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 Distinguished Professor Roderick Ireland, former Chief Justice of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court, who was a juvenile court judge for thirteen years and 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 on Blackboard.

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.

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. Both assignments will be graded on a pass/fail basis.** (See Guideline for Court Observation.)

Note that failure to submit your memorandum on time 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 and the field trip are both important and essential elements of this course you should not take this course if you are unable to attend because of schedule conflicts or for any other reason.

**FIELD TRIP TO TWO DYS LOCKED FACILITIES.** We will visit two locked juvenile facilities on a Saturday morning. We will travel by bus, departing from Ruggles Circle at 9 A.M. and returning around 1 P.M. This will be considered a regularly scheduled class, and you will be required to write a memorandum about your observations and experiences.

**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 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 on December 2nd.** 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.

**FINAL GRADE.** Your final grade will be based on your written memorandum on your court observations, your oral presentation on your court observations, and your memorandum on our field trip to the two locked facilities, all of which will be graded on a pass/fail basis; and your research paper, and oral presentation on your research paper, which will receive letter grades. 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 your calls.