



AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR PARALEGAL STUDIES, INC.

**OFFICIAL CATALOG
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Chicago Academic Office

1018 Woodview Court
Aurora, IL 60502
1-(800) 553-2420
FAX 419-715-6235

Business Office

P.O. Box 538
St. Clair Shores, MI 48080
1-734-995-6377
FAX 1-(208)-979-6318

Executive Office

American Institute for Paralegal Studies, Inc.
560 Lans Way
Ann Arbor, MI 48103

World Wide Web: <http://www.aips.com>

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American Institute for Paralegal Studies, Inc.

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MISSION

The Institute's mission is to teach practical legal skills to working adult professionals in a supportive, flexible, and challenging academic environment.

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

The Institute's model of distance learning is based on a large body of academic research. The model presumes that adults learn best when they are actively engaged in a structured and interactive learning environment. Appropriate technology, based on a computer conferencing system accessed via the Internet, serves as the primary vehicle for student - faculty, student - student, and student - staff communication. Course content is delivered primarily through traditional collegiate textbooks, electronic supplemental reading, and supplemented by on line study guides, audio lectures, and outside research. The vast library of the Lexis legal database is available to all students throughout their enrollment. Educational passwords are provided by the Institute.

The benefits of the education and training acquired through the Institute's paralegal/legal assistant program extend beyond the ability to gain employment in a law firm. Graduates of the Institute's program apply their paralegal education to a wide variety of careers in many different fields, including computers, technology, education, social services, the courts, medical records and health care, document management, corporate services, human resources, publishing, government, and innumerable entrepreneurial enterprises. Those currently employed in the legal field, such as paralegals, legal assistants, and legal secretaries, enroll in the Institute's program in order to upgrade their skills and earn their formal paralegal credential.

HISTORY

The American Institute for Paralegal Studies, Inc. was founded in 1978. The Institute was founded by practicing attorneys who identified the need for comprehensive training for paralegals and legal assistants.

After teaching on a residential basis for nearly 20 years, the Institute piloted a distance learning delivery system beginning in September, 1996. Effective in late 1997, the Institute completed a full transition to 100% distance learning delivery.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

The American Institute for Paralegal Studies, Inc. does not discriminate on the basis of age, sex, race, color, ethnic background, religion, disability, or height and weight in the administration of entrance policies, academic programs and activities, or in the recruitment and employment of faculty and staff.

OWNERSHIP

The American Institute for Paralegal Studies, Inc. is incorporated under the laws of the State of Ohio. The owners are:

Thomas W. Williams, Esq.
John S. Shaheen

**AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR PARALEGAL STUDIES, INC.
ADMINISTRATION**

Cyn Briles
Bookkeeper
(St. Clair Shores, MI Business Office)

Renee Sova
Director of Alumni and Advanced &
Specialty Programs
B.S., Shippensburg University
M.A. Eastern Michigan University
AIPS Paralegal Certificate
(Atlanta, GA)

John Shaheen
Executive Vice-President
Course Facilitator
B.S., Georgetown University
M.A., Central Michigan University
(Ann Arbor, MI)

Annie Fisher
Director
B.A., University of Missouri
AIPS Paralegal Certificate
(Aurora, IL)

Janice W. Hoover
Course Design Leader
B.A., Georgia State University
(Atlanta, GA)

Janet Russeth
Admissions Representative
Faculty member
B.S. Northern Illinois University
J.D. John Marshall Law School
(Anthem, AZ)

LICENSING

Students and prospective students have the right to review the licensing certificates of the Institute. Please contact us at 1-800-553-2420.

The Institute is licensed by the following state agencies:

Illinois: Certificate of Approval to Operate issued by the Illinois State Superintendent of Education, 100 North First Street, Springfield, Illinois 62777. Chicago office: Illinois State Board of Education, Private Business & Vocational Schools, 100 West Randolph, Suite 14-300, Chicago, Illinois 60601. Phone: 312-814-5818.

Michigan: Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs, Proprietary School Section, Licensing Division, Bureau of Commercial Affairs, P.O. Box 30714, Lansing, MI 48909, 517-373-6774

ABOUT ABA APPROVAL

The Institute is proud *not* to be eligible to participate in the voluntary American Bar Association approval process for paralegal programs, which was primarily created for community college programs.

Our legacy of innovation in fully distance learning delivery, early adoption of CALR (Computer Assisted Legal Research), highly qualified students from around the country (with undergraduate degrees or law related work experience) belies the ABA's outdated rules in regards to these three key elements. Our placement results, which regularly achieve over 80%, clearly demonstrate that results matter.

The ABA states: "...seeking approval by a legal assistant education program from the American Bar Association is a voluntary effort initiated by the Institution offering the program. Therefore, non-approval does not necessarily mean that the program being offered is not of good quality and reputable".

The ABA approval process is not an accreditation and the ABA Standing Committee on Legal Assistants is not a recognized accrediting body.

THE PROFESSIONAL PARALEGAL

As defined by the American Bar Association, a paralegal (also known as a legal assistant) is someone who is qualified through formal education, training, and/or work experience to perform, under the direction and supervision of an attorney, specifically delegated substantive legal work. This work generally requires a level of knowledge of legal concepts that, absent the paralegal, the attorney would perform the task.

The growth of the paralegal profession is well documented and is expected to continue throughout the decade. The growth of the profession is largely attributable to efforts to improve the efficiency and cost effectiveness of the delivery of legal services and to the increasing demand for legal services.

Opportunities for paralegals exist in law offices, public agencies, private corporations, non-profit agencies, and other institutions. Please refer to the "Placement Assistance" section of this catalog for a sample list of job titles. The following table shows ten categories of paralegal employment and the approximate percentage of paralegals working in these various categories.

As the paralegal profession continues to mature, new employment categories will be discovered. Why has the paralegal profession shown such phenomenal growth? One answer is the economic reality of the practice of law. Since lawyers are overtrained for a great deal of the work they must do, a paralegal has the capacity to perform many law office tasks under the supervision of an attorney at considerably less expense. Ultimately, the attorney/employer spends less time on routine matters not requiring a lawyer's expertise. The result is a net increase in the billable time available for the attorney, and a net decrease in the cost of legal services to the clients.

Paralegals also afford the law firm, agency or other employing body the ability to increase caseload, and to perform past and future functions in a clearly productive fashion. Productivity rates are soaring in the legal field, and paralegals are highly responsible for this efficiency. Another reason why the demand for paralegals will continue is due to the complexity of modern society, including the legalization of most natural processes that once were resolved informally. Finally, the paralegal "frees" the lawyer from many procedural, technical, and mechanical tasks, thereby offering the lawyer more time to perform the interpretive and theoretical aspects of the law.

THE PROFESSIONAL PROGRAM AT THE INSTITUTE

The entire field of paralegal education is perceived as being very new as a profession. Quite the contrary is true though, since most paralegals have already been involved in some occupation that was legally related. In a sense, the program offered by the Institute formally attests to these already possessed skills, whether it be banking, finance, real estate, or probate. The Institute provides a broader-based program of education than most of its applicants are used to, and as a result provides students with a wide array of skills that substantially enhance their careers. Students are exposed to a concentrated study of legal subjects

presented by attorneys. Successful completion of the program assures quality graduates who can assume higher or better positions in law related occupations.

The curriculum of the Institute is also a sound blending of theory and practice, allowing a student to refine or acquire present skills in subjects such as criminal law, torts or family law. The program teaches the student to develop self-discipline and responsibility to make sound judgments. The program hones analytical skills and assists individuals in sharpening their oral and written skills. Equally essential is the Institute's dedication to scholarship, academic integrity and career development. Instruction is challenging and the pace is brisk. The curriculum challenges the student's best efforts and rewards success with a feeling of satisfaction and accomplishment.

