

DISSERTATION

REVISITING THE IMPACT OF A RESIDENCE HALL STAFF TRAINING CLASS
ON THE MORAL JUDGMENT DEVELOPMENT OF COLLEGE STUDENTS

Submitted by

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ABSTRACT

REVISITING THE IMPACT OF A RESIDENCE HALL STAFF TRAINING CLASS ON THE MORAL JUDGMENT DEVELOPMENT OF COLLEGE STUDENTS

This research study was an attempt to replicate a previous study completed in 1987 by McKelfresh. More specifically, this study examined the impact of RA training on moral judgment development as measured by the Defining Issues Test-2 (DIT-2). The research method incorporated a pretest–posttest nonequivalent comparison-group design and posttest-only control-group design. The experimental group consisted of 43 students who were proceeding through the Resident Assistant (RA) selection course; the control group consisted of 45 students not participating in the course.

The following results of the study occurred: The mean pretest scores of students enrolled in the RA training course were higher than the mean pretest scores of the established norm for the DIT-2. There was a significant difference in the pretest N2 score for students enrolled in the RA selection course compared to the pretest N2 scores of students not enrolled. There was also significant growth between the pretest and posttest scores of students who completed the RA selection course compared to students who did not complete the course. Other findings were not significant.

Possible interpretations of these findings are a) students who set out to be RAs have a predisposition for a higher level of post-conventional moral judgment when compared to students who do not pursue RA training; and b) completing a residence-

hall selection course appeared to have an impact on the development of a student's moral judgment.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I briefly introduce the topic of moral judgment development of university students selected for Resident Assistant (RA) positions who received training through a structured course setting compared to university students who do not participate in the training class. The structured course setting included content and discussion about ethics, core values, and other topics focused on student development. Next, I present the problem statement. Following this discussion, I present the research questions and their respective null hypotheses, and the definitions, delimitations, and assumptions related to the study. Finally, I conclude with sections in which I discuss the significance of the study and my perspective as researcher.

The Background and the Problem

It is difficult to turn on the television, open a newspaper, or even surf the Internet without coming across instances in which individuals have made poor moral and ethical decisions. “After the collapse of some well-known organizations such as energy giant Enron and the public accounting firm Arthur Anderson, a new concern has emerged regarding issues and practices of ethical behavior in organizations” (Gundersen & Capozzoli, 2008, p. 315). Problems related to ethical behavior are not limited to the business world; they are alive and present in colleges and universities, as well. From multimillion-dollar-salaried coaches covering up internal scandals (Gleeson, 2014; Livingston, 2011), to top university administrators being fired for plagiarism (Associated Press [AP], 2004; Heyboer, 2013; Trevizo, 2011), to state auditors citing institutions for discrepancies in their bookkeeping (AP, 2008). Sexual harassment and Title IX

violations (Grasgreen, 2010; US Department of Education, 2014) are occurring more often. In addition, RAs are being fired over policy violations (Hottle, 2013; Wells, 2004), and poor ethical decision-making and its outcomes are evident in the media for all to see.

As a whole, institutions of higher education are facing more scrutiny than ever before, and the expectation that the professional and student staff members must abide by their professional organization's code of ethics is increasing. The everyday dilemmas that residence-hall student staff members (RAs) face (Blimling, 2003, 2010; Foubert J., 2014) is becoming more difficult for the traditional college-aged student to handle. "Less visible but perhaps more pervasive are ethical issues that permeate higher educational institutions in which ethics are considered, taught, learned, and carried toward the private sector" (Gundersen & Capozzoli, 2008, p. 315). The need for the decisions and actions of our RAs to have a more solid base in their own moral judgment is important, especially as we prepare them to leave college and enter the workforce (Foubert, J., 2014).

RAs are often the first persons in the residence-hall setting who become aware of concerns, issues, or dilemmas on the floor they supervise or the building in which they work. How RAs respond to the myriad of interactions they come in contact with can have a varying impact on the dynamics and growth of the floor community (Johnson C., 2012). These interactions can range from students discussing roommate conflicts they are experiencing to students discussing their depression and desire to harm themselves (Blimling, 2003; Foubert, 2007).

Student staff members who have a higher level of moral judgment development may better help their residents transition through rough situations that arise in the residence halls. Helping student staff members in their moral judgment development is a task or goal institutions of higher learning can accomplish in many different ways. One approach includes offering these individuals a preparatory course that addresses various dilemmas and ways they might handling them in their respective staff positions.

A study completed by David McKelfresh (1987) examined the impact of RA training on the moral reasoning of university students. McKelfresh noted that one goal of the Colorado State University (CSU) Residence Life program was to “create an environment which [*sic*] challenged and supports students in clarifying values and purpose” (1987, p. 4). He utilized the tenant of this goal and, through research, examined whether students’ formation of moral and ethical principles within their own lives was impacted because of treatment or training they had experienced.

McKelfresh conducted a study of the students enrolled in the CSU ED 496 course (Developing Your Personal and Leadership Potential). The CSU ED 496 course was used as a way to introduce the RA staff (experimental group) to the department, the department’s expectations of the RAs, and highlighted some of the topics they would be discussing later in the prefall training. The study, with a quasi-experimental, nonequivalent group design, utilized the pool of students enrolled in the course (those selected to proceed through the RA selection process) and students not enrolled (those not selected to proceed through the selection process). The students enrolled in the course encountered such topics as “values clarification, cultural diversity, racism, sexism, sexual preference, leadership styles, student development, helping skills, group

dynamics, and addictions” (1987, p. 2). The overarching research question was whether students would “think in more structurally complex ways about the moral issues that confront them upon completion of the course” (1987, pp. 6–7). McKelfresh performed a pre- and posttest on both the control group and experimental group utilizing the Defining Issues Test (DIT) to assess the research questions. His study suggested three key findings: The first was that completing a residence-hall staff-training course was important in influencing the moral reasoning for male students in the experimental group. Next, the study suggested that, for the entire experimental group, completing the staff-training course did not appear to be a factor that influenced their moral reasoning. Finally, which course section a member of the experimental group was enrolled in had no influence on that member’s growth in moral reasoning (1987).

Although McKelfresh’s study did not indicate a significant change in moral reasoning for all participants in the study, the fact that the male sample did indicate significant change in this regard is promising and supports my revisiting the study.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to attempt to replicate McKelfresh’s (1987) study of the impact of an RA training course on a student’s moral reasoning development when compared to the moral reasoning development of students who did not complete the course. It has been more than twenty-five years since the McKelfresh study. My research goal was to see whether there are differences in the moral judgment development of today’s traditional-age college students who participated in an RA training course compared to those traditional-age students who did not participate in such a course.

It is important to note the use of terminology: *moral reasoning* and *moral judgment*. McKelfresh used the term *moral reasoning*. In the current study, I am using the term *moral judgment*. In reviewing literature by Rest and others, these two terms speak to the same domain. One is more related to a process (reasoning), and the other is related to an outcome (judgment).

Research Questions

Specifically, the current study addressed the following questions:

1. Did moral judgment development pretest scores for students participating in the RA selection course differ from the scores of students not enrolled in RA selection course as measured by the Defining Issues Test-2 (DIT-2)?
2. Upon their completion of the RA selection course, to what extent did students participating in the course differ from students not enrolled in the course in terms of their growth in moral judgment development skills, as measured by the DIT-2?
3. Did the pretest moral judgment development scores of male students participating in the RA selection course differ from the pretest moral judgment development scores of female students enrolled in the RA selection course, as measured by the DIT-2?
4. Did the moral judgment development scores of students enrolled in the RA selection course differ in the pre- and posttests, as measured by the DIT-2?
5. Upon their completion of the RA selection course, to what extent did male students enrolled in the course differ from female students enrolled in the

- course in terms of their growth in moral judgment development skills, as measured by the DIT-2?
6. Did interactions occur between students' gender, their class standing, and their enrollment or not in the RA selection course, interactions that are reflected in the students' moral judgment development scores in posttest for the experimental group and in their general scores for the control group?

Of the six research questions, two are revisions of McKelfresh's (1987) original four research questions. The other four questions are an expansion of the original study.

Definitions

The purpose of this section is to define the frequently used terms that make up the crux of the study.

- *Control group* refers to the group of students who were not proceeding through the RA selection process. This group of students took the DIT-2 only one time.
- *Defining Issues Test (DIT)* refers to an instrument used to assess an individual's moral development. Six dilemmas are presented, with 12 items relating to each dilemma (Rest, 1986).
- *Defining Issues Test-2 (DIT-2)* refers to the updated version of the original DIT; this version has updated dilemmas, including streamlined instructions, five dilemmas versus six, a less-stringent method of purging unreliable subjects, and a higher level of validity (Rest, Narvaez, Bebeau, & Thoma, 1999a).

- *Ethics* is the “systematic study of the principles of right or wrong behavior” (Johnson C., 2012, p. xx).
- *Experimental group* refers to the group of students who proceeded through the RA selection process. This group of students took the DIT-2 twice, as a pre- and posttest.
- *Housing officer* refers to a housing or residence-life professional staff member.
- *Morals* are “specific standards of right and wrong” (Johnson C., 2012, p. xx).
- *Morality* refers to “basic guidelines for determining how conflicts in human interests are to be settled and for optimizing mutual benefit of people living together in groups” (Rest, 1986, p. 1).
- *Moral development* is a change that progresses toward a greater differentiation, integration, and adaption of moral reasoning as prescribed by Kohlberg’s model (1984) of moral development.
- *Moral judgment/Moral reasoning* refers to a movement of an individual’s way of thinking or reasoning that reflects an expansion of their perspective to include standards for judgment that the individual had not previously considered (Rest, 1994).
- *Resident Assistant (RA)* refers to a student staff member, typically an undergraduate student, who lives on a residence hall floor and is responsible for the general well-being of the students on that floor and within the building where he or she resides (Stange, 2002).

- *Resident Assistant (RA) selection course* is the Introduction to Residence Life course, which consists of 23 sections, with an average of approximately 12 students per section. A portion of the selection process for one to become an RA at the university studied requires all candidates to complete this course.
- *Residence hall* generally refers to an on-campus facility designed to serve as a student's home away from home while at college, and also to provide an avenue for the development of personal growth outside of the classroom.

Limitations

There are several possible limitations to this research. The syllabus used in this course was general to the research site, and no other. The housing officers charged with teaching the course held true to the syllabus, ensuring that the same lessons were taught to all sections of the course. The housing officers charged with teaching the course challenged the students to move out of their comfort zone in all activities that were presented so that the students in the course experienced cognitive dissonance in some way or fashion. The students completing the course put 100% effort into it and completed the instruments in a truthful and honest manner. The focus of this study was on the moral judgment development of students within the RA selection course; as a result, the study is not applicable to the general student population in regard to moral judgment development in the general classroom setting.

Delimitations

The following delimitations apply to this study: The study was delimited to students who were enrolled at one university within the Rocky Mountain (herein referred to as University) area and who had proceeded through the selection process to become

an RA. The study was limited to one semester of data collection (spring 2013) with multiple course sections. All participants who went through the selection process were selected for participation in the study.

Significance of Study

Riker proposed that residence halls might be more than just dormitories where people slept. He suggested that residence halls were places that could facilitate learning outside of the classroom. His view was that these living-learning centers would house students as part of the greater university community (1967). This notion continues today. Educating students outside of the classroom is typically an important mission of Housing and Residence Life departments across the country; however, this educational process at times involves noteworthy challenges.

Part of making a residence hall a living-learning center falls on the shoulders of the RAs, and the challenges of being an RA are ever-changing. Even to apply to be an RA, let alone proceed through the selection process and become one, requires a special type of student. Blimling (2003) describes the RA position in such a dark light that it is a wonder anyone would consider the job:

You have probably heard the expression “overworked and underpaid.” If it ever applied to a job, that job is that of the resident assistant ... if you are now at the stage where you are contemplating becoming an RA primarily because of the financial benefits, understand that the job simply does not pay enough. (p. 3)

RAs are frequently faced with moral decisions and encouraged to be good ethical role models to students on their floor.

Selecting current students to assume the RA role is one way housing officers help meet the multitude of challenges to be faced within the residence halls (Dodge, 1990). In addition, if a training course for RAs can help them develop moral judgment

and thus effectively face moral decisions and be ethical role models to students on their floor, the housing officers are strengthening their capability to meet the mission of their department. Having the capability to foster ethical development in residents, they can help lead the way to a stronger, more ethical community (Blimling, 2003; Deluga & Winters Jr., 1991).

Differences From the McKelfresh Study

I designed this study as an attempt to replicate McKelfresh's (1987) study that examined whether students who proceeded through a training course designed for RAs would have an increase in their moral reasoning development scores. I conducted the current study at a university similar to that of the McKelfresh study (1987); however, there are differences between the two studies. Table 1 displays the differences between the two RA training courses (1987 and 2013). The first noticeable difference is the length of time in weeks that the course covered. In 1987, the course was 15 weeks long, compared to 7 weeks in 2013. The additional time would suggest that the participants in the 1987 study were given opportunities in the training to discuss topics in greater detail. Another difference between the two courses is the inclusion of ethics in the 2013 curriculum.

Another noticeable difference was in the data-collection procedure. In his study, McKelfresh (1987, pp. 41–42) noted that data collection included administering the DIT via a paper copy and following up via phone with students who did not complete the instrument. With the current study, the instrument was distributed via electronic format, with follow-up occurring via email.

Table 1

Comparison of Resident Assistant (RA) Training-Course Syllabus, 1986–87 and Spring 2013

Week	1986–87 Topics	2013 Topics
1	Introduction, Transition to Student Assistant Position	Introductions, RA Job Description, Residence Life Organization Chart
2	Group Dynamics	Perceptions of the RA Position, Community Needs/Development, Role of the RA
3	Taking and Teaching Responsibility, Purpose	Core Values, True Colors, Communication Styles, Team Dynamics
4	Student Development Theory	Personal Mission Statement, Group Dynamics, Team Development
5	Helping Skills	Team Dynamics, Role Modeling, Ethics
6	Discipline	Identity and Inclusive Language
7	Situational Leadership/Advising Styles	Programming
8	Addictions/Alcohol and Drug Use/ Wellness	—
9	Family Issues	—
10	Open Session	—
11	Introduction to Differences	—
12	Sexism/Sex Role Stereotypes	—
13	Racism	—
14	Gay Issues	—
15	Closure/Wrap-Up	—

McKelfresh was able to use students who were selected as alternate RAs as the control group, which is a third difference between the two studies. Having the option of students being placed in the alternate pool meant that there were more qualified applicants than vacancies available for hire. With the current study's selection process, all students who proceeded through the RA selection process took the RA selection class before their actual selection as an RA. Therefore, the control group for the current study contained students who were not enrolled in the RA selection course and who had never been and currently were not RAs at the University. Instead, control group members were self-selected by responding to an email that asked them to take the DIT-2.

A fourth difference was the recruited sample size of the two studies. Because of the expansion of the Residence Life program and how the current RA selection process is conducted, a higher number of students in the current study met the criteria for selection into the sample population. This fact also required a higher number of recruited general students to participate in the control-population query.

The fifth difference is the use of terminology in relation to the measured moral development. In his study (1987), McKelfresh measured *moral reasoning* using the P score in the DIT. Within this study, I measured *moral judgment development* using both the P score and the N2 score in the DIT-2. Rest (1994) uses these terms interchangeably; but for the purposes of this study, I use solely *moral judgment development*.

A final difference is in the administration and follow-up use of the instrument in the respective study. Due to advancements in technology relative to the current study, I

replaced the paper version of the DIT with an online version (via SurveyMonkey) that the students could take wherever they had access to the Internet. Using SurveyMonkey provided participants with anonymity. I did not know who had completed the instrument because SurveyMonkey was set up to hide the list that showed who had and had not completed the instrument through a tool that tracks responses. This capability was helpful when I was sending reminder emails because it allowed me to send an anonymous blanket email to all those who had not responded without knowing who the emails were sent to.

Advantages to these differences in this study included a larger sample size for both the experimental and control group in the current study. Another advantage of the updated instrument is that it is shorter and easier to complete. Its reliability is also comparable with the original instrument. A final advantage was the capability to administer the instrument via email, which allowed the participants to complete it in the comfort of their own living space, or anywhere they had access to the Internet. The main disadvantage to the differences was that the control group in the current study did not participate in both the pre- and posttest; this limitation produced only a baseline score for the group and not a growth score.

Researcher's Perspective

My entire professional career has revolved around working in Housing and Residence Life. I started working as an RA in 1996 at Central Michigan University, where I served for 2 years in that role, until I graduated. Upon my graduation, I decided to further my studies at Clemson University in South Carolina, where I served as Graduate Residence Director for an all-male freshmen's residence hall. After I

completed a Master's of Education—Counseling and Guidance Services degree, with an emphasis in Student Affairs, I moved back to Michigan for my first full-time position. I assumed the role of the Hall Director of a substance-free facility and an honors facility at Ferris State University. I also worked in the Student Conduct office. After a few years working in Michigan, I moved to the University of North Alabama (UNA), where I was hired as the Associate Director of Residence Life. Four years later, I was promoted to the Director of Residence Life at the UNA and since then have had the pleasure of building the department from the ground up.

These experiences have allowed me to see all levels of a university housing operation while working with hundreds of RAs over the time frame. I have had the opportunity to work with some of the brightest future housing professionals, and also with those who have just wanted to get a scholarship to help pay for their college experience. These experiences have influenced my perspective of the roles RAs play in influencing the community they work with, and of the developmental expectations we have for them.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, I discuss research related to moral judgment and ethical development, and the theories of Lawrence Kohlberg, Carol Gilligan, and James Rest. I then review moral and ethics education programs as they relate to medical, business, and higher education, to highlight the different methods utilized to address moral and ethical issues in the professions. Next, I review the literature regarding the Defining Issues Test (DIT) and the Defining Issues Test 2 (DIT-2) used in this study. I then analyze Resident Assistant (RA) training programs. Finally, I examine the McKelfresh study. Figure 1 provides a conceptual map for the literature I reviewed for this chapter.

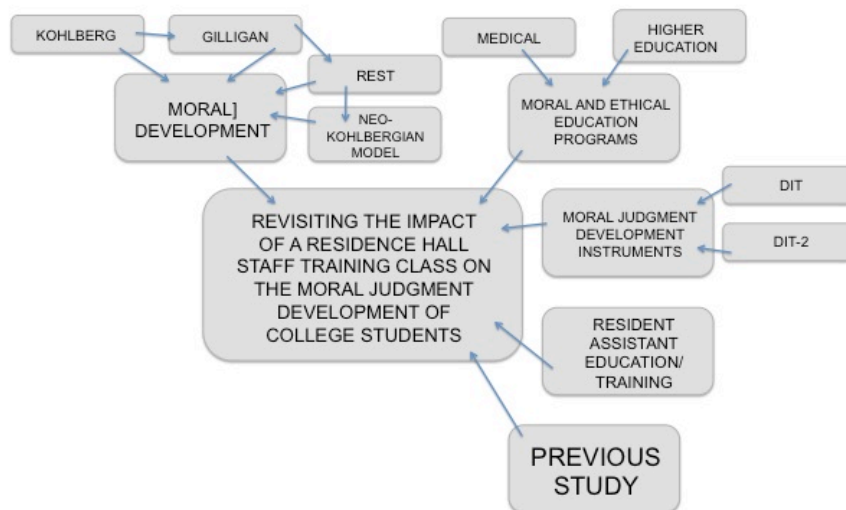


Figure 1. Conceptual map of literature review.

