

Case Study One

Mark is a physical education teacher who oftentimes invites students to demonstrate certain skills in front of class. He feels that students can get a better understanding of the activity if they watch a fellow classmate perform the movements. However, recently he has noticed a problem- all white men - always volunteer. Mark knows that there are many other fully capable students in the class including women and some international students; however they don't want to participate. Mark does not want to "force the issue" but feels it would add to the class if all students lead some of the demonstrations. In particular, he notices that some of the international students don't make eye contact and it concerns him that they are disengaged in the early portion of the class.

1. How would you handle getting the students activity involved? Why is it important?
2. What aspects of power and privilege are involved in this situation?
3. What might be some of the historical contexts that have influenced the situation?

*Modified from "Diversity and Inclusive Teaching "What would you do?" by Pamela Barnett.

Case Study Two

You have just been hired as the head coach of a high school football team in a community that has a significant number of Muslim families. Coinciding with the start of fall practices is Ramadan, the Islamic holy month of fasting, when adherents refrain from eating and drinking during daylight hours. It has been brought to your attention that 10 players on the team are observing the holiday. You are concerned about finding way to balance two-a-day practices with religious and safety issues.

1. How would you handle this situation?
2. What other issues would you need to address about this team?
3. What issues of privilege would you need to consider?
4. Given the political nature of high school athletics, what issues might occur because of the diversity of the team?

Case Study Three

Another physical education teacher at your school has been teaching a coed unit of softball. You have over heard many of the students joke about how the teacher demeans the male students for “throwing like girls”. In one class, the school’s star softball pitcher, a female who has had numerous Division 1 offers competed in a friendly contest against a member of the football team. The football player was quickly struck out by the softball player which led the teacher to “award” the football player with a pink skirt to wear over his shorts for the remainder of class.

1. In what ways does this uphold traditional gender roles?
2. How does this detract from the softball players abilities?
3. What factors of power impact the situation between the teacher and the football player?
The softball player?
4. How would you handle this situation as a colleague?

Case Study Four

You are a teacher at a high school which has a Native American Mascot. Most of the time the school's mascot "The Braves" is a source of pride for the students and community. However, you were recently approached by two Native American students who feel demeaned and embarrassed when the mascot and students perform a "mock rain dance" before the start of the game which include many stereotypical and racist gestures. The students explained "The Braves" could be a source of pride for all students but the current representation of the mascot is hurtful.

1. How would you address this issue with the students and administrators?
2. Discuss the Native American students' position in terms of power and privilege. What about the students participating in the mock dancing?
3. Would you react differently if the students who complained were not Native American?

Case Study Five

A school from one of the wealthiest parts of the city chanted “USA, USA, USA” following its boys basketball team’s regional final victory against a team that was made up predominantly of Hispanic players. The victory celebration was marred by the aforementioned “USA” chants, which came from the school’s fan section. Some at the game reported that the Hispanic students may have inflamed the situation by chanting “White Boys” either before or after the “USA” chant began.

1. What issues of power and privilege highlight this case?
2. As an administrator or coach, how would you handle this situation?
3. What steps would you take to be proactive in this situation?