

## **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: **Maureen Weston**
2. School: **Pepperdine**
3. Course: **Negotiation Settlement & Advocacy**
4. Semester: **Fall 2017**
5. Number of students in the course: **28**
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 are asked to interview a lawyer or other professional who regularly engages in negotiation about their experience with and lesson for negotiation. The goals of the assignment are to provide you an opportunity to: (1) learn from someone's experience in an actual negotiation; (2) practice interviewing skills including developing rapport and protecting confidentiality; and (3) reflect on how concepts we discuss in class may apply in actual negotiations.**

**The focus of the interview and sample questions may include:**

- **How does the attorney/person prepare themselves and their clients for negotiation?**
- **What are effective techniques or tactics?**
- **What do the “best,” most successful negotiators do?**
- **Describe their most challenging negotiation**
- **What conflict prompted the negotiation**
- **What role did emotions, relationships, money, interest have?**
- **What role did the lawyers play? The clients?**
- **What were the critical factors in concluding the deal?**

**Students interviewed professionals from a variety of industries. The lawyers interviewed worked in medical malpractice, worker compensation, intellectual property, entertainment law, insurance, mergers & acquisitions;**

**health care, public-interest, civil litigation, and criminal defense and prosecution. Some international students interviewed lawyers from their home countries including Germany, China, and Saudi Arabia. One student interviewed a professor from Columbia University who was involved in the Iran-Contra negotiations (I was impressed that the professor responded to her cold call email). Another student's mother is a foreign agent and we found that interesting. A student who is also a doctor interviewed his colleagues on how they negotiation essentially with parents of sick children.**

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)?

**1-2 pages**

9. When was the assignment due (or when did you conduct a Stone Soup activity)?

**Week 8**

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

**Counted toward participation grade - approximately 10%**

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?

**This Stone Soup exercise is a particularly useful learning experience which connects students to professionals who engage in negotiation, provides an opportunity for students to utilize their interviewing, networking, and communication skills, and brings together our class readings, discussions to connect theory to practice. We spend an entire class with students who report on their interview discussions and findings. It's a fascinating discussion and always heartening to know that what we teach has value and practical use and to see the students reach out to professionals on a substantive topic. Thank you!**

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

**See #11.**

13. What worked well with the assignment or activity?

**See #11.**

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

**I've done this assignment twice and it seems to work well in its current structure given the time constraints of the class and other coverage needs. Always open to suggestions!**

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

**Do it!**