Program Scope and Objectives
Paralegal Studies is a 30 unit certificate program, providing instruction in practical legal skills and substantive law. All coursework is taught at the upper-division level by attorneys and working paralegals.

The primary goal of the program is to educate students for positions as paralegals as a means of improving the quality, accessibility, and affordability of legal services. The program started in 1975 and has graduated well over a thousand paralegals. Further information on the program's key objectives and the mission statement submitted to the American Bar Association (ABA) can be found on the paralegal program's website.

ABA-Approved
For over 40 years, the Paralegal Studies Certificate Program, an American Bar Association-approved paralegal studies program, has been providing educational excellence to its students.

California legislation defines who may call himself or herself a paralegal and sets forth education criteria for paralegals. One of the criteria is graduation from a program approved by the American Bar Association. Please refer to the section on California Legislation on Paralegals cited below.

California Legislation on Paralegals
The state of California has adopted legislation that defines the titles “paralegal” and “legal assistant” and sets educational criteria and continuing education requirements for paralegals. The San Francisco State University Paralegal Studies certificate program meets the educational requirements of the law by virtue of being offered by an accredited institution with an ABA-approved program, and consisting of more than 24 units of paralegal coursework.

Faculty
All courses in this program are taught by attorneys and/or paralegals with practical experience in their respective fields. We currently have three program graduates on our faculty.

Career Outlook
Paralegals are employed in private and public interest law firms, corporations, banks, securities firms, government agencies, and regulatory bodies. The Bureau of Labor Statistics ranks the paralegal occupation as one of the fastest growing in the country. Recent state legislation requires that persons working as paralegals meet specified educational and continuing education requirements.
• Environmental Litigation
• Evidence
• Family Law
• Law Office Management
• Paralegal Experience Internship
• Patents
• Immigration Law
• Introduction to Professional Legal Writing
• Probate Procedures
• Real Estate Practice
• Trademarks & Copyrights
• Torts
• Wills, Trusts, and Estate Planning

**Intended Audience**
College graduates who are interested in a career in the legal field, international students who worked in the legal field as lawyers or paralegals in their home countries, career changers, students who are thinking about law school, and early retirees from other professions who have a general interest in the law.

**Non-Certificate Students**
If students wish to explore the legal field and want to take selected individual courses in the program, they may register for those courses, with the consent of the faculty member and program lead.

Also, those who already have experience in the legal field and who wish to take selected courses without applying to the program may register for courses with the permission of the individual instructor and program lead.