

# Aggie Core Values

## Weeks 6-8

### Description

This lesson will utilize individual, small-group, and large-group discussions and activities to help students explore the Aggie Core Values by comparing their own personal values to the Core Values of Texas A&M and identifying ways that they can put those values into practice.

### Learning Outcomes

- Students will explore the six core values of Texas A&M.
- Students will recognize the relevance of the core values and make connections to experiences and interactions they have had with others at Texas A&M.
- Students will explore and perform a comparative analysis of their own personal values.
- Students will identify ways that they can demonstrate respect for self, students, staff, and faculty by implementing the core values in their personal lives.

### Connection to Intended Course Outcomes/Class Objectives

- Self-efficacy – Small and large group discussions in class will provide students with opportunities to build confidence in their abilities to effectively navigate conversations that involve differing perspectives and opinions.
- Self-awareness – Students will gain a greater understanding of the motivators behind their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors by identifying their core values and the experiences that shaped them.
- Sense of purpose – Students should understand that everyone has different values and perspectives due to their personal experiences, but that our common ground and identity as a group can be found in the Aggie Core Values.
- Actively engaged – Students can practice and live the Aggie Core Values inside and outside the academic community. Understanding that these values follow us outside the Aggie Community will help prepare Aggies for great things once they leave the university environment.
- Socially integrated – Understanding self, engaging and respecting others, finding value in differences and commonalities in critical conversations and social interactions.

### Preparation, Materials & Facilitators

- A copy of the lesson plan (for Peer Mentor & Instructor)
- Notecards for Exit Ticket - 1 per student
- Aggie Core Values [Worksheet](#) - 1 per student
- [Slide Deck](#) (websites embedded)

### Overview of Time (Total time: 50 minutes)

- 15 Minutes - Personal Values Assessment (icebreaker/peer-to-peer activity)
- 25 Minutes - Slide Deck/Small Group Discussion
- 5 Minutes - Always/Sometimes/Never (Aggie Core Values)
- 5 Minutes - Exit Ticket

### Facilitator Instructions

- Regular font = talking points and should be read out loud to students
- *Italics* = notes for instructor; should NOT be read out loud to students
- **Bold** = questions for debrief/reflection and should be read out loud to students to encourage group discussion or sharing of ideas

## Personal Values Assessment/Peer-to-Peer Activity

15 Minutes

Slide 1

Slide 2 (2 minutes)

- *Play “What Texas A&M Stands For” video embedded in slide.* Many of you have probably seen this commercial on TV sometime in the last year. The video states that Aggies stand where duty requires them and for something bigger than themselves. This aligns with the university’s purpose as a land-grant institution. In 1876, Texas A&M became the state’s first public institution of higher education because of the Morrill Act, signed into law by President Abraham Lincoln. Land-grant institutions exist to provide research-based resources and programs for their residents while also providing them with the opportunity for a quality education.

Slide 3 (2 minutes)

- **How does this apply to you as a student?** As a land-grant institution, the purpose of Texas A&M is to “develop leaders of character dedicated to serving the greater good.” Texas A&M exists to prepare students for a lifetime of service at the local, state, and national level, as highlighted by the new Citizenship and Service Initiative. Our conversation today revolves around core values, which play a crucial role in shaping your character. We will discuss what values are, help you determine your own values, and identify ways they connect to the Aggie Core Values.

Slide 4 (3 minutes)

- *\*\*Before sharing text on slide\*\** **What are values?** *Provide students with an opportunity to respond.* **How are values formed?** *Provide students with a chance to respond, then share text on slide. Take a few moments and define what values are, where they come from, and how people utilize their values. Use the slide to guide the conversation.*

Slide 5 (8 minutes)

- *Have your peer mentor pass out the [Aggie Core Values worksheet](#) (and one notecard) to each student (or have students pull out a piece of paper).* On the slide are some examples that often come up as values that individuals have. Spend a few moments thinking about your own personal values. Write the five that resonate the most with you (your core values) on your worksheet in the designated section. Keep in mind that these are not aspirational values but ones that you know you already possess. *Provide 2-3 minutes for students to brainstorm their own core values.*
- Turn to a neighbor and share your top five values AND the experiences that shaped them. After you have shared your values, think of a situation in which you displayed one or more of your personal values and share with your partner. *Provide 3-4 minutes for partner discussions.*
- *Once partner discussions have ended, bring everyone back as a group.* **Is anyone willing to share their five core values with the entire group?** *Wait for responses.* **Is anyone willing to share an experience that shaped one of their core values or a situation in which you displayed a core value?** *Wait for responses.*

## Slide Deck & Drafting/Exploration of Aggie Core Values

20 minutes

Slide 6 (5 minutes)

- Now that you have an understanding of your own core values, we are going to discuss the Aggie Core Values. *During this portion of the lesson, you will be reviewing the Aggie Core Values with students. There will be stopping/talking points and a website to visit. The hope is that this would be a student-driven conversation; however, we have placed some examples for you to use to spur the conversation if it is lacking or if students are puzzled at how to respond.*
- Take a look at the following website, [tamu.edu/about/purpose-values.html](http://tamu.edu/about/purpose-values.html), as a group. Texas A&M values people immensely. If you really look at that purpose statement, you will find all 6 of our core values within that statement. Texas A&M is also considered an Honor Code Institution. While we will visit in a moment about integrity, the Aggie Code of Honor is taken quite seriously and is a tenet that Aggies live by. The Core Values at Texas A&M unify us and add concrete descriptors to who we are, how we live, and they show the world that we are a community of scholars with a service mission. *Take several minutes to read through the definitions of each core value provided on the university's website.* (5 minutes)

Slide 7 (15 minutes)

