

March 22, 2017

MEMORANDUM

TO: State Board of Regents

FROM: David L. Buhler

SUBJECT: Southern Utah University – Associate of Arts in Legal Studies and Associate of Science in Legal Studies (online)

Issue

Southern Utah University (SUU) requests approval to offer an Associate of Arts (AA) in Legal Studies and an Associate of Science (AS) in Legal Studies effective Fall Semester, 2017. The proposed programs were approved by the institutional Board of Trustees January 13, 2017.

Background

Southern Utah University currently offers an Associate of Applied Science (AAS) in Paralegal/Legal Assistant. The institution seeks to replace this degree with an Associate of Arts and an Associate of Science in Legal Studies. It is anticipated this change will enable students to continue their education toward a baccalaureate degree while providing applied skills for those who choose to enter the legal profession prior to completing a four-year program. All legal studies courses are available on-line, allowing students to complete the program without regard to physical location.

In the AAS program, students take 20 - 21 general education credits and 44 - 45 legal studies credits. In the AA and AS programs students will take 32 - 34 general education credits and 27 legal studies credits. This structure is consistent with American Bar Association (ABA) guidelines for associate degree paralegal programs. While SUU's program is not ABA-approved (ABA does not approve programs that can be completed fully on-line), the courses and content of the degree are understood to otherwise be consistent with the ABA guidelines.

Policy Issues

The proposed program has been developed through established institutional procedures and Board of Regents policy. Chief academic officers as well as faculty in related departments from the Utah System of Higher Education institutions have reviewed the proposal and have provided input.

Commissioner's Recommendation

The Commissioner recommends the Board of Regents approve the Associate of Arts in Legal Studies and the Associate of Science in Legal Studies.

David L. Buhler
Commissioner of Higher Education

DLB/BKC
Attachment

Utah System of Higher Education Program Description - Full Template

Section I: The Request

Southern Utah University requests approval to offer the following Associate's degree(s): Legal Studies effective Fall 2017. This program was approved by the institutional Board of Trustees on 01/13/2017.

Section II: Program Proposal

Program Description

Present a complete, formal program description.

The proposed Associate of Arts (AA) and Associate of Science (AS) in Legal Studies at Southern Utah University are designed to provide a two-year curriculum to support students who pursue a career as a paralegal or legal assistant. The skills and knowledge obtained through the programs may be useful in other fields such as business, real estate, and public administration. Classes within the programs provide insight into, and practical knowledge of, legal topics that may be of assistance to students who wish to attend law school. Pre-law students from any major may wish to take Legal Studies courses.

Consistency with Institutional Mission

Explain how the program is consistent with the institution's Regents-approved mission, roles, and goals. Institutional mission and roles may be found at higheredutah.org/policies/policyr312/.

SUU's mission statement states:

Southern Utah University is a dynamic teaching and learning community that engages students in experiential education leading to personal growth, civic responsibility, and professional excellence.

The Legal Studies programs are consistent with this mission statement. Students will engage in experiential education by completing a series of courses that not only involve traditional coursework, but also real-life projects and hands-on assignments. This coursework will allow students to grow personally and professionally. It will prepare them for a career as a paralegal or legal assistant as well as prepare them for further education.

Section III: Needs Assessment

Program Rationale

Describe the institutional procedures used to arrive at a decision to offer the program. Briefly indicate why such a program should be initiated. State how the institution and the USHE benefit by offering the proposed program.

Currently, SUU offers an Associate of Applied Science (AAS) in Paralegal/Legal Assistant. The newly proposed AA and AS degrees will replace this existing AAS degree. This change provides an efficient pathway into many baccalaureate degree programs for students who wish to continue their education beyond the associate degree level. At the same time, it will provide students foundational knowledge and skills to enter the workforce as a paralegal.

In the AAS program, students take 20-21 general education and 44-45 paralegal courses. In an AA./AS programs students will take the full general education core, 32-35 credits, and 28 credits of specialty courses. The institution reported that based on data from occupational demand websites, employers do not distinguish between the two degrees when searching for an employee and the skills needed for the job are those which are obtained by completing general education courses. The specialty courses assist them in preparing for the job, but taking fewer specialty courses is not expected to limit their occupational opportunities. American Bar Association (ABA) guidelines encourage associate-level paralegal programs to provide avenues for continued educational attainment.

