

Paralegal Program - Tactical Plan – 2009-2012

Submitted by Susan Jaworowski, Program Director, Legal Education Department

Introduction and brief history: The Kapi`olani Community College Legal Education department was established in 1975 and began offering an A.S. degree in Paralegal education. In 1978, the Paralegal program became ABA approved and has maintained that status through the ABA's rigorous reapproval and interim report processes. Only about a third of all paralegal programs are ABA approved; ABA approval is a mark of status among paralegal programs. The program at one time had a selective admissions process but is now open to any student who wishes to enroll. While the majority of students who take paralegal program courses intend to obtain a A.S. degree, other students may enroll to help them prepare for law school, or may already be working as paralegals and want to take a course to improve their skills in a specific area. The Legal Education Department also has a Legal Secretary Certificate of Completion, but demand for that is small as obtaining the certificate does not correlate to an increased salary.

Current situation: The strengths of the department lie in its continuing ABA approval and in its faculty. ABA approval is the national mark of excellence for paralegal programs. Only about one-third of all paralegal programs are ABA-approved, and the KCC program is the only ABA-approved program in Hawai`i. Most of the faculty are adjuncts who are teaching in their specialty areas; for example, a family law attorney teaches family law, a real estate attorney teaches the real property course, etc. This is good for the program as practitioners are in touch with the real-world practical skills that we are required by the ABA to teach the students. Another departmental strength is our increase in enrollment. After declining to an enrollment of 100 applicants in academic year 2007-08, enrollment has started to rise and we are at 122 in the current academic year.

Mission statement: The Paralegal program's mission is to provide paralegal education to students interested in careers as paralegals or for positions where communication, analytical, and organizational skills as well as knowledge of law and legal procedures are necessary. The program provides the foundation for students to think critically and act ethically in the workplace and in the community. It also prepares students to continue educational pursuits and encourages lifelong learning and community service.

The external environment: The program receives great support by its graduates in the community and by the two major paralegal organizations in the state, the Hawaii Paralegal Association (HPA) and the Hawaii Legal Support Professionals (HLSP), and the Hawaii State Bar Association (HSBA). HPA continues to run articles in its newsletter about the paralegal courses and has featured KCC paralegal program instructors in its Brown Bag continuing education lunches. The department maintains good relations with the HSBA, but one of the challenges is that the HSBA's primary focus is attorneys, not paralegals, and some projects the program had hoped to work on, such as continuing education for attorneys, have not been a priority with the HSBA.

The need for paralegals continues to grow; according to the State Department of Labor and Industrial Relations' Hawaii Workforce Informer, there are 30 projected openings each year through 2014. However, one need not have a paralegal degree to practice as a paralegal. Thus the challenge for the Paralegal program is to position itself attractively to potential degree candidates as they have an alternative to entering the profession.

An additional challenge is the economic climate, which has negatively affected the job market for attorneys and paralegals. While students with paralegal degrees can also work in banks, insurance companies, schools, and other businesses, the annual program review data lists the department as “unhealthy” in its demand as the projected outlook for paralegals alone appears to be about 30 per year. While this is below our current number of annual graduates, it still sets up an artificial ceiling against which the number of paralegal majors is assessed.

One last challenge is the loss of the classroom space at the UH Law School that was used for many years by the program. For many years, the law school shared its campus with KCC students at night, but with the growth of the law school's night program, KCC will have to move all weeknight courses back to its own campus. The paralegal program will thus have to look for classroom space at KCC. One disadvantage is that the law school has technical support until 9 pm, while KCC technical support ends before the evening courses begin. With more instructors encouraged to use online teaching tools, the lack of evening tech support is problematic.

The internal environment: The department will be merged into the Business Education department in Fall 2010, to form the new Business, Legal, and Technology department. While there are benefits to becoming part of a larger department, the Legal Education department has been a stand-alone department for decades and some challenges are to be expected during this transition.

In its annual program review, the department was rated as cautionary for efficiency. One factor may continue to prevent the department from reaching an overall healthy status in this category, and that is the BOR-approved faculty ratio. At present the department has only two FTE-equivalent BOR-approved faculty members, with the rest of the instructors being lecturers who generally teach one or two courses per year. As detailed in the 2009 Annual Program Review, there is sufficient volume of work to justify adding a third BOR-approved faculty position. Without the additional position, the department's BOR faculty rate is at 56.5, and the “unhealthy” category starts at 60. As paralegal majors increase, this will push that statistic into the unhealthy zone. Merging with the business department will not help this ratio as the MQ for paralegal faculty requires them to be an attorney. With the additional position, the BOR faculty rate would drop to 37.6, very close to a healthy ratio, which starts at 35. The addition of another FTE faculty member will also allow the department to continue to offer, and increase its offering of, online courses. The MQ for instructors is to be a practicing attorney, and none of our adjuncts can take the time away from their law practices to master online teaching.

