



Executive Secretary and Administrative Assistants

Course Overview: Encompass entry level, technical, and professional careers related to the design, development and support of hardware, software, multimedia, and systems integration services.

Career Goal (O*NET Code): (43-6011) - Secretaries and administrative assistants perform routine clerical and organizational tasks. They organize files, draft messages, schedule appointments, and support other staff.

Student Name: _____
Grade: _____
School: _____

SUGGESTED COURSEWORK

EXTENDED LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Middle School	8th	HS Courses:	(Local districts may list high school credit courses here)		<p>Curricular Experiences***: Business Professionals of America Future Business Leaders of America SkillsUSA Technology Student Association</p> <p>Career Learning Experiences: Apprenticeship Career Preparation Internship Job Shadowing</p>	<p>Extracurricular Experiences: Academic Decathlon Computer Tutor Language Immersion Programs School Newspaper Student Council UIL Academic Competitions Yearbook</p> <p>Service Learning Experiences: Boy Scouts of America Campus Service Organizations Community Service Volunteer Girl Scouts of the USA Peer Mentoring / Peer Tutoring</p>		
High School	9th	Courses*:	English I Algebra I or Geometry Biology	World Geography Foreign Language I Physical Education or Athletics			<p>COLLEGE CREDIT OPPORTUNITIES -- High School Students should take Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), dual credit, Advanced Technical Credit (ATC), or locally articulated courses (Tech Prep), if possible. List those courses that count for college credit on your campus.</p>	
		Career-Related Electives:	Principles of Information Technology					
	10th	Courses:	English II Geometry or Algebra II Chemistry	World History Foreign Language II Elective				
		Career-Related Electives:	Digital & Interactive Multimedia					
	11th	Core Courses:	English III Algebra II or Pre-Calculus Physics	United States History Foreign Language III ** Professional Communications or Speech				
		Career-Related Electives:	Web Technologies					
12th	Core Courses:	English IV Pre-Calculus or Calculus 4th Science	Government/Economics Elective Elective					
	Career-Related Electives:	Research in IT Solutions						
<p>How to Become an Executive Secretary or Administrative Assistant High school graduates can get basic office, computer, and English grammar skills in various ways: through high school vocational education programs, vocational-technical schools, or community colleges. Though not required, certification can demonstrate competency to employers.</p>							<p>Carrer Options (Sample of reported job titles)</p>	<p>Professional Associations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Association of Executive and Administrative • International Association of Administrative Professionals • Legal Secretaries International Inc • NALS • International Virtual Assistants Association
Postsecondary		<p>Texas Southmost College</p>	<p>South Texas College</p>	<p>Texas State Technical College</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative Assistant • Executive Assistant • Executive Secretary • Administrative Secretary • Office Manager • Administrative Coordinator • Administrative Aide • Administrative Associate • Executive Administrative Assistant • Secretary 			
		Administrative Management (CERT) Business Information Systems Technology (CERT) Office Management (CERT) Business Information Systems Technology (AAS) Business Management and Technology (AAS)	Office Specialist (CERT) Management (CERT) Office Management (AAS)	Business Management Technology (CERT) Business Management Technology (AAS)				
		<p>The University of Texas at Brownsville</p>	<p>The University of Texas - Pan American</p>					

* Students must meet local & state high school graduation requirements. ** Required course for the Distinguished Graduation Plan (in addition to other measures).
 *** Based on campus availability. Students may select other elective courses for personal enrichment purposes.

This plan of study serves as a guide, along with other career planning materials, for pursuing a career path and is based on the most recent information as of 2009. All plans meet high school graduation requirements as well as college entrance requirements.



Executive Secretaries and Administrative Assistants

TEA Industry Cluster	Computer/IT
SOC Code	43-6011
Identified by	TIP Strategies; Tech Prep Occupations
Projected Growth (2018)	17 %
BISD Magnet School Available	No

Source: Demand Occupations by Cluster, updated June 27, 2012

Description

What Executive Secretaries and Administrative Assistants Do

Secretaries and administrative assistants perform routine clerical and organizational tasks. They organize files, draft messages, schedule appointments, and support other staff.

