

Character Strengths and Academic Performance in Law Students

Margaret L. Kern ^{1,2} and Daniel S. Bowling, III ³

¹University of Melbourne, ²University of Pennsylvania, ³Duke Law School

Author Note

Margaret L. Kern, Melbourne Graduate School of Education, University of Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, and Department of Psychology, University of Pennsylvania; Daniel S. Bowling, III, Duke Law School.

The authors wish to acknowledge Gregory L. Riggs, former Associate Dean for Student Services and Community Engagement at Emory University School of Law, and David B. Jaffe, Associate Dean for Student Affairs at the American University Washington College of Law, for their leadership and support of this project. We also acknowledge Mike Eidle, University of Pennsylvania, for his help in data collection.

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Margaret L. Kern, 100 Leicester Street, Level 2, Melbourne Graduate School of Education, The University of Melbourne, Parkville, VIC 3010, Australia. Email: Margaret.Kern@unimelb.edu.au

Final accepted version, December 2014, *Journal of Research in Personality*. This paper is not the copy of record and may not exactly replicate the authoritative document published in the journal. The final article is available at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jrp.2014.12.003>

Abstract

We examined law student character and academic performance. Incoming students from Emory University ($N = 132$) and American University ($N = 164$) completed the Values in Action Character Strengths Inventory. Strengths were compared to a sample of U.S. lawyers ($N = 6,291$) and six other samples ($N = 135,814$). Law students demonstrated a normal range of characteristics, similar to other highly educated groups. Top strengths included judgment, curiosity, love of learning, and fairness. Strengths were positively related to undergraduate grades, but negatively related to LSAT scores and law school grades. Law school is the gateway to an important profession in our society; future research should examine the extent to which the structure of law school impacts student well-being and performance.

Keywords: Character strengths, Law school, Academic performance, Person-environment fit

Study Highlights

We examined character strengths in law students in relation to academic performance.

Law students' characteristics were comparable to other highly educated samples.

Strengths related negatively to law school grades.

The law school environment may not be conducive for using one's strengths.

1. Introduction

It is commonly assumed that lawyers are pessimistic, unhappy, and more prone to destructive addictions than other occupational groups (Daicoff, 1997; O'Grady, 2006). The roots of the unhappy lawyer narrative are old and deep, and the image of the socially maladapted lawyer, at home only when engaged in courtroom confrontation, is well entrenched in the public imagination and scholarly literature (e.g., Shiltz, 1999). A stereotypical image is that these negative tendencies are implanted in law school, where otherwise bright, ambitious, and optimistic college graduates develop a host of psychosocial ills, including high rates of depression and suicidal ideation, alcohol and drug abuse, and disabling stress (Benjamin, Kazniak, Sales, & Shanfield, 1986).

Early research lends support to this view. In a study of nearly 400 law students, those with a pessimistic explanatory style academically outperformed optimistic students (Satterfield, Monahan, & Seligman, 1997). Seligman and colleagues (2002) claimed that a pessimistic explanatory style is rewarded in law school and the profession as a whole, arguing that this pervasive, negative explanatory style is one of several reasons why lawyers are unhappy. No replication of this study has occurred, despite the authors' suggestion that such studies are needed. In this paper, we revisit lawyer personalities, focusing specifically on the character of law students.

Although character can be defined in different ways, we focus specifically on positive dispositions. The Values in Action (VIA) Classification of Character Strengths (VIA-IS) was created to measure 24 positive characteristics: appreciation of beauty, authenticity, bravery, creativity, curiosity, fairness, forgiveness, gratitude, hope, humor, kindness, leadership, love, love of learning, modesty, open-mindedness, persistence, perspective, prudence, self-regulation,

social intelligence, spirituality, teamwork, and zest (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). These virtues were chosen as they were seen as relatively universal, fulfilling to the individual, morally valued by individuals and societies, trait-like, measurable, and distinctive.

Numerous studies have been conducted on character strengths, suggesting that strengths are linked to better physical, mental, social, occupational, and functional outcomes (c.f. Niemiec, 2013). A growing number of studies suggest that using ones' signature strengths relates to higher well-being. For example, in one study with law students, those who purposely used their top strengths reported lower levels of depression and stress and increased life satisfaction (Peterson & Peterson, 2008).

