

Ungrading in AVS 101: Introduction to Animal Science

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Course Background

Course Name: AVS 101: Introduction to Animal Science *Majors section*

Course Description: LEC: (3 crs.) Animal industry's role in world and national economy; inheritance, growth, physiology, nutrition, and diseases of domestic animals and poultry; geographic distribution and marketing of animal products. (Lec. 3/Online)

Fall 2021 Enrollment: 103

Fall 2021 Teaching Format: Blended

Grade Breakdown: Exams (50 pts each; two in class and one final exam; 30% total) plus other “low stakes” assignments (reading questions, reflections and quizzes) as well as a scientific literacy project.

Course Goals: 1). Help students learn and retain information being taught so they can apply it in future courses. 2) Ensure that exams are part of the learning process/a tool rather than a penalty or a source of anxiety /stress.

Course Change

Intervention Developed:

Allowed students to regrade exams:

- Students were allowed to regrade regardless of score and could receive full credit
- Incorrect answers were marked with a star and highlighted instead of using an “x”.

Exam Regrading Policy:

- Hand in by a set due date
- Students were required to indicate the correct answer and a short justification

Results

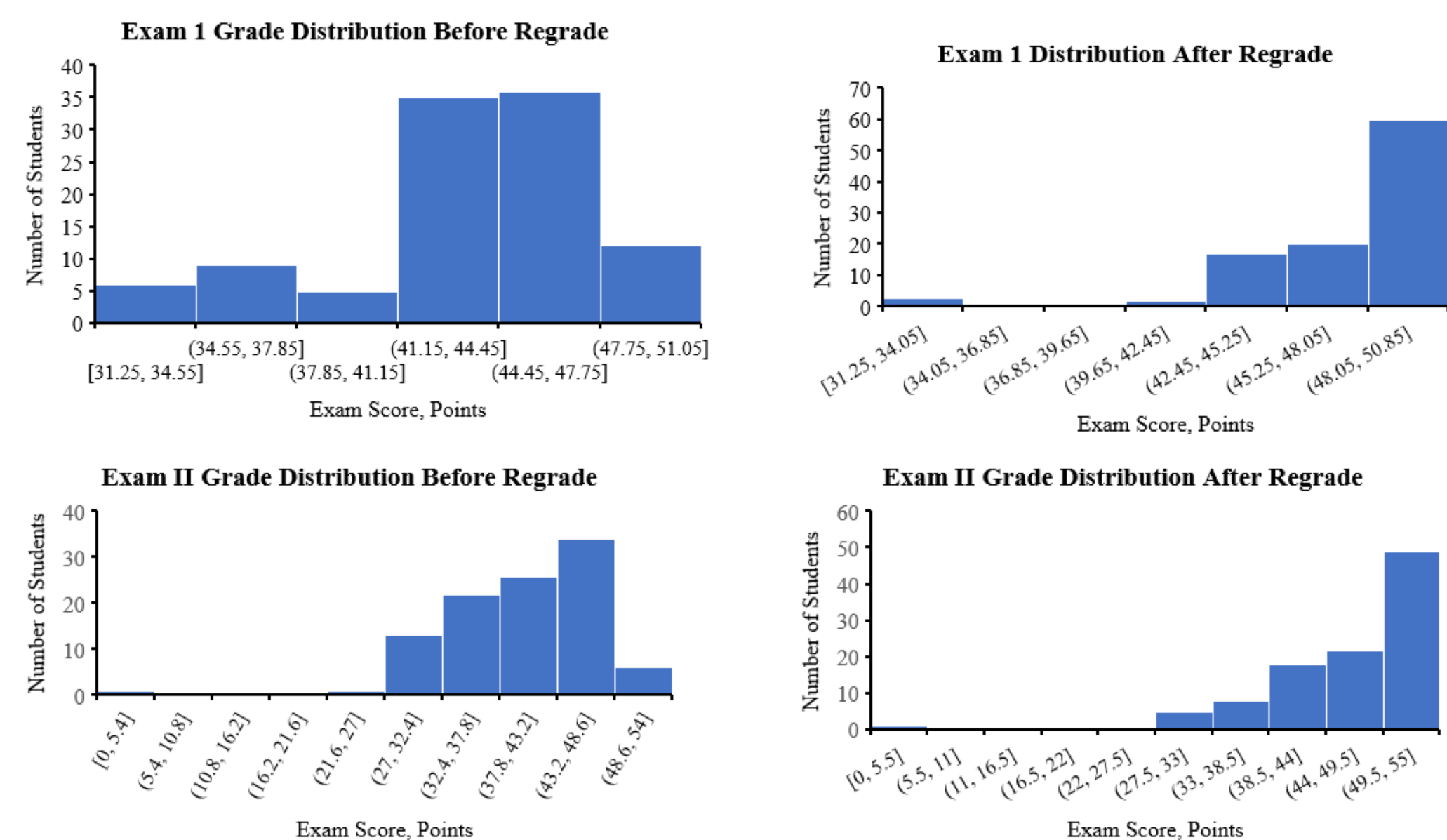


Figure 1: Graphical representation of student grade distribution before regrades (A and C) and after (B and D).

Exam score is presented in points earned out of 50.

Student Feedback:

"What I have enjoyed most about this class is how it is aimed at getting students to learn the material with less emphasis on grades making it a lot less stressful. More specifically, we were encouraged to learn all we could on different topics when it came to an exam but were not nearly as stressed out as we would be for other classes as we could always submit corrections that made us learn even more than we would have from what we got wrong."

"I would like to thank you for taking a more open approach to this class and grading and especially for making the tests retakable. I found that I was much less stressed while studying and learning material than in other classes, but as this class has my favorite content I feel like I still learned a lot."

"Personally, I enjoyed how you mark questions on exams with an asterisk when the right answer is not selected instead of marking it as incorrect. It changed my perspective of how I should view my exams and it genuinely made me feel cared about as a student. It made it known to me that you want us to learn and do well"

Results

Student Feedback Continued:

"I feel like I gained a lot of knowledge on all of the subjects because of the class being focused more on understanding the lessons and not memorizing everything. The fact that we can make up all the exams creates less stress and helps me focus on just understanding the material"

"I also like how you let us learn from our mistakes on our exams by letting us correct them. It's really beneficial in my opinion, and I'm able to grasp the material more because of it. I learned more than I was expecting"

Table 1:

	Exam I	Exam II
# of RG students ¹	61	62
# of NRG students ²	42	41
Overall exam average before regrade ³	86%	80%
Overall exam average after regrade ⁴	94%	92%
NRG student average ⁵	90%	80.6%
RG student average before regrade ⁶	84%	80%
RG student average after regrade ⁷	98%	98%
Delta, pts ⁸	7	9

¹RG: Regrade ; ²NRG: No Regrade; ³⁻⁷ data are presented as percent of total points received. Exams were out of 50 points. ⁸Average number of points earned back by regrading

Conclusion

This intervention is effective at building confidence, reduces academic related stress and increases learning opportunities.