

# President's Message

## *Building Global Literacy*

The Council on Foreign Relations, throughout its ninety-five-year history, has served as a resource for members, policymakers, and other interested citizens to help them understand the world and the foreign policy choices facing the United States and other countries. Traditionally, the Council's role has involved interacting with executive branch officials, members of Congress and their staffs, business leaders, diplomats, journalists, and leading academics. This is all essential, but it is not sufficient. The Council must reach a larger swath of the American people—college and high school students in particular—if future generations are to successfully navigate a world filled with risks and opportunities alike.

In today's globalized world, where information and a great deal else flows across borders, global literacy—the essential knowledge, skills, and perspective required to navigate a complicated, connected world—is vital. Unfortunately, American students are learning less about the world as schools continue to reduce required instruction in history, geography, and civics. Meanwhile, students can graduate from even the best universities without ever taking a class on international affairs or world history.

To narrow this gap between what students need to know and what they do know, the Council is launching CFR Campus, a new initiative and digital hub for educational products. These resources will help Americans become better informed and better equipped to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century. The United States competes in a global job market, and American students require a global understanding to stay competitive. Beyond that, there are positions in the civil service, the foreign service, the military, and the intelligence community that can best be filled by Americans with global knowledge, basic skills, and international perspective. And all Americans, no matter their professional fields, are voters and citizens of a democracy and thus need to have a basic understanding of how the world works and America's place in it. As a result, CFR Campus has become a top priority for this organization and for me personally.

This move toward expanding the Council into an educational organization in addition to its role as a think tank, publisher, and membership organization has been in the works for over a decade. We began by broadening the reach of many of our traditional products. Among the things we have been doing to connect CFR's work with educators are a bimonthly, interactive conference call series for students to hear from CFR experts on topics in international affairs; annual workshops for college and university presidents, professors, and high school teachers; and briefings for students, including an annual back-to-school event in the fall. The Council also disseminates publications from the think tank with accompanying teaching notes, and shares video and transcripts from on-the-record Council meetings for the use of educators and their students.



President Richard N. Haass

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## Model Diplomacy in Action

How can you bring hypothetical scenarios based on real issues to life in your classroom? Watch this brief video to see how students gain knowledge, build skills, and broaden perspectives with the most comprehensive simulation available, featuring content informed by Council on Foreign Relations experts.





This year saw the start of CFR Campus’s line of original products. Model Diplomacy is a National Security Council simulation that uses hypothetical case studies, built on real-world issues and informed by CFR’s experts, to help students understand the issues, institutions, and processes associated with shaping foreign policy. Students also develop the fundamental skills of a liberal arts curriculum, such as critical thinking, persuasive writing, collaboration, and public speaking. The interactive, multimedia, and classroom-based program incorporates blended learning, a combination of independent research and face-to-face interaction with instructors and classmates, which is widely embraced as the most effective teaching method today. It employs supplemental videos (many featuring Council members) and uses digital technology to inspire students.

Model Diplomacy is free and, with its instructor guide and background reading, is as much a resource for teachers and professors as it is for students. The program can be tailored to accommodate the needs of any educational situation. Judging by the interest and excitement generated, we are filling a major void. Since its launch, Model Diplomacy has had instructors at over five hundred institutions register from across the United States and sixty-six other countries.

Model Diplomacy and other more traditional products are all available online in the CFR Campus section of the Council’s website. Coming next will be modules on fundamental concepts and issues in international affairs and foreign policy, which can be used as a full course, as standalone resources, or as supplements to curricula. Topics will range from globalization, proliferation, and sovereignty to sanctions, arms

*Facing page:* Students participating in Model Diplomacy debate drone policy as the National Security Council.

*Above:* Richard N. Haass advises Middlebury College students during a Model Diplomacy simulation.



control, and trade. Our goal with CFR Campus is that all American students—not just those already on a path of study in international relations—attain a deeper understanding of why the world matters and the critical role of the United States, something essential if they are to be competitive as individuals and meet their obligations as citizens, and if this country is to be able to continue providing leadership in and to the world for decades to come.

Richard N. Haass  
*President*

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*Above: Professors discuss the rise of violent extremism at the College and University Educator's Workshop.*