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**Values and Leadership Activity**

**What is a value?**

Values are those inner standards from which you receive the motivation to act as you do and by which you judge behavior (both yours and others). Values signify what is important and worthwhile. They serve as the basis for moral codes and ethical reflection. Individuals have their own values based on many aspects including family, religion, peers, culture, race, social background, gender, etc. Values guide individuals, professions, communities, and institutions.

1. A value must be chosen freely. If you don’t cheat because someone tells you not to, or because you know you will get into trouble with some authority figure, you are not freely acting on your values of honesty and integrity.

2. A value is always chosen from among alternatives. If you don’t cheat because you are taking a test in an empty room without any resources, you cannot say you chose not to cheat. There must always be an alternative in choosing your value.

3. A value results from a choice made after thoughtful consideration of choices. If you don’t cheat because it never occurred to you to do otherwise, there is no value at play. If you cheat thoughtlessly or carelessly, it does not reflect a value. Only when you carefully consider alternatives and consequences and then make a choice is value reflected in that decision.

4. When you value something, it has a positive quality for you. If your decision not to cheat is something you feel good about, then it is based on a value. You like yourself for your honesty and integrity. You prize them and cherish these qualities in yourself.

5. You are willing to publicly stand by your values. Not only are you proud of your choice not to cheat, you will speak about your position and even try to convince others not to cheat. You declare in your actions and your words that you value honesty and integrity.

6. When you have a value, it shows up in every aspect of your life. You don’t just talk about having honesty and integrity – you live it. You will spend time and energy on developing your honesty and integrity. You will associate with people who also value honesty and integrity. You will make sacrifices (money or otherwise) to live by your values.

7. Values show up again and again in your actions. Not cheating on one thing does not mean you hold a value. Only when you make the same kind of choices over and over again in similar circumstances is value at play. Because of your honesty and integrity, you don’t cheat on anything. From small quizzes to big tests, from board games to big contests, your value is in effect in every circumstance.

**Choices and Values: What is important to me?**

Take a few minutes to think about the meaning of the items listed below. Indicate with a check mark the items that are important to you.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1.\_\_\_ A physical appearance to be proud of2.\_\_\_ To graduate with honors3.\_\_\_ Being an honest person4.\_\_\_ To have political power5.\_\_\_Being known as a “real” person6.\_\_\_ A meaningful relationship7.\_\_\_ Self-confidence and personal growth8.\_\_\_ Enjoyment of nature and beauty9.\_\_\_ A life with meaning, purpose, fulfilment10.\_\_\_ Continuing to learn and gain knowledge11.\_\_\_ A chance to help the sick and disadvantaged12.\_\_\_ To be attractive to others13.\_\_\_ Some honest and close friends14.\_\_\_ A long and healthy life15.\_\_\_ A meaningful relationship with God/Deity16.\_\_\_ A good marriage17.\_\_\_Satisfaction/success in the career of your choice18.\_\_\_ An equal opportunity for all people19.\_\_\_ Freedom to live life as you want20.\_\_\_ A financially comfortable life21.\_\_\_ Accomplishment of something worthwhile | 22.\_\_\_ A secure and positive family life23.\_\_\_ An enjoyable, leisurely life24.\_\_\_ Unlimited travel, fine foods, entertainment, recreational and cultural opportunities25.\_\_\_ Getting things changed for the better26.\_\_\_ A beautiful home in the setting of your choice27.\_\_\_A chance to develop creativity/potential in any area28.\_\_\_Owning a possession of great value29.\_\_\_ To speak up for my personal beliefs30.\_\_\_ To have better feelings about myself31.\_\_\_To be needed and to be important to others32.\_\_\_ To become a good parent33.\_\_\_ To have a better relationship with my parents34. \_\_\_ To be physically beautiful35.\_\_\_ To persevere in what I am doing36.\_\_\_Time for prayer/worship37.\_\_\_ To give of myself freely in helping others38.\_\_\_A safe and secure environment39.\_\_\_ To be loved by a special few40.\_\_\_To be trusted by others |

Of the items you selected above, list the number of the five items that are MOST important to you:

A.\_\_\_\_\_ B.\_\_\_\_\_ C.\_\_\_\_\_ D.\_\_\_\_\_ E.\_\_\_\_\_

When you have listed the five items that are most important to you, refer to the value characteristics chart below and write the appropriate characteristics according to your numbers.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Number | Characteristics |
| 5 | Sincerity |
| 3, 40 | Honesty, Integrity |
| 7, 30 | Emotional well-being, Stability |
| 8 | Artistic appreciation |
| 2, 10 | Education, Intelligence, Wisdom |
| 11, 37, 18 | (Altruism) Compassion, Fairness, Justice |
| 1, 12, 34 | Appearance, Beauty, Approval |
| 6, 13, 31, 39 | Love, Friendship, Personal closeness |
| 14, 38 | Health, Personal safety, Security |
| 15, 36 | Religion, Spirituality |
| 16, 22, 32, 33 | Family, Love, Emotional Security |
| 9, 17, 21, 27 | Fulfillment, Intellectual and Vocational achievement |
| 19 | Personal Freedom, Independence |
| 20, 26, 28 | Financial security, Money, Status |
| 23, 24 | Pleasure, Travel, Material satisfaction |
| 4, 25 | Power, Achievement |
| 29 | Courage |
| 35 | Perseverance |

Write the characteristics that correspond to the numbers you selected on the checklist.

1.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

3.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

4.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

5.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Please write a brief reflection about your values based on this activity. Use the following questions to guide your reflection:

1. Where do your values come from? (Family, religion, friends, media, self, etc)
2. How do these values influence your role as a student at NIU?
3. Do your peers share your values? How does this make you feel?
4. Are you satisfied with where you are headed in school, work, family, etc?
5. Does your race/ethnicity/economic background affect your values?
6. How do you believe your values influence your leadership style?

Now that you have reflected on your values, write a brief leadership action plan that you can use to guide your experiences at NIU. Please refer to the requirements for all three tiers of the Leadership Academy to guide your discussion. For example, how will your values influence your ability to complete the various activities within the Leadership Academy? How will they influence how much you enjoy the Leadership Academy activities? Feel free to include any other leadership experience(s) outside of the Leadership Academy in your plan.

Please begin your plan with your current year in school. For example, if you are a sophomore, begin with your sophomore year and work through your senior year.

When you are finished with the Values and Leadership Activity, please upload it to HuskieLink.

**Freshman Year:**

**Sophomore year:**

**Junior Year:**

**Senior Year:**