

POFL 1305--LEGAL TERMINOLOGY

Fall 2011

56872

Terri Goode-Tomlin, Professor

SYLLABUS

Course Description	Methods of Instruction
General Course Outcomes	Grading and Exam Policy
Course Prerequisites	Course Attendance and Participation Policy
Course Hardware & Software Requirements	Communication
Required Course Materials	Other Policies & Procedures
Course Schedule and Assignments	Faculty Contact Info

Faculty Contact Information

Instructor's Name: Terri Goode-Tomlin

Telephone: 713 718-

E-mail Address: Use Blackboard e-mail or you may also e-mail me at my HCCS e-mail. We ask that most all your correspondence regarding the class be sent through the Blackboard e-mail of your class!

Alternate E-mail: terri.goode-tomlin@hccs.edu

Course Description

The purpose of this course is to prepare students for the job of legal secretary, as well as assist all students with a multiplicity of legal terms. Job titles include legal secretary, legal transcription, court reporter, and court reporting copyist, etc.

This course will prepare students with an overview of the judicial system which includes discovery, trial, and appellate processes.

Prerequisites

No course prerequisites for this course.

General Course Outcomes

- A) The student will demonstrate his ability to prepare legal documents.
- B) The student will demonstrate to maintain both client and office financial records.
- C) The student will demonstrate his ability to spell and give meaning of legal terminology, legal procedures in courts, duties of secretaries and court reporters and other legal environments and learn methods of research at a 70% minimum accuracy rate.

Instructional Objectives

The student will be able to:

- A) research and learn terms used in Criminal Law (crimes, accomplices, defenses, larceny, embezzlement, etc.)
- B) research and learn terms used in law of Torts (torts and torfeasors, intentional torts, negligence and product liability, etc.)
- C) research and learn terms used in Law of Contracts (formation of contracts, contract requirements, etc.)
- D) research and learn terms used in Personal Property and Agency (personal property and bailments, intellectual property, etc.)
- E) research and learn terms used in Practice and Procedure (beginning a court action, service of process and attachments, etc.)
- F) research and learn terms used in Law of Wills and Estates (will, testaments, advance directives, revocation, lapses, etc.)
- G) research and learn terms used in Law of Real Property (estates in real property, co-ownership and multi-ownership of retail property, etc.)
- H) research and learn terms used in Family Law (marriage, divorce, divorce procedures, etc.)
- I) research and learn terms used in Law of Negotiable Instruments
research and learn terms used in Business Organization and Bankruptcy

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Course Hardware & Software Requirements

Computer Requirements

Microsoft Windows 9x, ME, 2000 or XP or other comparable operating systems
Mac OS 9.X to 10.1
PC: Intel Pentium 56.k modem

Netscape Communicator 4.5 or above or Internet Explorer 5.0 or above
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Browsers: Netscape 6.2 or higher Internet Explorer 5.0 or higher AOL 7.0 (JavaScript must be enabled for all browsers)
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Blackboard is ADA compliant with ADA Section 508 guidelines.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Required Course Material

Computer access to the Internet.

Textbook: LEGAL TERMINOLOGY by Gordon W. Brown, 5th Edition, Pearson Prentice Hall Publishing Company, Upper Saddle River, New Jersey ISBN-13:0-13-156804-3. (Links: www.prenhall.com, StudentAid.ed.gov).

Reference Materials

Texas Rules of Civil Procedure

Texas Government Code

Federal Rules of Civil and Criminal Procedure

Additional Resources

DE Student Services

<http://www.distance.hccs.edu/de-counseling/counseling.htm>

DE Student Handbook

<http://de1.hccs.edu/orient/6deHandouts.htm>

Online Student Services

<http://studentservicesonline.hccs.edu/>

Library Services

http://swc2.hccs.edu/lib_instruct/portal/de/; also make sure you utilize the various links in the WEB-CT portal for your class.

Methods of Instruction

Instruction will be offered entirely on the Internet through Blackboard course management system. Weekly assignments will be provided and students will use their own source of computer technology to complete and submit weekly assignments. All course work will be completed and submitted through Blackboard. Each assignment submitted late (more than five days) will be assessed no higher grade than a 70%, which is low "C" grade.

Course Participation and Attendance Policy

Attendance for this course will be evaluated by student's participation in online discussions and completion of assignments. Students are required to contact instructor "once" or more each week, this will be an "attendance grade". Students who do not participate online during the first week of class will be withdrawn from the course.

Course Schedule and Assignments

<i>WEEK</i>	<i>ACTIVITIES</i>
1	Introductions and Orientations. Submit a personal introduction, including your educational and employment background and your employment goals. Weekly Assignments: (Look under Assignments on the Blackboard Homepage for all Weekly Assignments.) Part One—Terms Used in Practice and Procedure Chapter 1/Court Systems and Jurisdiction
2	Chapter 2/Criminal Trial Procedure Chapter 3/Civil Trial Procedure
3	Chapter 4/Defense Pleadings in Civil Trials Chapter 5/Methods of Discovery
	Chapter 6/Pretrial Hearing and Jury Trial Chapter 7/Steps in a Trial Test 1 (Chaps. 1-7)
4	Chapter 8/Crimes, Accomplices, and Defenses Chapter 9/Crimes Against Property

	Part Three—Terms Used in Law of Contracts Chapter 10/Crimes Against the Person and Human Habitation Chapter 11/Homicide Weekly Assignment-4
5	Chapter 12/Crimes Against Morality and Drug Abuse Part Three—Terms Used in Criminal Law y Chapter 13/Personal Property and Bailments Weekly Assignment-5

	Chapter 14/Intellectual Property Chapter 15/Law of Agency
6	Weekly Assignment-6 / Test 2 (Chptrs. 10-15) Part Four—Terms Used in Law of Personal Property and Agency Chapter 16/Beginning a Court Action Chapter 17/Service of Process and Attachments Weekly Assignment-6
7	Chapter 18/Defensive Pleadings Part Five—Terms Used in Practice and Procedures Chapter 19/Methods of Discovery
8	Chapter 20/Pretrial Hearing and Jury Trial Chapter 21/Steps in a Trial Weekly Assignment-7
9	Part Six—Terms Used in Law of Wills and Estates Chapter 22/Wills, Testaments, and Advance Directives Chapter 23/Revocation, Lapses, and Ademption Weekly Assignment-8
10	Chapter 24/Principal Clauses in a Will Chapter 25/Disinheritance and Intestacy Weekly Assignment-8 / Test 3 (Chptrs. 16-23)
11	Chapter 26/Personal Representative of the Estate Chapter 27/Settling and Estate Weekly Assignment-9
	Chapter 28/Trusts Part Seven—Terms Used in Law of Real Property Chapter 29/Estates in Real Property Chapter 30/Co-Ownership and Multi-Ownership and Real Property Weekly Assignment-9/ Test 4 / (Chaps. 24-30)
12	Final Examination: (Submit legal research on current law; special instructions and criteria will be posted.)

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Grading & Examination Policy

Listed below is the grading system that will be used to evaluate your performance in this course.

Grade	Score
A-Excellent	90-100
B-Good	80-89
C-Fair	70-79
D-Passing	60-69
F-Failure	0-59

Quizzes and examinations will be administered within the Blackboard environment.

Evaluation and Grading

The following grading system will be used to evaluate your performance in this course.

<i>Examinations</i>	40%
<i>Weekly Assignments (includes attendance)</i>	35%
<i>Research on Current Law (Due on Final Examination Date)</i>	25%

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Communication Policy

If you have any questions or concerns about the course and/or course assignments, please contact me as soon as possible through BLACKBOARD email (this method preferred for all class questions) or my alternate email address.

Students who officially withdraw from the course during the first week will not receive a grade and the course will not appear in their permanent records. Students withdrawing from a course after this period and prior to the designated deadline in the college calendar will receive a "W". A student may not withdraw from a course during the last two weeks

without receiving a grade. If a student withdraws after the deadline, the grade received will be a "WF" which is the same as an "F".

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Assorted Policies and Procedures

Academic Honesty (Cheating): Academic dishonesty can result in a grade of F or 0 for the particular test or assignment involved, dropped, and/or expelled from the college. All work submitted must be representative of the student's ideas or writings.

Copyright: Obtain written clearance from copyright owner prior to reproducing or distributing materials. Include citations of all information that is not your original idea or wording.

Changes to the Syllabus: The instructor reserves the right to make changes to this syllabus. In the event that changes become necessary, students will be notified through Blackboard E-mail.

Distance Education Counseling Services: Advising can be accomplished by telephone at 713/718-5275 - option # 4, via email at de.counseling@hccs.edu, by visiting the Distance Education Office at the HCCS Administration Building, 3100 Main Street, 3rd floor and/or by on-site advising at other HCCS locations upon request. Confidential sessions with the distance education counselors will help students understand admissions, registration, entrance testing requirements, degree planning, transfer issues, and career counseling. Houston Community College counselors also maintain a local referral base in order to provide appropriate referrals to students with personal or family issues that may require long-term solutions.

