



TEXAS A&M INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Office of Continuing Education  
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**Education & Training Plan**  
**Family Law Professional Certificate Program with Externship**  
**Texas A&M International University (TAMUI)**

Student Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_ End Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Program includes National Certification & an Externship Opportunity**  
**Mentor Supported**

**Family Law Professional Certificate Program with Externship**

Course Code: TAMIU-L-FAM  
Program Duration: 6 Months  
Course Contact Hours: 375  
Student Tuition: \$3,799

**The Family Law Professional**

The practice of family law examines state regulation of sexual and marital relationships, including the delicate balance of family privacy against state intervention in the marital relationship. Litigating around the institution of marriage and family that is most personal to individuals, family law brings to light a number of issues that affect peoples' lives at a very deep level. Further, family law also covers principles governing child custody and visitation, child support, and the regulation of non-traditional relationships as they pose a variety of questions about what a "family" is under the law.

**The Family Law Professional Program**

Covering these intriguing and recently developing issues, this program provides an overview of family law. Students will explore fundamental topics including marriage, divorce, annulment, property division, parenthood, adoption, custody, support, and family violence as well as emerging areas such as legal recognition of non-marital families and assisted reproductive technology. Students will study all of these points with special attention to the legal principles, ethical issues, research, interviewing, discovery, drafting, and other essential practice skills that make up the work product surrounding this field. Examining the initial organization, operation and potential dissolution of a family unit, the Family Law program addresses premarital controversies, capacity to marry and the formalities of marriage in light of the rights and duties of marital partners, various grounds for divorce, annulment and separation, spousal support and basic issues of property distribution.

## Education and National Certifications

- Students should have or be pursuing a high school diploma or GED.
- There are no state approval and/or state requirements associated with this program.
- There is a National Certification exam available to students who successfully complete this program:
  - **Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS) Certification Exam.**

## Program Objectives

At the conclusion of this program, students will be able to:

- Describe tasks paralegals perform as members of a family law team
- Perform research on issues related to family law cases
- Interpret the major legal issues related to premarital agreements and marriage
- Interpret the major legal issues related to annulment, separation and divorce
- Interpret the major legal issues related to non-marital families
- Interpret the major legal issues related to parenthood and adoption
- Interpret the major legal issues related to family violence
- Interpret the major legal issues related to discovery and financial statements
- Interpret the major legal issues related to child custody and child support
- Interpret the major legal issues related to spousal support
- Interpret the major legal issues related to property division
- Draft family law documents
- Propose strategies for dealing with ethical issues that arise in family law cases
- Use Microsoft Office

## National Certification

Upon successful completion of this Texas A&M International University (TAMIU) program, students would be eligible to sit for the Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS) exam. Although there are no state approval, state registration or other state requirements for this program, students who complete this program at TAMIU will be prepared and are eligible to sit for this national certification exam. Students who complete this program are encouraged to complete the externship option with their program. Students who complete this program can and do sit for the MOS national certification exams and are qualified, eligible and prepared to do so. TAMIU works with each student to complete the exam application and register the student to take their national certification exam.

## Externship / Hands on Training / Practicum

Although not a requirement, once students complete the program, they have the ability to participate in an externship and/or hands on practicum so as to practice the skills necessary to perform the job requirements of a professional in this field. Students will be assisted with completing a resume and/or other requirements necessary to work in this field. All students who complete this program are eligible to participate in an externship and will be placed with a participating organization near their location. TAMIU works with national organizations and has the ability to place students in externship opportunities nationwide.

**TAMIU contact:** If students have any questions regarding this program including national certification and externships, **they should call Jacqueline Arguidegui of Texas A&M International University at 956-326-3068 or via email at [ce@tamiu.edu](mailto:ce@tamiu.edu).**

Note: No refunds can be issued after the start date published in your Financial Award document.



## About Texas A&M International University

**Welcome to TAMIU!** Texas A&M International University (TAMIU) is an international university, poised at the Gateway to Mexico and serving as the cultural and intellectual hub of a vibrant bilingual and bicultural community. A Member of The Texas A&M University System, TAMIU provides nearly 7000 students with a learning environment anchored by the highest quality programs built on a solid academic foundation in the arts and sciences. To fulfill its mission, the University offers a range of baccalaureate, masters and certificate programs. Programs focus on developing undergraduate and graduate offerings with a progressive international agenda for global study and understanding across all disciplines.

**OUR MISSION:** The mission of the Office of Continuing Education is to engage the public by improving the quality of life through academic courses, facilitating conferences and workshops, providing personal enrichment courses, professional certificate and certification programs, facilitating CE Units, community outreach endeavors, and facilitating camps and programs for minors throughout the year.

