

LEGACIES AND LESSONS

Facilitating Ethical Discussions on
Universities' Complex Pasts and Present

“What’s in a Name?” Facilitation Guide

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Facilitator's Guide

Legacies and Lessons: Facilitating Ethical Discussions on Universities' Complex Pasts and Present

In recent years, many higher learning institutions have committed themselves to investigating their institutional ties to slavery and the ways that the legacies of slavery and racism play out on campuses today. For example, the Universities Studying Slavery (USS) consortium has over one hundred members, including institutions in the United States, Canada, Colombia, Scotland, Ireland, and England, engaged in ongoing work to acknowledge and engage with the impact of slavery at these institutions.

This work is vitally important but not easy. Confronting past and present harms requires intellectual and emotional bravery, in both individual reflection and conversation with others. This learning pathway aims to help groups committed to grappling with institutional ties to slavery learn together in meaningful and productive ways.

In 2022, Harvard University released the Report of the Presidential Committee on Harvard & the Legacy of Slavery. Following the report's release, University stakeholders requested materials that conveyed accurate historical information while helping participants discuss difficult topics in a supportive and inclusive way, regardless of their background knowledge. One of those materials is the normative case study, which provides the foundation for this learning pathway. Normative case studies (NCS) are short, empirically-researched cases built around ethical dilemmas. They are designed to be read in about 10 minutes and immediately discussed in educational, professional, and community contexts. NCS are used around the globe to help people from different personal and professional backgrounds discuss ethical challenges.

The NCS in this pathway were developed by Professor Meira Levinson, founder of the EdEthics initiative, and a team of masters and doctoral students at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. While some of the cases in this pathway explore dilemmas on Harvard's campus, others are set at fictional universities; we believe that stakeholders at colleges and universities across the country and around the world will find questions and dilemmas that feel relatable in this collection of five cases. All the cases are designed to help students, faculty, staff, alumni, and other affiliates at colleges and universities explore complex and nuanced ethical questions about institutional entanglement with slavery and the legacies of that entanglement.

NCS do not lead participants to a single correct answer or a specific "aha!" moment. Rather, they

are tools used to facilitate conversations about challenging topics and dilemmas so that participants understand and appreciate others' perspectives and deepen their capacity and inclination for reflection in a way that expands their thinking.

The “Legacies and Lessons” learning pathway collects five NCS exploring different ethical challenges that both institutions and individuals face as colleges and universities grapple with histories and legacies of enslavement. While individuals completing the pathway will find plenty of food for thought, the pathway is best used for group learning. To that end, the EdEthics initiative has created this facilitation guide for instructors, professional learning providers, and other leaders to support their students, colleagues, and peers in discussion using this pathway.

Grappling with a topic like the legacy of slavery can be overwhelming. General [Care Resources](#) are provided in this guide. Consider reaching out to your community's resources and seeking support for mental, spiritual, and emotional well-being.

Essential Questions

Here are the essential questions that you will explore in this pathway. Depending on the number of cases you decide to discuss with your group, you may not explore all these questions. Be sure to consult the case facilitation guides below to determine the essential questions for each individual case.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- Why is it important to grapple with the role that slavery played at higher education institutions and the legacies of slavery that persist to this day? Who should be doing this grappling, and how?
 - How can institutions educate faculty, students, staff, and alumni—or help these stakeholders educate themselves—about institutional entanglement with slavery and the legacies of that entanglement?
 - How should prominent historical figures' beliefs and actions impact their inclusion in university life today? Does that answer change whether we're thinking about curriculum, naming, iconography, etc.?
-

Before You Begin

Whether you're an instructor using this pathway in a course, a professional learning facilitator leading a series of discussions, or a lifelong learner hoping to engage in conversation with colleagues or peers, it's important to do some planning before you begin the pathway.

CONSIDER YOUR GROUP

Start by thinking about your audience.

- Who will be a part of your group? If you are recruiting learners, how and to whom will you advertise this learning experience?
- Are your group members familiar with each other or meeting for the first time? What groundwork might you need to lay before the group will be ready for potentially challenging conversations together?
- What do you know about your group members (their backgrounds, interests, educational experiences)? Do you need to learn more about their needs and goals before planning your pathway?

We ideally recommend a group size of 6-12 members for normative case study (NCS) discussions. For larger groups, it's helpful to break into smaller discussion groups. While it's ideal to have a dedicated facilitator for each small group, groups can also self-facilitate, with one main facilitator checking in on the groups and overseeing the timings of the session.

ESTABLISH YOUR GOALS

There are many reasons why someone might engage in this pathway. Take some time to reflect on why engaging with institutional ties to slavery and its legacies is specifically important for you and your group. Communicate the goals so participants understand why this pathway is individually and/or communally meaningful. Also, are you leading towards any kind of assignment or action? How will that culmination impact the goals of the pathway?

MAKE LOGISTICAL DECISIONS

If you're an instructor using the pathway in a course or a professional learning facilitator using the pathway as part of regularly-scheduled sessions, you may already have most of the logistics figured out. Whether you're slotting this pathway into pre-existing learning opportunities or creating an arc of learning from scratch, here are some questions to consider:

- When, where, for how long, and how frequently will you meet with your group? (We recommend allotting at least 90 minutes per case discussion.)
- Do you have a pathway schedule or calendar that you can share with participants?
- What work will be done inside and outside of the meetings? (Allow for 2 hours if you plan to read the case as part of the meeting time.)

GET TO KNOW THE LEGACIES AND LESSONS SITE

This facilitation guide is designed for facilitators of this pathway, providing “behind-the-scenes” tips for planning and running NCS discussions. In contrast, the [Legacies and Lessons home page](#) is participant-facing and ready to be shared with your learners.

The Legacies and Lessons home page includes a framing video, links to each case page in the pathway, and some quotations on addressing complex historical issues from experts in the field. Each case page features essential questions, access to the case, additional resources, reflection questions, and expert video commentaries. Consider whether you'll have your group access cases through the pathway home page or whether you'll provide links to the case pages for the cases you'll be reading together.