In the current study, we investigated the character strengths of law students in relation to academic success. We measured the strengths of the entering classes of two relatively selective law schools and compared the strengths to other samples. As the law school environment is extremely demanding and focuses on objective applications of the law, we expected that these high achieving law students would score higher than other none-law samples in terms of conscientious/restraint-type strengths (e.g., prudence, perseverance, self-regulation, judgment), and lower on emotional strengths (e.g., creativity, love, spirituality). We then related the strengths to academic achievement, expecting that the highest achievers would report higher levels of strengths overall, and would be particularly high on restraint strengths, compared to lower achieving students.

2. Method

2.1. Measures

The Values in Action Inventory of Strengths (VIA-IS) is a 240-item self-reported test that identifies where a person falls along 24 different strengths (10 items per strength).¹ The measure has shown acceptable reliability and test-retest reliability, with growing support for its validity across diverse samples (Peterson & Park, 2009).

2.2. Participants

2.2.1. Emory University Law Students At the beginning of the fall 2010 semester, 132 incoming law students (64 females, 68 males) from Emory University completed the VIA Survey. On average, participants were 26 years old ($SD = 2.61$, range 22-37). Students had an average undergraduate GPA of 3.53 ($SD = .23$, range = 2.53-3.97) and LSAT scores of 165.61 ($SD = 4.13$, range = 150-176). VIA scores (i.e., composite scores for each of the 24 strengths) were compiled and matched by a third party to LSAT scores and undergraduate, first, and second year law school GPA.²

2.2.2. American University Law Students. At the beginning of the fall 2011 semester, 164 incoming law students (101 females, 63 males) from American University completed the VIA survey. On average, participants were 25 years old ($SD = 4.57$, range = 19-54). VIA scores were compiled and matched by a third party to first year law school GPA (first year fall and spring semesters, $n = 153$). Undergraduate GPA, LSAT scores, and second year GPA were not available.

2.2.3. Comparison Samples. For comparison, we included a sample of U.S. lawyers and six samples of non-lawyers. The U.S. lawyer sample was drawn from the Authentic Happiness

¹ The VIA measure is freely available with registration from www.viacharacter.org and www.authentichappiness.org. The law student samples reported here completed the measure through the Authentic Happiness website. There is now a shorter 120-item version, which was unavailable at the time of this study.

² Both first year fall and spring GPA were available ($n = 132$ and 131 , respectively). For the second year, only full year GPA was available ($n = 123$). Fall, spring, and second year GPA were highly correlated ($r_s = .68$ to $.75$) but separate (i.e., spring GPA does not include fall GPA; second year GPA does not include first year GPA).

website database. Between 2002 and 2012, 11,311 individuals completed the VIA measure and self-identified as lawyers. Of these, 58% were from the U.S. and 78% indicated having a graduate degree. We limited the sample to 6,219 individuals (2,553 males, 3,666 females) from the U.S. with a postgraduate degree. Exact age was unavailable, but over half (61.2%) was between 24 and 44 years old.

Several studies have examined strengths in various samples, and we compiled the means and rank ordered strengths from the tables of these studies, resulting in six additional comparison samples. Matthews et al. (2006) compared samples of West Point Cadets ($N = 103$), Norwegian Naval Academy Cadets ($N = 141$), and U.S. civilians age 18-21 ($N = 838$). Linley and colleagues (2007) examined strengths in 17,056 U.K. respondents. The largest study to date used data from the Authentic Happiness website database to examine strengths across the U.S. ($N = 83,576$) and 53 other nations ($N = 34,100$) (Park, Peterson, & Seligman, 2005).

2.3. Data Analyses

For the two law schools and the seven comparison samples, we rank ordered the strengths from highest to lowest, and calculated an overall mean strengths score. We compared the rank ordering, and used t -tests to compare the students with other samples. We then correlated the strength scores with first year law school GPA (fall and spring) and for Emory students, undergraduate GPA, LSAT scores, and first and second year GPA.

3. Results

3.1. Law Student Strengths

Table 1 summarizes mean values and rank ordered strengths for the Emory and American law students. On average, strengths were comparable across the two samples (overall mean strengths: $t(294) = 0.76, p = .45$). Scores were also similar for specific strengths, except

American students were higher in citizenship/ teamwork ($t(294) = 2.06, p = .04$). For both samples, four of the highest strengths were judgment, curiosity, love of learning, and fairness, and the lowest strengths were spirituality, appreciation of beauty, self-regulation, modesty, and forgiveness. Capacity for love ranked highly for Emory students, and kindness ranked highly for American students.

