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THE (MILLENNIAL) TIMES, THEY ARE A'CHANGIN': UNDERSTANDING GEN Z'S EXPECTATIONS IN THE CLASSROOM

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THE (MILLENNIAL) TIMES, THEY ARE A'CHANGIN': UNDERSTANDING GEN Z'S EXPECTATIONS IN THE CLASSROOM

DISSERTATION

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the College of Communication and Information at the University of Kentucky

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ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

THE (MILLENNIAL) TIMES, THEY ARE A'CHANGIN': UNDERSTANDING GEN Z'S EXPECTATIONS IN THE CLASSROOM

Drawing from over a decade of research, it can be said with relative certainty what millennial learners expected of their instructors when they were in the college classroom. But what about the expectations and needs of our current group of students, Generation Z? Because few studies exist on Gen Z in higher education spaces, this dissertation establishes a baseline of what these students might need and expect from market and generational research on this group of students and establishes expectancy violations theory as a sound theoretical base for instructional research. This dissertation's longitudinal, two-phase study, then, seeks to determine Gen Z students' expectations of their instructors' communication behaviors (i.e., credibility, rapport, confirmation, digital literacy) in the college classroom and examined the impact that violations of these expectations can have on these students' levels of engagement. Findings suggest that Gen Z students expected a moderate level of rapport and high levels of credibility, confirmation, and digital literacy; credibility and confirmation expectations were significantly negatively violated, while digital literacy expectations were significantly positively violated. Additional findings demonstrate that Gen Z students whose instructors met or positively violated expectations reported higher engagement than those with negatively violated expectations. Implications for instructors and administrators, as well as implications for further use of expectancy violations theory, are included, such as the suggestion that instructors need to focus on tailoring their instruction to the specific needs and expectations of Gen Z students, who differ greatly from generations past.

KEYWORDS: Gen Z, expectancy violations, expectations, student engagement.

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04/08/2022
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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION & RATIONALE

1.1 Background

For the past decade, scholars in various pedagogical fields (e.g., instructional communication, educational psychology) have examined the specific expectations and needs of the millennial generation in the college classroom. Millennials are known for their collaborative learning style, their technological savvy, and their idealistic outlook on life after graduation (Isaacs et al., 2020). However, while researchers have been busy getting to know millennial learners, a new generation has taken over the classroom. Gen Z, also known as the iGen or the Homeland Generation, is said most often to consist of those born between born between 1997 and 2012 (Twenge, 2018). While technologically proficient like millennials, the comparisons between these two generations largely end there. Gen Z students prefer to learn independently and thus, to heavily rely on technology to support their learning; they also have a much more cautious, realistic outlook on the "real world" they expect to encounter after completing their degree (Isaacs et al., 2020). Because this generation will be present in our college classrooms at least the next ten years, it is imperative that instructors, administrators, and researchers alike endeavor to understand what makes them tick as learners—just as was done with the previous generation.

Relatively little is currently known about Gen Z in the college setting, as Seemiller and Grace (2016) note that "much of [current] buzz and conversation about Generation Z has focused on their teen years" (p. xxii). As a result, studies on Generation Z in higher education are "sparse" (Seemiller et al., 2021, p. 2). Market research conducted by Gen Z-serving companies (e.g., Barnes & Noble College, 2018; Pearson, 2018; Spotify for Brands, 2019, 2020), however, offers preliminary insights into their educational

expectations. Gen Z does not just prefer to use technology to supplement their learning, like their millennial counterparts—they depend on access to it to both work independently (Seemiller & Grace, 2016) and to consult with others about questions they might have about course content (Pearson, 2018). They also have an overwhelming need to feel safe in academic spaces, wishing for their instructors to provide trigger warnings before discussing fractious topics like race or politics in class (Twenge, 2018).

Additionally, Gen Z has a much more nihilistic outlook on life than millennials, seeking only to learn what will benefit them most when entering the job market after graduation. A poll conducted by *The Washington Post* (2021), in conjunction with the market research firm Ipsos, found that 51 percent of Gen Z teenagers believe that now is a bad time to be growing up; additionally, 56 percent are concerned that America's best years are already behind us. One Gen Z-er told Spotify for Brands (2020) that, after witnessing an economic collapse in childhood and a global pandemic in young adulthood, "[this generation] has nothing to lose and everything to gain" (p. 5). As noted in the literature, however, there is a need for research on Generation Z that accounts for the many things this new group of students has to offer in the higher education space, treating their defining characteristics "as resources to build upon rather than as deficits to criticize and fix" (Jovanovic et al., 2021, p. 143).

For these reasons, among others, there is currently a mismatch between "what Gen Z needs and what [educators] are currently providing" (Bertolone-Smith & Spagna, 2019, p. 106) at all levels of instruction, particularly in higher education. Of particular concern for college instructors is Gen Z's overwhelming desire for emotional connection in social spaces like classrooms. A study by Spotify for Brands (2019) found that Gen Z specifically

sought out artists who "shared their sadness with the world" (p. 12) and podcasters who attempt to connect with their listeners on a deeper level by sharing personal anecdotes, and other studies suggest that this search for emotional resonance also carries over into the classroom. Marko Harrigan and colleagues (2021) found that when asked to choose between academic success and relational connection, Gen Z students placed more emphasis on relational connection every time. Similarly, Selingo (2018) found that Gen Z students liked instructors who made class interesting, were enthusiastic about teaching, and were willing to support them catch up when they fell behind best, as opposed to millennial learners who sought instructors that acted more as emotionally distant and closed-off academic professionals (Chory & Offstein, 2017). Gen Z sees their instructors not just as role models but also emotional support systems, with 78 percent reporting to Pearson (2018) that teachers are "very important" (p. 19) to their learning and their social and emotional development. As such, further research is needed to understand what Gen Z expects from their instructors in terms of using relationally focused instructional behaviors (i.e., instructor credibility, rapport, confirmation) and displaying technological savvy and skills (i.e., digital literacy) in the classroom.

Previous research has determined that students from older generations (e.g., millennials) do have specific expectations related instructor behaviors that they bring with them into the classroom. Studies from Faranda and Clark (2004) and Senko et al. (2012), for example, asked students to design their "ideal instructor" from a list of attributes, with qualities like approachability and a warm personality (i.e., rapport, confirmation) ranking amongst the most-selected items. A similar study by Goldman et al. (2017), with a similar methodology, found students placed a high premium on credible instructors who were

competent and trustworthy (i.e., credible). The literature also supports the idea that these expectations can be violated, both positively and negatively, by instructors in the classroom. A series of studies by Houser (2005, 2006) on traditional and non-traditional students, for example, found that traditional students' expectations for nonverbal immediacy were violated by what they had experienced in the classroom.

As evidenced in the literature, expectations can play an important role in the classroom. While meeting expectations may not be absolutely necessary for learning to take place, violated expectations can impact a variety of student outcomes in the classroom, from communication apprehension (Frymier & Weser, 2001) to willingness to engage in course tasks (Mottet et al., 2005); as such, it is important for instructors to meet expectations whenever they can. This dissertation seeks not to prescribe the behaviors of instructors, which would stifle the creativity of their instructional design and rid classrooms of the "teachable moments" that arise organically out of interactions with students, but rather to propose ways in which to better meet the expectations of (and in turn, promote better outcomes for) students—specifically, the expectations Gen Z holds of their instructors' behaviors and skills.

1.2 Summary

In order to foster a deeper understanding of this new generation of learners, this dissertation seeks to answer this overarching research question:

RQ: What does Gen Z expect from their instructors in the college classroom?

To address this research question and address gaps in the existing literature, the primary purposes of this dissertation are:

(a) to empirically explore what expectations Gen Z students hold about their instructors' behaviors and skills, including instructor credibility, rapport, confirmation, and digital literacy;

(b) to empirically explore how these expectations are violated, both positively and negatively, by what Gen Z students experience in the classroom;

(c) to provide evidence that violated expectations in the classroom can impact learning outcomes (i.e., engagement);

(d) to test the model proposed in Chapter 2, which sees the type of violation (i.e., met positive violation, met expectations, negative violation) as impacting students' level of engagement.

1.3 Organization

The first chapter of this dissertation provided an introduction to, and rationale for, the topic of Gen Z's unique expectations in the classroom. The second chapter reviews the extant literature on Gen Z and instructional communication behaviors and skills, including instructor credibility, rapport, confirmation, and digital literacy, to consider what is currently known or assumed about Gen Z's expectations. Additionally, the second chapter proposes expectancy violations theory as a theoretical framework under which to examine expectations in the classroom and the impact violations can have on student outcomes, which leads to the proposed hypotheses and research questions. The third chapter overviews the methods and data collection processes, and the fourth chapter will present the results from this study. Finally, the fifth chapter will provide a discussion of the results, implications for practice and research, and limitations of the study.

CHAPTER 2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Just as it was with millennials, it is imperative for both instructors and administrators alike to understand the expectations of Gen Z students and how current practices are violating them. While generational scholars (e.g., Twenge, 2018) have argued that Gen Z differs significantly from previous generations, few studies have examined how these differences impact the teaching and learning process. Thus, in this chapter, I will overview the current research on Gen Z, their defining characteristics, their station as the first generation of "digital natives," and their preferences and expectations for the role of instructor communication in the learning process. Then, I overview research about perceptions of instructors' communication behaviors and skills and examine how violations of students' expectations related to these perceptions can impact learning outcomes (i.e., engagement). Subsequently, I propose expectancy violations theory as a theoretical framework that might provide a foundation for examining the expectations of Gen Z and how instructors may be meeting or violating those expectations in their classrooms. Finally, I end with a rationale and model explicating the relationships between students' expectations and instructors' actual communication behaviors, violations of those expectations, and student engagement.

2.1 Gen Z

In their 1991 book, Strauss and Howe proposed the idea of generational theory, or that there are recurring generational cycles throughout history in which each new generation brings about new social, political, and economic change. A generation is defined as an aggregate of everyone born within the same span of twenty years and are typically

identified by birthyear (Strauss & Howe, 1991). Each generation experiences four "turnings" throughout their lifespan, which occur in never-ending cycles: high, where there is general conformity in society and institutions are strong; awakening, where institutions are attacked by a desire for autonomy; unraveling, where institutions are weak and distrusted; and crisis, where there is cultural and societal revolution. But what defines each generation is the turning they experience in young adulthood, which shapes their values, career paths, and economic prospects, among other things. Most recently, Strauss and Howe (2000) proposed that one of the newest generations, coined "millennials," would be wholly unlike any others before it because of the introduction of the dot-com bubble (and thus, the advent of near-ubiquitous technology) during their adolescence.

When millennials came to college, researchers and administrators alike worried about how to address the generation's learning preferences. Arum's (2011) popular *Academically Adrift* bemoaned the state of higher education as impacted by entitled millennial learners, pondering how best to meet the educational expectations of this new group of students. No longer could instructors rely on the lecture-heavy traditions of courses past, lest they lose the interest and engagement of the millennials in their classrooms. In the years since, numerous books and special issues of journals have documented in-depth the learning preferences of millennials and how best to address them through differentiated instructional design in the classroom (e.g., Strawser & Kaufmann, 2020). As the millennial era of higher education comes to an end, however, few studies have endeavored to understand the learning preferences of the newest generation of students, Gen Z. Because of their unique characteristics that distinguish them from

millennials, Gen Z "refuses to let us rely on what has worked for other generations" (Bertolone-Smith & Spagna, 2019, p. 106).