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Planning your Pathway

Planning your Pathway

The full Legacies and Lessons pathway features five cases that together form an arc of learning. However, everyone using this pathway will have their own goals and time constraints. You can modify this pathway so that it best meets the needs of your group. In this section, you'll find some ideas for planning the arc of learning that works best for you.

WHERE SHOULD I START?

However many cases you explore with your group, we recommend starting with **“A Forced Reckoning.”** The case was designed as an introduction to the many dilemmas and different perspectives raised as university affiliates grapple with the legacies of slavery.

After this case, select cases that best suit your needs. The chart below offers some guidance on the dilemmas and decision-makers presented in each case.

In the end, there is no single way to explore the pathway. Once you have decided which cases you will include and in which order you'll include them, use the next section to prepare to facilitate the normative case study discussions.

CASE	<u>A Forced Reckoning</u>	<u>What's in a Name?</u>	<u>To Teach or Not to Teach?</u>	<u>Visual Veritas</u>	<u>A Fork in the "Rhodes"</u>
Topic	• Curriculum	• Renaming buildings and institutions	• Curriculum	• Removing or updating campus memorials	• Scholarships and institutional funding
Historical Focus	• Enslavement • Colonialism • Race science • Louis Agassiz	• U.S. slavery • Institutional founding	• Colonialism • U.S. slavery • Historical use of	• Eugenics • Enslavement	• Colonialism • Cecil Rhodes
Core Values	• Accountability • Community • Safety • Progress	• Tradition • Care • Truth • Belonging	• Rigor • Tradition • Care • Progress	• Tradition • Progress • Community • Truth	• Success • Integrity • Justice • Responsibility
Who faces dilemmas?	• Students • Faculty • Staff • Institution	• Students • Faculty • Alumni • Staff • Institution	• Students • Faculty	• Faculty • Institution	• Students
Levels of Decision-Making	• Personal • Institutional	• Institutional	• Personal • Institutional	• Institutional	• Personal • Interpersonal
Genre	• Fiction	• Fiction	• Fiction	• Non-fiction	• Fiction
Setting	• Harvard University	• Fictional U.S. University	• Fictional U.S. University	• Harvard University	• Harvard University

03

Planning for Normative Case Discussions

Planning for Normative Case Discussions

While normative case studies (NCS) share similarities with other case studies used in educational settings, they do have distinct features. This facilitation guide draws out some of those unique features and offers concrete guidance for running NCS discussions. Before you begin exploring the discussion protocol and case-specific facilitation materials, read through these general guidelines for leading conversations about NCS.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BEST PRACTICES IN NORMATIVE CASE STUDIES

The goal of normative case discussions is to unpack challenging ethical quandaries and surface the many competing values at play in the dilemmas raised by the case. Discussion participants should know that the goal of the discussion is not to generate the “right” answer to any dilemma or even to come to a consensus about the “best” solution. Rather, groups should explore what makes each dilemma so complex, the values that possible avenues for action might uphold, and the potential compromises or tradeoffs that might accompany different actions. The issues raised in each case are challenging, and there are, in fact, no easy answers to the questions that will come up during discussion. Indeed, your group is likely to disagree about the “best” possible course of action in a case. Both participants and facilitators should expect non-closure and ambiguity. In order to support this learning, begin by setting discussion norms.

SETTING GROUP NORMS

Setting clear norms is essential for any group discussion, but particularly important for normative case discussions. NCS ask participants to unpack their own values and belief systems, then to discuss those values with others who might disagree. Such conversation across lines of difference requires that discussants feel safe and supported. Clear norms, fairly enforced by the facilitator, can create the sense of safety and support that group members need to fully engage and learn from each other.

In the box below, you’ll find norms that the EdEthics team regularly uses, adapted from [Leveraging Norms For Challenging Conversations \(2016\)](#). This resource was developed by Whitney Polk in collaboration with Dr. Aaliyah El-Amin at the Harvard Graduate School of Education and offers in-depth advice for creating and upholding norms. Please consider the norms below as a starting point, since you may have your own set of norms that work well for your group.

GROUP NORMS

- **Respect for Self and Others**
(e.g., Actively listen. Maintain confidentiality. Challenge ideas, not people)
- **Acknowledge the Different Backgrounds and Experiences of Others**
(e.g., Consider the role of your identities and power dynamics.)
- **Accept Challenge and Anticipate Discomfort**
(e.g., Push your thinking. Hold yourself and others accountable. Contribute to the conversation.)
- **Keep an Open Mind**
(e.g., Allow for growth. Listen before responding. Stay engaged.)
- **Embrace Uncertainty and Non-Closure**
(e.g., Don't expect all questions to be answered.)

NARRATIVE CASES VS. READER'S THEATER

Four of the five cases in this pathway offer both a narrative case study and a reader's theater script, which allows the case to be performed by a group. Both versions should take about 10 minutes to read (the narrative independently and the script together). Use the chart below to help you think through which version(s) to use with your group.

Narrative Version	Readers' Theater Version
• Written in third person. • Best used when learners are reading the case on their own before coming to the discussion. • Longer, thus including more details and/or perspectives.	• Provides a script with character dialogue to present the dilemma. • Best used when you want the group to perform the case during the session. • Makes for an engaging opening to a discussion. • Useful when group members will not have time to read a case on their own before a session.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR VIRTUAL FACILITATION

NCS discussions can take place in-person or virtually. The EdEthics team has led many discussions in both formats. If you are facilitating the pathway virtually, consider the following elements that may impact your virtual meeting.

LOGISTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Are you limited by time? (Free versions of virtual meeting platforms may only give you 45 minutes of meeting time.) How will that limitation impact your planning? Can you assign readings and additional materials before your meeting?
- Are you comfortable assigning groups, using the chat features, sharing screen, and generally navigating the software?

VIRTUAL NORMS

For virtual spaces, it's still important to use the discussion norms that you would use for an in-person discussion. You might also consider adding virtual norms to improve the group experience (e.g., "Keep on mute when the speaker is presenting;" "Keep your camera on;" "Use the 'hand raise' feature when you want to participate.").

WAYS TO SHARE PARTICIPANT CONTRIBUTIONS VIRTUALLY

In virtual sessions, we often use the "waterfall" approach with the chat feature: we have participants type their responses to a particular question into the chat and then all press "Enter" at the same time so that the responses appear together. Then we can ask questions based on the patterns that we see, or we can ask individuals to share more of their thinking based on their responses.

