

A Study of Self-Reported Academic Entitlement Scores on a Senior Military College
Campus

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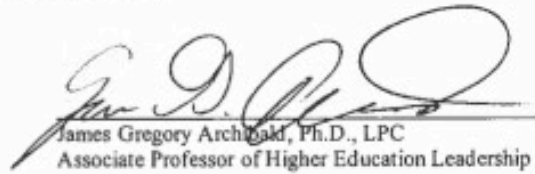
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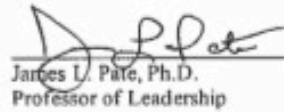
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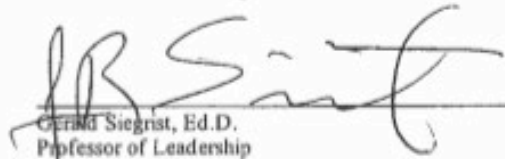
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ABSTRACT

The presence of academic entitlement within post-secondary students poses a significant threat to higher education. Elevated senses of academic entitlement often result in a student's expectation to achieve academic success without acknowledging the additional rigors associated with post-secondary coursework. Students may outwardly exhibit negative emotional responses when they fail to achieve high marks. This may be coupled with a view that the pursuit of a post-secondary education is a commodity as opposed to an opportunity to expand intellectual horizons. Elevated senses of academic entitlement may result in the disruption of healthy classroom dynamics, place additional strain on post-secondary faculty, and impact promotion and tenure processes. The researcher investigated the currently held self-perceptions of academic entitlement at a Senior Military College in the southeast region of the United States during the 2019 Fall semester.

Key Words: academic entitlement, Senior Military College, post-secondary, student-cadets

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DEDICATION

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To my loving mother Paulette Jakiel, thank you for always supporting me in my educational and professional endeavors. I hope that you know how proud I am to call myself your son. I hope that you know I love you with all of my heart.

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

A student's sense of self-worth, perception of their academic prowess, and behavioral characteristics have become topics of significant interest (Chowning & Campbell, 2009; Greenberger, Lessard, Chen, & Farruggia, 2008; Jackson, Singleton-Jackson, & Frey, 2011; Miller, 2013). The manner in which individual students view their academic environment led to a debate of how past, current, and future generations are comparable in their levels of academic entitlement (Thompson & Gregory, 2012; Twenge & Campbell, 2009). The presence of an elevated sense of entitlement has previously been linked to significant societal changes, the integration of technology in and outside of the classroom, and the migration of Generation Y or Millennials into higher education (Chowning & Campbell, 2009; Twenge & Campbell, 2009). Students that demonstrated elevated levels of academic entitlement have been shown to adopt a consumeristic view of their post-secondary educational pursuits. This may lead to a belief that in exchange for paying tuition, student-fees, or by merely attending classes, a student is entitled to high academic marks (Vallade, Martin, & Weber, 2014; Zhu & Anagondahalli, 2017).

Previous research on academic entitlement has focused on traditional educational settings (Chowning & Campbell, 2009; Ciani, Summers, & Easter, 2008; Kopp & Finney, 2013; Lockett, Trocchia, Noel, & Marlin, 2017). Gender and academic concentration have previously been included in attempts to gain an understanding of

unique influences that may contribute to academic entitlement among students (Ciani, Summers, & Easter, 2008; Jeffres, Barclay, & Stolte, 2014; Karpen, 2014; Kelly, 2010; O'Brien, Major, & Gilbert, 2012). Sessoms, Finney, & Kopp (2016) added to the literature with their exploration of the potential influence of class rank and enrollment time on academic entitlement among students.

Statement of the Problem

A growing portion of students are showing that they are ill-prepared for the challenges and rigors associated with post-secondary education. Students that achieved success during their secondary education may be operating under a false assumption that this same level of success will be easily replicated (Chowning & Campbell, 2009; Kerr, Johnson, Gans, & Krumrine, 2004; Santiago-Rivera & Bernstein, 1996). If a student failed to develop the appropriate internal awareness, they may associate negative academic performances to external factors instead of taking personal responsibility (Feldmann, 2001; Stork & Hartley, 2009). This shift in blame and warped sense of academic reality has previously been defined as academic entitlement.

When a student fails to achieve academic success, they may lash out against their instructor. The manner in which a student lashes out has previously been associated with negative personality characteristics and elevated senses of self-entitlement (Brown, Budzek, & Tamborski, 2009; Feldmann, 2001; Menon & Sharland, 2011; Twenge & Campbell, 2003). Dealing with potentially unruly students has added additional strain to overextended post-secondary faculty that are already experiencing high levels of burnout (Jian, Tripp, & Hong 2017). Faculty may feel pressured to modify or inflate grades out of fear of negative course evaluations and the impact these evaluations may have on

promotion and tenure (Redding, 1998; Rojstaczer, 2003; Scanlan & Care, 2004). By caving to these entitled demands, faculty may be unknowingly re-enforcing negative behaviors and allowing the confirmation of degrees to unworthy candidates (Fairchild & Crage, 2014).

Institutions have attempted to help students with their post-secondary transition by offering first-year seminar courses and new-student orientations. However, many of these programs may be geared more towards helping students identify physical locations on a campus as oppose to developing sound academic behaviors. Several studies have highlighted the presence and influence of academic entitlement in traditional secondary and post-secondary settings (Chowning & Campbell, 2009; Ciani et al., 2008; Elias, 2017; Kopp, Zinn, Finney, & Jurich, 2011). However, there is limited evidence that explains the presence of academic entitlement in non-traditional settings. This study seeks to fill this gap by examining the presence of academic entitlement at one of the six Senior Military Colleges in the United States.

Conceptual Framework

Several theories have developed in attempts to explain motivation and cognitive development in individuals. Two of the most relevant theories that have grounded research into the phenomenon of academic entitlement include Heckhausen, Wrosch, and Schulz's (2010) life-span development theory and Deci and Ryan's (1985) self-determination theory. These theories help to explain how individual students may be influenced by significant life events and the manner in which they are willing to attribute personal responsibility to the consequences of their actions. Both the life-span

development theory and self-determination theory serve as a foundation in exploring academic entitlement and are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to identify the current academic entitlement perceptions of students pursuing their post-secondary education at a Senior Military College. This research study explored three potential influences on academic entitlement. The first potential influence evaluated was a student's status within the Corp of Cadets. The second potential influence was the nature of a student's post-secondary educational program. The final potential influence was the academic college in which a student's major was housed within at the Senior Military College.

Information obtained from the proposed study could be used to fill the gap in research by examining academic entitlement at a non-traditional setting; a Senior Military College. Additionally, the study could provide faculty with strategies to effectively address academic entitlement within their classrooms and during student interactions. Academic administrators may also benefit from learning more about the influence of academic entitlement on end-of-course feedback surveys when attempting to determine the overall effectiveness of teaching practices, quality of instruction, and when awarding promotion or tenure.

Research Questions

The following research questions and null hypotheses statements were developed to guide the proposed study.

RQ1: What influence does a student's status within or outside of the Corp of Cadets have on self-reported academic entitlement scores at a Senior Military College?

RQ2: What influence does the academic college have on self-reported academic entitlement scores at a Senior Military College?

RQ3: What influence does the nature of a post-secondary program (Associate, Baccalaureate, or Certificate) have on self-reported academic entitlement scores at a Senior Military College?

Null Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no statistically significant influence between self-reported academic entitlement scores and a student's status in or outside of the Corp of Cadets at a Senior Military College.

H₀₂: There is no statistically significant influence between self-reported academic entitlement scores and the Academic College a student's major resides in at a Senior Military College.

H₀₃: There is no statistically significant influence between self-reported academic entitlement scores and the nature of a post-secondary program at a Senior Military College.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined for this study to provide a clearer understanding of academic entitlement and the unique setting of a Senior Military College.

1. Academic college: The college or discipline that oversees a unique group or set of academic majors at a post-secondary institution.
2. Academic entitlement (AE): Student held perceptions of their right to academic success based on their personal opinions, emotions, or consumerism mindset.

3. Academic Entitlement Questionnaire (AEQ): A validated instrument developed by Chowning & Campbell to measure academic entitlement.
4. Actively enrolled: Post-secondary students that are currently enrolled in at least one course within their specific academic discipline, degree, or program of study.
5. Contracted student-cadet (CSC): Student population enrolled at a Senior Military College that is a member of the Corp of Cadets and is eligible or has earned an officer's commission in the United States Army prior to graduation.
6. Non-contracted student-cadet (CNSC): Student population enrolled at a Senior Military College that is a member of the Corp of Cadets but is not eligible or has yet to earn an officer's commission in the United States Army prior to graduation.
7. Gender: The identity a student participant most closely associates and identifies as.
8. Senior military college (SMC): A post-secondary institution in the United States that has been designated as a Senior Military College by the Department of the Army.
9. Student status: The designation of either Contracted Student-Cadet, Non-Contracted Student-Cadet, or Traditional Student while actively enrolled at a Senior Military College.
10. Traditional student (TS): A student who is enrolled at a Senior Military College that is not a member of the Corp of Cadets nor is eligible to earn an officer's commission in the United States Army. The student must be pursuing any degree, certification, or post-secondary program that is not directly affiliated with the field of Military Sciences.

11. Years of enrollment: The amount of time that a post-secondary student has spent actively enrolled at a post-secondary institution.

Significance of the Study

Excessive levels of entitlement have been linked to negative consequences from an individual, communal, and societal standpoint (Kopp & Finney, 2013; Thompson & Gregory, 2012; Zhu & Anagondahalli, 2017). Students that have developed an unhealthy external locus of control may lack the necessary intelligence and resiliency to handle adversity (Twenge & Campbell, 2009). Faculty dealing with entitled students may feel additional stressors on classroom dynamics that are conducive to optimal learning (Vallade et al., 2014). Faculty may feel pressured to inflate their gradebooks due to the potential influence that post-course evaluations may have on employment status, merit-based raises, or when reviewed for promotion and tenure (Redding, 1998; Scanlan & Care, 2004). Singleton-Jackson, Jackson, and Reinhardt (2010) cautioned that catering to such outlandish demands may jeopardize the core foundations of higher education and devalue degrees. This study aims to address the current gap due to the fact these same concerns exist at non-traditional post-secondary settings; a Senior Military College.

The findings from this study may be of use to faculty, academic administrators, and other campus stakeholders that are looking to appropriately address academic entitlement. Given the scarcity of financial resources, institutions must be cautious when pushing for an increase in overall enrollment at the risk of deviating from academic rigor and student conduct policies. Studies into academic entitlement can provide strategies to create an appropriate bridge between effective recruitment/retention and establishing professional behaviors among students.

Assumptions

Assumptions made during this study included that enrollment at a Senior Military College will have an effect on overall self-reported academic entitlement scores. Students who were not associated with the Corp of Cadets may still be influenced by the unique environment that is offered by the Senior Military College. The second assumption of the study was that the sampling of students enrolled at the Senior Military College is an accurate representation of the student population enrolled at the remaining five Senior Military Colleges in the United States. The third assumption was that participants will select answers that represent their true feelings for all items of the Academic Entitlement Questionnaire. The fourth assumption was that students will understand the differences in the rankings provided within the 7-point Likert Scale associated with each question of the Academic Entitlement Questionnaire.

Delimitations

The following delimitations were identified prior to the completion of the study. Only students actively enrolled at the Senior Military College and pursuing a post-secondary undergraduate degree or certification would be allowed to complete the entire survey. Students that were not actively enrolled, who had withdrawn during the Fall semester, or no longer had an active institutional email address were excluded. Only students who were 18 years of age or older would be granted access to the survey. Students actively enrolled and pursuing a graduate degree at the Senior Military College were not allowed to complete the entire survey. Measures of self-reported academic entitlement scores included only completed survey responses. Academic entitlement was defined utilizing the attributes that were highlighted within the Academic Entitlement

Questionnaire only. The researcher was interested in identifying academic entitlement only and not other negative personality characteristics that may be present in post-secondary students (e.g. Dark Triad).

Limitations

Limitations are defined as influences that are outside of the researcher's control. The following limitations were identified prior to the completion of the study. The first limitation was that satellite campuses may not offer the same degrees, programs, or certifications that are offered on the Senior Military College's main campus. The number of participants who chose to access the survey and provided complete responses were outside of the primary researcher's control. Honesty of participant responses on Likert-scale questions associated with the Academic Entitlement Questionnaire were outside of the researcher's control

Organization of the Study

Chapter 1 of this study contains an introduction of the problem. A statement of the problem of is also provided to frame the challenges facing faculty when interacting with entitled post-secondary students. A brief introduction into life-span development theory and self-determination theory present the conceptual framework utilized to provide a foundation for study. The purpose of the study, research questions/null hypotheses, and significance of the study are included to address how findings contribute to the literature. Lastly, the definitions of terms, assumptions of the study, limitations, and delimitations are also provided.

Chapter 2 consists of a review of the literature utilized in previous attempts to explore academic entitlement in the post-secondary setting. Research on personality and

negative psychological behaviors, defining academic entitlement in the 21st century, and strategies that faculty may utilize to address academic entitlement serve as key variables within this review. A brief explanation of life-span development theory and self-determination theory are provided to define the selected conceptual framework for the study.

Chapter 3 consists of the methodological approach to the study. The selected methodology, data collection procedures, and data analysis procedures are explained in detail. Chapter 4 is composed of the findings and interpretations of the study. A presentation of these findings is provided throughout the chapter. Lastly, Chapter 5 provides a detailed explanation of the findings, implications for application, recommendations for future studies, and an overall conclusion of the study.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The provided literature review is an analysis and exploration of scholarly research in which academic entitlement (AE) was of primary interest. The literature review begins with the conceptual framework of life-span development theory (LSDT) and self-determination theory (SDT). Information regarding the history of AE and an operational definition of AE immediately follow. Associations of AE with other negative personality characteristics, generational differences across cohorts, and other potential influencers on AE compose the remainder of Chapter 2. A summary of the literature review is provided at the conclusion of the chapter.

Life-Span Development & Self-Determination Theory

The proposed study was grounded within the conceptual framework of LSDT and the SDT. Heckhausen et al. (2010) crafted LSDT to help identify the developmental paths that actively shape an individual's pursuit of long-term goals. A key feature of an individual's development is their capacity to regulate their motivation by adapting to change. These adaptations are often influenced by important societal and cultural events during key development stages (Heckhausen et al., 2010).

Heckhausen et al. (2010) further refined their definition of LSDT to focus on desired outcomes at both intermediate and long-term periods of time while providing an overlap between stages of development. This theory is applicable to research in the realms of AE where post-secondary students from the Millennial generation may have a different manner in how they view higher education. Laverghetta (2018) found that

Millennials have demonstrated a great hunger for post-secondary education, but this hunger is linked to an elevated sense of privilege. Link (2019) echoed a similar sentiment that Millennials attributed a stronger internal locus of control when a behavior was viewed as self-determined.

Self-determination theory (SDT), although constructed in a similar manner to LSDT, provided a deeper exploration of intrinsic and extrinsic motivational strategies. Self-determination theory (SDT) was initially proposed by Deci and Ryan (1985). Burton, Lydon, D'Alessandro, and Koestner (2006) advanced this framework to measure the influence of intrinsic motivation and self-regulatory strategies linked to successful outcomes and positive behavioral adaptations. Intrinsic or autonomous motivation involved the pursuit of an activity originally undertaken for enjoyment and not necessarily to obtain a specific outcome (Vansteenkiste, Lens, & Deci, 2006). Vansteenkiste et al. (2006) viewed intrinsic motivation as a natural foundation for development throughout a student's academic pursuits. This is in contrast to the views of post-secondary education as simply a means to an end. Extrinsic or controlled motivation was previously associated with the pursuit of wealth, fame, or tangible consequences that are separate from the task (Vansteenkiste et al., 2006). Students with elevated senses of entitlement may be motivated by extrinsic factors and believe without a post-secondary degree, they will be unable to obtain their desired level of wealth or social status.

Self-determination theory (SDT) was viewed as a macro theory that incorporates six domains: cognitive evaluation theory, organismic integration theory, causality orientations theory, basic psychological needs theory, goal contents theory, and

relationships motivation theory (Deci & Ryan, 2008). DeRobertis and Bland (2018) added to SDT by incorporating the influence of an individual's overall motivation, personality, locus of control, and general well-being. The overarching theme of SDT is focused on types of motivation and potential influencers as predictors of emotional, intellectual, and maturational outcomes (Deci & Ryan, 2008).

Self-determination theory (SDT) is applicable to AE due to the variety of experiences and influences a post-secondary student will be subjected to as they transition into a more autonomous role. When strategies are directed at teaching students accountability and maintaining an active role in their education, the hope is that the development of professional academic behaviors will follow (Link, 2019). Self-determination theory (SDT) may also help to explain why students with elevated AE may push-back against instructors that evaluate academic performance on the ability to meet pre-determined objectives as opposed to awarding credit for simply completing an assignment on time.

Defining, Measuring, and Quantifying Academic Entitlement

According to Chowning and Campbell (2009) AE is defined as “the tendency to possess an expectation of academic success without taking personal responsibility for achieving that success” (p. 982). The presence of entitlement may influence other undesirable student behaviors such as dissociation during lectures, utilization of personal technology for non-academic purposes, habitual tardiness, unexcused or unjustified classroom absences, and the notion that packing up course materials prior to being formally released from class is socially acceptable (Chowning & Campbell, 2009). Chowning and Campbell (2009) determined students with elevated senses of entitlement

are more likely to engage in uncivil behaviors during their direct interactions with their instructors. Inability to construct a professional email, failure to demonstrate humility, and having unreasonable expectations of their instructors have been linked to elevated levels of AE (Chowning & Campbell, 2009).

Although not excusable, first-year college students may initially display elevated levels of entitlement as they attempt to adjust to their new academic role. This may be associated with the natural transition that occurs between secondary and post-secondary students as they learn the rigors of time management and balancing increased levels of personal freedom (Kerr et al., 2004; Santiago-Rivera & Bernstein, 1996).

The Big Five Personality Inventory (BFPI) previously served as a framework through which researchers attempted to gain a greater sense of clarity on AE (Chowning & Campbell, 2009). Chowning and Campbell (2009) hypothesized that students who displayed the highest levels of incivility would score low on agreeableness and conscientiousness as defined from the BFPI. Throughout their study, Chowning and Campbell (2009) found that a student often attributed internal personal abilities to successful outcomes while attributing external factors to unsuccessful academic outcomes. These attempts to deflect blame and accountability may serve as catalysts for the development of an inflated sense of self-worth. Chowning and Campbell (2009) stressed additional research was required in the development of an instrument focused on detecting AE since this unique construct may not be reflected within the assessment tools associated with the BFPI.

Previous instruments and measures constructed to measure entitlement have largely been based upon Emmons' (1987) "Entitlement/Exploiteness (E/E) subscale of

the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI)” (Chowning & Campbell, 2009, p. 983).

The traditional E/E scale was replaced by the Psychological Entitlement Scale (PES) in an attempt to better explore the general phenomena of entitlement (Campbell, Bonacci, Shelton, Exline, and Bushman, 2004). The development of an instrument that solely focused on AE was necessary because students who demonstrated elevated senses of entitlement in their academic coursework may not engage in these same uncivilized behaviors during everyday social interactions (Chowning & Campbell, 2009).

Chowning and Campbell (2009) attempted to refine and further validate an AE instrument with the development of a 15 item two-scale Academic Entitlement Questionnaire (AEQ). Chowning and Campbell (2009) developed an instrument that was centered around a student’s responsibility for their education, expectations of their instructors, and acknowledgment of course policies/procedures. Chowning and Campbell (2009) stressed the need to re-evaluate student-centered course evaluations as a component of addressing AE. Entitled students who performed poorly in a course may not be able to provide unbiased feedback on an instructor’s teaching ability and use such an assessment to retaliate against an instructor (Chowning & Campbell, 2009).

Kopp et al. (2011) echoed the need for further research into the development of validated and reliable instruments that centered on the detection of AE. Despite an increased interest in AE, a review of the literature identified only three previous attempts to refine an AE instrument since 2002. Kopp et al. (2011) articulated the notion of a global belief that entitlement is becoming more of a rampant issue in today’s student populations. Further refinement and validation of AE instruments is necessary to enhance detection and understanding of AE.

Kopp et al. (2011) cautioned that individuals who feel they are entitled to certain rewards or outcomes are likely to respond with anger when their perceived needs are not met. The potential relationship between entitlement to other negative behaviors may pose a significant threat to the harmony and health of a classroom. Similarly, the findings of Chowning and Campbell (2009), Kopp et al. (2011) defined AE as the perception that a student should receive high marks in their courses that are independent of their actual efforts. This increased presence of AE among post-secondary students may be linked to students receiving greater academic rewards for average performance during their K-12 education (Kopp et al., 2011). Kopp et al. (2011) cautioned that this may predispose students to thinking they are able to obtain the same level of success at the post-secondary level by putting forth the same minimal efforts that were previously effective.

Kopp et al. (2011) highlighted that the mindset of applying the same minimal effort at the post-secondary setting may result in friction between students and their instructors. A student may misconstrue the total amount of time spent on a given assignment as a logical rationale for receiving an overall high mark. Whereas an instructor, may focus on the overall quality and the student's ability to adhere to a provided description or associated rubric (Kopp et al., 2011). This disconnect in evaluation methods may result in unfavorable student-held perceptions on the fairness of an instructor or the expectations associated with a given course. This friction may further be exacerbated if a professor is adhering to policies and procedures that are not uniform within their own department (Kopp et al., 2011).

More of today's post-secondary students have seemingly adopted a consumer-based view to their educational pursuits (Kopp et al., 2011). A student may feel they are entitled to A's in all of their courses because they are paying tuition or in the mind of the student, their instructor's salary (Kopp et al., 2011). The belief that a diploma may be purchased instead of earned through hard-work and dedication may explain this sense of superiority (Kopp et al., 2011). Kopp et al. (2011) suggested that institutions could utilize current AEQs to identify ways to incorporate gratitude and address entitlement tendencies within students.

Narcissism and Academic Entitlement

Twenge and Campbell (2003) highlighted the importance of understanding the influence of narcissistic tendencies and unhealthy behaviors on AE. Narcissists have a warped sense of reality in which they maintain inflated self-views; especially in regards to their perceived level of intelligence (Twenge & Campbell, 2003). Individuals suffering from narcissism are likely to blame situational factors for their failures instead of maintaining a sense of self-accountability (Twenge & Campbell, 2003). This supported the recommendations of Kopp et al. (2011), Twenge and Campbell (2003) stressed when dealing with narcissism in the classroom, efforts should be made to increase a student's capacity for empathy and character development.

Twenge, Konrath, Foster, Campbell, and Bushman (2008) found that narcissism increased across generations of post-secondary students. "Since 1982, Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI) scores have increased by 0.33 standard deviations." (Twenge et al., 2008, p. 875). These findings seemingly validated concerns future generations are not adhering to the same mantras and ideologies previous generations once held sacred.

Twenge et al. (2008) stressed an increased need to understand potential differences between environments and societies that each respective generation was a part of before attempting to draw conclusions of narcissistic tendencies across generations.

Menon and Sharland (2011) echoed Twenge et al. (2008) in the need to further analyze the influence of narcissism on entitlement and student attitudes in today's society. Post-secondary students are seemingly more concerned with the obtainment of riches or fame over being charitable, helping the community, or becoming spiritual (Menon & Sharland, 2011). Menon and Sharland (2011) pointed to the potential influence of social media platforms such as Facebook for this increase in a perceived need for self-promotion. Social media platforms may serve as a catalyst for the development of narcissistic characteristics among a highly impressionable population and further fuel entitlement tendencies (Menon & Sharland, 2011).

Twenge and Campbell (2009) articulated concerns for this increased level of narcissism and its cross-over to academics. Twenge and Campbell (2009) found that roughly 30% of the college students surveyed believed that they were entitled to at least a grade of B if they attended every class. These findings were supported by Menon and Sharland (2011) who determined "narcissism and academic entitlement are statistically significant predictors of an exploitative attitude." (p. 54).

Brown et al. (2009) highlighted concerns when exclusively relying on NPI scores as a means to evaluate the presence of narcissism. Brown et al. (2009) generalized the concept of narcissism into two global categories: grandiosity and entitlement. Grandiosity was measured utilizing the Narcissistic Grandiosity Scale developed by Rosenthal, Hooley, and Steshenko (2007) to identify the overinflated sense of self-worth

that is a central component of Narcissistic Personality Disorder (NPD). Campbell et al. (2004) developed the Psychological Entitlement Scale (PES) to account for the entitlement aspects of the disorder. Gaining a greater understanding of the uniqueness of narcissism may provide a framework for researchers that wish to apply the same approach when investigating AE.

Academic Entitlement's Influence on Classroom Dynamics, Grading, and Civility

Stork and Hartley (2009) cautioned of the negative influence of direct and passive aggressive behaviors in the creation of incivility within a learning environment.

Instructors and educators must be mindful of how their own incivilities, micro-aggressions, and macroaggressions result in deviations from normal social behaviors and can impede their ability to establish rapport with their students (Stevens & Miretzky, 2012; Stork & Hartley, 2009).

Stork and Hartley (2009) highlighted how increased emphasis has been placed on “Millennials, GenX, GenY, GenerationMe, or iGeneration who now populate college campuses” (p. 14). These generations, brought up in a digital age may have become accustomed to being affirmed with praise and the belief that they are unique and special. Stork and Hartley (2009) believed this to be an unexpected side-effect of an increased push to promote self-esteem and self-love within our society and youth. Through the use of the Student Perceptions about Professor Behaviors (SPPB), students indicated that professors who utilized students as a negative example (e.g. humiliated a student in front of the class) or refused to assist a student confused with an assignment were among the most offensive behaviors (Stork & Hartley, 2009). Instructors may be wise to better

understand the unique lens in which their students view daily lesson plans and how even the most trivial of actions or gestures could be taken in the wrong context.

Lippmann, Bulanda, and Wagenaar (2009) addressed issues of student incivility commonly seen in the construction of electronic correspondences between a student and their instructor. Students have seemingly developed a mindset that they not only expect those around them to appease their every desire, but to do so in an unreasonably prompt fashion (Lippmann, et al., 2009). An email drafted well outside of traditional working hours, may be met with hostility from a procrastinating student if an instructor fails to provide a response before an assignment is due (Lippmann et al., 2009). Generations that have grown up in the digital age have become accustom to their reliance on technology and as a result, may have changed perceptions on what is deemed a socially acceptable interaction (Lippmann et al., 2009). Instructors may benefit from providing students with examples of professional correspondence in their course syllabi to address this issue in a preventative manner.

