

EDU 5721 Course Synthesis
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Collective Bargaining in Education
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This course introduced Cohort 11 members to the complexities and nuances associated with collective bargaining and contract negotiations. The authors of the text, *Getting to Yes*, Fisher, Ury, and Patton, suggest that knowing and developing alternatives to reaching an agreement with the other party are oftentimes a source of great power. The authors contend, “Whether you should or should not agree on something in a negotiation depends entirely upon the attractiveness of the best available alternative.” The authors of *Getting to Yes* coined the notion BATNA (the Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement). The value of one side’s BATNA is always relative to the possible settlements available in the current negotiations, and the possibilities within a given negotiation process are heavily influenced by the nature of the interdependence between the parties. Today more so than ever before, school district administrators must be analytical, insightful, and savvy in dealing with Teacher’s Union contracts, collective bargaining, and negotiations.

Dr. Hughes created a collective bargaining scenario which required the cohort members to complete the preparation, analysis, and bargaining of a Teacher’s Union contract for a school system. The cohort was divided into two groups representing a Teacher’s Union and a Board of Education. Each constituency was presented with a set of criteria that guided the framework for the negotiations. By participating in integrative bargaining, both parties were inspired to engage in purposeful dialogue with the intention of progressing towards a reasonable settlement. The final group project was a report to

the Board of Education outlining the bargaining settlement related to initial goals and objectives. As a result of this experience, we learned that there are degrees of distinction involved in the negotiations process. This simulation exercise proved to be an invaluable experience for doctoral students who aspire to work as Central Office Administrators.