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## CD 610 Moral Development

Chris Kiesling

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ASBURY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
Department of Christian Education

**CD 610 Moral Development - (3 hours credit)**

*The course examines evidences touching the development of moral sense and judgment in relation to cognitive and biological growth, with special attention given to primary sources in Jean Piaget and Lawrence Kohlberg. Human development, conscience formation, and theological issues related to original sin, sinfulness, salvation, and nurture are brought to bear on the ministries essential to representing distinctive Christian values from one generation to the next.*

**INSTRUCTOR**

Chris Kiesling, B.G.St., M.Div., Ph.D.

Meeting Room: SH 408, T-R, 1:00-2:15

Office: FM 108

Phone: 858-2382 (If I am unavailable, you may access my voice mail at this number or contact the faculty secretary at 858-2200)

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Office Hours: Wednesday 9:30-11:00 or by appointment

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

The student showing competence in this course will be able to:

1. Examine the human sciences enterprise from a Wesleyan theological perspective including issues of epistemology, the naturalistic fallacy, and claims for "truth."
2. Discuss the interaction of biological, cognitive, affective, moral and faith components that contribute to development across the lifespan.
3. Articulate predominate moral developmental perspectives and consider their presuppositions and implications for moral development, religious education, and other dimensions of ministry.
4. Formulate questions and dialogue regarding the relationship of human development issues and the theological doctrines of creation, sin, the nature of human beings, redemption, and grace.
5. Distinguish between different conceptualizations of justice and relate these to Biblical revelation.
6. Identify probable gender differences in moral reasoning and their implications for ministry.
7. Reconstruct from their own experience personal transitions and movements through stages of development with a view toward embracing the whole of God's redemptive pattern.
8. Commit to ministry applications that are sensitive and responsive to the appropriate developmental level of the individuals in one's target population.
9. Understand suffering and pain as important mechanisms for transformation and articulate a theology that accounts for and comprehends their significance.

## TEXTBOOKS

James C. Wilhoit and John M. Dettoni. *Nurture that is Christian: Developmental Perspectives on Christian Education*. Wheaton: Victor Books, 1995.

Reading Packet for Moral Development (available at the bookstore, though it may be delayed beyond the first week of class).

James Fowler. *Faithful Change: The Personal and Public Challenges of Postmodern Life*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996.

Jean Piaget, *The Moral Judgment of the Child*. New York, Free Press, 1965.

E Stanley Jones, *The Christ of the Mount*.

Choose one from the following: (I recommend *The Great Divorce* for this class, but I am open to these other substitutions if they sound more appealing)

C.S. Lewis. *The Abolition of Man*

C.S. Lewis. *The Great Divorce*

Walter Wangerin. *The Orphean Passages*

(Available only in manuscript form from the bookstore)

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

### **Attendance and Participation**

It is expected that each student attend class regularly. Many topics will be addressed in class that are not included in the readings and that may be more difficult to attain outside of classroom experiences. Although no actual grading is associated with attendance, it can be influential in borderline grades and/or a plus or minus for any letter grade.

### **Formative and Summative Evaluations (300 possible points)**

This semester provides an opportunity for us to experiment with an approach to education known as mastery learning. Mastery Learning builds on the assumption that at least eighty percent of a class can reach a high level of mastery of course objectives if there is accurate, timely feedback and opportunity to correct and build upon what one currently knows. Thus, for each broad section of material that is covered, formative experiences will be designed that will help you assess how well you are appropriating the material. These formative evaluations will be turned in and checked, but will not be graded. Their purpose is both to help me know where readings and class presentations are not being made clear and to inform you of areas that you still need to focus on for the sake of gaining greater mastery. Summative evaluations for the class will come directly from these formative experiences and will function as second opportunities to master the knowledge base for this class and to demonstrate your ability to utilize this knowledge in real life contexts. The three summative evaluations will each be worth 100 points.

