

**WESTERN STATE COLLEGE OF LAW  
SPRING 2025  
JUVENILE LAW**

SECTION: **LAW-447**  
TIME: 6:30-9:20 p.m. Thursdays  
PROFESSOR: Rich Pfeiffer  
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**RECOMMENDED TEXT BOOKS**

Child Welfare Law and Practice (The Red Book 4th Edition)  
Seiser & Kumli on Juvenile Courts Practice and Procedure (available via  
Lexis Nexis)

**ADDITIONAL READING MATERIAL**

From time to time, you may be asked to read cases or articles chosen to  
supplement the required textbook.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

It is intended that this class not only present juvenile law issues, but in  
addressing those issues together as a class, it will improve legal writing,  
research, and most importantly -- teamwork. Almost all successful  
attorneys build relationships with other attorneys that improves the quality  
of their work, and actually makes practicing law easier.

Your professors will do their best to provide each student with as much  
assistance as is requested. The course is designed to not only teach  
juvenile law, but to also learn how to actually practice in court. While this  
subject is not tested in the Bar exam, this course is intended to assist in  
passing the Bar exam by giving feedback into a writing style that is similar  
to writing essays for the Bar exam, and giving tips on how to successfully

take the Bar. The final writing assignment is good training for the performance portion of the Bar exam. Guest speakers will likely be resources in future years should you decide to practice juvenile law. Practicing juvenile law presents opportunities to change lives forever. Those lives include children, parents, relatives, foster parents, and those who may want to adopt children. Currently, there is an extreme shortage of juvenile law attorneys at both the trial and appellate courts. This class will qualify you to competently practice juvenile law.

Juvenile Law is a one-semester, three unit course that is taught by a practicing juvenile law attorney and juvenile court judge. Other practicing juvenile law attorneys will be guest speakers. The course will deal with juvenile criminal law and child dependency law. The course is aimed at being able to competently practice juvenile law when you enter the legal profession. The course will consist of understanding the different stages of a juvenile case, how to draft motions, and writing writ petitions and appeals. This process will include legal research, legal writing, and some trial advocacy. The course will address representing children, parents, social service agencies, relatives, and foster parents, and how their different roles are addressed in the legal system. Writing assignments will be useful as samples in obtaining juvenile law employment opportunities. Completing this course will qualify students to competently practice juvenile law.

### **PARTICIPATION, PROFESSIONALISM, & PREPARATION**

#### **Participation & Professionalism (P&P)**

Success in law school involves an active learning environment. For volunteer participation, quality is valued over quantity, and all views are welcome. 40% of your final course grade will be based on the quality and quantity of your contributions to class discussions, attendance, punctuality, conduct during class time, a presentation of the juvenile law topic you have chosen for your paper, and overall professionalism.

### **RECORDING CLASSES**

You may not record this class. Students in violation of these policies may be referred to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.

## **OUTSIDE PREPARATION**

You should anticipate that, on average, preparing for class (including researching for and writing your paper) will take you a minimum of two hours for every one hour of class time. To restate with specificity and at risk of redundancy: because Juvenile Law is a three-unit class, you should estimate your preparation for class to require six (6) or more hours outside of class to complete for each class session.

## **OFFICE HOURS**

We do not have offices on campus. However, we will meet with students before or after class as can be arranged in advance. We can schedule meetings (in person, telephonically, or by zoom).

## **EXAMINATIONS AND GRADING**

Written assignments (motions and a child dependency writ/appeal) will make up 60% of the total grade. The writ/appellate assignment will include oral argument in class. In-class participation (that includes quizzes) will count for 40% of the final grade. Quizzes will be based on the weekly reading assignments. There will be no mid-term exam or final examination.

## **FORMAT REQUIREMENTS FOR ASSIGNMENTS**

- (1) Assignments must be typewritten in black ink on white 8 ½ x 11 inch paper.
- (2) Text must be in “Times New Roman,” 13-point font, including footnotes.
- (3) Writ/Appellate assignments will have margins that are one-inch top and bottom, and one and a half inch right and left side margins.
- (4) Motions will be written on Pleading Paper, and have margins that are one-inch top, bottom, right and left side margins, and have a footer on each page.
- (5) Each page shall be numbered, in the center of the bottom of the page, starting with the cover page.
- (6) Text must be left-justified.
- (7) Print shall be on only one side of the paper.
- (8) All papers shall be bound with a staple in the upper-left hand corner.

