

Earn your certificate in paralegal studies from James Madison University in only 5 months!



Strengthen your Legal Career or Start a New One!

JMU's Paralegal Certificate Program is ideal for legal assistants and staff wishing to augment their training and experience with a professional certificate or career changers seeking a profession with strong compensation.

Our non-credit online certificate program is designed with the adult learner in mind. Class sessions are held weekday evenings or on weekends and are delivered as a balance of self-paced and live instructor led training in an online environment.

If you are interested in enhancing your professional credibility, employment prospects and income potential in the legal industry, the JMU Paralegal Certificate is for you!

Top 5 Skills for Successful Paralegals

Paralegals are at the core of a successful legal practice as they work side by side with attorneys performing a wide variety of duties. Here are the top skills that paralegals need to work at their best:

- 1 Research and analytical thinking**
Top-notch research and analysis skills are critical for an effective paralegal. The ability to master legal research databases, know where to go for answers, and follow a step by step process to solve problems are necessary traits for paralegals.
- 2 Communication**
Paralegals need effective communication skills whether they are interviewing a client, scheduling appointments and court dates, or contacting parties for statements. Paralegals are the main connection between the attorney and client which requires clear and effective communication skills.
- 3 Organization**
Deadlines, due dates, and managing multiple clients drive the necessity for paralegals to be highly organized. Many paralegals are responsible for accurately allocating their time and billable hours to their clients which results in an efficient and profitable company or firm.
- 4 Writing**
Paralegals need exemplary writing skills free of errors including briefs, drafting pleadings, or correspondence with a client. Successful paralegals that have the ability to deliver high quality written documents that are clear and concise prove themselves as an integral part of the team.
- 5 Technology**
The ability to learn new software, systems, and continually update computer skills is essential for paralegals. Technology is constantly changing and a star paralegal will embrace those changes and quickly adapt to continue to add value to the organization's bottom line.



Top 5 Benefits of Earning a Paralegal Certificate at James Madison University

1 Improve Your Job Prospects

Employment in the paralegal industry is projected to grow much faster than average, as employers try to reduce costs by hiring paralegals to perform tasks once done by lawyers.*

The training and skills you receive can be used in a law office and translate to many other fields such as real estate, social services, and government.

2 Increase Your Earning Potential

The average salary of paralegals in the U.S. is about \$50,000 per year according to the Bureau of Labor and Statistics. Accordingly, compensation has increased steadily over the last decade, and it is expected to continue as the demand for paralegals continues to expand.

3 Convenience and Flexibility

You can earn your paralegal certificate online during convenient hours outside of the typical work day, so you can advance your career without the inconvenience of giving up your current position. Also, by enrolling in a program designed with the adult learner in mind, you'll have the flexibility and convenience of having course content delivered as a balance of self-paced and live instructor led training.

4 Learn from the Best in the Industry

Top paralegal programs only employ instructors who are practicing attorneys with a proven track record for success in the legal field. Their knowledge, experience and effectiveness in the learning environment is a key factor for your success during the program and beyond.

5 Learn the Skills Necessary for Success

Top paralegal programs teach you the skills, training, and knowledge acquired include an advanced understanding of legal procedure, ethics, and substantive law as well as research, communication and writing skills. You will learn to investigate complex fact patterns, conduct legal research, and assist in preparing cases for courtroom litigation. In addition to key career development concepts such as interviewing and resume-writing for the paralegal profession.

**Source: Bureau of Labor and Statistics, Occupational Outlook Handbook*

Are you ready to advance your career?

A Paralegal Certificate from James Madison University prepares you to be competitive in the job market, and it is further enhanced by JMU's reputation and tradition of excellence.

Upon meeting the necessary requirements of the program, you will receive a certificate of completion from James Madison University.

5 months, 6.2 CEUs, or 62 contact hours

Format

The program is offered 100% online with classes meeting 2 evenings per week or on weekends

Cost

\$3,995 which includes all materials, E-textbooks and certificate of completion

To learn more, contact the program advisor at (540) 908-4578 or visit www.jmuparalegal.org.



OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT