



**Grande Prairie Regional College**  
**School of Health, Wellness & Career Studies**  
**Department of Business & Office Administration**

**COURSE OUTLINE**  
**OA1610 A2 3 (3-0-0) 45 Hours for 15 Weeks**  
**Legal Office Administration I**

Grande Prairie Regional College respectfully acknowledges that we are located on Treaty 8 territory, the traditional homeland and gathering place for many diverse Indigenous peoples. We are honoured to be on the ancestral lands of the Cree, Dene/Beaver and Métis, whose histories, languages, and cultures continue to influence our vibrant community. We are grateful to have the opportunity to work, learn, and live on this land.

**Instructor** Leah Paslawski

**Room** A313

**Lecture** T 6-9 p.m.

**E-mail** [leahp@kmsc.ca](mailto:leahp@kmsc.ca)

**Office Hours** By appointment

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**CALENDAR**

**DESCRIPTION:**

This course is an introduction to legal office procedures. Upon completion, students will have a thorough knowledge and understanding of office procedures specific to a law firm including opening, closing, and maintaining client files; preparing legal correspondence; using Outlook for incoming/outgoing messages, calendaring, and meeting set up; the mechanics of timekeeping and creating billing statements; as well as managing office politics and human dynamics. The students will also be introduced to wills, powers of attorney, and personal directives. Records and time management will also be emphasized.

**PREREQUISITE:** None

**DELIVERY**

**MODE:**

High Flex - students have the option of attending sessions in the classroom, participating remotely via Zoom, or doing a combination of both. Please note that some course components require onsite attendance.

**TEXTBOOKS:**

Bedford, Jennie, *Legal Keys Keyboarding Drills & Terminology*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed, Tusker International (Creative Works) Ltd, 2017.

Edwards, Linda L., *Law Office Skills*. Thomson Delmar Learning, 2003. (used or on reserve at library)

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

- ↗ To gain the knowledge required to function efficiently and effectively in a productive law office environment
- ↗ To develop a basic knowledge of the legal secretary/assistant's clerical and practical duties required in a law office (including Microsoft Outlook)
- ↗ Development of keyboarding speed and accuracy
- ↗ Understanding the key role typing skills have when it comes to a legal assistant's employability
- ↗ To develop and apply the procedures involved in estate planning and in the creation of estate documents
- ↗ To develop a thorough understanding of Microsoft Outlook 2013: apply the skills needed to use Outlook to send and receive emails, as well as to organize an office with the use of Outlook calendars, task list options, and the scheduling assistant.

## **LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

The student will:

- ↗ recognize what it means to dress, act, and behave professionally
- ↗ recognize and apply effective phone, voice-mail, and e-mail techniques
- ↗ describe and apply the concept of effective time management
- ↗ formulate plans to efficiently manage their time
- ↗ perform and apply common billing practices and the mechanics of law office time keeping
- ↗ illustrate the mechanics of effective file management
- ↗ recognize, evaluate, and justify the realities of office politics
- ↗ recognize, evaluate, and apply methods to work effectively with "challenging" clients, attorneys, and colleagues.
- ↗ identify and apply the rules of estate planning and prepare law office documents.
- ↗ work on proofreading skills
- ↗ develop expertise in keying legal material – improving keying skills in both speed and accuracy

## **GRADING:**

Assignments	40%
Projects/ Tests	20%
Professionalism and Participation	10%
Final Exam	30%

**Note:** Speed, accuracy, as well as proofreading and correction skills will be fundamental in the evaluation of legal documents prepared

### **What is Professionalism?**

Webster's Dictionary definition of professionalism is, "the conduct, aims, or qualities that characterize or mark a profession or a professional person." Practicing the key concepts (listed below) will help you to master professionalism and prepare you to display this important aspect of your working self throughout the semester and during any work experience placement.

The students will demonstrate professionalism and job success skills through:

- **Conduct & Character** – Your values, behaviors, and the demeanor in which you perform your daily tasks.
  - This includes consistent attendance or online presence; fulfilling your duties properly, and in a timely manner while respecting the learning of others and projecting a professional image; conducting yourself with integrity: a concept of consistency of actions, values, methods, measures, principles, expectations, and outcomes; striving to be regarded as honest and truthful.
  
- **Competency & Excellence** — the quality of being outstanding or extremely good at what you do; surpassing ordinary standards; A display of competence indicates sufficiency of knowledge and skills that enable someone to act in a wide variety of situations.
  - Ability to complete work at a high standard or high quality. Capable and willing to participate in on-line activities and discussion forums with substantive and quality contributions reflecting your knowledge of course content. In order to demonstrate excellence, you must take initiative to go beyond what is required and display a commitment to continually make improvements; exhibit an understanding of your roles and responsibilities and be accountable for them; be committed to problem solving and trouble shooting, while also aiding those around you.
  