FACULTY

The faculty at the Institute has been selected for its teaching ability, especially via distance learning, and knowledge of paralegal functions and skills. All faculty members are paralegals or attorneys. They have been carefully selected for their academic qualifications and capacity to stimulate students and encourage and develop individual abilities. Current faculty and their resumes are posted in the Faculty Office conference of the Institute's FirstClass student portal.

STUDENT/TEACHER RATIO

The maximum student/teacher ratio in distance learning sections is 15:1.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Students and graduates of the Institute's paralegal program are encouraged to continue their professional career development beyond the Institute's program. Opportunities for further career development are offered by continuing education and training programs and by local and national professional legal associations.

Continuing Education and Training

One component of professional career development involves participation in law-related education and training programs. Most states have an umbrella organization, Institute of Continuing Legal Education (ICLE) or Mandatory Continuing Legal Education (MCLE), which offers continuing legal education services to attorneys. In several states, lawyers are required to earn a minimum number of continuing education credits on a regular basis. The state ICLE or MCLE may be sponsored by the state bar association and/or a consortium of law schools.

Frequently, the state ICLE or MCLE invites paralegals and other legal support staff to participate in programs and seminars related to specific legal practice areas.

Also contact NFPA, NALA, and your local/state paralegal organization for upcoming continuing education events. Addresses can be found under "Professional Association Membership" below.

Professional Association Membership

Becoming a member of a paralegal or law-related professional association will yield a variety of benefits. In addition to providing valuable networking opportunities, these organizations offer members a wide range of products, programs, and services, including educational conferences, professional publications, training programs, and other informational resources.

A brief description of some of the largest non-lawyer, legal associations is provided for your reference. For more information, please contact the organization directly.

In addition to membership in these national associations, students and graduates should consider membership in state and local paralegal associations. In many geographic regions, membership in state and local bar associations is also available.

National Associations

American Bar Association
541 N. Fairbanks Court
Chicago, IL 60611
(312) 988-5522

The American Bar Association is primarily an association of attorneys. However, the ABA provides several "classes" of "Associates", "...composed of nonmembers with whom affiliation is considered to be in the interest of the Association..." One of these classes is Legal Assistant Associate. As defined by the ABA, Legal Assistant Associates are "'A legal assistant or paralegal is a person, qualified by education, training or work experience, who is employed or retained by a lawyer, law office, corporation, governmental agency or other entity and who performs specifically delegated substantive legal work for which a lawyer is responsible."

Associate members have privileges such as attending meetings of the Association; receiving Association publications, be appointed to any Committee or Commission of the Association for which non-members are eligible for appointment; receive certain benefits available to ABA members; and affiliate with one or more of the sections of their choice upon application and payment of annual section dues.

An ABA member must sign the application as the Supervising Attorney. For an application, please contact the ABA at the address shown above.

Association of Legal Administrators
75 Tri-State International, Suite 222
Lincolnshire, Illinois 60069-4435
847-267-1252 phone, 847-267-1329 fax
<http://www.alanet.org/>

Founded in 1971, the Association of Legal Administrators' (ALA) currently has more than 10,000 members worldwide, with more than 100 chapters in the United States and Canada.

ALA's mission is "to enhance the competence and professionalism of the legal administrator and the legal management team." One of ALA's goals is to serve as the primary source of management information and professional growth for legal administrators.

Full-time managers of law firms, legal departments, or not-for-profit legal agencies are eligible for regular membership. Other individuals, such as practicing attorneys, retired legal administrators, full-time teachers at institutions of higher education, and full-time students at institutions of higher education, may qualify for associate membership.

National Association of Legal Assistants, Inc.
1601 South Main Street, Suite 300
Tulsa, OK 74119-4452
918-587-6828
<http://www.nala.org>

The National Association of Legal Assistants, Inc. (NALA), a non-profit organization, was founded in April, 1975. NALA membership includes more than 18,000 legal assistants, including both individual members and members of its 90+ affiliated state, local, and student legal assistant associations.

According to NALA's mission statement, NALA seeks to provide a strong national voice for legal assistants. NALA's objectives include enhancing the professional standing of legal assistants, establishing uniform standards for legal assistants, encouraging professional development and continuing education of legal assistants, defining the professional and ethical responsibilities of legal assistants, studying developments within the legal assistant profession, and developing the public's understanding of the profession.

NALA conducts a voluntary certification program for legal assistants, the Certified Legal Assistant (CLA) examination. Additional information regarding the CLA designation is published in the Institute's Student Catalog and is also available directly from NALA.

Legal assistants, students in legal assistant programs, attorneys, and legal assistant program educators are eligible for membership. Types of membership available include: Active, Associate, Student, and Sustaining.

CURRICULUM

The Institute offers two separate paralegal certificate programs, the General Practice Paralegal Certificate and the Litigation Specialty Paralegal Certificate. The General Practice Paralegal Certificate program takes approximately 8 months to complete (4 months if accelerated, exclusive of December) and is comprised of a minimum of 255 clock hours (17 semester credit hours equivalent). The Litigation Specialty Paralegal Certificate program takes approximately 12 months to complete (6 months if accelerated, exclusive of December) and is comprised of 375 clock hours (25 semester credit hours equivalent).

PARALEGAL/LEGAL ASSISTANT GENERAL PRACTICE CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

A certificate will be awarded upon successful completion of the program. Courses include the following:

<u>COURSE TITLE</u>	<u>SEMESTER CREDIT HOUR Equivalent</u>	<u>Minimum Clock Hours</u>
American Jurisprudence	1 hour	15
Torts & Personal Injury	2 hours	30
Civil Litigation	2 hours	30
Family Law	2 hours	30
Business Law	2 hours	30
Legal Research & Writing	2 hours	30
Lexis Workshop	1 hour	15
Criminal Law	2 hours	30
Estates & Trusts	2 hours	30
Ethics and Professional Responsibility Workshop	1 hour	15
TOTAL PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS	17 semester credit hours	255 clock hours

PARALEGAL/LEGAL ASSISTANT LITIGATION SPECIALTY PROGRAM

A certificate will be awarded upon successful completion of the program. Courses include the following:

<u>COURSE TITLE</u>	<u>SEMESTER CREDIT HOUR Equivalent</u>	<u>Minimum Clock Hours</u>
American Jurisprudence	1 hour	15
Torts & Personal Injury	2 hours	30
Civil Litigation	2 hours	30
Family Law	2 hours	30
Business Law	2 hours	30
Legal Research & Writing	2 hours	30
Legal Writing	2 hours	30
Lexis Workshop	1 hour	15
Alternative Dispute Resolution	2 hours	30
Criminal Law	2 hours	30
Estates & Trusts	2 hours	30
Ethics and Professional Responsibility Workshop	1 hour	15
Trial Practice and Evidence	2 hours	30
Discovery	2 hours	30
TOTAL PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS	25 semester credit hours	375 clock hours

A credit hour is a unit of measure, not necessarily an indicator of transferability of credit. The receiving institution, rather than the training institution, decides whether to accept credits for transfer. One semester credit is equal to 15 hours of lecture.

B-201 AMERICAN JURISPRUDENCE

15 clock hours/1 credit hour

A comprehensive study of the nature of the American judicial system and the paralegal profession. Attention is given to the role of the paralegal in the American legal system, an examination of where law originates and how it is classified, the structure of the federal and state court systems, and legal ethics.

