

Carnegie Council Lesson Plan for Ethical Issues in AI (60 minutes)

Overview

This session explores ethical issues around the use of artificial intelligence (AI). Specifically, this session focuses on uses of AI in political deliberation and diplomacy, as well as and through the fusion of data for law enforcement purposes. Students will consider the impact of these technologies on civil liberties and human rights.

Core Objectives

1. Students will be introduced to several ethical issues involving the use of AI tools for law enforcement issues.
2. Students will learn about how AI technologies may point toward more inclusive political deliberation, but also some of the risks and ethical limitations of such approaches.

Carnegie Council principles that the lesson addresses:

- **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.

1. Opening Ethical Provocation (10 minutes)

- **Prompt:** Imagine that a government decides to employ a powerful AI tool for increasing public safety. The tool has access to people's digital footprints (the data left behind when individuals use the Internet), can scan social media accounts and cameras (doorbell and CCTV), and cross reference this information with crime reports. The government claims they will use this technology to solve crimes, as well as more efficiently deploy law enforcement. Would you support this tool? Why or why not?
- Quick write and brief discussion.

2. Overview (10 minutes)

Students will be provided with an overview of two issues in AI, “data fusion” and the growing use of AI in politics (both in diplomacy and deliberation). They will consider questions around ‘accountability’ and the impact of these technologies on civil and human rights.

- **“Data fusion”** is the process of aggregating [behavioral data](#) or digital footprints—interests, beliefs, and movements in real life and online—to create new information. It can be used by law enforcement in [intelligence-led policing](#) (ILP), which “refers to a model of policing in which law enforcement officers utilize data collection and analytics technology to generate intelligence, with the goal of preventing criminal activity before it happens.” (From Carnegie Council’s [Intelligence-led policing Key Terms page](#))
 - i. Carnegie Council has developed a [Data Fusion](#) visualization tool that students can use to understand better how data fusion works and the risks involved (this will be used in the activity).
- AI tools are also increasingly being used in [political deliberations](#) and diplomacy. For instance, AI tools can be used to summarize documents; write political talking points, briefs, and speeches; do translations; and represent underrepresented groups or model conversations through chat bots.
 - i. As with data fusion, questions of accountability and transparency are relevant because the extent to which accuracy can be guaranteed is difficult given the “black box” nature of these tools. There are also ethical questions about the principles employed by the developers of these AI tools.
 - ii. See Carnegie Council’s [“The Trade-Offs of AI in Diplomacy”](#) communiqué for specific issues.

[“AI accountability](#) refers to the idea that artificial intelligence should be developed, deployed, and utilized such that responsibility for bad outcomes can be assigned to liable parties.” (From Carnegie Council’s [AI accountability Key Terms page](#))

- AI accountability is relevant to data fusion because many AI tools could be used to target activists or suppress political opponents. Data fusion tools may also generate evidence based on probabilities are not certain, in which case those wrongly accused would have a moral, if not a legal, claim against AI tools.
 - i. AI accountability is relevant to politics because of the need for transparency if the outcomes of these tools are to be used to justify policies, laws, or international agreements.

3. Case Study (35 minutes)

This activity will have students using Carnegie Council's [Data Fusion](#) tool to think through the ethical tradeoffs between rights and security with which policymakers have to grapple. Students will also utilize the [Data Fusion Question Set](#) to think through the proposed AI software.

Part 1: Divide the students into four groups and introduce the prompt (10 minutes)

The Scenario: You live in a liberal democracy that has constitutionalized certain political, civil, and human rights, such as the rights to life, liberty, and security; freedom of assembly; freedom of religion; freedom of association; and freedom of speech. The country has largely been ruled by one party for the last 20 years, the Purple Party, but there is a growing opposition party, the Blue Party. In recent years certain cities in the country have experienced increased violent crime, which the Blue Party has used in their political platform against the Purple Party. In response, the Purple Party has decided to deploy a new AI software that can use behavioral data and digital footprints to both solve crimes and help monitor those who are known associates with other convicted criminals to reduce crime.

The other issue is that in recent years the country, although guaranteeing freedom of religion on paper, has increasingly turned toward Religion A (with almost 75 percent of the population self-reporting as members), with the rest of the population practicing other religions (each of which has no more than 5 percent of the population) or not reporting any religious belief. Those who do not belong to Religion A increasingly feel threatened by the educational policies that the government has supported to bring religion into schools, as well as public commemorations of Religion A's holidays.

You will be divided into separate groups that each must make the case for or against the proposed tool within an ethical framework. Several relevant ethical concerns here are: rights, privacy, fairness, accountability, freedom or liberty, and security, though each group can consider more.

Group A: Representatives from the Purple Party

Group B: Law Enforcement

Group C: Representatives from the Blue Party

Group D: Members of an Interfaith Group that do not belong to Religion A

Part 2: Data Fusion Tool (20 minutes)

Students will access the Data Fusion tool and work through it as a group. While doing so, the students should take into account their perspective to understand the implications for their group's identity. As the students work through the tool, they should consider the relevance of privacy, fairness, accountability, rights, freedom or liberty, and security, especially toward their particular group. The students can also draw on the Data Fusion Question Set to identify more concerns, and create a list of possible constraints on the type of data available to the AI tool or uses for the AI tool they would feel comfortable with.

Part 3: Presenting Their Case (15 minutes)

In Part 3, each group will briefly present to the other groups their motivation for or against the tool. They will describe how the use of the tool fits within the rights-security dilemma, as well as ethical concerns, and how their restrictions on use and data may help alleviate those concerns. In particular, each group should address the rights they are most concerned about, and how their position relates to these tools.

4. Conclusion (10 minutes)

- Revisit Prompt
- Discuss the ethical challenges and tradeoffs the activity highlights for this example.
- Which of the four guiding principles of Carnegie Council are relevant when thinking through the governance of AI and data?

Additional Resources

- [“International Policing, Ethics, & the Use of AI in Law Enforcement, with Interpol’s Jürgen Stock,”](#) *Artificial Intelligence & Equality*, Carnegie Council, February 18, 2022 (Podcast)
- [“Mapping the Impact of Data Fusion on Freedom, Security, and Human Rights,”](#) Carnegie Ethics Accelerator, Carnegie Council, February 14, 2024 (Event Recording & Transcript)
- [“The Ethics of AI Agents in Global Governance,”](#) *Ethics Empowered: Leadership in Practice*, Carnegie Council, April 21, 2026 (Event Recording & Transcript)