Born between 1997 and 2012, Gen Z (also known as the iGen or the Homeland Generation) currently makes up a quarter of the U.S. population, including 74 million individuals (Twenge, 2018). The American subset of Gen Z is the most racially and ethnically diverse generation to date, with nearly half of them identifying as part of a community of color (Spotify for Brands, 2019). Generational research (e.g., Twenge, 2018) has found that, comparatively, Gen Z is more socially cautious than previous generations; they are less likely to smoke or drink before the legal age and less likely to date before going to college. Despite their proclivities for isolation and safety, however, this generation is more politically active than those before. They tend to be liberal or, at the very least, moderate leaning in their politics (Seemiller & Grace, 2016); some 24 percent of them have attended a rally or protest since the 2016 presidential election, compared to just 10 percent of people outside their generation (Spotify for Brands, 2019), and 77 percent of them had a plan to vote in the 2020 presidential election (Spotify for Brands, 2020). Gen Z is also more financially conservative, having watched their parents weather job losses during the 2008 economic recession, so the potential for financial success is important when choosing a future career (Twenge, 2018). Most notably, they are the first generation "for whom internet access has been constantly available" (Twenge, 2018, p. 2) in the palm of their hands, and are often characterized by academics and popular media sources to be more "technologically savvy" (Barnes & Noble College, 2018, p. 6) than any previous generation. Two out of every three own a smartphone, and some 87 percent of Gen Z-ers

log onto social media websites at least once a day (Twenge, 2018). Life without technology, for Gen Z, is unfathomable and untenable.

2.1.1 Digital Natives

Key to understanding Gen Z is their station as the first generation of digital natives. As conceptualized by Prensky (2001), a digital native is someone who has never known life without ubiquitous technology and, as a result, has grown up speaking "the digital language of computers, video games, and the Internet" (p. 1). They are the native speakers of technology and do not remember a time without it (Dingli & Seychell, 2015). Because of their unique upbringing, these individuals are theorized to behave differently than those who are not as familiar with digital environments; for example, digital natives are accustomed to receiving information quickly and prefer games to work (Prensky, 2001). These individuals are used to being fully immersed in technology, whether through their smartphone, tablet, or laptop, and heavily rely on these devices to function in the world at large (Bennett et al., 2008). Because of the ubiquity of digital technologies in the United States, it is assumed that there is a higher population of digital natives in America than there are currently in other countries (Bazylevych et al., 2019).

Nearly two decades of research on digital natives has created a consensus about the defining characteristics of digital natives. In her analysis of this literature, Thompson (2015) found that the following assumptions have been made about the group: they crave speed to slower-paced environments; they desire multitasking to maintaining a singular focus; they prefer pictures to text; they prefer collaborating with peers to working alone; and they expect that technology will be part of their lives, no matter where they are. However, Thompson (2012) notes, some of these assumptions "lack…empirical evidence

supporting them" (p. 12), meaning that much of what scholars *think* they know about digital natives actually derives from generational assumptions made about the technology habits of millennials and Gen Z.

Within the literature, there is an assumption that digital natives tend to be younger people, who belong to the two most recent generations (i.e., millennials and Gen Z; Bennett et al., 2008). Of particular note within this population are members of Gen Z, who are the first to be recognized by both popular and academic writing alike as the first generation of digital natives (Twenge, 2018). Having grown up immersed as much in the digital world as much as the physical one, this generation has a different technological approach to everything from socialization to activism—and, with their share of the population growing daily, it is important for researchers to understand how their digital upbringing has impacted them before they take over. Thus, it is apt to assume that this generation will have a different approach to a variety of things, including getting an education.

2.1.2 Gen Z and Education

As the first generation of true digital natives, Gen Z prefers to use technology whenever possible to supplement their learning. This generation of students is "reliant on technology" (Selingo, 2018, p. 30), but they do not always see technology as a learning tool; if their school is behind the times, Gen Z sees using outdated technology as a hinderance to their learning (Twenge, 2018). When used properly, however, Gen Z students enjoy using digital tools to supplement their learning (Seemiller & Grace, 2016) and to learn independently about topics that interest them individually. Nearly 60 percent of Gen Z-ers, for example, list YouTube as their number-one preferred learning source (Pearson, 2018). Using technology in classrooms, then, not only allows for instructors to

call on tools that are familiar to Gen Z but allows students to take a more active role in their education and to prepare for entry into the job market.

Gen Z's individualistic outlook also impacts their outlook on education. A report by Barnes and Noble College (2018) found that Gen Z students tend to flock to learning environments where they can "flex their aptitude for self-reliance and their ability to self-educate" (p. 6). Instead of relying on university tutoring services or office hour meetings with professors, they prefer to answer their questions by consulting with friends or looking online (Barnes & Noble College, 2018). A study by Vu et al. (2020) similarly found that Gen Z college students were more motivated and showed more affective learning gains when working individually than in a more competitive group structure. Gen Z students thrive in hybrid learning environments where they can consult with technology to find answers to problems on their own and seek colleges that will allow them to use their devices to their advantage during class.

Gen Z's financial conservatism also impacts their educational preferences, because "the college journey for Gen Z," writes Selingo (2018), "is largely about the career on the horizon" (p. 26). In a report by Barnes and Noble College (2018), Gen Z students listed career preparation as their top reason for choosing a college; for them, "college is seen as the pathway to a good job" (p. 3). Not only do they want basic career preparation, but they also want to succeed in those careers. 65 percent of Gen Z-ers, as compared to 43 percent of millennials, say that their goal is to make it to the top of their field (Pearson, 2018). As such, these students no longer seek educational experiences that are meant to broaden their minds or challenge them intellectually—they seek career preparation almost exclusively so that they can get a better and more stable job once they graduate (Twenge, 2018). In

their classes, Gen Z want interactive and engaging learning experiences that not only supplement course material but also demonstrate how the skills they are learning will be relevant to them in real-world contexts.

Finally, Gen Z's emphasis on social safety and political liberalism carries over into their educational preferences. They seek schools that are "emotionally safe" (Twenge, 2018, p. 173), where they can encounter new ideas without feeling as though their own views are threatened. Safe spaces on campus, where they feel protected and secure in their own identities and beliefs, are also important for Gen Z students. Twenge (2018) found that three out of every four Gen Z students agreed that professors should provide trigger warnings if course content mentioned difficult topics like sexual assault. In the same study, 28 percent of students agreed that a faculty member who, on a single occasion, made a racially insensitive remark should be fired immediately; additionally, some 38 percent of Gen Z students did not want their professors to mention issues of race and identity in their classrooms for fear of offending others. A study by Faulkner et al. (2021) supports these results, finding that Gen Z students wanted their instructors to communicate on the first day that they will "not tolerate any discriminatory attitudes or behaviors in the classroom" (p. 99). Students who feel as though their instructor create a safe space tend to perceive their instructors as caring, respectful, and supportive (Holley & Steiner, 2005), demonstrating the importance of making students feel emotionally and psychologically safe in the classroom. Gen Z students, specifically, need to know that they will feel safe and protected within the ivory tower when coming to college.

Perhaps the most pressing concern facing the academy as Gen Z takes over higher education spaces, however, is their lack of faith in the educational system. This generation

is increasingly distrusting of longstanding institutions, with 53 percent agreeing with the statement that they should be wary of big institutions like colleges and universities (Spotify for Brands, 2020). Just 18 percent of Gen Z-ers agree that a four-year college degree is "definitely" (The Washington Post, 2021, p. 3) worth the cost, and less than half list graduating college as an important priority. 64 percent want to pursue an advanced degree, down from millennials' 71 percent (Marron, 2015). They no longer believe that a college education alone will help them secure a good job or teach them skills they will need later in life (Twenge, 2018). While they understand that a college education is an investment that statistically leads to future success, they also believe that America's education system is in decline (Seemiller & Grace, 2016); some 89 percent of them considered an education plan other than pursuing a traditional four-year college degree immediately following high school (Spotify for Brands, 2020). As argued by Bertolone-Smith and Spagna (2019), Gen Z's apprehension toward education might result from the mismatch between "what Gen Z needs and what [educators] are currently providing" (p. 106). To demonstrate the value in a college education to Gen Z, then, it is important that instructors and administrators endeavor to understand these students' learning preferences and expectations—and how best to meet them in the classroom.

Looking at what Gen Z values (i.e., technology, individualism, job orientation, safety) provides some insights into what they might expect to see in the classroom. A study by Spotify for Brands (2019) found that, from a marketing standpoint, Gen Z valued transparency; they wanted to know the motivation behind certain brands or individuals communicating with them, so they could judge the content of the message for with these potential biases in mind. Within that content, Gen Z wanted to see honesty, equality, and

freedom: they want to be treated fairly, and they want to be valued for what they as an individual bring to the table. Emotional connections are also important to Gen Z. In the Spotify for Brands (2019) study, there was a "palpable strain of melancholy" (p. 12) running through participants' description of our current cultural climate; Gen Z participants felt connected to artists (i.e., Olivia Rodrigo, Phoebe Bridgers) who "shar[e] their sadness with the world" (p. 12) and with whom they could relate and connect on a deep, emotional level.

Preliminary research on Gen Z in the classroom supports these assessments of their values and expectations. A study by Seemiller and Grace (2019) found that Gen Z is a "relationally-minded" (p. 17) generation, and that Gen Z students valued instructors who show them compassion and kindness in addition to being knowledgeable about their respective subjects. Selingo (2018) found that, when asked what they like most about their favorite instructor, Gen Z students liked instructors who: made class interesting and involving; were enthusiastic about teaching; communicate clearly; talked to them both in- and outside of class; and understood and supported them in areas where they were unprepared or behind. While millennials and other generations have preferred to keep their distance from their instructors, seeing their primary role as being academic professionals (Chory & Offstein, 2017), Faulkner and colleagues (2021) found that Gen Z students valued instructors who were welcoming and who were willing to recognize and value students not just as learners but also as people. Similarly, Seemiller et al. (2021) found that Gen Z students wanted instructors who are personable and "take the time to create relationships with them" (p. 13), but further research is needed to fully understand what

Gen Z students expect from their college instructors in terms of certain communication behaviors and skills.

2.2 Instructor Communication Behaviors and Skills

A field that might be uniquely suited to examine Gen Z's expectations of their instructors is that of instructional communication, which examines the way in which effective communication (or lack thereof) impacts the teaching and learning process. Its roots are in educational psychology, pedagogy, and communication (Mottet & Beebe, 2006), combining these three foci to study "the process by which teachers and students stimulate meanings in the minds of each other using verbal and nonverbal messages" (p. 5). Within the instructional communication literature, numerous scholars have examined the impact of expectations on classroom communication. These studies, often framed by expectancy violations theory, offer insight into the expectations that students and instructors bring into class with them that, in turn, impact their perceptions of one another across a variety of constructs and variables. Though not all outright ask these groups for their expectations and preferences in the classroom, the studies cited in this literature review offer some commentary on baseline expectations (i.e., whether it is present or not) of instructor credibility, rapport, confirmation, and digital literacy, as well as how expectations relate to students' engagement, in the classroom.

From the broad range of instructional communication variables available for study, it is apt to examine these four—instructor credibility, rapport, confirmation, and digital literacy—because of Gen Z's unique attributes and preferences. According to Pearson (2018), 78 percent of Gen Z-ers saw teachers as being "very important to [their] learning

and development" (p. 19), and that teachers were more important to their personal development than any other group (i.e., parents, friends/peers, mentors, co-workers). Seemiller and Grace's (2019) research supports this claim, with 11 percent of their participants ranking instructors as their number-one role models and another 42 percent ranking them in the number-two spot.

Because of their contradictory great trust in teachers and their general wariness toward higher education, it is apt to assume that a Gen Z student will value an instructor's credibility in the classroom. Similarly, because of Gen Z's strong desire for emotional connection outside of the social media realm (e.g., Spotify for Brands, 2019; Spotify for Brands, 2020), it can be assumed that variables focused on building the instructor-student relationship like rapport and confirmation might be of importance. Along the same lines, multiple participants in the Spotify for Brands (2019) study noted that the individuals they found most "relatable and trustworthy" (p. 8) were those who drew on their own personal stories and experiences to build psychological closeness; emotional connection, it seems, is key for relating with Gen Z. Finally, drawing from Gen Z's attachment to technology and from Prensky's (2001) assertion that there is discord between digital native students and their digital immigrant instructors, it is imperative to examine how students' expectations for technology use and instructors' actual behaviors align. Endeavoring to understand Gen Z students' expectations for these specific instructor communication patterns works toward answering the call put forth by Sweet et al. (2019) to further examine and survey this new generation to ascertain their expectations as they relate to education.