A-101 TORTS AND PERSONAL INJURY

30 clock hours/2 credit hours

A survey of the general nature of tort law, including intentional torts, negligence, strict liability and damages. Specific attention is given to investigation in personal injury litigation, case management, settlement and negotiation. Attention is also given to alternatives to litigation (ADR).

A-102 CIVIL LITIGATION

30 clock hours/2 credit hours

A thorough examination of the initiation of legal actions, the preparation of pleadings, motions, the discovery process, pre and post-trial activities, trial, and administrative matters important to the legal process.

A-107 FAMILY LAW

30 clock hours/2 credit hours

The legal formalities of family law and its impediments are studied, including marriage, annulments, divorce, property rights and distribution, custody and visitation, alimony, separation agreements, adoptions, parent and child law. Students review the documents and pleadings typically seen in family law litigation, e.g. a complaint for divorce and a separation agreement.

A-108 CRIMINAL LAW

30 clock hours/2 credit hours

The definition and elements of crimes are explained, including crimes against the person and crimes against property. Constitutional safeguards and procedures necessary from arrest through trial, sentencing and punishment are reviewed.

B-202 BUSINESS LAW

30 clock hours/2 credit hours

A survey of basic principles of corporation law including their creation and operation as well as a review of partnerships and proprietorships as business entities. Students will be required to prepare the documents necessary for incorporation, amendments, by-laws, and the recording of director's meetings and minutes, dissolutions and liquidations.

The secondary thrust of the course will concern the law of contracts, their enforcement and regulation according to common law and statutory guidelines.

B-204 LEGAL RESEARCH AND WRITING

30 clock hours/2 credit hours

This course will provide legal assistants with a general understanding of the nature of legal research and its specific techniques and methodologies. Broad-based consideration will be given to the types of legal reference books: the state and national reporter series, legal encyclopedias, form books, and government publications.

Students use Lexis, one of the two major online law libraries, for the Legal Research course. Passwords are provided by the Institute. Current login instructions are posted in the on line *American Institute -> Lexis Law Library Conference*.

C-115 LEXIS WORKSHOP

15 clock hours/1 credit hours

This six unit, self-directed workshop is designed to provide students with the basic skills necessary to perform simple searches using the Lexis-Nexis web interface. Each unit builds on skills learned in previous units and includes a self-test to insure competency in new skills. Students are not required to have completed any course work prior to taking this workshop. After completing the workshop, students should be able to log on to lexis.com, select the appropriate source(s) and method for their search, retrieve and view those sources, and then print or store their search results. (Pass/Fail)

Students should complete this Workshop prior to the Legal Research Module. Extra charges apply if the Workshop is taken more than 30 days after the last scheduled course module in the curriculum. Please see the Tuition section of this Catalog.

C-301 LEGAL WRITING

30 clock hours/2 credit hours

This course is designed to strengthen writing, analysis, and critical thinking skills. The course looks at crucial issues of writing in the context of a law practice. By defining an effective writing process, and examining how to write for the appropriate audience, students will learn how to apply the principles of plain English, logical analysis and proper planning, organizing and drafting to a variety of legal documents, including case briefs and legal memoranda.

C-500 ETHICS AND PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

15 clock hours/1 credit hours

This is a six unit, self-directed workshop that is designed to provide students with an in-depth review of the law of professional responsibility as it affects paralegals, some tools for identifying and resolving ethical problems, and practical tips to use in everyday practice. It is based on the ABA Model Rules of Professional Conduct, but offers general guidance that can be adapted to practice in any jurisdiction. After completing the workshop, students should be familiar with the ABA Model Rules of Professional Conduct, the ABA's Model Guidelines for the Utilization of Legal Assistants, as well as the standards of professional conduct created by the National Association of Legal Assistants and the National Federation of Paralegal Associations. Students are also encouraged to explore their local rules of professional conduct. (Pass/Fail)

Students should complete this Workshop during the first half of the program. Extra charges apply if the Workshop is taken more than 30 days after the last scheduled course module in the curriculum. Please see the Tuition section of this Catalog.

C-520 TRIAL PRACTICE AND EVIDENCE

30 clock hours/2 credit hours

This course focuses on the role of the paralegal in preparing a case for trial, with specific emphasis on investigation and evidence. Students will explore the relationship of evidence law to investigation, learn how to plan an investigation, and discuss the types of evidence and the ways evidence can be preserved. Students will then take the next step in the litigation process by drafting complaints, reviewing the initiation of a lawsuit, and drafting responsive pleadings such as motions and answers. Finally, students will follow the steps in trial preparation, learn how paralegals assist at trial, and review the procedures employed after a verdict is rendered.

C-521 DISCOVERY

30 clock hours/2 credit hours

In this course students focus exclusively on the means and processes of exchanging information, exhibits, and documents between parties in a lawsuit. The course includes a review of the different types of discovery (interrogatories, depositions, production of documents) as well as the Federal Rules of Evidence governing discovery. Students will also be introduced to e-discovery - the discovery of electronically stored information.

C-530 ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION

30 clock hours/2 credit hours

This course presents Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) against the backdrop of traditional litigation. Eight basic methods of ADR, and several hybrids, are explained in detail. In addition, students will explore seven arenas where disputes often arise and how one or more methods of ADR apply. Students will evaluate disputes and disputants to determine the most appropriate method for resolving a matter. Specific topics addressed include negotiation, mediation, arbitration, settlement strategies, the application of ADR to specific disputes in various industries and sections of the bar, sources of ADR services, and the role of the paralegal in ADR.

C-570 ESTATES AND TRUSTS

30 clock hours/2 credit hours

The study of wills, intestate succession, trusts, estate planning, family protection, probate courts, uniform laws, the personal representative, and the process of probating a will and administering an estate. Specific attention is given to the laws of intestate succession; the technical requirements for executing, revoking, and contesting wills; trusts, including special-purpose trusts; estate planning; family protection laws, probate courts, and uniform laws related to estates and trusts; the appointment, duties, and titles of a personal representative; and the techniques used in formal and informal probate proceedings, as well as ancillary administration.

Optional Workshops

A-110 ADMINISTRATIVE LAW

15 clock hours/1 credit hour

This course surveys the general parameters of administrative law - those laws or rules promulgated by agencies of government whether state, local or federal in design. Topics include how administrative agencies operate, rule-making, and the checks and balances that govern agencies. Special attention is given to the procedural and substantive adjudication of administrative law questions. How specific administrative agencies make law is also covered, including the role of paralegals in various agencies.

A-109 JUDGMENT AND ANALYSIS WORKSHOP

15 clock hours/1 credit hour

This workshop is designed to provide students with an in-depth review of legal analysis and how that analysis is applied to legal memoranda. The first four units of the workshop focus on specific aspects of legal analysis. Units Five and Six bring all of the elements of legal analysis together in the preparation of a legal memorandum.

The workshop consists of six units and a final project. Students progress at their own pace through the units. Each unit includes an assignment relevant to the concepts presented in that unit, as well as a self-assessment e-test. After students have completed all of the units, they must successfully draft a legal memorandum in order to receive a passing grade for the workshop.

This workshop is a pre-requisite for students who wish to enroll in the Institute's CLA Review Course.

Workshops are open for all students and graduates at any time. There are no additional tuition charges for optional workshops. In rare occasions, a separate book fee may apply.

C-505 CLA Review Course

60 clock hours/4 credit hours

This course is designed to assist applicants preparing to sit for the Certified Legal Assistant (CLA) Exam. It is based on the *CLA Review Manual* and the *CLA Study Guide and Mock Examination*, and reviews all of the topics covered in each section and subsection of the examination. The course is comprised of eight units of topical coverage, each lasting one week. The ninth unit is a timed, self-administered, abbreviated mock CLA exam consisting of 525 questions.

