I. COURSE DESCRIPTION:

A. This course introduces computer technology and software applications within the law office, with an emphasis on the paralegal’s role in the use of law office technology.

B. This course is required to meet curriculum requirements for the Central Texas College Legal Assistance Program.

C. This course is occupationally related and serves as preparation for jobs in law and legal related fields.

D. Recommended prerequisite(s): Keyboarding

II. LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this course, (Law Office Technology), the student will:

General Objectives:

A. Explain how computers have impacted the legal profession and how they have changed the way work is performed by paralegals and attorneys in the law office.

B. Describe how case management software assists paralegals and attorneys to perform their roles in the law office.

C. Use word-processing and database software commonly used in law offices to draft legal documents and letters to clients.

D. Explain how legal timekeeping and billing is automated using spreadsheets, legal timekeeping, or billing software.

E. Conduct legal research using research Web sites.

F. Describe how computers are used to interact with the courts, clients, and attorneys, and the pros and cons of their use.
G. Discuss the concerns associated with the use of computers and technology in the law office and how to manage potential problems.

Student Outcomes:

A. To demonstrate an understanding of computer terminology commonly used in a law office.
   Measure: Students will take quizzes and final examination, following lectures and discussions, which will test their knowledge of computer terminology.
   Standard: At least 80% of all students will receive a grade of “C” or better on each of these examinations.

B. To demonstrate knowledge of basic word processing and its applicability to the law office.
   Measure: Students will utilize word processing computer applications to prepare legal documents.
   Standard: At least 80% of all students will receive a grade of “C” or better for this project.

III. INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

A. Instructional Materials for this course may be found at www.ctcd.edu/books.

B. Other references may be assigned by the instructor.

IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. Reading Assignment:
   As assigned by Instructor.

B. Projects, Oral Reports, Case Studies, Book Reports, Research Papers:
   Students will be expected to complete and submit all assigned projects, reports, and other assignments as indicated by the instructor.

C. Class Performance:
   All students are required and expected to maintain the highest standards of scholastic honesty in the preparation of all course work and during examinations. For a description and consequences of scholastic dishonesty see the Central Texas College Catalog.

D. Traditional Class Participation:
   The Student is expected to be on time to class, to have read the assigned materials, and be prepared to discuss the assignment in class. All persons must be present on exam day unless properly excused in advance. Students who are late for or absent from class have the absolute responsibility for obtaining the missed information. Students will be expected to take all scheduled examinations in the class period in
which they are assigned. Students are expected to observe the Central Texas College policy for attendance as explained in the current catalog.

E. Each student is expected to act in a manner consistent with the College’s functions and goals as an institution of higher education. The Board of Trustees of Central Texas College states the following examples of misconduct constitute an interference with the lawful and orderly use of college premises, facilities, and activities for which students may be subject to disciplinary action. This is not an all-inclusive list of prohibited behavior.

a. Interference with teaching, research, administration or CTC’s other responsibilities through disorderly conduct or disruptive behavior. This includes the use of or ringing of cell phones in the classroom. The instructor has the right to ask the student to leave the classroom and if the incident is repeated, the instructor has the right to ask the student to leave the class.

b. Refusing to depart from any property or facility of the College upon direction by College officials.

For more information on Non-Academic Misconduct please see the Student Handbook.

F. Academic Dishonesty: The College and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against any student accused of any form of academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating on academic work, plagiarism and collusion.

a. Cheating on academic work includes:

1. Copying another student’s test paper, research paper or term paper.
2. Using materials during a test that are not authorized by the test administrator.
3. Collaborating with another student during a test or in academic preparation without permission.
4. Using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, or soliciting the contents of an un-administered test.

b. Plagiarism is defined as presentation for credit as one’s own idea or product derived from an existing source.

c. Collusion is defined as the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing written work for credit.
All questions of academic dishonesty are reviewed by the faculty member. If the student does not accept the decision of the faculty member, the student may appeal to the department chairperson. If the student disagrees with the decision of the department head, the student’s case will be referred to the Dean of the Central Campus. The student will be allowed to remain in class until the process is exhausted except when immediate suspension or expulsion is deemed necessary for the continuance of the educational mission or when the safety of persons or property is in jeopardy. (See Student Handbook for more details.)

G. Feedback is the return of data about the result of a process. Feedback will be provided via test scores, graded assignments, and/or instructor evaluation of the students’ progress. Each student is encouraged to take advantage of the many avenues for feedback available to them. For example, office hours are established primarily to provide students access to their instructors to discuss their academic performance, to answer their substantive questions, and in some cases, to give them other academic guidance. While adjunct faculty do not normally have office hours, they are generally available before or after class to meet with you. E-mail is another easily available medium to obtain feedback. Additional feedback may be provided at the discretion of the instructor or upon the request of the student.