2.2.1 Credibility

The construct of instructor credibility comes from Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, which asserts that the most persuasive element of a speech is ethos (or credibility) resulting from perceptions of the speaker's intelligence, character, and goodwill. It was from this understanding that McCroskey (1966) derived his initial conceptualization of credibility within the communication context, seeking to measure a speaker's competence and character, which later led to the development of a teacher-specific scale by McCroskey et al. (1974) that examined credibility across five dimensions (i.e., competence, extraversion, composure, character, sociability). Over time, this scale was narrowed into McCroskey and Teven's (1999) oft-used measure that examines a teacher's credibility across three dimensions (i.e., competence, goodwill, trustworthiness). Using this conceptualization of the construct as a guide, several scholars have examined students' expectations of instructor credibility in a variety of contexts.

Though no study has yet to explicitly ask students what they expect from their instructors in terms of credibility, several scholars have examined the role that the mere presence or absence of credibility can play in mediating expectations in the classroom. A study by Schrodt and Witt (2006), for example, sought to understand students' expectations of different levels of immediacy and technology use in the classroom and their related perceptions of instructor credibility. Their experimental study placed students in one of eight conditions, with four different levels of technology use (i.e., low, minimal, moderate, complete) and two levels of immediacy (i.e., low and high), and asked participants to then rate the instructor's credibility; the scenario described led students to expect, regardless of the technology condition, that the course was meeting in a traditional face-to-face lecture

format. Results revealed that students perceived instructors as the most competent when they were using moderate amounts of technology in the classroom rather than relying solely on face-to-face or online-only delivery. Instructors were also perceived to be extending goodwill and to be the most trustworthy in the minimal technology condition. As students were led to expect that their class would not be heavily reliant on technology, the instructors who met or positively violated those expectations were seen as the most credible while those violating expectations (by putting the class fully online) were not.

A study by Mottet et al. (2007) found similar results in a hybrid class setting, seeking to examine how perceptions of instructor credibility can be impacted by students' workload expectations. Deriving from the idea of "college lite," where instructors adopt an "you leave me alone, and I will leave you alone" (Mottet et al., 2007, p. 146) attitude toward assigning homework, the authors asked whether students whose instructors avoided this approach violated their expectations. Results revealed that instructors who resisted the college lite approach were perceived to be credible by students, thus indicating that an instructor's meeting (or positive violation) of students' expectations impacts their credibility in the classroom.

Finally, a study by Sidelinger and Bolen (2016) on compulsively communicating teachers examined the role that instructor credibility can play in perceptions of instructors. An earlier study by the pair found that "talkaholic teachers" (Sidelinger & Bolen, 2015, p. 174) were seen by students as expectancy-violating, misbehaving instructors; as such, this follow-up study sought to potentially place instructor credibility in a mediating role and thus preventing perceived violations from being registered so severely by students. Results revealed that students' perceptions of an instructor's credibility did, in fact, mediate the

negative relationship between their violated expectations and communication satisfaction in the classroom, suggesting that students expect, in addition to avoiding compulsive communication, that their instructors will be credible in the classroom as well. From these studies, it is apt to assume that students' expectations about a variety of ideas and issues—and whether those expectations are met—can impact their perceptions of their instructor's credibility.

2.2.2 Rapport

Deriving from the relational perspective within instructional communication, rapport is defined as "an overall feeling between two people encompassing a mutual, trusting, and pro-social bond" (Frisby & Martin, 2010, p. 147). It consists of two dimensions: an enjoyable interaction, where individuals positively perceive communication with one another; and a personal connection, where a link or bond is formed by these individuals through their interaction (Gremler & Gwinner, 2000). Several scholars have argued for the importance of rapport in the development of the interpersonal relationship between teachers and students, as Frisby and Martin (2010) found that rapport was related to feelings of classroom connectedness, impacting students' perceptions of their classroom as a supportive and cooperative environment, and to students' willingness to participate in class.

Just one study, by Faranda and Clarke (2004), has identified what students expect in terms of rapport in their classrooms. The authors asked participants in nine focus groups to identify characteristics of their ideal instructor, and those responses were then coded into general themes and subcategories. Rapport was the most-identified component of the ideal instructor, with 35.8 percent of participants noting that they expected to see it in an

outstanding teacher's interactions with their students. Though further evidence is needed, it appears that, at least preliminarily, students expect their instructors to have "approachability, accessibility, personality, [and] empathy" (Faranda & Clark, 2004, p. 274) in the classroom.

While our collective knowledge on the rapport expectations of college students may be lacking, several studies on additional variables might offer insights into what these students expect related to this construct. An early study by McLaughlin and Erikson (1981), for example, asked students to identify the traits and characteristics of an ideal instructor. Participants were given stacks of notecards containing ninety personality traits and categorize them based on whether they expected to find them in their instructors. Results revealed that the ideal instructor was perceived to be approving, friendly, warm, expressing interest in students' interests, understanding, helpful, and considerate. While rapport-building was not an instructor trait given to participants to categorize, several of these qualities (e.g., friendly, warm) relate to our current conceptualization of the construct.

A study by Senko et al. (2012) yielded similar results, examining students' expectations as they relate to a variety of instructor behaviors, including enthusiasm, interactive style, warm personality, and good feedback. Using a budgeting methodology, students were asked to "buy" qualities for their ideal teacher from a preset list. Results revealed that these students prioritized enthusiasm as an essential item and viewed other qualities like warm personality, interactive teaching style, and good feedback as luxury items that, while not necessary for their learning, would still be nice qualities to have in an instructor. Though the study does not explicitly address any of the instructional communication constructs present in this literature review, several of the qualities (e.g.,

enthusiasm, warm personality) that students identified as being important to them could arguably fit under the umbrella of rapport. Certainly, these qualities connote the feeling of a trusting and prosocial relationship within the confines of the classroom and can offer further insight into what students expect from their instructors in terms of rapport-building, but further research is needed to confirm these results.

2.2.3 Confirmation

The construct of confirmation derives from Buber (1957), who noted that "the wish of every man to be confirmed as what he is, even as what he can become, by men" (p. 102). Over time, this definition has been expanded to include easily identifiable actions and traits, such as Laing's (1961) conceptualization that saw confirmation as a process by which a person recognizes, acknowledges, and endorses another individual as unique and valuable; a later expansion by Cissna and Sieburg (1981) added disconfirmation, conceptualized as indifference, imperviousness, and disqualification, to the list. Within the classroom setting, Ellis (2008) defined confirmation as the transactional process by which teachers communicate to their students that they are valuable, significant individuals. The measure most frequently used to capture the construct is Ellis's (2000) teacher confirmation scale, which measures confirmation across four dimensions: responses to student questions and comments, demonstrated interest, teaching style, and absence of disconfirmation.

While no study has examined students' expectations as they relate to confirmation in the classroom, several scholars have argued for the importance of confirmation in the development of a strong relationship between teachers and students. Ellis's (2000, 2004) initial studies on teacher confirmation revealed that confirmation is a significant predictor of learning, accounting for 30 percent of the variance in affective learning and 18 percent

of the variance in cognitive learning. Her studies also found that confirmation can play a large role in mediating students' emotions in the classroom, lowering students' receiver apprehension and increasing their motivation to learn.

A study by Schrodt et al. (2006) supported these findings. The authors examined the role that students' perceived understanding can play in mediating their perceptions of teacher confirmation and their ratings of instruction (i.e., credibility). Results revealed that perceived confirmation accounted for 64 percent of the variance in perceived understanding and 72 percent of the variance in students' evaluations of their instructors' credibility. While participants were not asked to report on their expectations about confirmation in the classroom, Schrodt et al.'s (2006) results highlight again the imperative role that the construct can play in creating a deeper, more harmonious learning experience for students.

Goodboy and Myers's (2008) study also aligned with Ellis's (2000) earlier results. The pair sought to determine if teacher confirmation or disconfirmation (or lack thereof) influenced students' learning outcomes, communication patterns, and their motivation to communicate with their instructor. They conducted a live experiment that manipulated the level of confirmation displayed by the instructor (i.e., not confirming, somewhat confirming, confirming) and after it was finished asked students to report on their communication patterns, motivations, and perceived learning. Results revealed that the students of the confirming instructor were more motivated to communicate with their instructor and reported more cognitive and affective learning than those in the other groups; they also participated more during class and were less motivated to make excuses when

speaking with the instructor. Yet again, confirmation played an important role in students' learning and general motivations in the classroom.

A study by Goldman and Goodboy (2014) examined the ways in which confirmation can mediate students' emotions (e.g., emotional interest, emotion work) in the classroom. Participants were asked to self-report on their own emotions and perceptions of teacher confirmation within their college classrooms. Results revealed, unsurprisingly, that students of confirming teachers reported higher levels of emotional interest, emotional support, and a general positive affect toward their courses and teachers. Students in confirming classrooms were also more willing to talk in class, put forth more effort in their coursework, and reported greater communication satisfaction with their teachers.

Finally, a study Christman and McCall (2021) examined the role that acknowledgement, or an instructor's demonstration of "care and concern" (p. 25) as well as interest in the overall wellbeing of their students, can play in a Gen Z student's experience in the classroom. Their results suggest that Gen Z students recognized forms of acknowledgement in the classroom when they saw them, and that it encouraged them to be motivated in class, to gain confidence and belief in their abilities to succeed, to work harder, and to persevere through trying times. In essence, when an instructor acknowledged or confirmed a student, they "[spoke] to [the] relational desire that so many of our students seek and need" (Christman & McCall, 2021, p. 36). From these studies, it can be concluded that confirmation plays an important role in teaching and learning—and, because of its great emotional weight, might be a preferred and even expected component of the learning experience for Gen Z students.

2.2.4 Digital Literacy

In an increasingly digital world, perhaps one of the most important skills both students and instructors can possess is digital literacy. Literacy, as it has been traditionally defined, relates to an individual's ability to read and write competently; however, this definition has expanded in recent years to include other types of literacies, including an individual's ability to use technological devices in ways that meet their information needs (Martin & Zahrndt, 2017). First introduced by Gilster (1998), digital literacy is broadly defined as "the ability to understand and use information in multiple formats from a wide variety of sources when it is presented via computers" (p. 1). Within this definition, Gilster (1998) outlined four core competencies of digital literacy—internet searching, hypertext navigation, knowledge assembly, and content evaluation—but failed to specify what specific skills are associated with each one. The American Library Association Digital Literacy Task Force (2013), in an attempt to remedy this issue, outlined five characteristics that a digitally literate individual should have: the cognitive and technical skills to locate, comprehend, interpret, and share digital information; the ability to use technology properly while locating and retaining that information; the ability to identify relationships between various digitally-oriented issues (e.g., privacy and technology); the ability to use their cognitive and technical skills with technology to collaborate with others; and the ability to become actively engaged in society using their digital skills. Essentially, a digitally literate individual must have mastered the skills "required to thrive in the digital media environment" (Park & Burford, 2013, p. 266).

Specifically, within today's academic environment, being digitally literate is crucial to a student's success. Digital literacy was recognized as early as 2001 as being a

crucial component of a 21st-century education, where the No Child Left Behind Act stipulated that all students should be "technologically literate" (American Library Association Digital Literacy Task Force, 2013, p. 7) by the eighth grade. The idea of "technological literacy" was not clearly defined within this Act of Congress, but the American Library Association Digital Literacy Task Force (2013) has since taken it to mean that a digitally literate student is one who can employ the aforementioned skills to a variety of tasks, "from research, to project creation, to creative expression…[within] formal teaching and learning settings" (p. 7). In the years since, the ALA's definition has been expanded by Kim (2019), who argued that academic digital literacy is the ability to "navigate information and knowledge for meaningful learning and academic performance in the digitalized environment" (p. 4). Drawing from the literature, digital literacy in the context of this dissertation is defined as the ability to use digital technologies, tools, and information in a way that enhances a student's learning and performance. Digital literacy skills are of particular importance to Gen Z students, many of whom are digital natives; as such, they might hold certain expectations of their digital immigrant instructors' digital literacy and use of technology in their classrooms.

