

Real Issues, Real People, Real Life

1. The project center site is in a culture that is extremely different than our US culture. All the participants are dealing with culture shock – food, dress, customs, physical differences, language, and way of life. In addition to this, the sole woman on one team comes to you claiming that she is being ignored by the team’s liaison. She feels she is not taken seriously, the liaison, when he meets with the team, never addresses anything to her in the way of comments about the project, nor does he acknowledge when she tries to insert herself into the discussion. She strongly believes that her contributions to the project are being dismissed and she is extremely frustrated. What can be done to manage all of these issues appropriately with the liaison, with the other team members and with the student herself?
2. While on site, one of the students approaches you with some very personal information. He tells you that his younger brother has “come out” the day before and that the brother has also been sexually assaulted by his boss. The student is wondering what to do since all of this has just occurred and he feels that he should be back in the U.S. to lend his support to his brother.
3. You are the advisor in London where students live in a student residence managed by professional staff. You receive notice from the management that two of the male students have been charged with allegedly violating the code of conduct – offensive language directed toward a non-WPI female student.
4. During the 2nd week on site, a student reveals to the group that he is gay. He shares that he has not yet come out to his family or friends back home, and thought that doing it away from home might be a way to “test” the process. IN general the reaction from the group is supportive and appropriate. However, one young man begins expressing opinions that reflect his deep-seated homophobia that he claims are religiously based. His expressions of his feelings are truly offensive to you, the student who has just come out, and many of the other students.
5. The second day on site, two male students are mugged in broad daylight. No weapons are seen, although the men are threatened that if they don’t hand over all their money they will be hurt. The two who perpetrated the crime were male and in their 20s.