

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: **Fran Tetunic**
2. School: **Shepard Broad College of Law Nova Southeastern University**
3. Course: **Dispute Resolution Clinic Course. This is a 2-credit course following the students’ intensive mediation training and concomitant with their in-house clinic component.**
4. Semester: **Fall 2017**
5. Number of students in the course: **17**
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.

The assignment was to interview an attorney familiar with the mediation process by virtue of attending mediation with his clients. The students devised the questions they wanted to ask the attorneys by reflecting on practical matters they wished to know and to gain attorneys’ views on the efficacy of the process.

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)?

Multiple pages to adequately answer the questions and communicate the attorney’s perspective on the mediation process.

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

The assignment was due on the last day of class.

10. What percentage of the grade was allocated to the assignment? **20%**

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?

We discussed how their interviews were going before they submitted the assignments. This gave them the opportunity to compare experiences, not only based on the attorneys' responses, but also the skills they employed while developing a relationship and speaking with the attorneys. The in-class discussion helped me to see how the students were able to transfer skills learned in mediation to the interview session.

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

The students wanted to know how the attorneys made decisions about selecting mediators and what they were looking for from the mediators. The students wanted to know about the business side of the practice of mediation. They were able to have their questions answered through participation in this Stone Soup assignment. Further, they learned that they were comfortable with the interview process in large part due to the skills they had honed in the Dispute Resolution Clinic. They were also able to reflect on what they might have done differently to better elicit information to answer their questions.

13. What worked well with the assignment or activity?

Student participation in deciding what they wanted to learn and devising their questions worked well in that they "owned" the assignment and enthusiastically set about accumulating the information they sought. Further, it allowed me to learn what they wanted to learn.

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

I would have the students conduct the interviews earlier in the term to leave time for more class discussion on the process, the transferable skills they employed, and to gather more information should they not have had their questions fully answered. Additionally, it would be helpful for the students to share their results with each other and to produce a chart, table (or other summary) showing their findings.

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

There are many ways to make this work. It is an excellent opportunity for students to relate classroom experience to the real world, while giving them a safe place to develop their skills and confidence.