Duties

Secretaries and administrative assistants typically do the following:

- Maintain paper and electronic filing systems for records and messages
- Route and distribute incoming mail and email
- Answer routine letters and email
- Reply and attach files to incoming messages
- Correct spelling and grammar to ensure accuracy
- Operate fax machines, videoconferencing and phone systems, and other office equipment
- Use computers for spreadsheet, word processing, database management, and other applications
- Complete forms in accordance with company procedures

Secretaries and administrative assistants perform a variety of clerical and organizational tasks that are necessary to run an organization efficiently. They use computer software to create spreadsheets, compose messages, manage databases, and produce presentations, reports, and documents. They also may negotiate with vendors, buy supplies, manage stockrooms or corporate libraries, and get data from various sources. Specific job duties vary by experience, job title, and specialty.

The following are types of secretaries and administrative assistants:

Executive secretaries and executive administrative assistants provide high-level administrative support for an office and for top executives of an organization. They often handle more complex responsibilities, such as reviewing incoming documents, conducting research, preparing reports, and arranging meetings. They may supervise clerical staff.

Legal secretaries do specialized work requiring knowledge of legal terminology and procedures. Legal secretaries prepare messages and legal papers, such as summonses, complaints, motions, responses, and subpoenas under the supervision of an attorney or a paralegal. They also may review legal journals and help with legal research—for example, by verifying quotes and citations in legal briefs.

Medical secretaries transcribe dictation, prepare messages, and help physicians or medical scientists with reports, speeches, articles, and conference proceedings. They also take simple medical histories, arrange for patients to be hospitalized, and order supplies. Medical secretaries need to be familiar with medical terminology, insurance rules, billing practices, medical records, and hospital or laboratory procedures.

Secretaries and administrative assistants, except legal, medical, and executive is the largest subcategory of secretaries and administrative assistants. They handle an office's administrative activities in almost every sector of the economy, including schools, government agencies, and private corporations. Secretaries in schools are often responsible for handling most of the communications among parents, the community, teachers, and school administrators. They schedule appointments, keep track of students' records, and handle matters that do not require the principal's attention.

Virtual assistants work from a home office. They use the Internet, email, and fax machines to communicate with clients. Although their assignments often vary from short term to long term, their typical duties are similar to those of other secretaries and administrative assistants. Working from a remote location allows virtual assistants to support multiple clients in different industries at the same time.

Training Opportunities Linked to Those Jobs

(Degree Types and Colleges/Universities)

How to Become an Executive Secretary or Administrative Assistant

High school graduates who have basic office and computer skills usually qualify for entry-level secretarial and administrative assistant positions.

Education and Training

High school graduates can get basic office, computer, and English grammar skills in various ways: through high school vocational education programs, vocational–technical schools, or community colleges. Many temporary placement agencies also provide formal training in computer and office skills.

Employers of more specialized positions, including medical and legal secretaries, often require applicants to have some knowledge of industry-specific terminology and practices. Community colleges and vocational-technical schools usually offer instruction in these areas.

Certification

Though not required, certification can demonstrate competency to employers. Legal secretaries have a few certification options. For example, those with 1 year of experience in the legal field, or who have concluded an approved training course and who want to be certified as a legal support professional, can acquire the Accredited Legal Secretary (ALS) designation through a testing process administered by [NALS](#). NALS offers two additional designations: Professional Legal Secretary (PLS), considered an advanced certification for legal support professionals, and a designation for proficiency as a paralegal.

[Legal Secretaries International](#) confers the Certified Legal Secretary Specialist (CLSS) designation in areas such as intellectual property, criminal law, civil litigation, probate, and business law to those who have 5 years of legal experience and pass an examination. In some instances, certain requirements may be waived.