Students will assess their strengths and weaknesses in each exam topic by taking a pre-test at the beginning of every unit. Discussions will focus on any problem areas that are revealed in the pretests and on any new material that is introduced in the unit reading. At the end of each unit, students will take a post-test made up of sample test questions to reinforce their knowledge of the subject matter and to acquaint them with the timing and types of questions that appear on the CLA exam.

This course is restricted to qualified AIPS Alumni. For details, please cross reference the CLA Exam section of this catalog, beginning on page 15.

ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

THE PARALEGAL/LEGAL ASSISTANT PROGRAM

The educational program at the American Institute is designed for highly-motivated men and women who wish to educate themselves in the specific areas of substantive law related to the tasks of being a paralegal. Experience has shown the Institute that its students enroll for refinement of present skills, retraining from one career to another, personal growth and enhancement, and for purposes of upward mobility in present occupations. The Institute's program is geared to the adult, working student.

Graduation from an accredited public or private high school is required for admission to the Institute. An undergraduate degree (associates, bachelors, or equivalent credits), or two years of training related work experience is recommended. The admissions office will assist you in determining if your combination of education and work experience are suitable preparation for the paralegal program.

Additionally, applicants must possess a high degree of motivation and analytical reasoning capability. They should be responsible, mature individuals who are sincerely interested in pursuing a career as a legal assistant. An official high school and/or college transcript is required during the enrollment process. Please request that your high school and college forward official transcripts directly to the Institute.

HARDWARE REQUIREMENTS:

Students may use any reasonably up to date personal computer, running Windows or Mac.

1. Word Processing (any modern Windows or Mac word processing program will work fine).
2. Basic familiarity with logging into your Internet Service Provider and using a web browser (such as Firefox, Chrome, Safari, or Internet Explorer). Students may subscribe to a local or national Internet service provider. The FirstClass client software is very easy to use. Our course facilitator will be available to help you install and test the client software.
3. Basic familiarity with file management of files on your computer. In particular, you should be able to save files to your computer and know how to retrieve them with their corresponding application software. The Institute's course facilitator will be available to provide guidance on this subject when needed.

POLICY ON TRANSFER OF CREDIT

CREDIT FOR PREVIOUS EDUCATION

The Director will evaluate any student's formal postsecondary education and award appropriate credit if, in his/her discretion, the coursework is comparable to that of the American Institute and was earned at an institution accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the US Department of Education or by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). Requests should be made in writing within 30 days of enrollment to permit adequate time to

plan the student's schedule. The Institute will not grant transfer credit for more than four semester credits, or for course work graded less than a "B".

Examples of comparable coursework generally considered for transfer credit include:

- prior formal paralegal training
- selected criminal justice courses
- business law

To insure that the competencies attained in the prior coursework are comparable to those covered in the AIPS curriculum, the student or program candidate is asked to provide the following information:

- Official transcript, sent under seal from the institution which originally awarded the credit
- Catalog description of the course to be considered for transfer of credit
- Copies of course syllabi or outlines may be helpful, but are not required

For students with considerable law office experience in a paralegal capacity, transfer of credit can be considered for a maximum of four semester credits. Experiential credit will be awarded, if appropriate, by the Director at his/her discretion. A certification from the legal employer is required attesting that skills in a specific area of law have been mastered. Requests for transfer of experiential credit must be made in writing within 30 days of enrollment and prior to the start of any course for which transfer credit is sought.

To request consideration for transfer credit, the student or program candidate should contact the Director by e-mail or phone. A decision will be rendered within seven calendar days or receipt of the official transcript and catalog description and any other appropriate supporting documentation.

Transfer of credit decisions are made jointly by the Director and Executive Vice President and are final.

Tuition will be pro-rated for any credit transferred.

TRANSFER OF AIPS CREDITS TO OTHER INSTITUTIONS

A credit hour is a unit of measure, not necessarily an indicator of transferability of credit. The receiving institution, rather than the training institution (i.e., AIPS), decides whether to accept credits for transfer. The Institute is not a degree granting institution, and there is no guarantee that degree granting institutions will accept AIPS credits towards degree requirements.

Accredited, degree granting institutions usually have policies on accepting credit for transfer. These include such academic factors as course equivalencies, grades, comparability, course level, content, applicability toward a degree or major, and course or program prerequisites. Most often, when accepted for transfer, credits are applied towards elective requirements.

To facilitate transfer of AIPS credits to other institutions, the Institute provides the following at no charge to graduates:

- Official transcripts, sent under seal to the institution requested by the graduate
- Course descriptions (found in this catalog and in the course study guides)
- Detailed course syllabi (found in the course study guides)

Please e-mail or call the Director or Course Facilitator for assistance with any of these items. A transcript request form is posted in the Alumni Association of the AIPS web site.

The Institute cannot control the transfer of credits to other institutions, and makes no guarantees or promises that the graduate will be successful in this endeavor.

DIRECTED STUDY OPTION

Directed Study options are available with the permission of the Director. In a Directed Study, the student is teamed up with one of the Institute's faculty members, and a course is taken in a one on one environment over a defined period of four to eight weeks. The syllabus and workload is identical to that found in the regular classroom sections. A Directed Study is called for when a student needs to retake a course and it is not convenient to wait until the next cycle, or if a student finds it necessary to take a course on a different schedule than currently available. Examples include an interruption of studies due to family, business, or travel commitments.

The disadvantage of Directed Study is that the student misses out on the opportunity to share information and discussion areas with peers. In every other respect, however, the syllabus is identical. For these reasons, a maximum of two Directed Study courses may be taken to satisfy the core curriculum requirements for graduation. Elective specialty or advanced courses are an exception to this maximum, as they are offered on demand.

Arrangements for a Directed Study must be made with the Director. Additional charges apply. Please see the Tuition section of this catalog for current pricing.

INDIVIDUAL SUBJECTS

The Institute realizes the need for some students to enhance their expertise in a particular area of the law. Therefore, a student may enroll on a part-time basis taking only specific courses of interest. Enrollment for an individual course can occur any time prior to the first class meeting. Contact the Institute for current fees and charges.

REGISTRATION PROCEDURE

To register, complete the registration form and mail, fax, or e-mail to the Institute. The Institute will confirm the registration within seven calendar days. Prospective students with special needs may contact the Academic Office for assistance.

ENROLLMENT DATES

Students may register at any time before the beginning of the scheduled course section.

ACADEMIC REGULATIONS

ACADEMIC FREEDOM

The Institute upholds the academic freedom of its faculty and respects their individual judgments and discretion. The Institute will not impose its will on the decision of an instructor in computing a grade if the evidence clearly demonstrates that accepted educational principles were applied.

CERTIFICATE OF DISTINCTION PROGRAM

The Institute understands the degree of personal commitment required by our students in order to achieve academic excellence. One Certificate of Distinction is awarded to a student from each course module. A student who is selected must have demonstrated grade achievement, attitude and distinguished accomplishments. The faculty member makes the selection for the Certificate of Distinction following each course module.

When a student is awarded a Certificate of Distinction, a note is added to the student's permanent progress report. This also becomes part of the student's permanent academic record.

Certificates of Distinction are not awarded in class sections of fewer than five students.

GRADUATION AND AWARD UPON COMPLETION

A certificate will be awarded upon successful completion of the program. To graduate and receive a certificate, a student must pass all individual subject areas with a minimum of 60% and maintain a cumulative weighted grade average of 70% or better. All courses must be completed and passed within the period of completion (see "period of completion" section of this catalog, p. 19). In addition, a Certificate will not be released if the student's tuition account is late, and/or if an official high school transcript is not on file. Certificates are mailed to graduates within 30 days of meeting all graduation requirements.