- **Collaboration & Team work** — the ability to work collaboratively, while demonstrating professional and ethical conduct with classmates and instructors;
  - Displaying the best aspects of teamwork, and practicing good communication skills.

## GRADE CONVERSION CHART:

Alpha Grade	4-point Equivalent	Percentage Guidelines	Alpha Grade	4-point Equivalent	Percentage Guidelines
A+	4.0	90-100	C+	2.3	67-69
A	4.0	85-89	C	2.0	63-66
A-	3.7	80-84	C-	1.7	60-62
B+	3.3	77-79	D+	1.3	55-59
B	3.0	73-76	D	1.0	50-54
B-	2.7	70-72	F	0.0	00-49

## STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

Daily attendance is essential. Attendance will be taken in class. Students are responsible for completing assignments outside of class time when necessary.

**NOTE: Students must attend in class on Week 10 – Introduction to Family Law (November 16, 2021 class) in order to participate in and receive marks for the family law presentations. Students must attend the final exam in person. For all other classes, students are permitted to attend either in class or remotely via Zoom.**

If you are ill, please e-mail instructor to confirm and have a classmate inform you of the work covered that day. **Classes will not be recorded, unless there are exceptional circumstances.** More than three (3) missed classes may result in a recommendation of "Debarred from Exam." (See College Calendar)

Assignments and tests missed will be recorded as zero. Assignments are due on the dates and at the time set by the instructor. No late assignments or rewrite of exams are permitted. Plagiarism will not be tolerated.

To read, understand and comply with GPRC academic policies.

\*\*Note: all Academic and Administrative policies are available at <https://www.gprc.ab.ca/about/administration/policies/>

## STATEMENT ON PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING:

Refer to the College Policy on Student Misconduct: Plagiarism and Cheating at [https://www.gprc.ab.ca/files/forms\\_documents/Student\\_Misconduct.pdf](https://www.gprc.ab.ca/files/forms_documents/Student_Misconduct.pdf)

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# Weekly Timeline

<p><b>Week One</b> Please use part of this week to get yourself prepared for the course. Get to know your course D2L site, introduce yourself in the "introduction forum" and read through the course outline and timeline.</p> <p>Introduction and Overview Professionalism     Read: Law Office Skills, Chp. 1 and 2, answer questions on p.24-25     Assignment 1: Short answer assignment     Legal Keys: read p. xi-xx, do p. 34-35     Law Office Ethics and the Role of the Legal Assistant</p> <p><b>All assignments are due <u>at the beginning of next week's first class</u>; hand in on D2L.</b></p>	<p><u>Questions / Notes:</u></p> <p>Use this area to write yourself any notes or questions you may have each week and want to ask me later.</p>
<p><b>Week Two</b> Law Office Ethics and Telephone Etiquette</p> <p>    Read: Readings on D2L and Law Office Skills, Chp. 2. and 3 answer questions on p.53-54</p> <p>    Legal Keys: p. 36-39, including all of Timing 2</p>	
<p><b>Week Three</b> Time Management</p> <p>    Legal Keys: p. 39-43, to end of Paragraph 1</p>	

<p><b>Week Four</b> Timekeeping and Billing</p> <p>Legal Keys: p. 43 (from Paragraph 2) - 49 (end of Timing 1)</p>	<p><u>Questions / Notes:</u></p>
<p><b>Week Five</b> File Opening and Initial Tasks</p> <p>No Legal Keys Assigned – Thanksgiving</p>	
<p><b>Week Six</b> File and Document Management</p> <p>TYPING: Test 1</p> <p>Legal Keys: p. 49 (Timing 2) – p. 54 (end of Timing 1)</p>	
<p><b>Week Seven</b> Introduction to Legal Office Correspondence</p> <p>Legal Keys: p. 54 (Timing 2); p. 60 (Exercise 1)</p>	
<p><b>Week Eight</b> Communication and Writing continued</p> <p>Legal Keys: p. 58 (Timing 3); p. 62 (Exercise 2)</p>	

<p><b>Week Nine</b>  Proofreading Techniques and Exercises</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Legal Keys: p. 65-69 (Exercises 3 and 4)</p>	<p><u>Questions / Notes:</u></p>
<p><b>Week Ten</b>  Introduction to Family Law  Family Law In-Class Presentations</p>	
<p><b>Week Eleven</b>  Introduction to Wills and Estates  <u>Estate Planning Part 1:</u> Wills</p>	
<p><b>Week Twelve</b></p> <p><u>Estate Planning Part 2:</u>  Powers of Attorney and Personal Directives</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Typing: TEST 2</p>	
<p><b>Week Thirteen</b></p> <p>Office Politics and Human Dynamics</p> <p>Review and Study for Final Exam – Optional Additional Final Exam Review Class to be added</p>	