Academic faculty in the health sciences face many professional challenges due to the competing demands of teaching, scholarship, and clinical duties. Successful achievement of these ongoing professional expectations requires the capacity to persevere when stress levels rise. The ability to manage challenging workloads and endure stress requires resilience, while the ability to sustain interest and effort towards professional goals demands grit.

The purpose of the study was to analyze differences in faculty resilience and grit as impacted by perceived stress and intrinsic personality traits, and determine how character strengths can mediate these effects.

Character strengths were used as predictor variables for faculty resilience and grit as well as a mediator variable for the impact of perceived stress on resilience/ grit.

Twenty faculty were interviewed at a midwestern medical college for approximately thirty minutes about sources of stress that impacted their levels of resilience and grit. Compelling literature created a need for 20 short MCW faculty interviews which yielded sources of stress [Fig 1]:

- Neuroticism
- Extraversion
- Conscientiousness
- Stress
- Zest
- Perseverance
- Excellence
- Leadership
- Perspective
- Love

Character strengths mediated the effects of stress (but not personality) on resilience and grit [Fig 3].

- The relation of stress and grit was mediated by the character strength of perseverance.
- The relation of stress and resilience was mediated by the character strength of zest.

The external stressors on faculty resilience and grit are mediated (compensated) by character strengths, in particular perseverance and zest.

Intrinsic qualities of faculty traits of personality would impact resilience and grit, in particular conscientiousness, extraversion, and neuroticism. However, personality could not be mediated by any character strengths.

Personality effects on other psychological outcomes such as empathy have been mediated by emotional intelligence, so perhaps that might be examined for resilience and grit in subsequent analysis.