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# Engaging in Difficult Conversations with Faculty Leaders

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JARED BICKENBACH: BAYLOR UNIVERSITY

DAVID DIBIASIO: WORCESTER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE



# Purpose

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***Why are we doing this session and why is this information important?***

- To gain insight and share ideas on how other international safety and security professionals handle difficult safety and security conversations with faculty leaders.
- To share common faculty leader expectations and discuss outliers.
- To learn how other institutions address shortfalls when faculty leaders do not meet expectations.



# Common Roles & Expectations

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- Professor
- Team Leader
- First Responder
- Travel Agent
- Financial / Budget Advisor
- Campus Security Authority (CSA)
- Cultural Advisor
- News Source
- Communications Specialist
- Judicial Affairs
- Health, Safety, Security Advisor
- Translator
- Academic Advisor
- Councilor



# The Demarcation Line

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## APPROVED TRAVEL

- Conversations tend to be informative
- Focus more on managing expectations
- Accepted or understood policies and procedures
- Discussions focused on proactive and active safety measures
- Typically less hostile

## UNAPPROVED TRAVEL

- More hostile (ALWAYS)
- Focuses on reasoning behind the assessment
- Use policies and procedures to justify decision
- Helps to have leadership buy-in when faculty appeal decisions (THEY WILL)
- Other ways to gain compliance?



# Travel Proposal

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## Proposal:

A pre-med faculty member has proposed a 14 day trip to Puerto Cabezas Nicaragua where a group of 15 students and one faculty member will work with the local health clinic

Travel Dates: May 13<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup>

Air Travel: U.S. to Managua, Managua to Puerto Cabezas

Accommodations: Will be provided by the local orphanage which operates several guest houses for visiting groups

Transportation and meals while in Puerto Cabezas will be provided by the orphanage



# Overview of Threats

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## Health Risk:

- Malaria
- Chikungunya
- Dengue Fever
- Zika Virus
- Hepatitis A, B, & E

## Civil Unrest:

- Managua specifically, but can pose a threat in Puerto Cabezas

## Mitigation:

- Bite prevention training
- Food and water safety training
- Medical clinic safety and protocols training
- BCON training
- Communication protocols
- Packing list overview
- Emergency Action Plan



# Questions

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- How many of you meet with all faculty leaders?
- Do your faculty leaders have mandatory training requirements? What type?
- What other training do you offer to faculty leaders?
- Do you have a list of resources for faculty leaders? What type of resources?
- Does your institution have faculty code of conduct policies that address expectations?
- Does anyone review faculty leader qualifications? How is this done?
- What recourse do you have if you have concerns about a faculty leader?
- Does anyone track faculty leader performance? Number of incidents, academic outcomes following an international trip?



# Logistics & Location

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## Logistics:

- Based on the proposed itinerary the group will have to take two planes into Puerto Cabezas. How do you intend to ensure everyone makes it to your accommodations in Puerto Cabezas?
- How do you plan on getting your group back to Managua in the event you have to evacuate?

## Location:

- What steps has your local partner taken to ensure your group's safety and security in the event of an incident?
- What can your local partner provide in the event of an incident?



# Questions

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- How do you ensure you have the most up-to-date information?
- What resources do you have that can help inform faculty leaders of safety and security issues at their destination? What about one off programs?
- Do you speak with or meet with local partner organizations?
- Do you have emergency contact information for all of your partner organizations?
- How frequently do you assess your long-term partnerships? What if something changes with your partner organization?



# Group Pre-departure

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## Orientation:

- Overview of local situation
- Health threats and vaccination requirements
- Insurance availability and process
- Communications protocols
- University response expectations
- Available resources
- Faculty and Student conduct expectations

## Training:

- Site / task specific training
- First Aid
- CPR
- BCON
- “What if” exercise
- Situational awareness training
- Emergency action plan familiarization





# Questions

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- What trip specific training do you offer faculty leaders and students?
  - *Does this empower or intimidate your faculty leaders?*
- In an emergency what are faculty leaders and students prohibited from doing?
  - *How do your faculty leaders feel about their responsibilities?*
- Do you offer advanced training for faculty leaders and students prior to departure?
- Do you prepare an emergency action plan for faculty leaders?



# Unapproved Travel

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## How do your conversations change when travel is not approved?

Think about the above scenario.

- Do you approve university travel? If not, who are the other stakeholders that you report to and how do you gain support for your assessment and recommendations?
- What recourse do you have if a faculty member protests your assessment or insists on traveling?
- Do you evaluate faculty leader qualifications?
- How do you present your assessment and document your findings so that stakeholders have access to your assessment?
- If you do not have travel approval authority and your assessment differs from the approval authority how do you reconcile differences in opinion?



# Conclusion

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**The main goal of this session is intended to get you thinking about how to communicate with faculty leaders, especially when conversations get heated.**

- Have accurate and relevant information to not only emphasize your points but to ease the concerns of faculty members.
- Understand that some difficult conversations arise from your faculty members' uncertainty or lack of experience with their leadership role.
- Have the backing of stakeholders at your institutions that will support your decisions.
- Be understanding and try to view the conversation from the faculty member's point of view.