Moral Judgment Development

For some time now, researchers and other professionals have been discussing the differences between moral development and ethical development. Kohlberg (1984)

defined moral development as a change that progresses toward a greater differentiation, integration, and adaption of moral reasoning as prescribed by his model of moral development. According to Kavathatzopoulos (1991) in McDonald and Donleavy (1995), ethical development is defined as "...the development of the ability to solve moral problems, and second, by focusing on improvements in this ability" (p. 849). For the purpose of this study, the concepts of moral development and ethical development are intertwined.

Over the past 25 years, multiple studies have examined the moral judgment development of college students. Two researchers, Pascarella and Terenzini, completed a large review of more than 2,600 studies. Based on their review, they suggested there is evidence that moral development occurs during an individual's college years (1991).

Because of the sheer volume of studies Pascarella and Terenzini examined, King and Mayhew thought it was important to complement that study by expanding on it. In 2002, King and Mayhew reviewed 172 studies that were completed between 1980 and 2001 and not included in the Pascarella and Terenzini study (1991). They discovered that, of those 172 studies, "there are only two studies included in this review that either found no relationship between formal education and moral reasoning development or failed to report differences in moral reasoning by formal education level" (King & Mayhew, 2002, p. 249).

In the next section, I examine the theories of Lawrence Kohlberg, Carol Gilligan, James Rest, and the neo-Kohlbergian model. I show how these theories interact with and expand upon each other.

Kohlberg

Lawrence Kohlberg's work focused on the moral judgments people make. "He saw such judgments as having three qualities: an emphasis on value rather than fact, an effect on a person or persons, and a requirement that an action be taken" (Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998, p. 173). With this theory, he observed moral development as occurring through a six-stage sequence that consists of three levels—Preconventional, Conventional, and Postconventional (Kohlberg, 1984), with each level grouped into two stages. "Kohlberg suggested that each level represented a different relationship between self and society's rules and expectations" (Evans et al., 1998, p. 174).

Based on his beliefs and studies, Kohlberg presented his theory that people progress in their moral development through cognitive conflicts. He suggested that an individual's progression through the six stages of moral development occurred one stage at a time, and that it was not possible to skip stages. He also suggested that moral development might occur because of social interactions (Kohlberg, 1984). Kohlberg's theory that moral development may depend on social interactions adds to the value of determining whether the social interactions in the RA selection course have an influence on a student's moral judgment development. Table 2 details these basic levels and stages of Kohlberg's model, together with representative age ranges and examples for each level.

According to Kohlberg, in the first (Preconventional) level, the basis for moral judgment lies in external happenings, bad acts, or personal needs. Individuals on this level are looking at the world through a personal-gain lens rather than the lens of a

Table 2

Kohlberg's Theory of Moral Development

Level and Stage	Age Range	Examples
Preconventional		
Stage 1: Heteronomous Morality	Preschool – elementary Some junior high	Stage 1: Avoids punishment
Stage 2: Individualistic, Instrumental Morality	Few high school students	Stage 2: Gains reward
Conventional		
Stage 3: Interpersonally Normative Morality	Few older elementary children Some junior high	Stage 3: Gains approval and avoids disapproval of others
Stage 4: Social System Morality	Many high school	Stage 4: Defined by rigid codes of law and order
Postconventional		
Stage 5: Human Rights and Social Welfare Morality	Rarely seen before college, with stage 6 very rare	Stage 5: Defined by a social contract that is generally agreed upon for the public good
Stage 6: Morality of Universalizable, Reversible, and Prescriptive General Ethical Principles		Stage 6: Based on the abstract ethical principles that determine one's own moral code

community member (Kohlberg, 1984). Stages 1 and 2 in this level consist of the Heteronomous Morality stage and the Individualistic, Instrumental Morality stage. In the Heteronomous Morality stage, the focus is on obedience and punishment orientation. “At this stage, what is right is defined as obeying rules so as not to be punished and refraining from physical harm to persons and property” (Evans et al., 1998, p. 174).

Individuals in this stage will justify their actions to avoid punishment, and the rights of and concern for other people are not considerations. Individuals residing in the Individualistic, Instrumental Morality stage will follow rules if doing so is in their best interest. They will satisfy their personal needs and occasionally those of others if they view those needs as fair and they can minimize the possibility of negative consequences toward themselves (Evans et al., 1998; Kohlberg, 1969, 1984).

The second (Conventional) level examines the notion that “moral value resides in performing good or right roles, in maintaining the conventional order and the expectancies of others” (Kohlberg, 1984, p. 44). Within this level, an individual will identify with the rules and expectations of others. Stages 3 and 4 within this level are Interpersonally Normative Morality and Social System Morality. In the Interpersonally Normative Morality stage, the focus is on gaining approval, pleasing, and helping others. “Concern centers around [*sic*] maintaining one’s image as a good person and gaining the approval of others. Shared feelings, agreements, and expectations take precedence over individual interests, but a generalized social system perspective does not yet exist” (Evans et al., 1998, p. 174). In the Social System Morality stage, the focus is on the individual maintaining authority and social-order orientation. The social system has a specific set of rules that apply equally to everyone. Upholding established rules and laws means doing right (Evans et al., 1998; Kohlberg, 1969, 1984).

The third (Postconventional) level explores the concept that moral values lie in the conformity of the individual to a set of common or shared standards or duties. Within this level, individuals distance themselves from the rules of others, instead basing their choices on self-chosen principles. The final two stages 5 and 6 exist within

this level. The Human Rights and Social Welfare Morality stage is based on the thought that the “rightness of laws and social systems are [sic] evaluated on the basis of the extent to which they promote fundamental human rights and values” (Evans et al., 1998, p. 175). The final stage, Morality of Universalizable, Reversible, and Prescriptive General Ethical Principles, involves an individual giving equal consideration to the viewpoints of all persons involved in a moral situation. “The process by which a contract is made is viewed as equally important with the fairness of the procedures that underlie the agreement” (Evans et al., 1998, p. 175). Kohlberg’s research suggests that young children are oftentimes operating in the Preconventional level, a majority of adults can be classified as acting within the Conventional level, and nearly 25% of all adults are functioning within the Postconventional level (Duska & Whelan, 1975). As McKelfresh (1987) noted, “Rest, Davison, and Robins (1978) in a review of cross-sectional data collected on several thousand high school, college and graduate students in the United States found [,] support for the general model of moral development proposed by Kohlberg” (p. 22).

Gilligan

Gilligan, a former student of Kohlberg, had concerns with certain aspects of Kohlberg’s findings and even accused him of gender bias (Colby & Damon, 1994). Gilligan based this accusation on the fact that women were not included in Kohlberg’s research on moral development (Evans et al., 1998). Gilligan (1993) suggested that Kohlberg had generalized his research findings toward both male and female, which was a concern because of the lack of women in the research Kohlberg had conducted to formulate his theory. Gilligan’s research involved both men and women. With one of

its three sets of subjects being college students (Gilligan, 1993), her study yielded the notion that moral development is based on the themes of care and justice. And although Gilligan criticized Kohlberg's study, its limitation is not necessarily a negative because it helps provide for the big picture. For example, as Elliott suggests,

Metaphorically, we might say that Kohlberg provides a highway map through the territory of morality. Gilligan provides a map of secondary roads. One can reach moral maturity by either route, but the trip will be different depending on the road chosen. Looking at a map that contains both sets of roads gives a more complete understanding of the territory. The maps can be used separately, but we naturally understand the terrain better the more cartographic interpretations we study. (1991, p. 23)

McKelfresh (1987) noted that Gilligan (1982) made many claims "about the proper way to assess moral development in males and females, but the one major testable assertion is that current, justice-oriented scoring systems downgrade women, and make women's development appear inferior to men's" (p. 33). McKelfresh (1987), however, went on to point out that, according to Walker (1985), it was demonstrated that it was a myth that men score higher than women on Kohlberg's test based on a review of multiple studies using different versions of Kohlberg's test.

Gilligan's theory suggests that women move through three levels and two transitional periods in their moral development. As they progress through each level, they identify a more complex relationship between themselves and others. The transitional movements characterize their accomplishment of a higher understanding between selfishness and responsibility (Evans et al., 1998). Figure 2 outlines Gilligan's stages of the ethic of care.

In Gilligan's first level, Orientation to Individual Survival, individuals moral decisions are focused solely on themselves; they view themselves as powerless. The



Figure 2. Gilligan's stages of the ethic of care.

individuals cannot differentiate between what should happen (necessity) and what they would like to happen (wish) (Elliott, 1991; Evans et al., 1998).

According to Gilligan, the first transitional stage, Selfishness to Responsibility, has the overarching theme of attachment and connection to others. Individuals in this transition will experience the feelings of others for the first time. They will make the decision that it is responsible and mature to put others first. Individuals in this transition will also come to the belief that it is selfish and immature to act based on their own personal needs (Elliott, 1991). In this transition, there is a conflict between *should* and *would*, which allows the individuals more choices for moral judgment. Persons moving through this transition “consider the opportunity for doing the right thing” (Evans et al., 1998, p. 192).

Gilligan's second level is Goodness As Self-Sacrifice. During this level, individuals will determine that being good is sacrificing themselves for the good of

others. They move from an independent and self-centered view to one that is of a larger engagement in which they rely on others (Elliott, 1991; Evans et al., 1998). “In fact, at this level, an individual may give up her own judgment in order to achieve consensus and remain in connection with others. Thus disequilibrium arises over the issue of hurting others” (Evans et al., 1998, p. 192).

From Goodness to Truth is the second transitional stage. In this transition, individuals begin to question why they maintain the practice of putting others ahead of themselves even if doing so is at their own expense. During this time they decide that, when they are making moral decisions, it is acceptable to think of themselves, and that doing so is not selfish but actually honest (Elliott, 1991; Evans et al., 1998).

Gilligan’s final level is the Morality of Nonviolence, which includes a transition from individuals’ previously perceived conflict around the issue of taking care of either themselves or others to a sense of equilibrium around making these choices. They now subscribe to the concept of nonviolence as a moral mandate to avoid hurting others (Elliott, 1991; Evans et al., 1998).

In their study, Friedman, Robinson, and Friedman (1987), tested 101 college students to examine Gilligan’s claim (1982) that men and women differ in moral judgments. The test contained 12 statements: six statements that were developed from Kohlberg’s description of postconventional moral reasoning (with four of those taken directly from the DIT), and six statements that were developed from Gilligan’s idea of women’s style of moral reasoning. Testing took place over a 45-minute period in-group sessions. Results “indicate[d] that neither gender nor sex-differentiated personality attributes are reliably associated with the type of moral judgments that individuals make”

(Friedman et al., 1987, p. 44). The study failed to support Gilligan's claims (1982); however, it did provide "preliminary evidence for the reality of a basis of moral judgments that is distinct from Kohlberg's" (Friedman et al., 1987, p. 46).

Several more-recent studies have continued to address possible gender differences when one is assessing moral judgment development. The notion that men score higher than women was discredited in Finger, Borduin, and Baumstark's (1992) study of 159 undergraduate students, as indicated through P scores from the DIT. These researchers' findings suggested that a student's grade level, not gender, was a stronger correlate of moral judgment scores (1992). In King and Mayhew's (2002) review of studies examining moral development in undergraduate students, the researchers noted that there was not a difference in a woman's moral judgment development compared to a man's in studies conducted by Abdolmohammadi, Gabhart, and Reeves (1997), by Cohen (1982), and by Sanders (1990). Finally, Derryberry and Thoma (2005), utilizing a sample of 167 college students, also noted that gender and moral judgment development are not dependent on each other as measured by the DIT, and they refuted "assertions that gender differences exist in the considered moral developmental indices" (2005, p. 79).

Rest (Six-Stage Model)

In 1979, Rest, also a former student of Kohlberg, revised Kohlberg's theory on moral development to create his own six-stage model. Rest thought that people do not use a singular method when they are making a moral decision; rather, he suggested that people could approach problem solving in a variety of different ways (1979). Rest

also emphasized that people can revert to less-complex approaches even after they have shown growth with a higher-level strategy (1979).

Rest did not totally disagree with Kohlberg's theory; instead, he saw the challenge to be in how Kohlberg went about the assessment process. Kohlberg utilized a drawn-out interview process "in which participants were presented with several moral dilemmas, asked to solve the dilemmas, then asked for the reasoning behind their choices" (Rest et al., 1999a, p. 47). Kohlberg then had to transcribe and score those interviews for that stage according to an 800-page scoring guide. Rest, in contrast, introduced the DIT, a pencil-and-paper test that included six dilemmas, each followed by 12 questions, which allowed for easier and quicker delivery and a much easier scoring method (Rest et al., 1999a). Later in this chapter, I cover the DIT and DIT-2 in more detail.

We can summarize Rest's six-stage model as follows: Stage 1 involves obedience, doing what one is told to do. Stage 2, instrumental egoism and simple exchange, views an act as good or right if it serves an individual's desires and interests. In Stage 3, interpersonal concordance, the individual is considerate. Individuals in this stage are nice and get along well with others because they are seeking the approval of others. In Stage 4, law and duty to the social order, the person respects and obeys figures of authority. Stage 5 is the societal consensus stage. Individuals in this stage see moral responsibility emerge from a voluntary commitment to cooperation between members of society. In Stage 6, nonarbitrary social cooperation, the individual is cooperating in a rational, equal, and impartial way (Rest, 1979; Rest et al., 1999a; Willis, 1992). Table 3 outlines this six-stage model.

Table 3

Rest's Stages of Moral Judgment (Rest, 1979)

Stage	What Is Right
Obedience	Doing what you are told
Instrumental egoism and simple exchange	Making a deal that serves a person's desires and interests
Interpersonal concordance	Being considerate, nice, and kind and getting along with people—seeking approval of others
Law and duty to the social order	Respecting and obeying the delegated authority
Societal consensus	Being obligated to whatever arrangements are agreed to by procedures of due process
Nonarbitrary social cooperation	Cooperating in a way that rational, equal, and impartial people would organize as a system of cooperation

Support for Rest's (1979) theory is evident in Narvaez's (1998) study, which examined how individuals understand moral discourse. The study consisted of two groups, one junior high, and one college. The participants read and recalled four moral narratives, then took the DIT as a corroborating measure of Stage 5 of Rest's model. Results showed that college students recalled "significantly more of the moral arguments from Stage 5, but not from Stages 1 to 4, supporting a cumulative, developmentally based moral schema pattern" (Narvaez, 1998, p. 20).

Rest (Neo-Kohlbergian Model)

Rest later presented a new approach to Kohlberg's moral-development theory with his four-component model (Rest, 1986). This model used Kohlberg's theory as a

guide. Rest's perspective was that Kohlberg's theory was still valid, but it also needed additional modifications. Rest recognized the usefulness of Kohlberg's starting points; however, he stressed that those starting points may not be the endpoints to a comprehensive theory. In particular, Rest suggested the following:

- (a) That moral judgment is only one psychological component of general moral development.
- (b) That Kohlberg's analysis of stages is of global, course-grained markers of life-span development, and that intermediate-level concepts are needed for a full decision-making model.
- (c) That Kohlberg's emphasis on justice is not a comprehensive moral theory, but predominantly deals with the morality of non-intimate relationships within society (the political side of morality rather than the personal side).
- (d) That Kohlberg's dilemmas do not cover the whole domain of morality. (Rest et al., 1999a, p. 57)

From this work, Rest brought four components to the forefront in a new model, which was his attempt to synthesize previous models (Rest et al., 1999a).

The four component model was originally used to classify various studies in morality that focused on different phenomena and used different theoretical starting points. Later, it was used as a heuristic tool in conceptualizing the psychology of morality as a whole. (Rest et al., 1999a, p. 101)

One main difference from Kohlberg's theory, which allowed for progression through the stages, is that Rest's four-component model requires individuals to achieve all four components concurrently for morally sound behavior to occur (Rest, 1986). The entire process contributes to the outcome of a moral act; the components are not sequential, nor are they human traits.

The first component in this new model is Moral Sensitivity. This component reflects individuals' interpretation of the situation at hand; their taking into account how different actions would impact the parties involved; and their being aware, when one

exists, that there is a moral dilemma. The second component is Moral Judgment. In this component, individuals judge whether an action they partake in would be justifiable in a moral sense. The third component, Moral Motivation, encompasses the degree of commitment individuals make toward a moral course of action. This component considers that, although individuals take personal responsibility for the outcome of their actions, moral values carry more weight for them than other values. Moral Character is the fourth component. At this level, individuals achieve their moral goals by persisting through the moral tasks, having courage in the face of a moral dilemma, and standing strong to fatigue and moral temptations (Rest et al., 1999a).

The four theories presented, while all different in their own way, present an understanding for moral development. As Elliott (1991) seemed to suggest, one theory is not better than the other; rather, they all lend support to the moral-development guide map. One theory by itself is good, and we can get from point A to B; however, additional theories provide additional routes to the same outcome. The basic understanding of these theories is like the compass to this study; they will point you in the right direction, but they also may make the trip more meaningful at the same time by offering an alternate route (Elliott, 1991).

Moral and Ethical Education Programs

Teaching moral and ethical education content has become more important in recent years (Benniga & Wynne, 1998). Colby, Ehrlich, Beaumont, Stephens, and Shulman (2003) note that some colleges are even intentionally focusing on moral and ethical education as the crux to a student's collegiate experience. This however, has not always been the case:

By 1945 the decline of moral education was a well-established trend in colleges and universities. In the two decades that followed, the decline continued, slowly at first, then dramatically. (McClellan, 1999, p. 99)

With the lack of moral grounding on college campuses during the 1950s and part of the 1960s, a revival of ethics in institutions ensued during the 1970s, based on theoretical support that was emerging from research on moral development. This trend saw courses focused on ethics appearing all over the country (McClellan, 1999).

With the revival of ethics in institutions of higher education came different formats for addressing the topic. These different formats included the use of specific classes or sections of classes that focused on ethics education. In the following sections, I examine research conducted across medical schools and general educational programs.

Ethics Education in Medical Schools

Self, Wolinsky, and Baldwin, Jr. (1989) assessed the “effect of incorporating medical ethics into the medical curriculum and the relative effects of two methods of implementing that curriculum” (p. 755). They used two different interventions, lecture and case study discussions, with a pretest-posttest, nonequivalent-comparison-group design. The study initially enrolled a total of 125 students, with attrition bringing the final sample to 119 students, of which 37 were in the lecture group, 46 were in the case-study group, and 36 were in the control group. The pretest, in which the students took the Sociomoral Reflection Measure (SRM), a written version of Kohlberg’s original Moral Judgment Interview (MJI), showed no statistically significant difference between the three groups ($p \leq .05$). The posttest, in which the students took the SRM again, showed

a significant difference ($p \leq .0001$) between the moral-reasoning scores of the control group and both experimental groups when compared to their pretest scores.

In regard to the experimental groups, both

improved significantly relative to the control group; moreover, the case study group scored over [sic] ten points better than the lecture group, a significant difference ($p \leq .03$). (Self et al., 1989, p. 757)

The research team proceeded to run a regression analysis using linear panel techniques (only mentioned, not shown in the article).

