

Student Perspectives: Putting Theory Into Action

Below we feature Sofia Orelo (JD '22) describing how she is putting negotiation theories to practice. Sofia presented at the ABA-Dispute Resolution Section's annual conference (along with fellow student Meredith Bennett-Swanson (JD '21) and professors Lynn Cohn and Annie Buth) about using classroom concepts to effectively engage administration about enacting change.

Concerned Students: A Case Study, by Sofia Orelo (JD '22)

Negotiation courses do not always have to look to hypotheticals to teach negotiation concepts, they can look inside or just outside the classroom.

As part of our negotiation class final project, my group (comprised of Meredith Bennett-Swanson, Charlie Sprayregen and Kathleen Kennedy) did a [case study](#) on the Northwestern Law administration's past, current, and ongoing negotiations with students, and more specifically a group called Concerned Students (led by Cyerra McGowan (JD'21), McKayla Stokes (JD'20) and others) regarding the hiring and retention of BIPOC faculty.

Our project illustrated the importance of applying negotiation concepts to our immediate environments. It is important to not only introduce students to negotiation for the purposes of interacting with future clients and fellow lawyers, but also to create change in their communities, in law school and beyond.

Our analysis covered a wide range of topics, including organizational, informational, and moral power as well as the power that derives from the identities of parties. Most importantly, our paper made "Suggestions for the Future," outlining ways Northwestern Law students can recognize power dynamics between the administration and the student body and leverage their power to advocate for change.

To learn more about the efforts of Concerned Students at Northwestern Law, click [here](#) to read an article by the Chicago Sun Times.

