

: Law 20 - Spring 2012 - Syllabus



Paralegal Studies Program

Los Angeles
Mission College

Syllabus

Law 20 - Basic Probate Procedures

Spring 2012

Spring 2012 - Section 0325

Instructor: [Elise Lampert, Esq.](#)
Office: Online Office Hours Only
Office hours: Wednesdays (by phone) 4:00 – 5:00 PM, or by appointment.
Phone: (818) 905-0601 - office
Email: profelise@sbcglobal.net
Moodle page: <http://moodle.lamission.edu/course/view.php?id=1007>

Textbook: [*How to Probate an Estate in California*](#) by Julia Nissley - 21st Edition - ISBN 9781413313154

Index of book - <http://abogado.pbworks.com/w/page/44151233/probate-book-index>

Chapter 1 of Textbook: <http://abogado.pbworks.com/w/page/44181297/probate-chapter-1>

Course Description: This course explores the fundamental principles and methods of fact gathering, office procedures, and required court work involved in the handling of probates of both testate and intestate decedents, as well as the administration of estates in California. Pr 13 - Wills & Trusts explores the fundamental principles of the law of wills, and trusts, including simple will and trust forms; an examination of the organization and jurisdiction of a California Probate Court; and the administration of estates in California Probate Courts.

Course Organization: Law 20 is organized into assignments, quizzes, proba, and forum discussions. Read **"Where to Start"**

Upon successful completion of this course, a student will be able to:

1. Brief law cases in probate law will disputes, administration of estates, fiduciary duties of administrators, executors, and beneficiaries, tax related matters, disputes over distribution of assets, and liabilities, jurisdictional issues, and final distribution and closing of the estate and continuing liability.
2. Critically analyze and argue issues in probate law including the issues listed above in #1.
3. Prepare legal documents, forms or papers related the the probating of an estate including Notice to Creditors, Petition for Probate, Inventory and Appraisals, Orders of Distribution, and Final Closing of the Estate.

Students will read probate law cases and write a case brief demonstrating their understanding and application of the essential facts and rules of law and legal principles of the case. see case brief rubric at <http://missionparalegal.pbworks.com/briefing>

Estimated Time per Week: 10 hours (see [Carnegie Rule](#))

Class format: The class is entirely online. No on campus meetings are required. . We use the [Moodle Course Management System](#). Carefully read [our policies](#).

The class follows a weekly format. If you click on "Section Links" in upper left corner of your moodle class, you will see the weekly assignments, quizzes, forums and activities. There are many opportunities for you to participate and earn points to attain a good grade.

Online classes require your attention and effort. If you fail to log into the class during the first two weeks you will be excluded from the class. There are activities and assignments each week; you will need to log into the class several times a week.

To be a successful online/hybrid student, you need to do schedule a regular time for studying, read and complete on line activities, and [more](#).

Technical Requirements: The minimum computer requirements are: Computer, either a Macintosh or IBM compatible; modem, minimum 28.8, broadband or high speed internet access is preferred and is required to view the videos. Software: Web browser software, preferably Firefox 3.5 or Internet Explorer 8, an e-mail address and a word processing program.

Get Firefox: <http://www.mozilla.com/en-US/firefox/all.html>

Get Internet Explorer: <http://www.microsoft.com/windows/Internet-explorer/default.apx>

Get a free email account at: www.mail.google.com

Students who do not have regular computer access may use computers in the campus Learning Resource Center. Be sure to save all your papers and assignments on a flash drive.

Course Login: <http://moodle.lamission.edu>

First Assignment: Introduce yourself to the class under the forum discussions for the first week. This is where you will get to know your classmates. Post your introduction by Sunday evening, 11:55 pm, February 19, 2012. You may be withdrawn from class if you do not post your introductions by the end of the 2nd week of class.

Contacting Your Instructor: I check my email several times a day and respond to emails within 24 hours. Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions; email me at gudinoac@lamission.edu in the subject line put: Law 20 #0330. I am also available by telephone on Wednesdays, 4:00 – 5:00 PM.

Discussion Forums: The discussion forums are the main area for class participation. The weekly discussions open on Mondays and close the following Sunday at 11:55 PM. Initial posts are due by Wednesdays at 11:55 pm. Initial posts should be at least two paragraphs in length (approximately 120-150 words), respond directly to the topic in a reflective manner, referencing the topic link and content provided, and applying the law or case materials. Respond to at least two students to each forum by Sunday evening at 11:55 pm.