Post test scores were predicted by pre test scores, age, gender, undergraduate GPA, scores on the MCAT, and a set of two dummy variables reflecting the three groups. (Self et al., 1989, p. 757)

The analysis showed that none of the mentioned attributes were related to the changes in the students' moral reasoning scores, and that all change was due to their being in one of the two experimental groups. The lecture group showed a change of 18.44 points ($p \leq .004$), while the case study group's change was 27.23 points ($p \leq .0001$).

The results of this study suggest the following: a) being taught ethics, even for a short time, makes a significant difference in the development of moral reasoning in students (Self et al., 1989, pp. 756–757); and

b) the small-group, case-study format is more effective than the lecture format in producing significant development of moral reasoning (Self et al., 1989).

Shorr, Hayes, and Finnerty (1994) also assessed the effects on first-year medical students of ethics education of the students' participation in a class in medical ethics.

An in-house test instrument was developed and administered to 110 first-year medical students at the University of Virginia School of Medicine before and after they took the required course in medical ethics. This instrument used both clinical vignettes and

multiple choice, true-false, and Likert-scale questions to measure the attitudes of medical students toward certain ethical questions. According to the authors, this approach was different from many past studies that relied on an instrument that included tests of moral reasoning or only asked the participants to identify the ethical conflicts. Researchers tested the validity and reliability of the instrument between two groups of students—one group that had already completed a course in medical ethics, and another group of health-care workers who had no formal training in medical ethics. They determined that face validity was present with the instrument. However, the authors noted later that some factors were present that may have limited the validity; these factors included that the students had predominantly homogeneous beliefs before they enrolled in the course, and that one third of the students had a prior course in medical ethics (Shorr et al., 1994). The results of the study showed that there was only one significant change ($p = .05$) in the pattern of responses to any clinical vignettes. They recommended that further research be conducted at other institutions.

In other research, Lindon and Draugalis (1992) conducted a cross-sectional study utilizing the DIT to assess the moral-development profiles of undergraduate pharmacy students. After modifying the curriculum to incorporate the implementation of small-group discussions during a pharmaceutical law and ethics course, they administered the test to first- and fourth-year PharmD students (Lindon & Draugalis, 1992). The first-year students completed the test during the first semester in which they took a required practice course. The fourth-year students were contacted via telephone and asked to participate in the study. The researchers gathered usable results from 40 first-year and 31 fourth-year students, which equated to an 81% participation rate for the

study. The result rate for the first-year students was 100%, but two scores were omitted from the analysis because of the DIT's own internal-consistency checks. A nondirectional *t*-test showed no statistically significant difference between mean levels of *p*-values for first- and fourth-year students ($t = -1.091$, $df = 69$, $P = .279$).

The authors recommended that educational interventions “which promote moral development are most successful when they create a cognitive disequilibrium necessary for moral development” (Lindon & Draugalis, 1992, p. 143). This study showed that pharmacy students at the studied institution are a “homogeneous group in the degree of principled moral reasoning” (1992, p. 143). The authors concluded that ethics instruction would not be necessary to be taught throughout the curriculum. Small group discussions allowed for the incorporation of personal values and ethics along with clinical judgment during their learning experience. They also stated that “First year students are just as ‘ready’ for bioethics dilemma discussions as fourth year students. The educational framework set forth ... has been used successfully in other professional curricula and is recommended for pharmacy curricula” (1992, p. 143).

Studies presented have shown mixed results regarding whether or not ethics education increases student's moral judgment development. Researchers continue to explore which, if any, methodology improves medical students' ability to use and improve in their moral judgment development. One common suggestion or recommendation by researchers is the need for continued research in the area.

Ethics Education in Higher Education

In the field of education, researchers have examined ethics education. Sanders and Hoffman (2010) set out to examine three different social-work programs that had different delivery methods for teaching ethics. These three different delivery methods (discrete with common morality content, infused, and discrete with mixed content) took place at institutions that were located in the Midwest and upper-southern parts of the United States and consisted of one private and two public institutions.

Institution A participated in the discrete-with-common-morality-content method. There was a specific graduate ethics course that was required by one graduate social work program. The course entailed reviewing literature related to ethics education and issues related to social work. It was in this class that the topic of common morality, Gert's theory of common morality, was introduced as a teaching tool. Gert's theory suggests that there is a common morality and that moral rules are a main piece of it. The theory continues to suggest that common morality is from the thought that all moral people understand what morality requires, forbids, allows, and encourages. Because of this, an individual can accept being guided and judged by that common morality (Strong, 2007). Institution B participated in the infused-content method. This method included ethics content throughout the program's curriculum. Institution C participated in the mixed model-discrete methodology. In addition to infusing content about ethics, this institution offered an elective course focusing on ethics and ethical behavior in social work.

The results are as follows. A sample of 144 total students participated in the pretest. The pretest included 46 students from Institution A, 48 from Institution B, and

50 from Institution C. A total of 124 students completed the posttest, with 38 students from Institution A, 47 from Institution B, and 39 from Institution C. Frequency analysis of demographic data amongst the groups revealed no significant differences between the groups in any of the areas (age, gender, undergraduate GPA, undergraduate degree, political orientation, and ethical framework) (Sanders & Hoffman, 2010). The researchers administered the DIT-2 and the Ethical Sensitivity Test (EST) twice during both the pre- and posttests (2010). Their research examined two hypotheses regarding ethics education:

Hypothesis 1: Students completing a discrete ethics course emphasizing the application of Gert's theory of common morality will have greater gains in moral judgment than students completing a curriculum that infuses ethics or who have completed a discrete ethics course using a mixed-model course.

Hypothesis 2: Students completing a discrete ethics course emphasizing the application of Gert's theory of common morality will have greater gains in ethical sensitivity than students completing a curriculum that infuses ethics or who have completed a discrete ethics course using a mixed-model approach. (2010, p. 13)

Results show that, for the first hypothesis, all groups did increase their mean scores. This hypothesis was further supported ($M = 7.4$ versus $M = 4.6$ and $M = 3.7$) in Institution A, which utilized Gert's theory of common morality. The researchers acquired these figures through the pre- and posttest mean scores for the $N2$ score ($N = 107$) of the DIT-2, which are represented in Table 4. The researchers ran an analysis of variance (ANOVA), which showed a significant difference between the posttest mean scores $F(2,104) = 5.08, p < .05$ (Sanders & Hoffman, 2010, p. 16).

Table 4

DIT-2 Pretest and Posttest Mean Scores for N2 Score (N = 107)

Scale	Common Morality Institution A			Infused Model Institution B			Mixed Model Institution C		
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Pretest	40	41.7	20.0	47	32.9	13.5	42	42.5	16.6
Posttest	36	49.1	17.3	37	37.5	16.2	34	46.2	15.2
Mean Difference		7.4			4.6			3.7	

Hypothesis 2 looked at ethical sensitivity rather than moral judgment and stated that “students completing an ethics course centered around [sic] Gert’s theory of common morality would show the greatest increase [in ethical sensitivity]” (Sanders & Hoffman, 2010, p. 16). Table 5 shows that Institution A students had an increase in mean difference of 9.1 between the pretest and posttest for their ethical sensitivity test. This difference was statistically significant, $t(37) = 3.157, p < .05$. Institution B students had an increase in mean difference of 14.7 between their pretest and posttest. This difference was also statistically significant, $t(46) = 4.956, p < .05$. Institution C students, however, had a decrease in mean difference of -.90 between their pretest and posttest. This difference was not statistically significant (Sanders & Hoffman, 2010, p. 17).

Sanders and Hoffman (2010) pointed out that, even though Institution A students had a higher posttest mean than those of the other two institutions, it was actually Institution B student’s difference from pretest to posttest that showed the largest difference, $F(2, 121) = 5.76, p = .004$; and this difference was significantly greater than the differences for Institution A and Institution C students (p. 17). Because of these

Table 5

Ethical Sensitivity Pretest and Posttest Mean Scores (N = 124)

Scale	Common Morality Institution A			Infused Model Institution B			Mixed Model Institution C		
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
EST Pretest	46	28.5	9.1	48	9.1	13.5	50	25.0	13.8
EST Posttest	38	37.6	17.8	47	23.8	15.1	39	24.1	18.1
Mean Difference		9.1			14.7			-0.9	

differences and the fact that Institution B students had a higher mean difference, which showed a greater increase in change compared to the results for Institution A and Institution C students, hypothesis 2 was not supported.

Some challenges to the validity of this study include the following: the original size of the groups and attrition of the participants. “One cannot say with certainty how scores would have been affected had there not been attrition; the study may or may not have resulted in more or less significant findings” (Sanders & Hoffman, 2010, p. 18). Another challenge lies in the low reliability rating of the EST (Cronbach’s alpha of .64). The use of this instrument casts a shadow of doubt on the reliability of the internal consistency because “alpha should be positive and usually greater than .70 in order to provide good support for internal consistency reliability” (Morgan, Leech, Gloeckner, & Barrett, 2011, p. 135).

In summary, Sanders and Hoffman (2010) showed that ethical education could have an impact on a student’s moral development, depending on the type of delivery

method used in the course. The various types of delivery methods they utilized in this study provide a wide range of options for the ethics educator.

Although there are examples of studies that have shown that an educational intervention could have significant impact on a student's moral judgment development, there also are studies that have shown otherwise. In a meta-analysis of 55 studies that contained educational interventions, Schlaefli, Rest, and Thoma (1985) suggested that standard "academic courses in the humanities and social studies do not seem to have an impact on moral judgment development" (p. 346). The authors noted that courses that emphasized personality development did produce moderate effects, especially when purposeful discussions around moral dilemmas were incorporated into the curriculum (1985). They also discovered that there was no difference in effect on a student's moral judgment development between a course of 3 to 12 weeks in duration and one that was more than 12 weeks in duration (1985).

Instruments That Measure Moral Judgment Development

In an effort to replicate McKelfresh's (1987) study, I also used the DIT for this study. However, because of the update of the original test to the DIT-2, I selected the current, yet comparable DIT-2. In this section, I explain the background of the original DIT and then briefly discuss the DIT-2.

The DIT

"The DIT began life humbly in the 1970s as a quick and dirty multiple-choice alternative to Kohlberg's time-consuming and complicated interview process" (Rest et al., 1999a, p. 4). Influenced by Kohlberg's interview method, the DIT was developed as a tool that presented the individuals who took the assessment with a series of stories

that highlight moral dilemmas. The instrument consists of six dilemmas, each containing 12 items that represent various issues that an individual might consider in making a decision about how to react to the dilemma. The participant is asked to rate each item in terms of how important it is to them, and then to rank the top four items in order (Rest et al., 1997). The DIT was designed based on the idea that people at different phases in their development view moral dilemmas differently. For example, they have a tendency to pinpoint the different major issues of the dilemma differently, and they have different thoughts about what is right and wrong.

The most-used score of the DIT is the P index. “The P index is interpreted as the relative importance that subjects attribute to Stage 5 and 6 items...The score is usually expressed in terms of a percentage, and can range from 0 to 95” (Rest, 1986, pp. 196–197).

For instance, if a participant ranked a post conventional item as “most important,” then the P score would be increased by four points; ranking it as “second most important” increases the P score by three points; ranking it in third place increases it by one point. The total produced in this way ranges in the six-story version from 0 to 57. (The total does not equal 60, because there are not four P items in every story.) This is referred to as the “raw” P score. Raw P scores are converted to percentages (having a base of 100 rather than 60), and therefore the P percentage scores range from 0 to 95. The P score is interpreted as the degree to which the participant thinks postconventional considerations are important (Rest et al., 1999a, p. 48).

Different demographics have different impact on a student’s P score. Research by Rest et al. (1999a) suggests that a student’s grade standing has a direct correlation on their individual P score. When four different education levels were grouped together, it was discovered that an individual’s education level accounted for over 52% of the variance between the groups (Rest et al., 1999a). However, a student’s gender, only accounted for 0.2% of the variance (Rest et al., 1999a).

Rest's four-component model presents the concept that the various four processes or components give credence to outwardly observable ethical behavior. According to Rest et al. (1999a), the four-component model's premise is that four inner psychological processes give rise to observable behavior. These processes are

- a) *Moral sensitivity* (interpreting the situation, role taking how various actions would affect the parties concerned, imagining cause-effect chains of events, and being aware that there is a moral problem when it exists)
- b) *Moral judgment* (judging which action would be most justifiable in a moral sense)
- c) *Moral motivation* (the degree of commitment to taking the moral course of action, valuing moral values over other values, and taking personal responsibility for moral outcomes)
- d) *Moral character* (persisting in a moral task, having courage, overcoming fatigue and temptations, and implementing subroutines that serve a moral goal. (Rest et al., 1999a, p. 101)

There is a loose connection between the four components, but Rest et al. (1999a) also note that the other three components help with co-determining behavior. The thought is that, by combining information from all four components, the behavior predictor (P score) will be stronger and more accurate. "There is some evidence that when more than one component is measured, the prediction to behavior is strengthened" (1999a, p. 101).

Moral judgment, the second component of Rest's model of moral behavior, is the component given the most focus with the DIT. "The four-component model helps explain why the DIT consistently correlates with behavioral measures. The hopeful part of this position is that by combining information from all four components, the prediction of behavior will become more powerful and precise" (Rest et al., 1999a, p. 101).

In 1994, by examining data from more than 1,000 studies, Rest established the mean DIT P score for undergraduate college students to be 42.3 (Rest & Narvaez, 1994). He went on to break these average scores down by different types of students and nonstudents; he suggested there was a large range between groups—for example, the P scores of 65.2 for moral-philosophy and political-science graduate students, compared to P scores of 18.9 for institutionalized delinquents (Rest & Narvaez, 1994).

The DIT-2

As the years passed following introduction and use of the DIT, criticism emerged that its content was becoming outdated. From these criticisms emerged the DIT-2. Its creation resulted in new stories, items, and language that fit the times. "...the DIT-2 was written to mirror the basic features of the DIT, shifting only the content of the stories and items" (Thoma, 2006, p. 77). The DIT-2 is now available in an online form. The online version includes measures set up in the delivery that serve as reliability checks. The first is a start-stop time variable. Next, there is a question that asks test takers to comment on their environment at the time they are taking the test. This addition creates a distraction index. These features have helped eliminate problems with the online version of the test (University of Alabama Office for the Study of Ethical Development, 2011). The DIT-2 also has updated dilemmas, is shorter than the DIT, and purges fewer participants due to doubtful response reliability (Rest, Narvaez, Thoma, & Bebeau, 1999). "With all three changes, DIT-2 is an improvement over DIT-1" (Rest, Narvaez, Thoma, & Bebeau, 1999, p. 644).

In 2009, the Office for the Study of Ethical Development established a set of normative information for DIT-2 scores. These norms were generated from data gathered between 2005 and 2009 and utilized almost 33,000 completed DIT-2 instruments of undergraduate college students. Findings showed that the mean P score of this group was 35.09. The mean N2 score was 34.76 (Dong, 2009). This information is shared by the Office as a general guide for comparisons of its data with that of other samples (Dong, 2009).

Chung, Bebeau, You, and Thoma (2009) have brought forward a concern that there has been a decline in postconventional scores and therefore students' overall moral judgment development. This is illustrated with the decline in mean P scores as indicated in Rest and Narvaez (1994) and Dong's (2009) research. Rest and Narvaez's average P score for college undergraduate students was 42.3 (1994), while Dong's average P score was 35.09 (2009). In addition to this decline in postconventional scores among college students, it has been shown that, in some cases, there has not been any significant difference in the DIT-2 N2 scores between undergraduate freshmen and seniors. The researchers presented and discussed these findings at both the 2009 American Educational Research Association Annual Conference (Chung et al., 2009) and the Association for Moral Education Annual Conference (Thoma, 2009).

The RA Role

Varied names are given to the students who staff residence halls at colleges and universities. Whether their title is Resident Assistant (RA), Community Advisor, Resident Mentor, or a combination of these, the students who assume that role are taking on more responsibility than other students on campus (Foubert, 2014). To fulfill

the educational mission of residence halls, student staff members must either possess or acquire knowledge, skills, and abilities in the following areas: conceptual application, counseling, basic information, administration, teaching, leadership, crisis management, and human relations (Blimling, 2003, 2010).

Their role, of course, is to motivate and initiate as well as to counsel and consult. They not only help students overcome barriers to satisfactory academic progress but also stimulate and promote activities which contribute to creative thought and intellectual curiosity. (Riker & Decoster, 2008, p. 82)

In addition to being a big responsibility, the RA position provides experiences for moral developmental opportunities through cognitive disequilibrium (Willis, 1992). Responding to late-night policy violations, working with roommate conflicts, making the decision to charge or not to charge a student for a lockout, or even dating a resident are just a few of the ethical dilemmas and stressors that RAs often must work through (Blimling, 2003; Boyer, 1987; Deluga & Winters, 1991). These experiences and encounters provide opportunities for both their own moral development and that of the residents on their floors.

Residence Life student staff members today are often faced with moral decisions that can have a substantial impact not only on the floor they supervise, but also on their own ability to maintain their RA position. The impact that RAs' ethical development has on the department they work with is immensely important. Stange (2002) noted in a study about housing officers' perceptions of competencies of RAs that "the competencies of ethics, role model, and motivation were considered by housing officers as the most important at the time of selection. These competencies were among the four most important competencies in general as well" (p. 77). With further development of Housing and Residence Life programs around the country, the notion of the ethical

development of the RA student staff remains an important piece of the puzzle in providing for a holistic on-campus living environment for the residents. “Both Dewey (1939) and, more recently, Kohlberg (1971) insisted that actual experience in confronting moral issues ... is important for moral development” (Boss, 1994, p. 186).

RA Training Programs

Once a student is selected to become an RA, extensive training usually takes place. At some institutions, this may consist of training prior to the start of each semester; at others, training may include a for-credit course related to the position offered at the university; at yet others, training may be a combination of the two. The purpose of this section is to examine different training and development methods educational institutions have used over time.

Mitchell, Rubin, Bozarth, and Wyrick (1971) conducted a study that examined whether short-term training had any effect on an RA's empathic accuracy level. At the time of the research, the student staff members were exposed to a 3-day orientation period, which consisted mostly of lecture-style sessions designed to acquaint the staff members with policies and procedures, resources available, and administrative duties. No effort was made to present on any ethical- and moral-development topics, nor were any presentations focused on attending skills or basic counseling skills. The study observed each of the 40 RAs participating in a 20-minute counseling interview with one of two actors. The RAs were instructed to be as helpful as possible within their role's parameters. The researchers then completed a subjective analysis of the recordings they had made. The analysis revealed that, despite the lack of comprehensive and direct training, the RAs still seemed engaged. Following the initial session, eight RAs

then were selected randomly for a more extensive training that consisted of 6 hours of training, versus the 20 minutes the rest of the group received. Those eight RA's were then retested with different actors 6 months later. Results showed that the trained group had a significant increase ($t = 2.005, p < .05$) in empathic accuracy during the posttraining interview (Mitchell et al., 1971). With the training session as minimal as it was by today's staff-training standards (Blimling, 2010; Foubert, 2014), these results offered proof that specifically targeting a topic and providing training on it can increase a staff member's knowledge, skills, and ability in the focused area.

Schilling (1977) discussed an early exploration of the concept of a structured training class for RAs at the University of Florida that looked at the potential to develop RAs as community builders on their floors. As the focus of the RA role shifted from "rule enforcement to community facilitation" (p. 33), the change of focus necessitated a modification to the training program. A training course was developed around the content areas of interpersonal and group skills, social organization, leadership, and communication skills (1977).