Labor Market Demand

Provide local, state, and/or national labor market data that speak to the need for this program. Occupational demand, wage, and number of annual openings information may be found at sources such as Utah DWS Occupation Information Data Viewer (jobs.utah.gov/jsp/wi/utalmis/gotoOccinfo.do) and the Occupation Outlook Handbook (www.bls.gov/oco).

The Utah Department of Workforce Services reported that during 2014 - 2024 the Paralegal and Legal Assistants occupational category (SOC Code 23-2011) in Utah will have 110 annual openings. Median annual wages were reported at \$42,270.

Student Demand

Provide evidence of student interest and demand that supports potential program enrollment. Use Appendix D to project five years' enrollments and graduates. Note: If the proposed program is an expansion of an existing program, present several years enrollment trends by headcount and/or by student credit hours that justify expansion.

The institution reported that enrollment in paralegal courses have increased by 37% in the last five years. However, there has been a slight decrease in the last two years. Paralegal courses are offered as part of the pre-law track for Political Science baccalaureate programs and for the Legal Studies minor. The institution noted that other institutions have had success in increasing enrollment when a change was made from the title of Paralegal to Legal Studies.

There is a new profession emerging that should create higher demand for an associates degree in paralegal or legal studies. This profession is Paralegal Practitioner. Currently, the Utah Supreme Court has approved this position and there is a steering committee working on details. It is expected the educational requirement for this profession will be an associate degree.

Similar Programs

Are similar programs offered elsewhere in the USHE, the state, or Intermountain Region? If yes, identify the existing program(s) and cite justifications for why the Regents should approve another program of this type. How does the proposed program differ from or compliment similar program(s)?

Not including SUU's AAS program, there are paralegal and/or legal studies programs at Salt Lake Community College and Utah Valley University. Salt Lake Community College has an AAS in Paralegal Studies. Utah Valley University offers an AAS in Legal Studies, an AS in Legal Studies, a Legal Studies Certificate of Proficiency, and a BS in Legal Studies.

Collaboration with and Impact on Other USHE Institutions

Indicate if the program will be delivered outside of designated service area; provide justification. Service areas are defined in higheredutah.org/policies/policy315/. Assess the impact the new program will have on other USHE institutions. Describe any discussions with other institutions pertaining to this program. Include any collaborative efforts that may have been proposed.

Faculty and academic administrators from throughout the USHE system have reviewed the program and have provided input. There is no foreseen impact on other USHE institutions.

External Review and Accreditation

Indicate whether external consultants or, for a career and technical education program, program advisory committee were involved in the development of the proposed program. List the members of the external consultants or advisory committee and briefly describe their activities. If the program will seek special professional accreditation, project anticipated costs and a date for accreditation review.

The courses in the new AA/AS degree programs were selected by current SUU legal studies faculty who are practicing attorneys with expertise in various areas of law. The institution will seek ABA approval if it becomes necessary as part of the

paralegal practitioner profession or if the ABA changes its requirements to allow for fully online programs.

Section IV: Program Details

Graduation Standards and Number of Credits

Provide graduation standards. Provide justification if number of credit or clock hours exceeds credit limit for this program type described in R401-3.11, which can be found at higheredutah.org/policies/R401.

The degrees can be completed within 60 - 63 credit hours. The variation comes from the general education core which is a requirement of 32-35 credits dependent on which courses a student chooses to take. There are four (12 credits) core Legal Studies courses and 16 Legal Studies elective credits. Credits counting toward the major must be completed with a grade of "C-" or better.

Admission Requirements

List admission requirements specific to the proposed program.

Any student admitted to SUU will be eligible to enroll in the program.

Curriculum and Degree Map

Use the tables in Appendix A to provide a list of courses and Appendix B to provide a program Degree Map, also referred to as a graduation plan.

