

Role-play Situation: Faculty-Student, “A Not-So-Honest Mistake”

Have two people read the scene. Discuss the situation as a group, using questions on the back. Grace and Betsy are looking for their male professor’s office and having trouble finding it...

Heard from the hall...Betsy: So where is this guy’s office?

Grace: He’s my sociology professor. It should be somewhere around here...

Betsy: What’s his name again?

Grace: Leach.

Betsy: I don’t see a Professor Leach anywhere.

Grace (next door to a woman professor’s office): Oh! Here it is. Locked. Damn -- he doesn’t have a whiteboard.

Betsy: Hey, maybe this lady knows where he is. He’s a big professor... he must have a secretary.

Grace: Yeah, maybe. *(to the professor)* Um, excuse me? Are you Professor Leach’s secretary?

Professor (pause): I’m another professor. This entire hallway is faculty offices *(short pause)*. The secretary is in the department office down the hall.

Grace: Oh! I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to offend you. We’ll try there. Thanks.

Questions:

1. Can you imagine this statement being made by a Skidmore student? (btw...it was)
2. What assumptions *about the woman professor* underlie the students’ question to her?
3. What assumptions *about the man professor* underlie the students’ statements?
4. How might the students’ assumptions about gender that showed up in this hallway conversation influence what happens in classrooms?