- (9) In the event an assignment that is pre-approved to be submitted by email, the assignment must be in a pdf format and the assignment shall be bookmarked.

*(The reason for this format is that this course is intended to prepare students for representing clients in court proceedings and these are the formats used in the juvenile and appellate courts. Professor Pfeiffer is willing to assist students in learning these formats. The final writ/appellate assignment will be useful as a writing sample to gain employment upon graduation.)*

### **LATE ASSIGNMENTS**

As a professional, you are responsible for handing in all assignments on time. Courts do not accept late papers. Late assignments will not be accepted. If an **unforeseen emergency** occurs, contact your professors as soon as possible. Traffic, computer problems, or workload are not emergencies. Your professors will evaluate if an unforeseeable event is an actual unforeseeable emergency. If permitted to turn in a late assignment, there will be a 20% reduction in grade. If an in-class participation event is missed (moot court argument, etc.), that event cannot be made up. If an in-class participation is missed due to an actual unforeseen emergency, 80% of the grade can be made up by the professors giving an additional assignment.

### **ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENT**

Western State College of Law has a written policy that requires students attend all classes. Students must attend eighty-five (85%) percent of all scheduled classes, including the drop-add period. That translates into only being able to miss two full classes. More than two missed classes will result in failing the course and receiving a grade of 0.0 (on a 4.0 scale). Arriving late for class will result in missing ½ of the class. Arriving later than half of the three-hour class will result in missing the entire class. The attendance policy is published in the Student Handbook. Students must sign in for each class and sign-in sheets will be circulated at the start of each class.

### **DISABILITY SERVICES STATEMENT**

Western State College of Law provides accommodations to qualified

students with disabilities. The Disabilities Services Office assists qualified students with disabilities in acquiring reasonable and appropriate accommodations and in supporting equal access to services, programs, and activities at Western State College of Law.

To seek reasonable accommodations, a student must contact Senior Assistant Dean Donna Espinoza, Student Services Director and Disabilities Services Coordinator, whose office is in the Student Services Suite #111. Dean Espinoza's phone number and email address are: (714) 459-1117; [despinoza@wsulaw.edu](mailto:despinoza@wsulaw.edu). When seeking accommodations, a student should notify Dean Espinoza of her or his specific limitations and, if known, her or his specific requested accommodations. Students who seek accommodations will be asked to supply medical documentation of the need for accommodation. Classroom accommodations are not retroactive but are effective only upon the student sharing approved accommodations with the instructor or professor. Therefore, students are encouraged to request accommodations as early as feasible with Dean Espinoza to allow for time to gather necessary documentation. If you have a concern or complaint in this regard, please notify Dean Marisa Cianciarulo at [mcianciarulo@wsulaw.edu](mailto:mcianciarulo@wsulaw.edu) or (714) 459-1168. Complaints will be handled in accordance with the College of Law's "Policy against Discrimination and Harassment."

### **WESTERN STATE COLLEGE OF LAW PROGRAMMATIC LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Western State College of Law's curriculum is designed so that every student achieves a level of competency prior to graduation in each of the eight Programmatic Learning Outcomes listed below:

#### **(1) Doctrinal Knowledge**

Students will demonstrate knowledge of substantive and procedural law in the core curriculum subjects, including Contracts, Criminal Law, Criminal Procedure, Torts, Real Property, Business Associations, Evidence, Civil Procedure, Constitutional Law, Estates, Community Property, Remedies, and Professional Responsibility.

#### **(2) Practice Skills**

Students will demonstrate the development of other law practice skills. Each student's chosen outcomes within this category will be varied based

on the student's particular interests, coursework and work experiences. They may include, but are not limited to, the following topics: oral presentation and advocacy; interviewing; counseling; client service and business development; negotiations, mediation, arbitration, or other alternate dispute resolution methods; advanced legal research and writing (excluding purely academic papers and the first four units earned in introductory first-year legal research and writing class); applied legal writing such as drafting contracts, pleadings, other legal instruments; law practice management or the use of technology in law practice; cultural competency; collaboration or project management; financial analysis, such as accounting, budgeting project management, and valuation; cost benefit analysis in administrative agencies; use of technology, data analyses, or predictive coding; business strategy and behavior; pre-trial preparation, fact investigation, such as discovery, e-discovery, motion practice, assessing evidence, or utilizing experts; trial practice; professional civility and applied ethics; a law clinic that includes a classroom component; or a legal externship that includes a classroom component.