V. EXAMINATIONS

A. There will be a final examination. There will also be quizzes from time to time.

B. The student must be present for all examinations. No make-up examinations will be given. Students who know in advance they will be absent from an examination due to valid reasons must arrange to take an early examination. Unexpected absences due to illness or extenuating circumstances will require the student to see the instructor about individual make-up work in lieu of the missed examination.

C. Students without excused absences will be given zero for the examination missed.

VI. SEMESTER GRADE COMPUTATION

Grade computation will be based on a grasp of technical information as evidenced by written examination. In addition, performance on computer-based projects may be graded at the teacher’s discretion, but nonetheless, successful completion of course requires satisfactory passing of all assignments.
VII. NOTES AND ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS FROM COURSE INSTRUCTOR

A. Course Withdrawal: There are occasions when it may be necessary to drop a course. In order to be officially withdrawn from the course, a student must obtain and complete a withdrawal form and have it signed thereon. The student's transcript will show "W" or "F", depending on whether the student is passing or failing in his/her course at the time of withdrawal.

- Friday of 3rd week for 5-week courses
- Friday of 4th week for 6-week courses
- Friday of 6th week for 8-week courses
- Friday of 7th week for 10-week courses
- Friday of 9th week for 12-week courses
- Friday of 12th week for 16-week courses

B. Administrative Withdrawal: Results when a student is absent an excessive number of times, as defined in the current Central Texas College Catalogue and/or other published amendatory documentation. In such a case, the student is dropped from the course with a grade of "F".

C. Incomplete Grade: May be given only in those cases where, because of personal illness, death in the immediate family, school sponsored trip, or military orders, the student is unable to complete the final examination for a course. Prior approval from the instructor is required before the grade of "IP" is recorded. A student who merely fails to show for the final examination will receive a zero for the final and "F" for the course.

D. Cellular Phones and beepers: Cellular phones and beepers will be turned off while the student is in the classroom or laboratory.

E. American's with Disabilities Act (ADA): Disability Support Services provide services to students who have appropriate documentation of a disability. Students requiring accommodations for class are responsible for contacting the Office of Disability Support Services (DSS) located on the central campus. This service is available to all students, regardless of location. Review the website at www.ctcd.edu/disability-support for further information. Reasonable accommodations will be given in accordance with the federal and state laws through the DSS office.

F. Instructor Discretion: The instructor reserves the right of final decision in course requirements.

G. Civility: Individuals are expected to be cognizant of what a constructive educational experience is and respectful of those participating in a learning environment. Failure to do so can result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.
H. **Nonattribution Policy:** In order to facilitate the free flow of information, no statements of personal opinion by the instructor concerning lawyers, judges, cases, or the legal system may be attributed to the speaker and is meant to be a confidential communication. This educational institution encourages complete freedom of expression in all academic endeavors. Comments made by instructors and students will not be attributed to them in any public forum or to any individual likely to transmit such statements to a public forum. However, participation in CTC academic events does not create a category of privileged communication. Our nonattribution policy protects all participants in our program – staff, faculty, students, speakers, and other guests – against having their remarks and opinions publicly quoted or otherwise attributed to them without their express consent; allows such statements to be discussed, away from CTC, provided care is taken to avoid publicly identifying the speaker; and encourages speakers to be responsible for the substantive content of their statements.

VIII. **COURSE OUTLINE**

A. **Unit one: Overview of Computers and Technology in the Law Office**

1. **Learning Outcomes:** Upon successful completion of this unit, the student will be able to:
   a. Identify how computers and technology are being used in legal organizations.
   b. Identify the various computer-system components.
   c. Recognize the essential elements of a computer.
   d. Distinguish among the various forms of computer software.
   e. Understand the concept of metadata.
   f. Recognize the ethical issues raised by the use of technology in the law office.

2. **Learning Activities:**
   a. Classroom or on-line lecture and discussion (C1, C5, C9)
   b. Student homework and study (C1, C5, C8, F1)
   c. Reading Assignments (F13, C1)

3. **Unit Outline:**
   a. Introduction to Technology and the Law
   b. Computers and Technology
   c. Elementary Computer Concepts
   d. Computer Components
   e. Peripheral Devices
   f. Introduction to Computer Software
   g. How Computers Can Help the Paralegal
   h. Legal Technology Trends
   i. Legal Ethics and Computer Technology
B. **Unit Two: Word Processing and Document Assembly**

1. **Learning Outcomes:** Upon successful completion of this unit, the student will be able to:
   a. Explain how legal organizations and paralegals use word processors.
   b. Describe major features found in word-processing programs.
   c. Explain what document assembly is and how it works.
   d. Discuss ethical problems related to word processing.

