



University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee School of Continuing Education

Legal Interpreting Certificate Program (LIC) Description Summary and Course Objectives

1. Introduction to Legal Interpreting

This is an introductory knowledge based course that examines interpreting in legal environments. This course will help students identify what environments are legal. Students will also begin to identify cultural aspects and influences on interpretation as well as how the interpretation impacts the legal environment. Students will be introduced to and identify the 3 (or more) cultures that they work in whenever working in a legal environment. Topics and activities will include identifying one's own language and culture in addition to identifying and assessing the use of powerful/powerless language in legal environments and how culture influences language and power. Students will be introduced to resources to improve their interpretation accuracy including an emphasis on continued development of content specific vocabulary.

Course objectives (learning outcomes):

Upon successful completion of the course, students will:

1. Identify the unique nature of interpreting work in legal settings
2. Demonstrate awareness of and identify legal environments vs. non-legal environments
3. Identify, analyze and articulate cultural aspects and power dynamics and their influences in legal environments
4. Develop an introductory approach to analyzing, understanding and interpreting legal vocabulary to build and integrate into their work within a legal context
5. Study a list of topic related legal terms
6. Be able to discern which legal terms apply to various legal environments
7. Establish strategies for continued vocabulary building and professional development throughout each course and into their professional career
8. Evaluate and employ strategies for interpreting idiomatic phrases found in legal settings
9. Initiate building their resource library regarding legal interpreting (Dictionaries, materials relating to their work, resources, etc.)

2. Ethics and Laws that Govern Legal Interpreting

This course will focus on the Wisconsin Code of Ethics for Court Interpreters, SCR 63. The course includes other professional codes of ethics for interpreters and incorporates articles and information on Case laws. Other laws relating to interpreting and requirements for providing interpreters are encompassed throughout the course. Students will build strategies to properly prepare for a case. The purpose of the course is for students to gain a deep foundational working knowledge of the WI Code and apply it to their work in legal settings. Students will be presented with various scenarios to identify, analyze and apply to the code.

Course objectives (learning outcomes):

Upon successful completion of the course, students will:

1. Identify and analyze the Wisconsin Code of Ethics for Court Interpreters.
2. Apply each Canon of the Code of Ethics to their work and gain an understanding of how the Code is a guide to performing their professional duties and responsibilities.
3. Be able to articulate the canons of the WI Code of Ethics for Court Interpreters.
4. Educate court and legal personnel (and others) regarding their professional duties and responsibilities
5. Know how to raise ethical issues during court proceedings and other legal work environments
6. Develop skills, techniques and logistics of what is required to properly prepare for various interpreting environments.
7. Compare and contrast other professional interpreter codes and learn which codes apply to which settings.
8. Learn about credentials, licenses, certifications, etc. required to become a professional legal interpreter.
9. Increase knowledge of WI Statutes, case laws and requirements relating to interpreting.
10. Continue reviewing, understanding and interpreting legal vocabulary; studying a list of topic related legal terms to analyze, build and integrate into their ability to work within a legal context.
11. Evaluate and employ strategies for interpreting idiomatic phrases found in legal settings.

3. Dynamics in Legal Interpreting - Team Interpreting & Roles of Interpreters

This course will teach techniques on team interpreting and defining the various interpreter roles in legal settings. Students will look at the similarities and differences between spoken language and sign language interpreters. They will also develop skills to improve teamwork for more effective accurate interpreting as well as learning how to work together when spoken language and sign language interpreters are in the same case. This course will also look at the use of technology.

Course objectives (learning outcomes):

Upon successful completion of the course, students will:

1. Identify the various interpreter roles in legal environments
2. Be able to compare and contrast spoken language interpreting and sign language interpreting; articulating the similarities and differences
3. Understand and develop the skills and techniques regarding best practices for team interpreting and protocol; including the use of notes
4. Know how to advise the best placement and best practice for optimal interpreting process resulting in the highest accuracy and least obtrusiveness to court and legal environments
5. Demonstrate the ability to make appropriate ethical decisions in legal environments
6. Be able to identify the types of technology options available for the interpreting process
7. Continue reviewing, understanding and interpreting legal vocabulary; studying a list of topic related legal terms to analyze, build and integrate into their ability to work within a legal context.
8. Evaluate and employ strategies for interpreting idiomatic phrases found in legal settings.

4. Foundational Legal Concepts and Legal Language

This course will focus on students learning some of the foundational concepts within the legal realm. Lessons include information and activities to increase knowledge and the ability to interpret topics such as the Rules of Evidence, the meaning and rationale behind objections, legal language, writings and documents. This includes how lawyers think and prepare for a case. Students will be introduced to resources for continued self-study with a concentration on increasing their understanding of legal terminology and idioms.