Disability Notification: Any student with a documented disability (e.g. physical, learning, psychiatric, vision, hearing, etc) who needs to arrange reasonable accommodations must contact the appropriate Disability Support Service (DSS) Counselor at the beginning of each semester. Faculties are authorized to provide only the accommodations requested by the Disability Support Services Office.

Students who are requesting special testing accommodations must first contact the appropriate DSS Counselor for assistance. Please contact the Distance Education Counselors at 713-718-5275, option #4 or de.counseling@hccs.edu in order to be referred to the appropriate DSS Counselor.

Students who require testing accommodations need to schedule an appointment for testing to ensure that staff will be available for

proctoring and to arrange for any adaptive equipment that may be required. Students should contact the distance education instructor's "Instructional Support Specialist" (ISS) the week prior to each of the exams throughout the semester to confirm that the requested testing accommodations will be met. If you need assistance in determining your instructor's ISS, please contact your instructor or the Distance Education Counselors for assistance. A student handbook is available at http://distance.hccs.edu/de-counseling/DE_student_handbook.htm.

Course Repeater Policy: Beginning in the Fall 2006, students who repeat a course for a third or more times will face significant tuition/fee increases at HCC and other Texas public colleges and universities. Please ask your instructor and/or counselor about opportunities for tutoring/other assistance prior to considering course withdrawal or if you are not receiving passing grades.

International Students: Receiving a W in a course may affect the status of your student Visa. Once a W is given for the course, it will not be changed to an F because of the visa consideration. Since January 1, 2003, International Students are restricted in the number of distance education courses that they may take during each enrollment requirement for International Students per semester. Please contact the International Student Office at 713 718-8520 if you have any questions about your visa status and other transfer issues.

Virtual Classroom Conduct: As with on-campus classes, all student in HC Distance Education courses are required to follow all HCC Policies and Procedures, the Student Code of Conduct, the Student Handbook, and relevant sections of the Texas Education Code when interacting and communicating in a virtual classroom with faculty and fellow students. Students who violate these policies and guidelines will be subject to disciplinary action that could include denial of access to course-related email, discussion groups, and chat rooms being removed from the class.

Notice of Students Who Live Outside of Houston: Students who live outside the Houston area and cannot take paper exams at one of our HCC testing locations MUST make arrangements for a proctor. Please see the Distance Education (DE) Student Services webpage for information at the following URL:

http://distance.hccs.edu/de-counseling/student_out_houston.htm.

Early Alert Notification: The Distance Education (DE) Department utilizes an Early Alert system managed by the DE counselors to provide outreach and intervention to students who may be at risk of withdrawal or failure. Referrals to this system are typically made by DE faculty member.

Degree Plans: Make sure you check with the department head for filing for Certificate or Degree plans. Business Technology Department chair office: 713 718-7807 or 7808.

Job Placement: Be sure to check with the job placement department at the college you are attending or is close to you. (Northwest: 713 718-5423) Note there is a job placement office at each HCC college, you can go on-line or call HCC's main number: 713 718-2000 to reach those offices. They will assist you with resume preparation, practice for job interviews, proper dress codes, provide a list of employers who need employees, etc.

Graduation: Be sure to file for graduation. You may march in the graduation activities when filing for a certificate or degree. Check with the Administrative Offices at the college you attend or that is close to you.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

**Scans (Secretaries Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills)
(Mandate by the United States Department of Labor)**

**STATEMENT OF WORKPLACE AND FOUNDATION
COMPETENCIES**

Houston Community College is determined to prepare you with the knowledge and skill you need to succeed in today's dynamic work environment. Towards this end, the following workplace competencies and foundation skills have been designed into the curriculum for **POFL-1305—Legal Terminology**.

COMMON WORKPLACE COMPETENCIES

Manage Resources: Identifies, organizes, plans, and allocates resources

Students in POFL-1305--Legal Terminology have to be able to appropriately allocate their time in order to complete class assignments in a timely fashion. They must be able to budget their time and perform class-related activities through a ranking process which allows them to meet self-determined goals.

Interpersonal: Works with others

Students in POLF-1305—Legal Terminology at times work together in groups. Many times these groups are randomly selected, thus giving the students an opportunity to interact with different types of students. Students must learn to use leadership skills, learning skills, negotiating

skills, and evaluating skills as they work together to accomplish a common goals.

Information: Acquires and uses information

Students in POFL-1305—Legal Terminology must acquire the proper information in order to successfully complete the course. Sources include classroom lectures, the text, the Internet, and reference books available in the classroom. Most importantly, students must use computers to process this information and to perform various tasks.