Schilling chose The Tennessee Self-Concept Scale (TSCS) as the instrument in this study because it had been reported that "significant positive changes in the self-concept scores of psychiatric patients as a result of psychotherapy" had occurred and were measurable using this scale (Schilling, 1977, p. 36). Its purpose in the University of Florida study was to assess whether the goal of increased self-development was achieved through individuals' participation in the course. The TSCS was administered as a pre- and posttest, nonequivalent-comparison-group design to six female and eight male RAs. The results revealed increases in all nine of the subscales; however, the

results also showed that only one of the nine subscales, the concept of “judging-self” ($t = 4.27$, $df = 13$, $p < .001$), showed significant increase. The author cautioned about the lack of a control group and the small sample size, yet he stated that the course still might have resulted in a significant positive change in the self-concept of the students who participated in it (1977).

In 1999, Murray Snider and Midkiff, Jr. conducted a study to examine the relationship between RA training and job performance—more importantly, whether improvement occurred as a result of the training. The researchers were cognizant to both productive behaviors (sound work habits) and counterproductive behaviors (disregard for policy violations, tardiness, lack of commitment) addressed in training, and they hypothesized that significant overall gains would be found in participants’ subject-matter knowledge at the completion of training. They also hypothesized that the knowledge the individuals gained would associate positively with productive behaviors on the job. The researchers administered pre- and posttests in the form of a written examination, which was delivered directly following the training period, and then again 4 weeks later. Results showed that overall scores on the posttest ($M = 8.69$) were higher than those on the pretest ($M = 7.62$) and were statistically significant ($F = 12.38$, $p = .00$). Results also showed that participants who had completed the training engaged in more than twice as many productive behavior patterns ($M = 10.57$) as counterproductive behaviors ($M = 4.26$) (Murray et al., 1999).

Healea (2005) implemented the concept of character education purposefully into ongoing RA training. “Based largely on the principles of the contemporary character education movement, Character Education with Resident Assistants (CERA) targets an

influential population of student leaders on college campuses—resident assistants” (p. 68). Healea inserted CERA into monthly training sessions to develop the cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects of an individual’s character. The idea was for the RA to know the good, love the good, and do the good through a threefold method of implementation that involved exposure, exploration, and application (2005). The staff members are purposefully exposed to role models, they examine the virtues of those individuals, and then they are encouraged to apply that virtuous behavior to their own lives (2005).

Healea evaluated CERA twice through the implementation process, at the end of the fall and spring semesters, through a questionnaire in which the participating RAs were asked to write about a critical incident that occurred as a result of what had they learned in CERA. One Hall Director identified common themes. A second Hall Director reviewed those themes, and compiled a final list of themes, and then indicated the effectiveness of CERA by showing the desirable themes (which were not specifically discussed in the study). Results showed that CERA provided a firm foundation on which the RA staff grew in respect for others (Healea, 2005).

The concept of a purposeful training program other than CERA, which focuses on character development or moral and ethical development, has not been discussed much in the literature. There is a need for further studies on methods for increasing the moral development of our student staff members, especially as changes to the campus climate and culture continue to evolve.

Previous Study by McKelfresh

As a precursor to the current study, McKelfresh (1987) conducted a study to examine the impact a leadership training course had on students. The study looked at whether the moral reasoning of the students enrolled in the course increased at the conclusion of the course when compared to the moral reasoning of a control group of students who did not attend the course. The course, ED496: Developing Your Personal and Leadership Potential, was developed in 1980 as a way to consolidate the leadership training programs offered in the University's Division of Student Affairs. The Department of Housing and Residence Education supported this course in multiple ways, one of which was the requirement that first-year student assistants complete a section of the course as a condition of employment (McKelfresh, 1987). There were five sections of ED496 taught during the 1986 fall semester, one of which all students selected to be RAs the following year had to enroll in.

The McKelfresh study examined four research questions, which yielded the following respective null hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the amount of growth in moral reasoning for students who completed ED496 and students not enrolled in ED496, as measured by the DIT, for one semester.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the amount of growth in moral reasoning for male students who have completed ED496 and female students who have completed ED496, as measured by the DIT.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference in the amount of growth in moral reasoning for male students and female students in the final pool, as measured by the DIT.

Hypothesis 4: There is no significant difference in the amount of growth in moral reasoning for students in the five ED496 course sections, as measured by the DIT. (1987, p. 8)

McKelfresh collected data in a pretest-posttest method at the beginning of the semester, and then again at the end of the semester and the completion of the course. Implementation of the DIT, however, was not associated with the ED496 course for the control group because McKelfresh distributed the DIT through the mail for both the pretest and posttest; for the experimental group, students' respective residence-hall supervisors administered and collected the returned copies of the DIT. Follow-up occurred with the students who did not return their DIT, first by a mailing, and then ultimately by a telephone call. McKelfresh took an initial sample of ($N = 51$) for the experimental group. This group yielded a return on both the pretest and posttest of ($N = 48$). Of the 48 DIT pre- and posttests both groups returned, 13 were not included because their data analysis returned an M score that was too high or the analysis contained a high number of story inconsistencies. Thus, the final number of usable instruments from the experimental group was 35, of which 20 were from males and 15 from females. Of the 91 alternates in the control group, 55 completed both the pre- and posttest, of which 12 were excluded because of story inconsistencies. Of the 43 usable tests, 15 were from males and 28 were from females.

Results of the study indicated the following: For Hypothesis 1, McKelfresh ran an ANOVA for repeated measures to determine whether the difference between the pretest and posttest means of the group enrolled in the ED496 course was significantly greater or less than the difference for the group of students not enrolled in ED496. Table 6 shows the results of the ANOVA, which indicate that the F value of .34 for the time/group interaction was not significant, thus retaining null Hypothesis 1 (McKelfresh, 1987).

Table 6

Hypothesis 1: Analysis of Variance for Repeated Measures: Results of the Change in Pretest and Posttest Scores on the DIT by Students Completing ED496 and Students Not in ED496

Source	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Probability</i>
Group	1	92.275	0.26	.6096
Student (Group)	76	350.855		
Time	1	77.190	1.49	.2260
Time × Group	1	17.692	0.34	.5607
Residual	76	51.804		

In examining Hypothesis 2, McKelfresh used an ANOVA to determine whether the difference between the pretest and posttest means of men enrolled in the course was significantly greater or less than that of women enrolled in the course. Table 7 shows a significant difference in change between the two groups. The *F* value of 4.24 for the time/gender interaction was significant at a .05 level of confidence; thus, McKelfresh rejected null Hypothesis 2. As measured by the DIT, there was a significant difference in the amount of growth in moral reasoning between male students and female students in the final pool. The male students showed an increased rate of growth in their moral reasoning skills compared to the female students (McKelfresh, 1987).

To evaluate Hypothesis 3, McKelfresh used an ANOVA to examine whether the pretest and posttest means of male students in the final pool was significantly different from the pretest and posttest means of female students in the final pool in reference to the amount of growth in moral reasoning as measured by the DIT. Table 8 shows a

Table 7

Hypothesis 2: Analysis of Variance for Repeated Measures: Results of the Change in Pretest and Posttest Scores on the DIT for Males and Females in ED496

Source	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Probability</i>
Gender	1	875.568	2.56	.1190
Student (Gender)	33	341.798		
Time	1	38.829	0.57	.4558
Time x Gender	1	288.874	4.24	.0475*
Residual	33	68.191		

Note. *N* = 70

**p* < .05

computed *F* value of 1.28 for the time/gender interaction, which was not significant at a .05 level of confidence; thus, McKelfresh retained null Hypothesis 3 (1987).

To assess Hypothesis 4, McKelfresh once again conducted an ANOVA to see whether the difference between the pretest and posttest means were significantly greater or less for the five ED496 courses in regard to moral growth of the students in each of the five sections. Table 9 shows that there was no significant difference in change of moral reasoning skills of students between the five sections, with an *F* value of .43 for the time/section interaction, and there was no significance at a .05 level of confidence; thus, McKelfresh also retained null Hypothesis 4 (1987). In his study, McKelfresh (1987) concluded that, in general, there was no significant difference in the moral reasoning skills between students who completed the ED496 class and those who did not. Over time, research has continued on moral judgment development, yet

Table 8

Hypothesis 3: Analysis of Variance for Repeated Measures: Results of the Change in Pretest and Posttest Scores on the DIT by Gender

Source	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Probability</i>
Gender	1	170.226	0.49	.4867
Gender	1	558.654	1.60	.2094
Gender x Group	1	382.348	1.10	.2982
Student/Gender x Group	74	348.385		
Time	1	29.285	0.60	.4406
Time x Group	1	13.568	0.28	.5992
Time x Gender	1	62.310	1.28	.2617
Time x Group x Gender	1	286.087	5.87	.0178
Residual	74	48.712		

Note. *N* = 156

Table 9

Hypothesis Four: Analysis of Variance for Repeated Measures: Results of the Change in Pretest and Posttest Scores on the DIT by Course Section

Source	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Probability</i>
Section	4	315.319	0.87	.4943
Student (Section)	30	363.121		
Time	1	64.067	0.80	.3781
Time x Section	4	34.482	0.43	.7852
Residual	30	80.042		

Note. *N* = 70

there is a lack of research when it comes to areas within Student Affairs, specifically regarding the RA. With the high expectations of role responsibilities and the liability that RAs have, along with the everyday challenges they face on their floors to make the right decision, examining the impact of training on moral judgment development of RAs is important. The goal of this dissertation was to examine the moral judgment development of RAs who participate in a training course. If a course that addresses professional ethics and core values can help increase an RA's moral judgment development, it may be a training tool that can be used across other colleges and universities to address this issue.

Conclusion

Research suggests that moral judgment is impacted by an individual's participation in higher education. This chapter highlights the ongoing research in the field of moral judgment development, and the development psychologists who have developed moral development theories. Research has been done on moral judgment development education in the medical and general educational areas that suggests positive outcomes for such education on an individual's developmental growth. There is, however, a gap in the literature when it comes to studying training programs for RAs and how these programs may impact students' growth in moral judgment development.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, I present the methodology of this study, including the null hypotheses; the research design; participants and site; and sampling procedures and external validity. I also recap differences between the current and previous studies; the instrumentation, including the internal validity and the measurement validity and reliability; the procedure for data collection; and the data analysis in the current study.

In this study, I have expanded upon McKelfresh's 1987 study, which examined the impact of a Resident Assistant (RA) training course on a student's moral reasoning development. I conducted this study using a quasi-experimental design with a mixture of pretest-posttest nonequivalent comparison-group design and posttest-only control-group design. Similar to McKelfresh's study, the site for this study was in the Rocky Mountain region. The study university has a student enrollment of more than 20,000 resident-instruction students hailing from all 50 states and between 50 and 90 countries. Throughout the rest of the dissertation, I will refer to the research site as the University."

After receiving Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval from Colorado State University (CSU) (Appendix A), I collected quantitative data from the experimental group using the DIT-2 (Appendix B) from all of the candidates proceeding through the RA selection course during the fall 2012 semester, and then again at the conclusion of the course in the spring 2013 semester. The Department of Housing and Dining Services at the University provided the list of students participating in the selection process (Appendix C). The control group consisted of a randomly selected sample of 1,000 freshmen, sophomore, junior, and senior students that was provided by the Executive

Director of Research and Assessment within the Division of Student Affairs at the University (Appendix D). These students were not enrolled in the course and were not RAs. I administered the DIT-2 to these students at the same time I gave the posttest to the experimental group. Using both descriptive and inferential statistical methods, I analyzed the data by testing the six research questions and six respective null hypotheses.

Hypotheses

I tested the following six null hypotheses:

- H_{01} : There is no significant difference in the moral judgment development pretest scores of students enrolled in the RA selection course for one semester and the scores of students not enrolled in the RA selection course, as measured by the DIT-2.
- H_{02} : There is no significant difference in the amount of growth in moral judgment development for students who completed the one-semester RA selection course and the scores of students not enrolled in the RA selection course, as measured by the DIT-2.
- H_{03} : There is no significant difference in the moral judgment development pretest scores for male students who were enrolled in the RA selection course and female students who were enrolled in the RA selection course, as measured by the DIT-2.
- H_{04} : There is no significant difference in the pre- and posttest moral judgment development scores of students enrolled in the RA selection course, as measured by the DIT-2.

- H₀₅: There is no significant difference in the growth in moral judgment development skills for male students who have completed the RA selection course and female students who have completed the RA selection course, as measured by the DIT-2 (McKelfresh, 1987).
- H₀₆: There is no significant interaction between gender, class standing, RA selection course enrollment and moral judgment development score change over time.

Research Design

This study was quantitative, with a pretest-posttest nonequivalent comparison-group design and posttest-only control-group design. Table 10 displays the diagram of this study.

Table 10

Research Design Diagram of the Study

Assign.	Grp.	Pre.	I.V.	Post.
NR	E:	O ₁	X	O ₂
R	C:		~X	O

Note. "...Assign. = assignment of subjects to groups (NR = nonrandom, R = random). Grp. = group or condition (E: = experimental, C: = control or comparison). Pre. = pre test (O = an observation or measurement; a blank means there was no pre test for that group). I.V. = active independent variable (X = intervention, ~X = control, comparison or other treatment). Post = post test (O = a post test observation or measurement)" (Morgan, Gliner, & Harmon, 2006, p. 93).

The primary method of contacting the control group was via email (Appendix E) because it offered me the capability to contact a larger population of students at one time at a low cost. I also sent the experimental group the link to the DIT-2 via email (Appendix F).

Participants and Site

Similar to McKelfresh's (1987) study, the purpose of the current study was to examine the relationship, over the same period, between the RA course and students' moral judgment development as compared to the moral judgment development of students who did not take the course. The course McKelfresh utilized was a training course, while the course for this study was a component of the selection process.

For this study, two groups were established. The first group, the experimental group, consisted of 43 students who were enrolled in the RA selection course and completed both the pre- and posttest via an email with a link to the SurveyMonkey website. There were nine male students and 34 female students. These students were all full-time students who were proceeding through the selection process to become RAs.

The second group, the control group, consisted of 45 students who responded to the email with the request to take the DIT-2 online using SurveyMonkey (discussed later) during the middle of the spring 2013 semester. From this self-identified group, the makeup consisted of 15 male students and 30 female students who all were full-time students and who had never been RAs nor enrolled in the RA selection course.

Course Session on Ethics

As noted earlier, the current RA selection course had a class session that was devoted to ethics, whereas the RA training course for the previous study did not. This session (Appendix G) included discussion and activities that were related to the Media's Perception of College, Role Modeling Behaviors as an RA, an Ethics Overview, and an activity utilizing an Ethics Continuum. The Ethics Overview touched on the differences

between ethics and values, which then led into the Ethics Continuum activity that involved a forced choice based on statements the course supervisor read to the class. A total of 85 minutes was devoted to these two topics, Ethics Overview and Ethics Continuum, during that class section.

Sampling Procedures and External Validity

I conducted the sampling for this study in two phases with three different groups. The first sampling phase (pretest) consisted of a sample of convenience of 208 students who were participating in the RA selection course as part of the RA selection process. I asked all students advancing through this process to take the DIT-2 when they returned for the spring 2013 semester, before the RA selection course began. The second phase (posttest) of sampling occurred at the conclusion of the RA selection course, which ended the week preceding spring break. This phase involved the group of students who participated in the RA selection course retaking the DIT-2. As is evident from the initial sample of 208 students, the response rate was lower than expected, with 43 students completing both the pre- and posttest. This phase also involved the control group of 45 students who were age 18 and older, who responded to an email sent to them by random name selection and provided to me by the Executive Director of Research and Assessment from within the Division of Student Affairs.

The goal of this study was to produce a sample that was representative of both the RA population and the general student population at the University. As Creswell (2009) noted, "External validity threats arise when experimenters draw incorrect inferences from the sample data to other persons, other settings, and past or future situations" (p. 162). I attempted to control the external validity of this study through the

following means: I selected the experimental group members through their accessibility; that is, they all had applied to become an RA and had proceeded through the selection process. The members of the control group identified themselves through their responses to the email that I sent to campus. They then self-selected by completing both the pre- and posttest.

Additionally, Creswell noted that the interaction of history and treatment of a study can affect its external validity: "Because results of an experiment are time-bound, a researcher cannot generalize the results to past or future situations" (2009, p. 165). However, this study is a modified replication of a study from 25 years ago, so the notion of determining whether the same results would or would not occur lent itself to strengthening the external validity of this study.

Instrumentation

To maintain similarity with McKelfresh's (1987) study, I used the DIT instrument for this study. However, I used the updated DIT-2, which has been shown to be easier for the participants to take and yet has the same level of reliability (University of Alabama, 2011). The instrument was delivered via email sent to both the experiment group of students proceeding through the RA selection process and the undergraduate students who had never taken the RA class nor been an RA at the University. The email included a link to SurveyMonkey, where the Center for the Study of Ethical Development (the Center) at the University of Alabama set up the instrument. Respondents were asked a series of questions to assist with reliability checks. These checks included a start-stop time variable, which flagged questions that respondents either answered too quickly or took too much time with. Questions also asked

respondents about their test-taking environment, such as whether the television was on, or whether they sent or responded to emails or text messages during the process. The answers to these questions created a distraction index, which, when combined with the start-stop time variable, helped minimize problems with reliability (2011).

The instrument is set up with demographic-variable questions, the above-mentioned reliability checks, and the actual test scenarios and questions. Instruments whose questions were not answered in their entirety were not used.

The DIT-2 comprises five scenarios that must be answered to produce an N2 score. The first scenario involves a father who contemplates stealing food for his starving family from the warehouse of a rich man who is hoarding food. The second is about a newspaper reporter who must decide whether to report a damaging story about a political candidate. The third is about a school-board chairperson who must decide whether to hold a contentious and dangerous open meeting. The fourth involves a doctor who must decide whether to give an overdose of painkiller to a suffering but frail patient. The final scenario is about some college students demonstrating against US foreign policy (University of Alabama, 2011).

Each of the five scenarios contains three main questions. The first question of each scenario inquires about personal choices regarding what the person in the scenario should do, and whether the respondent favors the actions of the person in the scenario. This question contains a 3-point Likert scale with items ranging from one extreme on the left to the other extreme on the right. For example, in the scenario about the school board and open meetings, if the participant believed that the meetings should always be open, he would mark "Should have the next open meeting" (University

of Alabama, 2011). The second question asks the respondent to use a 5-point Likert scale, with items ranging from *Great* on the left to *No* on the right, to rate a series of 12 issues in terms of importance. For example, in the scenario about the open meetings, the participant is asked if she agrees that the school board chair is required by law to have open meetings on major school-board decisions. If the person taking the DIT-2 is not in favor of this, she may select “Little” as her answer (2011). The final question asks the participant to rate the issues from the second question in order of importance. This question uses a ranking system of *Most Important* to *Fourth Most Important*, and not all selections from the second question are available. This process continues for all five scenarios (2011).

Internal Validity

Creswell (2009) outlines numerous threats to internal validity. He describes the selection threat, which was the first threat to this study, as follows: “participants can be selected who have certain characteristics that predispose them to have certain outcomes (e.g., they are brighter)” (p. 163). In this study, the selection of the control group was random based on the students self-identifying from a randomly selected list of students. The selection of members in the experimental group was self-identified based on the condition that the students were proceeding through the RA selection process. Although this was not random selection in the purest experimental terms, the fact that the students elected to proceed through the selection process on their own accord and were not required to do so was close to a random selection in practical terms.

