

Virginia Western Community College
LGL 117
Family Law

Prerequisites

None

Course Description

Studies elements of a valid marriage, grounds for divorce and annulment, separation, defenses, custody, support, adoptions, and applicable tax consequences. Includes property settlement agreements, pre- and ante-nuptial agreements, pleadings, and rules of procedure. May include specific federal and Virginia consumer laws.

Semester Credits: 3 Lecture Hours: 3 Lab/Clinical/Internship Hours: 0

Required Materials**Textbook:**

FAMILY LAW FOR THE PARALEGAL: CONCEPTS AND APPLICATIONS, 3rd Edition, Mary E. Wilson, Pearson.

Other Required Materials:

The following supplementary materials are available: • Understanding Your Domestic Relationship Rights in Virginia (A handout written and produced by the Richmond Women's Bar Association)

Course Outcomes

At the completion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. The primary goal of the course is to emphasize the terminology, content and practical application of the law regulating divorce, custody, support and other elementary domestic law issues.
2. I expect that 70% of students will achieve a mastery of the material, with the remaining 30% having at least a working knowledge. A mid-term and Comprehensive Final Exam will be administered.
3. These exams will test each student's ability to identify and address any of ten potential ethical issues and their likely results. A comprehensive final ensures that the student has a grasp of the general principles and their application to suggested scenarios, thereby permitting the student to expand on their answers.
4. The results of a mid-term exam will define the general level of most students' understanding. The Comprehensive Final can then focus on those areas that may be particularly difficult to grasp, while also addressing the basics that MUST be grasped. A particular strength of the course is to involve at least one but preferably two guest lecturers from the community, who will address real world application of the theory and principles covered in regular lectures and reading.

Topical Description

Week 1	Chapter 1: Introduction to Family Law and Practice
Week 2	Chapter 2: Ethics in Family Law
Week 3	Chapter 3: Marriage and Marriage Alternatives
Week 4	Chapter 4: Divorce, Separation and Annulment
Week 5	Chapters 5 & 15: Premarital Agreements and Separation Agreements
Week 6	Chapter 6: Alimony
Week 7	MID-TERM EXAM
Week 8	Chapter 17: Government Intrusion in Family Matters,
Week 9	Guest Speaker Heather Ferguson, Roanoke DSS or other comparable official
Week 10	Chapter 7: Property and Debt Distribution
Week 11	Chapter 8: Child Custody, Visitation and Third Party Rights
Week 12	Chapter 9: Child Support and Collection , Guest Speak TBA from DCSE
Week 13	Chapter 10: The Client Interview
Week 14	Capstone Speaker: TBA
Week 15	Final Exam Review
Week 16	FINAL EXAM

Notes to Instructors

None