CLASS BIOGRAPHIES/INTRODUCTIONS : You will find your instructor's autobiography posted in the "Discussion Board" of the class website. Please post your bio in the discussion board by Friday of week one. In your bio, please be sure to include:

DISCUSSION FORUMS: Every week a discussion questions posted to the website "FORUMS." You are required to post a answer to each discussion question by Wednesday of the forum week. Further, you are required to post, at least, one response to two or more of your classmates' initial responses. You are not required to respond to every classmate. You may, although this is a decision each student will make.

Minimum THREE different days per forum week. As we begin our online work together I want to discuss an important aspect of online learning, namely participation. **Participation** is an important part of this collaborative online learning environment. It is well documented that participation and collaboration does enhance learning & whether it be in-class or at a distance. You are encouraged to initiate and respond regularly and make sure **your ideas are presented clearly and are substantive**. **Postings that lack substance will receive little or no credit. For example, "I agree," "Good posting," or similar messages that add little or nothing to the discussion will receive few, if any credits.** Discussions posted to the website are an important part of the learning that takes place in this class. In essence, we learn from each other. Share ideas or questions with your colleagues. Ask them questions. Share your own experiences.

SOME SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS ABOUT PARTICIPATION:

Class Meeting Discussions:

- **Please read, review, and reflect on each message PRIOR to posting to the forums.** Remember: Others cannot get visual clues as to meaning, therefore, be careful in what and how you communicate. **Once posted, messages cannot be deleted!**
- All postings to any meeting in this class are to be considered CONFIDENTIAL and for consideration and discussion only by members of this class.
- Ask questions about areas of the subject that you wish to better understand or for clarification and/or amplification.
- Read your classmates comments and presentations, and respond constructively.
- Offer personal/professional experiences/observations relevant to the items being discussed.

Participation Rubric:

	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Exemplary
A minimum of 3 postings per forum on at least 3 separate days.	Less than 3 substantial postings.	Three required substantial postings.	More than the 3 substantial required posting.
Answers by Wednesday -----	Posting answers after Wednesday	Posting answers on Wednesday	Posting answers before Wednesday
Respond to classmates by Sunday			
Well reasoned with appropriate analysis.	No response or lacks applicability.	Response is applicable, but may not be thorough or lacks depth.	Thorough response with appropriate depth.
Appropriate dialog with classmates	Responses do not clearly relate to topic.	Responses relate to topic.	Responses clearly relate to topic.
Appropriate grammar, spelling, and APA references.	Spelling and/or grammar errors.	No spelling or grammar errors..	No spelling, grammar errors, or punctuation errors.

Student deliverables should be submitted on the specified date by midnight of the student’s time zone. For purposes of scheduling, each week or module begins on Monday 12:01 AM and concludes the following Sunday at Midnight.

EXPECTATIONS FOR WRITTEN WORK:

VOCABULARY - You are expected to read and understand the material presented in the assigned text and articles you locate.

FORMAT - Papers submitted should be written in accordance with the **APA, Bluebook, or other recognized formatting style.**

GRAMMAR - Use active voice in your writing. Also use the spelling and grammar check feature of your Word Processor before submitting your papers.

Homework Assignments: Assignments require you to read and brief law cases. Read the information on "[briefing law cases](#)". Below is the grading rubric for your case "briefs"

