

NORTHEASTERN STATE UNIVERSITY

Criminal Justice & Legal Studies Department

Criminal Justice 3553

PARALEGAL COMPUTER APPLICATIONS

Spring Term, 2000
10 January - 5 May

Charles Dreveskracht
Assistant Professor

SYLLABUS

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Introduction to computer technology and its applications within the legal environment.

Prerequisite: Criminal Justice 1513

II. COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

After completing Criminal Justice 3553, the student will be able to:

1. Define computer terminology frequently used in the law office.
2. Use common DOS commands.
3. Demonstrate ability to use software for word processing, spreadsheets, time and billing, and database management as they are applied to information processing in the law office.
4. Demonstrate the use of the personal computer in litigation support, case management, and legal research.
5. Research the availability of computer hardware and peripherals for specific law office functions and outline the selection criteria and budget considerations.

III. COURSE PURPOSE:

This course is an elective within the Paralegal Studies Option of the Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice.

IV. COURSE TEXTS:

The text for this course is **Using Computers in the Law Office** by Roper, Brent D. 3rd Ed. The student is expected to have read and be ready to discuss the assigned material during the appropriate class meeting (see the schedule).

V. COURSE EXAMINATIONS:

There will be two (2) major examinations in this course. See the schedule for the dates. Make-up exams will **NOT** normally be given. It is the student's responsibility to be at and to take the examinations at the appropriate times.

NUMBER 2 LEAD PENCILS WILL BE REQUIRED FOR ALL EXAMS.

VI. COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:

A number of small assignments will be given during the term. All assignments will be typewritten or computer printed and in proper form. Requirements and due dates will be given with the assignments.

VII. COURSE PARTICIPATION:

A maximum of 10 percent will be awarded for class participation. Students will be evaluated on their contribution to class discussion particularly on their performance during the short review period preceding most lectures. All students including those absent should carefully review material discussed before the next class meeting.

VIII. COURSE GRADING:

The student should understand that assignments, papers and presentations are to be turned in on or completed before the class indicated. **Papers and assignments that are not turned in by the class period indicated will have a penalty of a letter grade per each weekday (Monday-Friday) assigned.** Those students not doing a presentation during the assigned time without prior approval will have a penalty of two letter grades assigned per occurrence. **Failure to complete a major part of the course (turn papers, take major exams or make presentations) can result in the failure of the course.**

The following is a breakdown of the value of each element of the student's work as it pertains to the final grade:

Each examination will count 30%	$30 \times 2 = 60\%$
Assignments will count 30%	$30 \times 1 = 30\%$
Class participation will count 10%	$10 \times 1 = 10\%$
Total	$=100\%$

Grading System:

90-100 = A

80- 89 = B

70- 79 = C

60- 69 = D

0- 59 = F

VIV. COURSE FINAL GRADE:

If you would like to know your final grade at end of the semester before the University sends it to you, bring a **self addressed, stamped, business sized envelope** to the **final examination** and your final grade and final examination grade will be sent to you.

X. COURSE ETHICS:

A student found to be acting unethically (cheating on tests, quizzes, papers or assignments, etc.) will be failed in this course.

All work submitted to the instructor must be the result of the student's own effort. If it is not it is **PLAGIARISM**. Any instances of plagiarism in any class assignment or test will result in a grade of zero for the assignment or test. The assignment or test will have to be redone as well. To plagiarize is to represent as one's own work the words or ideas of another. Examples of plagiarism include:

- a. Failure to give credit to the person whose words or ideas have been borrowed;
- b. Failure to place quotation marks (or other proper citation forms) around passages that are cited verbatim;
- c. and Minor changes of someone else's sentences and words that do not alter the essential style or meaning of the passage.

The above paragraph is copied from a professional colleague with his permission.

XI. COURSE DECORUM:

The University regulations prohibit the use of tobacco (both smoking and chewing), drinking and eating in the classroom. These regulations will be observed. Tape recorders are **NOT** allowed in this course. Students who disrupt class (talking, pagers, cell phones, watch alarms, ect.) or fail to follow instructions will be warned once without penalty. **Talking during lectures or tests will NOT be tolerated** and students who persist in disturbing the class will be asked to leave and will have 5 points deducted from their cumulative total grade. Additional guidelines regarding classroom behavior will be announced in class.

XII. COURSE WITHDRAWAL:

Students may withdraw with a "W" grade until the last day allowed by the University (February 18, 2000 this semester) regardless of their grade in the course. Students who withdraw after the last to withdraw with a "W" will receive a "W" grade if they are passing at the time of their withdrawal and have less than ten absences (calculated on the basis of a fifty-minute class period). Students who want to withdraw and have a "F" average and less than ten absences should see the instructor. Students with ten or more absences (calculated on the basis of a fifty-minute class period) who withdraw will receive a "F" grade.

XII. COURSE ATTENDANCE:

A student should recognize that one of the most vital aspects of a college experience is attendance and participation in classes and that the value of this academic experience cannot be fully measured by testing procedures alone. The members of this class are considered sufficiently mature to appreciate the necessity of regular attendances, to accept this as a personal responsibility and to demonstrate the kind of self-discipline essential for such performance.