Males and females were fairly similar across the two samples (see Supplemental Table S1). Emory women scored higher than Emory men in appreciation of beauty, capacity for love, and spirituality, and lower in creativity. American women scored higher than American men in curiosity, gratitude, and kindness, and lower in creativity.

3.2 Law Students versus Other Samples

Table 1 also summarizes mean values and rank ordered strengths for the seven comparison samples. On average, U.S. lawyers were slightly lower than American students ($t(6,381) = 2.76, p = .006$), and were not significantly different than Emory students ($t(6,349) = 1.52, p = .06$). Similar to both student samples, for lawyers, judgment, curiosity, fairness, and love of learning were among the highest strengths, and lowest strengths were spirituality and modesty. Both student samples scored higher than lawyers in teamwork, hope, humor, perseverance, self-regulation, and zest, and lower in spirituality (see Supplemental Table S1).

Across strengths, law students were significantly higher than all other samples, except West Point Cadets ($t_{\text{Emory-Cadets}(233)} = -3.01, p = .003$; $t_{\text{American-Cadets}(265)} = -2.36, p = .02$). For the U.K. and U.S. general population samples, judgment, curiosity, love of learning, and fairness were among the top five strengths, similar to the law students, except student values were considerably higher. Love of learning, which ranked third for Emory students and fifth for American students, was ranked 21 for Royal Navy Recruits, West Point Cadets, and U.S.

civilians, and 15th across 53 countries worldwide. Across samples, modesty and spirituality were consistently two of the lowest strengths, and self-control was low, except in the two military samples. Appreciation of beauty, which was one of the lowest strengths for law students, was ranked much higher in the large-scale general population samples.

3.3. Character Strengths and Law School Performance

We then examined correlations between the individual character strengths and academic performance. The pattern of correlations between strengths and the academic outcomes, separate for men and women, is illustrated in Figure 1, and full correlations are in Supplemental Table S2). In the Emory sample, LSAT scores were negatively correlated with undergraduate GPA and positively correlated with law school GPA. Undergraduate GPA was positively correlated with law school GPA for women, but not for men. Only hope, perseverance, perspective, and social intelligence were related (inversely) to LSAT scores for males, whereas many of the strengths were related (inversely) to LSAT scores for females. Conversely, most of the strengths positively related to undergraduate GPA for males, whereas only fairness was related to undergraduate GPA for females. Law school GPA was significantly related (inversely) to citizenship/teamwork, fairness, honesty, hope, and judgment for males, and none of the strengths were significantly related to law school GPA for females. In the American sample, modesty was related to higher GPA for males, and spirituality was related to lower GPA for females.

3.4. Supplemental Analysis: Strength Factors

The individual strengths create 24 different calculations, and several of these could be significant by chance alone. The original theory classified the strengths into six categories (wisdom, courage, humanity, justice, temperance, and transcendence; Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Using exploratory or principle components factor analyses, various studies have

examined the factor structure of the 24 strengths and find three to five factors (c.f. Shryack, Steger, Krueger, & Kallie, 2010). Using a large (>400,000 persons) U.S. sample, McGrath (2014) found five dominant factors: social, emotional, restraint, theological, and intellectual. From the Big Five personality perspective, the social, restraint, theological, and intellectual factors relatively align with agreeableness, conscientiousness, extraversion, and intellect, respectively.

In the Emory and American samples, we calculated the mean factor scores for these five factors, and then examined correlations with the academic scores (see Supplemental Table S3). In both samples, the factors generally demonstrated acceptable reliability (Cronbach's alpha; Emory: social $\alpha = .79$, emotional $\alpha = .68$, restraint $\alpha = .82$, theological $\alpha = .75$, intellectual $\alpha = .65$; American: social $\alpha = .84$, emotional $\alpha = .84$, restraint $\alpha = .86$, theological $\alpha = .80$, intellectual $\alpha = .72$). In the Emory sample, for males, LSAT scores were negatively correlated with the emotional and restraint factors, whereas undergraduate GPA was positively correlated with the emotional, restraint, and theological factors. The restraint factor was negatively correlated with year 1 spring GPA, and the sociability factor was negatively correlated with year 2 GPA. For females, LSAT scores were negatively correlated with the sociability, emotional, restraint, and theological factors; none of the factors were correlated with undergraduate or law school GPA. In the American sample, none of the strengths were significantly correlated with law school GPA, for either males or females.