CASE BRIEF GRADING RUBRIC

	Outstanding A	Proficient B	Adequate C	Inadequate D/F
Case Name and Citation	Complete case name and properly formatted citation appear at the top of the case brief	Complete case name is provided but citation is incomplete	Complete case name is provided but no citation is give	Neither the case name nor the citation appears at the top of the case brief OR both case name and citation are incorrect.
Operative Facts	Operative facts are relevant to the issue being examined by the court and are logically organized.	Facts are relevant to the question being answered but lack coherence or organization.	Irrelevant facts are included. Lack of logical organization.	Relevant facts are omitted or lost in discussion of unrelated information.
Procedural Facts	Procedural history of the case is clearly and logically presented in proper chronology.	Procedural history of the case is presented but chronology is confusing.	Some procedural history is presented.	No procedural history is presented.
Issue/Short Answer	Includes all elements (applicable law, issue being examined and relevant facts) in a well crafted, grammatically correct question. Answer responds to question being posed.	Issue is separately articulated, but does not include all elements; applicable law, issue being examined and relevant facts. Answer responds to question being posed.	Issue is not separately articulated, but implied through description of facts or discussion of law. Answer does not respond to question being posed.	Issue is not articulated No answer is given.
Law	Law is correct and is relevant to the question being answered. Rule(s) of law succinctly paraphrased rather than quoted.	Law is correct and is relevant to the question being answered, but is not paraphrased	Rules of law are used in providing answer, but it is unclear if writer understands the law and is properly applying it.	Rules of law are omitted from answer or incorrect law is used.
Rationale	The court's reasoning is presented in a clear and logical fashion, leading the reader to an understanding of the rationale behind the law.	Law is applied to the facts, but the underlying rationale is not clear.	Analysis is unclear, causing the reader to question whether the law is correct.	No analysis of the law is given.
Writing Mechanics	Sentence structure, grammar, punctuation are substantially correct. Each component's material is logically organized and presented in a clear, concise manner.	Sentence structure, grammar, punctuation are substantially correct. Organization is logical but needs better consistency and clarity.	Adherence to rules of writing is poor. Material lacks organization and/or is unclear, making it difficult to understand.	Rules of writing are ignored or misunderstood. No apparent logic to the organization of the material. Writing lacks clarity.

**above adopted from case grading rubric - [AAFPE.org website](http://AAFPE.org)

Students who plagiarize will receive zero credit on the assignment.

Quizzes: The class is divided into weekly quizzes This is 25% of your grade.

Assignments: This class is divided into weekly assignments. This is 25% of your grade

Probate Forms : This class is divided into the preparation of Probate Forms. This is 35% of your grade

Discussion Forums - This class is divided into weekly discussions. This is 15% of your grade.

Late Assignments Our "[Late Work](#)" Policy is firm.

Grading Policy: Letter grades will be determined based upon the following:

Grade Distribution

Tests - 25% of your grade

Assignments - 25% of your grade

Probate Forms - 35% of your grade

Discussion Forums - 15% of your grade

Grade Scale:	A	90-100
	B	80-89
	C	70-79
	D	60-69
	F	≤ 60

Please note that a grade of C or higher is required for each of the 12 paralegal certificate classes.

Points will be posted on the class website after each activity closes.

Reasonable Accommodation: For students requiring accommodation the DSPS office provides special assistance in areas like: registering for courses, specialized tutoring, note-taking, mobility assistance, special instruction, testing assistance, special equipment, special materials, instructor liaisons, community referrals, and job placement. The phone number for the Office of Students with Disabled Student Programs and Services is: (818) 364-7732 and also their website at <http://lamission.edu/dsps>

Important Dates

Website opens Sunday 2/5/12 at 6 pm

February 05, 2012 Residency Determination Date for Spring 2012.
February 06, 2012 Day and Evening Classes Begin for Spring 2012.
February 11, 2012 Saturday Classes begin for Spring 2012.
February 17, 2012 - February 20, 2012 HOLIDAYS PRESIDENT'S DAY (COLLEGE CLOSED).
February 21, 2012 Last day to DROP with our incurring fees or with a REFUND for Spring 2012.
March 04, 2012 Last day to DROP without a "W" (No REFUND).
March 09, 2012 Last day to petition for Credit/No-Credit for Spring 2012.

March 09, 2012 Last day to do Section Transfer for Spring 2012.
March 29, 2012 Deadline to petition for Spring/Summer 2012 graduation.
March 30, 2012 CESAR CHAVEZ DAY (COLLEGE CLOSED).
April 02, 2012 - April 09, 2012 SPRING BREAK.
May 06, 2012 Last day to DROP with a "W".
May 26, 2012 Classes end for Spring 2012.
May 28, 2012 - June 04, 2012 FINAL EXAMS FOR SPRING 2012.
May 28, 2012 MEMORIAL DAY(COLLEGE CLOSED).
June 05, 2012 Graduation Day for Spring 2012.

