

Assessment of Stone Soup Course Experience

This questionnaire is for faculty who have used a “Stone Soup” Project assignment or activity to describe and assess their experience with it. Your response will be posted on the Indisputably blog and may be disseminated in other ways as well. It would help if you would describe specifics of your experience, but do not include information that could identify any student or subject of a Stone Soup assignment or activity.

1. Faculty name: **Douglas Yarn**
2. School: **Georgia State University**
3. Course: **Alternative Dispute Resolution (survey course)**
4. Semester: **Fall 2017**
5. Number of students in the course: **29**
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.

Interview: Subject should have been a lawyer-negotiator with at least 5 years of practice experience. See attached assignment description that I adapted from a document you distributed, but I can't remember or find the original.

7. Was the assignment required, one of several options, or for extra credit?
Required.
8. If students were to write a paper, how long was the paper supposed to be (in double-spaced pages)?
No more than 10 pages.
9. When was the assignment due (or when did you conduct a Stone Soup activity)?
By end of the exam period.
10. What percentage of the grade was allocated to the assignment?
25%

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?

Did not discuss in class.

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

- **Students discovered that the theory and concepts they were learning were useful in analyzing the negotiation behavior of others outside the controlled context of the classroom.**
- **Students discovered that many practicing attorneys use techniques adapted to the particular context within which they most frequently negotiate.**
- **By comparing their own negotiation behavior and philosophy to that of more experienced attorneys, students made choices as to what behaviors and attitudes to emulate, avoid, and improve upon.**

13. What worked well with the assignment or activity?

- **Students liked having an excuse to talk to a practicing attorney about a topic they were currently learning. Many have been eager to talk with me about what their subjects had to say.**

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

- **Maybe I would assign more weight to the exercise and eliminate some other exercises in the course.**
- **We did not discuss the experience in class because I had too many students and not enough time, but I would have done so in slightly different circumstances**
- **Also, the assignment final draft wasn't due until the end of the exam period. In the future, I would have the assignment due earlier and thus closer to the end of the negotiation portion of this survey course.**

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

Despite the materials you supplied to make it easier to manage this assignment, I found it very time consuming to structure, explain, and ultimately to grade. I was very frustrated with the difficulty I had coming up with some useful criteria for grading. Ultimately, I just lumped the papers into three categories: (1) low effort or didn't follow instructions (I had only 3 of these), (2) "stuck out" as particularly thoughtful and well written, and (3) everybody else.