BREAKOUT GROUPS (OPTIONAL)

As with in-person discussions, 6-12 people is a good size for a virtual NCS discussion group. If your group is significantly larger, consider whether you want to use breakout rooms to create smaller groups. Consider the following questions if you take this route:

- How well do the group members know each other?
- Do you have more than one facilitator to guide breakout groups? Could you appoint facilitators to different breakout rooms, even if they are not official facilitators?
- Will anyone stay behind in the main room in case someone is kicked off Zoom and needs to come back?
- How will you ensure that participants have access to the protocol or discussion questions even when they're not in the main room?
- How will you maintain discussion norms even within different breakout groups to ensure you and your participants get the most out of the NCS experience?

WHAT'S NEXT?

While this resource has thus far focused on planning your overall pathway, the next sections will help you plan for individual discussions in the pathway. You'll find below:

- A General Facilitation Guide for all cases, which include specific guidance on timing and a detailed discussion protocol.
- Case-specific supplemental guides with tailored questions and more information about the additional resources available on individual case pages in the pathway.

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General Facilitation Guide

General Facilitation Guide

This guide is a general guide that can be used to lead discussion on all of the cases. Supplement this guide with the case-specific information and instructions on the Cases 1-5 supplemental pages below.

TIME

- 90-120 minutes

MATERIALS

- Narrative case study or reader's theater script
- Case supplemental pages
- Facilitation guide
- Some way to write (pen/paper, laptop, tablet)
- [Participant packet](#) (optional)
- Additional Resources on case-specific webpage (optional)
- Expert Video Commentaries on case-specific page (optional)

SESSION

AGENDA

- Part I: Introduction and Norms (5-10 minutes)
- Part II: Reading the Case (10-15 minutes)
- Part III: Group Discussion (50-60 minutes)
- Part IV: Making it Personal (5-10 minutes)
- Part V: Reflection and Takeaways (10 minutes)

CASE DISCUSSION FACILITATION GUIDE

(FOR 90-120 MINUTES. ADJUSTABLE WITH MODIFICATIONS)

Before the Discussion

Consider your audience and the goals for your discussion.

- Who is in your group?
- Why is this group coming together?

Determine which materials you will need.

- Will you distribute the case before the discussion? (Is it reasonable to expect



Notes When we run case discussions in undergraduate or graduate courses, we generally ask students to read the cases—and any accompanying sources—before the discussion. When running professional development with in-service educators or other

participants to read it before the event?)

- Will you devote time during the event for participants to read the case or perform the reader's theater script?
- Will you encourage learners to read any additional resources with this case? Which ones will you assign and to whom? **Refer to the case-specific guides to see a list of additional resources and how they can contribute to the discussions.*
- Are there any other materials that you wish to distribute alongside the case?

Determine group size(s). We recommend ideally 6-12 people per discussion group.

- Will you run one whole-group discussion yourself?
- Will you break a large group into smaller groups? Will those groups be self-facilitated or will you require a team of facilitators?

professionals, we sometimes ask our participants to read the case in advance, but we also often rely on reader's theater scripts, which can be read just before the case discussion. Consider how you can maximize participation and learning for the group that you are working with.

Part 1a: Introductions | 5-10 minutes

Ask each member of the group to share their name (and pronouns, if desired), along with any additional information that may be useful (professional role for educators, academic major for students, etc.). You may also include an icebreaker question for community building.



Notes For virtual discussions, we often have discussion participants call on the next person to help the introductions run more smoothly.



Modifications If all members of the group already know each other well, you can omit introductions.

Part Ib. Discussion Norms | 5 minutes

Share a list of discussion norms for the conversation with participants. Once participants have had a chance to review the list, ask whether they wish to discuss or amend any norms or to add any new ones.



Notes You can find a list of norms that we often use on page 12.



Modifications If the group meets regularly, you can likely do a quick review of existing norms here.

Part IIa: Reading the Case or Performing the Script | 10-15 minutes

If your learners haven't yet read the case study, allow time for them to do so now. Given that people read at different speeds, it can be helpful to give your learners some questions to think about and make notes on once they've finished the case (if they're using the narrative version).



Modifications If your learners have already read the case prior to the session, you may still wish to provide 3-5 minutes so learners can re-scan the case.

Part IIb: Case Recap | 5 minutes

If your learners have read the case before the session, it's helpful to engage them in a "case recap" to reactivate the case before the discussion. Ask a volunteer to share key case details. Other participants can chime in with ideas they feel have been missed. The goal of the recap is to remind participants about the "facts of the case" before they begin discussing the dilemmas.



Notes While it's nice to have members of the group provide the recap, to save time you could present a short written recap or have the facilitator give a recap. Still allow people to add details that seem important to them.



Modifications If you are using a reader's theater script, you should omit the case recap. Be sure to budget 10-12 minutes for the group to perform the script.

Part IIIa. Discussion: What are the dilemmas? | 15-20 minutes

Before diving into the discussion, establish a common understanding of the term “dilemma.” We share the following definition:

- Dilemma: A situation where there is no one right answer and it is hard (even impossible) to realize all important values and principles at once.

Begin the actual case discussion by asking participants to surface the dilemmas in the case, using the following questions:

- What are the dilemmas in this case?
For whom are they dilemmas?

Potential follow-up questions include:

- Who are the stakeholders involved in this case?
- What are the dilemmas for individual characters here?
- How does each character’s identity shape their dilemmas?
- What are the dilemmas for the university as an institution?
- How are the dilemmas similar or different for different stakeholders?
- Dilemmas can be specific and practical, like concrete choices to be made (i.e., decisions a specific character needs to make), or big philosophical questions (e.g., the purpose of a university education), or anything in between. Do you see any dilemmas [at a more abstract or concrete level]?
- Are there any people who don’t



Notes We often ask discussion participants to start by naming the most obvious dilemma, the one that’s likely on most people’s minds. Then we move to exploring dilemmas within that main dilemma and to looking at other dilemmas that might not be so obvious. You might also clarify for the group that dilemmas can be specific decisions to be made and/or broader philosophical questions.