Cresswell describes the mortality threat to internal validity this way: “Participants drop out during an experiment due to many possible reasons. The outcomes are thus unknown for these individuals” (2009, p. 163). In the present study, a control group of 45 students initially completed the DIT-2. Of that group, 66% was selected to mirror the sex makeup of the experimental group. This sample size was larger than that in McKelfresh’s (1987) study. The current experimental group also had a slightly larger sample size in comparison to the previous study, which consisted of 35 students. The larger sample sizes can “account for dropouts” (Cresswell, 2009, p. 163), which lent support to the value of the sample size in the present study and helped neutralize this threat to internal validity.

Diffusion of treatment is another possible threat to internal validity. Cresswell (2009) describes this factor as when “participants in the control and experimental groups communicate with each other. This communication can influence how both groups score on the outcomes” (p. 163). To help combat the potential diffusion of treatment in the current study, the experimental group did not receive the email invitation that the control group received, which assisted in keeping the two groups separate. Also, given the size of the institution, the sample sizes involved, and the confidentiality features built into the survey process, the chances of participants knowingly interacting with each other were very low.

The testing process itself is one more way that internal validity can be challenged. Cresswell (2009) described this factor as when “participants become familiar with the outcome measure and remember responses for later testing” (p. 164). To address this threat, delivery of the pre- and posttests included a gap of

approximately three and a half months for the experimental group. The control group took the test only once (posttest), so testing was not a threat to internal validity for this group.

For this study, instrumentation was the last threat Creswell (2009) addressed. He described the threat to internal validity for instrumentation to be when “the instrument changes between a pre-test and post-test, thus impacting the scores on the outcome” (p. 164). This concern was not an issue for the control group because members completed the instrument one time. For the experimental group, this issue did not arise because I used the same version of the DIT-2 for both the pretest and the posttest.

Measurement Reliability and Validity

In the book *Preconventional Moral Thinking* (Rest et al., 1999a), the authors devoted extensive time to citing more than 400 published articles, in addition to many unpublished articles, to summarize the validity of the DIT in the literature. They discussed this validity in terms of seven criteria that operationalize the construct validity for the instrument. These seven criteria are

- a) Differentiation of various age/education groups.
- b) Longitudinal gains.
- c) Correlation with cognitive capacity measures.
- d) Sensitivity to moral education interventions.
- e) Links to prosocial behavior and preferred professional decision-making.
- f) Predicting political choice and attitude.
- g) Reliability. (Rest, Narvaez, Bebeau, & Thoma, 1999b, p. 310)

The first criterion showed that, through thousands of subjects, “30–50% of the variance of DIT scores is attributed to level of education in samples ranging from junior-high education to Ph.D’s [*sic*]” (Rest et al., 1999b, p. 310). The second criterion showed

significant gains in a 10-year longitudinal study of men and women making up both people who attended college and those who did not:

A review of a dozen studies of freshman to senior college students ($n = 755$) shows effect sizes of .80 (“large” gains). DIT gains are one of the most dramatic longitudinal gains in college of any variable studied in college students. (Rest et al., 1999a, p. 310)

The third criterion showed that “DIT scores are significantly related to cognitive capacity measures of moral comprehension ($r = .60s$)” (Rest et al., 1999b, p. 310).

Regarding the fourth criterion, involving sensitivity to moral education interventions, the authors noted that, in DIT scores they had reviewed for more than 50 intervention studies, they found “an effect size for dilemma discussion interventions to be .41 (‘moderate’ gains), whereas the effect size for comparison groups was only .09 (‘small’ gains)” (1999b, p. 310). The criterion of links to prosocial behaviors and to desired professional decisions saw DIT scores significantly linked to these factors in one review, which reported that “32 of 47 measures were statistically significant” (1999b, p. 310).

The authors’ review of validity of the DIT in the context of the sixth criteria revealed that

DIT scores are significantly correlated with political attitudes and political choices. In a review of several dozen correlates with political attitude, DIT scores typically correlate in the range of $r = .40$ to $.65$. When combined in multiple regression with measures of cultural ideology, the combination predicts up to two-thirds of the variance in opinions about controversial public-policy issues (such as abortion, religion in the public school, women’s roles, rights of the accused, rights of homosexuals, free-speech issues). Because such issues are among the most hotly debated issues of our time, the DIT’s predictability to these issues is important. (1999b, pp. 310–311)

Evaluation of the literature in terms of the seventh criterion for DIT validity, reliability, revealed the Cronbach’s alpha in the “upper .70s/low .80s. The test-retest reliability is about the same” (Rest et al., 1999b, p. 311).

As noted earlier, in 1999, the DIT-2 was created in an attempt to “respond to criticism that the content of the original DIT was becoming outdated and stale” (Thoma, 2006, p. 76). With this new instrument, a new developmental index was created. Replacing the P index, the N2 index was introduced. With this new index and instrument, a new way was devised to check whether or not participants were giving bogus data. The authors noted that the new instrument was “shorter, with clearer instructions, purges fewer subjects for bogus data, and is slightly more powerful on validity criteria” (Rest et al., 1999, p. 657). The DIT-2 was validated by administering both the first and second versions of the instrument to the same participants, thus “balancing the order of presentation” (p. 648). The samples included students ranging from ninth grade to professional school. It was determined that the DIT and DIT-2 were “highly correlated with DIT-2 ($r=.79$), and the 11 stories of DIT plus DIT-2 show a very high degree of internal consistency (Cronbach’s alpha .90)” (1999, p. 657).

Taking the above information into consideration, we can safely say that measurement reliability and validity have been proven to be satisfactory for the DIT-2. Knowing that all the testing that has been completed over the years has continually shown satisfactory levels of instrument validity and reliability strengthened the value of using the DIT-2 for the purpose of this study.

Data-Collection Procedure

The DIT-2 allows for online collection of data via SurveyMonkey or Qualtrics. For this study, I used SurveyMonkey, which allowed for the exportation of data via an Excel file into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). This data-collection

method decreased the possibility of error resulting from the human factor of entering the data. Having the study participants take the instrument online also allowed automatic storage of the data in a manner that worked with the scoring method the Office for the Study of Ethical Development at the University of Alabama uses.

The Executive Director's office in the University Student Affairs Division assisted by providing names and email addresses of all full-time undergraduate students. I cross-referenced this list with a list the Department of Housing and Dining Services provided of the students who were proceeding through the selection process to create a final list for the control group, which contained only the names of students who had not participated in the RA selection course. The Department of Housing and Dining Services also provided the list of names and email addresses of all students who proceeded through the RA selection process; I used this list for the email to the experimental group.

Data Analysis

Table 11 shows the breakdown of the research questions, the independent variable(s) associated with each question, the dependent variable(s) associated with each question, and the planned statistical analysis for each question in the current study. In addition to these planned statistical analyses, I performed descriptive statistics and data analyses to examine skewness, kurtosis, outliers, and other data of a descriptive nature.

Table 11

Research Questions, Variables, and Appropriate Statistics for Analysis

RQ	IV	DV	Statistic
RQ1	RA selection course enrollment	Moral judgment development pretest score—experimental, moral reasoning score—control	Independent samples <i>t</i> -test
RQ2	RA selection course enrollment	Moral judgment development posttest score—experimental compared to control	Independent samples <i>t</i> -test
RQ3	Gender, RA selection course enrollment	Moral judgment development pretest scores	Independent samples <i>t</i> -test
RQ4	RA selection course enrollment	Moral judgment development pre- and posttest scores	Paired samples <i>t</i> -test
RQ5	Gender, RA selection course enrollment	Moral judgment development gain score	Independent samples <i>t</i> -test using gain score
RQ6	Gender, class standing, RA selection course enrollment	Moral judgment development posttest scores—experimental; control group moral judgment development score	Univariate ANOVA

Note. RQ = Research Question; IV = Independent Variable; DV = Dependent Variable

Summary

In this chapter, I presented the methodology and rationale for conducting this research on the impact that an RA selection course has on the moral judgment development of a college student. I described the methods I used to sample both the

control group and the experimental group; I also described both the internal and external validity, and the measurement validity and reliability of the samples.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

In this chapter, I present the analysis of data related to the six hypotheses I examined in the study. I discuss the following areas: participants' demographic data, including gender, class standing, and intervention status. In addition, I present the N2 and P scores of the Defining Issues Test DIT-2 (DIT-2). Finally, I present the statistical results in the order of the research questions and hypotheses presented in chapter 3.

Participants

The participants for this study were obtained through the assistance of both the Department of Housing and Dining Services and the Executive Director's Office within the Division for Student Affairs. The experimental group comprised 208 possible participants. These were students progressing through the Resident Assistant (RA) selection process as identified by the Department of Housing and Dining Services. Students were sent an email inviting them to participate in the study. This email also contained all required Institutional Review Board (IRB) consent information. From the group email that was sent, seven emails were returned as invalid and one student opted out of all SurveyMonkey surveys. Of the 208 possible participants, a total of 112 began surveys for the pretest experimental group, and 93 completed surveys that were completed and considered usable. The posttest survey was then sent to the 93 students who completed the pretest. Of this group, 50 students responded; of those responses, 43 surveys were complete and usable, for a usable response rate of 20.67%.

The control group comprised 984 possible participants. This list of randomly selected freshmen through senior-level students was provided by the Executive Director's Office within the Division of Student Affairs. The control-group survey was sent to all 984 students. Of that group, two students opted out of all SurveyMonkey surveys. A total of 72 students responded, and 45 completed surveys that were considered usable, for a response rate of 4.57%.

Demographics

The experimental-group participants included nine males (20.93%) and 34 females (79.07%). Participant age for the experimental group ranged from 17 to 21 years, with an average age of 18.7 years. The experimental group was very homogenous. Of the 43 participants, 39 identified as Caucasian (90.7%). The segment of the group identifying at the Freshman education level was largest, with 30 students (69.77%) in that category.

The control group participants included 15 males (33.33%) and 30 females (66.67%). Participant age for the control group ranged from 17 to 44 years, with an average age of 21.1 years. The control group was very homogenous, as well. Of the 45 participants, 38 identified as Caucasian (84.44%). Again, the segment of the group identifying at the Freshman education level was largest, with 27 students (60%) in that category. Table 12 summarizes the demographic data for both groups.

Table 12

Demographic Frequencies and Percentages by Group

Variable	Control Group (n = 45)		Experimental Group (n = 43)	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Gender				
Male	15	33.33	9	20.93
Female	30	66.67	34	79.07
Race/Ethnicity				
African American or Black	2	4.44	2	4.65
Asian or Pacific Islander	0	0.00	0	0.00
Hispanic	2	4.44	2	4.65
American Indian/Other Native American	0	0.00	0	0.00
Caucasian	38	84.44	39	90.70
Other	3	6.67	0	0.00
Age				
17–19	31	68.89	36	83.72
20–24	6	13.33	7	16.28
25–30	5	11.11	0	0.00
35–40	2	4.44	0	0.00
45 and up	1	2.22	0	0.00
Education Level				
Freshman	27	60.00	30	69.77
Sophomore	8	17.78	8	18.60
Junior	4	8.89	3	6.98
Senior	6	13.33	2	4.65

Statistical Analysis of the Hypotheses

To determine whether there was any statistical significance in the proposed hypotheses, I utilized independent *t*-tests, paired-samples *t*-tests, and univariate analyses of variances. I have presented all of the proposed hypotheses in their null

form, along with a description of the statistical method used to examine the data. I broke the hypotheses down into two different hypotheses per research question, part a and part b. In part a, I used the N2 score as the basis for statistical analysis. In part b, I used the P score as the basis for statistical analysis. This distinction allowed for an analysis of the different scores in separate hypotheses, rather than combining both scores into one hypothesis and lacking the results for each score.

Research Question 1

Parts a and b of the first research question are as follows:

H_{01a}: There is no significant difference in the moral judgment development pretest N2 scores of students enrolled in the RA selection course for one semester and the scores of students not enrolled in the RA selection course, as measured by the DIT-2.

H_{01b}: There is no significant difference in the moral judgment development pretest P scores of students enrolled in the RA selection course for one semester and the scores of students not enrolled in the RA selection course, as measured by the DIT-2.

Table 13 shows that the moral judgment development pretest N2 scores of students enrolled in the RA selection course (the experimental group) were significantly different from the scores of those students who were not enrolled in the RA selection course ($p = .045$). Inspection of the two group means indicated that the average pretest N2 score for students enrolled in the RA selection course ($M = 40.48$) was significantly higher than the score ($M = 34.38$) for students not enrolled in the RA selection course. The difference between the means was 6.1 points on a 95-point scale. The effect size d is .44, which is slightly lower than a typical effect size in the behavioral sciences.

Table 13

Comparison of the Pretest Scores of Students Enrolled in the RA Selection Course and Students Not Enrolled in the RA Selection Course (N = 43 Enrolled and N = 45 Not Enrolled)

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
N2 Pretest Score			2.04	86	.045	0.44
Enrolled	40.48	13.30				
Not Enrolled	34.38	14.71				
P Pretest Score			1.06	86	.291	0.23
Enrolled	40.65	14.39				
Not Enrolled	37.19	15.24				

Table 13 also shows that the moral judgment development pretest P scores of students enrolled in the RA selection course did not differ significantly from the scores of students who were not enrolled in the RA selection course ($p = .291$). Inspection of the two group means indicated that the average pretest P score for students enrolled in the RA selection course ($M = 40.65$) was not significantly higher than the average score ($M = 37.29$) for the students who were not enrolled in the RA selection course. The difference between the means was 3.36 points on a 95-point scale. The effect size d is .23, which is smaller than typical for effect sizes in the behavioral sciences.

Because the N2 score for the pretest had significant results, the null hypothesis is rejected for H_{01a} . There was a significant difference between the moral judgment development pretest N2 scores for students who completed the one-semester RA selection course and the scores of students not enrolled in the RA selection course.

The P score for the pretest was not significant; thus, the null hypothesis is retained for H_{01b} . There was not a significant difference in the moral judgment development pretest P scores for students who completed the one-semester RA selection course and the scores of students not enrolled in the RA selection course.

As Table 13 shows, there was a significant difference between the N2 score and the P score. The N2 score, which is a newer index, has two parts that establish the score: the degree to which postconventional items are prioritized (almost identical to the P score), plus the degree to which lower-stage items (personal interest items) receive lower ratings than those given to higher-stage items (postconventional items) (Bebeau & Thoma, 2003). Because the N2 score used both rating and ranking data, and has more stringent rules than the P score, more protocols are invalidated for missing data compared to the P score (Bebeau & Thoma, 2003).

The P score, which is the original index method, is the simple sum of scores from stages 5A, 5B, and 6, converted to a percent. These stage scores were used to establish the P score because they have been empirically very similar and are all versions of postconventional moral thinking. The P score is described as the extent that a person prefers post-conventional moral thinking (Bebeau & Thoma, 2003).

With this in mind, the N2 score is a more accurate index in measuring moral thinking, because it takes all stages of Kohlberg's theory into account. The remainder of this chapter will continue to utilize both an a hypothesis and a b hypothesis to allow for the P score still to be analyzed in keeping true to McKelfresh's (1987) research, but also to allow for the newer N2 score to be analyzed.

Research Question 2

Parts a and b of the second research question are as follows:

H_{02a}: There is no significant difference in the amount of growth in moral judgment development N2 scores for students who completed the one-semester RA selection course and the scores of students not enrolled in the RA selection course, as measured by the DIT-2.

H_{02b}: There is no significant difference in the amount of growth in moral judgment development P score for students who completed the one-semester RA selection course and the scores of students not enrolled in the RA selection course, as measured by the DIT-2.

Table 14 shows the moral judgment development scores N2 and P pretest and posttest scores of students enrolled in the RA selection course, and of those students not enrolled in the RA selection course. As a note, there was no difference in scores of the control group because that group took the DIT-2 only one time. That singular score was used twice, in place of both the pre- and posttest scores. Significance was shown in both the N2 pretest and N2 posttest scores ($p=.046$ and $p = .033$). Effect size for the pretest N2 scores was $d = .44$, which is slightly less than a medium or typical effect. Effect size for the posttest N2 Scores was $d = .65$, which is between a medium or typical and a large or larger-than-typical effect.

Significance is not shown in the pretest P scores and posttest P scores ($p = .291$ and $p = .112$). Effect size for the pretest P scores is $d = .23$, which is slightly more than a smaller-than-typical effect. Effect size for the posttest P score is $d = .34$, which is between a small or smaller-than-typical effect and a medium or typical effect.

Table 14 also shows that the intervention did have a positive impact on the experimental group compared to the control group in regard to the changes in N2 scores between the pre- and posttest. Specifically, the N2 posttest score shows a very

Table 14

Comparison of the Pretest and Posttest Scores of Students Enrolled in the RA Selection Course and Students Not Enrolled in the RA Selection Course (N = 43 Enrolled and N = 45 Not Enrolled)

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
N2 Pretest Score			2.04	86	.045	0.44
Enrolled	40.48	13.30				
Not Enrolled	34.38	14.71				
N2 Posttest Score			3.07	86	.033	0.65
Enrolled	44.12	15.03				
Not Enrolled	34.38	14.71				
P Pretest Score			1.06	86	.291	0.23
Enrolled	40.65	14.39				
Not Enrolled	37.29	15.24				
P Posttest Score			1.61	86	.112	0.34
Enrolled	42.60	15.82				
Not Enrolled	37.29	15.24				

strong significance and a solid effect size. P scores showed increase in significance from pre- to posttest but were still not significant.

Because the N2 score for the pretest and posttest had significant results, the null hypothesis is rejected for H_{02a}. There was a significant difference in the amount of growth in moral judgment development as measured by the N2 score for students who completed the one-semester RA selection course and the scores of students not enrolled in the RA selection course.

Because the P score for the pretest and posttest did not have significant results, the null hypothesis is retained for H_{02b} . There was not a significant difference in the amount of growth in moral judgment development as measured by the P score for students who completed the one-semester RA selection course and the scores of students not enrolled in the RA selection course.

Research Question 3

Parts a and b of the third research question are as follows:

H_{03a} : There is no significant difference in the moral judgment development pretest N2 scores for male students who were enrolled in the RA selection course and female students who were enrolled in RA selection course, as measured by the DIT-2.

H_{03b} : There is no significant difference in the moral judgment development pretest P scores for male students who were enrolled in the RA selection course and female students who were enrolled in RA selection course, as measured by the DIT-2.

Table 15 shows that the moral judgment development pretest N2 scores of male students enrolled in the RA selection course were not significantly different from the moral judgment development pretest N2 scores of the female students who were not enrolled in the RA selection course ($p = .068$). Inspection of the two group means indicates that the average pretest N2 score for male students enrolled in the RA selection course ($M = 42.12$) was not significantly higher than N2 pretest score ($M = 40.04$) for the female students who also were enrolled in the RA selection course. The difference between the means was 2.08 points on a 95-point scale. The effect size d was .15, which is smaller than a typical size for effects in the behavioral sciences.