### **(3) Legal Analysis**

Students will demonstrate the ability to identify the factual and legal issues implicated by a fact pattern and to appropriately use cases (including identifying the salient features of an appropriate precedent case, identifying legally significant similarities or differences between the precedent case and a fact pattern and explaining why those are legally significant) and rules (including the ability to connect legally significant facts in a fact pattern to the rule) to predict how a court would decide the issue. Students will also demonstrate the ability to identify and evaluate the public policies of a precedent case or rule and be able to evaluate how public policy can impact the application of a rule to the legal issue.

### **(4) Legal Research**

Students will demonstrate the ability to locate relevant legal authority using a variety of book and electronic resources, and to properly cite to such legal authority.

### **(5) Communication**

Students will demonstrate the ability to communicate both orally and in writing in a manner appropriate to a particular task to effectively convey the author or speaker's ideas. This includes audience sensitivity in written and oral communication (the ability to adopt a tone, style and level of detail

appropriate to the needs, knowledge and expertise of the audience); and written communication basic proficiency (the ability to use the conventions of grammar, spelling, punctuation, diction and usage appropriate to the task and sufficient to convey effectively the author's ideas).

**(6) Advocacy of Legal Argument**

Students will demonstrate the ability, in both oral and written formats, to evaluate the legal, economic and social strengths and weaknesses of a case and use case and statutory authority as well as public policy to persuade others. Making policy-based arguments includes the ability to identify and evaluate the public policies of a precedent case or rule and their implications, and be able to assert such appropriate arguments to support a particular application or distinction of a precedent case to a legal controversy or a particular resolution of the application of a rule to the legal controversy.

**(7) Client Sensitivity and Cultural Competency**

Students will demonstrate an awareness of clients' needs and goals, including a sensitivity to clients' background and circumstances (including, but not limited to, socio-economic, gender, race, ethnicity, educational, disability and/or religious background(s)), the ability to make decisions that reflect an appropriate focus on those needs and goals, and awareness that cultural issues may affect the relevance of facts and application of the law. Cultural differences are an important factor in juvenile law cases.

**(8) Legal Ethics**

Students will demonstrate the ability to identify ethical issues in law practice contexts and make appropriate decisions to resolve such issues.

# **SYLLABUS**

## **CLASS SCHEDULE**

### **WEEK ONE: JANUARY 15, 2026**

Required Reading and Activities to be Completed Prior to Class:

Download and review the class syllabus and be prepared to ask any questions you may have regarding the course on the first day of class.

Be prepared to introduce yourself to the class. Introductions should include your name, your year in law school, anticipated practice areas as an attorney, legal experience, why you took this course and hope to get out of it, and anything interesting about yourself that you'd like to share with the class.

Read:

Seiser & Kumli California Juvenile Courts Practice and Procedure §§ 1.10, 1.11 (2025)

*Graham v. Florida* (2011) 560 U.S. 48

*Montgomery v. Louisiana* (2016) 136 S.Ct. 718

*People v. Franklin* (2016) 63 Cal.4th 261

*In re Palmer I* (2017) 13 Cal.App.5th 795

*In re Palmer II* (2018) 27 Cal.App.5th 120

Watch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wUa0bIqZ0XU>

### **CLASS AGENDA**

Introductions: (Professor and Students and describe career goals)

Course Overview: An overview of juvenile law that includes juvenile delinquency and dependency law.

Lecture:

Recent scientific advances in adolescent brain development and the relationships they play in juvenile criminal proceedings.



Youthful Offenders and *Franklin* Proceedings.

## **WEEK TWO: JANUARY 22, 2026**

Lecture:

Juvenile Delinquency: How juvenile criminal proceedings are held, the differences between juvenile and adult criminal proceedings, and when a juvenile can be tried as an adult.

Read:

California Welfare and Institutions Code:  
Sections 601, 602, 602.05, 702, 707

*J.N. v. Superior Court* (2018) 23 Cal.App.5th 706

*In re S.S.* (2023) 89 Cal.App.5th 1277

*In re Miguel R.* (2024) 100 Cal.App.5th 152

## **WEEK THREE: JANUARY 29, 2026**

Lecture:

Overview of Juvenile Dependency: Constitutional rights to Family Integrity; Parents and Children with Disabilities; and the Indian Child Welfare Act. The reunification services offered to parents and how those services impact a case.