Outcomes	B1 Increase total fall enrollment by two percent per year, from 7,272 to 8,918.
Performance Measures	The paralegal program provided 1311 SSH in the Fall 08 academic year. The goal for the coming years would be to improve 2% on that number, or 1337 SSH.
Strategies	Continue to market the program to the legal community and to pre-law students. Add online and cable courses to increase participation by younger students, nontraditional students, and neighbor island students. Put courses for one certificate of completion online to reach out to neighbor island students. Determine requirements and procedure to have the introductory law course, LAW 101, listed as a gen ed requirement as a social sciences diversification and/or an AA elective, to increase student awareness of and interest in the field.
Means of Assessment	Annual program review, OFIE tracking
Position(s) Responsible	Program director, counselor, faculty
Synergies with other programs, units, emphases and initiatives	If marketing support is provided by the college, the program would work with that person or office. For online course support, the program would work with CELTT.
Key Community Partners (if any)	Hawaii Paralegal Association, Hawaii Legal Support Professionals, Advisory Committee, Neighbor island community colleges advisors, and members of the legal community
Resources (human, physical, fiscal, technology) required to implement strategies. Please check appropriate funding sources X General (existing) <input type="checkbox"/> Special (existing) <input type="checkbox"/> Grants <input type="checkbox"/> Biennium and/or supplemental budget request	Hire one FT 9-month lecturer at \$55,000 plus fringe benefits. The additional salary can be justified based on hiring requirements and needs. Add a tech fee/supply fee for Westlas (online computer program support) – currently campus is covering this at \$5300/year Physical classroom space on the KCC campus for the LAW courses previously taught at the UH Law School Tech support student help for instructors teaching evening classes (3 hours/evening, 4 evenings/week @\$9.75/hour, or \$1872/semester) More marketing for the program is needed. Continuing support for online courses will be needed, including CELTT and KCC support for any additional cable TV courses, Laulima, and Elluminate.

<input type="checkbox"/> Others (Please list)	
i) Summary of data collected (actual)	(To be filled in at the end of the academic year)
j) Use of Results	(To be completed at the end of the academic year and used for planning for next academic year of the Tactical Plan)

Outcomes	B7 All certificate and degree programs complete two documented cycles of development, assessment, evaluation, and improvement of student learning outcomes. Career programs seek industry validation of learning outcomes
Performance Measures	One documented cycle is underway and will be completed by 2012. The second will be completed by 2015.
Strategies	Faculty and advisory committee will review SLOs for appropriateness and alignment with curriculum. Faculty will then review and assess one SLO per semester.
Means of Assessment	Annual program review
Position(s) Responsible	Program director, faculty
Synergies with other programs, units, emphases and initiatives	Work with Advisory Committee, Hawaii Paralegal Association, Hawaii Legal Support Professionals, and the Hawaii State Bar Association to identify changing needs in the field, and work with faculty to assess and improve the program SLOs.
Key Community Partners (if any)	Hawaii Paralegal Association, Hawaii Legal Support Professionals, Hawaii State Bar Association, Advisory Committee.
Resources (human, physical, fiscal, technology) required to implement strategies.	Human resources are needed for meetings and collaboration.
Please check appropriate funding sources	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> General (existing)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Special (existing)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	

Grants <input type="checkbox"/> Biennium and/or supplemental budget request <input type="checkbox"/> Others (Please list)	
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Outcomes	D1 Increase by 3 percent per year the number of degrees awarded and/or transfers to UH baccalaureate programs that lead to occupations where there is a demonstrated shortage of qualified, local workers, or where the average annual wage is at or above the U.S. average (\$38,651).
Performance Measures	In the 08-09 Academic year, the paralegal program had 115 majors and 17 graduates. A 3% increase would mean adding one new graduate over the next two years.
Strategies	<p>Develop mentoring plan to increase number of nontraditional (male) students in this field.</p> <p>Develop a 2+2 with UHWO to allow students to complete a 4 year degree.</p> <p>Explore use of Elluminate to teach synchronous online courses to improve student outcomes in online courses</p> <p>Coordinate with ENG100 to offer a contextualized ENG 100 for paralegals, either as a standalone course or as a learning community with LAW 101.</p> <p>Determine barriers to degree completion and explore options such as scheduling changes, modular scheduling, and required summer schedule.</p> <p>Explore opportunities with the Native Hawaiian Career and Technical Education Program.</p>
Means of Assessment	Annual program review
Position(s) Responsible	Program director, counselor, faculty, Advisory Committee
Synergies with other programs, units, emphases and initiatives	If marketing support is provided by the college, work with that person or office. Work with the LLL writing coordinator, Learning Communities coordinator, or other appropriate faculty to develop paralegal-centered ENG 100 course.