Modifications If you are short on time, you can shorten this section to 10 minutes. But we recommend giving the group as close to 15-20 minutes as possible.



Facilitator Tips Try not to respond to the first 1-3 comments and instead look to the other participants to build on what has been said. If you establish a pattern where participants expect you to respond to every comment, it will be hard to run a learner-centered discussion.

Sometimes people don’t really describe a dilemma. If that happens, see if there’s a way for you to reframe their comment in terms of a dilemma.

Be ready to redirect participants who offer solutions to the dilemmas during this part of the conversation. Let them know that

feature in the case by name but who might be facing dilemmas because of what's happening here?

See the case-specific supplemental guides for more questions that can help groups unpack the dilemmas particular to each case.

we'll talk about what the characters and/or stakeholders should do later in the conversation.

Part IIIb. Discussion: Why are these dilemmas? | 15-20 minutes

Before asking the next question in the protocol, give a short summary (2-3 minutes) of the dilemmas raised. You might organize this summary around different characters or stakeholders or around different context levels present in the case (i.e., interpersonal, classroom, university, community, society, etc.).

Then, use the following questions to delve deeper:

- Why are these dilemmas?
- What values or principles are at stake, and for whom?
- What practical and/or policy considerations are at stake?

Potential follow-up questions include:

- Do characters in this case disagree about which values matter, which should take precedence, or how they apply?
- Do characters in this case disagree about which considerations are relevant, which should take precedence, or how they should be addressed?



Notes You may wish to provide discussion participants with a list of possible values that might be at stake in the case. See the case-specific supplements for such lists.

If participants want to discuss solutions, consider sharing a reminder: "If you find yourself going quickly to solutions, either in your mind or especially in discussion, try to pause that instinct. We have found the kind of slow and deliberate thinking these case studies invite is the value of this exercise. At the end of the discussion, we can reflect on how it felt to delay the decision making." Then make sure to take the time to reflect at the end!



Modifications If you are short on time, you can shorten this section to 10 minutes. But we recommend giving the group as close to 15-20 minutes as possible.

- Which values do you see in tension in this case? (For example, “tradition” and “progress” are two values that are often in tension.)
- Do any characters in the case hold the same value but define it in different ways? (For example, multiple characters might believe in “fairness” but advocate for different courses of action as “fair.”)

See the case-specific supplemental guides for more questions that can help groups unpack the values tensions in each case.

You might consider having participants split into pairs or trios for the first part of this section. If you listen to a few groups while the participants are talking, you can get an idea of which pairs are discussing key values. You could ask one of those pairs to share first, rather than just opening up the question to the group. (Think of this as “warm calling.”)

Part IIIc. Discussion: What *might* be done in this case? | 5-10 minutes

Have discussion participants brainstorm possible courses of action that might be taken in the case. These can address any of the dilemmas raised and may be explored within the case or be totally novel. Use the following questions:

- What choices are available, and to whom?
- How do those choices relate to the values that we surfaced?



Notes You may wish to give participants time to brainstorm or discuss in pairs before opening this question to the group, if time allows.

It can be helpful to record the possible choices in an area visible to the learners (e.g., a digital whiteboard, chart paper) to create a common “text” that can be used in the next section.

You may need to remind your group that the goal at this stage is simply to list possibilities about what might be done, not to look for the best possible answer.

You could ask participants to think specifically about this question for

characters who share some identity marker with them. Students might think about what the students might do. In affinity spaces, participants might think about what those characters who share that part of their identity might do.



Modifications If you are pressed for time, omit this section and instead move to the next question of what should be done.

Part IIId. Discussion: What *should* be done in this case? | 5-10 minutes

Ask participants to consider what should be done in the case, using the following question:

- What do you think should be done in this case, and by whom? Why?

Potential follow-up questions:

- How does each of these choices frame and/or address the dilemmas?
- For each choice, what is gained? What, if anything, is lost or sacrificed? What tradeoffs might come with this choice?
- Who stands to gain from this decision? Who stands to lose?
- How might power dynamics impact the decision-making capacity of a particular character or stakeholder group?
- How would this decision affect the most vulnerable?

See the case-specific supplemental guides for more questions that can help groups think through potential solutions for each case.



Notes Remember that there is no one best course of action in these cases (though some courses of action are definitely better than others, and some actions would be wrong to take). Participants should not be looking for the “right answer.” Be sure to ask people to explain why they believe that the course of action they chose should be taken.

If you have a list of brainstormed options from the previous step, it can be helpful to annotate that list with the values each option upholds, along with any potential tradeoffs.

Part IV. Discussion: Making in Personal | 10 minutes

Ask participants to complete a quick write (2 minutes) on the following questions:

- Which character/stakeholder in the case do you identify with most? Why? How does this character/stakeholder help you think about your own relationship to the legacy of slavery?



Notes If participants are comfortable sharing their ideas with the whole group, open the floor to sharing.

For another sharing option, participants could partner with others who chose the same character. How do their reasons for choosing this character compare to their partner's reasons? What can they learn from each other? If there's time, pairs can share their learning with the larger group.

Facilitator Tip This part of the discussion is crucial. Few people at a university are in the position to create policy that addresses institutional responsibility, as many of these cases do. However, everyone can reflect on their own responsibility to confront this difficult history and engage with it presently. Be sure to leave enough time at the end of your discussion for this reflection.

This is likely to be the most difficult part of the conversation for participants, as we move from the world of the case to our world. If you have the sense that participants would feel uncomfortable with open discussion, choose the partner option.

Before ending the discussion, ask participants to reflect on the case and their experience discussing it. Use (some of) the following questions:

- What have you learned from talking about this case that might apply to other ethical dilemmas related to the legacies of enslavement and other challenging institutional histories?
 - What principles or values are you thinking about for the first time, or thinking about in a new way?
 - What policies or practices are you thinking about for the first time or in a new way?
- What questions are you taking from this discussion? What further learning might you do after leaving here today?
- What is a value that you're thinking about for the first time or in a new way?
- How are you thinking about your role at and/or relationship to your university after today's discussion?

See the case-specific supplemental guides for more reflection questions.