<http://www.tamiu.edu>



### Texas A&M International University and Pearson Education

Texas A&M International University Continuing Education / Extension (CEE) division eLearning programs were developed in partnership with Pearson Education to produce the highest quality, best-in-class content and delivery necessary to enhance the overall student learning experience, boost understanding and ensure retention. Pearson Education is the premier content and learning company in North America offering solutions to the higher education and career training divisions of colleges and universities across the country aimed at driving quality education programs to ensure student success. Please visit us at [www.pearson.com](http://www.pearson.com).

### About Pearson Education

Welcome to Pearson. We have a simple mission: to help people make more of their lives through learning. We are the world's leading learning company, with 40,000 employees in more than 80 countries helping people of all ages to make measurable progress in their lives. We provide a range of education products and services to institutions, governments and direct to individual learners, that help people everywhere aim higher and fulfil their true potential. Our commitment to them requires a holistic approach to education. It begins by using research to understand what sort of learning works best, it continues by bringing together people and organizations to develop ideas, and it comes back round by measuring the outcomes of our products.

## Family Law Professional Program Detailed Student Objectives:

### INTRODUCTION TO FAMILY LAW

- Identify the types of cases paralegals work on as members of a family law team
- Outline the client intake process
- Describe differences between subject matter, personal, and *in rem* jurisdiction
- Identify legal resources used by paralegals to research family law issues
- Describe the doctrine of *respondeat superior*
- Describe ethical issues related to conflicts of interest and attorney-client communications
- Propose appropriate actions in response to hypothetical ethical dilemmas

### PREMARITAL AGREEMENTS

- Conduct research related to family law case studies
- Locate forms needed to process family law cases in your jurisdiction
- Describe the nature, purpose, and scope of premarital agreements
- Describe how current trends and changes in society are affecting the enforceability of premarital agreements
- Apply rules, procedures, statutes, and case law related to premarital agreements in your jurisdiction to a case study
- Draft a premarital agreement

### MARRIAGE

- Conduct research related to family law case studies
- Identify common legal requirements for valid ceremonial and common law marriages
- Give examples of governmental regulation of the fundamental right to marry
- Identify basic types of rights and benefits that flow from marriage
- Describe how changes in state laws related to same-sex marriage are affecting family law practice
- Apply rules, procedures, statutes, and case law related to marriage in your jurisdiction to a case study

### ANNULMENT

- Conduct research related to family law case studies
- Identify differences between annulment and divorce
- Describe the two types of grounds for annulment that are common in many states
- Identify defenses to and consequences of annulment
- Apply rules, procedures, statutes, and case law related to annulment in your jurisdiction to a case study
- Draft a document to bring an annulment action

### NONMARITAL FAMILIES

- Conduct research related to family law case studies
- Articulate the legal differences between cohabitation, domestic partnership, civil union, and marriage
- Describe the common elements of a cohabitation agreement
- Identify forms of relief available to cohabiting partners when their relationship dissolves
- Apply rules, procedures, statutes, and case law related to nonmarital families in your jurisdiction to a case study
- Draft a cohabitation agreement
- Propose appropriate actions in response to hypothetical ethical dilemmas

**PARENTHOOD**

- Conduct research related to family law case studies
- Describe methods of establishing legal parentage
- Outline how parenthood may be disestablished
- Describe paternity fraud
- Describe issues surrounding assisted reproductive technology as related to family law practice
- Apply rules, procedures, statutes, and case law related to parenthood in your jurisdiction to a case study
- Propose appropriate actions in response to hypothetical ethical dilemmas

**ADOPTION**

- Conduct research related to family law case studies
- Identify the types of adoption
- Describe the process of adoption
- Summarize the rights of parents in the adoption context
- Describe the nature and purpose of putative father registries
- Apply rules, procedures, statutes, and case law related to adoption in your jurisdiction to a case study
- Draft a petition for adoption
- Propose appropriate actions in response to hypothetical ethical dilemmas

**FAMILY VIOLENCE**

- Conduct research related to family law case studies
- Identify types of abuse and neglect
- Describe remedies available to adult victims of family violence
- Give examples of mandatory and permissive reporters in child abuse cases
- Explain how abuse and neglect affect custody decisions
- Describe jurisdictional issues that commonly arise in family violence cases
- Apply rules, procedures, statutes, and case law related to family violence in your jurisdiction to a case study
- Draft a petition for protection from abuse

**DIVORCE PROCESS**

- Conduct research related to family law case studies
- Identify the major fault and no-fault grounds for divorce
- Describe jurisdictional issues that commonly arise in divorce cases
- Summarize the four primary methods for altering the marital status
- Outline the basic stages of the divorce process
- Identify common types of alternative dispute resolution
- Apply rules, procedures, statutes, and case law related to divorce in your jurisdiction to a case study
- Draft a complaint for divorce and responsive documents