2.2.4.1 Digital Immigrants

Unlike digital natives who grew up speaking the digital language, digital immigrants are those who were born before the advent of computer technologies (i.e., before 1980) yet adopt them throughout their lifetimes (Prensky, 2001). Due to this comparatively late adoption of technology, these individuals will never be as fully fluent in the digital language as digital natives. Prensky (2001) argued that this failure to fully master the language is due to the fact that "[digital immigrants will] always retain, to some

degree…their foot in the past" (p. 2). Extending this metaphor, it is theorized that digital immigrants are now living in a land that is in many ways foreign to them; they can adapt to this culture by adopting a significant number of technologies into their daily lives, but old habits die hard and still impact the way in which they interact with the digital world. For these reasons, Prensky (2001) stereotypes digital immigrants as curmudgeonly older adults (most often, teachers) who long for the days of yore, assuming that even "smart adult immigrants" (p. 3), who recognize that they will never know the digital language and thus depend on digital natives for guidance, fail to fully adapt to the digital environment in their lifetimes.

Several scholars (e.g., Bayne & Ross, 2011; Smith, 2013; Stoerger, 2009), noting that Prensky's (2001) positioning of digital immigrants as lesser than lacks political correctness and cultural sensitivity, have attempted to change this metaphor. Morozov (2008), for example, proposed re-labeling these groups as digital renegades, who use technology to affect real change in the world around them, and digital captives, who lack the skills to move beyond basic technology use. Others (e.g., Bayne & Ross, 2011; Stoerger, 2009) encourage scholars to view Prensky's (2001) original categories as opposite ends of a spectrum, on which one can possess a variety of both digital native and immigrant attitudes and skills, rather than as a dichotomy. Because the literature repeatedly refers to Gen Z as "digital natives" (e.g., Spotify for Brands, 2019; Spotify for Brands, 2020; Twenge, 2018), this study relies on Prensky's (2001) initial metaphor to describe this generation and their instructors to avoid confusion while also acknowledging its insensitivities toward vulnerable immigrant populations.

A close examination of the literature reveals several key differences between the digital native and digital immigrant populations. The first (and most obvious) difference comes from the ways in which they employ technology in their everyday life. A study by Margaryan et al. (2011) found that digital natives used far more technological tools in their day-to-day routines than digital immigrants. Similarly, a study by Dingli and Seychell (2015) found that digital natives were far more adept than digital immigrants at using technology when it comes to crafting a social identity, navigating new physical environments (e.g., traveling), and communicating. The second is that, because of their different approaches to technology, the two populations differ in their "sequential belief updating mechanism" (Kesharwani, 2020, p. 1) over time. Digital natives, who are used to encountering new information, are more apt to incorporate new information into their working memory and belief systems, while digital immigrants are more reticent to do so.

But the divide between digital natives and digital immigrants, Prensky (2001) argued, is clearest in the classroom, where digital immigrants are teachers and digital natives are now their students. Digital natives "think and process information fundamentally differently [than] their predecessors" (Prensky, 2001, p. 1); as a result, they have no patience for the learning archetypes of classrooms past, like lectures and step-by-step instruction that does not afford time for active, applied learning. Digital immigrant teachers, who speak the outdated pre-technology language, eschew the ways their digital native students prefer to learn, because they "don't believe their students can learn successfully while [multitasking]…[and] think learning can't (or shouldn't) be fun" (Prensky, 2001, p. 3). As a result, Prensky (2001) assumed that digital natives might not respond as well to their learning environments as previous generations of digital immigrant

students have because "school often feels pretty much as if we've brought in a population of… foreigners to lecture them" (p. 2).

Digital natives have different expectations than previous generations of quasi-natives (i.e., millennials) and immigrants when it comes to technology use in the classroom. A study by Ledbetter and Finn (2013) found that students were more empowered when their instructors had technology policies that encouraged, rather than restricted, use during class. A follow-up study by the pair found that students prefer instructors who have a high degree of technological integration in their courses (e.g., PowerPoints supporting lectures, timely email responses), and that these instructors were rated as more credible than those who use technology sparingly (Ledbetter & Finn, 2018). Finally, a study by Vallade and Kaufmann (2018) found that students in online courses saw their instructor as misbehaving when the instructor was unable to use technology correctly or explain how it should be used to students in the course. From these results, it is clear that students expect a certain level of technology use by their instructors during class, and that a failure to use technology adeptly can impact students' perceptions of their instructors' effectiveness. As noted by Prensky (2001), "today's students are no longer the people our educational system was designed to teach" (p. 1), and digital immigrant instructors need to catch up with their digital native students to ensure learning outcomes are met. To bridge this divide, it is imperative to develop a deeper understand what students expect from their instructors in terms of digital literacy and technology use in the classroom so that these two disparate groups might finally speak the same language.

2.2.5 Engagement

As a construct, student engagement is "the gold standard by which most educators gauge learning" (Frymier & Houser, 2018, p. 54) and has been defined in many ways. Depending on the context, it might refer to anything from the amount of time spent actively engaged in academically relevant material (Berliner & Rosenshine, 1976), to the extent to which a student participates in class (Fassinger, 1995), to the degree to which a student is academically and socially involved on their college campus (Tinto, 2000). Within instructional communication, however, scholars have recently united around Frymier and Houser's (2016) broad conceptualization that defines engagement as a "multidimensional construct encompassing several student characteristics and behaviors, with participation being one part" (p. 84). Resulting from this conceptualization confusion, there have been numerous attempts made at a measure to capture student engagement across its many dimensions. The most frequently used of these scales, at least within the instructional communication literature, is Mazer's (2012) student engagement scale, which measures engagement across four dimensions: silent in-class behaviors, oral in-class behaviors, thinking about course content, and out-of-class behaviors.

Mazer's (2012) quad-dimensional conceptualization of engagement is "process rather than product oriented" (Mazer & Graham, 2015, p. 214), focusing on students' ability to execute not only traditional participation-oriented behaviors (e.g., oral in-class behaviors) but also those like studying (e.g., out-of-class behaviors) that contribute to students' processing of class content outside of the classroom. Studies have linked high engagement to higher levels of persistence (Skinner et al., 1993) and motivation (Martin, 2009). Of note is the finding that students' emotional interest (i.e., their emotional

investment in the class or relationship with their instructor) significantly predicts their engagement (Mazer, 2012); therefore, high engagement is said to be the result of effective teaching (Handelsman et al., 2005).

Because of this association between effective teaching behaviors and engagement, it seems apt to examine how expectancy violations related to certain instructional behaviors (i.e., instructor credibility, rapport, confirmation) can impact engagement. As argued by Liberman (2021), engagement is "among the key independent variables predictive of student satisfaction among the Generation Z cohort" (p. 96), as pulling a Gen Z student's attention away from their devices speaks volume about their interest in their instructor and the course material. It has been proven that expectancy violations can impact both students' perceptions of their instructors (e.g., Lannutti et al., 2001; Mottet et al., 2007; Schrodt et al., 2006) and their own learning outcomes (e.g., Frymier & Weser, 2001; Mottet et al., 2005; Sidelinger & Bolen, 2016), but few studies have examined the impact expectancy violations can have on the specific communication outcome of engagement. As proposed by Burgoon (1993) in expectancy violations theory, expectancy violations of *all* valences, not just negative ones, can greatly impact communication outcomes. Extrapolating that idea to the classroom context, it would be wise to examine the impact that both negative and positive expectancy violations (as well as met expectations) can have on student outcomes like engagement.

2.3 Expectancy Violations Theory

A theoretical framework under which to examine the discrepancies between students' expectations and instructors' actual behaviors, as well as the impact that those

violations can have on student outcomes, is expectancy violations theory. Expectancy violations theory (EVT) first appeared as the proxemics violation model, proposed by Burgoon and Jones (1976) as a way to "integrate systematic[…] knowledge about how space is used as communication" (p. 131) that was derived from a review of the proxemics literature. At the time, the model focused on interactions between two individuals where the reward-punishment values, idiosyncratic communication patterns, and threat thresholds dictated the appropriateness of deviations from proxemic norms. The relationships between these variables, however, were never fully explored, with Burgoon and Jones (1976) proposing that these variables generally moderated the "expected distancing" (p. 132) in conversations between two people.

This model later evolved into nonverbal expectancy violations theory, broadening the theoretical domain beyond proxemics to nonverbal communication at large (Burgoon & Hale, 1988). Nonverbal expectancy violations theory cohesively linked the proxemics violation model's variables together for the first time, proposing that conversations, violations, and reactions took place in a certain order. The seminal piece of EVT scholarship by Burgoon (1993) fully articulated a more concise version of the theory. Expectations, Burgoon (1993) argues, exert "significant influence on people's interaction patterns…and on the outcomes of their interactions" (p. 41) and can be violated by the behaviors of others. The valence of that violation is determined by an individual's cognitive interpretations and evaluations of it as well as the reward valence associated with the other person (Burgoon, 1993). The model encompassed in this version of expectancy violations theory allows scholars to apply the theory to a variety of communication behaviors and constitutes what we know as expectancy violations theory today.

2.3.1 Initial Tenets and Propositions

In its first iteration, Burgoon and Jones's (1976) model was centered around a basic interaction amongst the *reactant*, or the perceiver, and the *initiator*, whose actions trigger a violation or met expectation of some kind. The reactant's expectations derive from a variety of places, from perceptions and first impressions of the initiator to a history of previous interactions with them. As proposed by Burgoon and Jones (1976), several variables impact the reactant's perception of the violated expectations, including social norms, idiosyncratic patterns, amount of deviation, reward-punishment value of the initiator, and threat threshold. Though some of the components have since become defunct in later versions of the model, many of these variables have stayed with the model throughout its evolution.

As part of the general "personal space expectations" construct, Burgoon and Jones (1976) operationalized social norms as having two components (i.e., interactant and environmental variables) that ultimately affect the interactant's perceptions of violations. Interactant variables include sex, race, culture, age, social status, and co-orientation of the interactants (Burgoon & Jones, 1976), as well as any personal features that may influence an individual's perceptions. Environmental factors, such as amount of physical space available and furniture arrangement (Burgoon & Jones, 1976), also influence the interactant's expectations in social interactions due to their influence on context and spaces where interactions take place.

An individual's idiosyncratic patterns of communication also play a significant role in the formation of expectancies and perceptions of violations. Idiosyncratic patterns depend on "the interplay of a complex system of variables" (Burgoon & Jones, 1976, p.

135), most notably personality make-up and psychological states, as an individual's introversion-extraversion orientation as well as their state of mind can alter what another might perceive as normal or acceptable within an interaction. Along these same lines, the amount of deviation from the norm can depend on what an individual perceives as an acceptable use of space. EVT holds that "individuals come to expect certain…patterns" (Burgoon & Jones, 1976, p. 136) during interactions, including the threshold value of distance that an individual maintains. Thus, to form an expectation, the reactant must know "something about the behavior patterns of the [other] individuals involved" (Burgoon & Jones, 1976, p. 134) from previous interactions.

Additionally, the reward-punishment value of the initiator, where certain individuals will have a higher perceived value than other individuals and thus be allowed certain violations within interactions, also impacts perceptions of violations. Burgoon and Jones (1976) noted that, in making initial evaluations of a person's patterns of communication, reactants often judge the initiator's positive or negative value in relation to themselves. A positive value denotes that the reactant associates reward (e.g., affiliation or acceptance) with the initiator and will be more likely to approach them; a negative value denotes punishment, such as criticism or rejection, which makes the reactant more likely to avoid them. Thus, in their work, Burgoon and Jones (1976) operationally defined the term as the "degree to which the reactant is predisposed to approach or avoid the initiator" (p. 138)—a definition that, like the reward-punishment of the initiator over time, has remained relatively stable throughout additional expansions of the expectancy violation framework.

Finally, the reactant considers the threat threshold of violations when forming expectations. This threshold is the product of the nature of the initiator and environmental factors; for example, the initiator's personality, idiosyncratic patterns, and reward-punishment value should influence threat potential in addition to contextual factors such as crowding or arrangement of space (Burgoon & Jones, 1976). As the encroachment of a threat threshold causes stress, communication outcomes are affected to the degree at which the reactant feels the threat. Because all intrusions of space cause individuals to react negatively at some point, a significant threat creates an expectancy violation.

