

**RELS 5146 Religious Education and Personal Growth (宗教教育與個人成長)**

2025-26 First Term

Instructor: Dr. CHOW Wai Yin

Class Venue: ELB 403 (5 Dec Friday Class TBC)

Office: KKB Rm 306 (by appointment)

Class Time: Wed 7.00 – 9.30pm (\*5 Dec on Fri)

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## **1. Course Description**

This course will examine the contemporary theories and research in the field of developmental psychology, and consider their relevance to the field of Religious Education. Issues of cognitive, emotional, identity moral, faith and spiritual development will specifically be considered. Attention will also be given to the implications of developmental perspectives for prospective religious educators in understanding themselves, the persons with whom they work, and the structures that best promote whole person development.

本課程將會檢視發展心理學的當代理論及研究，思考其與宗教教育的相關性；特別細察智力、情緒、身份、倫理，信仰和心靈發展等範疇。課程亦特別關注如何應用發展心理學的視野，協助志願成為宗教教育工作者了解自己、同工，以及有利全人成長的結構。

## **2. Expected Learning Outcomes**

Upon completing the course, students should be able to:

- Critically understand key theorists and concepts in human development within the framework of developmental psychology such as moral, faith, spiritual development and etc.;
- increase awareness of the relationship of religion, to education and general well-being;
- self-examine the student's stage of personal and spiritual development, reflecting on the implications for her/his role as a religious educator;
- develop creative strategies for facilitating optimal development over the life-span by using religious resources;
- apply concepts in developmental psychology to specific educational contexts.

### 3. Learning Activities

Lecture	Interactive tutorial	Lab	Discussion of case	Field-trip	Projects	Web-based teaching	Other (Reflection Paper)
(hr)in /out class	(hr)in /out class	(hr)in /out class	(hr)in /out class	(hr)in /out class	(hr)in /out class	(hr)in /out class	(hr)in /out class
2 (M)	1 (M)		1		10 hrs (M)		10 hrs (M)
M,O, NA	M,O, NA	M,O, NA	M,O, NA	M,O, NA	M,O, NA	M,O, NA	M,O, NA

M: Mandatory activity in the course

O: Optional activity NA: Not applicable

**Teaching mode:** On site face to face

### 4. Course Syllabus

Class	Date	Topic
1	3/9	<p>Introduction to Whole Person Development and Religious Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overview of course aims and structure</li> <li>Introduction to F.B. Kelcourse's framework: Body, Mind, and Soul</li> <li>Discussion: Why integrate human development with religious education?</li> </ul> <p>Reading and Discussion:</p> <p>F.B. Kelcourse, <i>Human Development and Faith Life-Cycle Stages of Body, Mind, and Soul</i>, Chapter 1.</p>
2	10/9	<p>Cognitive Development and Religious Thinking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The development of religious cognition from childhood to adolescence</li> <li>How religious concepts evolve with cognitive maturity</li> </ul> <p>Discussion on implications for religious educators</p> <p>F.B. Kelcourse, <i>Human Development and Faith Life-Cycle Stages of Body, Mind, and Soul</i>, pp.37-40.</p> <p>Ronald Goldman, <i>Religious Thinking from Childhood to Adolescence</i>, Chapter 2.</p>
3	17/9	<p>Emotional Development and Religious Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Erikson's psychosocial stages: identity and crisis in youth</li> <li>Emotional growth and its impact on religious experience and education</li> </ul> <p>Exploring spiritual, moral, social, and cultural dimensions</p>