Lippmann et al. (2009) associated this shift in mindset to the change in perceptions of college education from a pursuit of intellectual curiosity to an exchange of goods and services. Attending college has seemingly become more of a right in the mind of today's student instead of a privilege or earned opportunity. The mindset of I deserve as opposed to I've earned in today's student have led to an increased practice of grade inflations to potentially avoid negative backlash, criticism, and grade appeals (Jewell & McPherson, 2012; Lippmann et al., 2009; Mansfield, 2001; Rojstaczer, 2003). These same demanding students often take up considerable amounts of an instructor's time

outside of teaching and prevent the instructor from addressing additional responsibilities or more scholastic endeavors (Lippmann et al., 2009).

Uncivil classroom behaviors have been previously defined by Feldmann (2001) to encompass actions that directly disrupt a cooperative and harmonious learning environment. Lippmann et al. (2009) provided some solutions to today's educator in attempts to curb student incivility within their classrooms. Utilizing explicit language and providing students with assignment rubrics prior to due dates has the ability to disarm malcontents by showing the student exactly what must be done to earn an A. This may assist in having students understand the responsibility they must shoulder and how to effectively utilize provided tools or resources (Benton, 2006).

Lippmann et al. (2009) articulated that when rubrics were incorporated as part of projects or formal writing assignments, they provided a common ground that could be referred to when a student claimed they were unfairly assessed. Instructors should be mindful that if there is a lack of consistency within their department or if a faculty member has adopted a more rigid approach, an increase in friction between students and the instructor may result (Price, 2010). This potentially creates an opportunity for alignment in curriculum, instruction, and policies for a department or for instructors who are teaching multiple sections of the same course.

Giving students something to lose during grade negotiations may be another way for instructors to control the power struggle in their favor when dealing with an entitled student. Lippmann et al. (2009) identified that students often feel there is no harm in requesting a grade change or they are entitled to the opportunity to plead their case if they believe their performance was incorrectly assessed. Clearly stating within a course

syllabus that any grade is eligible for review, but that such reviews grant the instructor the authority to take away points, may decrease the number of frivolous complaints (Lippmann et al., 2009). Having students provide a written formal request for any grade reviews could assist in defusing the highly emotional aspect of a student's poor academic performance (Lippmann et al., 2009). Focusing the student's energies on constructing a formal letter prior to a grade review, Lippmann et al. (2009) suggested this may provide both the instructor and the student an opportunity to formulate their thoughts on the overall merits of the request prior to any face-to-face meeting.

Jian et al. (2017) researched the influence of student incivility and entitlement on the level of strain and burnout experienced by post-secondary instructors. Jian et al. (2017) provided an additional wrinkle into the ongoing research on AE by addressing the potential negative physiological and psychological toll AE can have on the other stakeholders involved in this relationship. Jian et al. (2017) stressed post-secondary instructors who are consistently faced with student incivility must endure and be steadfast in their dedication; otherwise they risk perpetuating or justifying a student's complaint of an instructor. Departments and administrative officials must support faculty in combating entitlement and incivility to avoid an exodus of faculty that have simply become fed-up with the current landscape of higher education.

Jian et al. (2017) explored the impact and influence of incivility as negative workplace stressors among post-secondary instructors and its direct influence of overall strain, psychological exhaustion, and cynicism. Post-secondary instructors may be placed in a difficult situation when attempting to respond to student requests while maintaining order with highly entitled students. Even when responding to unreasonable

requests, instructors need to go beyond simply referencing rubrics, course syllabi, assignment descriptions, or reemphasizing the course expectations (Jian et al., 2017). Turning a blind eye or ignoring even the most unreasonable requests may not be an option because a student may simply choose to forward their complaint to an instructor's supervisor (Jian et al., 2017). Unsurprisingly, over 26% of the instructors surveyed in the study reported that the current lack of respect and treatment of professors has left them exhausted and questioning the overall nature and mission of the higher education (Jian et al., 2017).

Another interesting phenomenon explored by Jian et al. (2017) was that students who could be deemed as the less powerful members of the equation were seemingly directing their malice towards the more powerful instructors. This conflicts with previous studies that have explored workplace incivility and found that often it was individuals in positions of power who tended to be the perpetrators or agents of incivility while victims tended to be in subordinate positions.

Knepp (2016) cautioned that when attempting to curb AE and incivility, professors must be careful in the perception of authoritarianism they outwardly demonstrate within their classrooms. Students who feel threatened or challenged in a course may shutdown if they feel they will not be able to successfully dig themselves out of a self-inflicted academic hole (Knepp, 2016). When elevated senses of authoritarianism are demonstrated by either the instructor or student, the resulting mismatch of beliefs may lead to an increase perception of incivility between parties (Knepp, 2016).

Parental Influence on Academic Entitlement

Today's post-secondary students have been raised by what is commonly referred to as the helicopter or lawnmower parent (Segrin, Wosidlo, Givertz, Bauer, & Murphy, 2012). This level of over-parenting takes away the opportunity to provide a child with a chance to learn from their failures and develop necessary levels of hardiness prior to transitioning to adulthood. Barton and Hirsach (2016) highlighted that as adolescents begin their transition into adulthood, entering college may involve a period of significant adjustment that may last for several months to several years.

Segrin et al. (2012) cautioned that over-involvement from parents may result in an inflated sense of privilege in the helicopter or lawnmower child. This inflation of ego may cause the child to inaccurately view all of life's problems as outsourceable and have little tolerance when things deviate from their expectations. Segrin et al. (2012) highlighted previous concerns that excessive over-parenting may result in abnormal emotional intelligence and personality deficiencies of empathy within a child.

Permissive parenting was linked to the practices of enabling and overindulgence of a child's perceived needs that hinders a child's development of independence (Barton & Hirsach, 2016). Barton & Hirsach (2016) expressed concern for society's push of the self-esteem movement that has shielded adolescences from criticism and failures. Many of the lessons learned from these short-comings are necessary for normal maturation and the development of self-accountability.

Twenge (2009) highlighted a positive development of the self-esteem movement was the breaking of the glass ceiling in certain professions for women and racial minorities. An unexpected consequence may have provided some students with a false

sense of bravado in regard to their true academic capabilities. Rutherford (2011) echoed similar sentiments over the arguments of effective parenting practices and found that the correct balance between nurturing and a disciplinarian style provided the proper balance of guidance and room for personal growth.

The impact of permissive parenting has influenced the manner and expectations of a Millennial's relationship with their post-secondary instructor. Price (2010) noted an increased desire for a healthy rapport between Millennials and their instructors may have resulted from being accustomed to the general interest and levels of concern that parents demonstrated towards their children. The influence of technology created a new relationship dynamic between post-secondary students and their parents. Parents could now be seen as virtually enrolling alongside their child, or virtually maintaining an umbilical connection that was non-existent among previous generations (Frey & Tatum, 2016).

Monaco and Martin (2009) cautioned parents who have taken a more active role in their child's transition to the post-secondary setting, may often be excessively involved in on-campus orientations, scheduling of courses, or serving as a proxy when an issue arises in their child's academic performance. The parents of Millennials who came from Baby Boomer or Generation X, may also play a role into the overall level of parental influence (Monaco & Martin, 2009). The level of involvement demonstrated among Baby Boomer parents may have played a significant role in the passing of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974 that provided post-secondary students who were 18 or older the right to specify who had access to their educational records (Monaco & Martin, 2009). Generation X parents have seemingly raised the bar

in parental involvement and demonstrated a propensity to demand safety and justice for their children within the educational system (Monaco & Martin, 2009). Monaco and Martin (2009) expressed a potential side-effect of Generation X's views on post-secondary education may be seen in increased desires for more personalized services for their child.

Alternatives to helicoptering and lawn-mowing, such as Winnicott's (1958) good enough mothering theory may be better served in providing balance between a parent's desire to remove obstacles while not diminishing opportunities to learn from failure (Sergin et al., 2012). By initially providing significant oversight but tapering influences as the child ages, parents can create a natural learning environment for cognitive development (Sergin et al., 2012). This mindset may provide the child with the understanding that they are not always going to be successful, but significant lessons are learned when forced to reflect on why they may have failed (Sergin et al., 2012). This may alleviate the negative connotations associated with failure.

Gender Influences on Student Entitlement

Ciani et al. (2008) identified the importance of understanding the influences of gender on the prevalence of AE among post-secondary students. Ciani et al. (2008) acknowledged a limitation of previous literature looking into the influence of gender on entitlement was that the focus of previous studies was geared more towards occupational settings and salary discrepancies. Desmarais and Curtis (2001) echoed the sentiment that women may feel they are not entitled to as much as men because they are routinely paid less for performing the same duties and responsibilities.

Ciani et al. (2008) found in their initial study, out of 1,229 surveyed participants, there were higher levels of reported entitlement from the male population regardless of the course content. This research reflected male students have a higher propensity to demonstrate entitled characteristics and be more demanding than their female counterparts (Ciani et al., 2008). Ciani et al. (2008) found that gender was determined to be a significant, negative predictor of both student entitlement, $\beta = -.54$, $SE = 0.07$, $t(17) = -7.79$, $p < .001$ and entitlement negotiations, $\beta = -.31$, $SE = 0.07$, $t(17) = -3.66$, $p < .01$. Ciani et al. (2008) discovered that male students reported greater levels of entitlement expectations and willingness to negotiate than their female counterparts.

A potential limitation noted from Ciani et al. (2008) was that the sample utilized were predominately white students (87%) and were almost entirely comprised of undergraduate students (99%). Ciani et al. (2008) recommended future research with a more diverse sample should be conducted to gain additional insight into the potential influence of race or culture and their potential impact on the manifestation of AE.

A unique secondary finding from Ciani et al. (2008) was the possible relationship between the total years of enrollment and entitlement. A significant effect of the class rank of the student (i.e. Freshmen, Sophomore, Junior, Senior), $F(3, 1171) = 4.46$, $p < .01$, partial $\eta^2 = .01$ was found. Interestingly, Ciani et al. (2008) reported that seniors ($M = 4.18$, $SE = 0.09$) were found to report significantly more entitlement in regards to negotiation with their instructors on a grade or other form of summative course evaluation than freshmen ($M = 3.75$, $SE = 0.06$) at $p < .01$.

Elias (2017) examined the potential influence of AE and cheating among post-secondary business students in a further attempt to analyze the influence of gender.

Similar to the results reported by Cianti et al. (2008), Elias (2017) found within the sample of 370 students, male and younger students had a higher sense of AE when compared to their female or older counterparts. An interesting secondary finding was the more entitled a student was, the less the student viewed cheating as an unethical means to achieve a higher mark within a course (Elias, 2017).

Due to the small sample sizes of the above referenced studies, additional research and exploration on the potential influence of gender on AE is still required to draw any generalizations. Additional socioeconomic factors may also merit exploration to better determine how previously unaccounted for variables may influence AE that were reported in male post-secondary students.

Generational Differences on Academic Entitlement and Incivility

The transformation of the post-secondary landscape has been influenced by the generational differences that are now seen between faculty and their students (Ziefle, 2018). Generational theory has previously been utilized to help define and classify students who come from a similar age group and have shared similar life experiences (Leiter, Jackson, & Shaughnessy, 2009; Leiter, Price, & Spence Laschinger, 2010). A larger body of post-secondary students are from the Millennial generation and have brought different expectations of their instructors, academic institutions, and the nature of their desired post-secondary education experiences (Mazer & Hess, 2016). Howe and Strauss (2000) defined the Millennial generation as any individual that was born between 1982 and 2004 and noted that Millennials will become the largest living generation in recent history. Mazer and Hess (2016) highlighted that the Millennial student has created

additional challenges for instructors and post-secondary institutions when attempting to create an optimal learning environment while modernizing current teaching practices.

These sentiments were echoed by Hosek and Titsworth (2016) who cautioned that the Millennial student has grown up in a more digital age than previous post-secondary cohorts. Millennial students have become accustomed to living in a dynamic environment where a greater level of fluidity exists in the searching, appraising, and digestion of educational content (Hosek & Titsworth, 2016). Meeting these challenges requires instructors to think creatively and implement various methods of instruction (visual, auditory, and kinesthetic) to maintain the attention, interest, and provide necessary flexibility within their courses (Hosek & Titsworth, 2016; Twenge, 2009). Instructors should not feel pressured to cater to every demand of the Millennial generation. Instead, faculty should provide the appropriate level of attention and develop rapport with their students to increase motivation and a student's willingness to meet established objectives and learning outcomes (Hosek & Titsworth, 2016).

Twenge (2009), who is widely considered one of the leading experts on entitlement in the 21st century, cautioned that understanding the unique strengths and weakness of Generation Me is necessary to curb entitlement. Twenge (2009) classifies Generation Me as any individual born after 1980 who grew up in a time when anything is possible, self-esteem was necessary for success, and the opinions of others are viewed as trivial or unimportant. Twenge (2009) mentioned although there are many negative connotations associated with Generation Me, individuals from Generation Me demonstrated high levels of intellectual intelligence. Their failure to adhere to provided

instructions may be a result of a limited attention span than a lack of comprehension (Twenge, 2009).

A unique characteristic shared by both Generation X and Generation Me has been the increased value on maintaining work-life balance. This central issue for students has the potential to impact work ethic and productivity when threatened (Twenge, 2010; Twenge, Campbell, Hoffman, & Lance, 2010). Twenge (2009) cautioned that before instructors broadly label all members of Generation Me as entitled or incompetent, they should remember their own shortcomings of their youth. Faculty should acknowledge the guidance that was provided to them during this critical period of development and provide the same mentorship to Generation Me.

Trzensniewski and Donnellan (2010) argued previous studies that attempted to classify Generation Me as vastly different from an emotional and personality standpoint are limited due to concerns over sample sizes. Trzensniewski and Donnellan (2010) attempted to better understand the generational differences and influences by appraising 477,380 U.S. high school senior students from the Monitoring the Future (MTF) project database. The sample that was analyzed from the MTF database was collected from high school students that were enrolled from the 1970's to the early 2000's. Trzensniewski and Donnellan (2010) found cohorts from both the 1970s and the 2000s were similar in their beliefs that they were smarter than others. Additional findings of the study indicated there wasn't sufficient evidence to suggest dramatic changes in student self-esteem, egotism, and individualism were apparent when comparing multiple cohorts. This seemingly conflicts with Twenge's (2009) previously generated profile of Generation Me.

Trzensniewski and Donnellan (2010) supported some of Twenge's (2009) initial findings that recent high school graduates were less trusting and more cynical of institutions of higher education. An increase in unrealistic expectations for the future and less of an internal drive for the 2000's cohorts sampled were identified (Trzensniewski & Donnellan, 2010). This negative stigma may be magnified because of the influence technology has had in the overall impression that recent generations of high school students are more self-absorbed and self-loving (Trzensniewski & Donnellan, 2010). The rise of reality television has provided a variety of polarizing individuals who may often be directly associated with negative connotations of Generation Me; even though they may be atypical for the majority of this generation's population (Trzensniewski & Donnellan, 2010).

Dark Triad

The negative personality traits of narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy may serve as significant predictors in the development of AE among post-secondary students (Turnipseed & Cohen, 2015). Today's post-secondary student seemingly demonstrated a pattern of behavior where they have become increasingly insistent on instant gratification and are not averse to having their wants met at the expense of others (Turnipseed & Cohen, 2015). Individuals who demonstrate these negative personality traits have been described as manipulative, cold, immoral, impulsive, and lack the integrity to take responsibility for their shortcomings (Turnipseed & Cohen, 2015). Turnipseed and Cohen (2015) pointed out that male students scored significantly higher than females on all three aspects of the Dark Triad and exhibited a greater willingness to contribute their failures to external sources.

Chowning and Campbell (2009) found students who have elevated levels of AE and narcissism often believed professors at the post-secondary setting should have more of an active role in preparing them to be successful. These same students insinuated that in instances of poor performance, instructors should be open to reconsidering and adjusting grades. Turnipseed and Cohen (2015) echoed these findings and expressed their concern that AE itself may be a learned behavior. Students who become accustomed to demanding an audience with their professors and badgering them into grade-inflation may quickly realize such behaviors yield favorable results and are more apt to repeat these behaviors (Turnipseed & Cohen, 2015). Chowning and Campbell (2009) cautioned post-secondary professors that individuals who displayed narcissistic tendencies may become more aggressive when they feel poor academic performances threaten their notions of self-worth.

Vedel and Thomsen (2017) explored the influence of academic major and the presence of Dark Triad traits in newly enrolled students at a Danish university. Utilizing a 27-item questionnaire, the Short Dark Triad (SDT), traits of the Dark Triad were assessed with a 5-point Likert scale (Vedel & Thomsen, 2017). After statistical analysis, Vedel and Thomsen (2017) reported a moderately positive correlation existed between narcissism, Machiavellianism and psychopathy; A strongly positive correlation was reported between Machiavellianism and psychopathy alone. Among majors, greater levels of darkness appeared within the disciplines of economics/business vs. political science or psychology (Vedel & Thomsen, 2017).

Narcissism and Narcissistic Personality Disorder

Narcissism or narcissistic characteristics may play a role in the levels of self-perceived entitlement within an individual. For the purposes of this study, the concept of narcissism is not a reflection of the personality disorder first officially recognized by the American Psychiatric Association in 1980, but rather a construct that refers to a personality variation between individuals (Twenge & Campbell, 2012). Twenge and Campbell (2012) linked narcissistic characteristics to AE as a mindset encompassing an over-inflated sense of one's self. This operational definition of narcissism was echoed by Brummelman, Thomaes, and Sedikides (2016) who elaborated individuals may feel they are superior to their peers or are entitled to special privileges. This belief of privilege may help to support the notion that students who demonstrated elevated senses of AE may be more narcissistic than those who demonstrated lower levels of AE. However, an individual may be viewed as being overly narcissistic without being medically diagnosed or confirmed as suffering from the extreme of Narcissistic Personality Disorder (Brummelman et al., 2016).

Brummelman et al. (2016) made note to clarify that there is a significant difference between individuals who possess healthy high levels of self-esteem and those that could be classified as narcissistic. One of the primary differences between the two, is that people with high self-esteem generally feel satisfied with themselves without suffering from the inferiority or ego complexes associated with their narcissistic counterparts (Brummelman et al., 2016). A key difference between the two constructs is that while narcissists tend to associate themselves with being fixated at the upper echelon

of a hierarchical order, people with high self-esteem tend to take a non-hierarchical view of their status (Brummelman et al., 2016).

Consumerism

One of the first documented instances of an elevated sense of consumerism among students was seen in the works of Morrow (1994). Morrow (1994) cautioned the presence of entitlement within an educational culture would potentially undermine academic achievement and intellectual development. The notion of a post-secondary education as a commodity instead of an opportunity to expand one's intellectual horizons must be accounted for by today's post-secondary faculty (Cain, Romanelli, & Smith, 2012). Delucchi and Korgen (2002) highlighted almost 75% of students surveyed would prefer to receive an A in a course even if it came at the expense of not learning a single key concept. Additionally, over 50% of the same students sampled indicated they felt it was the instructor's responsibility to keep them entertained, attentive, and motivated within the classroom (Delucchi & Korgen, 2002).

Gokcen (2014) echoed the catch-22 today's post-secondary institutions are facing when attempting to increase overall enrollment to meet the expenses of academic expansion. The cycle may be perpetuated further when attempting to account for the increased level of competition between programs for limited institutional funding (Gokcen, 2014). This problem seemingly snowballs as institutions are dedicating additional resources to marketing, social media, and presenting themselves as providers of services to a student's career aspirations and goals (Fairchild & Cragge, 2014; Gokcen, 2014). One of the greatest challenges post-secondary instructors faced when dealing with a consumer-based population were the outlandish demands from students that jeopardized

the instructional methods implemented within the classroom (Gokcen, 2014). Fairchild and Cragg (2014) highlighted concerns among faculty fully embracing the student as a consumer and the threat such an embracement has on the overall mission and vision of higher education.

Laverghetta (2018) questioned whether the overall increase in access to higher education played a role in the development of this consumerism mentality displayed within today's student population. Increased institutional pressures placed on faculty for developing and establishing a research agenda as a means to obtain external funding, has potentially devalued a professor's overall contributions to their primary task of teaching (Laverghetta, 2018). Institutions recently have invested significant funds to develop or update non-academic amenities as focal selling points to attract students to their campuses (Fairchild & Cragg, 2014; Laverghetta, 2018). Laverghetta (2018) cautioned the adoption of consumerism by post-secondary students may create an atmosphere that is a breeding ground for entitlement and incivility; negatively impacting a student's overall learning and academic experience.

Another consequence of consumerism in higher education may be that students entered post-secondary institutions with the assumption that the confirmation of a degree will come simply as a result of paying their tuition and fees (Brown, 2001). Degrees and post-secondary certifications have maintained a high value in society as they are viewed as means to increase one's class standing and provide career pathways to a livable and sustainable wage (Brown, 2001). If faculty and post-secondary institutions feed into this mindset of an equivalent exchange, a dilution of post-secondary education is a possibility. This could result in a failure to adhere to a minimum standard of proficiency within

respective disciplines and result in the confirmation of degrees to undeserving candidates (Brown, 2001). In the disciplines of allied health and physical sciences, this could jeopardize the safety of patients who come into contact with graduates that failed to truly comprehend the foundations of their degrees.

Cain et al., (2012) highlighted an increased competition in pharmacy education and other professional schools may be a driving force behind marketing and recruitment strategies. This was magnified when a program chose to highlight a benefit of their professional degree as a means to a lifelong career and promises of high salaries and financial stability (Cain et al., 2012). Additional concerns for professional programs were seen with foreclosed students or those that came from a previously established legacies at an institution (Cian et al., 2012). Programs felt added pressure to accept students that may not be as academically inclined as non-legacy students out of fear that rejecting a legacy could negatively impact future financial donations (Cian et al., 2012).

Student Perspective and Locus of Control

Procrastination may be another factor that influences the level of accountability displayed by post-secondary students when failing to adhere to due dates within their respective courses (Janssen & Carton, 1999). Rotter (1990) defined locus of control (LOC) as the degree or manner in which an individual attributed the consequences of their actions as a reflection of their own behaviors to those of an outside influence. Janssen and Carton (1999) hypothesized individuals with a greater internal LOC would be more willing to accept the control they had over the resulting outcome and be less likely to engage in procrastination. Jansseen and Carton (1999) found students with a

higher internal LOC took roughly four less days to complete assigned coursework than those with a higher external LOC.

Karpen (2014) provided a unique look into AE from the perspective of the student. Karpen (2014) acknowledged that while the ultimate responsible for educational success should fall on the student, this was only feasible if an institution and its faculty provided the necessary guidance to foster academic development. Instead of solely relying on student-centered evaluations of an instructor, Karpen (2014) suggested institutions should focus on comprehensive reviews of teaching strategies to ensure impactful teaching practices were being utilized. If professors were passionate and excited about the content they were delivering, even the most mundane and dry topics had the potential to stimulate desired levels of critical thinking among post-secondary student (Karpen, 2014).

Karpen (2014) sided with faculty that a level of accountability must be maintained for students to protect a program's integrity. The quality of a program's graduates should not come at the cost of inflated enrollment numbers or graduation rates (Karpen, 2014). If programs continue to overlook cases of academic dishonesty or fail to hold their students to an acceptable standard, an institution may begin to alienate students who do model these desired behaviors. Programs could soon find themselves attracting the wrong type of candidate and significantly hinder a program's sustainability (Karpen, 2014).

Summary

The topic of AE has been examined and studied through several theoretical lens (Cain et al., 2012; Chowning & Campbell, 2009; Deci & Ryan, 2008; Heckhausen et al.,

2010). Exploration into the life-span development theory (Heckhausen et al., 2010) and self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2008; DeRobertis & Bland, 2018) were provided to establish the framework for this study. Both theories highlighted the unique social and internal factors that may influence the development of AE within a post-secondary student population. Additional research on the influences of narcissism, consumerism, and other generational differences were provided to acknowledge the recent transformation of the higher education landscape (Cain et al., 2012; Chowing & Campbell, 2009; Delucchi & Korgen, 2002; Marrow, 1994; Twenge 2009)

Faculty have developed some interventions to address AE within the post-secondary setting and maintain order inside of the classroom (Benton, 2006; Lippmann et al., 2009; Stork & Hartley, 2009). Although these proposed interventions are frequently used, the majority of studies and interventions were employed only at traditional post-secondary institutions. However, it is unclear if these same interventions are effective at addressing AE at a SMC. Further research into this area is recommended to better understand and address AE among students enrolled at a SMC.

Therefore, the present study seeks to fill this gap in research. The purpose of this study is to identify the current academic entitlement perceptions of students pursuing their post-secondary education at a Senior Military College. Findings from this study could be useful to faculty and administrators employed at a SMC that are looking for ways to better detect and address AE among students. In Chapter 3, the methodology used to conduct the study and the selected research design are discussed.

Chapter III

METHODOLOGY

Academic entitlement (AE) has become a concern for post-secondary faculty. Several researchers have linked the rise in AE to an increase in narcissism and significant societal changes (Chowing & Campbell, 2009; Twenge, 2009; Twenge & Campbell, 2009; Twenge et al., 2008). While previous studies have been implemented in traditional secondary and post-secondary educational settings, there is limited evidence exploring student populations enrolled in non-traditional environments; Senior Military Colleges (SMC). The study was conducted to provide support of evidence on the potential effects of enrollment at a SMC on self-reported AE scores.

A cross-sectional descriptive survey research design was used to determine the presence of AE among post-secondary students enrolled at SMC. In this chapter, the research design, target population, sampling method, instrumentation, data collection, and data analysis procedures are described.

Research Design

The research design for this study was a descriptive cross-sectional survey. Levin (2006) explained although cross-sectional studies are similar to cohort studies there are significant differences between the two. One of the primary differences is that a cross-sectional study does not follow participants over a long period of time. A snapshot of the participants within a given population is taken and the primary researcher is only concerned with what was reported during this defined time. Levin (2006) articulated the use of cross-sectional surveys are commonly implemented when the purpose of the study

is descriptive in nature. An additional purpose of a cross-sectional study is to describe a population or a subgroup with respect to an outcome or a set of risk factors (Levin, 2006).