CERTIFICATE VERSUS CERTIFICATION/LICENSURE

Licensing and certification are often debated as a means of measuring competency and qualification. "Licensing" is a term denoting a mandatory procedure imposed by law usually regulated by a governmental agency. On the other hand, "certification" usually refers to a voluntary process, available to those who choose to participate. It is administered by organizations who are authorities in the field.

Schools do not "certify" a paralegal upon graduation. Often, without intent, the legal community uses the terminology "certified" versus "certification" interchangeably. Occasionally, you will see employers advertise for "certified paralegals" when they really mean paralegals with certificates from training programs.

*Note that there is no state licensing, federal licensing or required certification testing for paralegals. The issue has been a topic of debate and considerable controversy in the legal community since 1975. In 1975, the ABA held a series of hearings on the certification issue. It was concluded that it was premature to initiate a certification process for paralegals because the occupation was in a dynamic stage of development. This position was reaffirmed both in 1977 and 1985. The ABA Commission on Non-Lawyer Practice studied a similar issue from 1992 through 1994 and concluded in their report dated August of 1995 that each state should conduct its own careful analytical examination,

under the leadership of its Supreme Court to determine whether and how to regulate non-lawyer activity in its jurisdiction. The debate continues in different forms in several states.

*As of January 1, 2001, a statute went into effect in California which requires minimum educational requirements for paralegals. AIPS does not meet the educational requirement as stated in the statute as identified by categories 1 and 2. Graduates who possess a baccalaureate degree and a year of experience will qualify under category 3. The California statute can be viewed by following the link: <http://codes.lp.findlaw.com/cacode/BPC/1/d3/5.6/s6450>

The Institute, as a licensed educational institute, is authorized to award a Certificate upon successful completion of its' program of study.

CLA EXAM

In November 1976, the National Association of Legal Assistants (NALA) designed and implemented a voluntary Certified Legal Assistant (CLA) exam to recognize "those persons who achieve significant competence in the field." The test is optional and voluntary. The American Institute for Paralegal Studies, Inc. encourages and supports our graduates who desire to attain this professional credential.

According to the NALA web site, updated as of January 2011, over 15,000 paralegals have earned their CLA since inception in 1976. The exam is offered at ACT testing centers around the country. Applicants have an entire month to complete the five required sections of the exam.

NALA states " Certification is voluntary, not imposed by government. It is time limited, which means that those with the certification must fulfill ongoing educational requirements to keep the certification current, and the criteria for certification is recognized in the community."

The American Institute for Paralegal Studies, Inc. recommends you contact NALA directly to obtain written eligibility requirements to sit for the CLA exam. Each student/graduate of the American Institute for Paralegal Studies, Inc. possesses varying degrees of education and experience which may or may not meet the qualifications to sit for the exam.

After you have requested and reviewed NALA's eligibility requirements for the CLA exam, please feel free to call the Institute Director. The Director will be happy to discuss how your general education background, combined with the Institute's program, may qualify you to sit for the exam. Ordinarily, a student must have completed a minimum of 45 semester credit hours in general education plus a minimum of 15 semester credit hours of substantive legal courses, to meet NALA's eligibility requirements. The Institute's General Paralegal Certificate program meets the standard of 15 semester credit hours of substantive legal courses. The Litigation Specialty Paralegal Certificate program far exceeds the standard of 15 semester credit hours of substantive legal courses.

For AIPS graduates** who meet NALA's general education requirements, the following benefits are available:

- A two month, four credit, CLA Review course (C505) is offered on line for Institute graduates on an annual basis. Current course dates and book fees are posted in the CLA folder in the *American Institute* conference on our student network. The 60 clock hour/4 credit course is graded on a Pass/Fail basis. Graduates who start the review course but fail to successfully complete it may retake the class at the currently quoted retake course costs (see the Tuition and Fees section of this Catalog). The grade becomes part of the student's permanent AIPS transcript just like any other course.

- Graduates who take the CLA Review course within two calendar years from their originally scheduled graduation date may take the course at no charge, except for books and materials. For all others, the cost is at the alumni rate for a 30 clock hour/2 credit class, plus books and materials.

- Graduates of other paralegal programs may take the CLA Review class. The cost is at the Individual Course rate (see the Tuition section of this catalog). The Institute makes no representations on how such individuals will perform on the CLA exam. It is strongly recommended that such individuals have taken an Ethics course, Legal Writing course, and Judgment and Analysis course as part of their prior certificate or degree studies.

Kindly note that the CLA exam is hard! Passing it will require a commitment to study throughout the Institute's core curriculum with additional preparation via the review course and self study. The Institute cannot guarantee that exam candidates will pass the CLA!

For official information on the CLA exam, visit the NALA website at <http://www.nala.org>.

Graduates of all programs prior to the adoption of the Ethics Workshop will need to take this one credit course prior to starting the CLA Review class.

For more details and current pricing, please contact the Director.

Integrating the CLA Examination into the Institute's Outcomes Assessment Design

The CLA exam is composed of the following major sections: Communications, Ethics, Judgment and Analytical Ability, Legal Research, Human Relations & Interviewing Techniques, Substantive Law, and Legal Terminology. These major sections define the key skills and learning objectives that are taught across the Institute's curriculum. Indeed, the Institute has reviewed its entire curriculum in light of the competencies tested on the CLA exam, and provides significant supplementation to core course in direct support of these essential competencies. As a result, the curriculum is stronger than ever, and will benefit all graduates, whether they choose to sit for the CLA exam or not.

DISMISSAL AND WITHDRAWAL

The Institute recommends that notice of withdrawal or termination be submitted in writing to the Institute.

The Institute reserves the right to dismiss students who: a) fail more than 2 classes, b) who have falsified information required by the admissions process, c) for dishonesty involving assignments or examinations, d) for repeated disruptive behavior, and e) for delinquent accounts.

Upon dismissal or withdrawal, the student's tuition obligation to the Institute is calculated based on the refund policy as published in the appendix of this catalog and in the student enrollment agreement. Refunds, when due, are made to the student within 30 days of dismissal or withdrawal.

CHEATING/PLAGIARISM

Concern exists in all educational institutions over student cheating and plagiarism. The Institute views all breaches of academic integrity as serious.

A. Definition of Cheating/Plagiarism

1. Any direct copying of another student's material.
2. Directly copying any other author's work and presenting it as one's own, without clearly citing the source and using quotations.
3. Any plagiarizing or copying of another student's work on assignments or homework. Word for word reproductions are clear violations. Plagiarism exists when a clear preponderance of a student's work is copied or changed only slightly from another author.
4. Any illegal acquisition, theft, reproduction or other method of securing testing materials before test material administration.
5. Any other breach of academic integrity.

B. Institute Procedures

1. Institute faculty will advise the Academic Office that cheating/plagiarism has taken place. Faculty will submit the test, posting or assignment in question to the Institute.
2. The Institute will advise the student(s) in writing of the instructor's finding.

C. Penalties

1. Upon first violation, an immediate failure for the course will be given. No averaging of tests or other criteria will even be considered. The student receives a zero for the course.
2. Student will not be entitled to retake the class unless the pro-rated tuition is paid.

3. Upon any subsequent violation the student will be dismissed permanently from the Institute and a citation of that dismissal will be noted on the Institute's permanent record.

D. Appeal Rights

1. If a student disagrees with an instructor's finding of cheating or plagiarism, the student will formally notify the Institute Director, in writing, of his/her desire to appeal the finding. The appeal must list the reasons why the finding is unjustified, and other pertinent data the student feels necessary in a review of the case. The student has 30 days from the date of notification of the finding to exercise this right.