### **Book review (50 points possible)**

Write a 2-3 page reflection paper on the book you have chosen from the selected reading list. Include in the paper three specific responses to the material:

- A. Cite briefly the ideas, anecdotes, or individual changes that connected with your story, issues current in your life, and with topics addressed in this class.
- B. Report how reading this book through the lens of a moral development framework gave you new insights into the material and into understanding particular characters in the book.
- C. Flesh out the implications of this book and the commitments it provoked in you for your future ministry, your personal relationships, your spiritual journey, etc.

(Evaluation will consist primarily of how well the material was allowed to impact you, the moral development understandings you present, and how this book might inform ministry projections).

### **COURSE GRADE**

The combination of three assessment scores and the book review will be combined toward a final course grade determined on the following scale:

350 – 315	A
314 – 280	B
279 – 245	C
244 – 210	D
209 – 0	F

Please note the following description of grades (in italics) that have been decided on by the Asbury faculty. Following some of the description are rubrics I have added as an attempt to specify some of the distinctions I tend to make when grading the book review and (where applicable) summative evaluation questions.

*A = Exceptional work: surpassing, markedly outstanding achievement of course objectives*

Answers that would indicate such a cognitive grasp of the material that one could teach a seminar on the topic to a congregation; personal reflection that illuminates a concept under consideration or enables a new construct for self-understanding; creativity in the appropriation/presentation of a response that exhibits the capacity to utilize knowledge in a variety of contexts; additional research on a particular topic beyond the assignments for this course, etc.

*B = Good work: strong, significant achievement of course objectives*

Reflects a capacity to appropriate a moral development framework for understanding the issue presented, the narrative of one's own journey or for diagnosing a particular character's reasoning; reveals a thorough understanding of the assigned text and the capacity to transfer this knowledge to other domains of life and learning; processes material through theological reasoning apropos to graduate level understandings; wrestles with the implications of this material for ministry.

*C = Acceptable work: basic, essential achievement of course objectives*

All aspects of the assignment were adequately fulfilled.

*D = Marginal work: minimal or inadequate achievement of course objectives*

The texts for a given assignment were not referenced or were simply restated without any real reflection or attempt to construct knowledge for oneself. Application at a personal level was avoided, flat or misdirected; presuppositions in one's answer violated authorial intent, etc.

*F = Unacceptable work: failure to achieve course objectives*

Willful neglect, incapacity, or inexcusable difficulty in completing an assignment.

## Fall Agenda 2002

WEEK OF	TOPIC	READINGS
Sept 3	Introduction, course overview, integrating theology and social science	Wilhoit and Dettoni, Forward and CH 1, Reading Packet, Joy CH 1, Wilhoit and Dettoni, CH 16
Sept 10	Developmental Theory Piaget	Wilhoit and Dettoni, CH 2 Reading Packet, Lerner, Ch 8, pp.244 to 262
Sept 17	<b>Formative due on Sept 17</b> Piaget	Piaget, Section 1, pp. 13-108 Section 2, pp. 109-196
Sept 24	Piaget Sears video <b>Formative due on Sept 24</b>	Section 3, pp. 197-325 Wilhoit and Dettoni, CH 8
Oct 1	<b>Summative evaluation Oct 1</b> Kohlberg	Wilhoit and Dettoni, CH 3
Oct 8	Kohlberg	Reading Packet, Lerner on Kohlberg, pp.262-292 Joy, CH 2
Oct 15	<b>Formative due Oct 15</b> Les Miserables	Read from the selected reading list
Oct 22	Gilligan	Chapters in Reading Packet
Oct 29	<b>Summative evaluation Oct 29</b> Erikson and the Beatitudes	Wilhoit and Dettoni, CH 5 Wilhoit and Dettoni, CH 9 & 10
Nov 5	Fowler and Faith Development	Fowler, pp. 1-89
Nov 12	Fowler on shame	Fowler, pp. 90-144
Nov19	Wesley's faith journey	Reading Packet Joy, CH 11

	<b>***Book Review is due before reading week</b>	
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**READING WEEK IS NOVEMBER 26**

<b>Dec 3</b>	Implications for a postmodern world <b>Formative due Dec 3</b>	Wilhoit and Dettoni, CH 11 & 15 Fowler, pp. 145-236
<b>Dec 9 By noon</b>	<b>Summative Evaluation Due</b>	