Song and Chung (2010) reported cohort studies as a set of participants that were followed over an extended and predesignated period of time. Cohort studies differ from cross-sectional studies by implementing some form of follow up (Levin, 2006; Song & Chung, 2010). Some disadvantages of a cohort study were a need for a larger sample size, a need to follow participants over a greater period of time, and there are often additional costs associated with this design (Levin, 2006; Song & Chung, 2010). Another potential limitation of a cohort study model was the potential attrition bias that results from lost responses during the follow-up period. These losses can result in missing data points and if too many participants are lost, the internal validity of the study is threatened (Song & Chung, 2010).

Setia (2016) echoed Levin (2006) that the purpose of a cross-sectional study was the measurement of outcomes and exposures of the participants during the same period of time. Participants for a cross-sectional study were selected based upon inclusion and exclusion criteria set by the researcher. A benefit of utilizing a cross-sectional study was the study can be conducted with relative ease and may result in prompter data collection (Setia, 2016). Unlike a cohort study, cross-sectional studies were not subject to the loss of participants due to follow-up or retention issues (Levin, 2006; Setia, 2016; Song & Chung, 2010).

The survey (Appendix B) was developed utilizing Qualtrics, a survey generating software. The researcher was able to construct demographic questions and import the 15-item AEQ (Chowning & Campbell, 2009) within the Qualtrics software. After the survey

instrument was developed, question logic was assigned to demographic question 5; this logic limited access to the AEQ portion of the survey to only undergraduate participants. The researcher included the survey access link generated by Qualtrics in the initial recruitment and subsequent follow-up emails. Qualtrics collected and stored all responses in a password protected digital server. Once the four-week collection window elapsed, the researcher exported these data for cleaning and recoding (Appendix C). After these data were cleaned, analysis was conducted with SPSS to answer the three generated research questions.

In this study, a survey was used to identify potential similarities and/or differences in the self-reported AE scores among post-secondary students who were actively enrolled at a SMC. Selected students were pursuing a post-secondary certificate program, Associates, or Bachelor's degree during the Fall 2019 semester. Desired outcomes of this study may help assist current post-secondary faculty to: curb undesirable student behaviors, combat elevated senses of consumerism, and provide strategies to ensure academic integrity.

Research Questions

To explore the issue of AE at a SMC setting, the researcher developed the following research questions. These three generated research questions served as a foundation for identifying potential influencers of AE among post-secondary students enrolled at a SMC.

RQ1: What influence does a student's status within or outside of the Corp of Cadets have on self-reported AE scores at a SMC?

RQ2: What influence does the academic college have on self-reported AE scores at a SMC?

RQ3: What influence does the nature of a post-secondary program (Associate, Baccalaureate, or Certificate) have on self-reported AE scores at a SMC?

Setting

Data were collected from the SMC during the Fall semester of the 2019-2020 academic year. The SMC reported a total enrollment of 19,722 in Fall 2018. There were approximately 11,242 (57%) men and 8,480 (43%) women enrolled in both undergraduate and graduate programs. The ethnic population of the traditional student body enrolled at the SMC was, 79.3% White, 13.3% Hispanic, 4.3% Black or African American, 3.8% Asian, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander, 3.4% Multiracial, 1.0% Unknown, and 0.2% American Indian or Alaskan Native. Ninety-six countries were represented; 324 international students identified as non-resident aliens and 728 international students identified as Country of Citizenship. Forty-three U.S. states and territories were represented from the reported student body population.

Within the Corps of Cadets, there were 749 reported enrollments. There were approximately 134 (18%) female and 615 (82%) male cadets. The ethnic population of the cadet student body enrolled at the SMC was, 75.8% White, 8.0% Hispanic, 6.0% Black or African American, 5.1 % Multiracial, 4.4% Asian, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander, 0.5% Unknown, and 0.1% American Indian or Alaskan Native.

With respect to the undergraduate student population, there were 19,041 reported enrollments. There were approximately 12,132 (64%) students that were pursuing a

Baccalaureate degree and 6,909 (36%) students that were pursuing an Associate or Certificate degree/program.

Participants & Sampling

The survey was administered to all actively enrolled students at the SMC who were 18 years of age or older. The survey was constructed utilizing Qualtrics and was administered to participants through their institutional email addresses. The convenience sampling method was utilized because this method of sampling was the least time-intensive, produced no cost to the primary investigator, and was easier to obtain the desired sample size (Bornstein, Jager, & Putnick, 2013). Utilizing the sample size calculator provided by Raosoft (2004), it was determined that a recommended sample size of 377 was required with a margin of error of 5% and a confidence level of 95%.

Instrumentation

The instrumentation section explains the AE survey in detail, how the survey was measured, and the coding process for each survey item/response.

Demographics

Questions 1 through 6 collected basic demographic information for each participant. Question 1 asked for the gender of each participant. Question 2 asked the participant to identify whether they were a Contracted Student-Cadet (CSC), Non-Contracted Student-Cadet (CNSC), or a Traditional Student (TS). Question 3 asked the participant to identify their age. Question 4 asked how long the participant has been enrolled at the SMC. Question 5 asked what type of post-secondary program/degree they were actively pursuing: Associate's, Bachelor's, Certification, or Graduate. Question 6 asked which academic college their respective degree is housed within at the SMC.

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics help describe data in a meaningful way such that relevant patterns might emerge (Field, Miles, & Field, 2012). The sole use of descriptive statistics prevents the researcher from drawing definitive conclusions regarding hypotheses that were developed. Summary statistics of data can be presented to communicate the largest amount of relevant information as simply as possible (Mishra, Pandey, Singh, Gupta, Sahu, & Keshri, 2019).

Mishra et al. (2019) highlighted the three major types of descriptive statistics: measures of frequency, measures of central tendency, and measures of variation. Frequency statistics simply report the number of times that each variable occurs within a sample. Frequency analysis focuses on the number of occurrences and the overall percentage (Mishra et al., 2019). Measures of central tendency are used to identify the representation of a data set. The mean, median, and mode are the most commonly reported measures of central tendency. The mean is the mathematical average of a set of data; the median is the middle most observation if data are arranged in either an increase or decreasing order; the mode is the value that occurs most frequently in a set of observations (Mishra et al., 2019). Measures of variation or dispersion was another tool that is used to indicate the homogeneity or heterogeneity of these data.

The following descriptive statistics were collected to describe the population sampled: Range and percentage of participant age, percentage of gender responses, percentage of cadet and non-cadet response, percentage/frequency of nature of degree, and percentage/frequency of academic college. A nominal scale was used to place the

questionnaire items associated with gender identification, student population, post-secondary program, and academic college.

Nominal measurement involves placing items into mutually exclusive categories and numbers that are assigned to categories are for identification purposes only (Ary, Jacobs, Sorensen, Walker, 2014). Gender identifications were coded as 1 for male, 2 for female, 3 for gender neutral, and 4 for prefer not to answer. Student populations were coded as 1 for Contracted Student-Cadet (CSC), 2 for Non-Contracted Student-Cadet (NCSC), and 3 for Traditional Student (TS). Post-secondary program were coded as 1 for Associate's degree, 2 for Baccalaureate or Bachelor's degree, 3 for Certification or Certificate program, and 4 for Graduate degree. Academic colleges were coded as 1 for the College of Arts & Letters, 2 for the College of Business, 3 for the College of Education, 4 for the College of Health Sciences & Professions, 5 for the College of Science & Mathematics, 6 for the University College, and 7 for I don't know.

An ordinal scale was used to collect data on the age of participants. Ordinal scales rank objects according to how much of an attribute they possess; the number in an ordinal scale will indicate only the order of the categories (Ary et al., 2014). Years of age of participants were coded as follows: 1 for 18-19, 2 for 20-21, 3 for 22-23, 4 for 24-25, and 5 for 26+.

A ratio scale was used to collect data on how long a participant has been actively enrolled at the SMC. Ratio scales have a true zero point as well as equal intervals (Ary et al., 2014). How long a participant has been enrolled at the SMC were coded as follows: 1 for 0-1 semesters, 2 for 2-3 semesters, 3 for 4-5 semesters, 4 for 6-7 semesters, and 5 for 8 or more semesters.

Academic Entitlement Scale

Survey questions 7 through 21 were pulled directly from the Academic Entitlement Scale (Chowning & Campbell, 2009). Participants rated each item on a 7-point Likert-scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Academic entitlement scores were calculated following the recommendations of Chowning and Campbell (2009) by calculating the mean response for each item ranging from 1 to 7.

Externalized Responsibility Subscale

Questions 7 through 16 from the Academic Entitlement Scale assessed a participant's externalized responsibility for their academic success (Chowning & Campbell, 2009). Question 7 asked a participant to what level they disagreed or agreed it is unnecessary for them to participate in a class when the professor is paid for teaching and not for asking questions. Question 8 asked a participant to what level they disagreed or agreed that if they miss a class, it is their responsibility to obtain notes from the missed lecture. Question 9 asked a participant to what level they disagreed or agreed that they are not motivated to put forth significant effort into group work, because other group members will end up doing it or pick up the slack. Question 10 asked a participant to what level they disagreed or agreed that they believe that the university does not provide them with the resources they need to succeed in college. Question 11 asked a participant to what level they disagreed or agreed that most professors do not really know what they are talking about. Question 12 asked a participant to what level they disagreed or agreed that if they do poorly in a course and they could not make a professor's office hours, the fault of their failure lies with the professor. Question 13 asked a participant to what level they disagreed or agreed that they believe it is their responsibility to seek out the

resources to succeed in college. Question 13 asked a participant to what level they disagreed or agreed that for group assignments, it is acceptable for them to take a back seat and let others in the group do the majority of the work if they are busy with other obligations. Question 14 asked a participant to what level they disagreed or agreed that for group work, they should receive the same grade as the other group members regardless of their individual level of effort. Question 15 asked a participant to what level they disagreed or agreed that professors are just employees who get money for teaching.

Entitled Expectations Subscale

Questions 16 through 20 assessed a participant's self-serving entitled expectations about professors and course policies (Chowning & Campbell, 2009). Question 16 asked a participant to what level they disagreed or agreed that their professors are obligated to help them prepare for exams. Question 17 asked a participant to what level they disagreed or agreed that professors must be entertaining to be considered good. Question 18 asked a participant to what level they disagreed or agreed that their professors should reconsider their grade if they are close to the grade they want. Question 19 asked a participant to what level they disagreed or agreed that a student should never receive a zero on an assignment that they turned in. Question 20 asked a participant to what level they disagreed or agreed that their professor should curve their grade if they are close to the next letter grade.

Validity

The instrument that was selected to detect self-report levels of AE among the post-secondary student population had previously been validated in research looking into

the phenomena of AE. Cronbach's coefficient alpha for the Academic Entitlement Scale was recorded as $\alpha = .81$ for the 10-item Externalized Responsibility subscale, and $\alpha = .62$ for the five-item Entitled Expectations subscale. The sample of participants originated from the main campuses associated with the selected SMC. The primary investigator addressed collect bias through the utilization of the Qualtrics software.

Data Collection

Prior to the administration of the survey, the primary investigator obtained Institutional Review Board (IRB) exempt approval. The selection of students was assisted by the SMC's Department of Institutional Effectiveness. The primary investigator obtained the institutional email addresses for 18,502 students over the age of 18. The survey was only administered to students actively enrolled in courses during the Fall semester of the 2019-2020 academic year. Participants answered the survey by choosing the Likert scale response that best reflected their feelings/beliefs to the associated question or statement. Upon completion of the survey, the Qualtrics survey thanked the participant for their submission and responses were automatically stored within the Qualtrics database. Data from the survey was collected and analyzed utilizing SPSS version 24.

Data Analysis

Survey responses were coded for data analysis. Demographic data from questions 1 through 5 were used to describe the sample surveyed. To address Research Question 1, data collected from survey question 2 were used to identify the student's status in or outside of the Corp of Cadets. Aggregate Likert-Scale responses for questions 6-20 were analyzed and presented to identify the potential influence of student status and self-

reported AE scores. To address Research Question 2, data collected from survey question 5 were used to identify the Academic college the participant's degree or concentration was housed under at the SMC. Aggregate Likert-Scale responses for questions 6-20 were analyzed and presented to identify the potential influence of academic college and self-reported AE scores. To address Research Question 3, data collected from survey question 4 were used to identify the type of post-secondary education the participant is actively pursuing; Associate, Baccalaureate, or Certificate. Aggregate Likert-Scale responses for questions 6-20 were analyzed and presented to identify the potential influence of post-secondary program nature and self-reported AE scores.

After the survey responses were compiled, questions were broken into two distinct categories: Demographics and AEQ Responses. Data analysis included reviewing sub-categories within the demographic questions of the survey instrument to determine any variances in responses that were given by gender and total time of enrollment at the SMC. Possible future studies may examine categories such as the influence of graduate level programs and/or part-time enrollment status at an SMC on the self-reported AE scores. The process of data analysis was performed utilizing SPSS version 24 from the tabulated data collected and stored within the Qualtrics platform.

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was utilized for each of the three previously defined research questions. The purpose of a one-way ANOVA was to compare the means of two or more independent groups in order to determine whether there was statistical evidence that the associated population means were significantly different (Field et al., 2012). Field et al., (2012) provided the following data

requirements that needed to be met to allow the use of a one-way ANOVA: Dependent variable must be continuous (i.e. interval or ratio level), independent variable must be categorical (i.e. two or more groups), cases must have values on both the dependent and independent variable, independent samples/groups existed (e.g. independence of observations), a random sample of data was obtain from the population of interest, a normal distribution of the dependent variable existed for each group, homogeneity of variances (e.g. variances approximately were equal across groups), and there were no outliers. If normality, homogeneity of variances, or the outlier assumption for the one-way ANOVA were not met, the Kruskal-Wallis test may be used as an alternative (Field et al., 2012)

The one-way ANOVA was considered an omnibus test because the F test indicated whether the model was significant overall (e.g. whether or not there are any significant differences in the means between any of the groups). However, the one-way ANOVA did not indicate which mean was different (Field et al., 2012). Determining which pairs of means were significantly different required the use of a post hoc test. The Tukey Test was utilized for post hoc testing. Post hoc tests were implemented when an investigator had obtained a significant omnibus F -test with a factor that consisted of three or more means. Utilizing a post hoc test, the investigator was able to explore the differences that existed between means and provide information on which of the means were significantly different from others (Field et al., 2012). The assumptions of the Tukey Test included that observations are independent within and among groups, the groups for each mean in the test were normally distributed, and that homogeneity of variance existed (Field et al., 2012).

Limitations

Limitations for the proposed study included a potential lack of honesty from participant responses and a lack of total completed survey responses. Levin (2006) suggested that ways to address non-response rates in wide-scale surveys included: Incorporating at least two to three rounds of prompting, drafting a recruitment letter that explains that importance of the study and need for completed responses, and potentially providing incentives to participants.

Biased responses are another potential limitation of the cross-sectional survey design. Individuals may be more likely to respond when they have a particular characteristic or set of characteristics that the primary researcher is intending to study (Levin, 2006). Bias occurs when the characteristics in question were in some way related to the probability of having the outcome.

Another limitation of a cross-sectional design was that the study would simply characterize the prevalence of an outcome in a specific population during a predetermined moment of time. There was the potential that the situation may provide different results if another timeframe had been selected (Levin, 2006).

In future studies, these data collected from the participants could be compared to the remaining five SMC to better address the potential influence this unique campus environment may have on AE. Results from the selected SMC could also be compared to other local non-SMC institutions in the southeast region to better sample the potential influence that local population may have on AE self-perceptions and scores.

Summary

In conclusion, research questions 1, 2, and 3 were addressed by analyzing these data collected from the demographic survey questions 1-5 and the AE Scale questions 6-20. The purpose of questions 1-5 were to determine the participant's current status on the SMC as either a student-cadet or a traditional student, their identified gender, how long they have been enrolled at the SMC, what level/degree they are actively pursuing at the SMC, and in which Academic College their respective program of study is housed. The purpose of questions 6-20 were to assess the current self-reported perceptions of AE shared by the participants utilizing 7 point Likert-scale responses. The research methodology and data analyses procedures were described in detail.

The problem of AE and generated research questions provided insight into the context of the study and the null hypotheses. A description of the cross-sectional research design, sampled population, and survey instrument have also been presented and defined. The results and data analysis of this study are presented and discussed in Chapter 4.

Chapter IV

RESULTS

This descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted to determine if there were significant differences between self-reported Academic Entitlement (AE) scores of students enrolled at a Senior Military College (SMC) during the Fall 2019 academic semester. Scores were calculated using the Academic Entitlement Scale (Chowning & Campbell, 2009) that was distributed as an electronic survey generated utilizing Qualtrics to participants' institutional email addresses. In Chapter 4, the results of the study are presented with a description of the sampled population. Statistical analyses for the developed research questions are included within this chapter. Tables are provided to further organize and present information in addition to clarifying conclusions drawn from these data analyses.

Description of the Sample

The study sample was comprised of students 18 years or older actively enrolled at a campus associated with a SMC in the southeast region of the United States during the Fall 2019 academic semester. The projected necessary sample size was 377 participants based upon a power analysis and sample size calculator that utilized the Fall 2019 undergraduate enrollment numbers of 19,401 students (Raosoft, 2004). After Institutional Review Board (IRB) exempt approval was obtained (Appendix D; Appendix E), the researcher was granted access to 18,502 institutional student email addresses. Graduate student email addresses were also included but the Department of Institutional Effectiveness did not highlight those students within the provided list. Graduate students

were not part of the desired sample population. Graduate students who received an access link to the survey were automatically directed to the end of survey after completing the question five. These incomplete responses were not included during data analysis. Only students that indicated they were actively pursuing an undergraduate degree or certification program were granted access to the entire survey and Academic Entitlement Questionnaire (AEQ).

Participants were recruited via institutional email and completed the survey through the Qualtrics platform. Within the initial recruitment email (Appendix A) an active link to the survey and the following items were included: An explanation of the purpose of the study, a statement that participation was voluntary and anonymous, the approximate time it would take to complete the survey, and the ability for participants to discontinue their participation from the study at any time. Participants were informed within both the recruitment email and on page one of the survey that by accessing the link, they were consenting to participation and acknowledged that they were at least 18 years of age.

After the initial recruitment emails were distributed, follow-up emails were sent at the two-week mark to encourage participation and the completion of any in-process or incomplete responses. Once the four-week window elapsed, the survey was closed and only completed responses were used for data analysis. The survey was distributed to 18,492 student emails; 10 emails were returned as undeliverable. A total of 1,136 responses were recorded during the designated four-week collection window. All non-completed responses and/or graduate student responses were excluded from final data

analysis- a total of 302 responses. A final sample of 834 completed undergraduate survey responses were obtained.

Participants who completed the survey in its entirety were asked a total of 21 questions. The first six questions were associated with collecting demographic information to better describe the sampled population. Question 1 asked participants to select the gender that they identified with. Respondents were able to choose between male, female, gender neutral, or prefer not to answer. Question 2 asked participants to select the student population they associated with. Respondents were able to choose between Contracted Student-Cadet (CSC), Non-Contracted Student-Cadet (NCSC), or Traditional Student (TS). Question 3 asked participants to identify their age in years. Respondents were able to choose between 18-19, 20-21, 22-23, 24-25, or 26+ years old. Question 4 asked participants to identify how long they had been enrolled at a campus affiliated with the SMC. Respondents were able to choose between 0-1 semesters, 2-3 semesters, 4-5 semesters, 6-7 semesters, or 8 or more semesters. Question 5 asked participants to identify their post-secondary program. Respondents were able to choose to between Associate's degree, Baccalaureate or Bachelor's degree, Certification or Certificate program, or Graduate degree. Question 6 asked participants to identify the academic college that housed their major. Respondents were able to choose between the College of Arts & Letters, the College of Business, the College of Education, the College of Health Sciences & Professions, the College of Science & Mathematics, the University College, or I don't know.

To provide a more detailed description of the sampled population, basic demographic information was collected. The majority of participants were female,

68.1% ($n = 568$). The second largest representation were males, 29.4% ($n = 245$). To reflect the current societal times, the categories of Gender-Neutral $n=16$, and Prefer not to answer $n=5$ were included and made up the remaining 2.5% of the sample.

The majority of the sample, 88% ($n = 734$) identified as TS. Students that identified as being part of the Corp of Cadets composed the remaining 12% ($n = 100$); NCSC ($n = 53$) and CSC ($n = 47$).

The largest population of the participants, or 35% ($n = 292$) were between the ages of 18-19 years old. The remaining age group representations are as follows: 33.5% ($n = 279$) were between the ages of 20-21 years old, 16.3% ($n = 136$) were between the ages of 22-23 years old, 10.9% ($n = 91$) were 26 years old or older, and 4.3% ($n = 36$) were between the ages of 24-25 years old.

The largest population of participants or 24.1% ($n = 201$) had been enrolled at a campus associated with the SMC for 2-3 semesters prior to participating in the study. The remainder of the participants are provided in the following breakdown: 21.2% ($n = 177$) had been enrolled between 0-1 semesters prior to participating in the study, 20.9% ($n = 174$) had been enrolled between 4-5 semesters prior to participating in the study, 20% ($n = 167$) had been enrolled between 6-7 semesters prior to participating in the study, and the remaining 13.8% ($n = 115$) had been enrolled at a campus affiliated with the SMC for 8 or more semesters.

The largest population, 23.1% ($n = 193$) came from the College of Health Sciences & Professions. The remaining representation of academic colleges were as follows: 22.7%

($n = 189$) from the College of Arts & Letters, 18.3% ($n = 153$) from the College of Science & Mathematics, 13.2% ($n = 110$) from the College of Business, 12.6% ($n = 105$) from the College of Education, 7.7% ($n = 64$) indicated they weren't unsure of which College their major was housed under, and 2.4% ($n = 20$) were from the University College.

Most of the sample, 90.3% ($n = 753$) were students that were actively pursuing a Bachelor's Degree. Associate Degree students comprised 9.4% ($n = 78$) of the sampled population and only 0.4% ($n = 3$) participants indicated they were pursuing a Certification or Certificate Program.

Data Screening

The collected data were screened to ensure accuracy and normality. Assumptions of normality were tested graphically through the review of Q-Q plots and histograms. Q-Q plots that resembled a straight line reflected a normal distribution of data points. Distribution curves have been included in histogram figures to highlight normality of responses. Gender demographic distributions are represented in Figures 1-4 provided within Appendix E. Participants who indicated Gender Neutral and Prefer Not to Answer appeared to be the only gender demographics that do not adhere to a normal distribution. Responses from all three student statuses: CSC, NCSC, and TS appeared to be normally distributed. Student status distributions are represented in Figures 5-7. All five age groups: 18-19, 20-21, 22-23, 24-25, and 26+ appeared to be normally distributed. Age group distributions are represented below in Figures 8-12. Enrollment time from all five groups: 0-1 semesters, 2-3 semesters, 4-5 semesters, 6-7 semesters, and 8 or more semesters appeared to be normally distributed. Enrollment time distributions are

represented in Figures 13-17. Nature of post-secondary program: Associate's Degree/Certification Program and Bachelor's Degree appeared to be normally distributed. Nature of post-secondary program distributions are represented in Figures 18 and 19. Academic college responses appeared to be normally distributed and are represented in Figures 20-26.

Detailed Analysis

The null hypotheses stated that:

H₀₁: There was no statistically significant influence between self-reported academic entitlement scores and a student's status in or outside of the Corp of Cadets at a SMC.

H₀₂: There was no statistically significant influence between self-reported academic entitlement scores and the Academic College a student's major resides in at a SMC.

H₀₃: There was no statistically significant influence between self-reported academic entitlement scores and the nature of a post-secondary program at a SMC.

Research Questions

RQ1: What influence does a student's status within or outside of the Corp of Cadets have on self-reported AE scores at a SMC?

Responses were collected from 834 participants; 47 (6%) identified as CSC, 53 (6%) identified as NCSC, and the remaining 734 (88%) identified as TS. Between the three groups, NCSC reported the highest mean AggAEScores. The AggAEScores were calculated using a seven point Likert-scale with rankings of 1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= somewhat disagree, 4= neutral/no opinion, 5= somewhat agree, 6=agree, and 7= strongly agree for the 15 question Academic Entitlement Questionnaire (AEQ) developed by Chowning & Campbell (2009). Questions 2 & 7 associated with the AEQ

were recoded to indicated that lower Likert-scale responses were associated with elevated senses of entitlement and to accurately contribute to the AggAEScore total. Table 1 outlines the descriptive statistics of these groups when comparing the output generated by SPSS.

Table 1

Respondents Student Status Descriptive Statistics AEQ

	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SE</i>
Contracted Student-Cadet	47	41.94	14.59	2.13
Non-Contracted Student-Cadet	53	44.94	12.33	1.69
Traditional Student	734	40.69	10.92	.40

A one-way univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed within SPSS to evaluate the significance of any mean differences between the student-status groups scores on the AEQ. Levene's test for equality of variances was found not to be violated $F(2, 831) = 1.22, p=.30$. The ANOVA ($F(2, 831) = 3.70, p=.025$) was significant and there appeared to be an effect of student's status at the SMC on AggAEScores. Post hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean AggAEScore for TS and NCSC were significantly different, $p=.022$. There was no significant difference reported between the mean AggAEScores for CSC and NCSC, $p=.376$ nor between CSC and TS, $p=.742$. The null hypotheses for H_1 was rejected; suggesting that there was a statistically significant influence between self-reported academic entitlement scores and a student's status in or outside of the Corp of Cadets at a SMC.

Table 2

One-Way Analysis of Variance of Student Status AggAEScores

Source	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	2	935.44	467.72	3.70	.03
Within Groups	831	105040.82	126.40		
Total	833	105976.25			

RQ2: What influence does the academic college have on self-reported AE scores at a SMC?

Responses were collected from 834 participants; 20 identified their major was housed within the University College (2%), 64 were unable to identify where their major was housed (8%), 105 identified their major was housed within the College of Education (13%), 110 identified their major was housed within the College of Business (13%), 153 identified their major was housed within the College of Science & Mathematics (18%), 189 identified their major was housed within the College of Arts & Letters (23%), and 193 identified their major was housed with the College of Health Sciences & Professions (23%). Between the seven groups, the University College reported the highest Mean AggAEScores.

