Identity-related scenarios

Scenario #1
A student of color in the Cape Town program (“Learning for justice in post-apartheid South Africa”) is sitting in a guest lecture when the presenter looks directly at her. He provocatively announces his rejection of the term “African American” because they have no right to the use of the title African. In fact, he clarifies, even as a white South African, he has more claim of African heritage than someone of color. What are your thoughts on the situation?

Scenario #2
Two DukeEngage students are walking down the street in a former Soviet Republic. Both are U.S. citizens; one is of Asian descent while the other is white. Some young kids nearby start making noises that sound like a stereotypical Kung Fu movie. Should the students: a) ignore the incident; b) walk away but stop to talk about it; c) confront the kids as it’s a teachable moment?

Scenario #3
You’re teaching English as part of DukeEngage – South Korea. You are part of a diverse cohort, including a first-generation Indian-American student and a student who was adopted as a baby from Korea and grew up in Iowa. You hear that students in their classes are complaining that they thought they were getting a “real” English teacher. You ask what they mean, and they hint that your peers aren’t “real” English teachers because they aren’t white. How do you react?

Scenario #4:
You’re an African-American participating in DukeEngage – China, Zhuhai. You are slowly starting to get used to receiving long stares pretty much wherever you go, but a weekend enrichment trip to a zoo really shocks you: you notice that while you are taking pictures of animals, other people are taking pictures of you. Many attempt to be surreptitious, but a few blatantly ask if they can take your photo. What do you say? As a bystander, what can you do in this situation?

Scenario #5:
You are a female student on the DukeEngage Kenya- WISER program, working on issues of girls’ and women’s empowerment. You and one of your male peers spend most of your days teaching in the village schools. The two of you frequently have check-ins with a male Kenyan that you work with. After a few of these meetings, you begin to notice an unsettling pattern: the Kenyan teacher always addresses your male peer, rather than you. Even if you ask a question, the teacher answers by making eye contact with your partner and seemingly responding only to him. This really upsets you, but your peer tells you you’re overreacting. What should you do?