2.3.2 Evolution of Tenets and Propositions

Numerous studies by Burgoon, published prolifically throughout the 1980s, examined the effects of proxemics violations on communication outcomes. Empirical results from these tests of the model consistently "yielded support for many of the model's propositions" (Burgoon & Hale, 1988, p. 58), as well as support for the effects of numerous nonverbal violations (e.g., lack of immediacy, conversational involvement) on communication outcomes. These studies later led to the expansion of the model to include all nonverbal violations, proxemics or otherwise, that form our understanding of expectancy violations theory today.

Specifically, a study by Burgoon and Hale in 1988 marked the evolution of the theory through a name change, from "proxemics violations model" to "nonverbal expectancy violations theory." As described in the latter by Burgoon and Hale (1988), nonverbal expectancy violations theory posits that individuals hold expectations about the nonverbal behaviors of others—and when those expectations are violated, heightened arousal triggers a series of cognitions that in turn create positive or negative responses that

foster positive or negative communication outcomes. Instead of defining key components of expectations, Burgoon and Hale (1988) focused on the model at the theory's core: expectancy violations, where expectations are not met or violated; arousal, where attention shifts to the violation; communicator reward valence, where the reactant determines the reward-punishment value of the initiator; behavior interpretation and evaluation, where the reactant decides to make a response; and violation valence, which determines the positive or negative nature of that response.

What was noticeably different in Burgoon and Hale's (1988) evolved theory, beyond the introduction of this process, was their definition of expectations to no longer be based primarily on social and cultural norms. Burgoon and Jones (1976) originally defined expectations as specific ideas that derive from the "normative nature of distancing relationships" (p. 132), paying strict attention to the social norms that influence contexts in which interactions take place as well as the cultural norms that influence a person's distancing behaviors. Burgoon and Hale's (1988) definition asserted that expectations are not "exclusively norm-based" nor do they "represent[…] some specific behavior" (p. 60); rather, expectations arise largely from past knowledge of idiosyncrasies and operate "within a range" (p. 60). Combined with a more complete model, this new definition provided a more precise and procedural explanation of how expectancy violations affect communication outcomes, as well as an avenue for application to the "full range of [nonverbal] violations" (Burgoon & Hale, 1988, p. 77).

Burgoon's (1993) definitive work on EVT took this theory distillation one step further. Burgoon (1993) considered expectations to be "grounded in societal norms" (p. 31) but more generally defined them as an "enduring pattern of anticipated behavior" that

derive from previous knowledge of the initiator's communication style. These expectations "exert significant influence on people's interaction patterns…and on the outcomes of their interactions" (Burgoon, 1993, p. 41), and can be violated by the communication patterns and behaviors of others. Using this definition, Burgoon (1993) built upon earlier models to encompass a "wide range of nonverbal and verbal behaviors" (p. 31), allowing for the examination of expectations and violations across a variety of communication contexts, including instructional ones.

2.3.3 Previous Applications in Instructional Communication

EVT has been used to examine instructional communication issues, such as the instructional expectations of students (e.g., Frymier & Weser, 2001; Houser, 2005; Houser, 2006; Schrodt & Witt, 2006), for over thirty years. An early study by Koermer and Petelle (1991), for example, used the theory to better understand the impact of students' perceived expectancy violations on their rating of a teacher's instruction. The authors hypothesized that incongruencies between expectations and reality would be significantly different from congruent violations in terms of student ratings of instruction. Results revealed that students' rating of instruction depended on the type of congruence with expectations, that is, that teachers who employed clarity and enthusiasm communicative behaviors in their classroom were rated as better instructors than those who did not (Koermer & Petelle, 1991). A similar study by MacArthur and Villagran (2015) used the theory to determine which verbal messages students did *not* expect their instructors to use and thus perceived as violations within the online learning context. The authors examined students' responses to three types of online messages from instructors (i.e., indolent, incompetent, and offensive) under EVT, exploring the extent to which instructors' expectancy violations (as

portrayed in these messages) affect students' motivation for communicating. Their results revealed that students did tolerate indolent and incompetent messages but did not tolerate offensive messages and viewed them as expectancy violating; students lost all motivation to communicate with instructors after receiving an offensive message (MacArthur & Villagran, 2015).

A study by McPherson et al. (2003) used EVT to explore students' range of responses to displays of teacher anger in the classroom. The authors hypothesized that aggressive expressions of anger would be negatively associated with appropriateness (and thus deemed an expectancy violation), while assertive expressions would be positively associated with appropriateness for fitting within students' expectancies. The study found that students perceived all displays of teacher anger, save those seen as assertive in nature, as expectancy violating; those behaviors then created negative communication outcomes, including decreased affect for the teacher and for the course.

A set of related studies by Houser (2005, 2006) sought to determine the differences between traditional and nontraditional students' expectations related to a variety of communication behaviors, including nonverbal and verbal immediacy. Participants in these studies were asked to report on both their expectations of and experiences with nonverbal and verbal immediacy in the classroom. Results revealed that traditional and nontraditional students held similar moderate expectations for both dimensions of the construct; only traditional students' expectations of verbal immediacy were violated by what they had experienced in the classroom.

These studies, among others previously mentioned in this chapter (e.g., Lannutti et al., 2001; Mottet et al., 2006; Mottet et al., 2007; Sidelinger & Bolen, 2015; Sidelinger &

Bolen, 2016), all suggest that instructors' messages and behaviors can violate student expectations and can significantly impact learning outcomes in the classroom—and thus, it would be advantageous for instructors to meet them.

2.4 Summary, Research Questions, and Hypotheses

There are two noticeable gaps in the previous literature on expectations in the classroom. First, there is limited information, beyond preliminary generational research and marketing analyses, on Gen Z's expectations of instructor communication patterns. Second, there are few studies within the instructional field that examine Gen Z's expectations in terms of instructor behaviors in the classroom. Taken together, this study aims to bridge these gaps by surveying Gen Z students on their expectations of instructors' communication behaviors and skills in the classroom and how those expectations are violated over time. In the Time 1 survey, taking place during the first two weeks of the semester, Gen Z students were asked to report their instructional expectations in terms of credibility, rapport, confirmation, and digital literacy, as well as their engagement in class. In the Time 2 survey, taking place four weeks after the Time 1 survey, Gen Z students were asked to report what behaviors their instructors are exhibiting in the classroom in terms of credibility, rapport, confirmation, and digital literacy, as well as how their own engagement in class. In these two phases, this longitudinal study seeks to answer the following research questions:

> RQ_1: What do Gen Z students expect of their instructors in terms of (a) credibility, (b) rapport, (c) confirmation, and (d) digital literacy?

RQ_2: How, if at all, are student expectations met or violated by instructors' behaviors?

In addition to examining the alignment of Gen Z students' expectations with their instructors' actual behaviors, this study also seeks to understand how violated expectations can impact the student learning outcome of engagement. To examine this relationship, Gen Z students in phase one will also be asked to report the engagement behaviors they typically exhibit during their classes. Analysis of their responses will help to test two hypotheses:

H_1: Students whose expectations are negatively violated will report lower engagement.

H_2: Students whose expectations are met and/or positively violated will report higher engagement.

Drawing from Burgoon and Hale's (1988) early nonverbal expectancy violations model, which sees communication outcomes as a function of violation valence, this study proposes a model of instructor behaviors and expectations that aligns with hypotheses 1 and 2. This model can be found in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1 Expectancy violation model for the differences between expectations and experiences and its prediction of engagement.

CHAPTER 3. METHODS

This longitudinal dissertation was completed during the Fall 2021 semester. To answer my research questions and to test my hypotheses, I first surveyed Gen Z students on their general instructional expectations. I then surveyed this same group of students four weeks later about specific instructor behaviors to determine whether those behaviors were violating or meeting their expectations. Additionally, students reported on their self-perceptions of their own engagement behaviors in the classroom to assess learning outcomes.

Previous studies (e.g., Goldman et al., 2017; Houser, 2005, 2006) examining students' preferences and expectations of their instructors have only surveyed millennial and adult student populations using one-time cross-sectional data. I sought not just to replicate these studies by asking students about their expectations but also to expand on previous findings by surveying these same students again to determine how those expectations are met and/or violated and what effect those violations have on their classroom engagement.

3.1 Sampling Procedure

For the Time 1 survey, I employed two sampling procedures to increase sample size and sample diversity. First, a convenience sample of students at the University of Kentucky was initially surveyed between weeks three and five of their fall semester (mid-September; see Table 3.2). This early sampling point allowed for the collection of data before students had fully adapted to their classes and experienced expectancy violations in the classroom. Following Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, a survey was

uploaded to Qualtrics and shared via the College of Communication and Information's SONA system, an online research system utilized by the College of Communication and Information at the University of Kentucky. Students who completed the survey received two research credits toward a required two as part of their COM, CIS, ICT, LIS, or SIS coursework for their participation. These courses are commonly required across all majors at the university and thus, diversity of majors was expected. In this sample, only students who completed both surveys received the research credits.

Second, I also relied on those in my professional network (e.g., graduate students, former instructors, professional colleagues, dissertation committee members) to distribute the survey with other Gen Z students outside of the University of Kentucky. Students who completed the survey outside of the University of Kentucky in this sample were entered into a raffle to win one of five $5 Starbucks gift cards to incentivize their participation. To raffle them off, I used a randomized number generator to pick the winners from the list of the last four digits of their phone numbers, provided at the end of the survey for data matching purposes. This first phase of the study in this population was open for two weeks (mid-September; see Table 3.2). While this timeframe was still early in the semester at each of the participating institutions, the survey was administered during varying weeks of their semesters due to different start dates for the fall semester.

To capture the same sample of students later, all students provided their email address at the end of the survey, where they then received the Time 2 survey four weeks after the first survey closed (mid-October; see Table 3.2). Previous studies (e.g., Frisby et al., 2016; Sidelinger et al., 2012) considered the six- and seven-week mark to be the approximate mid-point of the semester, a point at which students are comfortable with and

actively engaged in their classes, and thus can identify consistent characteristics of their coursework and behaviors of their instructor. Sending out the Time 2 survey after weeks six and seven had passed ensured that all students at all participating institutions had spent several weeks on campus and in face-to-face classes with their instructors and thus were able to identify how their instructors are behaving and how those behaviors align with their earlier-reported expectations.

3.2 Sample Characteristics

For participants to have been included in this study at UK, they had to be enrolled in a course in the College of Communication and Information that met face-to-face during the Fall 2021 semester and be a member of Gen Z (i.e., born between 1997-2003). All participants who met the sample criteria received an email via the SONA system letting them know that the study had opened for participants. For participants to be included in the study outside of UK, they had to be enrolled in at least one face-to-face course at an accredited college or university in the United States during the Fall 2021 semester. A diverse sample, in terms of race, gender, and year in school, of 400 participants was desired for the Time 1 survey; accounting for attrition between data collection points and projecting a power estimate for necessary analysis, a diverse sample of 200 participants was desired for the Time 2 survey.

Specifically, these numbers were derived from a power analysis conducted using G*Power, which found that, in order to conduct the proper analyses for this study with a moderate effect size ($\alpha = 0.05$, $|p| = 0.5$), a sample size of at least 200 participants (who complete both surveys) was needed. Factoring in the expectation of a minimum 30%

attrition rate, as experienced in most longitudinal studies (Gustavson et al., 2012), a minimum of 200 participants completing both surveys allowed for the chosen analyses to be run and to have appropriate statistical power.

3.3 Participants

A total of 586 participants began the first survey. Any incomplete or duplicate surveys were removed from the analysis, resulting in 469 participants in the final sample for the first survey. These same 469 participants were recruited to participate in the second survey. A total of 273 participants began the second survey. Any incomplete or duplicate surveys were removed from the analysis, resulting in 251 participants. Next, data from the Time 1 and Time 2 surveys were matched. Of the initial 586 participants, 240 surveys could be matched and comprised the final sample. A little more than half (53.5%) of the participants retained in the final sample of survey 1 were retained in the final sample of survey 2, resulting in a 46.5% attrition rate.