Notes It's nearly impossible that you'd have time to ask all of the reflection questions listed here! Think about which questions will be most helpful for the group that you're facilitating and choose one or two accordingly.

You may want to allow participants the option to pass (opt not to share) during this final part, depending on the level of comfort in the group.



Modifications If this group is coming together for a specific purpose, you may want to tailor the reflection to that purpose. For example, instructors might think about how what they've learned will impact their teaching, while students might think about the implications of the discussion on their future coursework. In our experience, discussion participants find this chance for reflection very meaningful—be sure to leave enough time for it in your discussion.

Virtual Modification For a virtual discussion, a waterfall technique could work here. Have each person type their sentence/ question into the chat, but not press enter. Then, have everyone press enter at the same time. Be mindful, however, that not everyone may be comfortable with sharing their personal reflection with the group.

Part VI: Optional Space for Feedback | 2-5 minutes

If you would like to provide a space to give feedback at the end of each session, ask participants anonymously to provide positives (pluses +) and potential changes (deltas Δ).

In person, you can use sticky notes, paper, or an online form. Virtually, consider using an online form.



Notes After collecting feedback, reflect on the feedback provided. Some feedback might suggest a change in norms or a different structure. Others might indicate that people feel challenged and are experiencing growth.

If this discussion is part of an arc of learning, consider how you can use the feedback as you plan the next session.

05

Case-Specific Supplemental Guides

CASE: What's in a Name?

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS



Higher education institutions serve a diverse range of stakeholders: students, faculty, staff, alumni, the local community, and the broader public. How should we consider the differing needs and beliefs of these various stakeholders when deciding when and how to grapple with the legacies of slavery?

How should university founders' beliefs and actions impact their inclusion in university life today?

How can institutions make changes that help their campuses feel more inclusive without losing important connections to the past, even when that past is harmful?

SUMMARY

In this case, set at a fictional liberal arts college, a group of administrators and students on the Committee on Historical Memory meet to discuss their institution's approach to renaming. The previous academic year, the college released a report detailing its namesake's connections to slavery and renamed the central administration building. However, some students are now calling for further action—including renaming the school itself. College affiliates are divided, and administrators must weigh what to do next. What responsibilities do universities have to reconsider whom they memorialize? How should they weigh different stakeholder perspectives? How might different approaches to naming promote or impede belonging on campus?

POSSIBLE VALUES

FAIRNESS	CHOICE	ACTION
RESPONSIBILITY	COMMUNITY	BELONGING
TRUTH	LEARNING	SAFETY

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The pathway page for this case includes several resources that offer differing perspectives on the dilemmas in the case and additional context to help learners understand the world

of the case. Use the information here to help determine which additional resource(s) best serve the needs of your group.

- After reviewing 3,800 buildings for their connections to controversial figures, [the University System of Georgia Board of Regents decided not to pursue name changes. Learn more about that decision \(new tab\).](#)
- To explore why some institutions can shift their stance on renaming over time, see these pieces from Princeton University:
 - [Princeton Will Keep Woodrow Wilson’s Name on Building Despite Controversy \(new tab\)](#)
 - [Princeton Renames Wilson School and Residential College, Citing Former President’s Racism \(new tab\).](#)
- Many universities have considered renaming buildings on their campuses. Learn more about the [policies and procedures that different institutions use when trying to determine whether renaming is the right step \(new tab\).](#)
- In 2025, Harvard College decided not to rename an undergraduate dorm named for John Winthrop, a colonial governor who supported slavery:
 - Explore why [Harvard students petitioned to dename Winthrop House in 2023 \(new tab\).](#)
 - Read about [Harvard’s decision to maintain the Winthrop House name while adding historical context to the building \(new tab\).](#)
- A [research study compared renaming policies and their representation metrics across the US and Canada \(new tab\).](#) See how different regions compare.
- In Toronto, Canada, [Ryerson University changed its name to Toronto Metropolitan University \(new tab\)](#) due to the founder’s connection to the residential schools where the government sent Aboriginal children after forcibly removing them from their families.

CASE SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

DILEMMAS QUESTIONS

- Professor Fitzgerald expresses frustration that her colleagues are “celebrating” the Thompson family. How, if at all, do you see the difference between “celebrating” and “recognizing” the Thompsons, as Professor Lewis describes it?
- Professor Lewis argues that the Thompsons’ viewpoints were quite common among their historical peers. How, if at all, should historical context be taken into account as institutions consider whether to continue recognizing founders and donors who espoused views now considered harmful?

- The name of Thompson College fills a number of roles in the case: a reminder of historical injustice, a source of alumni pride, and a sought-after brand, among others. What do you think the name of an institution means: to those currently on campus, other affiliates, and the wider world? How does the origin of that name affect its meaning?
-

VALUES QUESTIONS

- All of the characters in the case hold the values of “community and belonging.” What do those values mean to different characters? How do they influence their beliefs about the possibility of renaming?
 - At the end of the case, Dean Mitchell admits that she may no longer know the college’s principles. Based on the case, what do you see as the values Thompson College stands for?
-

SOLUTIONS QUESTIONS

- How do the other examples of renaming in the case (at Princeton and Yale, for example) help you think about renaming Thompson College?
 - Do you view renaming as “erasure” of the past or an important step toward a more just future (or as something else entirely)? Why?
 - There’s no clear consensus among the many stakeholders and Thompson affiliates about whether the college should be renamed. How should institutions take into account different viewpoints when making such decisions? Should some voices hold more weight than others? If so, whose? Why?
-

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- There’s debate in the case about whether renaming a building is a symbolic gesture or a true action. How do you see it?

06

Extension Activities

Extension Activities

As you've seen, between the general facilitation guide and case-specific questions, you can easily fill 90-120 minutes with an NCS discussion. However, you may sometimes want to spend more time with a particular case and the dilemmas it raises, whether within the same session or at a follow-up session. Below you'll find some possible extension activities you might use with the cases.

As you think through which extension activities to use (if any), consider the goals and interests of your group members. Which activities best serve those goals?