Table 3

Respondents Academic College Descriptive Statistics AEQ

College	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SE</i>
Arts & Letters	189	41.56	11.63	.85
Business	110	42.65	12.47	1.19
Education	105	40.71	11.64	1.14
Health Sciences & Professions	193	40.34	10.14	.73
Science & Mathematics	153	38.89	10.62	.86
University	20	48.40	9.30	2.08
I Don't Know	64	42.09	11.74	1.47

A one-way ANOVA was performed within SPSS to evaluate the significance of any mean differences between the academic college groups scores on the AEQ. Levene's test for equality of variances was found not to be violated $F(6, 827) = 1.08, p = .37$. The ANOVA ($F(6, 827) = 3.06, p = .006$) was significant and there appeared to be an effect of the academic college that houses a student's major at the SMC on AggAEScores. Post hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean AggAEScore for College of Health Sciences & Professions and University College were significantly different, $p = .036$. There was also a significant difference detected between the College of Science & Mathematics and the University College. The null hypothesis for H_2 was rejected; suggesting that there was a statistically significant influence between self-reported academic entitlement scores and the academic college a student's major resides in at a SMC.

Table 4

One-Way Analysis of Variance of Academic College AggAEScores

Source	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	6	2302.32	383.72	3.06	.006
Within Groups	827	103673.93	125.36		
Total	833	105976.25			

RQ3: What influence does the nature of a post-secondary program (Associate, Baccalaureate, or Certificate) have on self-reported AE scores at a SMC?

Responses were collected from 834 participants; 3 identified they were pursuing a post-secondary Certificate Program (0.4%), 78 indicated they were pursuing an Associate's Degree (9.4%), and 753 indicated they were pursuing a Bachelor's Degree (90.2%). Students that were pursuing an Associate's Degree reported the highest Mean AggAEScores.

Table 5

Respondents Nature of Post-Secondary Program Descriptive Statistics AEQ

	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SE</i>
Associate's	78	42.58	12.71	1.44
Bachelor's	753	40.88	11.13	0.41
Certificate	3	37.67	9.24	5.33

A one-way ANOVA was performed within SPSS to evaluate the significance of any mean differences between the nature of the post-secondary program groups scores on the AEQ. Levene's test for equality of variances was found not to be violated $F(1, 832)$

= .567, $p = .452$. The ANOVA ($F(2, 831) = .931, p = .395$) was not significant and there does not appear to be an effect of the nature of the post-secondary at a SMC on AggAEScores. Null hypotheses H_3 failed to be rejected; suggesting that there was no statistically significant influence between self-reported academic entitlement scores and the nature of a post-secondary program at a SMC.

Table 6

One-Way Analysis of Variance of Post-secondary Program AggAEScores

Source	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	2	236.83	118.42	.93	.395
Within Groups	831	105739.42	127.244		
Total	833	105976.25			

Summary of the Results

The research questions and hypotheses were analyzed utilizing an ANOVA using SPSS. The first research question was analyzed to determine whether there was a significant difference between self-reported AE scores and a student's status within or outside of the Corp of Cadets. Table 1 highlighted the aggregate AEScores that were obtained from the population sample based upon a student's student within or outside of the Corp of Cadets. The aggregate AEScores were obtained by totaling the self-reported Likert-Scale items from the provided survey instrument. Questions 2 & 7 were recoded to reflect that responses that were associated with negative classroom behavior and entitlement in the same manner that the other survey questions reported/captured. Higher reported aggregate scores were associated with higher levels of self-reported AE among

the surveyed population. Within the sampled population, the lowest AE score reported was a 15 from the TS population and the highest reported score was a 105 from the CSC population.

The second research question was analyzed to determine whether there was a significant difference between self-reported AE scores and the academic college that a student's major was housed within at the SMC. Table 3 highlighted the aggregate AEScores that were obtained from the population sample based upon the academic college that a student's major was housed within at the SMC. The largest number of participants came from the College of Health Sciences & Professions ($n = 193$). The highest AggAEScore came from the College of Arts & Letters (105) and the lowest AggAEScore came from the College of Health Sciences & Professions (15).

The final research question was analyzed to determine whether there was a significant difference between self-reported AE scores and the nature of a student's post-secondary program at the SMC. Table 5 highlighted the aggregate AEScores that were obtained from the population sample based upon the nature of a student's post-secondary program at the SMC. Due to the limited number of responses for the Certificate Program ($n = 3$), the researcher was unable to detect whether a significant difference existed between the three groups. The lowest (15) and highest (105) AggAEScores both came from participants that were pursuing a Bachelor's Degree program at the SMC.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to identify the current AE perceptions of students pursuing their post-secondary education at a SMC. This research study explored the potential influence that a student's status within the Corp of Cadets, the nature of their

post-secondary educational program, and the academic college in which their major was housed within at a SMC had on self-reported AE scores. Descriptive statistics were utilized to provide a more detailed snapshot of the 834 participants and included information on age, gender, and total enrollment time. In summary, a response rate of 6.14% ($n = 1,136$) from the sampled population resulted in a 73.42% ($n = 834$) completion rate of the survey.

Null hypothesis One was rejected for the variable of student population a participant associated with (CSC, NCSC, or TS). A significant difference existed between NCSC and TS on AggAEscores ($p = .022$). No significant difference existed between CSC and NCSC ($p = .376$) nor CSC and TS ($p = .742$). Null hypothesis Two was rejected for the variable of academic college that a participant's major was housed within the SMC. A significant difference existed between AggAEscores for participants from the College of Health Sciences & Professions and the University College ($p = .036$) and between the College of Science & Mathematics and the University College ($p = .007$). No significant differences were reported between the remaining Academic Colleges. Null hypothesis Three failed to be rejected for the variable associated with the nature of a participant's post-secondary educational pursuits.

In the final chapter a discussion of the study findings and a summary of the results are provided. Additional information will be provided on how the results relate to previous studies conducted on the concept of AE. A discussion of the limitations of the study, potential implications for practical application, and recommendations for further research serve as a conclusion for this chapter.

Chapter V

CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to identify the current academic entitlement (AE) perceptions of students pursuing their post-secondary education at a Senior Military College (SMC). This research study explored the potential influence that a student's status within the Corp of Cadets, the nature of their post-secondary educational program, and the academic college in which their major was housed within at a SMC had on self-reported AE scores. This chapter contains an overview of the study and a general discussion of the results/findings. Conclusions and recommendations for future research will also be discussed.

Academic entitlement (AE) has become a hinderance within post-secondary education and has placed additional strain on faculty who are overworked and underappreciated (Benton, 2006; Feldmann, 2001; Greenberger et al., 2008). With the recent influx of Millennials and Generation Z students, faculty have been tasked to serve the primary purposes of their institutions while engaging, captivating, mentoring, and challenging a new generation of students (Hosek & Titsworth, 2016; Howe & Strauss, 2007; Leiter et al., 2010; Mazer & Hess, 2016). The lines between establishing the appropriate amount of rigor and providing a student-centered learning environment have become blurred. Students are aware that institutions rely on end of course feedback to determine merit based raises and promotion/tenure for faculty. This potentially shifted the power dynamic in favor of a student population that may not be the most reliable nor unbiased source of information on effective instruction (Redding, 1998; Rojstaczer, 2003; Scanlan & Care, 2004)

Overview

The study was completed at a SMC campus utilizing Qualtrics to develop an electronic survey instrument that incorporated the Academic Entitlement Questionnaire (AEQ) developed by Chowning & Campbell (2009). The survey which included six demographic questions and the 15-item AEQ, was electronically distributed during the Fall 2019 academic semester. The following questions were developed to guide the researcher:

1. What influence does a student's status within or outside of the Corp of Cadets have on self-reported AE scores at a SMC?
2. What influence does the academic college have on self-reported AE scores at a SMC?
3. What influence does the nature of a post-secondary program (Associate, Baccalaureate, or Certificate) have on self-reported AE scores at a SMC?

Limitations to the Study

Initial limitations of the study could have arisen from the development of the research questions. The graduate student population at the SMC were not included in the third research question nor granted access to the entire survey. Basic demographic information was obtained to describe the sample but was not a key point of emphasis. Additional questions or other instruments that have been developed to measure AE could be utilized to better capture responses and address gaps that may exist from solely using the AEQ developed by Chowning and Campbell (2009).

Data Analysis Summary and Discussion

RQ1: What influence does a student's status within or outside of the Corp of Cadets have on self-reported AE scores at a SMC?

Student status within or outside of Corp of Cadets was an influencer of AE and was assessed through question 2 of the survey instrument and the AggAEScore generated from the 15-item AEQ. The majority of the respondents (88%) identified as Traditional Students (TS) and reported the lowest overall AggAEScores. These findings suggested that a student's choice to become involved with the Corp of Cadets at a SMC may actually result in a greater sense of entitlement. By associating oneself with a specific sub-population on the SMC's campus, students within the Corp of Cadets may be operating underneath the false narrative that they are indeed special and different from TS.

Non-Contracted Student-Cadets (NCSC) reported the highest AggAEScores ($M = 44.94$) and these findings highlighted another issue. Not every student that was enrolled in Military Science courses at the SMC will earn a commission upon graduation. There was a larger overall population of NCSC than Contracted Student-Cadets (CSC) at the SMC even if this was not reflected in the provided data. Non-Contracted Student-Cadets who assumed that they are guaranteed a commission for simply paying the associated fees and attending all of their Corp of Cadet duties presents a unique problem.

This mindset could be similar to the mindset shared by TS of being able to earn no less than a satisfactory mark in their courses for simply showing up and putting forth minimum effort. While one would like to assume that actively taking steps to join a branch of the Armed Forces would draw more mature and grounded individuals, these data seemed to show that the Corp of Cadets was just as vulnerable to negative academic

behaviors and AE. Data from this study seemed to highlight a need for greater exploration of the role of the Corp of Cadets within the SMC setting and a need to identify when a student cadet is informed of their transition from NCSC to CSC. Identification of this transitioning period could provide insight into whether this polarizing event has an influence on AE at an SMC. Expansion into the remaining five SMCs could highlight potential differences between a student-cadet's status and AE. Additional research is needed to identify whether other SMCs have developed specific on-boarding or orientation sessions to help alleviate AE within their student-cadet ranks.

RQ2: What influence does the academic college have on self-reported AE scores at a SMC?

The academic college where a post-secondary student's major was housed was a potential influencer of AE and was assessed through question 6 of the survey instrument and the AggAEScore that was generated from the 15-item AEQ. The two lowest AggAEScores ($M = 38.89$) came from the College of Science & Mathematics and the College of Health Sciences & Professions ($M = 40.34$). These findings supported the works of Cain et al. (2012) that highlighted although not impervious to AE, professional degrees and programs associated with higher levels of rigor and pre-requisite requirements often weed-out uncouth students during initial semesters of enrollment. The College of Science & Mathematics and the College of Health Sciences & Professions focused their coursework on the practical applications of knowledge grounded in objective material and not subjective constructs open to a student's individual interpretation.

The University College at the SMC houses several Associate and Baccalaureate degrees that were more generalized in nature. These generalized concentrations may potentially serve as an initial starting point for students who are undecided on their respective major. This could explain why elevated AggAEScores were detected within this setting. Students within the University College may have struggled to come to grasps with their post-secondary identity or in some cases may have failed to gain entry into the more restrictive academic colleges. A common reported affliction of students with AE was their desire to graduate on time or as soon as possible. This preoccupation with adherence to a self-imposed deadline and not the quality of their education may further fuel AE.

Colleges that find themselves attracting undecided or more of a generalist student may benefit from the inclusion of professional development courses within their curriculum. The SMC does currently offer a UNIV 1000 course that serves as an on-boarding elective for all new and transfer students, but additional refining and professional development may be necessary to ensure that the course is adequately preparing students.

RQ3: What influence does the nature or a post-secondary program (Associate, Baccalaureate, or Certificate) have on self-reported AE scores at a SMC?

The nature of a post-secondary program as an influencer of AE was assessed in question 5 of the survey instrument and the AggAEScore that was generated from the 15-item AEQ. Due to limited responses from the Certificate Program, no significance difference between programs was detected. However, when viewing the provided descriptive statistics, there does appear to be elevated AggAEScores among the Associate

Degree population ($M = 42.58$). Students who pursue an Associate's Degree if not enrolled in a technical college or trade school may be unsure of their overall capabilities at the post-secondary setting. The Associate's Degree allowed students to address core curriculum requirements and explore their potential footing if they wished to continue their post-secondary education upon completion.

For some students, this may result in transferring into a Baccalaureate program where the majority of their remaining coursework will be within their major or discipline. These courses are often at the 3000 or 4000 level and may present new challenges to students who were not adequately prepared for these additional rigors during their 1000 and 2000 level coursework (Kerr et al., 2004; Santiago-Rivera & Bernstein, 1996). The inclusion of an orientation or onboarding seminar, similar to what first-year students are required to complete at the SMC, may help students further understand that previous academic successes are not always an accurate predictor of future academic performance.

Recommendations for Further Research

Recommendations for future research were based upon the completed study and findings. The first recommendation would include a replication of the study with the inclusion of the graduate student population to obtain a larger and more diverse sample at the SMC. Inclusions of graduate students would allow researchers to detect AE within graduate or professional programs and draw comparisons to their undergraduate counterparts. Cain et al. (2012) explored AE in pharmacy education and other professional programs during their initial study and a similar framework could logically be adopted at a SMC setting with similar student populations. The SMC that was

selected currently offers 35 graduate degrees/programs that could be explored for AE to identify or detect any lingering effects for students who chose to complete multiple tiers of the post-secondary education within the same SMC campus network. Soliciting feedback from the graduate students outside of Likert-scale responses could also provide insight into how graduate students are impacted by a peer with excessive AE (Karpen, 2014).

An advantage of capturing information on AE from the graduate student population could allow a researcher to utilize a cohort study design to follow students throughout the entirety of their graduate education. This method could reveal trends and information that failed to be capture in the cross-sectional study design that was utilized for this dissertation. A cohort study design could allow the primary researcher to account for changes in AE as a result of societal and developmental influences (Burton et al., 2006; Deci & Ryan, 1985; DeReboertis & Bland, 2018; Heckhausen et al., 2010; Laverghetta, 2018; Link, 2019; Vansteekiste et al., 2006). A greater understanding of the negative consequences associated with AE in these highly competitive graduate programs could also be a potential benefit (Levin, 2006; Sessoms, Finney, & Kopp, 2016; Song & Chung, 2010). Collecting and analyzing data from both undergraduate and graduate student populations could assist faculty in developing pre-professional programs to create a smoother transition between degree levels (Jeffres et al., 2014).

The second recommendation would include surveying dual-enrolled secondary students that actively take courses at the SMC. The inclusion of dual-enrolled secondary students would require additional authorization from the Institution Review Board (IRB) and parental consent for any student that was under 18 years old. Including dual-enrolled

secondary students may provide insight into how AE may have already manifested within a respective student population prior to their first college semester. Analyzing AE among dual-enrolled students at the SMC would strengthen the current body of literature and help identify influences that either alleviate or exacerbate AE during post-secondary coursework (Kerr et al., 2004; Santiago-Reivera & Bernstein, 1996; Twenge, 2009).

Similar to the recommendations of providing assistance to transitioning undergraduate students to the graduate level, introductory courses could be aligned to instill an appropriate mindset in students new to the SMC (Kerr et al., 2004). This could potentially alleviate some of the misconceptions held by first-year college students that academic success at the post-secondary level will mirror previous successes (Kerr et al., 2004). This training could help faculty develop and adapt course policies to better fit the needs of a unique classroom population that may represent several generations (Benton, 2006; Feldmann, 2001; Price, 2010). Although all students of a course may be lumped together as a singular collective unit, differences in the manner a dual-enrolled student, a last semester senior student, and a non-traditional adult learner should be acknowledged.

Another recommendation would include surveying participants during a different academic semester. Utilizing either the spring or summer semester may capture more honest responses. Students that are surveyed during their semester of anticipated graduation may be more willing to be honest and complete a survey in its entirety knowing that they will not be returning to the campus. This type of unbiased feedback may better align with the initial intention of a post-course survey; identifying high-impactful teaching practices and effectiveness of instruction. Utilizing the last semester of enrollment could provide a researcher with insight into the propensity of a student to

engage in undesirable academic behaviors knowing they are only a few credits short from graduating. This sense of finality could allow participants to be more transparent in their responses.

Utilizing a later semester could help faculty and departments address apathy or burn-out that may afflict students during their last courses. Faculty and advisors could effectively use this information to challenge students to continue to put forth maximum effort and adhere to standards of excellence. From a student perspective, this may address a misconception that faculty will show excessive grace in grading practices during a student's last semester for the sake of preserving retention and graduation rates.

Future researchers could also look into implementing more of a mixed methods approach in attempts to understand AE. After analyzing survey responses, participants could be recruited to engage in focus group discussions to explore the issues of AE for the students' perspective (Karpen, 2014). These focus groups could help gain additional insight into student expectations from their instructors and provide a glimpse on whether their personal views of AE may be influencing their post-secondary experiences. Similar to the recommendations offered by Karpen (2014), this would give the student population a forum to provide insight beyond simple Likert-Scale responses and potentially assist instructors in finding the appropriate middle ground between supporting student success and academic coddling. This type of open dialogue may allow students to understand the rationale behind an instructor's unwillingness to budge on course policies and procedures. This could strengthen student perceptions of an instructor, the instructor's commitment to only reward positive academic behaviors, and preserve the prestige of confirmed degrees.

Implications

As society continues to push the narrative that obtainment of a post-secondary degree as the primary means to elevated social status and the ability to earn a sustainable wage, a dangerous catch-22 remains. Depending on the nature of a student's post-secondary studies, there may be several colleges that are vying for these new tuition dollars. Colleges are investing more money into amenities to attract students and sell them on tangibles outside of tradition, prestige, and quality of education (Fairchild & Cragg, 2014; Laverghetta, 2018). Although this investment into non-academic resources helps increase overall enrollment, there is a potential to breed a dangerous consumer-based mindset among new students. This consumer mindset may warp a student's perception that college is a commodity that can be exchanged for tuition dollars. This conflicts with the traditional view of post-secondary education as a place of intellectual exploration, character development, and a progression into a more autonomous member of society.

Institutions should not forget that their vision and mission statements are meant to represent more than just a flowery bumper sticker used to swoon parents and new students at Open House events. By failing to support faculty in their attempts to establish and maintain rigor within their courses, an institution faces the risk of seeing prominent stakeholders leave for better opportunities. The apex of the higher education hierarchy must be cognizant that today's faculty are asked to expand their roles outside traditional teaching without receiving additional compensation. If faculty feel unsupported, unprotected, and disrespected, it will be impossible for institutions to deliver on the quality of instruction that may have been a key selling point to new students. Although

the notion of college being available to everyone is admirable, institutions should not be naïve and assume that college is for everyone. Certain student populations would be better served and gain real-life experience by having instructors hold them accountable for poor performance prior to releasing students into the real world. Students and faculty alike must acknowledge that the real world is very different from the safe confines a college campus may provide.

This disconnect between the expectation of faculty and students can result in friction during normal interactions when the matters of academic performance are broached. While faculty will continue to lean on explicit syllabi and course descriptions, students may lament that instructors are out of touch to the new challenges and demands facing today's college students (Hosek & Titsworth, 2016; Monaco & Martin, 2009; Price, 2010).

To effectively address this potential disconnect, faculty should look for common ground and maintain transparency within their courses and expectations (Benton, 2006). Although painstaking, the initial investment of ensuring course policies and procedures are clearly articulated can provide instructors with a sound foundation to justify grading decisions. This may help to address potential gray areas such as penalties for late submissions or excessive absences.

Another opportunity for faculty to combat AE is to frame the consumerism argument in a way that forces students to understand why they must be willing to uphold their end of the bargain. For students that are looking to obtain entry into professional or graduate programs, a professor can highlight the injustice that can occur if a student was denied entry because a fellow peer was not held to the same academic standard. By

forcing the student to see how grade inflation and caving to an unruly few can significantly jeopardize the efforts of the many, students may be more willing to take personal accountability (Cain et al., 2012; Delucchi & Korgen, 2002; Gokcen, 2014; Karpen, 2014).

Getting students to understand the why behind their desire to pursue a post-secondary education is another key intervention in combating AE. As previously discussed, the over-parenting of Generation Y and Generation Z has provided new challenges for post-secondary faculty (Barton & Hirsch, 2016; Greenberger et al., 2008). The evolution of the helicopter parent and their obsession with removing the word failure from their child's lexicon has deprived many students the opportunity to learn critical life lessons. Faculty and post-secondary staff should focus students on learning accountability for their actions and performance and not simply deflecting the blame to an external entity (Burton et al., 2006; Deci & Ryan, 1985; Deci & Ryan 2008). Some of the most valuable lessons that post-secondary students can learn are not grounded in times of academic success, but during short-falls and missteps that force a student to look inward and become more self-aware.

Conclusion

The perceptions and expectations of Millennial and Generation Z post-secondary students are not the same as they were for previous cohorts (Chowning & Campbell, 2009; Thompson & Gregory, 2012; Twenge & Campbell 2009; Ziefle, 2018). Today's post-secondary student population has been greatly influenced by the rise of social media and the relationship between themselves and their parents (Hosek & Titsworth, 2016; Monaco & Martin, 2009; Price, 2010). Significant life and societal events have changed

the way today's post-secondary student interacts with faculty and what they deem as socially acceptable (Frey & Tatum, 2016; Price 2010). This potential disconnect is seemingly exacerbated when students display elevated senses of entitlement and are unwilling to take accountability for their academic shortfalls (Turnipseed & Cohen, 2015).

The level of stress faced by current post-secondary faculty is increasing as institutions are tasking faculty with fulfilling additional responsibilities outside of a traditional teaching load. Often these additional requests or demands are implemented without a significant increase in compensation (Fairchild & Crage, 2014). Faculty are often at the mercy of their institutions when attempting to obtain tenure or promotion. In its current model, institutions may be granting too much power to the arbitrary interpretation of student evaluations of instruction (Redding, 1998; Scanlan & Care, 2004). Institutions of higher education should be wary when catering to such outlandish consumeristic viewpoints solely for the sake of chasing tuition dollars. Such pursuits risk the heart and soul of higher education's intended purpose (Laverghetta, 2018).

Institutions, faculty, and students must be willing to work together to ensure that once sought-after degrees and the prestige that embodies the confirmation of these titles is not cast to the wayside (Singleton-Jackson et al., 2010). Additional emphasis may need to improve introductory courses to provide students with the wisdom and guidance needed to handle adversity throughout their post-secondary pursuits. Failing to address these gaps in resiliency, society's infatuation with the preservation of self-esteem, and over-parenting may allow entitlement to fester and grow; hindering cognitive and emotional development of post-secondary students. Learning to accept failure and being

able to differentiate between what one earns as opposed to what one believes to be owed, is perhaps an unwritten aspect of the post-secondary curriculum. Failing to effectively address entitlement prior to a student's graduation may result in ill prepared graduates. Although these individuals would have demonstrated success from a didactic standpoint, they may be ill-equipped to handle challenges of the real world that were not directly addressed within their curriculum.

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APPENDIX A:
Recruitment Email

You are being asked to participate in a survey research study entitled “A Study of Self-Reported Academic Entitlement Scores on a Senior Military College Campus”, which is being conducted by Andrew J. Jakiel, a doctoral student at Valdosta State University. The goal of the study is to increase the amount of knowledge on the current self-held perceptions of Academic Entitlement from students that have chosen to pursue their post-secondary education at a Senior Military College. This research study is anonymous. No one, including the researcher, will be able to associate your responses with your identity.

Your participation is voluntary. You may choose not to participate and to stop responding at any time. You must be at least 18 years of age to participate in this study. Your participation serves as your voluntary agreement to participate in this research project and your certification that you are 18 or older. Questions regarding the purpose or procedures of the research should be directed to Andrew J. Jakiel at ajjakiel@valdosta.edu, or (Dr. James G. Archibald at jgarchibald@valdosta.edu)

This study has been deemed Exempt as defined by the Revised Common Rule 45 46.104(d)(2) from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) review in accordance with Federal regulations. The IRB, a university committee established by Federal law, is responsible for protecting the rights and welfare of research participants. If you have concerns or questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the IRB Administrator at 229-259-5045 or irb@valdosta.edu.

The survey will remain open for a period of four weeks. A reminder email will be sent out at the two-week mark to remind participants to complete any incomplete responses. If you have already completed the survey in its entirety, you may disregard the reminder email. Permission to utilize the survey for academic purposes is included on the survey instrument and

no additional permissions are necessary, as indicated on the instrument (Chowing & Campbell, 2009

APPENDIX B:

Qualtrics Survey Questions

“A Study of Self-Reported Academic Entitlement Scores on a Senior Military College Campus”

Student Survey Created By: Andrew J. Jakiel

Q1 Which gender do you identify as?

- ☐ Male (1)
 - ☐ Female (2)
 - ☐ Gender Neutral (3)
 - ☐ Prefer Not To Answer (4)
-

Q2 With what student population do you associate yourself?

- ☐ Contracted Student-Cadet (1)
 - ☐ Non-Contracted Student-Cadet (2)
 - ☐ Traditional Student (3)
-

Q3 Please identify your age.

- ☐ 18-19 (1)
 - ☐ 20-21 (2)
 - ☐ 22-23 (3)
 - ☐ 24-25 (4)
 - ☐ 26+ (5)
-

Q4 How long have you been enrolled at a campus associated with this Senior Military College?

- ☐ 0-1 semesters (1)
 - ☐ 2-3 semesters (2)
 - ☐ 4-5 semesters (3)
 - ☐ 6-7 semesters (4)
 - ☐ 8 or more semesters (5)
-

Q5 Which of the following post-secondary programs best describes your current major/academic focus?

- ☐ Associate's Degree (1)
- ☐ Baccalaureate or Bachelor's Degree (2)
- ☐ Certification or Certificate Program (3)
- ☐ Graduate Degree (4)

Skip To: End of Survey If Which of the following post-secondary programs best describes your current major/academic focus? = Graduate Degree

Q6 In which of the following College & Academic units is your current major housed?

