litigation process and the procedural rules that guide the resolution of non-criminal disputes in the United States. Students will examine the sources of procedural law, determine proper jurisdiction and venue, and explore each phase of litigation, including pleadings, discovery, pre-trial motions, trial preparation, and civil trials. The course also covers judgments, remedies, and post-trial motions. Through practical application, students will draft foundational procedural documents such as complaints, answers, and motions, and develop the skills to present clear, organized legal arguments.
PL 205 Torts and Liabilities	This course introduces students to the principles of tort law, including negligence, intentional torts, and strict liability. Students will analyze how tort concepts function within the civil justice system and apply them to commonly encountered in legal practice. Students will identify legal issues, interpret case law, and use structured methods of legal analysis.
PL 210 Contracts	This course introduces students to the principles of contract law, including formation, enforceability, performance, and remedies. Students will explore how statutes, case law, and the Uniform Commercial Code (UCC) define contract rights and obligations. Emphasis is placed on contract drafting, interpretation, and the ethical responsibilities of legal professionals supporting contract-related work.
PL 255 Criminal Law and Procedure	This course examines the substantive and procedural aspects of criminal law, including major offenses, constitutional safeguards, and stages of the criminal justice process. Students will learn how laws define criminal behavior, how courts administer justice, and how legal assistants contribute to case preparation and documentation. Ethical standards and professional conduct in criminal practice will be emphasized.
PL 260 Family Law Practice	This course introduces the fundamental legal principles that shape family relationships, focusing on the formation and dissolution of legal bonds. Students will examine the requirements for a valid marriage and divorce, explore the purposes and determination of alimony, and analyze how courts assess the best interests of the child in matters involving custody and support. The course also covers the legal standards and procedures for adoption and guardianship. Students will draft essential family law documents while gaining a foundational understanding of how family law affects individuals and families.