Section V: Institution, Faculty, and Staff Support

Institutional Readiness

How do existing administrative structures support the proposed program? Identify new organizational structures that may be needed to deliver the program. Will the proposed program impact the delivery of undergraduate and/or lower-division education? If yes, how?

As a replacement of a current program, administrative structures are established and sufficient for the new programs. There are no new organizational structures needed and the programs will have no impact on the delivery of undergraduate and/or lower-division education.

Faculty

Describe faculty development activities that will support this program. Will existing faculty/instructors, including teaching/graduate assistants, be sufficient to instruct the program or will additional faculty be recruited? If needed, provide plans and resources to secure qualified faculty. Use Appendix C to provide detail on faculty profiles and new hires.

Currently, the AAS is taught using two full-time faculty and three adjunct faculty. There will be a reduction in force as one of the full-time faculty members will retire in the near future but will continue to teach on a part-time basis.

Staff

Describe the staff development activities that will support this program. Will existing staff such as administrative, secretarial/clerical, laboratory aides, advisors, be sufficient to support the program or will additional staff need to be hired? Provide plans and resources to secure qualified staff, as needed.

Existing staff is expected to be sufficient to support the proposed programs. There is a full-time administrative assistant for the department and a part-time hire is planned.

Student Advisement

Describe how students in the proposed program will be advised.

Students will be advised through a combination of academic advising and the part-time staff member who will be hired in the near future.

Library and Information Resources

Describe library resources required to offer the proposed program if any. List new library resources to be acquired.

Continued subscription of Westlaw Next and legal specialty related books (as pertinent to current courses) are required for this program. Both of these are currently available through the SUU library. Additional library resources are not anticipated.

Projected Enrollment and Finance

Use Appendix D to provide projected enrollment and information on related operating expenses and funding sources.

Section VI: Program Evaluation

Program Assessment

Identify program goals. Describe the system of assessment to be used to evaluate and develop the program.

The programs are designed to provide students with the knowledge, skills, and values necessary to work effectively, competently, ethically, and successfully as paralegals in a law office/firm, corporation/business entity, government agency, or the public sector, as well as supporting students in seeking their goals of and preparation for continued education.

Students who graduate will demonstrate the following competencies:

1. Skills necessary to work effectively as a paralegal within a legal work environment
2. An understanding of ethical rules for the conduct of legal professionals and their implications
3. A knowledge of basic legal terminology
4. The ability to understand the application of procedural and substantive law within the American Legal System
5. The ability to perform legal analysis and to apply that analysis

For assessment purposes, each student shall complete a research and writing project involving the preparation of a legal memorandum and related oral argument. Legal studies faculty shall assess based on this project whether the student learning outcomes have been met. This project shall be completed in LEGL 2000 - Legal Research and Writing. Dependent on what learning outcomes are selected, other projects/courses can also be used for assessment.

Student Standards of Performance

List the standards, competencies, and marketable skills students will have achieved at the time of graduation. How and why were these standards and competencies chosen? Include formative and summative assessment measures to be used to determine student learning outcomes.

Students who graduate will demonstrate the following competencies:

1. Skills necessary to work effectively as a paralegal within a legal work environment
2. An understanding of ethical rules for the conduct of legal professionals and their implications
3. A knowledge of basic legal terminology
4. The ability to understand the application of procedural and substantive law within the American Legal System
5. The ability to perform legal analysis and to apply that analysis

These skills were chosen by attorneys with knowledge of both what skills paralegals need as well as what knowledge is necessary for continued education. Formative assessment will be completed by continued feedback on assignments, drafts of

papers and projects, and consistent monitoring of a student's work. Summative assessment will be completed using major projects and exams to determine competency in an area. Both of these assessment methods will be utilized to determine learning outcomes and assess those outcomes.

Appendix A: Program Curriculum

List all courses, including new courses, to be offered in the proposed program by prefix, number, title, and credit hours (or credit equivalences). Indicate new courses with an X in the appropriate columns. The total number of credit hours should reflect the number of credits required to be awarded the degree.

For variable credits, please enter the minimum value in the table for credit hours. To explain variable credit in detail as well as any additional information, use the narrative box at the end of this appendix.