2. **Learning Activities:**
   a. Classroom or on-line lecture and discussion (C1, C5, C9)
   b. Student homework and study (C1, C5, C8, F1)
   c. Reading Assignments (F13, C1)

3. **Unit Outline:**
   b. Legal Word-Processing Programs: Microsoft Word vs. Corel WordPerfect.
   c. Legal Word Processing Fundamentals
   d. Merging and Document Assembly in Word Processors
   e. Microsoft Word Online Training and Word Templates
   f. PDF Files
   g. PDF/A
   h. Document Assembly Programs
   i. Ethical Considerations

C. **Unit Three: Spreadsheet Software**

1. **Learning Outcomes:** Upon successful completion of this unit, the student will be able to:
   a. Explain what a spreadsheet is.
   b. Describe how rows and columns make up the structure of a spreadsheet.
   c. Explain what text, values, and formulas are.
   d. Describe the types of graphs commonly found in spreadsheet programs.
   e. Explain how copying formulas can simplify the use of a spreadsheet.
   f. List and describe the ways in which paralegals can use spreadsheets.

2. **Learning Activities:**
   a. Classroom or on-line lecture and discussion (C1, C5, C9)
   b. Student homework and study (C1, C5, C8, F1)
   c. Reading Assignments (F13, C1)
3. **Unit Outline:**
   a. What is a Spreadsheet?
   b. “What If” Analysis
   c. Spreadsheet Structure and Organization
   d. Spreadsheet Fundamentals
   e. Spreadsheet Planning
   f. Spreadsheets in the Legal Environment
   g. Excel in Office 365
   h. Ethical Considerations

D. **Unit Four:** Legal Timekeeping and Billing Software

1. **Learning Outcomes:** Upon successful completion of this unit, the student will be able to:
   a. Explain what timekeeping and billing are.
   b. Explain the computerized timekeeping and billing process.
   c. Describe the different types of legal fee agreements.
   d. Identify why accurate billings are important to law firms.
   e. List the basic features and functions of timekeeping and billing programs.
   f. Describe how timeslips are entered into a timekeeping and billing system.
   g. Explain how management reports generated from a timekeeping and billing system can help a firm.
   h. Explain what electronic billing is.
   i. Describe the factors for determining whether a fee is reasonable.

2. **Learning Activities:**
   a. Classroom or on-line lecture and discussion (C1, C5, C9)
   b. Student homework and study (C1, C5, C8, F1)
   c. Reading Assignments (F13, C1)

3. **Unit Outline:**
   a. Introduction to Timekeeping and Billing
   b. Manual versus Computerized Billing Systems
   c. The Computerized Timekeeping and Billing Process
   d. Kinds of Legal Fee Agreements
   e. Legal Expenses
   f. Timekeeping and Billing for Paralegals
   g. Functions of a Successful Billing System
   h. Computerized Timekeeping and Billing: Software
   i. Integrating Timekeeping and Billing, Accounting, and Case Management
   j. What to Look for in Timekeeping and Billing Software
   k. The Ethics of Timekeeping and Billing
E. Unit Five: Databases, Case Management, and Docket Control Software

1. Learning Outcomes: Upon successful completion of this unit, the student will be able to:
   a. Define relevant terms, including database, field, record, table, and query.
   b. Explain what a docket control system is.
   c. Explain what case management is.
   d. Describe the computerized docket cycle.
   e. Describe how a computerized case management system can prevent cases from being forgotten or overlooked.
   f. Discuss why docket control and case management are important to a legal organization from an ethics perspective.

2. Learning Activities:
   a. Classroom or on-line lecture and discussion (C1, C5, C9)
   b. Student homework and study (C1, C5, C8, F1)
   c. Reading Assignments (F13, C1)

3. Unit outline:
   a. What is a Database?
   b. Database Structure
   c. Common Database Terms
   d. Calendaring, Docket Control, and Case Management
   e. Introduction to Docket Control/Case Management
   f. Introduction to Docket Control/Case Management
   g. Manual Docket Control
   g. Types of Computerized Docket Control Systems
   h. Overview of Computerized Legal Case Management and Docket Control
   i. Implementing Case Management Systems—Why They Fail
   j. The Docket Cycle
   k. Ethical and Malpractice Considerations

F. Unit Six: The Cloud and Social Media

1. Learning Outcomes: Upon successful completion of this unit, the student will be able to:
   a. Understand how legal professionals use the cloud.
   b. Understand the ethical issues posed by the use of the cloud by legal professionals.
   c. Understand how to navigate securely in the cloud.
   d. Understand what social media is and how it has impacted the practice of law.
   e. Understand the legal ethical issues raised by the use of social media.
2. **Learning Activities:**
   a. Classroom or on-line lecture and discussion (C1, C5, C9)
   b. Student homework and study (C1, C5, C8, F1)
   c. Reading Assignments (F13, C1)