- ☐ College of Arts & Letters (1)
- ☐ College of Business (2)
- ☐ College of Education (3)
- ☐ College of Health Sciences & Professions (4)
- ☐ College of Science & Mathematics (5)
- ☐ University College (6)
- ☐ I Don't Know (7)

End of Block: Introduction Statement & Demographics

Start of Block: Survey Questions

Please read the following statements and indicate on the provided scale the response that you feel best represents your feelings towards the statement.

You will have the option of indicate the following responses: Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Somewhat Disagree (3), Neutral/No Opinion (4), Somewhat Agree (5), Agree (6), Strongly Agree (7)

Q1 It is unnecessary for me to participate in class when the professor is paid for teaching, not for asking questions.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree (1)
 - ☐ Disagree (2)
 - ☐ Somewhat Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Neutral/No Opinion (4)
 - ☐ Somewhat Agree (5)
 - ☐ Agree (6)
 - ☐ Strongly Agree (7)
-

Q2 If I miss class, it is my responsibility to get the notes

- ☐ Strongly Disagree (1)
 - ☐ Disagree (2)
 - ☐ Somewhat Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Neutral/No Opinion (4)
 - ☐ Somewhat Agree (5)
 - ☐ Agree (6)
 - ☐ Strongly Agree (7)
-

Q3 I am not motivated to put a lot of effort into group work, because another group member will end up doing it.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree (1)
 - ☐ Disagree (2)
 - ☐ Somewhat Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Neutral/No Opinion (4)
 - ☐ Somewhat Agree (5)
 - ☐ Agree (6)
 - ☐ Strongly Agree (7)
-

Q4 I believe that the university does not provide me with the resources I need to succeed in college.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree (1)
 - ☐ Disagree (2)
 - ☐ Somewhat Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Neutral/No Opinion (4)
 - ☐ Somewhat Agree (5)
 - ☐ Agree (6)
 - ☐ Strongly Agree (7)
-

Q5 Most professors do not really know what they are talking about.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree (1)
 - ☐ Disagree (2)
 - ☐ Somewhat Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Neutral/No Opinion (4)
 - ☐ Somewhat Agree (5)
 - ☐ Agree (6)
 - ☐ Strongly Agree (7)
-

Q6 If I do poorly in a course and I could not make my professor's office hours, the fault lies with my professor

- ☐ Strongly Disagree (1)
 - ☐ Disagree (2)
 - ☐ Somewhat Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Neutral/No Opinion (4)
 - ☐ Somewhat Agree (5)
 - ☐ Agree (6)
 - ☐ Strongly Agree (7)
-

Q7 I believe that it is my responsibility to seek out the resources to succeed in college.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree (1)
 - ☐ Disagree (2)
 - ☐ Somewhat Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Neutral/No Opinion (4)
 - ☐ Somewhat Agree (5)
 - ☐ Agree (6)
 - ☐ Strongly Agree (7)
-

Q8 For group assignments, it is acceptable to take a back seat and let others do most of the work if I am busy.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree (1)
 - ☐ Disagree (2)
 - ☐ Somewhat Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Neutral/No Opinion (4)
 - ☐ Somewhat Agree (5)
 - ☐ Agree (6)
 - ☐ Strongly Agree (7)
-

Q9 For group work, I should receive the same grade as the other group members regardless of my level of effort.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree (1)
 - ☐ Disagree (2)
 - ☐ Somewhat Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Neutral/No Opinion (4)
 - ☐ Somewhat Agree (5)
 - ☐ Agree (6)
 - ☐ Strongly Agree (7)
-

Q10 Professors are just employees who get money for teaching.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree (1)
 - ☐ Disagree (2)
 - ☐ Somewhat Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Neutral/No Opinion (4)
 - ☐ Somewhat Agree (5)
 - ☐ Agree (6)
 - ☐ Strongly Agree (7)
-

Q11 My professors are obligated to help me prepare for exams.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree (1)
 - ☐ Disagree (2)
 - ☐ Somewhat Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Neutral/No Opinion (4)
 - ☐ Somewhat Agree (5)
 - ☐ Agree (6)
 - ☐ Strongly Agree (7)
-

Q12 Professors must be entertaining to be good.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree (1)
 - ☐ Disagree (2)
 - ☐ Somewhat Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Neutral/No Opinion (4)
 - ☐ Somewhat Agree (5)
 - ☐ Agree (6)
 - ☐ Strongly Agree (7)
-

Q13 My professors should reconsider my grade if I am close to the grade I want

- ☐ Strongly Disagree (1)
 - ☐ Disagree (2)
 - ☐ Somewhat Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Neutral/No Opinion (4)
 - ☐ Somewhat Agree (5)
 - ☐ Agree (6)
 - ☐ Strongly Agree (7)
-

Q14 I should never receive a zero on an assignment that I turned in.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree (1)
 - ☐ Disagree (2)
 - ☐ Somewhat Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Neutral/No Opinion (4)
 - ☐ Somewhat Agree (5)
 - ☐ Agree (6)
 - ☐ Strongly Agree (7)
-

Q15 My professors should curve my grade if I am close to the next letter grade.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree (1)
- ☐ Disagree (2)
- ☐ Somewhat Disagree (3)
- ☐ Neutral/No Opinion (4)
- ☐ Somewhat Agree (5)
- ☐ Agree (6)
- ☐ Strongly Agree (7)

End of Block: Survey Questions

APPENDIX C:
Coding for Survey Questions

Survey Question #	Variable	Coding Description
1	Gender	1= Male
		2= Female
		3= Gender Neutral
		4= Prefer Not to Answer
2	Student Population	1= Contracted Student-Cadet
		2= Non-Contracted Student-Cadet
		3= Traditional Student
3	Age	1= 18-19
		2= 20-21
		3= 22-23
		4= 24-25
		5= 26+
4	Enrollment Time	1= 0-1 Semesters
		2= 2-3 Semesters
		3= 4-5 Semesters
		4= 6-7 Semesters
		5= 8+ Semesters
5	Post-Secondary Program	1= Associate's Degree
		2= Bachelor's Degree
		3= Certificate Program
		4= Graduate Degree
6	College & Academic Unit	1= College of Arts & Letters
		2= College of Business
		3= College of Education
		4= College of Health Sciences & Professions
		5= College of Science & Mathematics
		6= University College
		7= I Don't Know
7	Academic Entitlement	1= Strongly Disagree
		2= Disagree
		3= Somewhat Disagree
		4= Neutral/No Opinion
		5= Somewhat Agree
		6= Agree

		7= Strongly Agree
8	Academic Entitlement	1= Strongly Disagree
		2= Disagree
		3= Somewhat Disagree
		4= Neutral/No Opinion
		5= Somewhat Agree
		6= Agree
		7= Strongly Agree
9	Academic Entitlement	1= Strongly Disagree
		2= Disagree
		3= Somewhat Disagree
		4= Neutral/No Opinion
		5= Somewhat Agree
		6= Agree
		7= Strongly Agree
10	Academic Entitlement	1= Strongly Disagree
		2= Disagree
		3= Somewhat Disagree
		4= Neutral/No Opinion
		5= Somewhat Agree
		6= Agree
		7= Strongly Agree
11	Academic Entitlement	1= Strongly Disagree
		2= Disagree
		3= Somewhat Disagree
		4= Neutral/No Opinion
		5= Somewhat Agree
		6= Agree
		7= Strongly Agree
12	Academic Entitlement	1= Strongly Disagree
		2= Disagree
		3= Somewhat Disagree
		4= Neutral/No Opinion
		5= Somewhat Agree
		6= Agree
		7= Strongly Agree
13	Academic Entitlement	1= Strongly Disagree
		2= Disagree
		3= Somewhat Disagree

		4= Neutral/No Opinion
		5= Somewhat Agree
		6= Agree
		7= Strongly Agree
14	Academic Entitlement	1= Strongly Disagree
		2= Disagree
		3= Somewhat Disagree
		4= Neutral/No Opinion
		5= Somewhat Agree
		6= Agree
		7= Strongly Agree
15	Academic Entitlement	1= Strongly Disagree
		2= Disagree
		3= Somewhat Disagree
		4= Neutral/No Opinion
		5= Somewhat Agree
		6= Agree
		7= Strongly Agree
16	Academic Entitlement	1= Strongly Disagree
		2= Disagree
		3= Somewhat Disagree
		4= Neutral/No Opinion
		5= Somewhat Agree
		6= Agree
		7= Strongly Agree
17	Academic Entitlement	1= Strongly Disagree
		2= Disagree
		3= Somewhat Disagree
		4= Neutral/No Opinion
		5= Somewhat Agree
		6= Agree
		7= Strongly Agree
18	Academic Entitlement	1= Strongly Disagree
		2= Disagree
		3= Somewhat Disagree
		4= Neutral/No Opinion
		5= Somewhat Agree
		6= Agree
		7= Strongly Agree

19	Academic Entitlement	1= Strongly Disagree
		2= Disagree
		3= Somewhat Disagree
		4= Neutral/No Opinion
		5= Somewhat Agree
		6= Agree
		7= Strongly Agree
20	Academic Entitlement	1= Strongly Disagree
		2= Disagree
		3= Somewhat Disagree
		4= Neutral/No Opinion
		5= Somewhat Agree
		6= Agree
		7= Strongly Agree
21	Academic Entitlement	1= Strongly Disagree
		2= Disagree
		3= Somewhat Disagree
		4= Neutral/No Opinion
		5= Somewhat Agree
		6= Agree
		7= Strongly Agree

APPENDIX D:
Insitution Review Board Approval/Exemption

Andrew Jakiel
Department of Kinesiology

Project Title: A Study of Self-Reported Academic Entitlement Scores on a Senior Military College Campus

Dear Mr. Jakiel

Your IRB application 2019-121 entitled "A Study of Self-Reported Academic Entitlement Scores on a Senior Military College Campus" has been evaluated in light of the federal, state, and institutional guidelines that govern the protection of human subjects. The proposed research has been deemed **EXEMPT** as defined by the Revised Common Rule 45 CFR 46.104(d)(2).

Although your project is exempt from continued IRB review, the research must adhere to the proposal submitted to the IRB. If changes to your study become necessary during the research project, you will need to submit a *Research Modification Request* form to the IRB and obtain IRB approval before implementation of those changes.

If an unanticipated problem and/or adverse event happens during your study, you must notifiy the IRB by submitting an *Unanticipated Problem Report*. Other actions also may be required depending on the nature of the incidence. For adverse events that directly impact the safety of research participants, you should also contact the IRB Chair directly.

Please note that although exempt protocols do not have an expiration date and do not require periodic continuing review by the IRB, we ask researchers to inform the IRB when a research project has been completed so that we can keep track of active research projects. Once you complete the study or if you decide to terminate your project prematurely please submit a *Notice of Research Closure/Termination* form to the IRB. The IRB may send you reminders as a courtesy, but it is your responsibility as the principal investigator to complete the research process by submitting the termination form.

Finally, please include the IRB study number denoted above in all your communication or correspondence related to your application and this letter. If you have any questions or need clarification of the contents of this letter, please contact me.

Good luck with your project!

Best,

Troy Smith, Ph.D.
UNG IRB Chair
irbchair@ung.edu

APPENDIX E:
Insitution Review Board Approval/Exemption



**Institutional Review Board (IRB)
For the Protection of Human Research Participants**

PROTOCOL EXEMPTION REPORT

Protocol Number: 03898-2019

Responsible Researcher: Andrew Jakiel

Supervising Faculty: Dr. James Archibald

Project Title: *A Study of Self-Reported Academic Entitlement Scores on a Senior Military College Campus.*

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD DETERMINATION:

This research protocol is **Exempt** from Institutional Review Board (IRB) oversight under Exemption **Category 2**. Your research study may begin immediately. If the nature of the research project changes such that exemption criteria may no longer apply, please consult with the IRB Administrator (irb@valdosta.edu) before continuing your research.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

- *Please provide VSU's IRB with a copy of the permission letter received from UNG's IRB.*
- *Upon completion of this research study all data (data list, email correspondence, etc.) must be securely maintained (locked file cabinet, password protected computer, etc.) and accessible only by the researcher for a minimum of 3 years.*

☒ *If this box is checked, please submit any documents you revise to the IRB Administrator at irb@valdosta.edu to ensure an updated record of your exemption.*

Elizabeth Ann Olphie *08.30.2019*
Elizabeth Ann Olphie, IRB Administrator

Thank you for submitting an IRB application.
Please direct questions to irb@valdosta.edu or 229-253-2947.

Revised: 06.02.16

APPENDIX F:
Figures

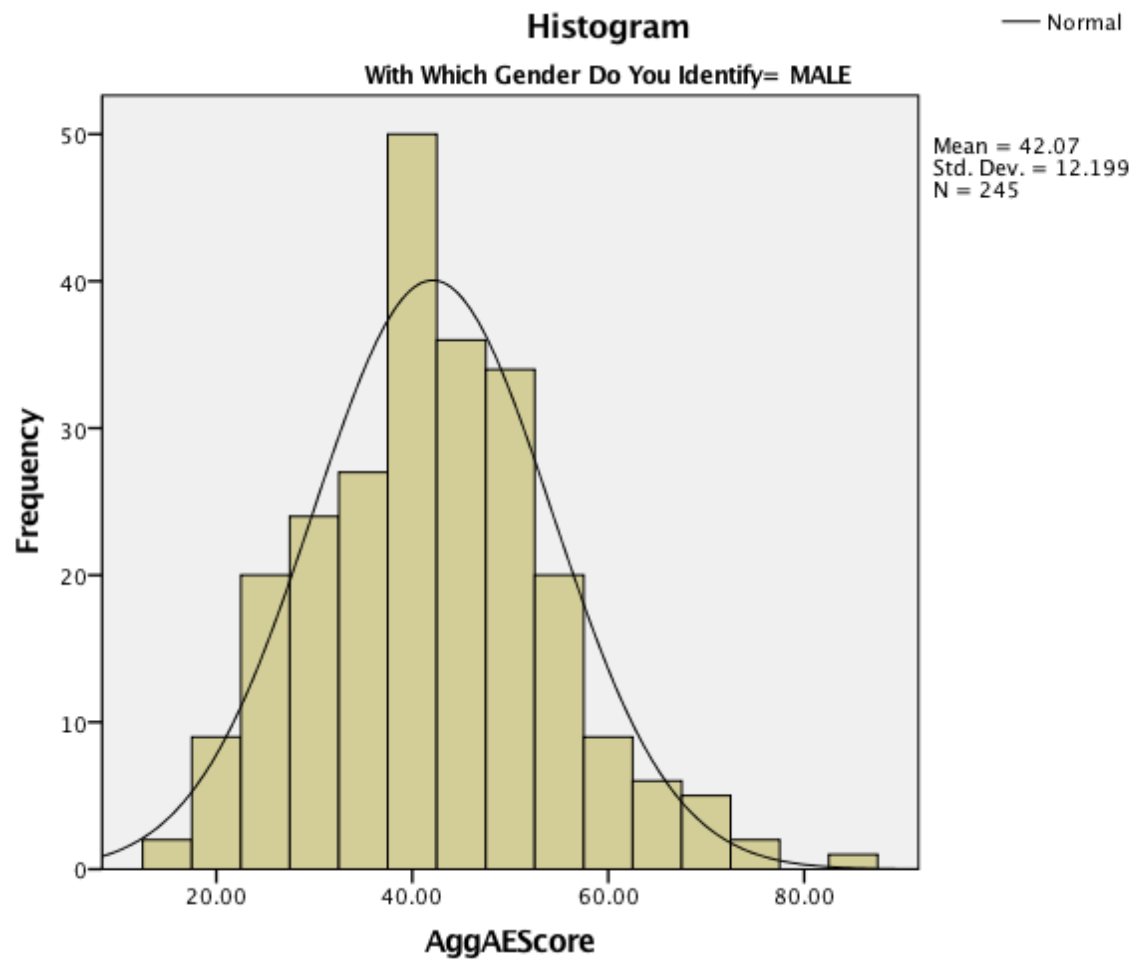


Figure 1: Mean AggAEScores for male students Fall 2019.

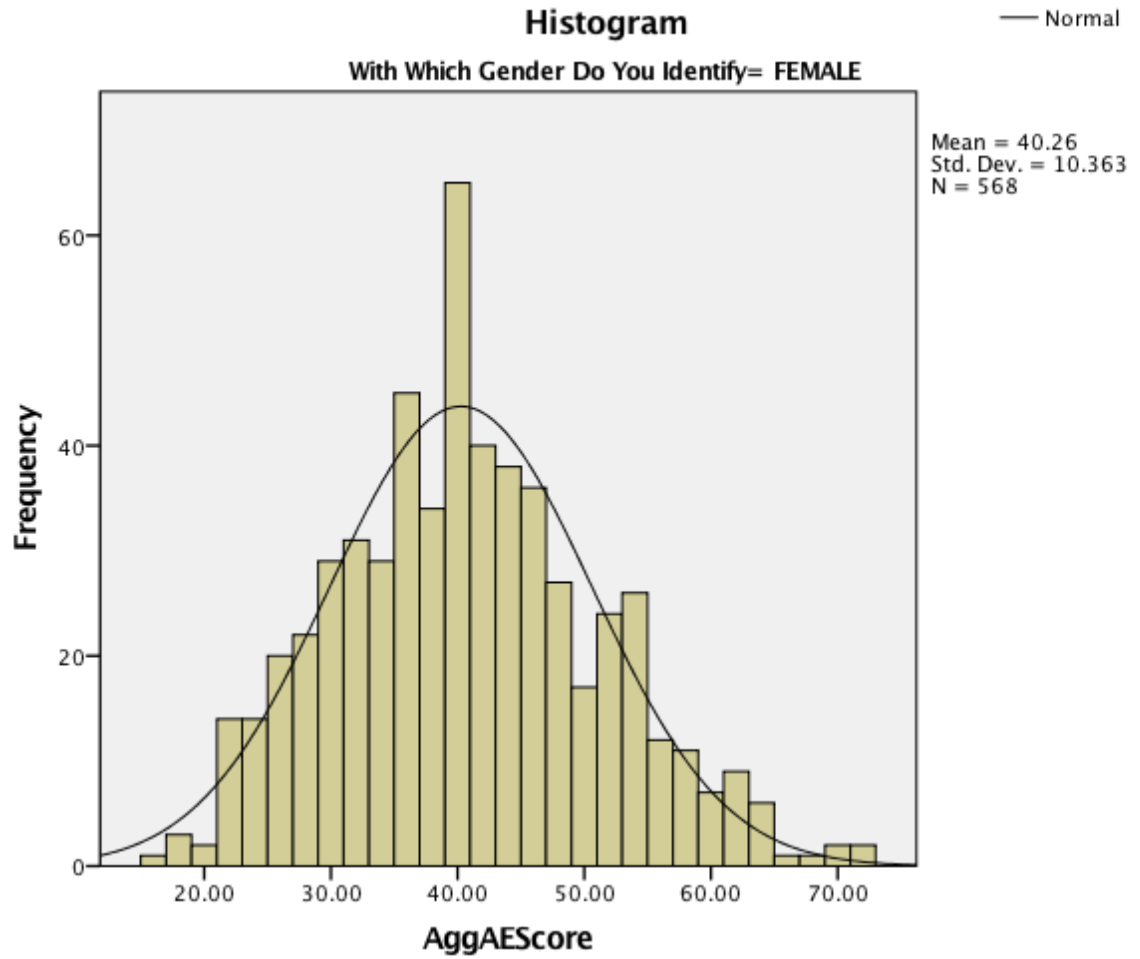


Figure 2: Mean AggAEScores for female students Fall 2019.

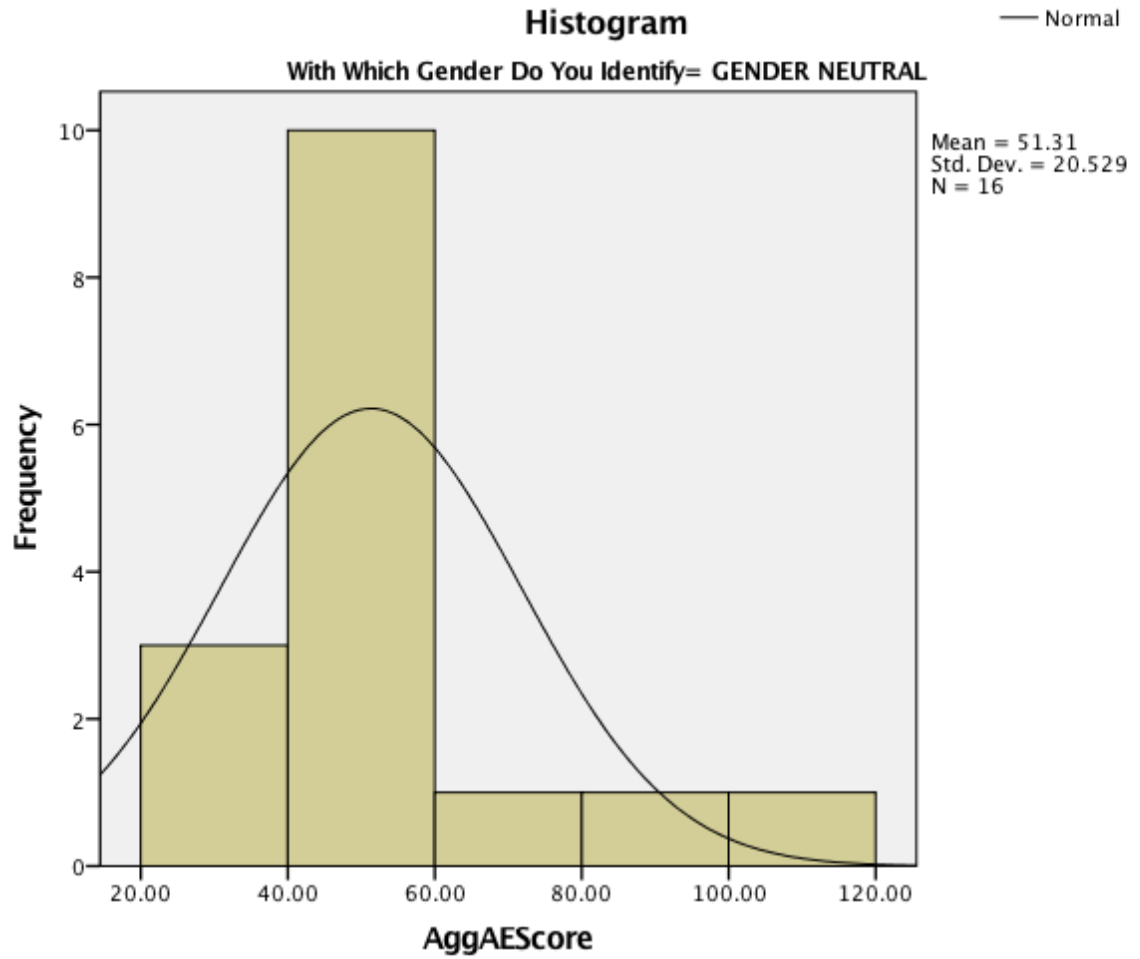


Figure 3: Mean AggAEScores for gender neutral students Fall 2019.

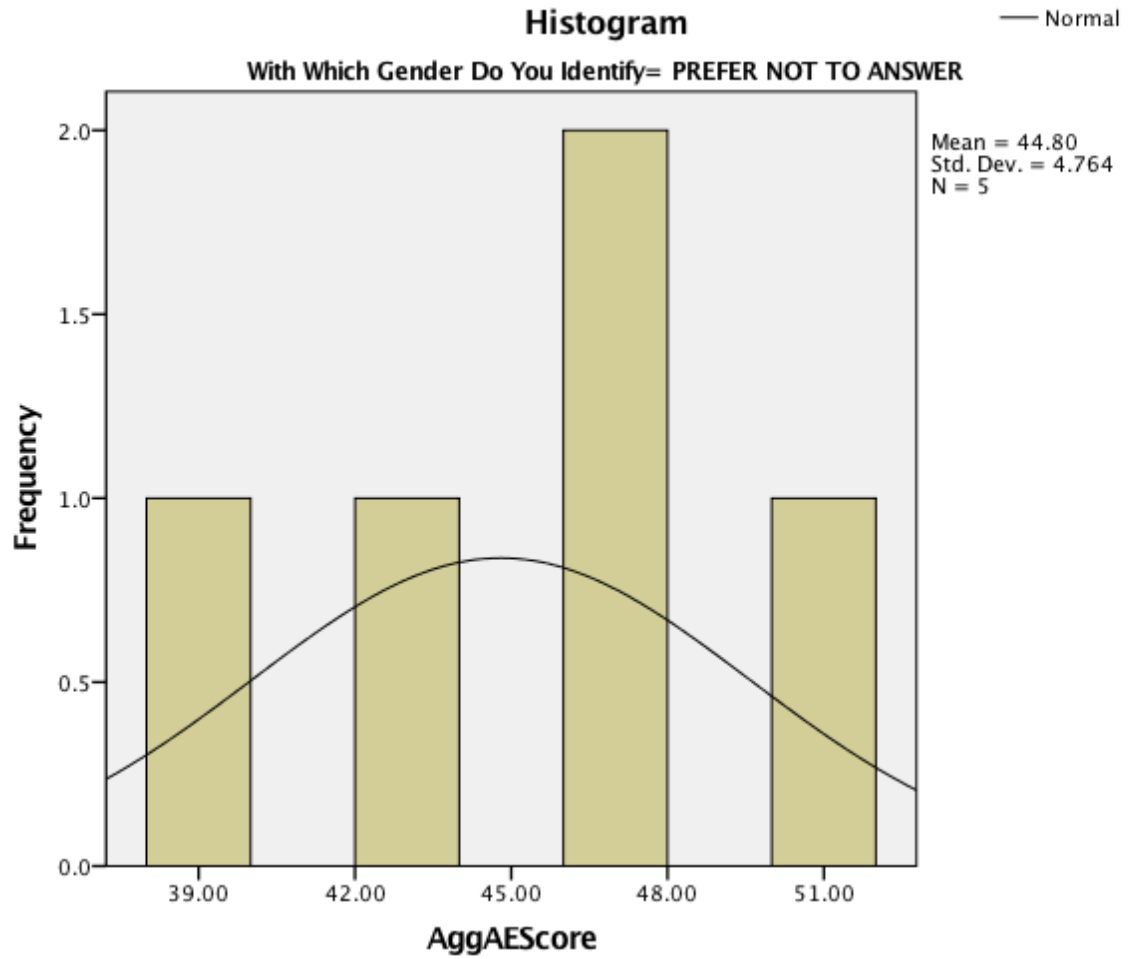


Figure 4: Mean AggAEScore for student who chose not to disclose gender Fall 2019.