**DISCOVERY AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

- Conduct research related to family law case studies
- Identify differences between formal, informal, and electronic discovery
- Describe the primary strengths and weaknesses of the five formal methods of discovery
- Summarize common objections to discovery requests
- Describe the purpose and scope of financial statements
- Outline the court's role in the discovery process
- Apply rules, procedures, statutes, and case law related to discovery and financial statements in your jurisdiction to a case study
- Draft a financial affidavit
- Propose appropriate actions in response to hypothetical ethical dilemmas

**CHILD CUSTODY**

- Conduct research related to family law case studies
- Describe the common legal standards for custody decisions
- Identify types of child custody
- Identify factors courts consider when making custody decisions
- Describe the role of the guardian *ad litem* and other advocates for children in the context of custody decisions
- Summarize how courts are increasing recognition of the rights of third parties in child custody cases
- Describe jurisdictional issues that commonly arise in child custody cases
- Apply rules, procedures, statutes, and case law related to child custody in your jurisdiction to a case study
- Draft a parenting plan

**CHILD SUPPORT**

- Conduct research related to family law case studies
- Explain the role of Title IV-D agencies in child support cases
- Identify differences between child support and spousal support
- Describe factors courts consider when establishing and modifying child support orders
- Describe jurisdictional issues that commonly arise in child support cases
- Apply rules, procedures, statutes, and case law related to child support in your jurisdiction to a case study
- Draft a motion for temporary child support
- Propose appropriate actions in response to hypothetical ethical dilemmas

**SPOUSAL SUPPORT**

- Conduct research related to family law case studies
- Describe types of spousal support
- Identify the common elements of a spousal support provision in a separation agreement
- Describe differences between spousal support and property division
- Describe factors courts consider when awarding spousal support
- Apply rules, procedures, statutes, and case law related to spousal support in your jurisdiction to a case study
- Draft an alimony provision for a separation agreement

### **PROPERTY DIVISION**

- Conduct research related to family law case studies
- Identify differences between separate and marital property
- Describe differences between community property and equitable distribution approaches to property division
- Identify factors courts consider when making property division decisions
- Describe jurisdictional issues that commonly arise in property division cases
- Apply rules, procedures, statutes, and case law related to property division in your jurisdiction to a case study
- Draft a proposed property settlement
- Propose appropriate actions in response to hypothetical ethical dilemmas

### **SEPARATION AGREEMENTS**

- Conduct research related to family law case studies
- Identify the common components of a separation agreement
- Describe differences between a merged and surviving separation agreement
- Give examples of problems that arise related to separation agreements
- Apply rules, procedures, statutes, and case law related to separation agreements in your jurisdiction to a case study

**Note: This program can be completed in 6 months. However, students will have online access to this program for a 24-month period.**

**MICROSOFT OFFICE Module**

- Use an integrated software package, specifically the applications included in the Microsoft Office suite
- Demonstrate marketable skills for enhanced employment opportunities
- Describe proper computer techniques for designing and producing various types of documents
- Demonstrate the common commands & techniques used in Windows desktop
- List the meaning of basic PC acronyms like MHz, MB, KB, HD and RAM
- Use WordPad and MSWord to create various types of documents
- Create headings and titles with Word Art
- Create and format spreadsheets, including the use of mathematical formulas
- Demonstrate a working knowledge of computer database functions, including putting, processing, querying and outputting data
- Define computer terminology in definition matching quizzes
- Use the Windows Paint program to alter graphics
- Use a presentation application to create a presentation with both text and graphics
- Copy data from one MS Office application to another application in the suite
- Use e-mail and the Internet to send Word and Excel file attachments
- Demonstrate how to use the Windows Taskbar and Windows Tooltips
- Explain how copyright laws pertain to data and graphics posted on the Internet
- Take the college computer competency test after course completion
- Follow oral and written directions and complete assignments when working under time limitations

**Note:** Although the Microsoft Office Module is not required to successfully complete this program, students interested in pursuing free Microsoft MOS certification may want to consider completing this Microsoft Office Module at no additional cost.

**System Requirements:**

**Windows Users:**

- Windows 8, 7, XP or Vista
- 56K modem or higher
- Soundcard & Speakers
- Firefox, Chrome or Microsoft Internet Explorer

**Mac OS User:**

- Mac OS X or higher (in classic mode)
- 56K modem or higher
- Soundcard & Speakers
- Apple Safari

**iPad Users:**

- Due to Flash limitations, eLearning programs are NOT compatible with iPads

**Screen Resolution:**

- We recommend setting your screen resolution to 1024 x 768 pixels.

**Browser Requirements:**

- System will support the two latest releases of each browser. When using older versions of a browser, users risk running into problems with the course software.
- Windows Users: Mozilla Firefox, Google Chrome, Microsoft Internet Explorer
- Mac OS Users: Safari, Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox

**Suggested Plug-ins:**

- Flash Player
- Real Player
- Adobe Reader
- Java