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES (OPTIONAL)

- Write a 150-300-word **reflection** on a follow-up question not discussed. (10-20 minutes)
- Write a 150-300-word **reflection** on a case-specific question. (10-20 minutes)
- Assign one or two of the reflection questions from the protocol as a journaling prompt. (10-30 minutes)
- **Perform a [character deep dive](#).** Examine one of the characters in the case in-depth, unpacking their main values and the specific steps they could take next. (15-20 minutes)
- **Use the “[I Used to Think... Now I Think...](#)”** thinking routine to help participants reflect on their thinking and explore how and why their thinking has changed. (10-20 minutes)
- **Use the “[Connect, Extend, Challenge](#)”** thinking routine to draw connections between new ideas and prior knowledge in the case. Use the following questions to guide the reflection. (20-30 minutes)
 - Connect:
 - How is the case connected to something you know about?
 - How does the case connect to what you know about dilemmas in your institution?
 - Have you been in a similar dilemma?
 - Extend:
 - What new ideas or impressions are extending your thinking in new directions?
 - What new ideas did you learn through using this protocol for examining dilemmas?

- Challenge:
 - What was challenging or confusing in the case and/or discussion? What are you wondering about?
 - What would you like to learn about your own institution after reading and discussing this case?
- **Whole Group Reflection** option: Create a “found poem”: ask participants to choose first a sentence, then a phrase, then a word from the case. Ask the group to stand in a circle and go around, having everyone share first their sentence one after another, then their phrase in a second round, then finally their word in a third round, without commentary or interruption. It sounds simple but can be surprisingly profound. After the found poem has been “performed,” you can ask the group to reflect on the experience. What was it like to choose small pieces of the text; what factors influenced their decisions? How did choosing their text and/or hearing the found poem change or deepen their thinking about the dilemmas in the case? (15-20 minutes)
- **Create a visual representation** or other artistic interpretations of the key tensions and choices at stake in the case. Use any materials (drawing utensils, pipe cleaners, construction paper, tape, and other simple craft materials) or other mediums (podcasts, videos, even interpretive dance). (30-60 minutes)
- **Creative writing:** Ask participants to write a 1-page dialogue between themselves and a character in the dilemma. What would you say to the character about the dilemma, and what might they say in response? How would you express your own values to the character? (30-45 minutes)
- **Related Cases:** If you want to explore a similar dilemma, consider these other cases developed by the EdEthics team:
 - [School Walkouts as Civil Disobedience](#): Further explore ethical dilemmas in student activism and voice through this case in which district leaders in Portland, OR, face dilemmas when students organize walkouts to protest the 2016 election.
 - [Course Correction](#): Consider unpacking challenges in curriculum development through this case in which a middle school principal must decide whether to run a critical consciousness course despite pushback from the community and a new law forbidding the teaching of “divisive concepts.”
 - [A Uniform Decision](#): Question how to balance the needs and experiences of different communities through this case in which a principal in Australia considers how to approach an upcoming holiday commemorating a World War I battle given the large number of both service veterans and asylum seekers from war-torn nations in his community.

07

Using Additional Resources

Using Additional Resources

The case-specific supplemental guides and case webpages include additional resources that can offer insights into the dilemmas raised by that case. These resources are a mix of news reporting and academic research that offer additional context, as well as commentaries and opinions that offer individual views on the issues in the case. Think about what additional resources might be most helpful for your group. If you choose to assign additional resources, here are some potential activities to use with them.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES FOR PARTICIPANTS USING ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Participants can **practice perspective taking** by reading **additional resources** that take a stance on the issues raised in the case. Here are some questions they might consider:
 - What values does each author seem to hold? How do you know these are their values?
 - What do you agree with in this article? What do you disagree with?
- **Pick a Line:** Assign any additional resource and ask participants to pick a line that deepens their understanding of the case. In small groups, have each participant share their line. After each share, the others in the group discuss why the participant might have chosen the line: how does it deepen our understanding of the case? The participant then shares why they chose the line. The process repeats for each participant.
- **Think-Pair-Share:** Assign half of the participants one perspective resource and the other half a different perspective. Pair individuals who read different perspectives and ask them to share a quick summary of the text and their thoughts.
- **Jigsaw activity:** Participants are divided into small groups, and each group is assigned a specific resource. They become “experts” on the resource, and then participants are redistributed into new groups, with one expert from each of the original groups present in the new group. Within the new group, each participant takes turns teaching the other members about their assigned resource.
- **Gallery Walk:** Place excerpts (from a sentence to a paragraph in length) from the additional resources around the room with space to write comments and reflections. Allow participants time to walk around the room, read pieces that interest them, and leave comments and questions with markers. Participants can also respond to others’ comments. After the time, you might assign one person to each poster to summarize the comments. You might also use the posters as a starting point for group discussion.

EXPERT VIDEO COMMENTARIES

Each case webpage contains short videos in which higher education leaders, professors, students, and alumni share their expertise on the issues raised by the case. Consider assigning one or more videos for each case to support your participants' learning.

In addition to the videos on the case webpages, EdEthics has created a library of expert videos on the legacies of slavery in a video playlist: [Legacies and Lessons Playlist](#). You may find videos in this playlist that are particularly relevant to your group's needs.

Below are some reflection questions you can use to help your group reflect on their learning after watching each video. You might also consider using some of the extension activities above with the videos.

VIDEO REFLECTION QUESTION (OPTIONAL)

- What stood out to you in the video, and why?
- What was familiar to you? What was new?
- What do you agree with in this video? What do you disagree with?
- What values do you think the expert is conveying through their comments?
- How do the perspectives raised in the video connect to the perspectives raised in the case study?
- How did the video commentary impact your understanding of the dilemma?
- What questions do you have after watching this video?

08

Closing the Pathway

Closing the Pathway

By the time you've reached the end of the pathway with your group, you'll have explored a variety of difficult ethical dilemmas over a series of likely-challenging conversations. It's important to bring some closure to your pathway in a way that makes sense for your group. Whether you close out the pathway at the end of your last case discussion or have a final session specifically to reflect together, take some time now to think back to your goals and consider how you might best end this arc of learning for your group. Your plan may change as the pathway progresses—it seems almost certain it will—but here are a few ideas to jumpstart your thinking.

