



Stringent Attendance Polices Are Associated with Increased Class Attendance and Better Performance

What is this Research About?

Studies suggest that class attendance and participation is associated with improved student learning. Class absenteeism can be the product of many factors including the availability of online lectures, employment, boredom, illness, or competing demands such a social life or other coursework. In this study, the researchers explored the relationship between stringency of attendance and participation polices and their effect on student attendance and class performance.

What did the Researchers Do?

The researchers collected data from nine different undergraduate courses taught at a large urban college between 2010 and 2015. Eight of the courses were taught face-to-face and involved 1-2 in-class lectures a week. The ninth course was taught virtually and involved interactive weekly discussions. The researchers reviewed the attendance/participation policies for each course and coded the stringency of the policy as either a Stringent Attendance/Participation Policy, Moderate Attendance/Participation Policy or Gentle Attendance/Participation Policy.

What did the Researchers Find?

The researchers found that graded attendance polices were positively correlated with attendance rate. In addition, the study concluded that the more stringent the attendance polices were, the more likely students were to attend class. Students in classes with stringent or moderate attendance polices were less likely to receive D or F grades than students in classes with gentle attendance polices. Not surprisingly, the researchers also found that students with more absences had lower final grades.

SoTL

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➔ How to Implement this Research in Your Classroom

This study indicated that implementing a graded and stringent attendance policy, students feel more motivated to attend class. Instructors can implement this research in classrooms by clearly stating an appropriately stringent graded attendance and participation policy in the course syllabus to encourage students to come to class. Gentle or no attendance polices may lead students to find excuses to skip class, resulting in lower course grades. Implementing stringent graded attendance policies can serve as a source of motivation for students and make them responsible for their course outcome.

➔ Citation

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➔ Keywords

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