SYLLLABUS

**COURSE DESCRIPTION.** This course will introduce you to the fundamental case law and philosophy of Juvenile Law, including the laws governing Delinquent Acts, Abuse and Neglect, Youthful Offender and Transfer/Waiver cases, and Status Offense cases. We will read and discuss the leading United States Supreme Court and Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court cases, and you will have the unique opportunity to see actual cases firsthand during visits to the Boston Juvenile Court. In addition, we will visit two locked juvenile facilities.

The course is taught by Roderick Ireland, former Chief Justice of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court, who was a juvenile court judge for thirteen years at the beginning of his career. Judge Ireland is the author of *Massachusetts Juvenile Law*, a leading treatise on the subject.

**TEXT.** Our text this semester is a compilation of leading cases, articles, and statutes that will be supplemented during the quarter with other materials distributed in class. The text materials are available from the University’s Reprographics Department, located in 11 Ell Hall.

**REFERENCE AND RESOURCE MATERIALS.** Though we will not be using a text book, there are several first rate books that you may wish to consult for reference or resource assistance. I recommend the following: (1) *Massachusetts Juvenile Law*, by Roderick L. Ireland, Volumes 44 and 44A of the Massachusetts Practice Series, West Publishing, 2006; (2) *Children and the Law in a Nutshell*, by Sarah Ramsey and Douglas Abrams, West Group Publishing, 2001; and (3) *Cases on Children in the Legal System*, by Wadlington, Whitebread and Davis, Foundation Press, 1983.

**HANDOUTS.** Additional materials will be distributed in class from time to time on cases, statutes, pleadings, legislation, news articles, etc.

**FORMAT.** Class will include lectures, court attendance, role play, video tape and slide presentations, class discussion, a special guest speaker, and a field trip to two locked juvenile facilities.

**CLASS ATTENDANCE.** Regular attendance is expected. Lectures will almost certainly include material not covered in the assigned readings. *(See section on QUIZZES, below.)*

**COURT ATTENDANCE AND ORAL REPORT.** An important component of this course is your attendance at court. Court attendance provides a unique opportunity for you to observe real life proceedings in juvenile court sessions that are customarily closed to the public. I have arranged special access for you, and your court visits will provide the experiential foundation upon which my lectures and your learning will be based. These visits will maximize and enhance your knowledge by bringing theory to life. They are scheduled to take place at the beginning of the semester and will count as class sessions. *(See attached SCHEDULE.)*
Here is how it will work: You must go to the Boston Juvenile Court on three (3) different days within a three week period that I will specify, and observe at least three court sessions with different judges at each visit. At the conclusion of your visits you will give an oral report to the entire class and submit a written summary of your observations per my instructions. (See GUIDELINE FOR COURT OBSERVATION.) ► Failure to submit your memorandum or to give your oral report as scheduled will result in a failing grade for the assignment.

The best hours to attend court are between 10 A.M. and 4:00 P.M. (weekdays), but court is open from 9:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M. for those of you who have the time and/or inclination. The Boston Juvenile Court is located in the Edward W. Brooke Courthouse, 24 New Chardon Street, Boston.

**Important Note:** Because court attendance is such an essential element of this course, and because you will be asked questions on your final examination about what you personally observed and concluded about the Juvenile Court, you should not take this course if you are unable to attend court because of schedule conflicts or for any other reason.

**RESEARCH PAPERS AND ORAL PRESENTATIONS.** You will be required to write a research paper on a topic related to Juvenile Law that I have approved in advance, and also give a 15-20 minute oral presentation on your research topic at the end of the semester. The paper must be at least twenty pages in length and should be based on scholarly research rather than just your opinion on the subject. Note that I do not allow the same topic to be used by more than one student, so the sooner you claim your topic, the better. **Both the paper and oral presentation are due in the last two classes, depending on when you claim your research topic.** The oral presentations will be scheduled in the reverse order of claiming your topics. In other words, the first student to claim a topic will be the last student to present, and the last student to claim a topic will be the first person to give their presentation.

**QUIZZES.** Quizzes will be given throughout the semester on an unannounced basis. They will be based on the assigned readings or class lectures, or both. **A zero will be entered for any missed quiz.** No make-ups will be allowed except for documented medical reasons.

**FINAL GRADE.** Your final grade will be based on your quizzes, your oral report on your court observations, your written memorandum on your court observations, your research paper, and your oral presentation on your research paper. Each will be worth one fifth of your grade. Also, final grades may be affected up to one full grade, up or down, based on your class participation.

**OFFICE HOURS.** I will be available thirty minutes before each class and after class, or by appointment at other mutually convenient times. My office is located in 401D Churchill Hall; my office phone is (617) 373-3304; and my e-mail is r.ireland@neu.edu. I welcome you to contact me.