3. **Unit Outline:**
   a. What is the “Cloud”?
   b. Encryption in the Law Office
   c. Online Security
   b. Virtual Law Offices
   c. Social Media
   d. Geolocation

G. **Unit Seven: Electronic Discovery**

1. **Learning Outcomes:** Upon successful completion of this unit, the student will be able to:
   a. Explain why electronic discovery is an important aspect of litigation.
   b. Identify the term that the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure use for all electronic data, and understand its scope.
   c. Explain the purpose of the “meet and confer” pretrial conference that parties must have pursuant to the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure.
   d. Discuss the duty of parties to preserve electronic information.
   e. Understand the different steps of an electronic discovery procedure.
   f. Explain what native and image formats are.

2. **Learning Activities:**
   a. Classroom or on-line lecture and discussion (C1, C5, C9)
   b. Student homework and study (C1, C5, C8, F1)
   c. Reading Assignments (F13, C1)

3. **Unit Outline:**
   a. Electronic Discovery Overview
   b. The Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and Electronically Stored Information
   c. Producing and Receiving ESI
   d. Ethical Considerations

H. **Unit Eight: Litigation Support Software**

1. **Learning Outcomes:** Upon successful completion of this unit, the student will be able to:
   a. Explain what litigation support is.
   b. Explain why computerized litigation support methods are more
successful than manual methods.

  c. Explain why a legal organization might use a litigation support service provider.
  d. Identify the three major types of litigation support systems.
  e. Describe the litigation support process.
  f. Identify and use various search methods to retrieve litigation support data.

2. Learning Activities:
   a. Classroom or on-line lecture and discussion (C1, C5, C9)
   b. Student homework and study (C1, C5, C8, F1)
   c. Reading Assignments (F13, C1)

3. Unit outline:
   a. Tracking Information and Documents Used in Litigation
   b. Why Litigation Support?
   c. Manual Litigation Support Methods
   d. Overview of Computerized Litigation Support
   e. Types of Computerized Litigation Support Systems
   f. The Litigation Support Process
   g. Searching and Retrieving Litigation Support Data
   h. Litigation Support Tips
   i. Questions and Fears about Computerized Litigation Support
   j. Ethical Considerations

I. Unit Nine: The Internet, Computer-Assisted Legal Research, and Electronic Mail

1. Learning Outcomes: Upon successful completion of this unit, the student will be able to:
   a. Explain the different types of services the Internet offers.
   b. Discuss problems with using the Internet for research.
   c. Describe the difference between a subject-oriented search engine and a metasearch engine.
   d. List resources for finding legal information on the Internet.
   e. List resources for finding factual information on the Internet.
   f. Explain what is involved in planning a search query.
   g. Formulate simple search queries for Westlaw or Lexis Advance.

2. Learning Activities:
   a. Classroom or on-line lecture and discussion (C1, C5, C9)
   b. Student homework and study (C1, C5, C8, F1)
   c. Reading Assignments (F13, C1)

3. Unit outline:
   a. Introduction to the Internet
   b. Use of the Internet in Legal Organizations
c. Searching and Finding Information on the World Wide Web
d. Performing Legal Research on the Internet
e. Electronic Mail
f. Introduction to Computer-Assisted Legal Research
g. Manual Legal Research
h. CALR: Online Legal Databases
i. Fee-Based Computer-Assisted Legal Research Services
j. Westlaw
k. Lexis Advance
l. Other CALR Fee-Based Service Providers
m. Increased Productivity on CALR Systems
n. Ethical Considerations

I. **Unit Ten: The Electronic Courthouse, Automated Courtroom, and Presentation Graphics**

1. **Learning Outcomes:** Upon successful completion of this unit, the student will be able to:
   a. Explain what the “electronic courthouse” is.
   b. Describe how an automated courtroom works.
   c. Describe what presentation software does.
   d. Explain how presentation software can be used in the legal environment.

2. **Learning Activities:**
   a. Classroom or on-line lecture and discussion (C1, C5, C9)
   b. Student homework and study (C1, C5, C8, F1)
   c. Reading Assignments (F13, C1)

3. **Lesson outline:**
   a. The Electronic Courthouse
   b. The Automated Courtroom
   c. Overview of Presentation and Trial Presentation Software
   d. Creating Legal Presentations with Microsoft PowerPoint
   e. Creating Presentations with TrialDirector
   f. Courtroom Presentation Tips
   g. Ethical Considerations

Other time blocks not specifically allocated above are spent with introductory topics, administrative matters, exams, and review classes (both before and after exams).