		<p>Erik Erikson, <i>Identity, Youth, and Crisis</i>, Part III.</p> <p>Ron Best, <i>Education for Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development</i>, Chapter 6.</p>
4	24/9	<p>Identity Development and the Sacred</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⑩ The construction of religious identity in social contexts</li> <li>⑩ Hans Mol's social-scientific theory of religion and identity formation</li> </ul> <p>Classroom dialogue: Identity challenges in religious education</p> <p>Hans Mol, <i>Identity and the Sacred : a Sketch for a New Social-Scientific Theory of Religion</i>, Chapter 8.</p>
5	1/10	Public Holiday - National Day of the People's Republic of China
6	8/10	<p>Moral Reasoning Development and Religious Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⑩ Stages of moral development and their relation to faith</li> <li>⑩ Role of religious education in fostering ethical reasoning</li> </ul> <p>Reflective exercises on moral dilemmas</p> <p>F.B. Kelcourse, <i>Human Development and Faith Life-Cycle Stages of Body, Mind, and Soul</i>, pp.40-45.</p> <p>Ron Best, <i>Education for Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development</i>, Chapter 5.</p>
7	15/10	<p>Faith Development and Religious Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⑩ James Fowler's Stages of Faith theory</li> <li>⑩ Psychological and spiritual dimensions of faith growth</li> </ul> <p>Application: Supporting faith development in diverse learners</p> <p>James Fowler, <i>Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning</i>, Part IV.</p> <p>F.B. Kelcourse, <i>Human Development and Faith Life-Cycle Stages of Body, Mind, and Soul</i>, pp.45-48.</p>
8	22/10	<p>Spiritual Development in Childhood and Adolescence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⑩ Defining spiritual development beyond religious affiliation</li> <li>⑩ Educational strategies to nurture spirituality</li> </ul> <p>Case studies and group discussion</p> <p>Eugene C. Roehlkepartain, <i>The Handbook of Spiritual Development in Childhood and Adolescence</i>, Chapter 15.</p>

		Ron Best, <i>Education for Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development</i> , Chapter 4.
9	29/10	Public Holiday - Chung Yeung Festival
10	5/11	Addressing Loss in Religious Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⑩ The role of religion in coping with loss and grief</li> <li>⑩ Pedagogical approaches to support students facing loss</li> </ul> <p>Reflective practice: Integrating loss into religious education</p> <p>F.B. Kelcourse, <i>Human Development and Faith Life-Cycle Stages of Body, Mind, and Soul</i>, Chapter 13.</p>
11	12/11	Death, Dying and Religious Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⑩ Religious perspectives on death and dying</li> <li>⑩ Teaching death with sensitivity and theological insight</li> </ul> <p>Discussion: Preparing learners for existential questions</p> <p>F.B. Kelcourse, <i>Human Development and Faith Life-Cycle Stages of Body, Mind, and Soul</i>, Chapter 14.</p> <p>Christopher M Moreman, <i>Teaching Death and Dying</i>, Part I.</p>
12	19/11	Synthesis and Application: Whole Person Development in Practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⑩ Integrating cognitive, emotional, moral, identity, faith, and spiritual development in religious education</li> <li>⑩ Designing educational interventions for whole-person growth</li> </ul> <p>Final reflections and course evaluation</p> <p>Ron Best, <i>Education for Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development</i>, Chapter 13 &amp; 15.</p>
13	26/11	Presentations # Group 1-4 (to be confirmed)
14	3/12	Presentations # Group 5-8 (to be confirmed)
15	5/12 (Fri)	Make Up Class: Paper Consultation - <b>Classroom Venue TBC</b>

### **Required Reading List:**

Alexander, Hanan A. *Reclaiming Goodness: Education and the Spiritual Quest*. Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2001.

Crain, William C. *Theories of Development: Concepts and Applications*. Sixth edition. London, [England]: Routledge, 2016 (e-book).

- \*Kelcourse, Felicity Brock. *Human Development and Faith Life-Cycle Stages of Body, Mind, and Soul*. St. Louis, Mo: Chalice Press, 2004. Santrock, John W. *Life-Span Development*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill 2015 (e-book).
- \*Best, Ron. *Education for Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development*. London: Continuum, 2000 (e-book).