4. Discussion

In this study, we examined the character strengths of incoming law students in comparison to lawyers and other groups, and examined associations between those strengths and law school performance, as indicated by grade point average (GPA). Overall, law students

demonstrated a normal range of characteristics, similar to other intelligent, highly educated samples. The most dominant strengths for both law students and lawyers included judgment, curiosity, fairness, and love of learning. To the extent that reported character strengths were significantly related to grades, correlations were negative, for both characteristics normally associated with lawyers (critical thinking and persistence) and interpersonal strengths. This suggests that personality, in the form of character strengths, has less effect on success as a law student than generally believed.

Notably, compared to U.S. lawyers, students self-reported significantly higher levels of zest, hope, perseverance, and self-regulation. The students completed the VIA strengths questionnaire at the beginning of their law school program. It is possible that the enthusiasm associated with the beginning of a new chapter in life influenced their self-reports. Alternatively, supporting the pessimistic view often held of lawyers (e.g., Benjamin et al., 1986), such differences could reflect positive characteristics that are lost through the difficulties of law school and law practice. Given that using one's strengths relates to positive outcomes in life and at work (see Niemiec, 2013), an important question for future research is the extent to which the structure of law school might prevent the use of character strengths, and the potential implications this may have for student well-being and performance (Peterson & Peterson, 2008).

Although many of the strengths were positively related to undergraduate GPA, they were negatively related to law school GPA. This could be due to a selection-distortion effect (see Srivastava, 2014). Most law schools, including Emory and American, use a combination of undergraduate GPA and LSAT scores for admission decisions. The American Bar Association's accreditation guidelines permit little variance in admission policies at schools, particularly with regard to the LSAT. The LSAT measures logical and analytical reasoning, as do typical first year

exams (Shultz & Zedeck, 2011). While logical and analytical reasoning are certainly important to an undergraduate, they are not as predictive of undergraduate grades as other traits and behaviors, such as Big Five conscientiousness (Poropat, 2007). Several studies have shown that performance on the LSAT is a better predictor of first year law school grades than undergraduate GPA (e.g., Stilwell, Dalessandro, & Reese, 2011). Similarly, in the Emory sample, LSAT scores and undergraduate GPA were inversely correlated, and LSAT scores were a stronger predictor than undergraduate GPA of law school GPA. It is entirely possible that a sub-group of hard working students within our sample earned good undergraduate grades and admission to law school despite relatively weaker LSAT scores, yet were at a competitive disadvantage during the first year of law school against students who excelled on the LSAT. The extent to which a selection-distortion effect explains the pattern of correlations, and implications for ultimate law school success, is an intriguing area for further exploration in the future.

Although the two schools generally showed a similar pattern of correlations for fall and spring GPA, the strengths of correlations differed. Differences might capture characteristics of the schools themselves. Unfortunately, LSAT scores and undergraduate GPA were unavailable for the American sample, so the full pattern of results could not be replicated. We do believe the schools provide a decent representation of the first year law school experience for most law students. While both schools are in the upper half of common ranking systems, neither is so highly ranked as to be a statistical outlier. Like most law schools throughout the ranking hierarchy, the schools rely heavily upon a combination of LSAT scores and undergraduate grades, and have similar first year curriculum and teaching methods.

We acknowledge that character was measured only through the VIA Survey, which may not be the most appropriate vehicle for assessing law student personality. Daicoff (1997), for

example, found more distinctive differences in lawyer personality using the Myers-Briggs. The VIA is a self-report instrument, with all of the limitations involved in self-report measures. Further, although these results were longitudinal in nature and academic scores were objectively measured, GPA is a limited indicator of success. Additional markers of success, such as job placement, awards, and career success, both in law school and after graduation, may be more informative. Research with other personality measures and other modes of assessment will be valuable in the future to delineate true associations between character, personality, and achievement.

