

Role-play Situation: Student-Student, “The Test”

Have two people read the scene. Discuss the situation as a group, using questions on the back.

Steve and Cindy are leaving class after getting a particularly difficult test back from their professor...

Steve: Wow... well that sucked.

Cindy: Eh, it was alright. I just wish she'd have cut us some slack on the essay questions.

Steve: Yeah, how freaking bitchy was that? Docking points for *punctuation and grammar*. We all know how to write, this is college.

Cindy: Yeah, but I think the idea is we should know it by now. Plus, she said the writing center is always open, or else you could just go to her for help. She's really helpful actually, I went in to see her.

Steve: Do you talk to her a lot?

Cindy: Yeah, I'm thinking about asking her to be my advisor.

Steve: Well, better you than me. She hates me.

Cindy: How do you know?

Steve: I've never gotten anything above a B in this class. There is absolutely no way I can be getting these grades. I study.

Cindy: Well, I don't think she'd not give you an A you on purpose.

Steve: She just doesn't like it when I contradict her. Just because she thinks she knows everything... Maybe she just doesn't like guys.

Cindy: She is the professor, I'm pretty sure she's studied this more than we have.

Steve: Whatever, you're a girl you wouldn't get it.

Cindy: What's that supposed to mean?

Steve: You all think you know everything and are always right all the time. PMS is only called that because mad-cow disease was already taken.

Cindy: I've seen that on a bumper sticker before. And guys aren't much better than girls, you know.

Steve: Yeah, well whatever, it's true. Chill out. I'm going to go get lunch. See you later.

Cindy: Bye...

Questions:

1. What did you notice in particular about this conversation?
2. What assumptions *about the professor* underlie specific statements by the two people?
3. What assumptions *about each other* underlie specific statements by the two people?
4. Unpack the specific statement: “Yeah, how freaking bitchy was that? Docking points for *punctuation and grammar*. We all know how to write. This is college.”
 - i. Can you imagine this statement being made by a Skidmore student?
 - ii. Would a similar comment be made about a male professor? If so, what might be said?
 - iii. What does it say about women professors?
 - iv. How might this statement influence the way the professor is viewed by someone who hears the conversation?
 - v. Might the statement change classroom dynamics in the future?
 - vi. Does Steve’s attitude affect the campus climate? Does it change the way individual students might interact with faculty, one on one?
5. Unpack the specific statement, “PMS is only called that because mad-cow disease was already taken.”
 - i. Can you imagine this statement being made by a Skidmore student?
 - ii. What does it convey about women?
 - iii. How might Cindy feel *about herself* when Steve said this? About women professors?
 - iv. How might the conversation differ if two men students were talking about the test?
 - v. What statements might have been made if the professor had been a man?