

Assessment of Stone Soup Course Experience

This questionnaire is for faculty to describe and assess your experiences with “Stone Soup” Project assignments or activities. Your responses will be posted on the Indisputably blog and may be disseminated in other ways as well. Please describe specifics of your experience, but do not include information that could identify any student (except as noted below) or subject of a Stone Soup assignment or activity.

1. Faculty name: **Bob Dauber**
2. School: **Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law, Arizona State University**
3. Course: **Evidence**
4. Semester: **Fall 2017**
5. Number of students in the course: **91**
6. Briefly describe the Stone Soup assignment or activity (e.g., interview or focus group class). If you assigned students to conduct an interview, summarize the type of subjects and focus of the interview. If you conducted a focus group class, describe the speakers and issues discussed.

Students were offered the opportunity to earn extra credit points by observing a court proceeding during which evidence was introduced or an evidentiary objection was addressed. To earn the points, students were required to submit a 1-2 page reflective essay, describing what they observed and how it related to an issue or rule addressed in class. Of the 91 students in class, 62 submitted essays.

7. Was the assignment required, one of several options, or for extra credit?
Extra credit
8. If students were to write a paper, how long was the paper supposed to be (in double-spaced pages)?
1-2 pages
9. When was the assignment due (or when did you conduct a Stone Soup activity)?
End of the semester

10. What percentage of the grade was allocated to the assignment?

3 “points” added to final exam, which equals approximately 3% of the point spread.

11. Did you discuss in class the results of students’ work? If so, what did you and the students learn from this discussion? Was this a good use of class time?

No – only explained the assignment

12. What did students learn that they wouldn’t have learned without the Stone Soup assignment or activity?

Students who participated in the activity were able to see how the rules and doctrine discussed in class are applied in court proceedings.

13. What worked well with the assignment or activity?

Students seemed to appreciate the encouragement to observe court proceedings. For many, it was their first time watching a hearing or trial, and they were surprised by how well they understood the evidentiary arguments they observed. The instructions required only 1 hour of observation, but most students stayed for an entire morning or afternoon, and some returned the next day to observe the continuation of the trial or hearing.

This year, I posted the memos on the class website so that all could read about what others experienced. Only 3 of the 62 students asked that their memos remain private.

14. What would you do differently if you do it again?

I engaged in some follow-up discussion via e-mail with some of the students, responding to ideas raised in their memos. Time permitting, I would like to increase this type of interactivity, and perhaps use a discussion board so that others could participate in the dialogue.

15. What would you advise other faculty considering using a Stone Soup assignment or activity?

The added time commitment is not insignificant, but it’s well worth the investment.