Our study suggests that the supposed presence of a “lawyer personality” – and by extension a predisposition to depression and/or other psychosocial ills – might be overstated. However, more studies are needed. There is little empirical examination of the mental and emotional well-being of law students, but anecdotal and survey evidence of law student psychosocial struggles abounds. Given that yet law school is the gateway to a profession of profound importance in our society, the extent to which we can learn more about how lawyers are trained, whether that training affects future lawyers in negative ways, and if so, how training can be improved without damaging academic outcomes, will be of great social utility.

References

- Benjamin, G. A. H., Kazniak, A., Sales, B., & Shanfield, S. B. (1986). The role of legal education in producing in producing psychological distress among law students and lawyers. *American Bar Foundation Research Journal*, *37*, 225-252.
- Daicoff, S. (1997). Lawyer, know thyself: A review of empirical research on attorney attributes bearing on professionalism. *American University Law Review*, *46*, 1337-1427.
- Linley, P. A., Maltby, J., Wood, A. M., Joseph, S., Harrington, S., Peterson, C., Park, N., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2007). Character strengths in the United Kingdom: The VIA inventory of strengths. *Personality and Individual Differences*, *43*, 341-351.
- Matthews, M. D., Eid, J., Kelly, D., Bailey, J. K. S., & Peterson, C. (2006). Character strengths and virtues of developing military leaders: An international comparison. *Military Psychology*, *18*, S57-S68.
- McGrath, R. E. (2014). Scale- and item-level factor analysis of the VIA Inventory of Strengths. *Assessment*, *21*, 4-14.
- Niemic, R. (2013). What the research says about character strengths. *VIA Institute on Character*. Retrieved from www.viacharacter.org/www/en-us/research/summaries.aspx
- O'Grady, C. (2006). Cognitive optimism and professional pessimism in the large-firm practice of law: The optimistic associate. *Law & Psychology Review*, *30*, 23-56.
- Park, N., Peterson, C., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2006). Character strengths in fifty-four nations and the fifty US states. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, *1*, 118-129.
- Peterson, C., & Park, N. (2009). Classifying and measuring strengths of character. In S. J. Lopez & C. R. Snyder (Eds.), *Oxford handbook of positive psychology*, 2nd edition (pp. 25-33). New York: Oxford University Press.

LAWYERS AND CHARACTER STRENGTHS

Peterson, C., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2004). *Character strengths and virtues: A handbook and classification*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Peterson, T. D., & Peterson, E. W. (2008). Stemming the tide of law student depression: What law schools need to learn from the science of positive psychology. *Yale Journal of Health Policy, Law, and Ethics*, 9.

Poropat, A. E. (2009). A meta-analysis of the five-factor model of personality and academic performance. *Psychological Bulletin*, 135, 322-338.

Satterfield, J. M., Monahan, J., & Seligman, M. E. P. (1997). Law school performance predicted by explanatory style. *Behavioral Sciences and the Law*, 15, 95-105.

Seligman, M. E. P., Verkuil, P., & Kang, T. (2002). Why lawyers are so unhappy. *Cardozo Law Journal*, 23, 33-53.

Shiltz, P. (1999). On being a happy, healthy, and ethical member of an unhappy, unhealthy, and unethical profession. *Vanderbilt Law Review*, 52, 871.

Shryack, Steger, Krueger, & Kallie, 2010.

Shultz, M.M., & Zedeck, S. (2011). Predicting lawyer effectiveness: Broadening the basis for law school admission decisions. *Law and Social Inquiry*, 36, 620-661.

Srivastava, S. (2014). The selection-distortion effect: How selection changes correlations in surprising ways [blog]. Retrieved from <http://hardsci.wordpress.com/2014/08/04/the-selection-distortion-effect-how-selection-changes-correlations-in-surprising-ways/>

Stilwell, L. A., Dalessandro, S. P., & Reese, L. M. (2011). Predictive validity of the LSAT: A national summary of the 2009 and 2010 correlation studies. *Technical Report of the LSAC 11-02*. Retrieved from <http://www.lsac.org/lisacresources/research/all/tr/tr-11-02>