The final sample resulted from cleaning the data from the original number of participants. First, participants that did not complete both surveys were removed from the sample. Second, participants who did not spend more than five minutes on each survey, to ensure that all instructions were read and followed, were removed from the sample. Third, participants who completed one or both surveys twice, matched using demographic data and the last four digits of their phone number, were removed from the sample. Finally, Z-scores were calculated for each scale used in the survey to identify participant responses that were outliers (i.e., answering outside of one standard deviation of the mean across all

items). No participants were determined to be outliers in this process and thus were not removed from the sample for that reason alone.

In terms of demographics, participants were predominantly female (n = 180), with the remaining participants identifying as male (n = 59) or trans/nonbinary (n = 1). Participants were also predominantly white (n = 188), followed by Asian (n = 19), Black or African American (n = 16), Hispanic or Latinx (n = 10), and American Indian or Alaskan Native (n = 3). Participants were allowed to report if their race fit into an "other" category, and four specified their race in a textbox where two of these participants identified as Middle Eastern, one identified as biracial, and one did not specify their race. The average age of participants ranged from 18 to 23 years old (M = 19.28 years, SD = 1.23).

Participants reported that they were primarily first-year students (n = 96), followed by sophomores (n = 54), seniors (n = 48), and juniors (n = 42). Participants represented a total of 7 colleges/universities in the United States, with 201 from the University of Kentucky, 30 from Oklahoma Baptist University, 3 from Centre College, 2 from Georgetown College, 2 from the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor, 1 from Indiana University Bloomington, and 1 from the University of Cincinnati. Demographic information about these institutions can be found in Table 3.1, while information about the times of the semester during which students received the surveys, based on their respective academic calendars, can be found in Table 3.2. Consistent with the sampling goals, a diverse set of institutions were represented (e.g., size, public vs. private, geographic location, Carnegie classification); however, the sample size from these institutions were significantly smaller than those from the convenience sample location.

Table 3.1 Demographic information about participating institutions.

Institution	Location	Undergraduate Enrollment	Carnegie Classification	Public or Private
Centre College	Danville, Kentucky	1,333	Baccalaureate College	Private
Georgetown College	Georgetown, Kentucky	1,109	Baccalaureate College	Private
Indiana University Bloomington	Bloomington, Indiana	32,986	R1 – High Research Activity	Public
Oklahoma Baptist University	Shawnee, Oklahoma	1,808	Baccalaureate College	Private
University of Kentucky	Lexington, Kentucky	22,227	R1 – High Research Activity	Public
University of Michigan-Ann Arbor	Ann Arbor, Michigan	31,329	R1 – High Research Activity	Public
University of Cincinnati	Cincinnati, Ohio	28,657	R1 – High Research Activity	Public

Table 3.2 Institution start dates and week numbers for survey distribution.

Institution	Semester Start Date	Week Numbers, Survey 1	Week Numbers, Survey 2	Number of Participants
Centre College	August 30, 2021	Weeks 2-4	Weeks 8-10	3
Georgetown College	August 23, 2021	Weeks 3-5	Weeks 9-11	2
Indiana University Bloomington	August 23, 2021	Weeks 3-5	Weeks 9-11	1
Oklahoma Baptist University	August 19, 2021	Weeks 4-6	Weeks 10-12	30
University of Kentucky	August 23, 2021	Weeks 3-5	Weeks 9-11	201
University of Michigan-Ann Arbor	August 30, 2021	Weeks 2-4	Weeks 8-10	2
University of Cincinnati	August 23, 2021	Weeks 3-5	Weeks 9-11	1

Participants also reported 49 different majors, with Communication (n = 23), Nursing (n = 20), Integrated Strategic Communication (n = 18), Psychology & Behavioral Sciences (n = 15), and Economics & Finance (n = 13) being the most popular. As several participants came from institutions where first-year and sophomore students had not yet declared a major, 5 were undecided. All participants received some sort of financial aid from their institution, with 158 receiving scholarships, 63 receiving federal loans, 61 receiving university grants, and 4 receiving federal work study. Of the sample, 34 were first-generation college students.

Finally, participants reported hearing about the survey from a variety of sources, with 149 hearing about the survey from the SONA research system on which the survey was located at the University of Kentucky, while 85 heard about the survey from an instructor, 4 heard about it from a friend, and 2 preferred not to say where they heard about the survey.

3.3.1 Instructors

As part of the second survey, participants were asked to provide demographic data about the instructors on whom they were reporting. In terms of demographics, these instructors were predominantly male (n = 129), with the remaining instructors identifying as female (n = 110) or trans/nonbinary (n = 1). Instructors were also predominantly white (n = 193), followed by Black or African American (n = 25), Asian (n = 12), Hispanic or Latinx (n = 7), and American Indian or Alaskan Native (n = 1). Participants could report if their instructors' race fit into an "other" category, where they could specify their instructor's race in a textbox; just one participant checked this box but did not provide any additional information.

In terms of rank, instructors were believed to be primarily full professors (n = 163), followed by lecturers (n = 19), associate professors (n = 10), teaching assistants (n = 7), instructors of record (n = 6), assistant professors (n = 2), and adjuncts (n = 1), while 29 participants did not report their instructor's ranking. Participants were allowed to report if their instructor's rank fit into an "other" category, where they could specify their instructor's rank in a textbox; one participant listed their instructor as a "professor and CFO" at their institution.

Finally, instructors represented a total of 34 academic disciplines, with Communication (n = 34), History (n = 13), Psychology (n = 9), English (n = 7), and Business Management (n = 5) being the most popular, while 112 participants did not provide their instructor's discipline.

3.4 Procedures

Once potential participants arrived at the survey hosted in Qualtrics, they first viewed the informed consent cover letter and agreed to participate in the study. Those who chose not to participate, but were still enrolled in the study via SONA, were re-routed to an alternative assignment that allowed them to receive study credit (as required by the university's Institutional Review Board). Those choosing to participate then began the survey, reporting on their instructional expectations and engagement, before providing basic demographic information. They were then re-routed to a new survey to provide their email address. For every set of items in the Time 1 survey, participants were asked to consider the behaviors they expect an instructor in a face-to-face, traditional classroom to use, as well as of their engagement in their current classes.

Participants then received the second survey link via email four weeks after they completed the first survey. Once they arrived at the second survey hosted on Qualtrics, they began the survey, where participants were asked to report on the actual behaviors the professor of their first face-to-face, traditional class uses each week. They were also asked to report on their own engagement behaviors displayed in that instructor's class. Finally, for data matching, participants were finally asked to provide basic demographic information.

3.5 Measures

To measure students' expectations of their instructors' behaviors and instructors' actual behaviors in the classroom, each survey included the following measures. Survey one can be found in Appendix A while survey two can be found in Appendix B.

3.5.1 Credibility

Instructor credibility was measured using all items from McCroskey and Teven's (1999) source credibility scale. The measure includes 18 items that gauge credibility across 3 dimensions: competence (e.g., "intelligent vs. unintelligent"); goodwill (e.g., "cares about me vs. doesn't care about me"); and trustworthiness (e.g., "honest vs. dishonest"). All items in the scale were measured across a 7-point Likert scale, with opposites from each item (e.g., "phoney" and "genuine") placed on opposite ends of the scale. In McCroskey and Teven's (1999) use of the scale, all dimensions were found to be reliable: competence ($\alpha = 0.85$); goodwill ($\alpha = 0.92$); and trustworthiness ($\alpha = 0.92$). As the scale was refined over several decades to comprehensively include these specific dimensions of credibility in the face-to-face classroom, it is considered a valid measurement of the

construct (e.g., Graham, 2009; Myers & Martin, 2018). Following the advice of both McCroskey and Teven (1999) and Finn et al. (2009), each dimension was analyzed separately during data analysis rather than collapsing them to make a summative score for credibility.

For the Time 1 survey, all items were modified to reflect on general expectations using the question stem "In responding to [item numbers], please consider the behaviors you expect an instructor in a face-to-face, traditional classroom to use. I expect my professor to be…" In the Time 1 survey, all three dimensions were found to be reliable: competence ($\alpha = 0.82$, $M = 6.49$, $SD = 0.59$); goodwill ($\alpha = 0.85$, $M = 5.77$, $SD = 0.91$); and trustworthiness ($\alpha = 0.88$, $M = 6.62$, $SD = 0.58$).

For the Time 2 survey, the directions were modified to reflect on the actual behaviors using the question stem "In responding to [item numbers], please consider the behaviors of the professor of your first face-to-face, traditional class each week. My professor is…" In the Time 2 survey, all three dimensions were found to be reliable: competence ($\alpha = 0.88$, $M = 6.24$, $SD = 0.81$); goodwill ($\alpha = 0.86$, $M = 5.13$, $SD = 0.71$); and trustworthiness ($\alpha = 0.92$, $M = 6.22$, $SD = 0.87$).

3.5.2 Rapport

Rapport was measured using all items from Frisby and Martin's (2010) modified rapport measure, adapted from Gremler and Gwinner's (2000) scale that measures rapport in the service industry. The measure includes 11 items that gauge rapport across 2 dimensions: enjoyable interaction (e.g., "I look forward to seeing my instructor in class"); and personal connection (e.g., "I have a personal relationship with my instructor"). All items in the scale were measured across a 7-point Likert scale, from 1 (strongly disagree)

to 7 (strongly agree). In Frisby and Martin's (2010) testing of the scale, the scale was found to be reliable ($\alpha = 0.96$). Studies by numerous instructional scholars (e.g., Frisby et al., 2014; Frisby et al., 2017) have validated the scale for use in examining rapport in the face-to-face classroom. It has also been used as a summative scale (i.e., all four subscales together to create a single score) in previous studies (e.g., Frisby et al., 2014; Frisby & Gaffney, 2015); as such, it was used that way in this study.

For the Time 1 survey, all items were modified to reflect on general expectations using the question stem "In responding to [item numbers], please consider the relationship you expect to have with your instructor in a face-to-face, traditional college classroom." In the Time 1 survey, both dimensions were found to be reliable: enjoyable interaction ($\alpha = 0.82$; $M = 5.21$, $SD = 0.93$); and personal connection ($\alpha = 0.91$, $M = 4.23$, $SD = 1.30$).

For the Time 2 survey, the directions were modified to reflect on the actual behaviors using the question stem "In responding to [item numbers], please consider the relationship you have with the professor of your first face-to-face, traditional class each week." In the Time 2 survey, both dimensions were found to be reliable: enjoyable interaction ($\alpha = 0.93$, $M = 5.17$, $SD = 1.35$); and personal connection ($\alpha = 0.93$, $M = 4.19$, $SD = 1.53$).

3.5.3 Confirmation

Confirmation was measured using all items from Ellis's (2000) teacher confirmation scale. The measure includes 27 items that gauge confirmation across four dimensions: responses to student questions and comments (e.g., "Takes time to answer students' questions fully"); demonstrated interest (e.g., "Makes an effort to get to know students"); teaching style (e.g., "Uses a variety of teaching techniques to help students

understand course material"); and absence of disconfirmation (e.g., the reverse-coded "Puts students down when they go to the teacher for help outside of class"). All items in the scale were measured across a 5-point Likert scale, from 0 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). In Ellis's (2000) development of the scale, all four dimensions were found to be reliable: responses to student questions and comments ($\alpha = 0.86$); demonstrated interest ($\alpha = 0.85$); teaching style ($\alpha = 0.85$); and absence of disconfirmation ($\alpha = 0.92$). Though this scale is the only measure of the construct available to instructional communication scholars, it has been validated by various scholars (e.g., Goodboy & Myers, 2008; Goldman et al., 2014) throughout its two decades of use in face-to-face classrooms. It has also been used as a summative scale (i.e., all four subscales together to create a single score) in previous studies (e.g., Ellis, 2000; Ellis, 2004) because, as argued by Ellis (2000), all four dimensions must be present for a student to feel confirmed in the classroom. As such, it was used as a summative scale in this study.