Table 15

Comparison of the Pretest Scores of Male Students Enrolled in the RA Selection Course and Female Students Enrolled in the RA Selection Course (N=9 Male and 34 Female)

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
N2 Pretest Score			0.41	41	.68	0.15
Male	42.12	14.34				
Female	40.04	13.21				
P Pretest Score			0.06	41	.96	0.02
Male	40.89	16.62				
Female	40.59	14.03				

Table 15 also shows that the moral judgment development pretest P score of male students enrolled in the RA selection course did not differ significantly from the same score for female students who were not enrolled in the RA selection course ($p = .96$). Inspection of the two group means indicates that the average pretest P score for male students enrolled in the RA selection course ($M = 40.89$) was not significantly higher than the pretest P score ($M = 40.59$) for female students. The difference between the means was .3 points on a 95-point scale. The effect size d was .02, which is smaller than typical for effects in the behavioral sciences.

Both the N2 and P scores had the same nonsignificant outcomes in their results; therefore, the null hypothesis is retained for both the a and b versions. There was no significant difference in the value of pretest scores for male and female students enrolled in the RA selection course.

Research Question 4

Parts a and b of the fourth research question are as follows:

H_{04a}: There is no significant difference in the pre- and posttest moral judgment development N2 scores of students enrolled in the RA selection course, as measured by the DIT-2.

H_{04b}: There is no significant difference in the pre- and posttest moral judgment development P scores of students enrolled in the RA selection course, as measured by the DIT-2.

A paired-samples *t*-test indicated that the N2 posttest scores did not, on average, show a significant change compared to the N2 pretest scores, $t(42) = -1.953, p = .057, d = -.26$, as Table 16 demonstrates. The difference between the N2 pretest and posttest means was 3.64 points on a 95-point scale. The effect size is smaller than typical for effects in the behavioral sciences. Table 16 also shows that the P posttest scores of students enrolled in the RA selection course did not differ significantly from P pretest scores ($p = .390$). Inspection of the P score group means indicates that the difference between the P score pretest and posttest for students enrolled in the RA selection course 1.95 was not significantly different. The effect size *d* is $-.13$, which is smaller than typical for effects in the behavioral sciences.

Both the N2 and P scores for these groups of students had the same nonsignificant outcomes in their results; therefore, the null hypothesis is retained for both the a and b version. There was no significant difference in the pretest and posttest moral judgment development scores for students enrolled in the RA selection course.

Table 16

Comparison of the Pretest and Posttest Scores of Students Enrolled in the RA Selection Course (N=43 Enrolled)

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
N2 Score			-1.953	42	.057	-0.26
Pretest	40.48	13.30				
Posttest	44.12	15.03				
P Score			-0.869	42	.390	-0.13
Pretest	40.65	14.39				
Posttest	42.60	15.82				

Research Question 5

Parts a and b of the fifth research question are as follows:

H_{05a}: There is no significant difference in the growth in moral judgment development N2 scores for male students who have completed the RA selection course and female students who have completed the RA selection course, as measured by the DIT-2.

H_{05b}: There is no significant difference in the growth in moral judgment development P scores for male students who have completed the RA selection course and female students who have completed the RA selection course, as measured by the DIT-2 (McKelfresh, 1987).

I computed the average N2 and P scores from the DIT-2 for the pre- and posttests for the male students completing the RA selection course and for the female students completing the RA selection course. Table 17 is a presentation of these data. Mean N2 scores and P scores for the pretest, posttest, and the scores for computed change over time are presented, along with the standard deviations.

Table 18 shows that the moral judgment development change over time N2 scores of male students enrolled in the RA selection course were not significantly

Table 17

Summary of Data of RA Selection Course Student Pre-test and Post-test N2 Mean Scores on the DIT-2 by Gender (N=9 Male and 34 Female)

	Gender			
	Males in RA Selection Course		Females in RA Selection Course	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
N2 Score Pretest	42.12	14.34	40.04	13.21
N2 Score Posttest	41.76	9.81	44.73	16.19
N2 Score Change Over Time	-0.35	15.61	4.70	11.20
P Score Pretest	40.89	16.62	40.59	14.03
P Score Posttest	38.44	10.99	43.71	16.83
P Score Change Over Time	-2.44	21.58	3.00	12.56

different from the female students who were not enrolled in the RA selection course ($p = .28$). Inspection of the two group means indicates that the average change over time N2 score for male students enrolled in the RA selection course ($M = -.35$) is not significantly higher than the female N2 change over time score ($M = 4.7$). The difference between the means is 5.05 on a 95-point scale. The effect size d is $-.37$, which is smaller than a typical size for effects in the behavioral sciences.

Table 18 also shows that the P score change over time for the moral judgment development of male students enrolled in the RA selection course did not differ significantly from the same P scores for female students who were not enrolled in

Table 18

Comparison of the Change Over Time Scores of Male Students Enrolled in the RA Selection Course and Female Students Enrolled in the RA Selection Course (N=9 Male and 34 Female)

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
N2 Change Over Time Score			-1.11	41.00	.28	-0.37
Male	-0.35	15.61				
Female	4.70	11.20				
P Change Over Time Score			-0.73 ^a	09.48 ^a	.49	-0.31
Male	-2.44	21.58				
Female	3.00	12.56				

^a *The t and the df were adjusted because variances were not equal*

the RA selection course ($p = .49$). Inspection of the two group means indicates that the average P score change over time for male students enrolled in the RA selection course ($M = -2.44$) was not significantly higher than the P score change over time for females ($M = 3$). The difference between the means was 5.44 points on a 95-point scale. The effect size d was $-.31$, which is smaller than typical for effects in the behavioral sciences.

Both the N2 and P scores for male and female students had the same nonsignificant outcomes in their results; therefore, the null hypothesis is retained for both the a and b versions. There was no significant difference in the scores for change over time for male and female students enrolled in the RA selection course.

Research Question 6

Parts a and b of the sixth research question are as follows:

H_{O6a}: There is no significant interaction between gender, class standing, RA selection course enrollment and moral judgment development N2 scores, as measured by the DIT-2.

H_{O6b}: There is no significant interaction between gender, class standing, RA selection course enrollment and moral judgment development P scores as measured by the DIT-2.

To assess whether gender, class standing, and a student's enrollment in the RA selection course each seemed to have an effect on an individual's N2 and P scores for moral judgment development, I conducted a univariate ANOVA.

Table 19 shows the means and standard deviations for the N2 scores of the two genders for moral judgment development, for education level, and based on whether a student was proceeding through the RA selection course. Figure 3 shows a means plot for the gender and intervention of the N2 scores.

Table 20 shows that there was not a significant interaction between gender and education level on the N2 moral judgment development scores ($p = .98$) of study participants. There was also not a significant interaction between gender and whether or not a student was proceeding through the RA selection course in terms of the impact of those variables on the N2 scores for moral judgment development ($p = .49$).

Even though there was not a significant interaction between gender and whether or not a student was proceeding through the RA selection course, Figure 3 shows the means plot, which demonstrates the visible interaction between the two variables, and which is also illustrated in the medium to large effect size ($d = .65$) (Gilner, Morgan, & Leech, 2009). In addition, there was not a significant interaction between the

Table 19

Means, Standard Deviations, and n for N2 Moral Judgment Development Scores As a Function of Gender, Education Level and Whether a Student Is Proceeding Through the RA Selection Course

	In RA Selection Course			Not in RA Selection Course		
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Freshman						
Male	4	40.59	4.69	7	35.42	17.97
Female	26	42.04	15.90	20	32.15	16.19
Sophomore						
Male	2	51.48	5.52	3	28.48	6.43
Female	6	51.33	15.61	5	32.96	15.93
Junior						
Male	1	46.10	–	3	42.69	11.47
Female	2	60.04	13.86	1	34.14	–
Senior						
Male	2	32.22	16.70	2	41.20	15.75
Female	0	–	–	4	40.34	10.54
Total						
Male	9	41.76	9.81	15	36.26	14.37
Female	34	44.74	16.19	30	33.44	15.03

educational level of students and whether or not they were proceeding through the RA selection course in terms of the N2 moral judgment development scores ($p=.43$) of those students. Finally, there was not a significant interaction between gender,

Table 20

Analysis of Variance for N2 Moral Judgment Development Scores as a function of Gender, Education Level and if a Student is Proceeding Through the RA Selection Course

Variable and Source	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Gender	1	18.10	0.08	.78
Education Level	3	127.83	0.55	.65
Intervention	1	922.51	3.97	.05
Gender * Education Level	3	13.07	0.06	.98
Gender * Intervention	1	112.93	0.49	.49
Education Level * Intervention	3	215.81	0.93	.43
Gender * Intervention * Education Level	2	91.88	0.40	.68
Error	73	232.43		

educational level, and whether or not students were proceeding through the RA selection course in terms of the impact on the N2 moral judgment development scores ($p=.68$) of those students. There was, however, a significant main effect of the intervention (whether or not a student was proceeding through the RA selection course) on moral judgment development scores, $F(1, 73) = 3.97, p = .05$.

Table 21 shows the means and standard deviations for the moral judgment development P scores for the two genders, education level, and whether or not students were proceeding through the RA selection course.

Table 22 shows that there was not significant interaction between gender and education level on the P scores ($p = .72$) for moral judgment development. There also

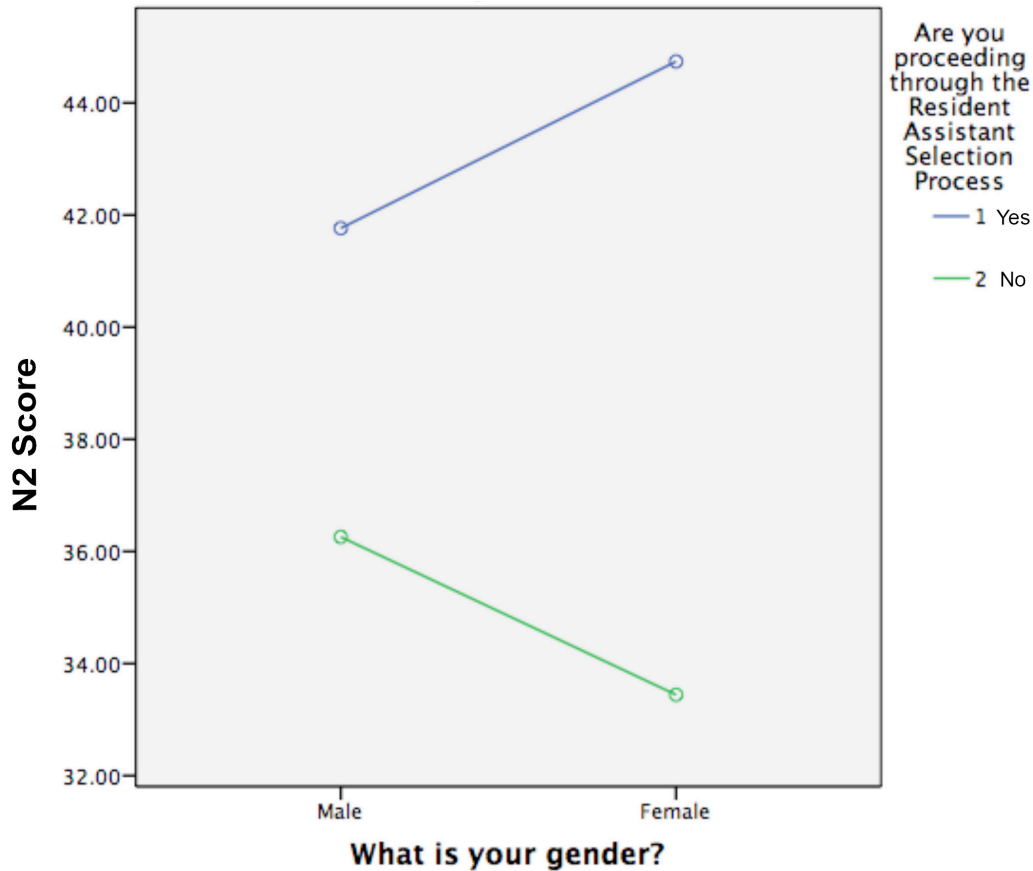


Figure 3. Means Plot of N2 Scores.

was not significant interaction between gender and whether or not a student was proceeding through the RA selection course as reflected by the P scores for moral judgment development ($p = .49$). In addition, P scores for moral judgment development ($p = .25$) did not show a significant interaction between students' education level and whether or not they were proceeding through the RA selection course. Finally, the P scores for moral judgment development ($p = .57$) did not show a significant interaction between gender, students' education level, and whether or not they were proceeding through the RA selection course.

Both the N2 and P scores had the same nonsignificant outcomes in their results, therefore the null hypothesis is retained for both the a and b versions. For these study

Table 21

Means, Standard Deviations, and n for P Scores for Moral Judgment Development As a Function of Gender, Education Level, and Whether Students Were Proceeding Through the RA Selection Course

	In RA Selection Course			Not in RA Selection Course		
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Freshmen						
Male	4	40.00	9.38	7	38.29	20.01
Female	26	41.46	15.27	20	35.40	15.86
Sophomore						
Male	2	48.00	0.00	3	27.33	13.01
Female	6	47.33	22.40	5	34.00	11.58
Junior						
Male	1	36.00	–	3	46.00	15.87
Female	2	62.00	11.31	1	46.00	–
Senior						
Male	2	27.00	15.56	2	52.00	8.49
Female	0	–	–	4	40.50	11.36
Total						
Male	9	38.44	10.99	15	39.47	17.34
Female	34	43.71	16.84	30	36.20	14.27

participants, there was not an interaction between gender, class standing, RA selection-course enrollment, and moral judgment development scores as measured by the DIT-2.

Table 22

Analysis of Variance for P Scores for Moral Judgment Development As a Function of Gender, Education Level, and Whether Students Were Proceeding Through the RA Selection Course

Variable and Source	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Gender	1	53.84	0.22	.64
Education Level	3	125.19	0.51	.68
Intervention	1	42.53	0.17	.68
Gender * Education Level	3	110.26	0.45	.72
Gender * Intervention	1	117.32	0.48	.49
Education Level * Intervention	3	349.23	1.42	.25
Gender * Intervention * Education Level	2	138.91	0.56	.57
Error	73	246.54		

Summary

In this chapter I presented the findings of the current study. The analysis resulted in mixed outcomes to the underlying question, “Would the participation in an RA selection course help students experience positive growth in their moral judgment development?” I investigated six research hypotheses with data gathered from the DIT-2. For hypotheses 1 and 2, there was a significant outcome for one part of the hypothesis, but not for the other parts when they were broken down into a and b sections. Because the N2 score for the pretest had significant results, the null hypothesis was rejected for H_{01a} . There was a significant difference between the moral judgment development pretest N2 scores for students who completed the one-semester RA selection course and the scores of students not enrolled in the RA selection course. This was also the case for H_{02a} , which saw the N2 scores for the pretest and posttest

growth. Those scores had significant results, thus the null hypothesis was rejected. There was a significant difference between the moral judgment development N2 scores growth for students who completed the one-semester RA selection course compared to the students not enrolled in the RA selection course. The null hypothesis was fully retained in hypotheses 3 through 6. In chapter 5, I discuss the research findings in light of the literature and present recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to replicate the McKelfresh study from 1987 and to examine whether there is a difference in the moral judgment development in students enrolled in a one semester RA training class when compared to that of a similar group of students who did not participate in the Resident Assistant (RA) training class. Although much research has focused on the general college student's moral judgment development (King & Mayhew, 2002; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991), little research has been completed on the moral judgment development of RAs. This chapter includes a discussion of the research findings related to the literature, recommendations for future research, and a conclusion.

Findings Related to the Research Questions and Literature

In this study, I examined two different scores: the P score, which was the original score from the Defining Issues Test (DIT) and the N2 score, which was the new score from the Defining Issues Test-2 (DIT-2). I examined both scores and discovered findings based on the following null hypotheses:

- H_{01a} : There is no significant difference in the moral judgment development pretest N2 scores of students enrolled in the RA selection course for one semester and the scores of students not enrolled in the RA selection course, as measured by the DIT-2.
- H_{01b} : There is no significant difference in the moral judgment development pretest P scores of students enrolled in the RA selection course for one

- semester and the scores of students not enrolled in the RA selection course, as measured by the DIT-2.
- H_{02a}: There is no significant difference in the amount of growth in moral judgment development N2 scores for students who completed the one-semester RA selection course and the scores of students not enrolled in the RA selection course, as measured by the DIT-2.
 - H_{02a}: There is no significant difference in the amount of growth in moral judgment development P score for students who completed the one-semester RA selection course and the scores of students not enrolled in the RA selection course, as measured by the DIT-2.
 - H_{03a}: There is no significant difference in the moral judgment development pretest N2 scores for male students who were enrolled in the RA selection course and female students who were enrolled in RA selection course, as measured by the DIT-2.
 - H_{03b}: There is no significant difference in the moral judgment development pretest P scores for male students who were enrolled in the RA selection course and female students who were enrolled in RA selection course, as measured by the DIT-2.
 - H_{04a}: There is no significant difference in the pre- and posttest moral judgment development N2 scores of students enrolled in the RA selection course, as measured by the DIT-2.

- H_{04b}: There is no significant difference in the pre- and posttest moral judgment development P scores of students enrolled in the RA selection course, as measured by the DIT-2.
- H_{05a}: There is no significant difference in the growth in moral judgment development N2 scores for male students who have completed the RA selection course and female students who have completed the RA selection course, as measured by the DIT-2 (McKelfresh, 1987).
- H_{05b}: There is no significant difference in the growth in moral judgment development P scores for male students who have completed the RA selection course and female students who have completed the RA selection course, as measured by the DIT-2 (McKelfresh, 1987).
- H_{06a}: There is no significant interaction between gender, class standing, RA selection course enrollment and moral judgment development N2 scores as measured by the DIT-2.
- H_{06b}: There is no significant interaction between gender, class standing, RA selection course enrollment and moral judgment development P scores as measured by the DIT-2.

In evaluating the findings, I discovered the following outcomes:

An examination of Hypothesis 1a revealed a significant difference in the moral judgment development pretest N2 score of students who were enrolled in the RA selection course for one semester compared to the N2 score of students not enrolled in the RA selection course. When I used the N2 score as an indicator, students who were proceeding through the RA selection process did appear to have a higher pretest score

than their counterparts who were not completing the course. This outcome was not the case with the P score (Hypothesis 1b), which showed no significant difference between the two groups. There has not been any research regarding the moral judgment development scores of RAs in relation to those same scores for general undergraduate students. Although Dong (2009) has recently established norms for certain groups (i.e., high school 10th through 12th grade, Vocational-Technical (Vo-Tech) students, undergraduate freshmen through seniors, and graduate students), there has been nothing similar established for RAs.

An examination of Hypothesis 2a showed a significant difference in the growth in moral judgment development pretest and posttest results based on the N2 scores for students who completed the RA selection course compared to students who did not complete the course. Participation in the course, which included the addition of a section devoted to ethics, did appear to have an effect on increasing a student's moral judgment development compared to students who were not in the course, according to the N2 scores. This finding supports the research of both Schlaefli et al. (1985) and Self et al. (1989); both research groups showed that students who are exposed to ethics in the curriculum, even for a short period of time, show a significance increase in their moral judgment development scores.

As McKelfresh (1987) noted, Rest et al. (1978) generalized that, in order to have a positive effect on a student's development (e.g., increase in DIT score), the course would take several months to complete. According to the results of the current study, the educational intervention, although just 7 weeks, in length had an impact on the N2 scores of students participating in the class. Because the pre and post test was

administered so close together for the experimental group, the chance for a higher level of moral judgment development was lowered due to this testing effect. In the 7-week class, a session was devoted to professional ethics and the RA position. In contrast, there was not any specific class session related to ethics in the McKelfresh study.