## 5. Assessment and Expected Learning Outcomes

Learning Activities	Deadline	A	B	C	D	E
<b>Attendance, Class &amp; Tutorial Discussion (15%)</b> Students are required to participate in class and tutorial discussions. The central questions to be discussed can be centered around: “How one’s cognition, identity, morality or faith formed, and how are religious beliefs and practices related to these formations?” by various developmental psychological learnt in the classes. Students are also encouraged to critically integrate various developmental psychological concepts in religious education and counselling.		✓	✓		✓	✓
<b><u>Design Thinking and Group Presentation (40%)</u></b> 3-4 students in a group make a 25-mins presentation on human development and religious education. The students may choose from one of the following ages, e.g., children, youth, young adults, or older adults, <b>to observe and study</b> the study group’s developmental characteristics. Then, design an educational/counseling program for the study group to gain religious thinking, identity/moral/faith, or spiritual development through different aspects of religious resources such as religious texts, practices or rituals.	23 Oct – 26 Nov	✓	✓		✓	✓
<b><u>Reflection Paper (45%)</u></b> Based on the presentation materials, and the feedback from the classmates and the teacher, you are required to write a reflective and academic paper. <b>Length:</b> around 3500 words <b>Evaluation Criteria:</b> please see the marking rubrics attached behind. <b>Submission:</b> Papers should be submitted in soft copy via VeriGuide and Blackboard. Late submission will be penalized: 10 marks will be deduced for one day of late submission. Submission after 10 days will be given a zero mark.	8 Dec, 11.55pm	✓	✓		✓	✓

## 6. Assignment Grading

Please see the marking rubrics upload on Blackboard.

### **Grade A Paper:**

- The paper demonstrates *a thorough understanding* of the concepts and ideas being presented.
- The concepts *are clearly applied* and well-developed throughout the paper.
- The paper presents *an innovative project* that is relevant to the topic and demonstrates creativity and *originality*.
- The writing is clear, concise, and engaging, with proper grammar and syntax.

#### **Grade B Paper:**

- The paper demonstrates *a good understanding* of the concepts and ideas being presented.
- The concepts are applied well throughout the paper, but may not be as fully developed as in an A grade paper.
- The writing is clear and concise, with proper grammar and syntax.

#### **Grade C Paper:**

- The paper demonstrates *a basic understanding* of the concepts and ideas being presented, but may not demonstrate a full understanding of the material.
- The concepts may not be applied as clearly as in higher grade papers and *may require further explanation or elaboration*.
- The writing may be less clear and may contain errors in grammar and syntax.

### **7. Feedback for evaluation**

- End-of-term university course evaluation will be conducted in class.
- Students' comments and feedback on the course through e-mails or personal meeting with the instructor are always welcomed.

### **8. Facility for Posting Course Announcements**

- Related course materials are delivered via the platform **"BLACKBOARD"** (<http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/eLearning/>)

### **9. Academic honesty and plagiarism**

- Students must submit their papers in **soft copy via VeriGuide**. Relevant information on academic honesty and plagiarism can be allocated at: <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty>.
- When you use other writer's ideas or findings, you are advised to represent them in your own words. Simply copying of full sentences or parts of sentences from the source article is not allowed.

### **10. Use of AI tools: allowed with explicit acknowledgement and proper citation (Approach 3)**

- Students may use some AI tools in some class activities and assignments on the condition that they **make explicit acknowledgement** and **proper citations** of the input from AI tools.
- Acknowledging support from AI tools: Students are required to acknowledge all functional uses of a generative AI tool and **cite it when they paraphrase, quote, or incorporate into their own work any content** (whether it is text, image, data, or other format) that was created by it.

- **An example of acknowledgement**

*'I acknowledge the use of (name of AI tool – e.g. ChatGPT (<https://chat.openai.com/>) to (specify the support, e.g. plan my essay, generate some ideas for the content, ask for examples of data collection instruments, get the dates of historical events, etc.).*

- **An example of citation**

OpenAI. (2023). *ChatGPT* (Mar 20 version). <https://chat.openai.com/chat>

- **An example of including texts generated by an AI tool in work**

"The **following** text was generated by an AI tool / language model (ChatGPT):"

[Insert the **text** generated by ChatGPT here.]

- **An example of including texts generated by an AI tool and the prompts that were used to elicit the text from the AI tool**

"[The prompt], as generated by an AI language model (ChatGPT):"

[Insert the text generated by ChatGPT in response to the prompt.]

- Students are reminded to learn and use the AI tools responsibly and ethically and be aware of the limitations
- Students are reminded to clarify with the course teacher and obtain permission if necessary when in doubt.

## 11. Guideline on sharing lecture recordings

- The copyright of any lecture recordings shared in the course, whether they are produced by teachers, students, or peer note-takers, belongs to the University.
- Students should not share these recordings with others without obtaining prior written consent from the teacher(s).