For the Time 1 survey, all items were modified to reflect on general expectations using the question stem "In responding to [item numbers], please consider the behaviors you expect an instructor in a face-to-face, traditional classroom to use. I expect my professor to…" In the Time 1 survey, all four dimensions were found to be reliable: responses to student questions and comments ($\alpha = 0.70$; $M = 3.51$, $SD = 0.47$); demonstrated interest ($\alpha = 0.80$; $M = 3.34$, $SD = 0.56$); teaching style ($\alpha = 0.77$; $M = 3.32$, $SD = 0.59$); and absence of disconfirmation ($\alpha = 0.79$, $M = 0.38$, $SD = 0.44$).

For the Time 2 survey, the directions were modified to reflect on the actual behaviors using the question stem "In responding to [item numbers], please consider the behaviors of the professor of your first face-to-face, traditional class each week. My

professor…" In the Time 2 survey, all four dimensions were found to be reliable: responses to student questions and comments ($\alpha = 0.80$; $M = 3.28$, $SD = 0.65$); demonstrated interest ($\alpha = 0.84$; $M = 3.09$, $SD = 0.75$); teaching style ($\alpha = 0.81$, $M = 2.78$, $SD = 0.83$); and absence of disconfirmation ($\alpha = 0.87$, $M = 0.54$, $SD = 0.60$).

3.5.4 Digital Literacy

Digital literacy was measured using all items from Ng's (2012) digital literacy scale. The measure includes 15 items that gauge digital literacy across four dimensions: attitude statements (e.g., "I like using ICT for learning"); technical (e.g., "I know how to solve my own technical problems"); cognitive (e.g., "I am familiar with issues related to web-based activities"); and social-emotional (e.g., "ICT enables me to collaborate better with my peers on project work and other learning activities"). All items in the scale were measured across a 5-point Likert scale, from 1 (not at all true) to 5 (always true). In Ng's (2012) multi-phase development, the scale was found to be reliable ($\alpha > 0.75$). As the scale is one of the only digital literacy scales that (a) does not focus on quantifying singular digital literacy skills (e.g., Compeau & Higgins, 1995; Koc & Barut, 2016) and (b) is applicable outside of niche settings (e.g., ETS, 2008; UNESCO, 2018), Ng's (2012) digital literacy scale is one of the only statistically validated ways to measure digital literacy in the face-to-face classroom. Though few studies have used the scale, Ng (2012) argues for using the summative scale (i.e., all four subscales together to create a single score) because, in his model, a person must possess cognitive, technical, and social-emotional skills, in addition to having the right attitude toward technology, in order to be considered digitally literate. As such, it was used as a summative scale in this study.

For use in this study, several changes were made to these modified attitudes and cognitive skills items to better reflect the expectancy violations focus and the target of the research questions and hypotheses. The term "ICT" in the modified items was replaced with the more general term "technology," allowing for students to reflect on their instructors' general technology use (e.g., learning management systems, PowerPoints) in their responses to the items. The focus in each item was also shifted from the student (i.e., "I…") to the instructor (i.e. "I expect my instructor…," "My instructor uses…").

In the Time 1 survey, two dimensions were found to be reliable: attitude statements ($\alpha = 0.87$, $M = 3.72$, $SD = 0.72$); and technical ($\alpha = 0.88$, $M = 3.25$, $SD = 0.83$). One dimension, cognitive ($\alpha = 0.66$, $M = 4.06$, $SD = 0.70$), was approaching reliability, while one dimension, social-emotional ($\alpha = 0.46$, $M = 3.58$, $SD = 0.86$), was found to be unreliable (i.e., an alpha below 0.6), and reliability could not be improved by dropping items from the sub-scale.

In the Time 2 survey, three dimensions were found to be reliable: attitude statements ($\alpha = 0.90$, $M = 4.03$, $SD = 0.78$); technical ($\alpha = 0.92$, $M = 3.77$, $SD = 0.84$); and cognitive ($\alpha = 0.78$, $M = 4.23$, $SD = 0.79$). One dimension, social-emotional ($\alpha = 0.52$, $M = 3.73$, $SD = 0.92$), was found to be unreliable (i.e., an alpha below 0.6), and reliability could not be improved by dropping items from the sub-scale. As the digital literacy, social-emotional dimension was found to be unreliable in both surveys, its two items were removed from analysis.

3.5.5 Engagement

Engagement was measured using all items from Mazer's (2012) student engagement scale. The measure includes 13 items that gauge engagement across four

dimensions: silent in-class behaviors (e.g., "I listen attentively to my instructors during class"); oral in-class behaviors (e.g., "I orally participate during class discussions"); thinking about course content (e.g., "I think about how the course materials are related to my life"); and out-of-class behaviors (e.g., "I study for tests and quizzes"). All items were measured across a 7-point Likert scale, from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). In one of Mazer's (2013) original studies, the scale was found to be reliable across all four dimensions: silent in-class behaviors ($\alpha = .77$); oral in-class behaviors ($\alpha = .91$); thinking about course content ($\alpha = .92$); and out-of-class behaviors ($\alpha = .81$). As Mazer's (2012) measure encapsulates not only traditional (i.e., oral participation) engagement behaviors but other process-oriented ones as well, it is considered a valid measure of engagement in face-to-face classrooms (e.g., Frymier & Houser, 2018) and as such, has been used frequently by instructional scholars examining the construct in that setting. Because students reported on their actual engagement behaviors during both surveys 1 and 2, no modifications were made to this scale.

In the Time 1 survey, all four dimensions were found to be reliable: silent in-class behaviors ($\alpha = 0.82, M = 5.90, SD = 0.84$); oral in-class behaviors ($\alpha = 0.91, M = 4.70, SD = 1.48$); thinking about course content ($\alpha = 0.86, M = 5.29, SD = 1.28$); and out-of-class behaviors ($\alpha = 0.75, M = 5.09, SD = 1.15$).

In the Time 2 survey, all four dimensions were found to be reliable: silent in-class behaviors ($\alpha = 0.86, M = 5.73, SD = 1.06$); oral in-class behaviors ($\alpha = 0.90, M = 4.79, SD = 1.64$); thinking about course content ($\alpha = 0.91, M = 5.36, SD = 1.42$); and out-of-class behaviors ($\alpha = 0.77, M = 5.15, SD = 1.31$).

3.5.6 Demographics

Students were asked to report basic demographic information, including their gender, race, year in school, and age, as well as the name of the school they attend. To match student data between the Time 1 and Time 2 surveys, students were also asked to provide the last four digits of their phone numbers, which allowed for them to remain anonymous in the data collection process (i.e., not collecting student ID numbers or birthdates). Additionally, in the Time 2 survey, students were asked to report instructor demographics (i.e., gender identity, race, rank, discipline).

3.6 Creation of Expectancy Violations Variables

Prior to testing H_1 and H_2, students were placed into the appropriate expectancy violations groups for comparison on each of the instructional communication scales (i.e., negative violation group, met expectations group, and positive violations group). Previous instructional scholars have used this method of creating groups in their studies of expectations in the classroom (e.g., Houser, 2005, 2006). These groups were created using the same process as Frisby et al. (2014) in their study on rapport and classroom participation, where participants were grouped based on means and standard deviations from those means. Specifically, the standard deviation for each expectation mean was used to create the groups (see Table 3.3). Those whose experiences were one standard deviation or lower than the expectations mean were placed in the negative violations group. Those whose experiences were within one standard deviation of the expectations mean were placed in the met expectations group. Those whose experiences were one standard deviation or higher than the expectations mean were placed in the positive violations group.

For credibility (competence; $M = 6.49$, $SD = 0.59$), there were 57 participants in the negative violations group (i.e., $M = 5.9$ or below), 183 in the met expectations group (i.e., $M = 6$-7.08), and 0 in the positive violations group (i.e., $M = 7.09$ or above). For credibility (goodwill; $M = 5.78$, $SD = 0.91$), there were 91 participants in the negative violations group (i.e., $M = 4.87$ or below), 149 in the met expectations group (i.e., $M = 4.88$-6.69), and 0 in the positive violations group (i.e., $M = 6.7$ or above). For credibility (trustworthiness; $M = 6.62$, $SD = 0.59$), there were 90 participants in the negative violations group (i.e., $M = 6.03$ or below), 150 in the met expectations group (i.e., $M = 6.04$-7.21), and 0 in the positive violations group (i.e., $M = 7.22$ or above).

For summative rapport ($M = 4.71$, $SD = 1.05$), there were 50 participants in the negative violations group (i.e., $M = 3.66$ or below), 126 in the met expectations group (i.e., $M = 3.67$-5.76), and 64 in the positive violations group (i.e., $M = 5.77$ or above). For enjoyable interaction, there were 51 participants in the negative violations group (i.e., $M = 4.28$), 118 in the met expectations group (i.e., $M = 4.29$-6.16), and 71 in the positive violations group (i.e., $M = 6.17$ or above). For personal connection, there were 54 participants in the negative violations group (i.e., $M = 2.93$ or below), 132 in the met expectations group (i.e., $M = 2.94$-5.53), and 54 in the positive violations group (i.e., $M = 5.54$ or above).

For summative confirmation ($M = 3.44$, $SD = 0.43$), there were 92 participants in the negative violations group (i.e., $M = 3.01$ or below), 123 in the met expectations group (i.e., $M = 3.02$-3.87), and 25 in the positive violations group (i.e., $M = 3.88$ or above). For responses to student questions and comments, there were 86 participants in the negative violations group (i.e., $M = 3.04$ or below), 97 in the met expectations group (i.e., $M = 3.05$-

3.98), and 57 in the positive violations group (i.e., *M* = 3.99 or above). For demonstrated interest, there were 75 participants in the negative violations group (i.e., *M* = 2.78 or below), 127 in the met expectations group (i.e., *M* = 2.79-3.90), and 38 in the positive violations group (i.e., *M* = 3.91 or above). For teaching style, there were 108 participants in the negative violations group (i.e., *M* = 2.72 or below), 111 in the met expectations group (i.e., *M* = 2.73-3.92), and 21 in the positive violations group (i.e., *M* = 3.93 or above). For absence of disconfirmation, there were 53 participants in the negative violations group (i.e., *M* = 3.17 or below) and 105 in the met expectations group (i.e., *M* = 3.18-3.87), and 82 in the positive violations group (i.e., *M* = 3.88 or above).

Finally, for summative digital literacy (*M* = 3.68, *SD* = 0.63), there were 20 participants in the negative violations group (i.e., *M* = 3.05 or below), 144 in the met expectations group (i.e., *M* = 3.06-4.31), and 76 in the positive violations group (i.e., *M* = 4.32 or above). For attitude statements, there were 30 participants in the negative violations group (i.e., *M* = 3.01 or below), 135 in the met expectations group (i.e., *M* = 3.02-4.45), and 75 in the positive violations group (i.e., *M* = 4.46 or above). For technical, there were 16 participants in the negative violations group (i.e., *M* = 2.41 or below), 138 in the met expectations group (i.e., *M* = 2.42-4.09), and 86 in the positive violations group (i.e., *M* = 4.09 or above). For cognitive, there were 32 participants in the negative violations group (i.e., *M* = 3.37 or below), 120 in the met expectations group (i.e., *M* = 3.38-4.77), and 88 in the positive violations group (i.e., *M* = 4.78 or above).

Table 3.3 Violation thresholds for violating groupings.