The P score (Hypothesis 2b) showed no significant difference in the moral judgment development pretest and posttest scores for the two groups. The finding for Hypothesis 2b is in line with the McKelfresh study (1987).

Unlike McKelfresh (1987), who found significance between the genders and their scores, there was not a significant difference in the pretest scores (Hypothesis 3a and Hypothesis 3b) between males and females participating in the RA selection course of the current study.

In examining both Hypothesis 4a and 4b, I found no significant differences between the pre- and posttest moral judgment development scores (both N2 and P scores) of the students enrolled in the RA selection course. Although there were gains in the average N2 and P scores, they were not significant. This outcome supports the research that has shown that studies using an educational intervention have not had significant results when one is comparing moral judgment development scores only to between members of the experimental group (Schlaefli et al., 1985).

In examining Hypothesis 5a and 5b, I also found no significant difference in the posttest scores (both N2 and P scores) of these subgroups. This means there was no significant difference in the moral judgment development between males and females taking the RA selection course. These findings are in line with research that showed that the relationship of gender and an individual's moral judgment development are not

dependent on one other (Derryberry & Thoma, 2005; Finger et al., 1992; King & Mayhew, 2002; Rest, 1976).

The outcomes of the current study regarding Hypothesis 6a and Hypothesis 6b revealed no significant differences between gender, class standing, RA selection-course enrollment, and moral judgment scores for both N2 and P scores. Although there is an evident correlation between students attending college and a positive impact on their moral judgment development scores, higher level (postconventional) scores have actually been declining over the past 30 years, with the highest decline in the past 10 years (Chunget al., 2009). “This indicates that recent cohorts of college students have not adopted the most developmentally sophisticated moral schema in the same way as earlier generations of college students did” (Mechler & Bourke, 2011, p. 28). In addition, research suggests there is no significant difference between the DIT-2 P scores for freshmen and seniors (Chung, Bebeau, You, & Thoma, 2009; Thoma S. , 2009). This finding was also the result of the current study. The average N2 score for men enrolled in the RA selection course was 41.76, while the average N2 score for women enrolled in the RA selection course was 44.74. The average N2 score for freshmen men in the RA course was 40.59 and for women was 42.04. The average N2 score for men in the control group (those not in the RA selection course) was 36.26, while the average N2 score for women in the control group was 33.44. The average N2 score for freshmen men in the control group was 35.42 and for women was 32.15. There was no significant difference in N2 scores related to interactions between gender and education level, or whether or not a student was enrolled in the RA selection course.

Research shows that individuals' participation in higher education has a positive impact on their moral judgment development as measured by the DIT (Cummings, Dyas, & Maddux, 2001; King & Mayhew, 2002; Mentkowski, Rogers, & Doherty, 2000). Mentkowski et al. (2000) stated that a university's curriculum does lead to growth in moral reasoning: "...again demonstrating a broad link between formal education and the development of moral judgment" (pp. 125–126). This is also supported in the Cummings et al. (2001) study that concluded that students' moral judgment development scores increase as they advance in education level. Yet the current study shows those increases as only marginal.

A finding that came out of the analysis of this study, yet not one of the hypotheses, pertains to the pretest mean score of the students enrolled in the RA selection course. According to the research of Dong (2009), the mean N2 score for undergraduate students was 34.76, while the mean P score for undergraduates was 35.09. The findings for the current study are different: The mean score of the students enrolled in the RA class was 40.48, which is above the norms for the DIT-2. The mean P score for students enrolled in the RA selection course was 40.65, which is also above the norms for the DIT-2. The mean N2 score for students who were not enrolled in the RA selection course was 34.38, which is almost the norm published by Dong (2009) for the DIT-2. The current mean P score for students not enrolled in the RA selection course was 37.29, which is slightly above the norms published by Dong (2009) for the DIT-2. Because of the differences in scores between the current experimental group (those seeking an RA position) and the control group (general student population),

those who seek to become RAs already have a slightly increased level of moral judgment development (P or N2 score) as measured by the DIT-2.

Summary of Study Findings

A small level of statistically significant outcomes has been shown with this study. Hypothesis 1a and 2a both had significant outcomes, while all of the others did not. For Hypotheses 1a and 1b, there has not been any specific research on RAs in relation to their normative moral judgment development scores. The findings for Hypothesis 2a showed a significant difference in their moral judgment development based on pretest and posttest N2 scores for students who completed the RA selection course compared to students who did not complete the course; these findings support the research of Schlaefli et al. (1985) and Self et al. (1989). Although the findings for Hypothesis 2b, which utilized the P score as the measurement, were not significant, they were in line with McKelfresh's (1987) findings. The findings for Hypotheses 3a and 3b conflicted with McKelfresh's (1987) findings that showed differences between the genders. Results for Hypotheses 4a and 4b did not show a significant difference in pre- and posttest scores of only the students enrolled in the course. In comparing scores between those students, I found no difference. This outcome supports the research that has shown that studies using an educational intervention have not had significant results when one is comparing moral judgment development scores to only the participants to themselves (Schlaefli et al., 1985). Findings for Hypotheses 5a and 5b also did not show a significant difference between the genders in moral judgment development posttest scores. Both of these findings are in line with research that showed that gender and an individual's moral judgment development are not dependent

on one other (Derryberry & Thoma, 2005; Finger et al., 1992; King & Mayhew, 2002; Rest, 1976). Finally, the outcomes for Hypotheses 6a and 6b also indicated no significant differences between gender, class standing, RA selection course enrollment, and moral judgment scores for both N2 and P scores. These findings are supported by Chung et al. (2009) and Thoma (2009), who showed no differences between freshmen and seniors' moral judgment development scores; the findings also are supported by the literature related to gender cited previously for Hypotheses 3a and 3b, and 4a and 4b.

Recommendations for Future Research

The outcomes of this study suggest various recommendations for future research in this area. I also suggest a few possible modifications to the research design of future studies.

What makes higher education so special is the diversity in campuses across the country. My recommendations for future research include the following: A similar study could be completed at other colleges and universities of varying size and Carnegie Classification. From technical schools to the major research institutions, there are many different types of higher-education systems. Different institutions with different RA training programs may produce results that differ from the current study.

A similar study utilizing a mixed-method approach also might be conducted to gain a better understanding of exactly how individuals' moral judgment development increases. Listening to their stories and their experiences of the training and how they believe it has prepared them to be ethical professionals could be of interest.

Another future research project could look at the impact of a universal syllabus for RA training to be used by multiple colleges and universities. Similar research questions as in the current study could be examined across the participating campuses. Gaining support for this project may be a challenge, but it potentially could be achieved by having a group of professionals from across the country come together first, and then design the syllabus together. Utilizing a national organization such as American College and University Housing Officers—International (ACUHO-I) might be one way to get more buy-in for this venture.

Finally, it would be interesting, but difficult, to establish a norm N2 score for RAs across the country. Having this standard would allow researchers to see whether their students were above or below the established norm score, and whether anything they did from an intervention standpoint caused an increase or decrease in the N2 scores. Partnering with the Center for the Study of Ethical Development at the University of Alabama would be important to establish a norm N2 score for RAs across the country as they are the clearing house for all aspects of the DIT-2.

In examining the actual research design, I recommend the following two changes for future studies: First, to get a more robust sample, distribute the DIT-2 in person to both the control group and the experimental group. It is very easy to ignore an email containing a request to complete a survey, but much more difficult when someone is in front of you making the request.

Second, have the control group complete the pre- and posttest. With the delivery of this study's instrument via the Web, and my having to rely on the students to self-select into the study, it was difficult enough to get a small response rate on the single

test the control group took. This difficulty also would be another reason in support of the previous recommendation.

Conclusion

Leaders within higher education have been concerned with the moral development of students since the colonial times (McClellan, 1999). The days of house moms, curfews, and *in loco parentis* have evolved into coed, suite-style living with thematic housing opportunities, and well-trained student staff who are responsible for the day-to-day management of a floor of residential students. “Although emphasis on moral development in relation to intellectual development fluctuated over the years, current leaders stress the importance of moral development in today’s colleges and universities” (Willis, 1992, p. 97).

This study adds to the limited body of knowledge of RA training courses and provides some insight into how a training course can impact an individual’s moral judgment development. The purpose of this study was to see whether there are differences in the moral judgment development of today’s traditional-age college students who participated in an RA training course compared to those students who did not participate in such a course. The hypothesized model was tested and showed minimal statistical support for the full conceptual framework of the study. The results discussed in chapter 4 indicate a significant difference in both the pretest and posttest N2 scores of students who were enrolled in the RA training course compared to those students who were not. This outcome demonstrates that, at a minimum, students who were enrolled in the RA training course demonstrated a higher level of postconventional moral thinking, and thus a higher N2 score.

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APPENDICES

Appendix B: The DIT-2

Defining Issues Test-2 US version

1. Informed Consent

Dear Participant,
Thank you for agreeing to participate in our research project.

- As a reminder, we ask for your student ID#, but are not collecting names attached to the survey. Once all the surveys have been submitted, we will modify your student ID# so that there would be no way to link your survey responses to you.
- The survey should take you no more than 45 minutes
- At the end of the survey, you will have the option of providing your name to be entered into a drawing for a \$100 gift certificate or just submitting the survey. If you choose to enter into the drawing, you will be re-directed to another screen so that your name will not be associated with your survey responses.

We appreciate you taking the time to help with this project.

If you have any questions, please contact Kevin Jacques at kjacque@rams.colostate.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a volunteer in this research, contact Janell Barker, Human Research Administrator, at 9704911655.

Sincerely,
Sharon K. Anderson, PhD
Professor, School of Education

Kevin L. Jacques
Doctoral Student, School of Education

Defining Issues Test-2 US version

2. Defining Issues Test-2

This questionnaire is concerned with how you define the issues in a social problem. Several stories about social problems will be described. After each story, there will be a list of questions. The questions that follow each story represent different issues that might be raised by the problem. In other words, the questions/issues raise different ways of judging what is important in making a decision about the social problem. You will be asked to rate and rank the questions in terms of how important each one seems to you.

PLEASE TRY TO FINISH THE QUESTIONNAIRE IN ONE SITTING.

Defining Issues Test-2 US version

3. EXAMPLE of the task

Imagine you are about to vote for a candidate for the Presidency of the United States. Before you vote, you are asked to rate the importance of five issues you could consider in deciding who to vote for. Rate the importance of each item (issue) by checking the appropriate box.

*1. Rate the following issues in terms of importance.

	Great	Much	Some	Little	No
1. Financially are you personally better off now than you were four years ago?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Does one candidate have a superior moral character?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Which candidate stands the tallest?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Which candidate would make the best world leader?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Which candidate has the best ideas for our country's internal problems, like crime and health care.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Note. Some items may seem irrelevant or not make sense (as in item #3). In that case, rate the item as "NO".

After you rate all of the items you will be asked to RANK the top four items in terms of importance. Note that it makes sense that the items you RATE as most important should be RANKED as well. So if you only rated item 1 as having great importance you should rank it as most important.

*2. Consider the 5 issues above and rank which issues are the most important.

	1	2	3	4	5
Most important item	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Second most important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Third most important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fourth most important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Again, remember to consider all of the items before you rank the four most important items and be sure that you only rank items that you found important.

Note also that before you begin to rate and rank items you will be asked to state your preference for what action to take in story.

Thank you and you may begin the questionnaire!

Defining Issues Test-2 US version

4. Story 1

Famine

The small village in northern India has experienced shortages of food before, but this year's famine is worse than ever. Some families are even trying to feed themselves by making soup from tree bark. Mustaq Singh's family is near starvation. He has heard that a rich man in his village has supplies of food stored away and is hoarding food while its price goes higher so that he can sell the food later at a huge profit. Mustaq is desperate and thinks about stealing some food from the rich man's warehouse. The small amount of food that he needs for his family probably wouldn't even be missed.

*1. What should Mustaq Singh do? Do you favor the action of taking food?

Should take the food
 Can't decide
 Should not take the food

*2. Rate the following issues in terms of importance.

	Great	Much	Some	Little	No
1. Is Mustaq Singh courageous enough to risk getting caught for stealing?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Isn't it only natural for a loving father to care so much for his family that he would steal?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Shouldn't the community's laws be upheld?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Does Mustaq Singh know a good recipe for preparing soup from tree bark?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Does the rich man have any legal right to store food when other people are starving?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Is the motive of Mustaq Singh to steal for himself or to steal for his family?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. What values are going to be the basis for social cooperation?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Is the epitome of eating reconcilable with the culpability of stealing?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Does the rich man deserve to be robbed for being so greedy?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. Isn't private property an institution to enable the rich to exploit the poor?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. Would stealing bring about more total good for everybody concerned or wouldn't it?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. Are laws getting in the way of the most basic claim of any member of a society?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

*3. Consider the 12 issues above and rank which issues are the most important.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Most important item	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Second most important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Third most important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fourth most important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Defining Issues Test-2 US version

5. Story 2

Reporter

Molly Dayton has been a news reporter for the *Gazette* newspaper for over a decade. Almost by accident, she learned that one of the candidates for Lieutenant Governor for her state, Grover Thompson, had been arrested for shop-lifting 20 years earlier. Reporter Dayton found out that early in his life, Candidate Thompson had undergone a confused period and done things he later regretted, actions which would be very out-of-character now. His shoplifting had been a minor offense and charges had been dropped by the department store. Thompson has not only straightened himself out since then, but built a distinguished record in helping many people and in leading constructive community projects. Now, Reporter Dayton regards Thompson as the best candidate in the field and likely to go on to important leadership positions in the state. Reporter Dayton wonders whether or not she should write the story about Thompson's earlier troubles because in the upcoming close and heated election, she fears that such a news story could wreck Thompson's chance to win.

*1. Do you favor the action of reporting the story?

Should report the story Can't decide Should not report the story

*2. Rate the following issues in terms of importance.

	Great	Much	Some	Little	No
1. Doesn't the public have a right to know all the facts about all the candidates for office?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Would publishing the story help Reporter Dayton's reputation for investigative reporting?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. If Dayton doesn't publish the story wouldn't another reporter get the story anyway and get the credit for investigative reporting?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Since voting is such a joke anyway, does it make any difference what reporter Dayton does?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Hasn't Thompson shown in the past 20 years that he is a better person than his earlier days as a shop-lifter?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. What would best service society?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. If the story is true, how can it be wrong to report it?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. How could reporter Dayton be so cruel and heartless as to report the damaging story about candidate Thompson?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Does the right of "habeas corpus" apply in this case?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. Would the election process be more fair with or without reporting the story?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. Should reporter Dayton treat all candidates for office in the same way by reporting everything she learns about them, good and bad?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. Isn't it a reporter's duty to report all the news regardless of the circumstances?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

*3. Consider the 12 issues you rated above and rank which issues are the most important.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Most important item	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Second most important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Third most important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fourth most important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Defining Issues Test-2 US version

6. Story 3

School Board

Mr. Grant has been elected to the School Board District 190 and was chosen to be Chairman. The district is bitterly divided over the closing of one of the high schools. One of the high schools has to be closed for financial reasons, but there is no agreement over which school to close. During his election to the School Board, Mr. Grant had proposed a series of "Open Meetings" in which members of the community could voice their opinions. He hoped that dialogue would make the community realize the necessity of closing one high school. Also he hoped that through open discussions, the difficulty of the decision would be appreciated, and that the community would ultimately support the school board decision. The first Open Meeting was a disaster. Passionate speeches dominated the microphones and threatened violence. The meeting barely closed without fist-fights. Later in the week, school board members received threatening phone calls. Mr. Grant wonders if he ought to call off the next Open Meeting.

*1. Do you favor calling off the next Open Meeting

Should call off the next open meeting
 Can't decide
 Should have the next open meeting

*2. Rate the following issues in terms of importance.

	Great	Much	Some	Little	No
1. Is Mr. Grant required by law to have Open Meetings on major school board decisions?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Would Mr. Grant be breaking his election campaign promises to the community by discontinuing the Open Meetings?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Would the community be even angrier with Mr. Grant if he stopped the Open Meetings?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Would the change in plans prevent scientific assessment?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. If the school board is threatened, does the chairman have the legal authority to protect the Board by making decisions in closed meetings?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Would the community regard Mr. Grant as a coward if he stopped the open meetings?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Does Mr. Grant have another procedure in mind for ensuring that divergent views are heard?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Does Mr. Grant have the authority to expel troublemakers from the meetings or prevent them from making long speeches?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Are some people deliberately undermining the school board process by playing some sort of power game?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. What effect would stopping the discussion have on the community's ability to handle controversial issues in the future?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. Is the trouble coming from only a few hotheads, and is the community in general really fair-minded and democratic?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. What is the likelihood that a good decision could be made without open discussion from the community?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Defining Issues Test-2 US version

***3. Consider the 12 issues you rated above and rank which issues are the most important.**

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Most important item	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Second most important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Third most important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fourth most important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Defining Issues Test-2 US version

7. Story 4

Cancer

Mrs. Bennett is 62 years old, and in the last phases of colon cancer. She is in terrible pain and asks the doctor to give her more pain-killer medicine. The doctor has given her the maximum safe dose already and is reluctant to increase the dosage because it would probably hasten her death. In a clear and rational mental state, Mrs. Bennett says that she realizes this; but she wants to end her suffering even if it means ending her life. Should the doctor give her an increased dosage?

*1. Do you favor the action of giving more medicine?

Should give Mrs. Bennett an increased dosage to make her die. Can't decide Should not give her an increased dosage

*2. Rate the following issues in terms of importance.

	Great	Much	Some	Little	No
1. Isn't the doctor obligated by the same laws as everybody else if giving an overdose would be the same as killing her?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Wouldn't society be better off without so many laws about what doctors can and cannot do?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. If Mrs. Bennett dies, would the doctor be legally responsible for malpractice?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Does the family of Mrs. Bennett agree that she should get more painkiller medicine?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Is the painkiller medicine an active hallucinogenic drug?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Does the state have the right to force continued existence of those who don't want to live?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Is helping to end another's life ever a responsible act of cooperation?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Would the doctor show more sympathy for Mrs. Bennett by giving the medicine or not?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Wouldn't the doctor feel guilty from giving Mrs. Bennett so much drug that she died?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. Should only God decide when a person's life should end?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. Shouldn't society protect everyone against being killed?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. Where should society draw the line between protecting life and allowing someone to die if the person wants to?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

*3. Consider the 12 issues you rated above and rank which issues are the most important.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Most important item	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Second most important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Third most important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fourth most important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Defining Issues Test-2 US version

8. Story 5

Demonstration

Political and economic instability in a South American country prompted the President of the United States to send troops to "police" the area. Students at many campuses in the U.S.A. have protested that the United States is using its military might for economic advantage. There is widespread suspicion that big oil multinational companies are pressuring the President to safeguard a cheap oil supply even if it means loss of life. Students at one campus took to the streets in demonstrations, tying up traffic and stopping regular business in the town. The president of the university demanded that the students stop their illegal demonstrations. Students then took over the college's administration building, completely paralyzing the college. Are the students right to demonstrate in these ways?

*1. Do you favor the action of demonstrating in this way?

Should continue demonstrating in these ways Can't decide Should not continue demonstrating in these ways

*2. Rate the following issues in terms of importance.

