

## Carnegie Council Activity on the Ethics & Values Mind Map (30-45 minutes)

### Overview

This interactive activity engages students with Carnegie Council's Ethics & Values Mind Map to explore ways to solve issues through ethical reflection. By identifying the values they would like to uphold and contending with the trade-offs of ethical decision-making, students will develop a thoughtful values-based response that communicates one way to address a problem.

### Learning Outcomes

As a result of engaging in this activity, students will:

- Identify an ethical issue they are trying to address.
- Analyze the values and perspectives that cause others to have different point of view around the issue.
- Consider how others may view the issue differently and identify ways to address their concerns.
- Create a value-driven statement that enables them to articulate a solution.

Carnegie Council principles that the activity addresses:

- **The commitment to international cooperation** is a moral proposition because it goes to the essence of ethics—recognizing what is common for all, while managing the intrinsic and inevitable differences between and among people.
- **The defense of democracy in the U.S. and globally** requires confronting autocrats who discriminate based on ethnicity, gender, and religion, and who deny basic freedoms to their citizens.
- **Fidelity** means honesty, integrity, and a good-faith effort at serving the truth. Rhetoric certainly matters, and in an age of disinformation, leaders must fight against lies, willful deception, and deliberate misrepresentation of facts.
- **The humanitarian imperative** is the duty to save lives and alleviate suffering through humane and equal treatment. As violence and cruelty abound in conflict zones around the world, mounting effective humanitarian responses remains the essential moral imperative of our time.

**Materials for the Exercise:**

- [Ethics & Values Mind Map](#)

**Activity Instructions:**

The activity can be done in two ways:

- Option 1: Assign students the Ethics & Values Mind Map as homework and ask them to bring their responses for discussion.
- Option 2: Provide 10-15 minutes during class time for students to fill out the Ethics & Values Mind Map and then begin the discussion.

During the Ethics & Values Mind Map exercise, choose an ethical issue that you would like to address and develop a thoughtful values-based response that communicates one way to address the problem. You can choose either a local, community, or international issue. Answer the series of questions to help you achieve your desired outcome. The most important aspect of this exercise is to help you engage in the process of reflecting on the questions.

## **1. Introduction for the Discussion (15-20 minutes)**

Feel free to use the following introduction to facilitate a discussion with students on what they learned as a result of engaging with the Ethics & Values Mind Map:

In everyday life, we make judgements based on our values. We learn these values from our upbringing, education, and the people we engage with. Because our values may differ from those of others, disagreements and conflict can occur. Carnegie Council takes a pluralistic approach to ethics which rejects the position that there is only one acceptable lens through which to assess moral questions. Pluralism, simply put, is empathy for difference while seeking what is common in humanity. Ethics is not about finding one "right" answer, but about strengthening ethical inquiry, considering other perspectives and dialogue across differences. Using ethics as a tool allows us to reflect on what we truly care about, how to best articulate our thoughts, and find solutions that are grounded in values.

**What is ethics?** Ethics constitutes a reflection on morality that seeks to analyze, criticize, and interpret rules, roles, and relations within society. To learn more about the definition of ethics, please visit Carnegie Council's [Key Terms page](#).

**What are values?** Values are individual beliefs that motivate people to act one way or another. They serve as a guide for human behavior. To learn more about values, please visit the [Ethics Unwrapped page](#), from the McCombs School of Business at the University of Texas.

## **2. Discussion Questions** (15-20 minutes)

Ask students to reflect on the following questions and engage in a class-wide conversation:

1. What surprised you about the activity?
2. What values did you identify in your mind map, and how were they influential in your values-driven statement?
3. Did considering values different from your own change or deepen your thinking about the issue? If so, how?
4. What is the most valuable thing you are taking away with after engaging with the Ethics & Values Mind Map exercise?
5. How did the Ethics & Values Mind Map exercise help you think of ethics as a tool for developing solutions to an issue?

### **Post-Activity Reading**

To wrap up the activity, you can introduce students to Carnegie Council's [\*Ethics in International Affairs 101\* guidebook](#).