

Professor James Pennington, besides serving as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Government, is also a full equity law partner at Bluegrass Law Group. He started out as a non-traditional student in EKU's regional campus system and online program.

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR JAMES PENNINGTON, J.D.

Paralegal Programs, Department of Government



For the student pursuing a career in paralegal, what skill set should they possess?

“Writing and research skills certainly, but above all you have to think like an attorney. You have to have that deductive reasoning thought process and critical thinking. Paralegals also must possess people, communications, and interpersonal skills as well.”

You teach legal writing. What are some of the other courses students take in the paralegal program?

“There is a core curriculum including legal research. They can take electives such as a family law or criminal law class. But once you learn the way to think through a problem, to do legal analysis, it doesn't matter the area of law because you're just applying a different set of facts to a different law. You're going through the same deductive reasoning. All of our students are also required to complete a 280-hour internship that they can do with a practicing attorney, a government office, or clerking for a judge.”

What's the current demand for paralegals in the field and what's the future outlook for this profession?

“The demand's high now and the outlook is promising. Lawsuits aren't going down, cases aren't going away and if anything, with the pandemic, there's been a log jam of cases. Paralegals are going to be doing a lot more remote working and with some of the technology that we have in legal research, I see that being the way of the future. Just a note, about 65-70 percent of our students have jobs before they even graduate. In addition, we place a little over 90 percent of our graduates within three months of graduation.”

What would you say to a prospective student who asked you 'why should I get a paralegal degree from EKU?' and 'why should I do it online?'

“We care. We care about you as a student. We want to see you succeed. Yes, we are accredited by the American Bar Association but I and all my colleagues, we care. As far as online, it is more convenient. You can take the program completely from home – anytime you want, day or night.”

❖ For more information on the Paralegal program, [click here](#).