

Dear PROFESSOR,

It has been a great semester with you in Elementary Statistic this spring. I really appreciate your effort in teaching this course. This effort can be seen through your prepared materials for each class and review session. In my opinion, you have given clear and thorough lectures together with helpful assignments that improve my understanding of the course's content. However, I find the unannounced quiz stressful, discouraging, and punitive. I think the quiz practice can be reconsidered to make it improves the students' understanding of the material better, encourages participation in students, and makes the course more enjoyable.

First of all, I want to discuss the shortcomings of that I noticed. One of the advantages of having pop quizzes in a course is higher attendance. Many studies have proved this. This is because the students would not want to lose some percentage of their grades without being present and try to do the quiz. However, this seems to be an advantage is actually doing the opposite. A recent study by Victoria Frisch shows this contradictory. She conducted an experimental study over a period of seven weeks between two sections of her course. The study aims to determine if pop quizzes rise the students' performance on midterm exams better than announced quizzes would. One section is given pop quizzes and the other is given announced quiz. As part of the study, she also collects the data of the attendance between two sections. The result, however, contradicts her hypothesis which is based on an earlier study that the risk of a pop quiz would encourage the students to come to class. It shows that the section with higher attendance was the one that is given announced quiz. Therefore, the unannounced quiz is increasing attendance but it's not doing this job as well as we expected, specifically not as well as announced quiz does. From this study, I can see the same pattern in our class. Even though there is a risk of losing grade of a pop quiz, the class attendance still drops as the class goes on in the

semester. After considering that students might have dropped the class, I can still see students who attend classes after the dropping deadline which means they did not drop the course miss classes afterward. Also, it's noticeable that you hardly give pop quizzes in two consecutive classes so there have been a significant number of missing spots in the class on the day right after a pop quiz is given. This behavior in the students is also observed by Victoria Frisch in her study. Hence, I find that although pop quiz enhances attendance as shown in earlier studies, it's losing this advantage because the students are making their way around it for skipping classes as seen in our class and a recent study.

In addition, studies have shown that pop quizzes encourage students to do more reading and revision before class. However, I find announced quiz can do a better job than unannounced quiz in improving students' performance. Both announced and unannounced quiz enhances the attendance overall. Although the physical presence and intellectual involvement are not always working in pair, being in class either voluntary or forced lower the failure rate of the students. This is shown in the study conducted by Evelyn Derera. The overall module pass rate increases by 20% with the administration of unannounced quizzes. In contrast, a study conducted by Leemarc Alia last year presents a different perspective on this rate. Her study examines the students' performance in three modes of quizzes: unannounced, announced, and immediate. It stays true that unannounced quiz lowers the rate of failure to only 22.92%. However, the rate of passing is very high which is 60.42%. This means that the percentage for better performance is very low including 12.50% for satisfactory, 4.17% for good, and 0% for better performances. On the other hand, this study shows that announced quiz both keeps the failure rate lower and improves the performance of the students. In specific, the failure rate is 4.17%, the class pass rate is 37.50%, the satisfactory rate is 39.58%, the good rate is 16.67%, and the very good rate is

2.08%. This confirms my opinion that unannounced quiz is not improving the students' performance genuinely. Instead, it is just keeping the students' performance good enough according to the course requirements. On the other hand, I find announced quiz is more helpful because it gives me the chance to study before the examination. Also, I will feel motivated to study for my own good instead of studying because I'm scared of losing points. This is also what Maryellen Weimer, a renowned professor in the teaching field, acknowledge in one of her article about improving quizzes. She shares that more students have done the reading and prepared before class because of the quizzes. This behavior is not the "daily preparation motivated by understanding" which enhances learning by having interaction with the course's content regularly. Hence, the knowledge reinforcement by a better-designed quiz can be more long-lasting which can lead to better performance overall.

