

# Preface

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Evidence law is a crucial component for any paralegal program in the U.S. Too often, the textbooks available for courses in evidence law do not assist students in mastering this critical area of law. Many of the texts available are not for paralegal students.

In *Evidence Law for Legal Assistants*, emphasis is placed on the real world aspects of evidentiary rules. There are scenarios throughout the book that help to explain and bring home what are sometimes considered esoteric rules. Although there is a great deal of emphasis on the Federal Rules of Evidence, the author also brings in state rules and cases to demonstrate not only the similarities between the federal and state approaches, but also some of the important differences. This book is written with the student and the instructor in mind. The author has extensive experience not only in teaching the topic, but also in living it. As an assistant district attorney and as a private attorney with a law firm in a major city, the author handled all types of evidentiary questions in both civil and criminal cases.

The text is built around various rules, often citing the Federal Rules to provide context, case law to expand on the rule, and then an insight into state laws and cases to round out the coverage. The writing strikes a balance between the theoretical and academic bases of every aspect of evidence law from relevancy to evidentiary issues on appeal.

## **KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF EVIDENCE LAW FOR LEGAL ASSISTANTS:**

### **The Writing Style**

The author's clear and coherent writing is one of the best features of the text. The author clearly communicates his enthusiasm for the topic throughout the materials.

### **Chapter Features**

Each chapter has a standard format, including:

- **Clearly stated chapter objectives**

Each chapter sets out five objectives for the student-reader.

- **Introductory paragraph**  
The major topics in the chapter are set out in this introductory chapter.
- **Material presented in a logical way**  
The topics discussed in the chapters flow in a logical, commonsense manner.
- **Learning styles are taken into consideration**  
The topics in the chapters are discussed in a variety of ways to take advantage of different student-reader learning styles.
- **Significant cases**  
The text will also place strong emphasis on seminal or otherwise important cases to help demonstrate the importance of evidence law in both civil and criminal cases.
- **Terms and legal vocabulary**  
All terms and legal vocabulary are defined immediately for the student—the first time a key word or legal term is mentioned in the text, a definition of it appears in the margin. This helps students grasp the meaning without breaking into the flow of the reading by having to turn to the glossary.
- **Extensive use of scenarios**  
The author uses numerous scenarios to bring a real-world feel to the evidentiary topics in the chapter. These scenarios also provide an excellent foundation for classroom discussion.
- **Case excerpts**  
Each chapter contains a significant case designed to expand on the topics discussed in the chapter. There are also questions for students based on the case to further assist their understanding of the case and its relevance to the chapter concepts.
- **“Real world” flavor**  
The text also places heavy emphasis on the practical aspects of evidence law in both civil and criminal litigation practice.
- **Ethical issues**  
Ethics is crucial for any legal professional. Each chapter explores an important ethical question and explains the relevance of ethical systems for the day-to-day practice of law.
- The chapters also contain a feature called “Skills You Need in the Real World.” This feature addresses practical skills and hands-on activities that help the reader relate the material to the acquisition of specific skills related to evidence law, including taking photos and video of accident/crime scenes, formulating a chronology of events, creating an evidence chart that is cross-referenced to witness testimony and various methods to identify potential hearsay statements, among others.
- **Pedagogy**  
The text has numerous features that take advantage of the varying learning styles that students apply to learning.

- The text also offers a chapter-by-chapter series of review questions and practice test questions allowing students to gauge their command of the material. Answers to the review and sample test questions are provided in Appendix B of the book.
- The complete text of the Federal Rules of Evidence is provided in Appendix A of the book.
- Appendix B contains the answers to all of the end-of-chapter questions to give the reader an easy and helpful way to check their comprehension of the material presented.
- Appendix C contains a civil Complaint and Answer, as well as other materials, that the students can use to develop specific skills related to using, researching, and evaluating evidence that may be used in the civil case. This feature is also tied into another of the author's textbooks, *Tort Law for Paralegals*, 7th Edition, ISBN: 978-1-5438-4752-9 where the author discussed the same case in the context of bringing a negligence action in a car wreck case.

## INSTRUCTOR'S MANUAL

The author has developed an impressive instructor's manual to accompany the text. Recognizing the needs of instructors for multiple resources, the author has provided the following features:

- **Suggested syllabi and lesson plans**
- **Answers to all end-of-chapter questions for analysis and hypotheticals**
- **Test bank**  
The test bank includes a variety of test questions, including:
  - Essay questions (3 per chapter)
  - True-false (10 per chapter)
  - Fill in the blank (10 per chapter)
  - Multiple choice (20 per chapter)
- **PowerPoint slides for each chapter**