- **Have you heard any of these quotes before?** As we've discussed, our own experiences and upbringings shape how we define and implement values in our lives. (5 minutes)
- We are going to split up into six small groups, one for each of the Aggie Core Values. Your group will be responsible for producing a definition for your assigned core value as well as where you have seen, or would expect to see, this Core Value in action on campus. When finished, brainstorm what on-campus resources exist for each of the six Aggie Core Values. *Divide the class into six groups and assign each group a Core Value to discuss. Once in groups, continue with the explanation.* You will have 5 minutes to discuss your assigned core value. Once time is up, each group will take turns presenting what they have discussed with the rest of the class. *Provide groups with 5 minutes to complete the worksheet.*
- *After 5 minutes, ask for a group to volunteer to share (10 minutes). Inform students that they can record their classmates' responses on the back page of the worksheet (Page 2). Examples of the core values and answers that you may hear include:*

**Respect:** *Treating everyone with dignity and respect; welcoming everyone as a unique individual who has value to add to Texas A&M; adhering to boundaries; taking care of our resources, buildings, and respecting others' property. Safety for everyone on campus; Including everyone in our traditions; inviting new friends to games, yell practice, or sharing our knowledge of the organizations we are a part of; not putting other people down or making fun of them because they look different, sound different, think differently. Being respectful of professors in class, agreeing to disagree if our viewpoint is different from someone else's, giving everyone a chance to feel heard in conversations, and utilizing appropriate salutations in emails to faculty, students, and staff on campus.*

*Offices on campus that show Aggie Respect - The Memorial Student Center, Office of Student Community Standards,*

**Excellence:** *Students investing time in their studies. Understanding we all are here for a common goal (to become a leader to serve the greater good), setting and attaining goals, reframing our success so that we can continually improve. Hard work, dedication, failure, trying again, not settling or compromising. Positive self-talk, doing the next right thing,*

	<p><i>reflection (what went right, what could go better next time), gratitude, persistence, seeking challenges, and overcoming obstacles.</i></p> <p><i>Offices on campus that show and foster Aggie Excellence - Academic Success Center, your academic advisor, your department/college,</i></p> <p><b>Leadership:</b> <i>Courage, forward thinking, embracing change. Unity, inspiration, empowerment, an educational mindset (learning to be a good follower before becoming a good leader), and taking the first step. Building one another up, understanding our core values and our personal values, aligning our words and deeds.</i></p> <p><i>Offices on campus that show and foster Aggie Leadership - Student Organizations and Activities, The Corps of Cadets, specific programs, Launch, Graduate and Professional Studies, and all departments/colleges.</i></p> <p><b>Loyalty:</b> <i>Dedication, trust. Respect, support, strength. “We are the Aggies, The Aggies are we, true to each other as Aggies should be.”</i></p> <p><i>Offices on campus that show and foster Aggie Loyalty - Student Assistance Services, University Health Services, Disability Resources, Association of Former Students</i></p> <p><b>Integrity:</b> <i>Following through on commitments and expectations, upholding the Aggie Code of Honor, “An Aggie does not lie, cheat, steal, or tolerate those who do.,” completing assignments and exams without cheating and unauthorized help, understanding all Student Rules and adhering to them. Holding ourselves accountable for our actions, not tolerating inappropriate behaviors from others and holding them accountable for their actions, engaging our personal values even when it is not the popular thing to do, consequences (good and bad) for our actions. Engaging your personal values even when no one is looking, being honest with ourselves and with others.</i></p> <p><i>Offices on campus that show and foster Aggie Integrity - The Aggie Honor System Office, Division of Risk, Ethics, and Compliance, Hollingsworth Center for Ethical Leadership, Office of Student Community Standards</i></p> <p><b>Selfless Service:</b> <i>Reaching far and wide to other communities, working to help others. Making a positive impact, working hard just for the sake of it, without expectation for recognition or reward. Volunteering inside and outside the greater community, sharing our time with everyone.</i></p> <p><i>Offices on campus that show and foster Selfless Service - Student Assistance Services, AggieServe - Leadership &amp; Service Center</i></p>
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Reflection - Always, Sometimes, Never	
5 minutes	<p>Slide 8 (5 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Now that we have learned about the Core Values at Texas A&amp;M, spend a few minutes looking at your worksheet and for each core value, check the box Always, Sometimes, or Never (I always, sometimes, or never demonstrate this value in my daily life). Compare your core values to the Core Values of Texas A&amp;M that we just discussed. <b>Are there any values that align with yours? Are there any that are conflicting? How might you deal</b></li> </ul>

	<p><b>with a situation where you must choose to engage your personal and core values?</b> <i>Our personal values are unique to us. As we relate to being Aggies, our core values are unique to us as a community. You may still be grappling with your personal values, and they may change over time as they are tested under pressure. There are times when personal values and University Core Values conflict, depending on the situation. This is a great opportunity to use one of the questions provided above for a short class discussion.</i></p>
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<b>Exit Ticket - Personal Application</b>	
5 minutes	<p>Slide 9 (5 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I would like to share with you a recent article from the Aggie Spirit Magazine, where six students were charged with highlighting a core value at Texas A&amp;M and what it means to them, as well as how they embody and live out that value. <i>You have the option to send students this article before class and have them read it, or you can briefly summarize it to your students in class.</i> <a href="http://tx.ag/WhatMakesUsAggies">tx.ag/WhatMakesUsAggies</a></li> <li>On your notecard, answer the following question: <b>How do you hope to live out one of the Aggie Core Values during your time here at Texas A&amp;M?</b></li> </ul>
Closing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Next week we are going to be talking about _____. I'm excited to read your exit tickets. See you next week!</li> </ul>