COP 3502 Spring 2017 Attendance Results

I started taking attendance on paper during lecture just for curiosity's sake for the last seven lectures. I never told the students what that attendance would count for and never announced outside of class that I was doing it, but everyone who came to class knew that I was keeping track and logging who was coming and who wasn't. I tracked this attendance during the last 7 class sessions and don't have lecture attendance data for the first 21 or so class sessions.

I broke my students into four categories based on the attendance data for the last 7 lectures:

Group 1: The "started coming" group - these are students who didn't come the first day I took attendance (surprise day), but came at least 4 times out of the last 5.

Group 2: The "always coming" group - these are students who came to all 7 of the last lectures, including the first day I took attendance when they had no way of knowing I was going to do so.

Group 3: The "rarely coming" group - these are students who came 3 or fewer days out of the last 7 days

Group 0: Everyone who doesn't fit into any of the categories above. I suspect that these are the "really good" attendance students, who missed at least one of the last seven days, but was there on my surprise attendance day.

Here are the course averages broken down by these four groups:

Group	Exam 1 Avg	Exam 2 Avg	Final Exam Avg	Course Avg
2	52%	70%	65%	65%
0	53%	68%	59%	61%
1	44%	63%	58%	58%
3	42%	57%	41%	44%

As we can see here, there is a clear correlation between coming to class and grades. In fact, between the two extremes (always coming and never coming), there's a 24% difference in final exam performance and 19% difference in overall course percentage. These are huge differences. Coming because you were motivated to by the attendance sheet (group 1) in this light yielded benefit for this group. Notice that the differences between groups 1 and 3 for exam #1 and exam #2 were relatively small, but spiked to be much, much higher for the final exam and the course average. **_So, the moral of the story is that all is not lost. If you improve your attendance towards the end of a course, you can improve your course grade._** While this group scored 7% lower than those who always attended and 3% lower than those who consistently attended but not all the time, they did 14% better in the course than those who never attended. Group 0 shows up where you'd expect them to: technically, it's probably the case the group 0 attended the first part of the class in a similar fashion to group 2, but that their attendance towards the end of class waned. They are near equal to group 2 on exams #1 and #2, but fell 6% on the final exam, and 4% in course average. **_So, the takeaway from looking at this group is that skipping classes (even just 1 or 2) in the last few weeks can lower your course grade by close to 4%._**