2. The decision of the Director and Executive Vice President is final, and cannot be further reviewed within the Institute.

EXAMS , EXTERNAL ACTIVITIES and ASSIGNMENTS

All assessments will be completed with the FirstClass network. As an overview, the following can be expected:

Assignments and external activities are designed to give the class hands-on experience with legal forms and procedures. Projects should reflect your best effort. Your work should be professional, thorough and concise.

Final exams are administered during the last unit of each course.

A numerical grade is assigned for each course module.

MAKE-UP WORK

LATE Assignments, External Activities and Exams

When a scheduled project is not submitted on time, the student must contact their instructor. A twenty percent penalty will be assessed on all late homework, assignments, and exams. In cases of SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES the twenty percent penalty may be waived. Late homework, assignments and exams must be submitted within five days. An F will be assigned whenever a student does not follow the above procedures.

Students may not work together on graded assignments and exams unless specifically authorized by the instructor. Students must submit original work products on all graded assignments and exams. See policy on Cheating/Plagiarism, page 16.

Missing Discussion Participation

Discussion is an essential part of course participation. Missing discussion postings are assigned a zero unless the student has made prior arrangements with their instructor. In cases of SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES the instructor will assist the student with alternative arrangements.

EXAMS

Exams and assignments are returned to students electronically via the FirstClass network. Please allow two weeks to receive your grades after the final exam due date. **Under no circumstances will student grades be given to the student, or to any third party, over the telephone.**

RIGHT TO APPEAL COURSE GRADE

In the event a student wishes to appeal a course grade assigned by an instructor, she/he may appeal in the following manner:

- a. File a notice of appeal directly to the instructor within 10 days of the assignment of the grade, stating the reason for appeal, along with backup documentation. **Appeals of course grades will not be considered if sent later than 10 days after the grade was posted by the Instructor.**
- b. Send a copy of the appeal directly to the Director.
- c. The instructor will review the appeal and provide notification to the Institute of the decision within two weeks of the receipt of the appeal.
- d. The Institute will notify the student via e-mail of the result within five days of the instructor's decision.
- e. The instructor's decision is final and cannot be further reviewed within the Institute.

STANDARDS OF ACADEMIC PROGRESS

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Students must maintain a cumulative weighted average of 70% and must pass all classes with a minimum grade of 60%. Workshops graded on a Pass/Fail basis ordinarily require a minimum of 80% to pass. Some require a 90%.

ACADEMIC PROBATION

When a student fails a course, or the student's weighted GPA falls below 70%, she/he will be notified by the Institute and placed on academic probation. A student on probation is considered to be making satisfactory academic progress as long as no more than two classes are failed.

A student will remain on probation until all failed courses are repeated and passed and the cumulative weighted average is raised to 70%. In calculating the cumulative weighted average the grade for repeating the course replaces the failing grade. The student is responsible for the pro-rated cost of retaking course work. Please refer to the "Period of Completion" section of this catalog, on p. 19 for additional information on time constraints.

A student failing more than two classes or continuing on probation for more than one year will be dismissed from the program.

ATTENDANCE

Regular participation is an essential part of the distance learning program of study. Employers seek job candidates who show not only strong academic performance, but who also evidence reliable attendance. Classroom participation and student/teacher interaction is also an important part of the educational process.

All students are encouraged to log in frequently. Once a day is not too often. It is difficult to face a barrage of unread messages and assignments once they are allowed to build up. Besides, your classmates will miss you!

If you need to be out of town for a few days (business, vacation, etc) you can take FirstClass with you. You can also log in using a standard web browser, by pointing to <http://aips.com/login>.

If you have to be off line for more than a couple of days, be sure to let your instructor and course facilitator know your schedule.

GRADING SCALE

A student's progress is monitored during each term. The minimum passing grade in most individual subject areas, except Pass/Fail courses, is 60% (Pass/Fail courses carry a higher passing requirement, which varies by class). The student must earn a minimum cumulative average of 70% to graduate. A "W" (withdrawal) is given when the student withdraws from a class for any reason. A course with a grade of "W" will not be considered a course successfully completed; in order to earn a Certificate of Completion the course must be repeated. A "W" does not count in the weighted average. The Institute does not issue "Incompletes" for any course. Pass/Fail courses count towards graduation requirements, but are not factored into the weighted average.

A numerical grade based upon discussion participation, assignments, external activities, and exams is given in each course. The numerical grade is converted into a letter grade as follows:

97 - 100	A+
94 - 96	A
90 - 93	A-
87 - 89	B+
84 - 86	B
80 - 83	B-
77 - 79	C+
74 - 76	C
70 - 73	C-
67 - 69	D+
64 - 66	D
60 - 63	D-
59 or below	F

Students and graduates can request their PROGRESS REPORT with a cumulative, weighted average at any time, using the automated form in the *AIPS Administration* conference of the student network. Grades, assignments, and exams will not be released to the student if tuition payments are in arrears. Under no circumstances will grades be given to students over the telephone. When grades are received and posted from faculty each month, a notice is posted in the *AIPS Course Facilitator* conference alerting the class that the grades are in.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

A leave of absence for up to 30 days or until the first day of the next scheduled module in the student's curriculum is granted only to students who wish to temporarily interrupt their education due to SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES. Students must request a leave of absence by e-mail or in writing. The request must be approved by the Director. A "W" will be assigned for classes started but not completed before the leave of absence. A "W" does not count towards the weighted average.

Refunds, when applicable, will be honored as detailed in the refund policy section of this catalog. All refunds are calculated as of the student's last date logged into the system, unless an earlier withdrawal date was requested in writing.

PERIOD OF COMPLETION

Students are permitted two academic years from the date of initial enrollment to complete and pass all subject areas with a minimum cumulative, weighted average of 70% in order to receive a Certificate. After two academic years, students are dismissed.

Self Directed Workshops which are required components of the curriculum must be completed within 30 days of the student's last regularly scheduled class to be included in the tuition rate. After 30 days, the student is charged the pro-rated tuition for the Workshop.

The student is responsible for the cost of retaking failed courses. The minimum passing grade for most courses is 60%. Some Workshops are graded on a Pass/Fail basis.

REINSTATEMENT

A student who has been dismissed for lack of satisfactory academic progress may apply to be readmitted to the Institute after waiting a period of 3 months. Such student will be enrolled for a probationary period upon re-entry.

The Institute will not reinstate a student who was dismissed for unsatisfactory conduct.

RETAKE COURSE

A student or graduate may retake any subject area within two academic years for the current retake fee, posted under the Tuition section of this catalog. The student is also responsible for the costs of any books and materials needed. The new grade will replace the original grade for that subject on the student's final progress report for each class retaken.

RIGHT TO APPEAL DISMISSAL OR TERMINATION

In the event a student wishes to appeal any determination as to dismissal actions s/he may appeal in the following manner.

- 1) Forward written Notice of Appeal within 10 days of termination to the Director stating reason for appeal.
- 2) If the appeal is denied by the Director, forward Notice of Appeal to the Executive Vice President for review.

STUDENT INFORMATION

CALENDAR AND SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

The General Paralegal Certificate program takes approximately 8 months to complete all of the required course modules (4 months if accelerated), not including December. The Litigation Specialty Certificate program takes approximately 12 months to complete (6 months if accelerated), not including December. Each two credit module is taught over a four calendar week month. There are no classes taught during the month of December.

COMPLAINT RESOLUTION POLICY

The Institute, like all educational institutions, is a complex enterprise consisting of many departments and individuals. It is realistic, therefore, that certain problems will be more difficult to resolve than others.