AS a student, one should remember that they are responsible for all material covered in class. If a class should be missed, it is the student's task to find and make-up the missed material. Leaving an electronic mail message, voice mail message, or written message does **NOT** fulfill this responsibility.

Attendance will count towards the computation of the student's final grade. **Students who came to class late or leave early will be counted absent.**

XIII. COURSE INFORMATION:

The class will meet from 12:30-13:45 on Tuesdays and Thursdays in room 307 of the NET Building.

XIV. COURSE INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION:

Charles Dreveskracht
303 Seminary Hall
Northeastern State University
Tahlequah, Oklahoma 74464-2399
Telephone (voice): (918) 456-5511 ext. 3505
Telephone (fax): (918) 458-2390
E-Mail(Internet): dreveskr@cherokee.nsuok.edu
URL: <http://arapaho.nsuok.edu/~dreveskr>

Office Hours:

Monday: 13:00-16:00
Tuesday: 15:30-16:30
Wednesday: 15:00-17:00
Thursday: 15:30-16:30
Friday: 11:00-12:00
or by appointment

CLASS HOURS:

Monday:
Tuesday: 12:30-13:45 and 14:00-15:15
Wednesday: 17:20-22:00
Thursday: 12:30-13:45 and 14:00-15:15
Friday:

XV. COURSE ACCOMMODATIONS:

If any member of the class feels that he/she has a disability and needs special accommodations, please advise the instructor of such disability at the first class attended.

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If any member of the class feels that he/she has a disability and needs special accommodations, please advise the instructor of such disability at the first class attended.

XVII. COURSE EXCEPTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS:

Under **EXTREMELY** compelling circumstances, exceptions can be made to some policies in this syllabus. If you have a problem, inform me as soon as possible, preferably beforehand and in person. If I am alerted early, it may be possible to work out a mutually satisfactory solution to the situation. Delay almost always makes resolution more difficult. I prefer to discuss problems in my office rather than in front of the class and find that the students are usually happier about the decisions made there. All exceptions to class policies in this syllabus must be requested in writing and, if approved, will be granted in writing. The instructor, not the students, determines class policy or policies in any instance in which the syllabus does not seem to be clear.

XVIII. COURSE GENERAL OUTLINE:

- I. Introduction to computer applications
 - A. Computers in the law office
 - B. Computer skills necessary for the legal profession
 - 1. Computer literacy
 - 2. Computer concepts and terminology
 - 3. Keyboarding and mouse skills
 - 4. Understanding the legal job to be done
- II. Computer hardware
 - A. Basic functions
 - B. Central processing unit
 - C. Peripherals for input and output
 - D. Hard drives and local area networks
- III. Disk operating systems(MS-DOS)
 - A. Systems generally
 - B. Disks and disk maintenance
 - C. Directories and subdirectories

IV. Document production

- A. Types of word processing
- B. How word processing is used in law offices
- C. Word processing functions

V. Information management with database management systems(DBMS)

- A. Databases and database management systems
- B. Client databases

VI. Computer in law office management functions

- A. Timekeeping and billing
- B. Calendar and docket control
- C. File management
- D. Conflicts checks

VII. Automated litigation support systems(ALS)

- A. Define ALS
- B. Prepackages
- C. Full-Text systems
- D. Document summary systems

VIII. Data communications

- A. Hardware
- B. Software
- C. Electronic mail

IX. Computer-Assisted research(CALR)

- A. Legal databases
 - 1. WESTLAW
 - 2. LEXIS
- B. Non-Legal databases
 - 1. Dialog
 - 2. NEXIS

X. Electronic Spreadsheets

- A. Description
- B. Benefits
- C. Applications
 - 1. Taxation
 - 2. Litigation
 - 3. Real Estate
 - 4. Domestic Relations
 - 5. Estates
 - 6. Probates

XI. Internet

- A. Law and the Internet
 - 1. Legal Research
 - 2. Business on the Internet
- B. World Wide Web

XXI. COURSE SCHEDULE:

<u>WEEK</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>PAGES</u>	<u>NOTES</u>
1	January 11 & 13	Introduction	1-14	
2	January 18 & 20	Hardware	15-40	
3	January 25 & 27	Software	41-69	
4	February 1 & 3	Operating Systems	70-90	
5	February 8 & 10	Word Processing	90-158	
6	February 15 & 17	Spreadsheets	159-201	
7	February 22 & 24	Database Management	202-249	
8	February 29 & March 2	CALR	250-288	
9	March 7 & 9	Internet I	289-325	Exam # 1 On March 9 Covering Pages 1-288.
10	March 21 & 23	Internet II	289-325	
11	March 28 & 30	Litigation Support	326-360	
12	April 4 & 6	Billing & Timekeeping	361-407	
13	April 11 & 13	Docket Control	408-436	
14	April 18 & 20	Legal Specific	437-453	
15	April 25 & 27	Presentation Graphics	454-482	
16	May 4	13:00-14:50	Exam # 2	Covering Pages 288-482

“PLEASE BE PLANNING WELL AHEAD SO THAT YOU ARE PREPARED FOR THE REQUIRED ASSIGNMENTS AND TESTS ON THE ABOVE DATES”