“But I Deserved an A”: Addressing Academic Entitlement Behaviors
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Academic Entitlement: “Tendency to possess an expectation of academic success without a sense of personal responsibility for achieving that success.” -Chowning and Campbell, 2009

Types of Academic Entitlement

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<th>Requesting a grade change/expecting a higher grade</th>
<th>Expecting a positive result regardless of one’s actions</th>
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<td>Asking for exception to university policies</td>
<td>Placing responsibility on external factors rather than on oneself</td>
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Addressing Academic Entitlement Behaviors

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<th>Address Student's Mindset</th>
<th>Support and Reassure Faculty</th>
<th>Give It Time</th>
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<td>● Determine the underlying concern</td>
<td>● “Just Say No”</td>
<td>● De-escalate the situation</td>
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<td>● Foster student's growth mindset</td>
<td>● Provide Perspective</td>
<td>● Check in with other parties</td>
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<td>● Reiterate importance of course policies</td>
<td>● Put it in writing</td>
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Case Study 1: Laura’s e-mails
You receive an e-mail before the start of spring semester from Professor Smith, who teaches Intro to Psychology. She said she is very concerned about Laura, a student with whom she’s been exchanging e-mails for several weeks since fall grades came out. She forwards you the e-mails.

December 27: Laura writes: "Dear Professor, I am seriously panicked about the grade I got in your class. I did well on the assignments. I thought I was going to get an A- and I am shocked that I received a B. I am a hardworking student and do not deserve a B in this class. I am begging you to reconsider and change my grade. It is important to my GPA and future prospects for graduate school."

January 3: Professor Smith responds: "I'm sorry you are disappointed with your grade. You can see how the grade was calculated here (see the attachment outlining the grade calculation). There’s nothing I can do to change your grade. This is not about how hardworking you are- and I’m sure you are. It's about total points earned throughout the semester."

January 8: Laura responds: "I seriously can’t live with this grade. I am having a panic attack. I went to every class. I think the TA's didn’t pass the attendance sheet around every time and I think this is bringing my grade down by a point. Please, please I am begging you to consider my request."

What factors (internal and/or external) might be playing a role in this student’s behavior?
How would you respond to the professor?
If you meet with the student, how would you approach this conversation?
Case Study 2: Mark’s Physics class

It is a few weeks until the end of the spring semester. Mark schedules a meeting with you; according to your office notes he's never met with anyone in Academic Services before. He said that his Physics professor told him yesterday that he is failing the course. He asks if he can drop it; you let him know that this is not possible as the deadline passed a month ago. You ask him what he has been struggling with in Physics. Mark becomes visibly upset and takes on a slightly aggressive tone when he tells that this course has been a “huge waste of time.” He says the professor doesn’t know how to teach the material and that because of this he misses questions on the exams. He says that he should be allowed to drop because he didn’t know how he was doing until after the deadline.

How many types of AE behaviors is Mark exhibiting? Which behaviors?
How would you approach the rest of your conversation with Mark?
What would your follow-up after the meeting look like?

Resources