		Course Number	NEW Course	Course Title	Credit Hours
General Education Courses (list specific courses if recommended for this program on Degree Map)					
General Education Credit Hour Sub-Total					32
Required Courses					
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	LEGL 1100		Introduction to Law	3
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	LEGL 1200		Legal Ethics and Professionalism	3
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	LEGL 1900		Civil Procedure	3
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	LEGL 2000		Legal Research and Writing	3
Required Course Credit Hour Sub-Total					12
Elective Courses					
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	LEGL 1400		Legal Interviewing, Investigation, Case Prep	3
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	LEGL 1500		Family Law	3
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	LEGL 1600		Criminal Law and Procedure	3
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	LEGL 1700		Torts	3
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	LEGL 2100		Estate Planning and Probate Law	3
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	LEGL 2400		Real Estate and Property Law	3
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	LEGL 2600		Business Law and Corporate Law	3
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	LEGL 2890		Internship (1-3 credits)	1
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	LEGL 2900		Administrative Law	3
Choose _____ of the following courses:					
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>				
Choose _____ of the following courses:					
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>				
Choose _____ of the following courses:					
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>				
Choose _____ of the following courses:					
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>				
Elective Credit Hour Sub-Total					16
Core Curriculum Credit Hour Sub-Total					60

Program Curriculum Narrative

Describe any variable credits. You may also include additional curriculum information.

The general education core is 32-35 credits, dependent on completed courses and scores on placement exams. To ensure a student is not required to exceed the maximum of 63 credits, there are 12 core courses and 16 electives. If a student needs additional courses because they only needed 32 credits of general education courses, they can use an open elective.

LEGL 2890 - Internship can be taken for 1-3 credits. Forty-five hours of internship work needs to be completed per credit hour.

Degree Map

Degree maps pertain to undergraduate programs ONLY. Provide a degree map for proposed program. Degree Maps were approved by the State Board of Regents on July 17, 2014 as a degree completion measure. Degree maps or graduation plans are a suggested semester-by-semester class schedule that includes prefix, number, title, and semester hours. For more details see <http://higheredutah.org/pdf/agendas/201407/TAB%20A%202014-7-18.pdf> (Item #3).

Please cut-and-paste the degree map or manually enter the degree map in the table below.

First Year Fall	Cr. Hr.	First Year Spring	Cr. Hr.
ENGL 1010 - Intro to Academic Writing	3	ENGL 2010 - Intermediate Writing	3
LEGL 1100 - Intro to Law	3	LEGL - Elective	3
LEGL 1200 - Legal Ethics and Professionalism	3	LEGL 1900 - Civil Procedure	3
American Institutions Req.	3	Humanities Req.	3
LM 1010 - Information Literacy (Int. Learning)	1	Physical Science Req.	4
CSIS 1000 - Intro to Comp. App. & the Internet	3		
Total	16	Total	16
Second Year Fall	Cr. Hr.	Second Year Spring	Cr. Hr.
LEGL - Elective	3	Life Science Req.	3
LEGL - Elective	3	LEGL 2000 - Legal Research and Writing	3
Social Sciences Req.	3	LEGL - Elective	3
Quantitative Literacy Req.	3	LEGL - Elective	3
Fine Arts Req.	3	LEGL - Elective	1
Total	15	Total	13
Third Year Fall	Cr. Hr.	Third Year Spring	Cr. Hr.
Total		Total	
Fourth Year Fall	Cr. Hr.	Fourth Year Spring	Cr. Hr.
Total		Total	

Appendix C: Current and New Faculty / Staff Information

Part I. Department Faculty / Staff

Identify # of department faculty / staff (headcount) for the year preceding implementation of proposed program.

	# Tenured	# Tenure -Track	# Non -Tenure Track
Faculty: Full Time with Doctorate			1
Faculty: Part Time with Doctorate			4
Faculty: Full Time with Masters			
Faculty: Part Time with Masters			
Faculty: Full Time with Baccalaureate			
Faculty: Part Time with Baccalaureate			
Teaching / Graduate Assistants	////	////	
Staff: Full Time			
Staff: Part Time			1

Part II. Proposed Program Faculty Profiles

List current faculty within the institution -- with academic qualifications -- to be used in support of the proposed program(s).