CLOSING ACTIVITIES (OPTIONAL)

- **(RECOMMENDED)** End with gratitude for the individuals in the group and the group as a whole.
- Reflect on what participants learned together. Use one of the reflection thinking routines in the case-specific protocols above.
- Discuss what participants want to learn after the pathway. What questions do they still want to answer?
- Consider tangible next steps and actions. We hope that through this pathway, participants feel encouraged to continue their learning and/or take a tangible action step to address the legacy of slavery. Consider encouraging participants to create a SMART action plan (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound) to support concrete action.

POTENTIAL NEXT LEARNINGS

- Take time individually or with a group to explore additional resources for these cases or explore the links at the bottom of the Legacies and Lessons learning pathway pages. Alternatively, start with local and regional resources near you to learn about the history in your specific context.
- Examine the work that other universities are actively doing to address the legacy of slavery. Here are some examples of how some universities have responded to the legacy of slavery. Are there any actions that feel feasible, within your locus of control, and helpful to your context? What would it look like in your context to do any of these actions? Is there someone you could reach out to learn more about their work in addressing the legacy of slavery?
 - **Research and Public Education:** Brown University's Slavery and Justice Report, published in 2006, detailed the university's ties to the slave trade and its legacy.

As a result, [Brown established an academic center for research and teaching on the impacts of slavery \(new tab\)](#). [The University of Alabama's Research on Enslaved People \(new tab\)](#) ensures that the enslaved individuals who labored on UA's campus or who were enslaved by faculty and college presidents are identified.

- **Memorialization:** [The University of Virginia created a memorial to Enslaved Laborers to honor the estimated 4,000 enslaved laborers who built and maintained the school for over four decades \(new tab\)](#). The memorial hopes to “serve as a catalyst for further discovery and learning.”
- **Renaming:** [Georgetown University renamed a building after Isaac Hawkin, one of 272 enslaved people in the 1838 Sale \(new tab\)](#).
- **Reparations:** [Georgetown University's Reconciliation Fund hopes to award \\$400,000 \(new tab\)](#) annually to community-based projects that impact the descendants of the people enslaved on Jesuit plantations in Maryland.
- **Partnerships with HBCUs:** Some non-HBCUs have made steps to strengthen and expand their relationships with HBCUs. For example, [Harvard's Du Bois Scholars Program \(new tab\)](#) offers rising juniors and seniors from select HBCUs fully-funded internships at the Harvard College Summer Undergraduate Research Village.
- **Community engagement:** [The College of William and Mary's Lemon Project \(new tab\)](#) engages with the community by hosting supper programs like the Summer Sankofa Genealogy Workshop Series and the Lemon's Learners Black History Matters Summer Camp.

POTENTIAL NEXT ACTIONS

- **Educate others:** Consider becoming a facilitator for this learning pathway and continue educating those around you.
- **Develop Student/Visitor Maps:** If your institution has already begun research into its history, use that research to create walking tour maps of your campus that educate visitors and new students to the history and legacy of slavery on campus. This is a great way to introduce the broader public to the history of your institution. [Harvard & the Legacy of Slavery has a self-guided walking tour \(new tab\)](#) that can serve as a model, as can the [University of Virginia's Enslaved African Americans Walking Tour \(new tab\)](#).
- **Build Curriculum:** If you are in a position to do so, think about ways to develop curriculum, research opportunities, and/or internships to educate others on the history and legacy of slavery.

- **Find a community:** This work is seldom done alone. Join a group focused on this work and that centers real co-stewardship of the project, especially with descendants of the affected communities. [Universities Studying Slavery](#) can be a good place to start (new tab).
- **Research:** Consider researching or contributing to research efforts around the legacy of slavery in your area. Ex: Help digitize historical documents and support archival efforts.
- **Participate in activism:** Expand your locus of control by joining a group that is actively trying to address the legacy of slavery. Start at your institution or local community.
- **Uphold accountability and transparency:** Petition institutions for more accountability or transparency in their funding and investments.

GRATITUDE

In the spirit of closing with gratitude: Thank you for using this learning pathway. To explore more dilemmas in education, visit the EdEthics website at edethics.stanford.edu, where you'll find not only [our case bank](#) but also ethical case simulations, short "brief-cases," other learning pathways, and more.

09

Appendix

Appendix I: Participant Packet

At EdEthics, we find it helpful to provide our discussion participants with graphic organizers to help them track their thinking during case conversations. [Click here to make a copy of our participant packet](#), which you can customize for your group's discussion.

Appendix II: FAQs

GENERAL FACILITATION TIPS AND GUIDELINES

- If you split the larger group into pairs or trios, you can then “warm call,” or call on participants you heard making good comments in their smaller groups. You can also ask people to share something their partner said. If someone has been quiet throughout the discussion, you can gently invite them in: “[Name], do you have anything you’d like to share?”
- People often want to “solve” the dilemma or talk about what the characters should do right away. If this happens, remind them that they will get to talk about taking action. However, we start the discussion by naming a variety of dilemmas, which ultimately helps us think about possible pathways for action later.
- If participants get stuck in thinking about solutions before it’s time to talk about them, try to name the values you see them thinking about. For example: “It sounds like you’re thinking about the importance of students’ psychological safety in the case. Does that seem right? How are the characters in the case thinking about that value?”
- If participants are moving far from the case and the dilemmas it raises (like talking about their school instead of the case), you could bring them back by asking the group a question specifically about the characters or details in the case. See the follow-up questions throughout the facilitation guide for some ideas.
- Make notes about points you’d like to follow up on with participants. Ask questions to help them elaborate on their thinking. Listen carefully for dilemmas they may be having trouble articulating, and try to rephrase them.

WHAT IF NOBODY IS TALKING?

- You can always have participants turn and talk to a partner (or in a trio if the numbers are uneven). You can also have participants write for 1-2 minutes in their packet to generate ideas and then ask someone to share.
- You can turn back to the text of the case if people are quiet. Ask the participants to find a sentence or two that really resonated with them or a point of view that they didn’t agree with. Then you can either have them start sharing these quotations with the whole group and explaining why they chose them, or you can have them share with a partner before opening up discussion to the whole group.

WHAT IF THE CONVERSATION GOES SIDEWAYS?

