
RESOURCES FOR USING REAL PRACTICE SYSTEMS MATERIALS IN TEACHING

DECEMBER 12, 2022 | JOHN LANDE | [LEAVE A COMMENT](#)

This post describes how faculty can use ideas and materials from the Real Practice Systems Project to help students get realistic understandings of practice. I initially focused on mediation systems, which are the combination of factors affecting what mediators do before, during, and after mediation sessions. These systems include their routine procedures and strategies for dealing with recurring challenging situations. Practitioners develop systems for other repeated tasks such as advocacy in mediation, negotiation, or a wide range of other functions. So I generically refer to this as Real Practice Systems, not limited to mediation.

Of course, faculty can use this project by assigning students to read any of [the publications in this project](#), possibly assigning students to read particular mediators' systems in the [Ten Real Mediation Systems post](#).

Although the project generally focuses on the systems that mediators develop and use, it can be adapted for students to understand the perspectives of lawyers acting as advocates in mediation, negotiators, and legal practice generally, as illustrated below.

In addition, faculty can use the project as a template for a variety of paper assignments. For example, students could conduct [Stone Soup interviews](#) of practitioners using interview protocols for [mediators](#), [advocates in mediation](#), and [negotiators](#).

Faculty could assign students to write their aspirations of their own systems after graduation. Even as students, they can describe the parts of the templates about their backgrounds, values and goals. It could be a useful exercise to have them imagine the kinds of parties and cases they might deal with in practice and what procedures they might use. Faculty could assign students to write their systems early in the semester and then revise them at the end of the semester, reflecting on what they learned and how their perspectives might have changed.

Here are templates for assignments about students' desired systems as [mediators](#), [advocates in mediation](#), and [negotiators](#).

A variation of this assignment would focus on students' actual performances in simulated or real cases during the semester. For this assignment, students would describe the parties and cases as well as their planned approach and how they dealt with challenging situations. Here are templates for these assignments about students' roles as [mediators](#), [advocates in mediation](#), and [negotiators](#).

Faculty are welcome to modify these protocols and templates as desired.

I suggest that students first complete each section with bullet points summarizing their ideas, going through the entire assignment. After that, they might go back and flesh out their discussions, writing full paragraphs. I suggest starting with the bullet points so that students don't get bogged down in the beginning and run out of steam before they get to the end. I suggest requiring them to write full paragraphs because this can stimulate insights that students wouldn't get simply by writing bullet point summaries.

I strongly suggest that faculty discuss these assignments in class. I know that there never is enough time to cover everything you want. But faculty who used Stone Soup assignments that discussed them in class found that it was really worth the time.

This post is part of a series related to my article in the Cardozo Journal of Conflict Resolution, [Real Mediation Systems to Help Parties and Mediators Achieve Their Goals](#).

This post provides [more ways to help students understand dispute resolution practice](#).

[This post collects all the posts in this series.](#)

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