

S.J.U. EDU 5420 Politics in Education – Course Synthesis, Spring 2011

Prof. Frank Smith

Cohort 11 Collaboration

The Politics in Education course focused on Deborah Stone's notion of the paradoxical nature of the political process. Stone's text, *Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making*, was the theoretical framework for all course projects and activities. Stone's work provided a model to approach research in terms of goals, problems, and solutions. Stone compares and contrasts the market model and the polis model, and demonstrates how the polis model can be used to describe how political decisions are crafted.

In an effort to further our understanding of Stone's framework, the cohort did thematic analyses of several other works which included, *Whatever it Takes*, by Paul Tough, *Between Public and Private*, by Katrina Bulkley, et.al. , and a case study on civic capacity by Clarence Stone. The cohort worked in various, interchangeable groups to create product matrices that were used for culminating, group research papers. These research projects allowed the cohort to synthesize Stone's work to answer the research question, "How shall the schools be governed?"

The rigorous content and coursework proved to be beneficial and enabled the cohort to gain a greater depth and understanding of the intersection of politics and education.