- 1) Students are encouraged to bring their complaints to the attention of the Director, either by phone, e-mail, or in writing. Many potential problems can be resolved by early discussion with the Institute's staff.
- 2) Students not satisfied with this informal resolution process should formally notify the Director in writing, with appropriate documentation, of any unresolved problem or complaint. The Director will research the problem and will respond to the student in writing.
- 3) The student may file a Notice of Appeals with the Office of the Executive Vice President. The decision will be reviewed by an Appeals Committee comprised of the Director and the Executive Vice President. A written report will be returned from the Office of the Executive Vice President.
- 4) The student may also file a written complaint with the appropriate state licensing agency. Please refer to the section of this catalog entitled, "Licensing and Accreditation" for the address.

CONDUCT

The administration and faculty of the Institute expect students to possess a strong desire to achieve and to exhibit a courteous manner toward fellow students, administrative staff, and instructors alike. Cause for dismissal may be conduct not in conformance with a businesslike or professional manner which may include but not be limited to dishonesty involving assignments or examinations, behavior which disrupts the class, or abusive language.

NETWORK ACCESS AND PRIVACY

The *FirstClass network* operated by the Institute and its partners in the Distance Learning Consortium is a private network. It is to be used for educational purposes only.

Faculty and staff have full discretion in moderating conferences on the network. Postings may be removed by faculty and staff whenever they are deemed inappropriate.

Please note that the system administrator, designated management staff, and network consultants have full access to all user mailboxes on the network. It is routine and normal for these designated individuals to access user mailboxes to offer technical assistance, training, and for troubleshooting and network oversight.

Verification of student identity is established through a secure login and password. The user-specific login and password establish that the student who registers in the program is the same student who participates in and completes the program, earning academic credit. There are no additional charges associated with the verification of student identity at the time of registration or enrollment.

HARASSMENT

The Institute is committed to providing a learning environment that is free of unwanted, discriminatory and illegal behavior. All students, faculty, and staff have the right to an educational environment free from intimidation and harassment of any sort, whether based upon sex, race, age, religion, ethnic group, handicap, etc. The Institute prohibits any act--physical, verbal, written, or visual-- which has the effect of unreasonably interfering with a student's, faculty, or staff's performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive atmosphere.

Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual or abusive nature where:

1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or a condition of an individual's employment or a student's evaluation, or
2. A decision is based on an individual's acceptance or rejection of such conduct, or
3. Such conduct unreasonably interferes with a student's performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive learning environment.

The Institute will not tolerate sexual harassment on the part of faculty, staff, or students.

Any student, faculty, or staff who believes that he or she has been subjected to sexual, racial, or other form of harassment should immediately report the incident to any supervisor or any officer of the Institute, without fear of reprisals or adverse action against the instructor or student by the Institute.

Institute staff will notify the Executive Vice President of the claim. The Executive Vice President will ensure that the claim is investigated and that the appropriate action is executed. Appropriate action may include dismissal or termination.

PROGRAM MATERIALS

All required textbooks and supplementary materials are purchased by students through the vendor of their choice. Many students elect to purchase used textbooks to save on fees. The FirstClass software is furnished directly to students by the Institute as a part of tuition fees. In some cases, required software must be downloaded from the Internet. When additional software is required, instructions will be provided.

DELINQUENT ACCOUNTS

Students who withdraw, are dismissed, or complete the program with a delinquent account balance will be transferred to the FAME, Inc. collections department. In the event that appropriate payment arrangements are not made, the student account will be turned over to the law firms selected by FAME, Inc, which services the Institute's payment plans.

TUITION FINANCING

New Students are invited to apply for the AIPS Student Financing plan. A variety of payment plan options are available under this program. For current plans, please visit our website.

Please contact Admissions for further information.

INSURANCE

The Institute does not carry insurance on students' personal belongings and is not responsible for loss or damage from any cause.

PAYMENT METHODS

Costs of the program may be paid by check or money order payable to "A.I.P.S." Major credit cards (MasterCard, VISA, DISCOVER, AMEX) will be accepted as well.

PLACEMENT ASSISTANCE

Statement of Purpose

The goal of placement assistance is to help students understand the array of career options available to paralegal graduates and to offer individualized guidance in making knowledgeable choices based on these career options.

Students and graduates should take note that looking for employment can be a time consuming and high energy process. Job seekers often say it is like a full time job in itself.

THE INSTITUTE DOES NOT AND CANNOT PROMISE OR GUARANTEE EMPLOYMENT TO ANY INDIVIDUAL STUDENT OR GRADUATE.

While participation in the Placement Assistance Program is voluntary, a student may utilize this option to help achieve career goals. Students who are delinquent in their accounts are not permitted to participate in the Placement Assistance Program.

Opportunities for paralegals exist in private law offices, government agencies, banks, corporations, insurance agencies, legal clinics, courts, accounting and engineering firms, title companies, health care organizations, construction companies, legislative offices and committees, and a variety of other organizations. Law-related expertise is valuable to a wide range of positions. As a result someone with paralegal/legal assistant education and training may be gainfully employed in any of a vast range of job titles, including:

paralegal	legal assistant
legal administrator	legal technician
law librarian	legal researcher
legal information specialist	docket clerk
legal/law clerk	court clerk
probate estate clerk	bankruptcy specialist
victim witness coordinator	litigation coordinator
legal editor/coder/proofreader	title examiner/closer/abstractor
immigration specialist	foreign affairs analyst
civil rights analyst	social services representative
case advocate/specialist	community law specialist
domestic relations specialist	social security specialist
public entitlement specialist	senior citizen specialist
tribal court rep.	veterans law specialist
housing/tenant law specialist	disability law specialist
probate administrator	hearing and appeals officer
investigator	loan assistant/reviewer/officer
legal instruments examiner	public utilities specialist
tax law specialist	import specialist
environmental protection specialist	security specialist
insurance adjuster	group insurance reviewer
compliance specialist	regulatory analyst
legislative analyst	land law examiner
copyright examiner/technician	estate law examiner
workers compensation claims examiner	unemployment compensation claims examiner
forfeiture specialist	accounts specialist
benefits analyst	financial assistant
contract administrator/specialist	real estate broker
claims examiner	collections administrator

personnel/human resource manager
labor relations specialist
wage and hour compliance specialist
records manager
risk management
parole officer
office manager
corporate officer

child support specialist
employee relations specialist
mediation specialist
credit union manager
health law specialist
police officer
child care provider
business owner/entrepreneur

Starting salaries differ according to area, and will also reflect the individual qualities of the graduates, such as appearance, attitude and previous education. In addition to salary, a graduate must consider the location of the employer, the type of organization, social contacts and other benefits the employer may offer. *Legal Assistant Today*, the premier journal for paralegals, publishes an annual salary survey with state and regional details on paralegal salaries.

For more information on the American Institute for Paralegal Studies, Inc.'s Placement Assistance Program, please contact the Director.

STUDENT RECORDS **TRANSCRIPTS**

A permanent record of the student's academic information is maintained by the administrative staff at the Institute. Copies of these records are available to the student while attending the program and may be requested after graduation. A request for copies must be made in writing to the Institute's Academic Office. The Institute guarantees students' the right to a copy of their file.

Progress reports are updated after completion of each course module. Students can request a copy of their updated progress report at any time through the AIPS Administration conference. Under no circumstances will student grades be given to the student, or to any third party, over the telephone. Exams and grades will be **WITHHELD** by the Academic Office if the student account is delinquent or if official high school or college transcripts are not on file.

