



# Academic Entitlement, Personality, and Academic Performance Among Graduate Health Students

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## Background

- Academic entitlement (AE) is a recently recognized phenomenon characterized by students expecting academic success without assuming personal responsibility.
- In a field that directly impacts patient safety, AE can lead to ill-prepared providers managing care, increasing risks of adverse outcomes. Current AE research centers on undergraduates outside healthcare, highlighting the need to study graduate students to identify trends and potential predictive factors.
- Examples of AE behavior: contesting grades; demanding extensions or special accommodations; disregarding academic integrity; creating a hostile learning environment.

## Objectives

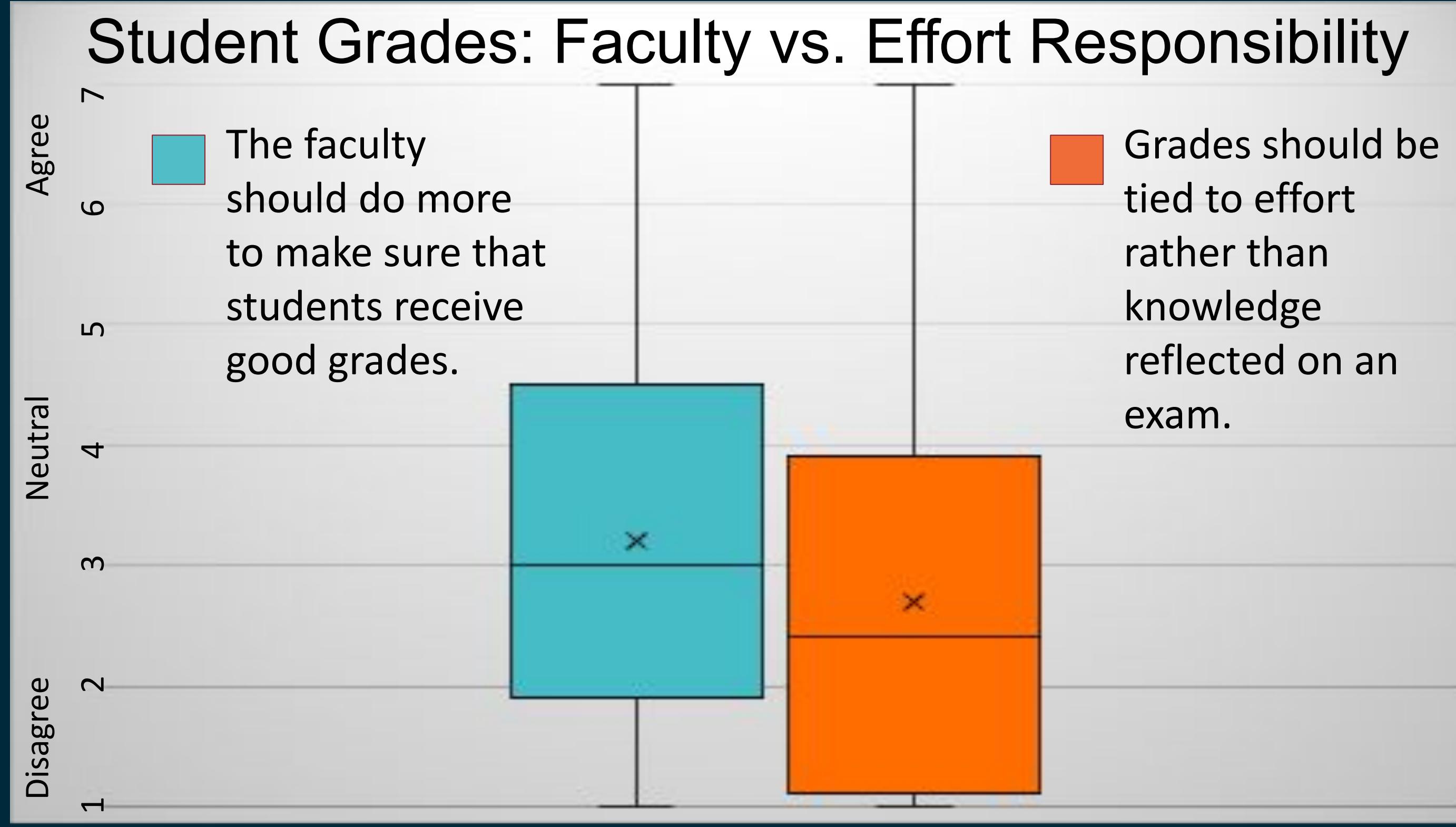
- Measure academic entitlement and differentiate its prevalence, key characteristics, and implications among graduate students.
- Discuss the role that various demographic and personal factors have in the expression of academic entitlement.

