

Overcoming Status Quo Bias to Use Stone Soup



Some faculty are intrigued by the Stone Soup Project but are not ready to incorporate a Stone Soup assignment or activity in their courses.

The experience of the Legal Education, ADR, and Practical Problem Solving ([LEAPS](#)) Project of the ABA Section of Dispute Resolution is quite relevant. LEAPS was designed to help faculty incorporate what we called “practical problem-solving” in their courses. We recognized that, for many reasons, faculty often don’t do so and [we catalogued various barriers, causes for reluctance, underlying interests, and possible responses.](#)

One of the major reasons is status quo bias. Faculty who have taught the same courses many years may feel, “If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it.” This is especially true when faculty feel that their courses are working very well. Class time is limited and most faculty can’t include everything they want as it is. Adding something new generally requires cutting something important. Faculty are busy, and revising courses may not be as high a priority as publishing or other activities. Including a Stone Soup assignment or activity in their courses that requires more of their time also may be a problem. Given the forces of inertia, some faculty interested in using Stone Soup in their courses may need some time before they are ready to do so.

To add a Stone Soup assignment or activity to one’s courses may require overcoming status quo bias. Presumably faculty do so because they believe that it’s worth their time and the advantages of incorporating Stone Soup experiences of actual practice are more important for their students than whatever they would omit.