Technology: Works with a variety of technologies

Students in POFL-1305—Legal Terminology must apply technology to specific tasks, determining what application to use to obtain a specific outcome.

FOUNDATION SKILLS

Students in POFL-1305—Legal Terminology must demonstrate basic skills: read, write, listen and speak. The student must learn to locate, understand, and interpret written information in documents such as manuals graphs and schedules.

Students in POFL-1305—Legal Terminology must demonstrate thinking skills: think creatively, make decisions, solve problems, visualize, know how to learn, and reason.

Students in POFL-1305—Legal Terminology must also demonstrate personal qualities: display responsibility, self-esteem, sociability, self-management, and integrity and honesty.

EFFECTIVE JOB PERFORMANCE: The Skills Employers Want

FIVE COMPETENCIES

Resources: Identifies, organizes, plans, and allocates resources

- A. *Time*—Selects good relevant activities, ranks them, allocates time, and prepares and follows schedules
- B. *Money*—Uses or prepares budgets, makes forecasts, keeps records, and makes adjustments to meet objectives
- C. *Material and Facilities*—Acquires, stores, allocates, and uses materials or space efficiently
- D. *Human Resources*—Assesses skills and distributes work accordingly, evaluates performance and provides feedback

Interpersonal: Works with others

- A. *Participates as Member of a Team*—contributes to group effort
- B. *Teaches Others New Skills*

- C. *Serves Clients/Customers*—works to satisfy customers' expectations
- D. *Exercises Leadership*—communicates ideas to justify position, persuades and convinces others, responsibly challenges existing procedures and policies
- E. *Negotiates*—Works toward agreements involving exchange of resources, resolves divergent interests
- F. *Works with Diversity*—works well with men and women from diverse backgrounds.

Information: Acquires and uses information

- A. *Acquires and Evaluates Information*
- B. *Organizes and Maintains Information*
- C. *Interprets and Communicates Information*
- D. *Uses Computers to Process Information*

Systems: Understands complex inter-relationships

- A. *Understands Systems*—knows how social, organizational, and technological systems work and operates effectively with them
- B. *Monitors and Corrects performance*—distinguishes trends, predicts impacts on system operations, diagnoses deviations in systems' performance and corrects malfunctions
- C. *Improves or Designs Systems*—suggests modifications to existing systems and develops new or alternative systems to improve performance

Technology: Works with a variety of technologies

- A. *Selects Technology*—chooses procedures, tools or equipment including computers and related technologies
- B. *Applies Technology to Task*—understands overall intent and proper procedures for setup and operation of equipment
- C. *Maintains and Troubleshoots Equipment*—prevents, identifies, or solves problems with equipment, including computers and other technologies

A THREE-PART FOUNDATION

Basic Skills: Reads, writes, performs arithmetic and mathematical operations, listens and speaks

- A. *Reading*—locates, understands, and interprets written information in prose and in documents such as manuals, graphs, and schedules
- B. *Writing*—communicates thought, ideas, information, and messages in writing; and creates documents such as letters, directions, manuals, reports, graphs, and flow charts
- C. *Arithmetic/Mathematics*—performs basic computations and approaches practical problems by choosing appropriately from a variety of mathematical techniques
- D. *Listening*—receives, attends to, interprets, and responds to verbal messages and other cues
- E. *Speaking*—organizes ideas and communicates orally

Thinking Skills: Thinks creatively, makes decisions, solves problems, visualizes, knows how to learn, and reasons

- A. *Creative Thinking*—generates new ideas
- B. *Decision Making*—specifies goals and constraints, generates alternatives, considers risks, and evaluates and chooses best alternatives
- C. *Problem Solving*—Recognizes problems and devises and implements plan of action
- D. *Seeing Things in the Mind's Eye*—organizes, and processes symbols, pictures, graphs, objects, and other information
- E. *Knowing How to Learn*—uses efficient learning techniques to acquire and apply new knowledge and skills
- F. *Reasoning*—discovers a rule or principle underlying the relationship between two or more objects and applies it when solving a problem

Personal Qualities: Displays responsibility, self-esteem, sociability, self-management, and integrity and honesty

- A. *Responsibility*—exerts a high level of effort and perseveres towards goal attainment
- B. *Self-Esteem*—believes in own self-worth and maintains a positive view of self
- C. *Sociability*—demonstrates understanding, friendliness, adaptability, empathy, and politeness in group settings.
- D. *Self-Management*—assesses self accurately, sets personal goals, monitors progress, and exhibits self-control
- E. *Integrity/Honesty*—chooses ethical courses of action