- Disagreement is ok! Rather than trying to get the group to consensus, use the questions from the protocol to pinpoint exactly what participants are disagreeing about. Does it have to do with a difference in values? Past experiences impacting their decision-making? Even if participants agree about what should be done in the case, are they all prioritizing the same values in choosing that solution? (They probably aren't!)
- Feel free to revisit the norms if the discussion starts getting uncomfortably heated. You could try saying something like, "I understand that these topics can be difficult to talk about. An important expectation for this conversation is that we _____. Please keep this expectation in mind moving forward." See [Leveraging Norms For Challenging Conversations \(2016\)](#) for more advice on upholding norms.
- If participants are making statements grounded in prejudice or misinformation, it's important to address those in the moment to keep the trust of the group. To kindly correct them, use this helpful line: "That's a common misperception. I can see why you think that. Let me share some other information with you..."
- Help participants feel heard if the conversation gets heated. Try restating the ideas: "Here's what I'm hearing..."
- If participants keep talking about themselves and their school instead of the case, return to the text. Ask them to choose a character they identified with and determine which values are important to that character. Or ask them to choose a quotation that resonated with them or that they disagreed with (see note above for more about this facilitation move).

WHAT IF PEOPLE WON'T ENGAGE WITH THE DILEMMAS?

- Be on the lookout for these pitfalls of normative case study discussions:
 - *"Magic fairy dust" solutions*: If participants try to sidestep the dilemma by changing the facts of the case, gently remind them of the facts in the case. (For example: "It would be great if Jamie could add new books to the syllabus without removing other books, but he only has so many classes with his students. Let's think about how he should decide what to keep and what to swap out.") The real world is messy, and the cases reflect that messiness. After all, educators are constantly making decisions in imperfect situations with incomplete information
 - *Denying the dilemma*: Comments like, "There was no dilemma for me here," or "The obvious answer is..." can really shut down the discussion. It's important to address the multiple ways of viewing the case so that other participants don't feel their different opinions are invalid. You can remind participants that there are many ways of viewing the case and resurface the dilemmas brought up at the beginning of the discussion.

ADDITIONAL FACILITATION RESOURCES

- Our [Facilitator Responses for Controversial Conversations \(new tab\)](#) offers specific language to use when responding to challenging moments, from one participant dominating the conversation to groups debating the issues rather than discussing them with an open mind.
- This [self-assessment can help you understand your strengths as a facilitator and what you can do to strengthen the community within your group \(new tab\)](#), even if the conversation becomes heated.
- Learn ways to meaningfully use a [hot moment—a sudden moment of conflict or tension in a discussion— to advance learning \(new tab\)](#) for your group.

Appendix III: Care Resources

GENERAL FACILITATION TIPS AND GUIDELINES

Naturally, talking about the history and legacies of slavery can elicit a range of responses and emotions—even racial trauma. Racial trauma refers to the physical and psychological symptoms that Black and Indigenous people and other people of color experience after exposure to particularly distressing or life-threatening racist experiences. For allies, unpacking racist histories and policies can also evoke painful responses that should be cared for and addressed.

Based on a participant's background and experiences, they might require different supports to process the responses raised by this pathway. It's also helpful to be aware of the potential signs of distress and racial trauma in yourself and participants so that you provide necessary care resources. Here are some specific resources to support facilitators and participants experiencing racial trauma and/or distress.

- Explore the [Racial Trauma, Resiliency, and Ally resources \(new tab\)](#) for demographic-specific resources.
- If you would like more detailed ways to care for yourself and your community, explore the strategies presented in the [Family-Care, Community-Care, and Self-Care Tool Kit \(new tab\)](#).
- These [tips for how to cope with racial trauma and racial battle fatigue \(pdf\)](#) provide succinct and clear tools to immediately cope with racial trauma.
- Remember the importance of communal action to improve agency and address racial trauma. The Southern Poverty Law Center provides some [examples of how to respond to hate as a community \(new tab\)](#).
- Explore this mental health resource for [directories for therapists who have training in racial trauma therapy \(new tab\)](#).

Appendix IV: Discussion Structures

Would you like more options for different group sizes and discussion goals? Consider the discussion structures in the table below.

OPTION	DESCRIPTION
Whole Group	• Typically, one facilitator guides the conversation of the whole group. • This is an appropriate format for groups that have fewer than fifteen participants. • For larger groups, you can involve more participants by having several partner talks during the whole-group discussion.
Small Group	• This is a way to break up larger groups into discussion-sized sections. • Form smaller groups of four to eight, each with its own facilitator. • Ideas between small groups are shared. Ways to do this include: • Reconvene to the larger group and have a group presenter share a key idea from the group– perhaps the group’s response to the question at the end of the case. • Reconfigure, or “jigsaw”, the groups so that each new group includes at least one member from the original groups. • End with a final whole-group discussion.
Fishbowl	• This is ideal for medium to large groups. • This option encourages careful, active listening. • Some participants begin as speakers while others are assigned the role of listeners. Often a group of chairs is placed in the center of the room for the speakers, and the listeners sit outside this circle. • Sometimes listeners may be asked to comment on the

	discussion: who is participating, what kinds of arguments are being presented, or where points of agreement versus disagreement are arising. • Fishbowl participants may speak for themselves or as representatives of a particular author or perspective.
Town Hall	• This is ideal for larger groups. • This offers a great way to get ideas from multiple perspectives onto the table, including roles or perspectives that members of the group might not represent on their own. • Participants speak from a particular role or perspective. Facilitators begin by having participants introduce themselves, identify their roles, and then speak briefly (1-2 minutes) on the case. • Facilitators can assign participants to speak from the perspective of someone in the case (e.g., a student, a professor, a community member, an administrator) to represent the viewpoints of one of the characters, or speak from their real-life role. • If there is enough time, the facilitator can assign participants different roles during different rounds of discussion. • Often, facilitators allow participants to break out of their assigned perspective in the final round of discussion.
Digital / Online	• This option can work for groups of any size. • Different programs and apps will determine the structure of the discussion. • Popular formats include threaded online discussions, video conferencing, digital collaborative spaces such as wikis and shared docs, and social media. • This can be a good way to document and preserve case discussions.

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