## Validated Tools of Measurement

- The current literature was examined to identify previously validated tools to measure the desired variables.
- To measure AE:** Academic Entitlement Questionnaire, or AEQ  
Consists of 8 Likert scale statements like, "It is the professor's responsibility to make it easy for me to succeed".
- To measure narcissistic personality traits:** Narcissistic Personality Inventory, or NPI  
Consists of 8 paired statements in which participants choose which one applies more to them.  
"It makes me uncomfortable to be the center of attention" vs. "I really like to be the center of attention".
- To detect social desirability:** BIDR-16  
Used to detect under or overreporting of certain characteristics.  
It consists of 16 Likert statements like, "When I hear people talking privately, I avoid listening".

## Methods

- Observational, descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted
- IRB approval as an exempt study obtained
- Email solicitation was sent out to the entire RFU student population
- Data collected using Qualtrics demographic data; AEQ, NPI, and BIDR tools; and 2 qualitative free-response questions
- Statistical analysis With SPSS to determine predictive demographic factors and possible correlations with AE



Correlations of Attributes		
Attributes Examined	Spearman Correlation (r value)	2-Tail Significance (p value)
AEQ:NPI	-0.105	0.230
AEQ:BIDR	-0.127	0.147
AEQ:GPA	-0.044	0.633
NPI:GPA	-0.088	0.358
NPI:BIDR	0.093	0.270
High NPI: BIDR	-0.417	0.034 ★
BIDR:GPA	0.208	0.027 ★

Program-Specific Observations				
Academic College Enrolled	AEQ Mean (SD)	NPI Mean (SD)	BIDR Mean (SD)	GPA Mean (SD)
Chicago Medical School	29.93 (13.941)	<b>3.02 (2.074)</b>	72.80 (9.964)	3.635 (0.498)
Health Professions	35.38 (17.052)	2.50 (2.246)	72.54 (9.864)	3.582 (0.390)
Nursing	31.24 (15.388)	2.42 (1.703)	<b>81.05 (9.681)</b>	<b>3.918 (0.157)</b>
Pharmacy	<b>34.75 (12.384)</b>	2.63 (1.188)	69 (5.043)	3.057 (0.365)
Podiatric Medicine	37.11 (11.822)	2.78 (2.016)	73.28 (9.535)	3.399 (0.514)
Graduate Postdoctoral	-	-	-	-
Overall Mean	32.57 (14.679)	2.70 (1.946)	74.96 (10.260)	3.647 (0.439)

## Results

- Demographic factors such as age, biological sex, gender, ethnicity, country of origin, education obtained outside the USA, employment status, parental status, marital status, military background, academic college enrolled, years matriculated within each academic program, amount of workforce time before matriculation, and student loans owed after graduation were not significantly correlated with AE, NPI, or socially desirable responding (SDR).
- No significant statistical correlation between AE and NPI or SDR.
- Higher NPI levels were negatively associated with SDR.
- A positive correlation emerged between SDR and self-reported GPA ( $p=0.027$ ).
- Although not statistically significant, program trends included:  
AE was reported highest in Podiatric Medicine and Health Professions  
NPI was reported highest in Chicago Medical School  
NPI was lowest in Nursing  
SDR is positively correlated with GPA, peaking in Nursing
- Qualitative analysis showed divided opinions on grading flexibility, with most agreeing that healthcare students should be held to higher academic standards.

## Discussion

- Direct comparisons to previous research are challenging because existing data primarily comes from undergraduate students.
- Narcissistic traits were negatively linked to social desirability.
  - Those with narcissistic traits did not care what others thought about them.
- Higher social desirability was positively associated with higher self-reported GPAs.
  - Those who valued others' opinions reported higher GPAs, though whether this reflects actual performance or misreporting is unclear.
- The project underscores the need for further AE research, dismisses narcissism as a predictor, and emphasizes clearer academic expectations to reduce AE and improve student-faculty dynamics.

## References