	Great	Much	Some	Little	No
1. Do the students have any right to take over property that doesn't belong to them?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Do the students realize that they might be arrested and fined, and even expelled from school?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Are the students serious about their cause or are they doing it just for fun?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. If the university president is soft on students this time, will it lead to more disorder?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Will the public blame all students for the actions of a few student demonstrators?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Are the authorities to blame by giving in to the greed of the multinational oil companies?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Why should a few people like Presidents and business leaders have more power than ordinary people?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Does this student demonstration bring about more or less good in the long run to all people?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Can the students justify their civil disobedience?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. Shouldn't the authorities be respected by students?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. Is taking over a building consistent with principles of justice?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. Isn't it everyone's duty to obey the law, whether one likes it or not?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

*3. Consider the 12 issues you rated above and rank which issues are the most important.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Most important item	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Second most important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Third most important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fourth most important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Defining Issues Test-2 US version

9. Demographics

Please provide the following information about yourself:

***1. What is your level of education? Please mark the highest level of formal education you are currently enrolled in or have completed:**

- Freshman in a bachelor's degree program
 Sophomore in a bachelor's degree program
 Junior in a bachelor's degree program
 Senior in a bachelor's degree program

2. Which best describes your race/ethnicity? [Check all that apply]

- African American or Black
 Asian or Pacific Islander
 Hispanic
 American Indian/ Other Native American
 Caucasian (other than Hispanic)
 Other (please specify)

***3. What is your gender?**

- Male
 Female

***4. How many brothers and sisters do you have? Put 0 if you don't have any.**

The number of brothers:

The number of sisters:

5. What is your age?

Enter your age in years:

***6. In terms of your political views, how would you characterize yourself?**

- Very Liberal Somewhat Liberal Neither Liberal nor
Conservative Somewhat
Conservative Very Conservative

***7. Are you a citizen of the U.S.A?**

- YES NO

***8. Is English your primary language?**

- YES NO

Defining Issues Test-2 US version

10. Test taking Environment

We would like to know something about how you completed this questionnaire. Your answers will not affect whether or not you get credit for participation but will help us understand how students take questionnaires outside of class.

1. I completed the questionnaire in one sitting.

- Yes
 No

2. Music was playing while I completed the questionnaire.

- Yes
 No

3. The TV was on while I completed the questionnaire.

- Yes
 No

4. I received phone calls while completing the questionnaire

- yes-more than one
 yes-just one
 No

5. I made a phone call while completing the questionnaire.

- Yes- more than one
 Yes- just one
 No

6. I received emails/text messages while completing the questionnaire.

- Yes-more than one
 Yes-just one
 No

7. I responded to emails/text messages while completing the questionnaire.

- Yes--more than one
 Yes-just one
 No

Defining Issues Test-2 US version

8. I stopped and talked to friends while completing the questionnaire.

- Yes- more than once
- Yes- just once
- No

9. Compared to how I take surveys in the classroom I took this questionnaire:

- The same way - not different at all
- About the same way – I had a minimal amount of distractions
- Not the same way– I had distractions that made me stop and start the questionnaire.
- Not at all the same way – I completed the questionnaire when I could while doing other things.

Defining Issues Test-2 US version

11. Recording

To help process the information:

1. Please enter your csuid number.
2. Please Indicate if you are proceeding through the Resident Assistant Selection Process.

***1. [REDACTED] Number**

***2. Are you proceeding through the Resident Assistant Selection Process?**

- Yes
- No

Defining Issues Test-2 US version

12. Recording 2

***1. What is the name of the instructor for your Resident Assistant Training Course?**

13. Gift Card Drawing

***1. Would you like to be included in the drawing for one of five \$100 gift cards to the Bookstore?**

- No
- Yes

14. Thank You

Thank you for taking the time to assist us in this research study! We greatly appreciate your time.

Appendix C: Housing and Dining Service Agreement Memo

Monday, September 10, 2012

Kevin Jacques
UNA Box 5057
Rice Hall
Florence, AL 35632



Dear Mr. Jacques,

This letter is to serve as our departmental agreement to work with you in seeking subjects for your dissertation research. Specifically, seeking participants from our Resident Assistant Pool through our Resident Assistant Class we conduct in the spring semester.

I am happy to provide necessary information, disseminate requests, etc as needed for your research.

Sincerely,

[Redacted signature]

[Redacted name]

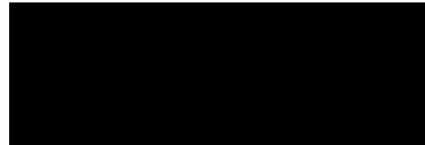
Assistant Director of Residence Life – Staffing, Training & Development

[Redacted contact information]

[Redacted footer line]

Division of Student Affairs

Appendix D: Agreement to Provide Control-Group Email Addresses



TO: Whom It May Concern

FROM: [REDACTED]
Executive Director, Assessment and Research

DATE: September 10, 2012

SUB: Agreement to Provide Student Names and Email Addresses

This memo is sent to confirm that [REDACTED] will provide Kevin Jacques with names and email addresses for his research for his doctoral dissertation.

Please contact me at [REDACTED] if you have any questions.

Appendix E: Control-Group Email

Dear Participant,

My name is Kevin Jacques, a Doctoral student from the Colorado State University School of Education, College and University Leadership specialization. Sharon Anderson, Ph.D. is my advisor and the Principal Investigator. We are conducting a research study on if participating in the Resident Assistant training class has an impact on a student's moral judgment versus students who do not participate in the class. The title of our project is "Revisiting the Impact of a Residence Hall Staff Training Class on the Moral Judgment Development of College Students." The Principal Investigator is Sharon K. Anderson, Ph.D., Professor from the School of Education, and I am the Co-Principal Investigator.

We would like you to take two online assessments: one at the beginning of the Resident Assistant training class, and one at the conclusion of the course. The assessment is known as the Defining Issues Test-2. Each assessment will take approximately 30 to 45 minutes; your total time commitment is no more than 1.5 hours. Your participation in this research is voluntary. If you decide to participate in the study, you may withdraw your consent and stop participation at any time without penalty.

Confidentiality is of the utmost importance during this research project. With that in mind, we will ask you to provide your Student ID# so that the researchers can match the pre and post surveys. Only the research team will have access to the surveys. The researchers will not create a list that links your Student ID# to your name, and once the surveys have been linked, your Student ID# will be modified making it impossible to link your survey responses to you. At the end of the survey, you will be asked if you would like to be entered into a drawing for one of five \$100 [REDACTED] bookstore gift certificates. If you select to be entered into the drawing you will be directed to a different screen to provide your name and contact information. Your name will not be linked to your survey responses. When we report and share the data with others, we will combine the data from all participants. If your name is drawn to receive a gift certificate, your identity/record of receiving compensation (NOT your data) may be made available to [REDACTED] officials for financial audits. While there is no direct benefit to you as a participant, we hope to contribute to the literature in assessing the impact of Resident Assistant training on moral judgment.

There are no known risks that we are aware of by participating in this study. It is not possible to identify all potential risks in research procedures, but the researcher(s) have taken reasonable safeguards to minimize any known and potential, but unknown, risks.

To indicate your willingness to participate in this research and to continue on to the survey, click here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/5P6GD5J>.

If you have any questions, please contact Kevin Jacques at kljacque@rams.colostate.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a volunteer in this research, contact Janell Barker, Human Research Administrator, at 970-491-1655.

Sincerely,

Sharon K. Anderson, PhD
Professor, School of Education

Kevin L. Jacques
Doctoral Student, School of Education, College and University
Leadership Program

Appendix F: Experimental-Group Email

Dear Participant,

My name is Kevin Jacques, a Doctoral student from the Colorado State University School of Education, College and University Leadership specialization. Sharon Anderson, Ph.D. is my advisor and the Principal Investigator. We are conducting a research study on if participating in the Resident Assistant training class has an impact on a student's moral judgment versus students who do not participate in the class. The title of our project is "Revisiting the Impact of a Residence Hall Staff Training Class on the Moral Judgment Development of College Students." The Principal Investigator is Sharon K. Anderson, Ph.D., Professor from the School of Education, and I am the Co-Principal Investigator.

We would like you to take the one online assessment. The assessment is known as the Defining Issues Test-2. Participation will take approximately 30 to 45 minutes. Your participation in this research is voluntary. If you decide to participate in the study, you may withdraw your consent and stop participation at any time without penalty.

Confidentiality is of the utmost importance during this research project. With that in mind, we will ask you to provide your Student ID# so that the researchers can ensure your responses do not get mixed with the responses from the students who are proceeding through the RA Selection process. Only the research team will have access to the survey responses. The researchers will not create a list that links your Student ID# to your name, and once the surveys have been collected, your Student ID# will be modified making it impossible to link your survey responses to you. At the end of the survey, you will be asked if you would like to be entered into a drawing for one of five \$100 [REDACTED] bookstore gift certificates. If you select to be entered into the drawing you will be directed to a different screen to provide your name and contact information. Your name will not be linked to your survey responses. When we report and share the data with others, we will combine the data from all participants. If your name is drawn to receive a gift certificate, your identity/record of receiving compensation (NOT your data) may be made available to [REDACTED] officials for financial audits. While there is no direct benefit to you as a participant, we hope to contribute to the literature in assessing the impact of Resident Assistant training on moral judgment.

There are no known risks that we are aware of by participating in this study. It is not possible to identify all potential risks in research procedures, but the researcher(s) have taken reasonable safeguards to minimize any known and potential, but unknown, risks.

To indicate your willingness to participate in this research and to continue on to the survey, click here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/5P6GD5J>.

If you have any questions, please contact Kevin Jacques at kljacque@rams.colostate.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a volunteer in this research, contact Janell Barker, Human Research Administrator, at 970-491-1655.

Sincerely,

Sharon K. Anderson, PhD
Professor, School of Education

Kevin L. Jacques
Doctoral Student, School of Education, College and University
Leadership Program

Appendix G: Week 5 RA Course Lesson Plan

Week 5: Team Dynamics, Role Modeling, Ethics

Learning Outcomes: As a result of participation in this session, participants will...

- Be able to explore individual communication styles and personal value systems to understand where others are coming from.
- Understand the importance of role-modeling good behavior (academically, socially, and ethically).
- Learn the importance of changing perceptions by exploring myths and truths of the college experience.
- Be able to openly understand that people have varied evaluative processes.

Class at a glance:

<i>Time</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Materials Needed</i>
5 min	Administrative Tasks	
25 min	Overview: Pick Your Team Exercise (see Part 1)	Pick Your Team Worksheet
15 min	Media's Perception of College Experience (see Part 2)	Video and means of playing it to a group
5 min	Break	
20 min	Discussion: Perception Change (see Part 3)	
20 min	Role Modeling (see Part 4)	
30 min	Ethics Continuum (see Part 5)	

Homework:

- Read "Marginality and Mattering: Key Issues in Building Community"- due next class.
- Programming Worksheet- due Week 7.

Part 1: Overview: Pick-Your-Team Exercise

Participants are asked to report out to the larger group about their case study. Please refer to Case Studies.

Part 2: Media's Perception of College-Experience Video

Play the video in front of the class. The purpose of the video is to get participants thinking about whether or not perceptions are true and how perceptions can be changed.

Prompt for class BEFORE they see the video:

This video contains a variety of clips from movies and TV that represent college students. I'd like you to watch it and at the end, I'd like to have a discussion on some of things that are shown.

Discussion of video:

- *How are college students portrayed in the media based off of these clips?*
- *What has been portrayed in the video that you think is true about college students?*
- *What are some myths that have been portrayed by the media?*

Part 3: Perceptions

Perceptions of University Activity prompt:

In small groups, please discuss each of the following questions. Afterward, we'll discuss as a large group.

**Facilitators may break the class into four smaller groups and assign each group to a section of questions below for discussion.*

Social & Community

- When students come to college, what do they expect in terms of social life?
- What do incoming students expect regarding their roommates?
- What do students expect their floor community to be like?

Personal Health

- What do incoming students expect regarding their personal health and well-being?
- What do students expect regarding less-frequently considered aspects of personal health including mental, spiritual, sexual, and emotional?
- Are students empowered to take care of their own personal health in college?

University Environment

- What is University's reputation in the eyes of incoming students?
- Which aspects of University's environment can help a student to be successful and happy? Which aspects can hinder this?
- What does the community expect University students to be like?

Academics

- What do incoming students expect of their classes and coursework?
 - Do new students feel supported or on their own regarding academic success?
 - Do students expect to be able to study in their residence hall?
-

Ask participants to write their answers down for their own reference:

If you could summarize incoming students' perceptions about University in three words, which words would you use?

Perceptions of Residence Hall Activity prompt:

So, these are the general perceptions of University. Let's look a bit more closely at perceptions of certain residence halls.

Look back on your experience of living in a residence hall, and consider the following:

- *What perceptions existed about that hall?*
- *Were people proud to live in that building?*
- *Were people proud to be part of your floor community?*
- *How would you describe the culture of your building?*
- *How did you learn about that culture?*
- *What was generally regarded as the best part about living there?*
- *What was generally regarded as the worst part about living there?*
- *What three words would you use to describe that residence hall?*

Take a look at what three words you used to describe the residence hall. Could you also use those same words to describe a human being?

Anthropomorphism is the attribution of human characteristics to nonhuman things.

Some further examples might include

- "My car is acting really temperamental lately."
- "New York is the city that never sleeps."
- "My dog is such a character!"
- Also, think about B.B. King's guitar "Lucille"; Carl Sandburg's description of Chicago's "Broad Shoulders"; wind being described as "angry", etc.

These anthropomorphic sentiments bear little to no literal truth, but have value metaphorically because they invite us to relate to the given object in a particular way.

Similarly, for residence halls, assigning to them human-like attributes sets up an expectation for people to relate to the buildings in a certain way. These ideas, along with perception, have a powerful impact on how a community develops within a building.

With this idea in mind, let's discuss the following questions:

- *To what extent can RAs affect perceptions about a building?*
- *What concrete steps can RAs take to affect perceptions?*

Key point: Given that close to 90% of our on-campus population is new to the University, RAs are definitely in a position of influence over their hall's community because they have experienced the University before, and in many cases have lived in that particular building. As for RAs who are new to a building, it is important not to totally buy into all of the talk about a building's innate characteristics. How a building operates is largely a function of the people living there. Influence the lives of the people who live there, and you will influence the perception of the building for the people who live there, and for those who don't.

Part 4: Role Modeling

Activity prompt: *In this activity, I'd like you to take a minute to write down your own ideas about what you think it means to be a good role model as a Resident Assistant, and then discuss your thoughts in small groups.*

Let's work to arrive at 10 attributes of an RA Role Model.

Make sure that the conversation takes into account:

Rules and Policies	Integrity
Social Behavior	Identity
Academics	Inclusiveness
Campus Involvement	Sense of Purpose
Personal Balance	Emotional Expression
Self-Care	Community Engagement
Healthy Relationships	Respect
Assertiveness	Being what they want their community to be

“You must be the change you wish to see in the world.”—Gandhi

If you want your community to be something, you must first be IT and show others how to be IT.

If you want your floor to be _____,

then you as an RA must be _____.

(Same as Above)

Part 5: Ethics Overview

Often ethics and values are mistaken for the same thing. Explain the difference using the following descriptions of both:

VALUES	ETHICS
Define the individual	Translate values into action
Constant	Changing
Internally derived	Externally determined
Virtue-oriented	Justice-oriented
General	Specific
Stated morally	Shared behaviorally
Judged as good or bad	Judged as present or absent
Set priorities	Set boundaries

Taken from "Everybody Does It! Ethics & Everyday Choices" by Susan K. Mead, Assistant Director for Training, Staffing and Academic Support, East Carolina University

Part 6: Ethics Continuum

Activity prompt: *One end of the class represents "Strongly Agree" and the other end represents "Strongly Disagree." You will listen to a statement and stand at the spot on the continuum that best represents how you feel about the issue. You will get an opportunity to discuss why you are where you are on the continuum. As everyone responds to the questions about why they moved to the "agree" or "disagree" positions, you are free to change positions if one of the other participants says something that persuades you to modify your original viewpoints.*

Remember that your function is to keep everyone involved, ensure that students articulate thoughtful reasons for their selected positions, and not allow the discussion to become too personal or rowdy.

Begin with a relatively innocuous topic, and then gradually move toward more controversial and even “hot-button” issues. The key question in facilitating this exercise will be

Why do you strongly agree or strongly disagree with this statement?

Possible statements:

- It is okay if I do not report someone drinking in the halls because I know that person is a responsible drinker.
- It is okay to skip the duty walk.
- If you are in a party with your group and there are some derogatory remarks being made about certain groups of people, it is okay to not say anything.
- My room is my own private space and I should be able to put up any posters, or messages.
- My right to a healthy environment supersedes another’s right to smoke.
- I see another RA from my staff not performing her duties. I just do not bring it up with my supervisor.
- It is okay to smoke with residents regardless of age.
- I am a good friend with other RAs and I can consistently switch duty nights so I can “go out.”
- If one of your residents walks in drunk but does not cause any problems, you just let the resident go to his room and sleep it off instead of confronting him.
- If you are going to an activity and want to invite some staff members, you just invite all of them, whether or not you are friends with them.
- The drinking age should be lowered to 18.
- It is okay to date a staff member.
- I am at a party and I am 21 when some of my residents arrive who I know are not 21 yet. I just continue drinking.
- It is okay to date residents on your floor/in the building.
- It is okay to drink with residents who are 21 when you are also 21.
- I am an RA and I can get away with violating policies such as having alcohol in my room, violating fire code, etc.
- It is okay to pawn issues on my floor off on other RAs to deal with. I am not good at confrontations and I do not want to be the “bad guy.”
- I should be able to wish everyone Merry Christmas.

- It is okay to use personal information (mailing addresses) of residents available to front-desk workers to solicit for organizations I personally belong to (i.e., religious events, entertainment events).
- When of age, I return to the building drunk in front of residents who know me—after all, everyone does that.
- It is okay to provide other residents with information on another student's disciplinary record.
- I do not offer certain campus resources to students because the resources go against my own personal beliefs (e.g., not referring to GLBTRC or other student-diversity services and programs).
- Posting pictures/status messages that exhibit actions that could be seen as questionable/bad role modeling on Facebook is OK.

Processing activity: *Observations? Did you feel pressured to conform? How do you think these situations will play out in the RA role? How do you think you will balance personal beliefs with ethics? Is ethics limited to policies and procedures, or is it more than that?*

Key point: Stress the importance of having a personal ethical philosophy but also of being able to temper that with the organization's rules and policies.

Perception discussion

If you'd like to cut out the questions to distribute them to the group, use this:

Social & Community

When students come to college, what do they expect in terms of social life?

What do incoming students expect regarding their roommates?

What do students expect their floor community to be like?

Personal Health

What do incoming students expect regarding their personal health and well-being?

What do students expect regarding less-frequently considered aspects of personal health including mental, spiritual, sexual, and emotional?

Are students empowered to take care of their own personal health in college?

University Environment

What is University reputation in the eyes of incoming students?

What aspects of University's environment can help a student to be successful and happy? Which aspects can hinder this?

What does the community expect University students to be like?

Academics

What do incoming students expect of their classes and coursework?

Do new students feel supported or on their own regarding academic success?

Do students expect to be able to study in their residence hall?