According to the **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)** students and parents of dependent students have the right to review a student's educational records, to request amendment to a student's educational records, to provide consent prior to disclosure of personally identifiable information, and to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education regarding the failure of an institution to comply with FERPA. Students or parents of dependent students may request a hearing to challenge the contents of a student's record, and the student will be given the opportunity to place a statement regarding contested information in the record stating the nature of the disagreement.

A parent or student must make a request in writing to review educational records. An appointment will be scheduled in order to make these records available.

No personally identifiable information will be released to a third party without the written consent of the parent or student unless it is:

- a. To other school officials who have educational interest in the information;
- b. To officials of another school where the student seeks or intends to enroll;
- c. To representatives of the Comptroller General of the United States, the Secretary of Education, or State and local educational authorities;
- d. To State officials if required by State statute;
- e. To organizations conducting studies for educational agencies or institutions to develop, validate, or administer tests, administer student aid programs or improve instruction. No personally identifiable information will be released except to representatives of the organization and the information provided to the organization will be destroyed when no longer needed for the study.
- f. To parents of a dependent student;
- g. To comply with a judicial order or subpoena;
- h. To meet a health or safety emergency;
- i. To an alleged victim of a crime of violence regarding the results of disciplinary proceedings against the alleged perpetrator of the crime.

All disclosures of information will be recorded in the student's file and will include parties receiving the information and the legitimate interests of the parties for inspection of the records.

Personally identifiable information which is designated as directory information includes student's name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities, degrees and awards received and the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended.

STUDY TIME

Students can expect to spend an average of 1-2 hours of study time for each unit of course work.

TAX CREDITS (Federal) for AIPS programs

AIPS students are not eligible for the tax credits available for eligible postsecondary institutions, as defined in the IRS regulations. These credits are restricted to programs that participate in the Federal Title IV institutions.

REFUND POLICY

I understand that the REFUND POLICY of the Institute is as follows:

1. **REJECTION OF AN APPLICANT** - The tuition paid by an applicant will be refunded in full if the applicant is rejected by the Institute.
2. **TERMINATION DATE** - The date of withdrawal or termination is the last day the student logged into the conference server, for any purpose, except for notifying the Institute of official withdrawal. All refunds are calculated through the last day of attendance.
3. **THREE DAY CANCELLATION** - All tuition paid by an applicant will be refunded if requested within three days after signing an enrollment agreement and making an initial payment. In such case, the refund will be made within 10 business days.
4. **CANCELLATION PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT OF CLASSES BY STUDENT** - If an applicant accepted by the Institute cancels after the three days but prior to the start of scheduled classes or never attends class all tuition paid will be refunded within 30 days of the first scheduled day of class or date of cancellation, whichever is earlier.
5. **TERMINATION OR WITHDRAWAL AFTER COMMENCEMENT OF CLASSES:** In the event a student withdraws or is terminated from the Institute after commencement of classes, the Institute will calculate the refund by using the following policy:
 - a) A student who starts class and withdraws or is terminated during the first week of the program shall be obligated for 10% of the tuition or \$500.00, whichever is less.
 - b) A student who withdraws or is terminated after the first week and through 50% of the program (through 60% for Wisconsin residents) shall be obligated for tuition as prorated for that portion of the program that has been completed, plus 10% of the unearned tuition for the portion of the program that was not completed.
 - c) A student who withdraws or is terminated after 50% of the program (after 60% for Wisconsin residents) is completed shall be obligated for the full program tuition.
 - d) *After the first week of the program, the Institute's policy is to calculate the percentage of the program completed based on when the student last participated in class based on work submitted or participation in an online forum.*
6. **REFUND PROCESSING** - All refunds, when due, will be made within 30 days of the student's date of withdrawal or termination. Refund requests should be made in writing or by e-mail, but can also be made by phone or fax.
7. **CANCELLATION BY THE INSTITUTE** - In the event that a course or program is canceled by the Institute subsequent to a student's enrollment, the Institute will refund all monies paid by the student.
8. **BOOK FEE** - Book fees are not subject to the refund computation as books are purchased by students from the vendor of their choice.

The Lexis (\$50.00) portion of the book fee can only be refunded under the following conditions: During the New Student Orientation period only, and prior to the posting of Lexis accounts to the class.

9. **Tuition Discounts and Scholarships** - In the event of withdrawal or dismissal, any tuition discounts, credits, or scholarships are forfeited.

TERMINATION POLICY - The Institute reserves the right to dismiss students who: A) fail more than 2 classes, B) who have falsified information required by the admissions process, C) fail to provide official high school or college transcripts within 30 days of class starting date, D) for dishonesty involving assignments or examinations, E) for repeated disruptive behavior, F) for delinquent accounts.

Refund Policy for Individual Courses:

For students who register for only one course at a time, the refund policy is as follows:

If you change your mind before the first scheduled day of the individual course, you are entitled to a refund of your tuition.

After the start of the class, but before the end of the first calendar week, you are responsible for 25% of the course tuition. If you decide to withdraw from the class after the second week, you are responsible for 50% of the tuition. If you elect to withdraw after the third calendar week from the scheduled start date you are responsible for 100% of the tuition.

TUITION

Tuition can be paid by check or money order payable to "A.I.P.S." Major credit cards (MasterCard, Visa, Discover, AMEX) will be accepted.

The schedule of fees for the Institute are:

Effective February 2011

Litigation Paralegal Specialty Certificate Program

Tuition:		\$5,995.00
*Approximate textbook fee	\$570.00	
TOTAL PROGRAM maximum		<u>\$6,565.00</u>

General Paralegal Certificate Program

Tuition:		\$3,995.00
*Approximate textbook fee	\$420.00	
TOTAL PROGRAM maximum		<u>\$4,415.00</u>

** (Students purchase books on their own from the vendor of their choice. Used books are acceptable as long as the editions are correct. E-texts are also acceptable when available.)*

Financing options are available. A credit check is required. For information, call your admissions representative at 1-800-553-2420, or visit our web site at <http://www.aips.com/financing.html>.

Individual Course Option: Students may elect to register for one course module at a time. The cost for a 2 credit/30 clock hour course is \$240.00, or \$120.00 for a 1 credit/15 clock hour course. Books are additional. If taken as a *Directed Study*, an additional \$275.00 is charged.

Directed Study Option: Any course taken out of sequence as a *Directed Study* is charged an additional \$275.00. Please reference page 13 for a description.

Retake course option: For students and graduates who retake a course, the minimum charge is 1/2 the currently published prorated tuition. If the retake is taken as a *Directed Study*, please add \$125.00. Books are additional if new textbooks have been adopted.

Workshop charges: Required Workshops are included in the tuition and book fees. However, Workshops must be completed within 30 days of the student's last regularly scheduled class to avoid additional charges. If taken after this due date, the *Retake Course* charges apply as noted above.

Lexis Account: Lexis accounts are valid only for currently enrolled students. They automatically expire upon your originally scheduled graduation date. If your graduation is delayed, and you need to extend your account, Lexis charges a \$50.00 fee. The extension of the account is only valid for the duration of makeup classes, usually not to exceed 60 days. Kindly note the scheduled expiration date of your Lexis account, which appears along with your Lexis User ID on your database report.

Credit for payment in full: For students who pay in full for the entire program, a 15% tuition discount (does not apply to the book fee) will be posted to their account. The credit is on the net tuition after any other discounts or scholarships.

Credit for payment in four quarterly installments: For students who pay 1/4 of the tuition up front, and the remaining three payments in the following quarters, a 10% tuition discount (does not apply to the book fee) will be posted to their account. The credit is on the net tuition after any other discounts or scholarships.