

# JUVENILE JUSTICE

Antonin Scalia Law School at George Mason University

Spring 2025

Professor Erin Meyers

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*Please read the syllabus carefully. Note that it is subject to change during the semester.*

## COURSE INFORMATION

Meeting Time: Tuesdays, 1:50-3:50 PM

Casebook: [Feld & Moriearty](#), Cases and Materials on Juvenile Justice Administration (6th ed)

## OFFICE HOURS

Location: 440C (inside the Law & Economics Center suite)

Open, In-Person Office Hours: TBA

Virtual Office Hours: I'm always happy to meet virtually. Email me if you would like to schedule a meeting outside of office hours.

## GRADING

Your grade in the class will be determined by the final exam, which will be on **May 6**. I will provide more details about the exam as the semester progresses. I may raise or lower your grade by 1/3 of a letter grade (e.g., from B+ to A-) based on class preparedness and participation (quality, rather than quantity, will determine this).

## COURSE OVERVIEW

This course provides a survey of the US juvenile justice system. Juvenile justice refers to the state's treatment of minors who are accused of criminal activity or violating other social norms. We will discuss the system's historical development, its evolving goals and policy, and related reform efforts. In examining the system, the course will contain elements of criminal law and procedure, education law, mental health law, and family law, among other areas.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Identify the major eras of juvenile justice
- Understand and apply the various substantive legal principles relevant to juvenile justice
- Respond to and provide your own informed critiques of juvenile justice law and policy

## CLASSROOM LOGISTICS AND RULES

Class Structure: The course will involve some lecturing but will be primarily Socratic- and discussion-based. Please ensure you come to class prepared to participate and note the potential impact of participation on your grade.

Attendance: To the extent possible, please email me in advance regarding any absences. Per [school policy](#), you will be ineligible to receive credit for the course if you miss more than 20% of class sessions (in our case, more than 5 classes). You must be present for at least 75% of a class session to be counted as present.

Timeliness: Please do your best to be on time for class. If you are consistently late, I reserve the right to not allow you to enter the classroom after class has started.

Breaks: We will take a 5-to-10-minute break during each class session.

Computers: You are welcome to use your computer in class for note-taking purposes or to access course materials, but not for anything else.

Respect: I expect everyone to contribute to a welcoming and respectful learning environment.

## ADDITIONAL SCHOOL POLICIES AND RESOURCES

- I expect every student to adhere to the [Student Honor Code](#).
- Please be aware of the [Academic Regulations](#).
- University Life provides student support resources such as:
  - [Counseling and Psychological Services](#)
  - [Student Health Services](#)
  - [Student Support and Advocacy Center](#)

## SCHEDULE

Note: I will announce the readings for the second half of the semester before spring break. You can expect them to be similar in length to those in the first half of the semester.

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading</b>
1	1/21	Introduction	Syllabus 1-40; 121-129
2	1/28	Comparison with Criminal Law	51-70; 81-103; 109-121
3	2/4	Fourth Amendment	159-181; 262-270
4	2/11	Fourth Amendment in Schools	184-231
5	2/18	Drug Detection in Schools	231-281
6	2/25	Fifth Amendment	270-295; 299-309; 318-327; 334-338; 342-347
7	3/4	Preliminary Screening	359-416
N/A	3/11	No Class – Spring Break!	N/A
8	3/18	Pretrial Detention	TBA
9	3/25	Trial Rights	TBA
10	4/1	Waiver	TBA
11	4/8	Eighth Amendment	TBA
12	4/15	Dispositions	TBA
13	4/22	Treatment vs. Punishment	TBA