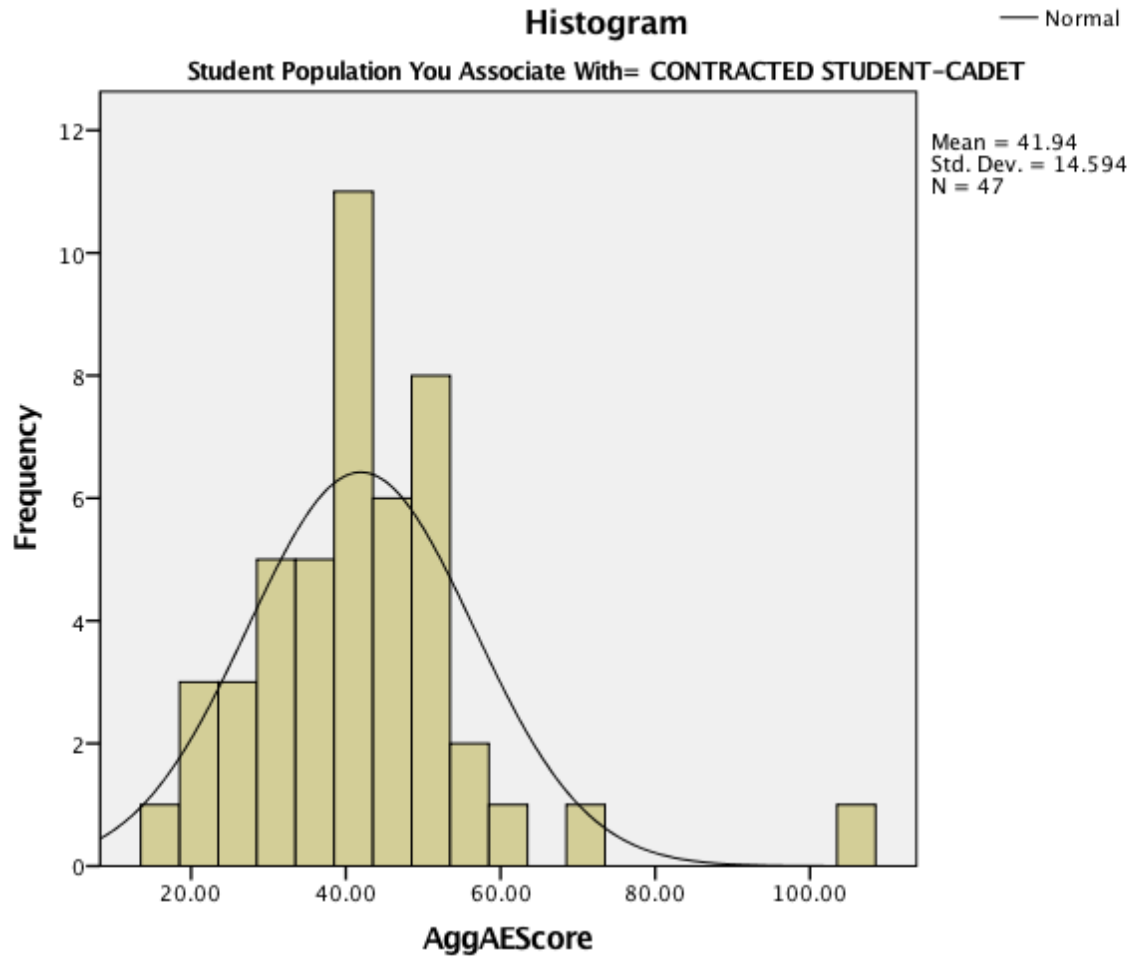


Figure 5: Mean AggAEScore contracted student-cadet Fall 2019.

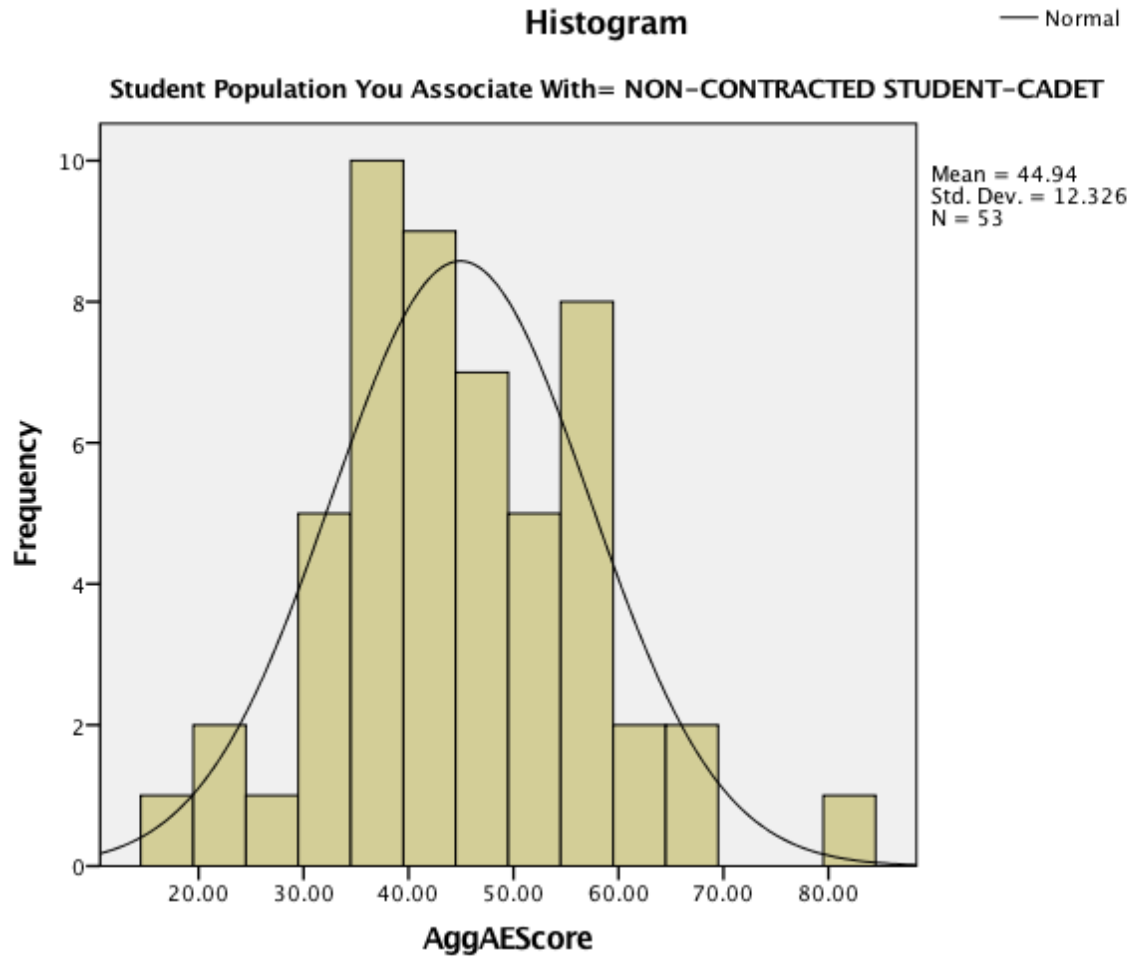


Figure 6: Mean AggAEScore non-contracted student-cadet Fall 2019.

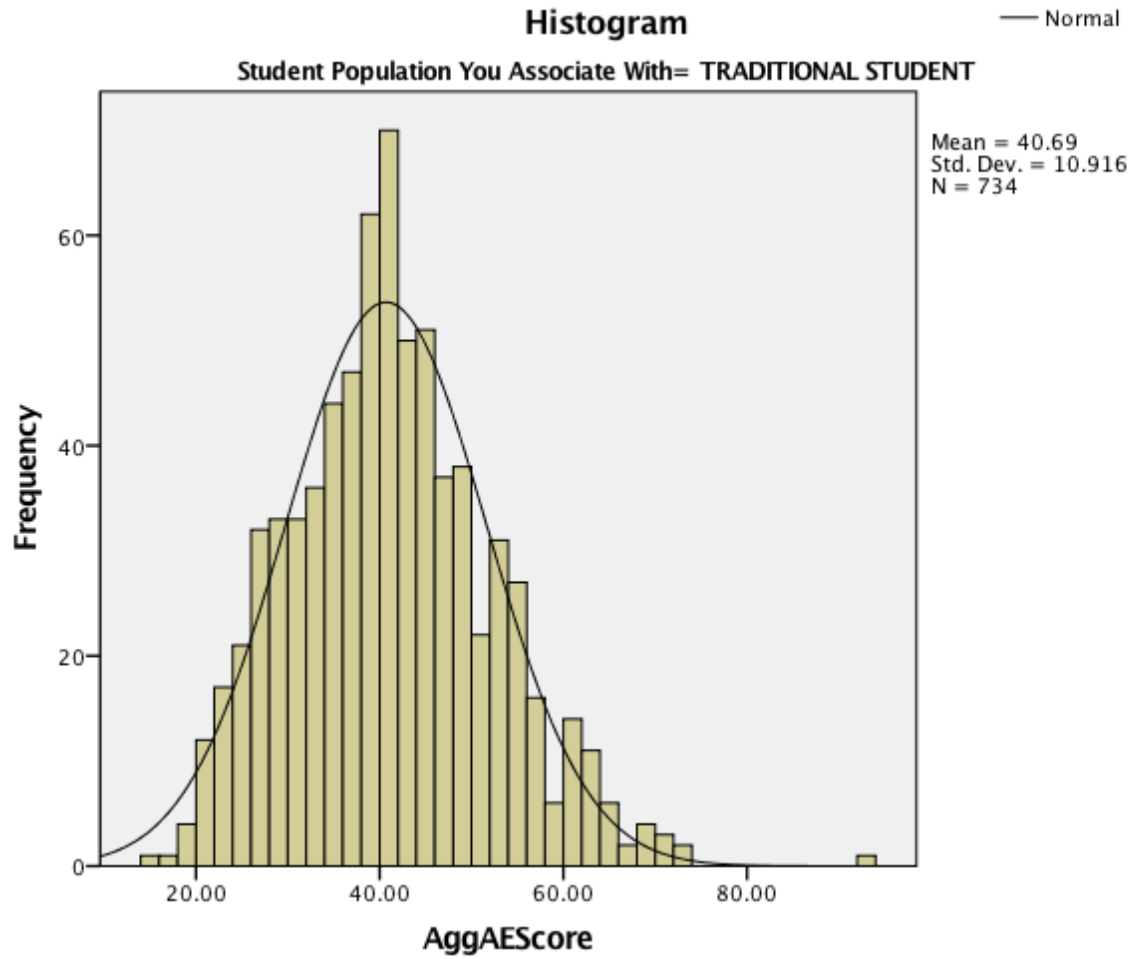


Figure 7: Mean AggAEScore traditional student Fall 2019.

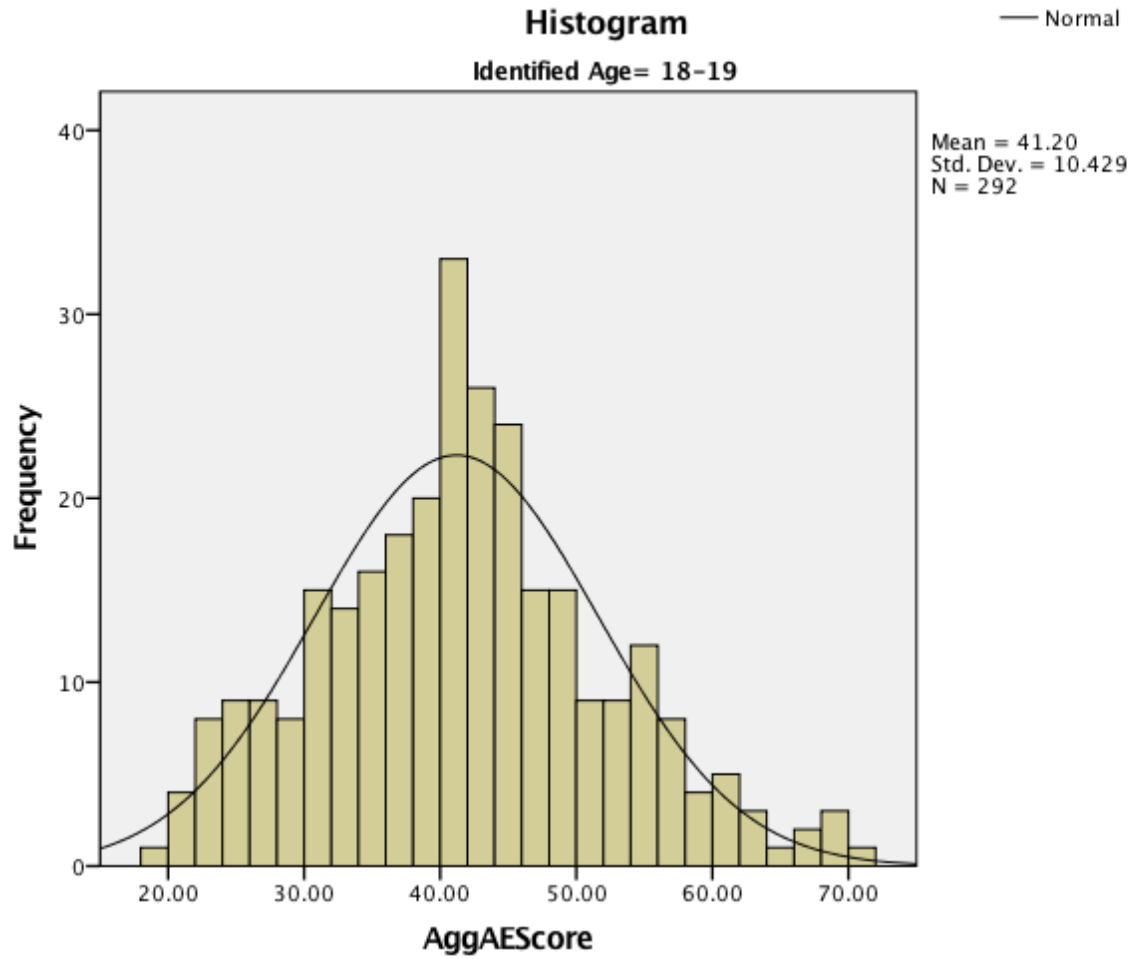


Figure 8: Mean AggAEScore Age 18-19 Fall 2019

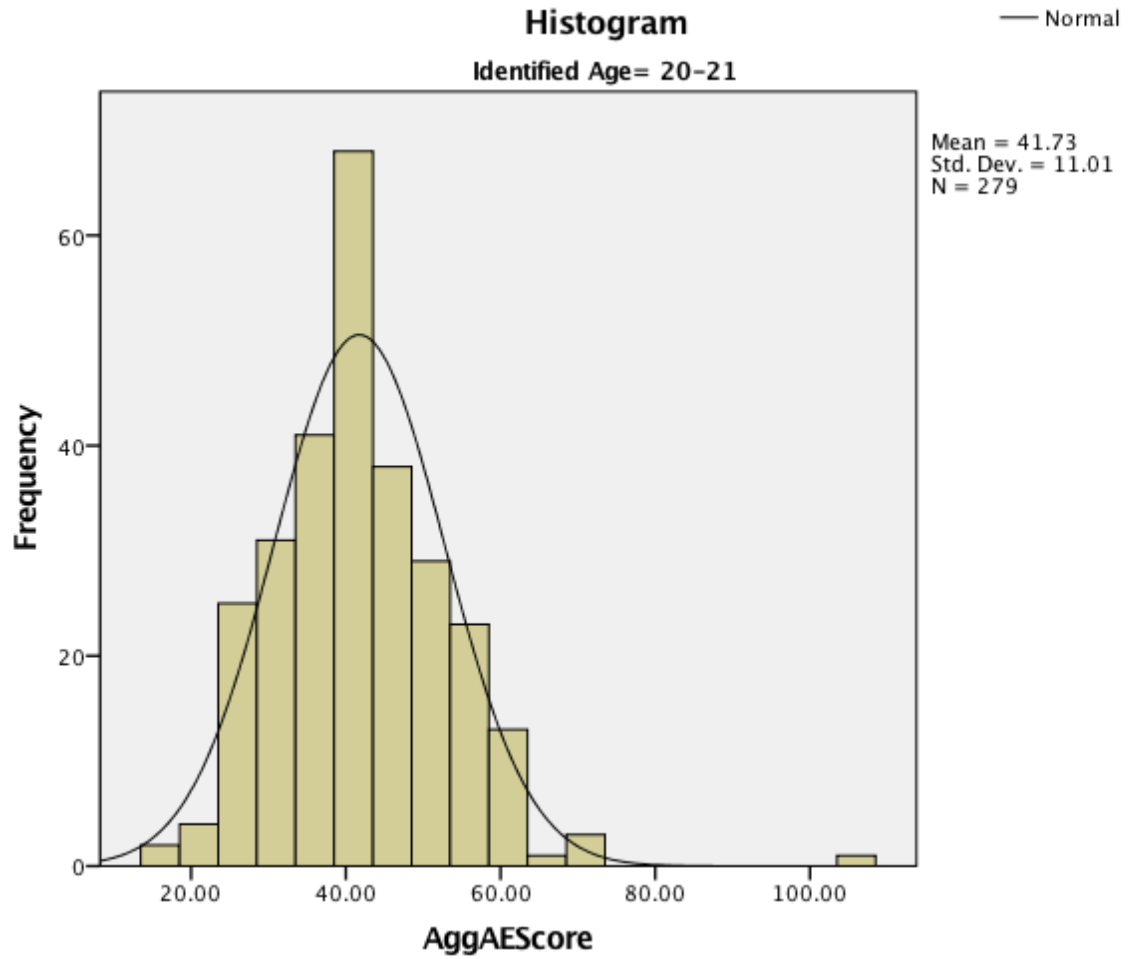


Figure 9: Mean AggAEScore Age 20-21 Fall 2019

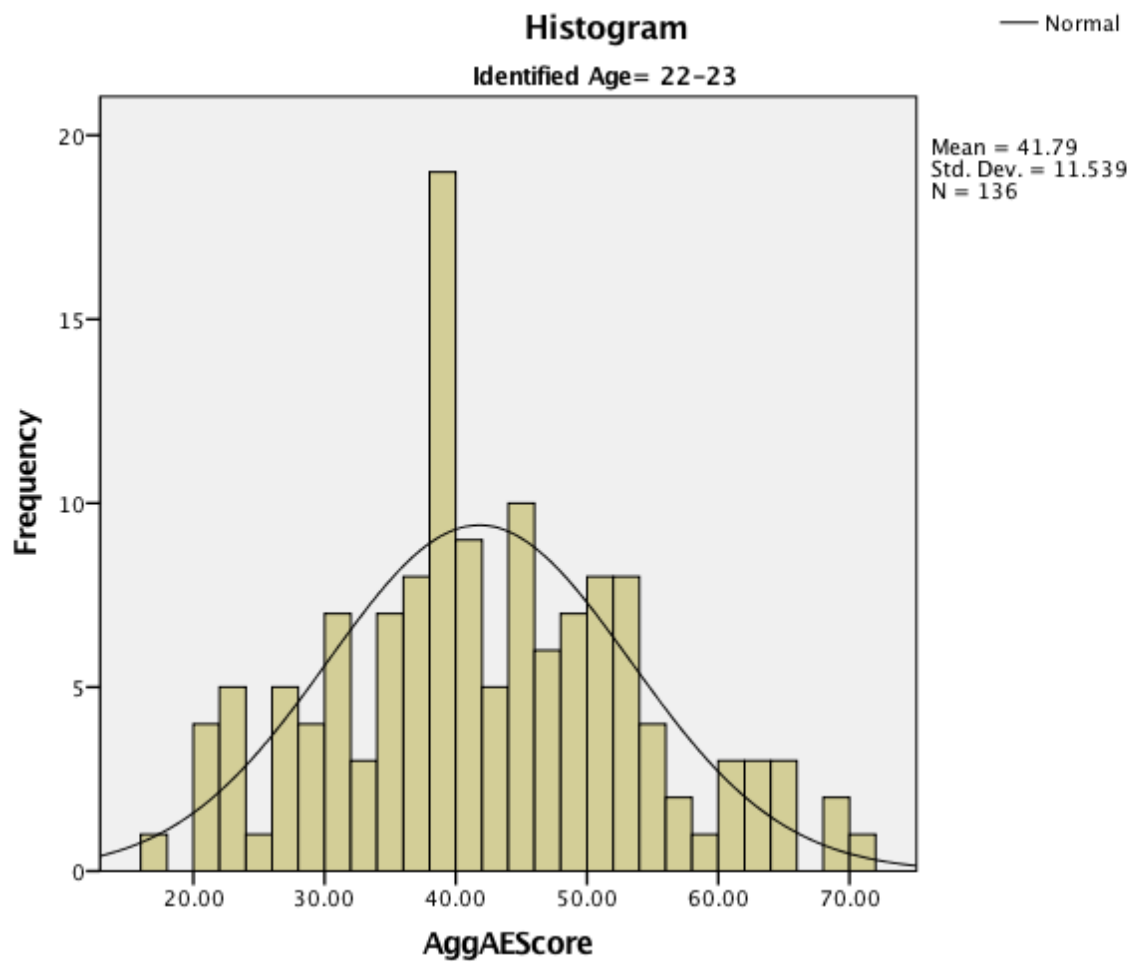


Figure 10: Mean AggAEScore Age 22-23 Fall 2019

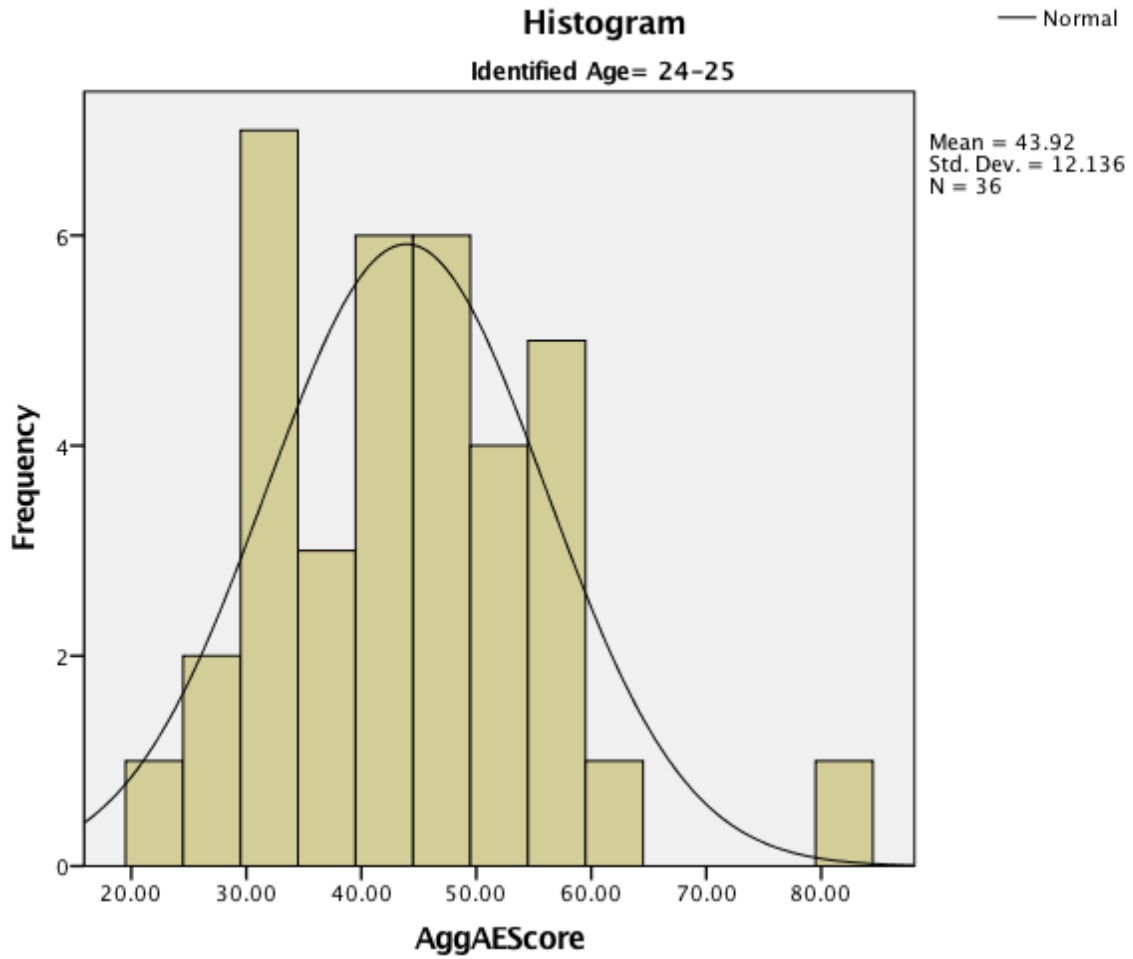


Figure 11: Mean AggAEScore Age 24-25 Fall 2019

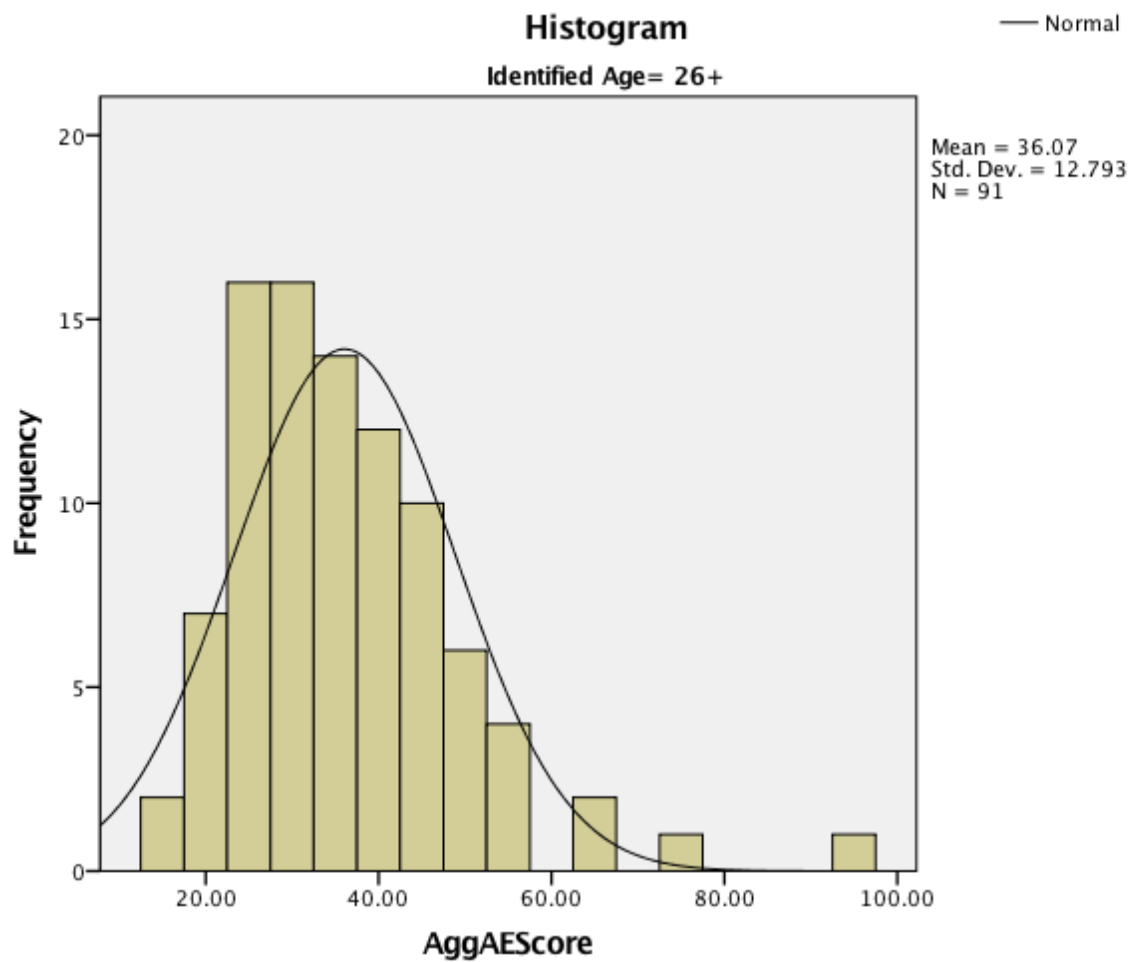


Figure 12: Mean AggAEScore Age 26+ Fall 2019.