Calendar of Activities

Fax all forms to Prof. Elise Lampert at 800-

[Probate Law](#) - [Fact Pattern for All Probate Forms](#) - Fax all forms to Prof. Gudino at 818-638-5798 - [probate forms](#)

Distribution of Grades

Tests - 25% of your grade

Assignments - 25% of your grade

Probate Forms - 35% of your grade

[Discussion Forums](#) - 15% of your grade - entered at the end of the session

A grade of C or greater is required to pass the class

Week 1 - Due 2/12/12

- Read the [syllabus for the class](#) and order the [textbook](#) and login to [moodle](#) - <http://lamc.etudes.fhda.edu> and use your login formula at <http://profj.us/login> -
- Scan the textbook to familiarize yourself with the [table of contents](#) - "How to Probate an Estate in California"
- Read [Dear Online Student](#)
- Post your [Introduction](#)
- Read "[How to Study Law](#)" and post to moodle
- Read [Good Legal Writing](#) and post to moodle
- Read [The Uses of Argument](#) and post to moodle
- Read [Analytic Thinking](#) and post to moodle
- Read "[Character Counts](#)" and post to moodle
- Read Differences between a "Case" and a "Code" ([10 Hour Law School](#)) and post to moodle
- Read "[Recognizing Plagarism](#)" and take the test

- review the following - summary of probate law - <http://profj.us/probatelaw/>
- Read Chp. 1 - Overview
- Review checklist of handling a simple estate - <http://duedates.pbwiki.com/f/law20cklist.htm>
- Review requirement of a will - <http://probatelaw.pbwiki.com/f/willform.htm>
- Review a simple will - <http://duedates.pbwiki.com/f/simplewill.htm>
- #1 Prepare simple will
- weekly forum discussion

Week 2 - Due 2/19/12

- Read chp 2 "first steps in handling an estate"
- Review steps in conducting a probate of an estate - law20steps.htm
- #2 Calculate attorneys fees
- #3 Probate court location - see - <http://www.profj.us/information/probate/>
- #4 - Name of Executor
- weekly forum discussion

Week 3 - Due 2/26/12

- Read chap 3 "heirs and beneficiaries" - chp34notes.htm
- #5 - Prepare form DE 111 Petition for Probate - <http://probatelaw.pbwiki.com/probate-forms>
- Quiz A - chp. 1 & 2
- weekly forum discussion

Week 4 - Due 3/4/12

- Read chp. 4 "decedents estates: - chp34notes.htm
- Read "How to settle a simple estate" - law20settle.htm
- test B - chp. 3 & 4
- weekly forum discussion

Week 5 - Due 3/11/12

- read chp. 5 - "schedule of assets and debts"
- review [make an inventory of the estate](http://makeaninventoryoftheestate)
- review schedule of assets form - assets.html
- #6 - review introduction to the probate code - [read intro to probate code](http://readintrotoprobatecode)
- weekly forum discussion

Week 6 - Due 3/18/12

- read chp. 6 - "identifying best transfer procedure"
- review FAQ on Wills and Estates - <http://estateplanningattys.com/estateplanning.html>
- #7 - determine and discuss assets of the estate
- Test C - Chapter 5, 6 & 7
- weekly forum discussion

Week 7 - Due 3/25/12

- read chp. 7 "taxes"
- #8 prepare DE-147 for "Duties of the Administrator"
- weekly forum discussion

Week 8 - Due 4/1/12

- read hp. 8 "transferring title to real property"
- Review probate rules chp 10 - part 1, 2, 3, and 4
- #9 - prepare DE -150 "Letters"
- #10 - Petition for Waiver
- weekly forum discussion

Week 9 - Due 4/8/12

- read chp. 9 "transfer of securities"

- #11 - prepare DE -157 Notice of Administration
- Test D - Chp. 8, 9 & 10
- weekly forum discussion
- **Spring Break 4/9/12 - 4/15/12**

Week 10 - Due 4/22/12

- read chp. 10 "joint tenancy property"
- #12 - prepare DE -160 Inventory and Appraisal
- weekly forum discussion

Week 11 - Due 4/29/12

- read chp. 11 - "transferring small estates"
- #13 - prepare DE -161 Inventory and Appraisal and Attachment #1
- Test E - chp. 11, 12 & 13
- weekly forum discussion

Week 12 - Due 5/6/12

- read chp. 12 - "transferring trust property"
- #14 - prepare Petition for Final Distribution
- weekly forum discussion

Week 13 - Due 5/13/12

- read chp. 13 - "overview of the probate court process"
- read chp. 14 - "Conducting a simple probate"
- Test F - chp. 14 & 15
- weekly forum discussion

Week 14 - Due 5/20/12

- #15 - prepare Order of Final Distribution
- weekly forum discussion

Week 15 - Due 5/27/12

- TBA

Week 16 - Due 6/3/12

- TBA

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Updated: 1/15/12