Course objectives (learning outcomes):

Upon successful completion of the course, students will:

1. Be introduced to and increase their working knowledge of the Rules of Evidence
2. Discover and be able to interpret the definitions of the most commonly used objections in legal settings
3. Analyze the meaning of objections used in court proceedings and apply strategies for handling objections during the interpretation process
4. Learn how lawyers think and prepare cases
5. Increase working knowledge of and application of legal language (such as lines of questioning) during the interpreting process
6. Continue reviewing, understanding and interpreting legal vocabulary; studying a list of topic related legal terms to analyze, build and integrate into their ability to work within a legal context.
7. Evaluate and employ strategies for interpreting idiomatic phrases found in legal settings.

5. Legal Procedure: Criminal and Civil

This course will focus on the specific understanding of the steps in how a case proceeds from beginning to end. It's purpose is to develop a student's understanding of substantive and procedural criminal and civil law processes within the legal system and where and how interpreters operate within those environments.

Course objectives (learning outcomes):

Upon successful completion of the course, students will:

1. Compare and contrast the basic structure of the Federal and state legal systems
2. Distinguish between criminal and civil procedures
3. Demonstrate the steps in a criminal procedure from the alleged commission of a crime to disposition of a case
4. Demonstrate the steps in a civil procedure from filing of a case to resolution
5. Distinguish the differences between adult legal cases and cases involving minors
6. Recognize and discern various court documents in a case file and legal setting
7. Identify the various professional roles in the Wisconsin Legal System and understand their basic function and authority
8. Continue reviewing, understanding and interpreting legal vocabulary; studying a list of topic related legal terms to analyze, build and integrate into their ability to work within a legal context.
9. Evaluate and employ strategies for interpreting idiomatic phrases found in legal settings.

6. The Construct of Legal Environments

This course specifically identifies and defines various legal settings and demonstrates protocol and how interpreters function in those environments. This includes defining the detailed practical aspects of various legal settings such as - depositions, motion hearings, trials, voir dire process, jury instructions, plea colloquy, attorney/client interactions, police interactions (including Miranda Warning and booking), DV/SA, TRO/RO, divorce, parenting conference, Bankruptcy, traffic court, small claims court, family court (TPR), competency hearings, Immigration court, evictions, guardianships, mediations, etc. The course describes and demonstrates the construct of the various legal settings and introduces many documents that are associated with these legal settings.

Course objectives (learning outcomes):

Upon successful completion of the course, students will:

1. Identify aspects of various legal settings
2. Distinguish various legal settings and describe the basic steps that occur in each setting
3. Demonstrate an awareness of various legal documents and in what settings the documents may appear
4. Identify the complexities of different legal settings and adjustments that need to be addressed to provide the most accurate interpretation possible
5. Increase their ability to apply the complex meaning and concepts of the Miranda Warning to more accurate interpretation
6. Describe practical application of how interpreters work in the various settings
7. Continue reviewing, understanding and interpreting legal vocabulary; studying a list of topic related legal terms to analyze, build and integrate into their ability to work within a legal context.
8. Evaluate and employ strategies for interpreting idiomatic phrases found in legal settings.

7. Capstone

Putting it all together. This course will provide a comprehensive simulation for students to apply the knowledge, skills, and abilities learned in the program. Students will experience being contacted by a requestor for interpreting services, taking the necessary steps to gather information for them to provide professional quality services. They will be responsible for contacting the appropriate people to obtain what is needed for preparation for the case, to set up meetings, utilizing appropriate legal language and vocabulary. Students will demonstrate how they apply their Code of Ethics throughout their work. They will need to request, discuss and establish the necessary teams needed for the requested case, apply learned knowledge of interpreter roles and determine which role they will be taking in a mock trial experience. Students will then go through a mock trial experience where they will be graded as part of their final exam. A written final exam will also be included in the capstone.

Course objectives (learning outcomes):

Upon successful completion of the course, students will:

1. Demonstrate how to properly prepare for an interpreting assignment; knowing how to read and understand a case file and request appropriate documents for preparation
2. Integrate legal vocabulary in the process of the simulated mock hearings and trial
3. Exhibit how to work in various team combinations when working in legal settings
4. Engage in higher level and critical thinking dialog with colleagues regarding team interpreting when working with team members with the same language pair
5. Engage in higher level and critical thinking dialog with colleagues regarding team interpreting when working in a case that involves both spoken language and sign language interpreters
6. Make cultural adjustments affecting the interpreting process
7. Articulate appropriate needs for accurate interpretations, correcting errors, etc
8. Articulate the WI Code of Ethics when needed
9. Demonstrate learned knowledge and understanding of objections
10. Utilize strategies for managing communication in legal settings
11. Interact with legal personnel on a professional level employing appropriate legal language and terminology
12. Demonstrate knowledge, skills and ability to accurately interpreter in legal environments incorporating an ability of understanding about how lawyers think and prepare for a case.
13. Demonstrate knowledge, skills and ability to understand and accurately interpreter lines of questioning
14. Demonstrate a clear understanding and working knowledge of interpreter roles and conflicts
15. Demonstrate an understanding of criminal and civil procedures
16. Recognize various legal environments and procedures
17. Demonstrate knowledge of adult legal settings and legal settings involving minors