Advancement

Secretaries and administrative assistants generally advance through promotion to other administrative positions with more responsibilities. Qualified administrative assistants who broaden their knowledge of a company's operations and enhance their skills may be promoted to senior or executive secretary or administrative assistant, clerical supervisor, or office manager. With additional training, many legal secretaries become paralegals. For more information, see the

profile on [paralegals and legal assistants](#). Once hired, most secretaries and administrative assistants tend to get more advanced skills through on-the-job instruction.

Important Qualities

Computer skills. Secretaries and administrative assistants use computers for email, word processing, spreadsheets, and database management. Therefore, having good computer skills is very important.

Interpersonal skills. Secretaries and administrative assistants work with many different individuals each day. Being pleasant and attentive contributes to a positive work environment and client experience.

Organizational skills. Whether filing papers or filling out forms, secretaries and administrative assistants must make sure that files, folders, and schedules are in proper order so an office can run efficiently.

Writing skills. Secretaries frequently write memos and email when communicating with managers, employees, and customers. Therefore, they must have good grammar, ensure accuracy, and maintain a professional tone.

Texas Southmost College	South Texas College	Texas State Technical College	The University of Texas at Brownsville	The University of Texas - Pan American
Administrative Management (CERT)	Office Specialist (CERT)	Business Management Technology (CERT)		
Business Information Systems Technology (CERT)	Management (CERT)	Business Management Technology (AAS)		
Office Management (CERT)	Office Management (AAS)			
Business Information Systems Technology (AAS)				
Business Management and Technology (AAS)				

Local Employers

Abundant Life Assembly of God	Harlingen	Incarnate Word Academy	Brownsville
American Engineering Svc	Harlingen	Rike-Ogden-Figueroa Architects	Harlingen
Besteiro Middle School	Brownsville	St Mary's Catholic Church	Santa Rosa
Cameron Works Workforce Ctr	Brownsville	Texas Southmost College	Brownsville
First National Bank	Brownsville	Vasquez Surveying	Brownsville

Career Options

(Specific Job Types)

- Administrative Assistant
- Executive Assistant
- Executive Secretary
- Administrative Secretary
- Office Manager
- Administrative Coordinator
- Administrative Aide
- Administrative Associate
- Executive Administrative Assistant
- Secretary

Salary Ranges

Wages for Executive Secretaries and Executive Administrative Assistants

Location	Pay Period	2011				
		10%	25%	Median	75%	90%
United States	Hourly	\$14.58	\$17.56	\$21.91	\$27.74	\$34.14
	Yearly	\$30,300	\$36,500	\$45,600	\$57,700	\$71,000
Texas	Hourly	\$14.66	\$17.71	\$21.83	\$27.16	\$32.93
	Yearly	\$30,500	\$36,800	\$45,400	\$56,500	\$68,500
Brownsville-Harlingen, TX MSA	Hourly	\$11.99	\$14.56	\$18.15	\$22.90	\$29.53
	Yearly	\$24,900	\$30,300	\$37,800	\$47,600	\$61,400
McAllen-Edinburg-Mission, TX MSA	Hourly	\$13.29	\$15.89	\$19.37	\$23.30	\$28.06
	Yearly	\$27,600	\$33,100	\$40,300	\$48,500	\$58,400

Professional Associations linked to the Careers

For more information on careers in secretarial and administrative work, visit

[Association of Executive and Administrative Professionals](#)

[International Association of Administrative Professionals](#)

For more information on legal secretaries and administrative assistants, visit

[Legal Secretaries International Inc](#)

[NALS](#)

For more information on virtual assistants, visit

[International Virtual Assistants Association](#)

Sources

The information provided in this document was collected from the following sources:

- Occupational Outlook Handbook (<http://www.bls.gov/ooh/>)
- O*NET OnLine (<http://www.onetonline.org/>)
- Texas CARES (<http://www.texascaresonline.com/>)
- CareerOneStop (<http://www.careeronestop.org/>)