Going back the nature of unannounced quiz, I find it quite punitive. It seems to be commonly known that pop quiz is a tool for faculty to keep students to come to class. Personally, I find it's helpful to come to class to listen to the lectures which clarify the concepts. The lecture is actually the source that I learned most of my knowledge from. However, as I mentioned above, physical presence and intellectual involvement do not always take place together. Since knowledge is straightforward, I can do the reading and still have a good understanding. I find it's unfair for me that even though I study and understand the material well, I can still lose points if I do not come to class both unexcused or excused. This can be the case for other students too. While the pop quiz is a good measure to encourage students who are required to take the class and go to class involuntarily, the pop quiz can be punitive for students who are in the major and work hard on the course's material on daily basis.

Reflecting on our talk, I find some details worth mentioning. First of all, the class is required as a core curriculum for the majority of the students which make the students reluctantly go to class. However, attendance is not much of your concern, rather it's a requirement as stated in the department's policy. That lessens the necessity of the pop quiz as one of its main advantages is to raise class attendance. Also, as I mentioned above physical presence and intellectual involvement do not always take place at the same time, being forced to come to class will further discourage them from being involved in the class. This also results in another consequent that can be accounted for the students' performance. After your pop quiz is given, the number of students who actually go to class drop drastically. I noticed that it can be just half of the class be presented. If the students are not genuinely motivated, they will not come to class or if they come to class, they will just be a presence but do no actual learning. Considering that you believe that the course material is necessary for the students and can be applied regularly outside of the classroom, the pop quiz is not motivating the students to study for their own good.

Besides, it's well proven that pop quiz makes the students study more regularly which is what you believe to help the student learn more from the class. I agree with this point because I do study more often for the class under the pressure of the pop quiz. However, the students are learning more but their performance on the second exams drop which show in the decrease from 72 to 62 on average. I aware that some of the students are bringing the grades down, then your quiz practice is not helping these students specifically which show that your practice is not generally applicable for a normal size class of 28 students. This might be the reason why the students find it hard to keep up in the class and the number of students that dropped your class which accounts for 30% of the number of students in your class initially. In my opinion, the quiz

practice should treat the class as a whole and it's failing to raise the class performance, specifically, the exam score.

Another idea that we talked about is learning from failure. I think this is also a good idea. I appreciate that you make the students learn from their failure which is quite effective and give us the chance to earn back grades through the extra credit. I enjoy this method. However, I find it quite discouraging for the students at first. Also, since the quiz questions are conceptual, it helps in understanding the material content better but also not directly helping the students in their exams. A study by Azolosa Julian suggested that his quiz practice enhances the reading among students but there is no difference in the performance between the students who are quizzed on lecture's material and the students who are quizzed on textbook's materials. Hence, he proposed that quizzes may have helped the students improve their performance through practice. This might be something you want to consider. The student might do better in their exam if they got the chance to practice more during quizzes.

All in all, I find that your quiz practice has both advantages and disadvantages. The advantages include higher attendance, low failure rate, and more consistent studying. On the other hand, it also causes selected attendance (drop the class and drop attendance drastically after a quiz is given), stress, and not improving the students' overall knowledge. It is not necessary if you are using it as an attendance record. It can be replaced by a signup sheet or roll call. I also find announced quiz can urge students to study more thoroughly because they would plan and have more time to study. Besides, perfect attendance is not easy and not necessary because the material can be studied from the textbook and homework. In the case that the students miss a couple of classes, they risk losing their point even if they studied. I find this discouraging and not academically constructive. As a result, I think you can reconstruct the quiz practice in various

ways. In Maryellen article for designing better quizzes, she demonstrates an example of a professor who named his pop quiz "extra credit". This approach enhances student involvement by changing the perspective of the students. She also suggests quiz strategy that has a combination of activities before, during, and after class can. However, as a student, I cannot give you good advice about reconstructing your quiz. Instead, as Maryellen considered in her studies, each faculty need to do their own analysis for each class. There are multiple details that need to take into consideration: type of quizzes, type of questions, the relationship between quiz questions and exam questions, how often quizzes are given, and what are the students' feedback. As I mentioned above, after considering different studies, I find announced quiz a better measure. However, redesigning your pop quiz is also another choice. I hope you can consider my feedback and make the studying experience for the students less stressful and more helpful.

As a student in the class, my individual feedback is not representative but worth considering. Thank you for your time. I have included the studies and articles that I have done my research with below. Please let me know if you have any question or feedback.

Sincerely,

STUDENT 2

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