Read:

Section II.A. of *Michael G. v. Superior Court* (2023) 14 Cal.5th 609, 623-26

*In re Dezi C.* (2024) 16 Cal.5th 1112

*In re N.R.* (2023) 15 Cal.5th 520

California Welfare and Institutions Code:

Sections 224.2, 300, 300.2, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 305.5, 305.6

## **WEEK FOUR: FEBRUARY 5, 2026**

Lecture:

Case Initiation, CPS investigation, the Child Dependency Petition, and Detention Hearing (includes removal standards).

Read:

*In re Cheryl H.* (1984) 153 Cal.App.3d 1098

*In re Jasmine G.* (2000) 82 Cal.App.4th 282

*In re Henry V.* (2004) 119 Cal.App.4th 522

California Welfare and Institutions Code:

Sections 305, 319, 361, 361.1, 361.2, 361.3

### **WEEK FIVE: FEBRUARY 12, 2026**

Lecture:

Jurisdiction/Disposition Hearing and the right to appeal.

Read:

*In re David M.* (2005) 134 Cal.App.4th 822

*Troxel v. Granville* (2000) S.Ct. 2054

*Kristine M. v. David P.* (2006) 135 Cal.App.4th 783

*In re Guardianship of Christian G.* (2011) 195 Cal.App.4th 581

California Welfare and Institutions Code: sections 300, 355

### **WEEK SIX: FEBRUARY 19, 2026**

Lecture:

Review Hearings, Standards, the right to appeal.

Read:

California Welfare and Institutions Code:

Sections 361.5, 366.21, 366.22

Read:

*In re Mark L.* (2001) 94 Cal.App.4th 573,

*In re Alvin R.* (2003) 108 Cal.App.4th 962

### **WEEK SEVEN: FEBRUARY 26, 2026**

Lecture:

Termination of Reunification Services/Writ

Read:

California Welfare and Institutions Code:  
Sections 366.21, subd. (g)(1); 366.22, subd. (a),

Read:

*Blanca P. v. Superior Court* (1996) 45 Cal.App.4th 1738  
*Jennifer A. v. Superior Court* (2004) 117 Cal.App.4th 1322  
*David B. v Superior Court*, (2004) 123 Cal. App. 4th 768

### **WEEK EIGHT: MARCH 5, 2026**

*Dependency Writ/Appellate Writing Assignment Given*  
***Students Will Have the Choice of Which Party (Child, Parent, County Counsel, Relative, or Foster Parent) They Wish to Represent in the Writ Assignment***

***Students Must Keep a Research Log Regarding the Writ Assignment***

Lecture:

Relative Placement, including Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children.

Read:

*In re K.B.* (2023) 97 Cal.App.5th 689  
*In re N.J.* (2024) 104 Cal.App.5th 96  
California Welfare and Institutions Code:  
sections 309, 361.3, 1400

**No class on March 12, 2026**

### **WEEK NINE: MARCH 19, 2026**

Lecture:

Termination of Parental Rights/Appeal  
Exceptions to Termination, including the Parental-Benefit Exception

Read:

*In re Caden C.* (2021) 11 Cal.5th 614  
*In re Autumn H.* (1994) 27 Cal.App.4th 567  
*In re Andrew M.* (2024) 102 Cal.App.5th 803

California Welfare and Institutions Code:  
Sections 366.26, 16508.1

**WEEK TEN: MARCH 26, 2026**

*Optional Outline or Draft of writ writing Assignment Due*

Lecture:  
Trial advocacy (includes in-class mock trial)

Read:  
Fact patterns will be provided in advance of class

**WEEK ELEVEN: APRIL 2, 2026**

Lecture:  
Appellate Advocacy (includes in-class mock trial)

Read:  
handout will be provided in advance of class

**WEEK TWELVE: APRIL 9, 2026**

*Make Arrangements to Meet With Professor Regarding Writ Outline For Critiques*

Lecture:  
Foster Parents Rights and Obligations.

Read:  
California Welfare and Institutions Code:  
Section 361.5

Family Code Sections:  
8816.5, 8700, 8714.5, 9205

**WEEK THIRTEEN: APRIL 16, 2026**

Writ Assignment Due

Lecture

Permanency Planning Hearing, Legal Permanency and Children's Interests that include Sibling Visitation. Non-Minor Dependent. Appellate Rights.

**WEEK FOURTEEN: APRIL 23, 2026**

Lecture:

Dependency cases/civil rights advocacy

Review and Course De-Brief