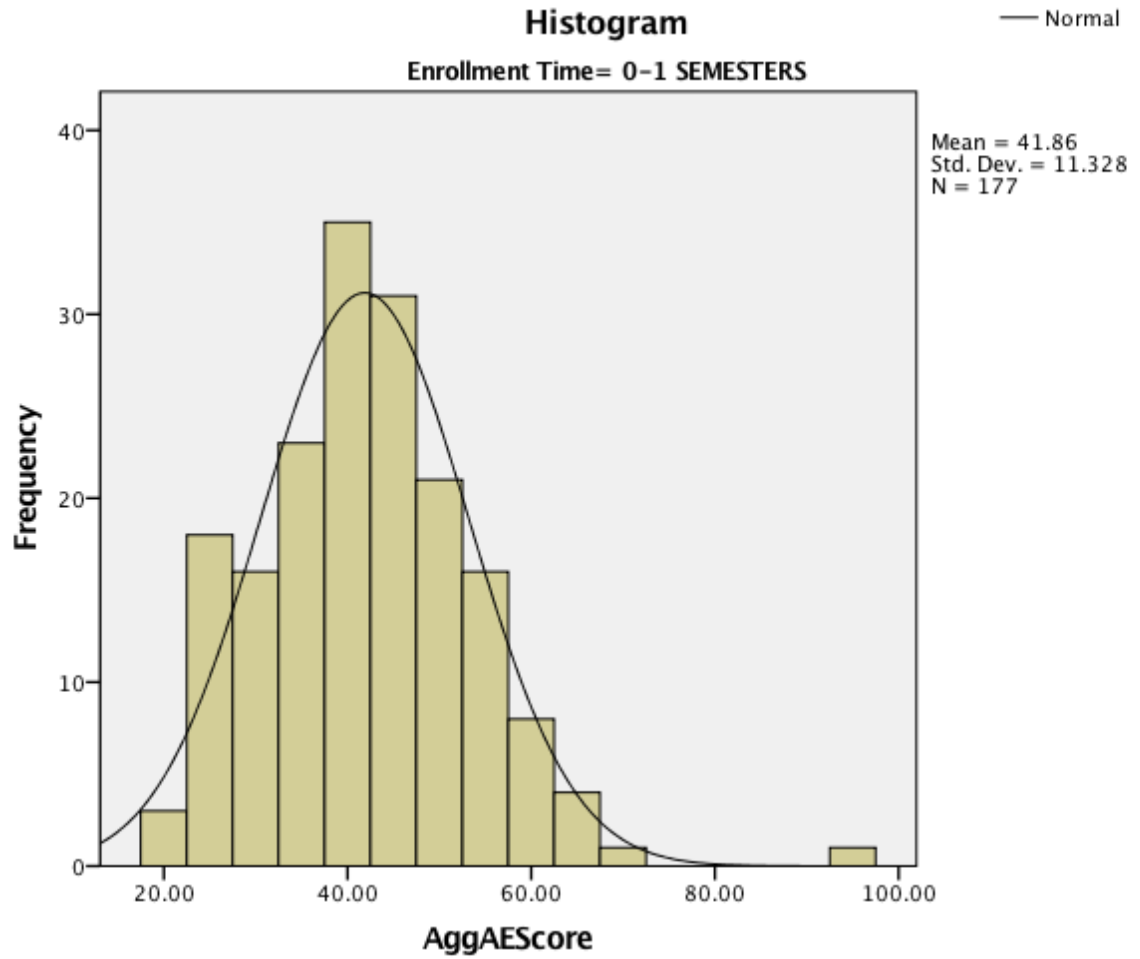


Figure 13: Mean AggAEScores enrollment 0-1 semesters Fall 2019

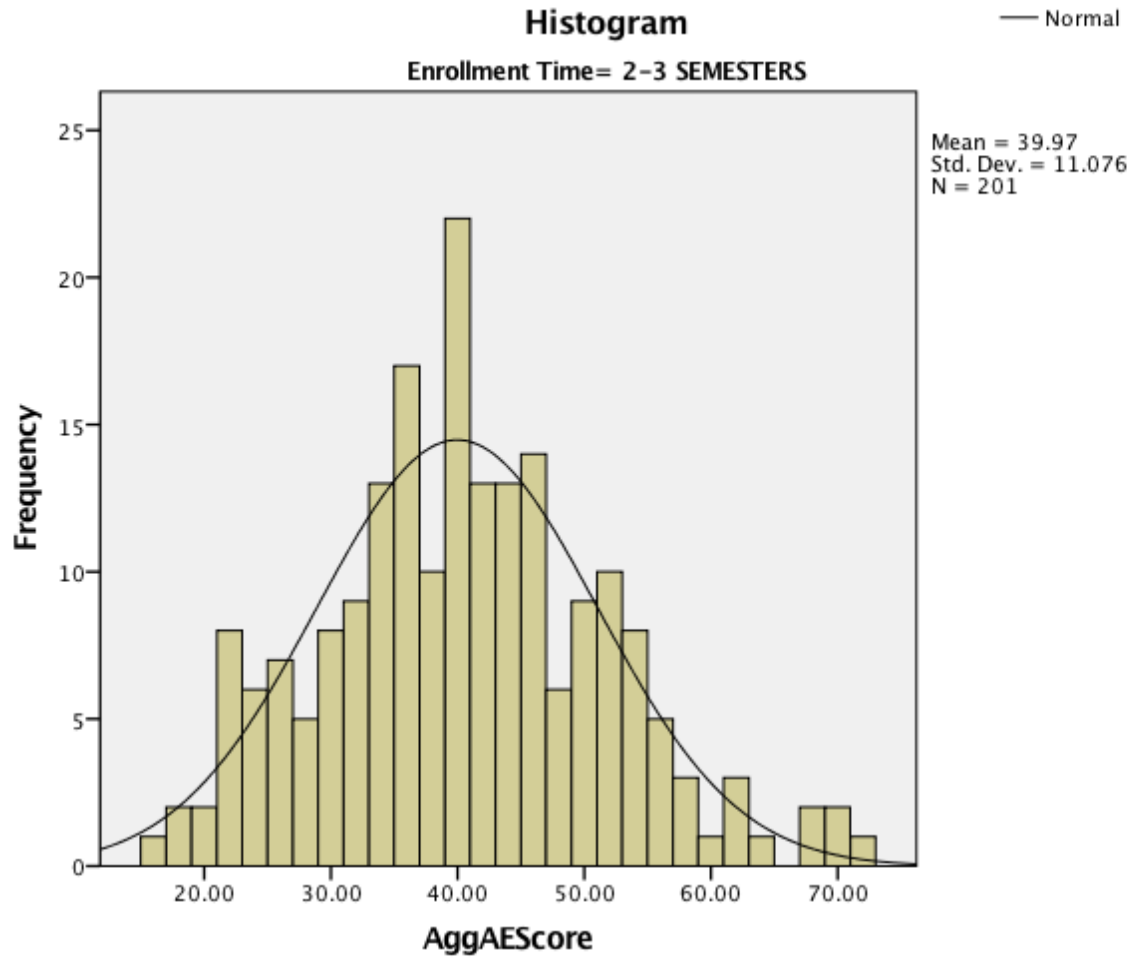


Figure 14: Mean AggAEScores enrollment 2-3 semesters Fall 2019

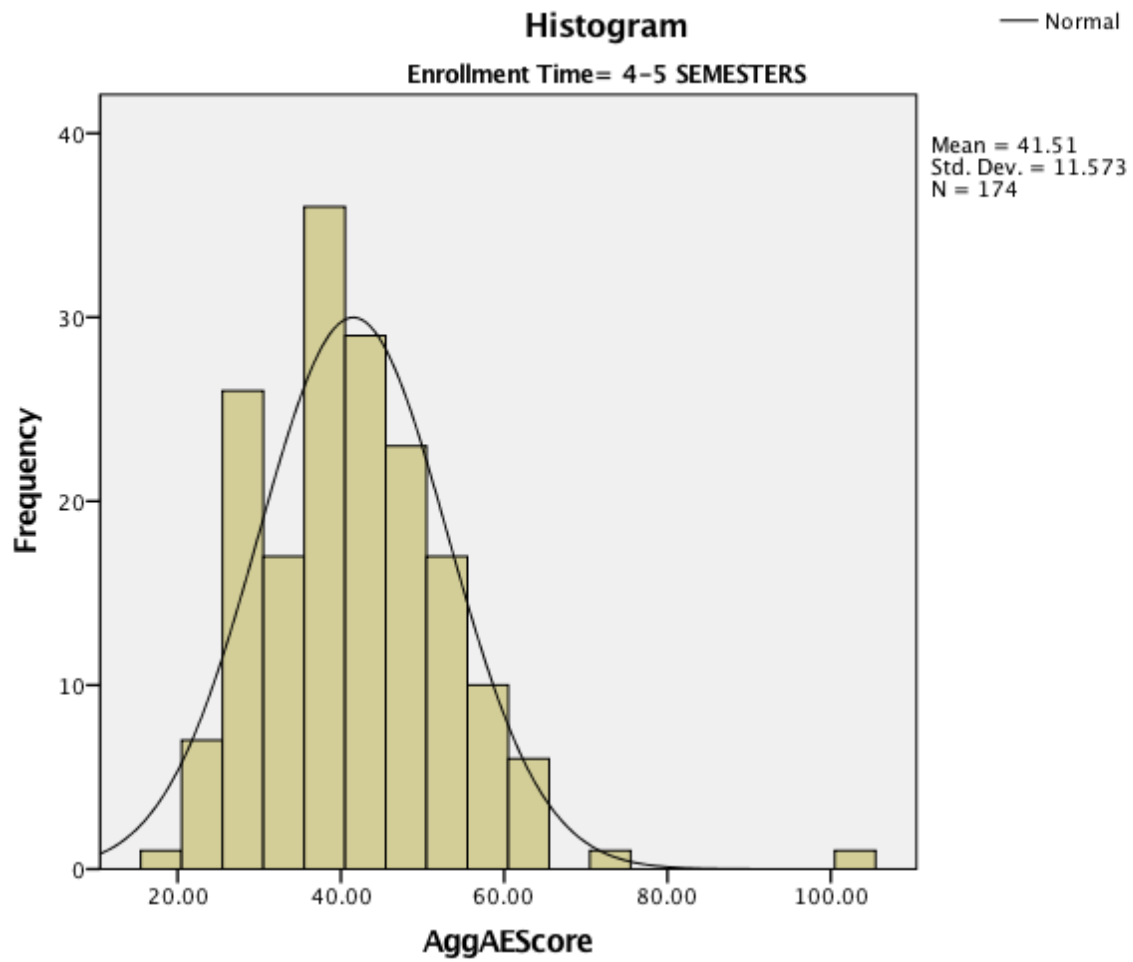


Figure 15: Mean AggAEScores enrollment 4-5 semesters Fall 2019

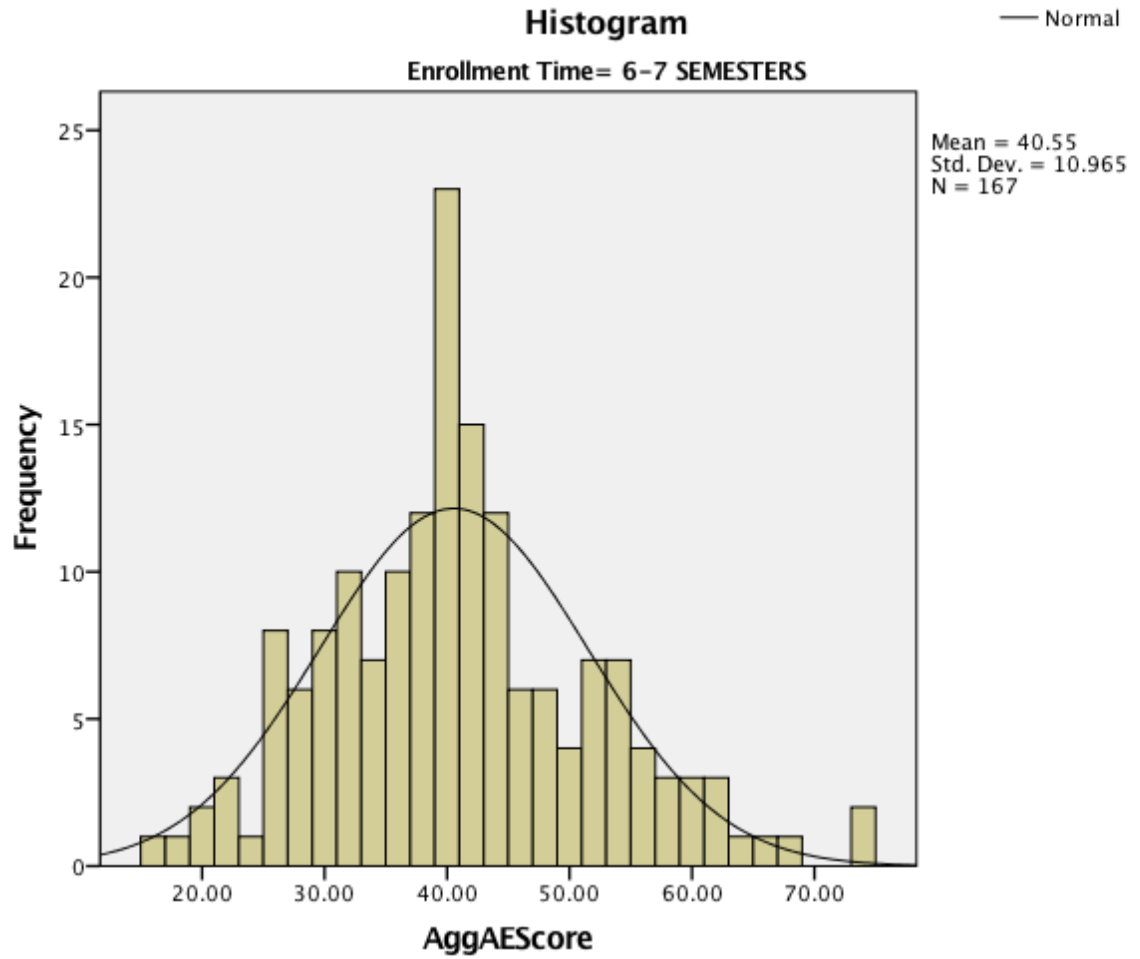


Figure 16: Mean AggAEScores enrollment 6-7 semesters Fall 2019

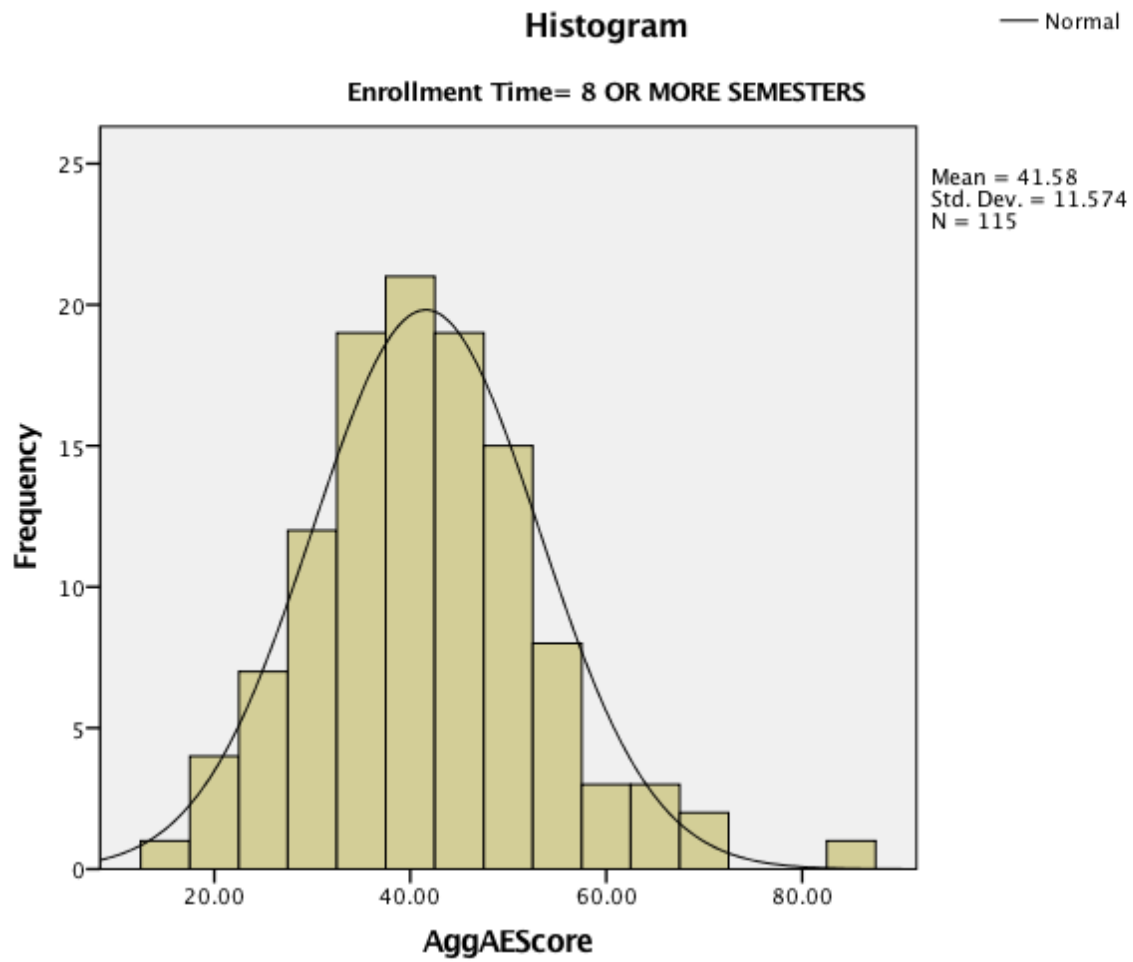


Figure 17: Mean AggAEScores enrollment 8+ semesters Fall 2019

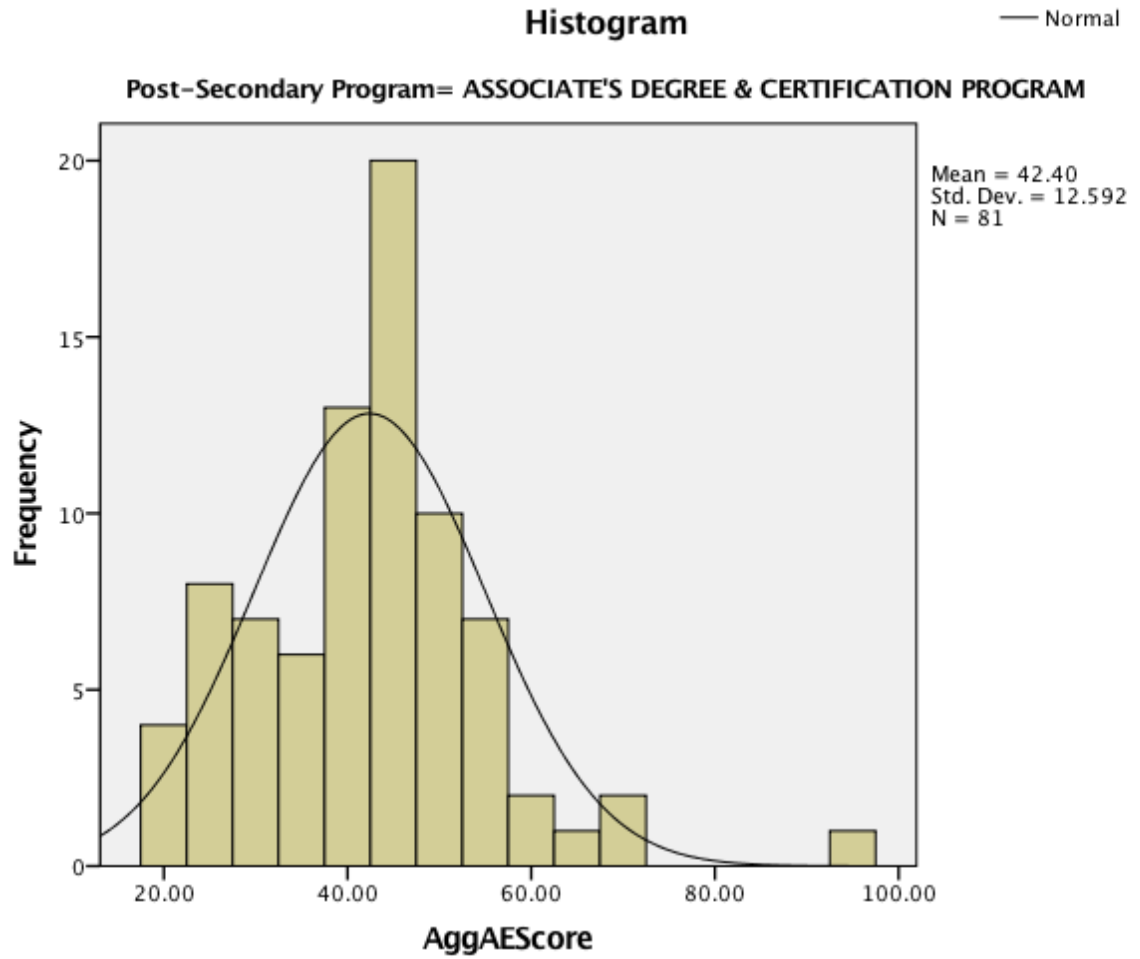


Figure 18: Mean AggAEScore Associate's degree & certification program Fall 2019

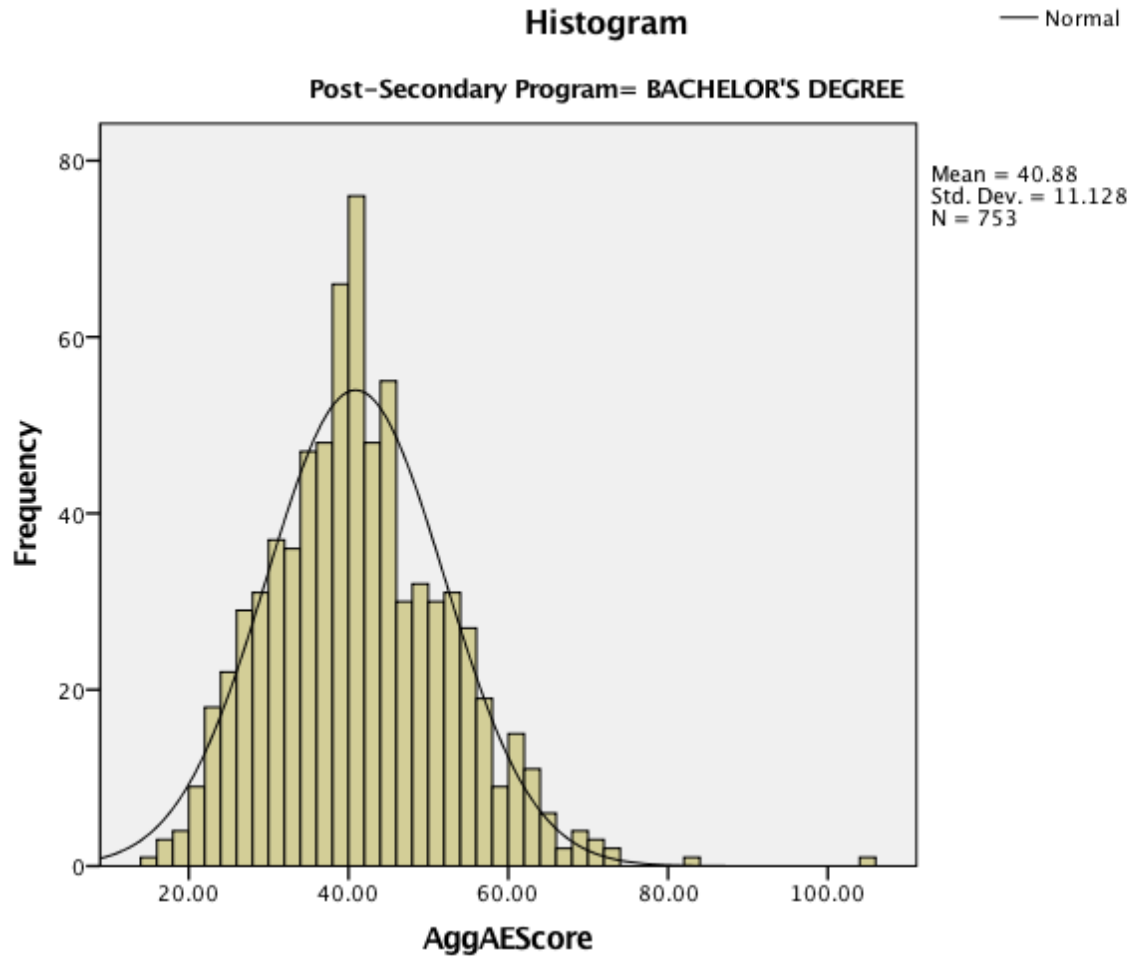


Figure 19: Mean AggAEScore Bachelor's degree Fall 2019

