



NATIONAL PARALEGAL COLLEGE

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Grading Policy

Each student who completes the requisite assignments and exams in a course will be given a letter grade from “A” through “F” upon completion of the course. The course will be graded on approximately the following basis:

First Examination: 20%
Second Examination: 20%
Third Examination: 20%
Assignments: 40%

EXAMINATIONS

Examinations are administered online and generally consist of approximately 10 questions, each calling for answers of fewer than 100 words. Students receive a numeric grade from 1 to 100 on each examination, as well as written comments from the instructor.

ASSIGNMENTS

Assignments should be adequately researched and thought out before submission. The exact amount of research and length of the assignment are left to the discretion of the student. However, the following minimum guidelines should be noted:

Assignments calling for research (which includes most assignments in paralegal courses) should contain at least two citations to appropriate legal authorities. Citations may be to cases, statutes or other scholarly journals or treatises, as appropriate. Citations to the courseware are not acceptable, as one of the goals of the NPC curriculum is to train the student to become adept at online legal research.

Assignments that do not call for legal research (such as document drafting or opinion and analysis assignments) should be no shorter than one typed page, double-spaced (250 words). Assignments generally need be no longer than 500 words, but students will not be penalized for going over 500 words.

Assignments that do not conform to these minimum guidelines will receive an appropriate grade reduction.

All assignments will be read and graded by the instructor.

Grades will be on the following basis:

4 = excellent

3 = good

2 = satisfactory

1 = poor

0 = no credit (must resubmit)

The following grading rubric is used to determine a student's assignment grade:

Factor	4 (Excellent)	3(Good)	2(Satisfactory)	1 (Poor)	0 (no credit)
Thoroughness	Answered all questions in the exercise completely and in the appropriate order.	Answered all questions in the exercise but not completely and/or not on the appropriate order.	Answered most of the questions in the exercise but not completely and/or not on the appropriate order.	Did not answer the questions in the exercise in a satisfactory manner but did make some reasonable effort to do so.	Made little or no reasonable effort to answer the questions posed in the assignment.
Demonstrated Understanding of the Assignment and has come to an appropriate conclusion	Response demonstrates a thorough understanding of the exercise and the student has justified and enunciated an appropriate conclusion.	Response demonstrates an understanding of the exercise and comes to a conclusion.	Response demonstrates some understanding of the exercise. The conclusion that the student comes to may not be appropriately justified by the rest of the essay.	Response demonstrates some understanding of the exercise but shows a high level of confusion on the part of the student. The student's conclusion, if any, is not supported by the rest of the essay.	Response demonstrates a very poor understanding of the subject matter presented by the assignment.

Documentation/ Legal research	Student has cited at least two excellent sources and has applied them appropriately. Appropriate sources are documented and well cited and well integrated.	Student has cited one excellent source or two or more good sources but has missed at least one excellent source. Sources are integrated well in the assignment.	Student has cited appropriate sources but has missed the best available OR student has cited good sources but has done a poor job of integrating them.	Student has cited poor or inappropriate authorities or has failed to establish the relevance of the sources that he or she has cited.	Student has not cited any legal authorities or has cited authorities that are irrelevant.
Organization	Essay is organized very well; the reader can clearly understand where the essay is going at all point and a cohesive easy-to-follow argument is made in the essay. Separate paragraphs are used for separate ideas.	Essay is well organized. The essay is coherent, though may not flow freely. Different components of the essay are broken up appropriately.	Essay shows some level of organization, but is difficult to follow. The essay is not as focused as it should be. Essay may go back and forth between points without using new paragraphs.	Essay is poorly organized and/or is very difficult to follow. The student did not appropriately separate thoughts and did not properly organize the essay.	There is no reasonable attempt to organize the essay coherently.
Critical Thinking and Analysis	Shows excellent critical thinking and analysis. The student was able to apply the cited law to the facts of the given case in a clear and convincing manner.	Shows good critical thinking and analysis. The student's points are well argued and well supported.	Shows adequate critical thinking and analysis. The student's points are supported by logic, but are not exceptionally convincing.	Shows minimal critical thinking and analysis. The student's arguments are weak and unconvincing.	Shows no or inadequate effort critical thinking or analysis.

WEEKLY INTERACTION REQUIREMENT

To ensure that all students are involved and participating in the course as the course moves forward, each student enrolled in this course must, at least one during each week, either:

1) Attend a live lecture

OR

2) Submit at least one assignment

OR

3) Take at least one examination

OR

4) Answer a weekly “interaction” question or questions that will be posted on the “Assignments and Exams” page.

The weekly “interaction” question(s) will be straightforward and will cover material covered in class that week. Answers to these questions should be short (typically 1-3 sentences) and to the point.

This student response (which is necessary only if the student does not attend a live class or take an exam or submit an assignment in the given week) will be graded on a pass/fail basis. The interaction questions will be posted no later than Monday of each week and must be answered on or before the following Sunday.

Students who did attend a live class or take an exam or submit an assignment in the given week may ignore the weekly interaction question.

Any student who does not fulfill this requirement during a given week will receive a reduction in his or her over-all grade of 2 percentage points from his or her over-all average. Conversely, any student who demonstrates excellent participation either through message board participation or through relevant in class discussion may receive an increase in his or her over-all grade, at the discretion of the instructor.

MESSAGE BOARD PARTICIPATION

At NPC, we believe that interaction with instructors and fellow students is a key component of online education. However, we are cognizant of the fact that many people cannot attend the live online lectures which provide the best opportunity for this interaction. Therefore, the next best way to provide students with an interactive learning experience is through the NPC message boards.

Asking questions or making comments on the message boards is a great way to solicit feedback not only from instructors, but from classmates as well. Lively message board discussions add immeasurably to the learning experience for all students.

Although message board participation is not required in order to earn a perfect grade, an instructor may, at his or her discretion, give a student a moderate amount of extra credit (typically, one-third of a letter grade) for excellent message board participation.

FINAL COURSE GRADE

Students who complete all assignments and exams within one week of the end of the course will receive a final course grade by the instructor. Students who do not complete their coursework within one week of the end of a course will automatically receive the grade of "I". In this circumstance, if the student completes the coursework within 30 days after the end of the course, the grade of "I" will automatically revert to the new grade given by the instructor. No record of the grade of "I" will remain on the student's transcript. Instructors may, at their discretion, give a student an extension of an additional 30 days to complete the coursework. Under no circumstances will an extension be given beyond 60 days after a course ends.

COURSE WITHDRAWAL

Students may drop enrollment in a course within the first week without any financial liability or adverse effect on their academic grade.

If a student elects to drop enrollment in a course after the first week but before 4 weeks, the student will incur financial liability for the course in accordance with NPC's withdrawal policy. In this circumstance, the student will receive a grade of "W" on his or her academic transcript. The grade of "W" is not used in the computation of the student's GPA.

If a student elects to drop enrollment in a course after 4 weeks, the student will incur financial liability for the course in accordance with NPC's withdrawal policy. In this circumstance, the student will receive a grade of "I" on his or her academic transcript. The grade of "I" counts as 0 points in the computation of the student's GPA.

If, in the future, a student that has received a "W" or "I" on a course, successfully completes the same course, "W" or "I" will be removed from the student's academic transcript and replaced by the new grade received by the student.

OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPTS

Students can receive an official transcript, or have an official transcript mailed to an educational institution or employer, at no cost, by contacting NPC's office by telephone or mail.