Table 1*VIA strength mean values and ranks across samples*

	Emory students		American students		U.S. Lawyers		UK sample		Royal Naval Recruits		West point cadets		U.S. civilians		53 countries		U.S. general sample	
	#	M	#	M	#	M	#	M	#	M	#	M	#	M	#	M	#	M
Judgment, open-mindedness	1	4.28	1	4.20	1	4.23	1	3.93	10	3.69	9	3.99	5	3.88	5	3.91	1	3.96
Curiosity, interest in the world	2	4.03	2	4.13	2	4.08	3	3.87	2	3.85	5	4.02	6	3.86	8	3.86	2	3.95
Love of learning	3	4.00	5	4.00	3	4.06	4	3.84	21	3.23	21	3.54	21	3.49	15	3.67	4	3.94
Capacity to love and be loved	4	3.97	10	3.91	6	3.88	7	3.70	7	3.76	11	3.97	3	3.98	6	3.87	9	3.78
Fairness, equity, justice	4	3.97	3	4.03	4	3.96	2	3.91	5	3.78	9	3.99	8	3.85	2	3.98	2	3.95
Humor, playfulness	6	3.95	8	3.95	10	3.79	9	3.66	5	3.78	7	4.00	2	4.00	6	3.87	14	3.66
Perspective wisdom	7	3.93	7	3.97	8	3.87	13	3.62	12	3.66	14	3.93	9	3.82	11	3.74	11	3.73
Kindness, generosity	8	3.92	4	4.02	9	3.86	5	3.82	2	3.85	7	4.00	1	4.06	1	3.99	6	3.84
Gratitude	9	3.91	10	3.91	6	3.88	14	3.57	19	3.43	12	3.95	6	3.86	4	3.94	10	3.74
Honesty, authenticity, genuine	9	3.91	6	3.99	5	3.95	6	3.78	1	3.89	1	4.12	3	3.98	2	3.98	5	3.85
Industry, perseverance	11	3.88	12	3.85	12	3.73	18	3.41	7	3.76	2	4.09	17	3.64	19	3.59	18	3.52
Hope, optimism	12	3.85	12	3.85	19	3.57	20	3.34	4	3.82	3	4.05	12	3.76	18	3.61	18	3.52
Social intelligence	12	3.85	9	3.92	10	3.79	11	3.64	11	3.68	12	3.95	10	3.81	11	3.74	13	3.67
Zest, enthusiasm, energy	14	3.75	16	3.75	21	3.52	19	3.37	14	3.60	19	3.64	18	3.60	21	3.48	20	3.51
Citizenship, teamwork, loyalty	15	3.71	14	3.83	16	3.62	17	3.52	9	3.74	5	4.02	11	3.78	14	3.68	16	3.59
Leadership	15	3.71	14	3.83	14	3.68	10	3.65	16	3.54	16	3.86	13	3.73	13	3.71	12	3.68
Creativity, originality	17	3.69	18	3.65	13	3.72	8	3.69	15	3.56	18	3.77	14	3.70	10	3.75	8	3.79
Caution, prudence, discretion	18	3.68	19	3.59	19	3.57	21	3.30	20	3.31	22	3.52	22	3.40	22	3.47	21	3.43
Bravery, valor	19	3.67	16	3.75	14	3.68	15	3.54	13	3.65	3	4.05	16	3.66	15	3.67	15	3.63
Self-control, self-regulation	20	3.51	22	3.47	22	3.33	23	3.18	16	3.54	17	3.80	24	3.31	24	3.27	23	3.31
Forgiveness, mercy	21	3.48	20	3.52	18	3.58	15	3.54	18	3.52	23	3.45	20	3.50	17	3.65	17	3.58
Appreciation of beauty	22	3.44	21	3.51	17	3.61	11	3.64	23	3.00	24	3.42	15	3.67	9	3.76	7	3.81
Modesty, humility	23	3.23	23	3.24	22	3.33	22	3.23	22	3.20	19	3.64	23	3.34	23	3.46	22	3.32
Spirituality, sense of purpose	24	3.11	24	3.11	24	3.28	24	2.87	24	2.75	15	3.89	19	3.54	20	3.55	24	3.28
N		132		164		6219		17056		141		103		838		83576		34100
Overall mean strengths score		3.77		3.79		3.73		3.57		3.57		3.86		3.72		3.72		3.67
Standard deviation		0.26		0.27		0.24		0.26		0.29		0.21		0.21		0.19		0.21
Minimum		3.11		3.11		3.28		2.87		2.75		3.42		3.31		3.27		3.28
Maximum		4.28		4.20		4.23		3.93		3.89		4.12		4.06		3.99		3.96

Note. # = rank order from highest to lowest.