## 12. References

### Religious Thinking

Goldman, R. *Religious Thinking from Childhood to Adolescence*. London : Routledge and K. Paul, 1964.

### Concept of Prayer

Long, D., Elkind, D., Spilka, B., "The Child's Conception of Prayer," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, April 1967, Vol.6 (1), pp.101-109.

### Religious Identity

Elkind, D. *All Grown Up and No Place to Go: Teenagers in Crisis*. Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1998.

### Faith

Fowler, J. *Stages of Faith*. San Francisco : Harper & Row, 1981.

### Theological Concepts

Nyhof, M A., Johnson, C. N., "Is God just a big person? Children's conceptions of God across cultures and religious traditions." *The British journal of developmental psychology*, March 2017, Vol.35(1), pp.60-75

### Moral Development

Kurt Gray, Jesse Graham, eds. *Atlas of Moral Psychology*. New York: The Guilford Press 2018

### Spiritual Development

Eugene C. Roehlkepartain, ed. *The Handbook of Spiritual Development in Childhood and Adolescence*. [electronic resource] London: SAGE, 2006.

### General

Bates, Dennis, Durka, Gloria, and Schweitzer, Friedrich. *Education, Religion, and Society: Essays in Honor of John M. Hull*. Oxon: Routledge, 2006.

Coles, Robert. *The Spiritual Life of Children*. Wilmington, MA: Houghton-Mifflin 1991.

E. Paulette Isaac (ed). *Expanding the Boundaries of Adult Religious Education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2012.

Fowler, James W. "Faith Development Theory and the Human Vocation." In *Becoming Adult, Becoming Christian: Adult Development and Christian Faith*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1984.

Kenyon, Gary. *Restorying Our Lives: Personal Growth through Autographical Reflection*. Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1997.

Martin, James Alfred Jr. *Beauty and Holiness: The Dialogue between Aesthetics and Religion*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1990.

Miller, John. *The Contemplative Practitioner: Meditation in Education and the Professions*. Westport Conn.: Bergin and Garvery, 1994.

Moore, Thomas. *The Care of the Soul: A Guide for Cultivating Depth and Sacredness in Everyday Life*. New York: Walker, 1992.

Palmer, P. *To Know as We are Known: Education as a Spiritual Journey*. San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1993.

Pieper, Josef. *A Brief Reader on the Virtues of the Human Heart*. Ignatius, 1991.

Ratcliff, Donald, ed. 2004. *Children's Spirituality: Christian Perspectives, Research, and Applications*. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books.

Ratcliff, Donald. E. *Experiencing God and Spiritual Growth with your Child*. Available online without charge at: <http://childspirituality.org/experience/>, 2006.

Thomas G. Plante (ed). *Religion, Spirituality, and Positive Psychology: Understanding the Psychological Fruits of Faith*. Calif.: Praeger, 2012.

Thomas Moore. *Soul Mates: Honouring the Mysteries of Love and Relationship*. N.Y. Harper Collins Publisher, 1994.

Wickett, R.E.Y. *Models of Adult Religious Education Practice*. Birmingham, AL: Religious Education Press 1991.

Wilber, Ken. *No Boundary: Eastern and Western Approaches to Personal Growth*. Boulder, Colo.: Shambhala, 1981.



Wilhoit, James C., and John M. Dettoni, eds. *Nurture that is Christian: Developmental Perspectives on Christian Education*. Wheaton, IL: Bridge Point, 1995.

William Johnston. *The Inner Eye of Love*. London: Collins, 1978.

周惠賢及楊國強著：《香港的生命教育：文化背景、教育改革與實踐方向》。初版。香港：宗教教育中心，2002。

黃碩然編：《提升生命素質的培育》。香港：華人基督教宗教教育促進會，2001。

輔仁大學宗教學系：《宗教的生命觀》。台北市：五南圖書出版有限公司，2010  
(<http://hunteq.com.easyaccess1.lib.cuhk.edu.hk/wunanc/wunankm?!SB978-957-11-5933-1>)

唐君毅著：《生命存在與心靈境界：生命存在之三向與心靈九境》。臺北：臺灣學生書局，1977。

世界宗教博物館：《全球化、宗教與生命教育》。臺北市：宗博出版社，2002。