	First Name	Last Name	Tenure (T) / Tenure Track (TT) / Other	Degree	Institution where Credential was Earned	Est. % of time faculty member will dedicate to proposed program.	If "Other," describe
Full Time Faculty							
	Randall	Allen	Other	J.D.	J. Reuben Clark Law School (Brigham Young University)	15%	Lecturer/NT
Part Time Faculty							
	Christine	Taylor	Other	J.D.	University of Oklahoma College of Law	100%	Part time
	Edrick	Overson	Other	J.D.	Michigan State University College of Law	100%	Part time
	Geoffrey	Chesnut	Other	J.D.	Arizona State University College of Law	100%	Part time
	Tyler	Melling	Other	J.D.	University of Iowa College of Law	100%	Part time

Part III: New Faculty / Staff Projections for Proposed Program

Indicate the number of faculty / staff to be hired in the first three years of the program, if applicable. Include additional cost for these faculty / staff members in Appendix D.

	# Tenured	# Tenure -Track	# Non -Tenure Track	Academic or Industry Credentials Needed	Est. % of time to be dedicated to proposed program.
Faculty: Full Time with Doctorate					
Faculty: Part Time with Doctorate					
Faculty: Full Time with Masters					
Faculty: Part Time with Masters					
Faculty: Full Time with Baccalaureate					
Faculty: Part Time with Baccalaureate					
Teaching / Graduate Assistants	////	////			
Staff: Full Time					
Staff: Part Time					

Appendix D: Projected Program Participation and Finance

Part I.

Project the number of students who will be attracted to the proposed program as well as increased expenses, if any. Include new faculty & staff as described in Appendix C.

Three Year Projection: Program Participation and Department Budget						
	Year Preceding Implementation	New Program				
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Student Data						
# of Majors in Department	320					
# of Majors in Proposed Program(s)	////	20	22	24	27	30
# of Graduates from Department	60					
# Graduates in New Program(s)	////	5	6	7	8	9
Department Financial Data						
	Department Budget					
	Year Preceding Implementation (Base Budget)	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3		
		Addition to Base Budget for New Program(s)	Addition to Base Budget for New Program(s)	Addition to Base Budget for New Program(s)		
<i>Project additional expenses associated with offering new program(s). Account for New Faculty as stated in Appendix C, "Faculty Projections."</i>						
EXPENSES – nature of additional costs required for proposed program(s)						
<i>List salary benefits for additional faculty/staff each year the positions will be filled. For example, if hiring faculty in year 2, include expense in years 2 and 3. List one-time operating expenses only in the year expended.</i>						
Personnel (Faculty & Staff Salary & Benefits)						
Operating Expenses (equipment, travel, resources)						
Other:						
TOTAL PROGRAM EXPENSES	////	\$0	\$0	\$0		
TOTAL EXPENSES		\$0	\$0	\$0		
FUNDING – source of funding to cover additional costs generated by proposed program(s)						
<i>Describe internal reallocation using Narrative 1 on the following page. Describe new sources of funding using Narrative 2.</i>						
Internal Reallocation						
Appropriation						
Special Legislative Appropriation						
Grants and Contracts						
Special Fees						
Tuition						
Differential Tuition (requires Regents approval)						
PROPOSED PROGRAM FUNDING	////	\$0	\$0	\$0		
TOTAL DEPARTMENT FUNDING		\$0	\$0	\$0		
Difference						
Funding - Expense		\$0	\$0	\$0		

Part II: Expense explanation

Expense Narrative

Describe expenses associated with the proposed program.

Because the programs will replace the existing AAS program, additional funding is not needed. Sufficient faculty and staff, as well as resources, are in place to cover costs.

Part III: Describe funding sources

Revenue Narrative 1

Describe what internal reallocations, if applicable, are available and any impact to existing programs or services.

N/A

Revenue Narrative 2

Describe new funding sources and plans to acquire the funds.

N/A