Key Community Partners (if any)	UHWO, Hawaii Paralegal Association, Hawaii Legal Support Professionals, Advisory Committee, Native Hawaiian Career and Technical Education Program
Resources (human, physical, fiscal, technology) required to implement strategies. Please check appropriate funding sources <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> General (existing) <input type="checkbox"/> Special (existing) <input type="checkbox"/> Grants <input type="checkbox"/> Biennium and/or supplemental budget request <input type="checkbox"/> Others (Please list)	Human resources are needed for meetings and collaboration.
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Outcomes	D10 Redesign curriculum approval and revision process and fully implement five year curriculum review process.
Performance Measures	All courses are reviewed and in Curriculum Central within the 5 year cycle
Strategies	20% of courses are reviewed each year and entered into Curriculum Central.
Means of Assessment	Review by VCAA
Position(s) Responsible	Program director, faculty
Synergies with other programs, units, emphases and initiatives	KCC Curriculum Committee, Advisory Committee, the American Bar Association, the American Association for Paralegal Education

Key Community Partners (if any)	American Bar Association
Resources (human, physical, fiscal, technology) required to implement strategies. Please check appropriate funding sources <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> General (existing) <input type="checkbox"/> Special (existing) <input type="checkbox"/> Grants <input type="checkbox"/> Biennium and/or supplemental budget request <input type="checkbox"/> Others (Please list)	Human resources necessary to review, edit, and get approval of any changes. Additional time required to place each course into Curriculum Central.
i) Summary of data collected (actual)	(To be filled in at the end of the academic year)
j) Use of Results	(To be completed at the end of the academic year and used for planning for next academic year of the Tactical Plan)

Outcomes	E1 Recruit, renew, and retain a qualified, effective, and diverse faculty, staff, and leadership committed to the strategic outcomes and student-centered performance measures. Increase professional development funding by three percent per year from \$776,000 to \$955,000 for the achievement of these measures
Performance Measures	Additional BOR-approved position is added to allow the department to achieve a healthy efficiency rating. Lecturer and student evaluations are average or above average for all adjunct instructors. Faculty increase their use of online tools such as Laulima so that all faculty use the minimum level

	<p>of tools as specified by the program director by the end of the three year period. Program director continues regular professional development as required by the American Bar Association. Faculty receive regular professional development through faculty meetings and other appropriate methods . Resources are obtained from the college to support the continued approval status of the program with the American Bar Association (ABA) with the concomitant support for a site visit after the 2011 reapproval report is submitted.</p>
Strategies	<p>Program director evaluates adjuncts and guides them toward improvement. Faculty meetings cover educational strategies and topics, including use of online tools, as provided by the program director and others. Program director continues regular professional development as required by the American Bar Association via the annual American Association for Paralegal Educators conference . American Bar Association approval status is retained via compliance with required reporting procedures and implementation standards. Other full time faculty attend conferences on a regular basis</p>
Means of Assessment	Lecturer evaluations, student evaluations, ABA evaluation of program.
Position(s) Responsible	Program director, faculty
Synergies with other programs, units, emphases and initiatives	CELTT
Key Community Partners (if any)	American Bar Association, American Association for Paralegal Educators
Resources (human, physical, fiscal, technology) required to implement strategies. Please check appropriate funding sources <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> General (existing) <input type="checkbox"/> Special (existing) <input type="checkbox"/> Grants <input type="checkbox"/> Biennium and/or supplemental budget	<p>CELTT support, professional development both general and specific to paralegal educators. One additional BOR-approved faculty added as necessary to achieve a healthy efficiency rating as described in B1 above. Resources are obtained from the college to support the continued approval status of the program with the American Bar Association (ABA) with the concomitant support for a site visit after the 2011 reapproval report is submitted.</p>

request <input type="checkbox"/> Others (Please list)	
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