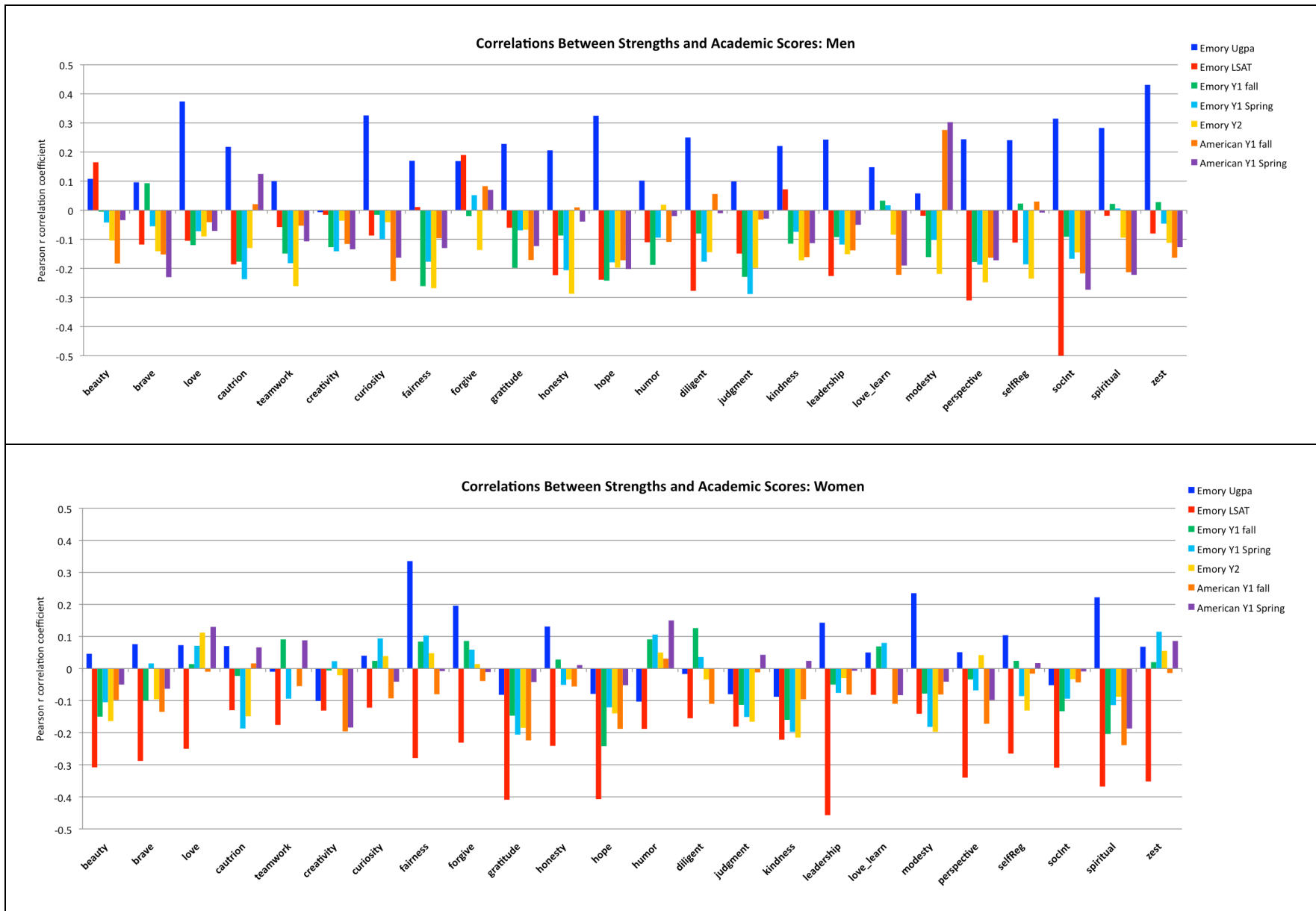


Figure 1. Correlations (Pearson r correlation coefficients) between strengths and academic outcomes for Emory and American students, for men (top) and women (bottom). Ugpa = undergraduate GPA, LSAT = LSAT scores, Y1 fall = year 1 law school GPA, fall semester, Y2 spring = year 1 law school GPA spring semester, Y2 = year 2 law school GPA (combined fall and spring semesters).