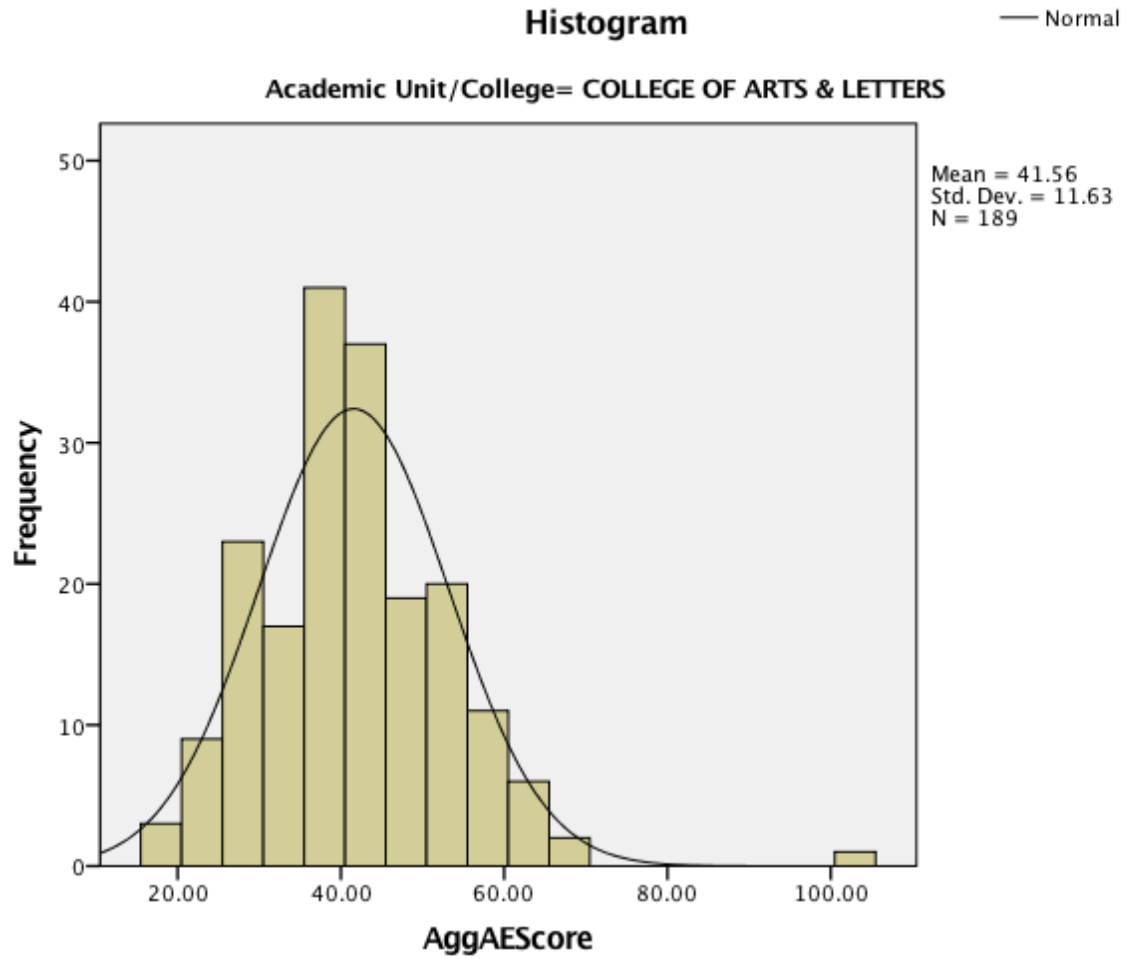


Figure 20: Mean AggAEScore College of Arts & Letters Fall 2019.

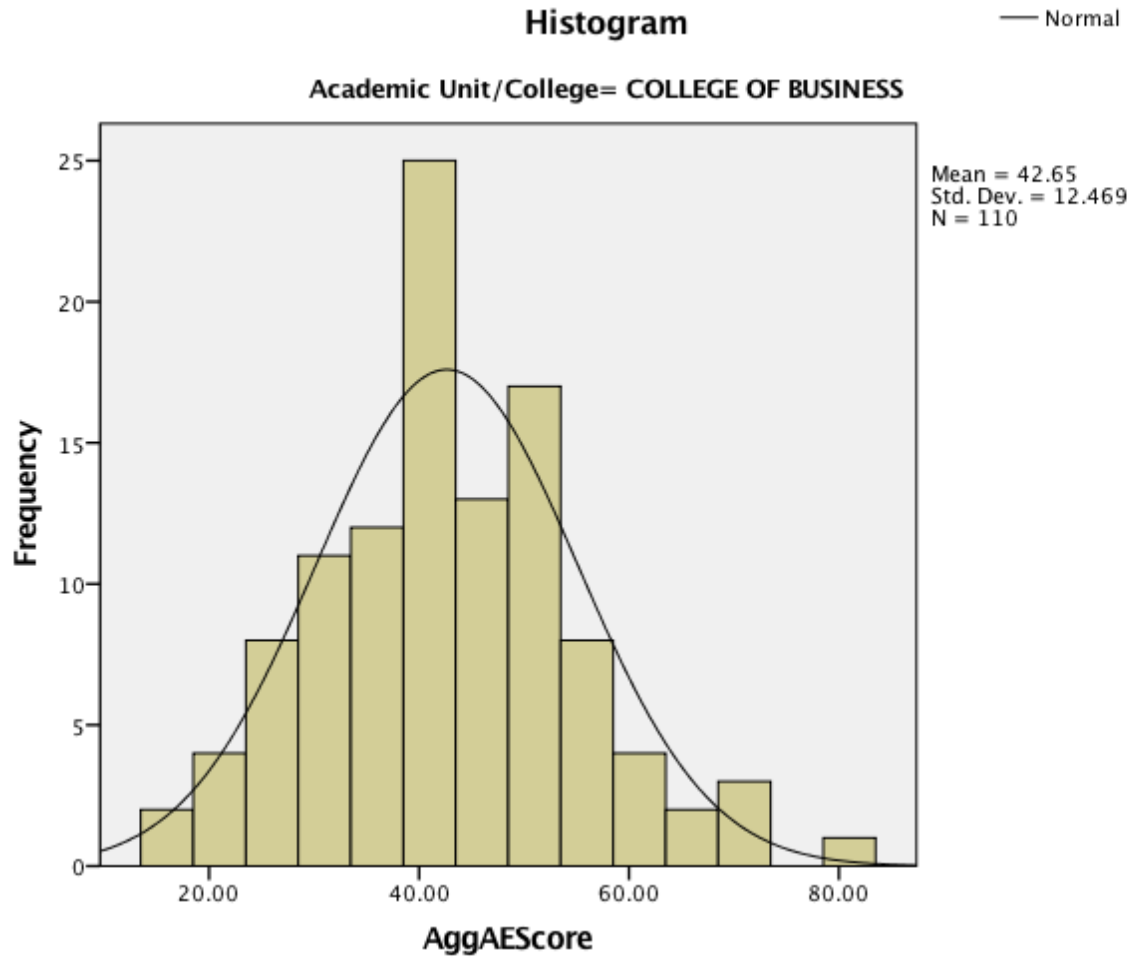


Figure 21: Mean AggAEScore College of Business Fall 2019.

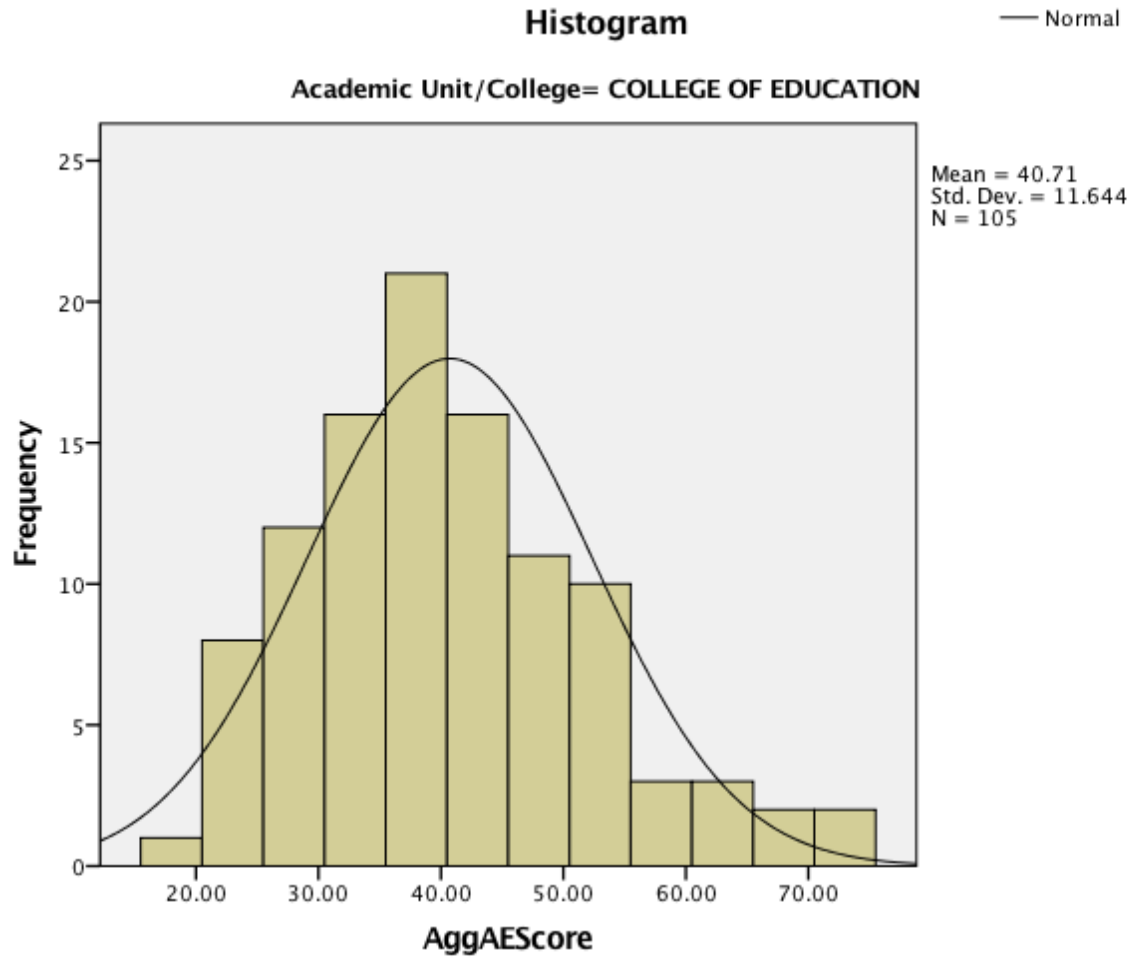


Figure 22: Mean AggAEScore College of Education Fall 2019.

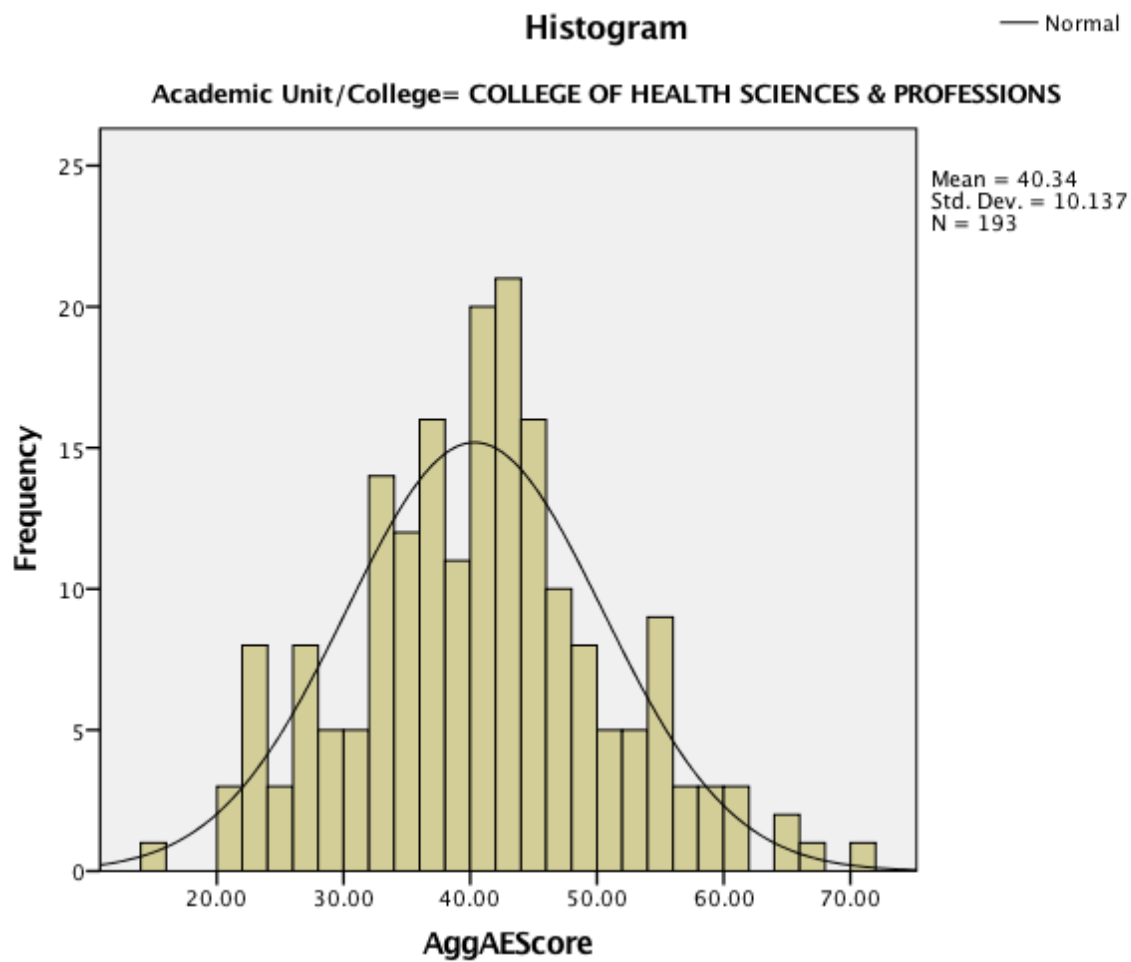


Figure 23: Mean AggAEScore College of Health Sciences & Professions Fall 2019.

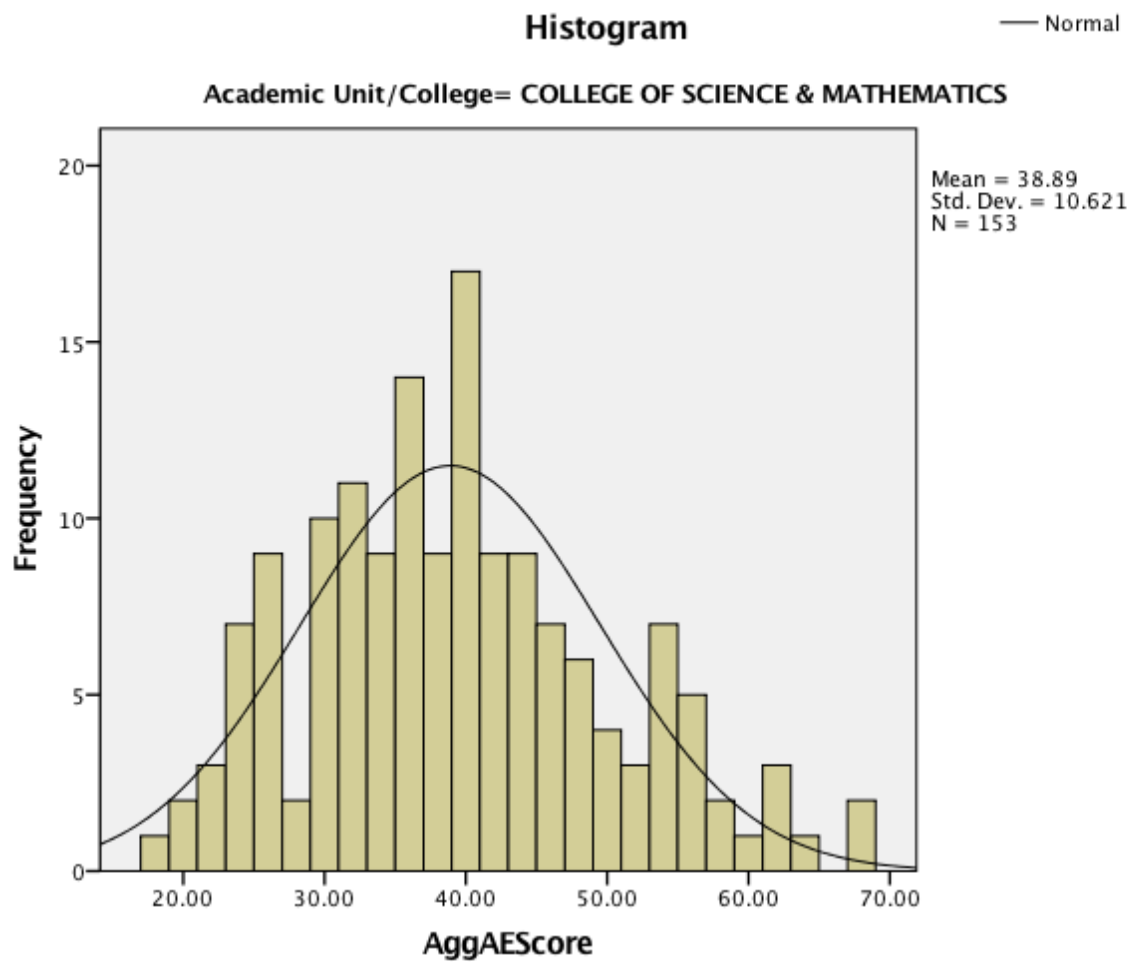


Figure 24: Mean AggAEScore College of Science & Mathematics Fall 2019.

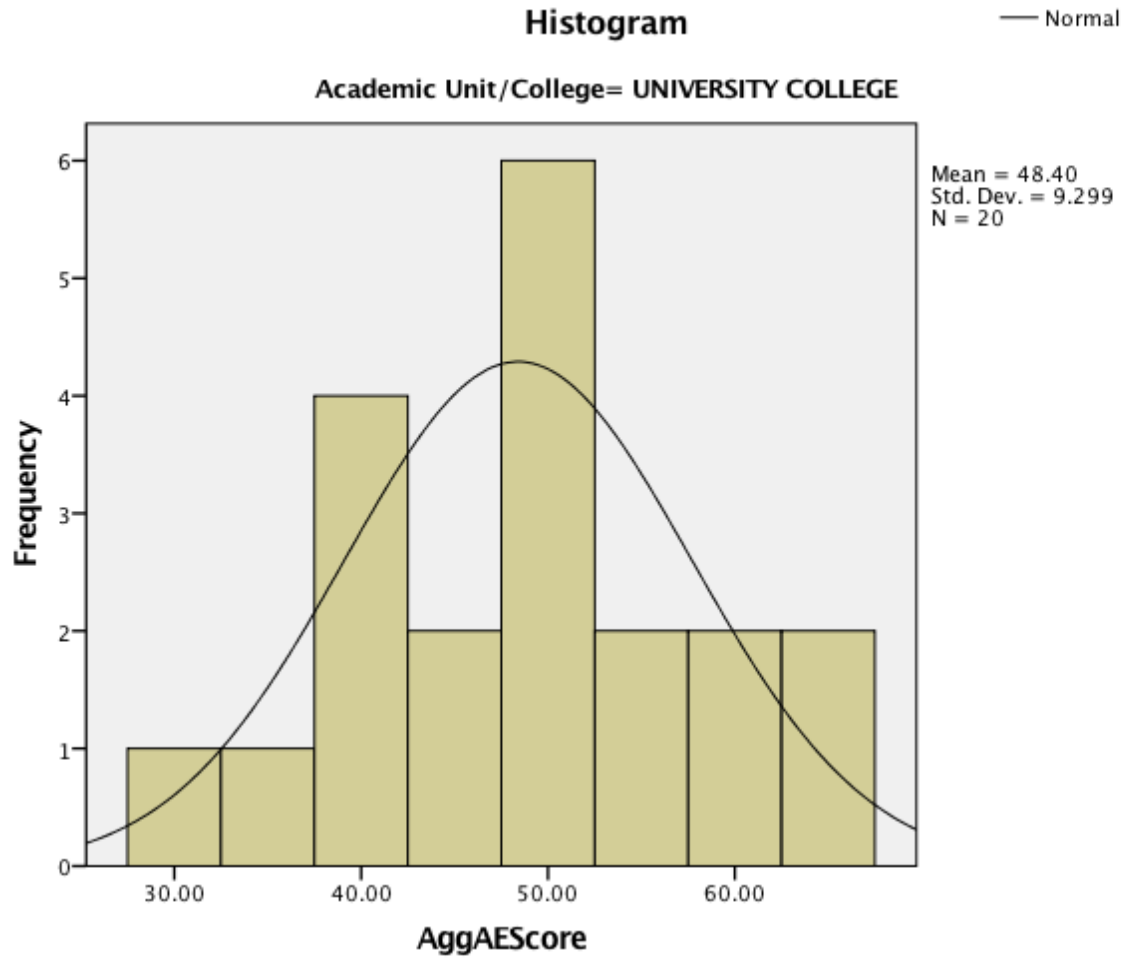


Figure 25: Mean AggAEScore University College Fall 2019.

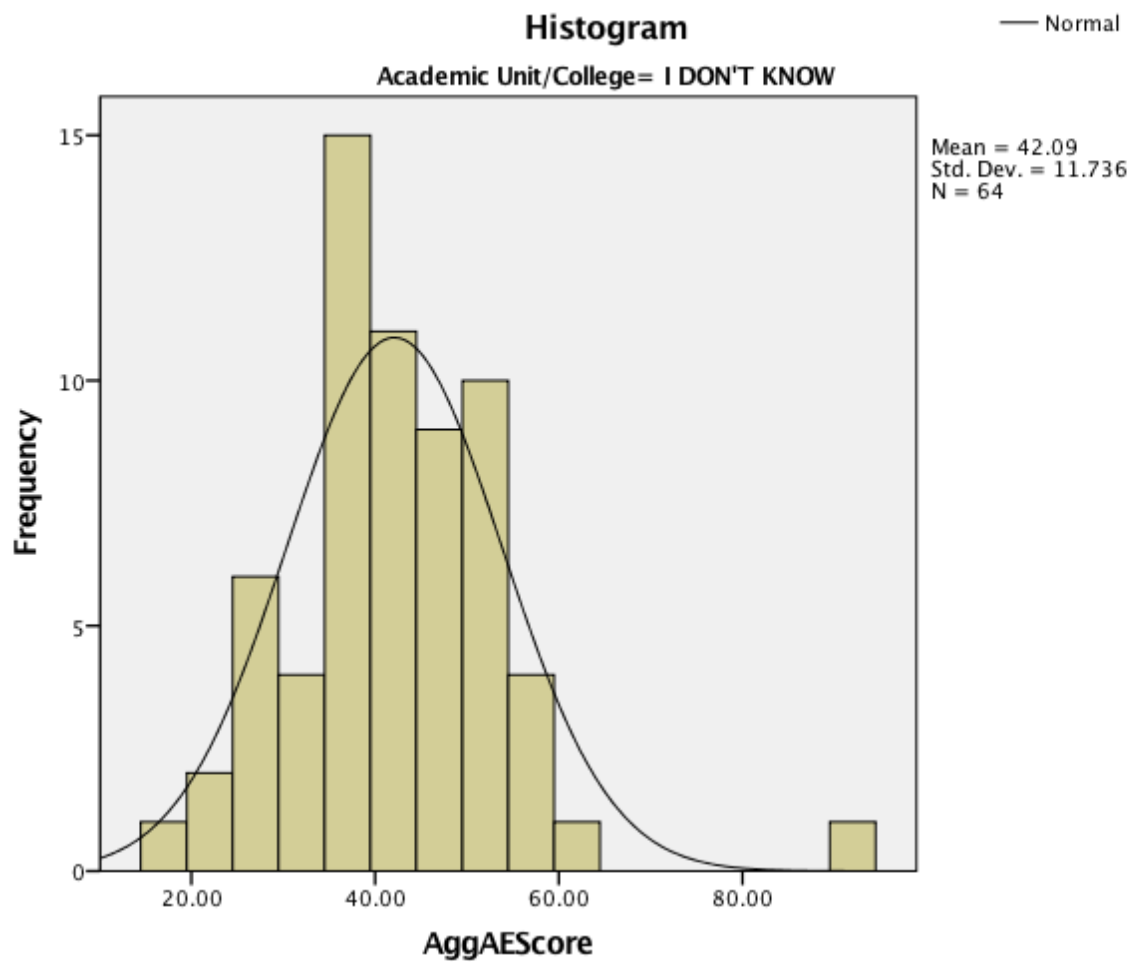


Figure 26: Mean AggAEScore Unknown College Fall 2019.