Scale	Subscale	Negative Violations	Met Expectations	Positive Violations
Instructor Credibility				
	Competence	< 5.90	5.91 - 7.08	> 7.09
	Goodwill	< 4.87	4.88 - 6.69	> 6.70
	Trustworthiness	< 6.03	6.04 - 7.21	> 7.22
Rapport	Summative	< 3.66	3.67 - 5.76	> 5.77
	Enjoyable Interaction	< 4.28	4.29 - 6.16	> 6.17
	Personal Connection	< 2.93	2.94 - 5.53	> 5.54
Confirmation	Summative	< 3.01	3.02 – 3.87	> 3.88
	Responses to Student Questions and Comments	< 3.04	3.05 - 3.98	> 3.98
	Demonstrated Interest	< 2.78	2.79 - 3.90	> 3.91
	Teaching Style	< 2.72	2.73 - 3.92	> 3.93
	Absence of Disconfirmation	> 3.17	3.18 - 3.87	< 3.88
Digital Literacy	Summative	< 3.05	3.06 - 4.31	> 4.32
	Attitude Statements	< 3.01	3.02 - 4.45	> 4.46
	Technical	< 2.41	2.42 - 4.09	> 4.10
	Cognitive	< 3.37	3.38 - 4.77	> 4.78

3.7 Data Analysis Plan

Prior to the analysis of responses to the instructional communication scales (i.e., credibility, rapport, confirmation, digital literacy, engagement), I performed a reliability analysis on each scale and subscale to determine if any had a low reliability that could not be improved by removing items and thus, should be removed from analysis. Only one subscale—social-emotional, which contained two items—was removed from analysis due to a low alpha ($\alpha = 0.46$ for the Time 1 survey; $\alpha = 0.52$ for the Time 2 survey) that could not be improved by removing either of the items from analysis.

RQ_1 asked what Gen Z students expect of their instructors in terms of (a) credibility, (b) rapport, (c) confirmation, and (d) digital literacy. To answer this question, I gathered descriptive statistics (i.e., means, standard deviations) from survey one because they showed the "average" level at which an instructor was expected to display the behaviors associated with each variable.

RQ_2 asked how, if at all, student expectations and instructor behaviors align. To answer this question, I performed a series of paired-samples t-tests that compared the expectations means and experiences means for all four variables because it allowed for the determination of whether the mean differences between these two means was zero.

H_1, which proposed that students whose expectations are negatively violated will report lower engagement, and H_2, which proposed that students whose expectations are met and/or positively violated will report higher engagement, were tested using a series of analysis of variance (ANOVA) tests, where the types of engagement (i.e., silent, oral, thinking, out of class) served as the dependent variables and the student violation groups served as the fixed factor. To determine which group pairings are significant, I used the

Scheffe post-hoc test as it allowed for testing all three possible contrasts between all group means at once rather than two at a time (Field, 2009).

Finally, to test the model proposed in Chapter 2, I used four multiple linear regressions to determine if the model is a good fit to the data. Because multiple linear regressions assume a linear relationship between the input variables (i.e., the difference between expectations and experiences) and the output variable (i.e., the type of engagement), this analysis was appropriate to test the theory-driven model (Field, 2009). It also allowed for the testing of multiple predictors (i.e., credibility, rapport, confirmation, and digital literacy violation groups) against the outcome variable (Field, 2009).

The next chapter reports the results from these analyses as they relate to the proposed research questions and hypotheses.

CHAPTER 4. RESULTS

The research questions and hypotheses posed in this study aimed to understand the difference between Gen Z's expectations of and their actual experiences with college instructors and how these potential violations can impact their engagement in the classroom.

RQ_1 asked what Gen Z students expect of their instructors in terms of (a) credibility, (b) rapport, (c) confirmation, and (d) digital literacy. This question was answered by gathering descriptive statistics (i.e., means, standard deviations) that allowed for the comparison of students' mean scores on each of the scales and sub-scales on the first survey (see Table 4.1). Participants expected moderate levels of rapport (M = 4.71, on a scale of 1 to 7), and high levels of credibility (competence) (M = 6.49, on a scale of 1 to 7), credibility (goodwill) (M = 5.78, on a scale of 1 to 7), credibility (trustworthiness) (M = 6.62, on a scale of 1 to 7), confirmation (M = 3.44, on a scale of 0 to 4), and digital literacy (M = 3.68, on a scale of 1 to 5).

Table 4.1 Students' expectations of instructors for credibility, rapport, confirmation, and digital literacy.

Scale	Subscale	Mean	Standard Deviation
Instructor Credibility			
	Competence	6.49	0.59
	Goodwill	5.78	0.91
	Trustworthiness	6.62	0.59
Rapport	Summative	4.71	1.05
	Enjoyable Interaction	5.22	0.94
	Personal Connection	4.23	1.30
Confirmation	Summative	3.44	0.43
	Responses to Student Questions and Comments	3.51	0.47
	Demonstrated Interest	3.34	0.56
	Teaching Style	3.32	0.60
	Absence of Disconfirmation	3.61	0.44
Digital Literacy	Summative	3.68	0.63
	Attitude Statements	3.73	0.72
	Technical	3.25	0.84
	Cognitive	4.07	0.70

RQ_2 asked how, if at all, Gen Z students' expectations are met or violated by their instructors' communication behaviors. The descriptive statistics (i.e., means and standard deviations) on the students' perceptions of instructors (survey 2) were examined (see Table 4). RQ_2 was answered by performing a series of paired-samples t-tests, which compared the expectations means from the Time 1 survey (see Table 4) and experiences means from the Time 2 survey (see Table 4.2) for all four scales to determine whether there were significant differences between expectations and experiences, which were collected at two different time points.

Table 4.2 Students' experiences of instructors for credibility, rapport, confirmation, and digital literacy.

Scale	Subscale	Mean	Standard Deviation
Instructor Credibility			
	Competence	6.24	0.81
	Goodwill	5.13	0.71
	Trustworthiness	6.22	0.87
Rapport	Summative	4.68	1.36
	Enjoyable Interaction	5.17	1.35
	Personal Connection	4.20	1.53
Confirmation	Summative	3.15	0.61
	Responses to Student Questions and Comments	3.28	0.66
	Demonstrated Interest	3.09	0.75
	Teaching Style	2.77	0.83
	Absence of Disconfirmation	3.46	0.59
Digital Literacy	Summative	4.01	0.71
	Attitude Statements	4.03	0.78
	Technical	3.77	0.85
	Cognitive	4.23	0.80

The paired samples t-tests showed statistically significant violations for three of the four communication behavior expectations and experiences (see Table 4.3). Credibility

(competence) expectations ($M = 6.49, SD = 0.59$) were significantly higher than credibility (competence) experiences ($M = 6.24$, $SD = 0.81$), t (239) = 4.81, $p < 0.001$. Credibility (goodwill) expectations ($M = 5.78$, $SD = 0.91$) were significantly higher than credibility (goodwill) experiences ($M = 5.13$, $SD = 0.71$), t (239) = 10.15, $p < 0.001$. Credibility (trustworthiness) expectations ($M = 6.62$, $SD = 0.59$) were significantly higher than credibility (trustworthiness) experiences ($M = 6.22$, $SD = 0.87$), t (239) = 7.02, $p < 0.001$. In other words, students' expectations for all three dimensions of credibility were significantly negatively violated.

Summative rapport expectations ($M = 4.71, SD = 1.05$) were higher than summative rapport experiences ($M = 4.68$, $SD = 1.36$) but not statistically significant, t (239) = 0.34, $p = 0.73$. Enjoyable interaction expectations ($M = 5.22$, $SD = 0.94$) were higher than enjoyable interaction experiences ($M = 5.17$, $SD = 1.35$) but not statistically significant, t (239) = 0.55, $p = 0.58$. Personal connection expectations ($M = 4.23, SD = 1.30$) were higher than personal connection experiences but not statistically significant ($M = 4.20, SD = 1.53$), t (239) = 1.64, $p = 0.87$.

Summative confirmation expectations ($M = 3.44$, $SD = 0.43$) were significantly higher than summative confirmation experiences ($M = 3.15$, $SD = 0.61$), t (239) = 7.03, $p < 0.001$. Repsonses to student questions and comments expectations ($M = 3.51, SD = 0.47$) were significantly higher than responses to student questions and comments experiences ($M = 3.28, SD = 0.66$), t (239) = 5.29, $p < 0.001$. Demonstrated interest expectations ($M = 3.34$, $SD = 0.56$) were significantly higher than demonstrated interest experiences ($M = 3.09$, $SD = 0.75$), t (239) = 4.64, $p < 0.001$. Teaching style expectations ($M = 3.32$, $SD = 0.60$) were significantly higher than teaching style experiences ($M = 2.77$, $SD = 0.83$), t

(239) = 9.06, $p < 0.001$. Absence of disconfirmation expectations ($M = 3.61$, $SD = 0.44$) were significantly higher than absence of disconfirmation experiences ($M = 3.46$, $SD = 0.59$), t (239) = 3.78, $p < 0.001$. In other words, student's confirmation expectations for summative confirmation, responses to student questions and comments, demonstrated interest, teaching style, and absence of disconfirmation were significantly negatively violated.

Summative digital literacy expectations ($M = 3.68$, $SD = 0.63$) were significantly lower than summative digital literacy experiences ($M = 4.01$, $SD = 0.71$), t (239) = -6.30, $p < 0.001$. Attitude statements expectations ($M = 3.73$, $SD = 0.72$) were significantly lower than attitude statements experiences ($M = 3.04$, $SD = 0.78$), t (239) = -5.01, $p < 0.001$. Technical expectations ($M = 3.25$, $SD = 0.84$) were significantly lower than technical experiences ($M = 3.77$, $SD = 0.85$), t (239) = -7.45, $p < 0.001$. Cognitive expectations ($M = 4.07$, $SD = 0.70$) were significantly lower than cognitive experiences ($M = 4.32$, $SD = 0.80$), t (239) = -2.99, $p = 0.003$. Thus, students' expectations for summative digital literacy and all three dimensions of digital literacy were significantly positively violated.

In sum, credibility and confirmation expectations were significantly negatively violated, while digital literacy expectations were significantly positively violated. No significant violations took place in relation to rapport expectations.

Table 4.3 Students' expectations vs. experiences of instructors for credibility, rapport, confirmation, and digital literacy.

Scale	Subscale	Expectations Mean	Expectations Standard Deviation	Experiences Mean	Experiences Standard Deviation	Overall Change
Instructor Credibility						
	Competence	6.49	0.91	6.24	0.81	-0.25*
	Goodwill	5.78	0.91	5.13	0.71	-0.65*
	Trustworthiness	6.62	0.59	6.23	0.87	-0.39*
Rapport	Summative	4.71	1.05	4.68	1.36	-0.03
	Enjoyable Interaction	5.22	0.94	5.17	1.35	-0.05
	Personal Connection	4.23	1.30	4.20	1.53	-0.03
Confirmation	Summative	3.44	0.43	3.15	0.61	-0.29*
	Responses to Student Questions and Comments	3.51	0.47	3.28	0.66	-0.23*
	Demonstrated Interest	3.34	0.56	3.09	0.75	-0.25*
	Teaching Style	3.32	0.60	2.77	0.83	-0.55*
	Absence of Disconfirmation	3.61	0.44	3.46	0.59	0.15*
Digital Literacy	Summative	3.68	0.63	4.01	0.71	0.33*
	Attitude Statements	3.73	0.72	4.03	0.78	0.30*
	Technical	3.25	0.84	3.77	0.85	0.52*

Cognitive	4.07	0.70	4.23	0.80	0.16*

* indicates a statistically significant ($p = 0.05$ or lower) violation.

H_1 and H_2 predicted that students whose expectations were negatively violated would report lower engagement, while those whose expectations were met and/or positively violated would report higher engagement. These hypotheses were tested using a series of analysis of variance (ANOVA) tests, where the types of engagement (i.e., silent, oral, thinking, out-of-class) served as the dependent variables and each variable's violation groups served as the fixed factor. See Chapter 3 for details on how violation groups were created. Scheffe post-hoc analyses were used to examine all group differences.

4.1 Credibility

When testing the models for each credibility dimension and type of engagement, there were no participants in the positive violations group, meaning that this group was not included in the analysis and that the Scheffe post-hoc analyses of group differences were not able to be performed due to there only being two groups.

4.1.1 Credibility: Competence

The model testing silent engagement behaviors and credibility (competence) violations was significant, F (1, 239) = 21.96, $p < 0.001$, $p\eta^2 = 0.08$, power = 0.99. Participants in the met expectations group reported more silent engagement behaviors (M = 5.91, SD = 0.98) than those in the negative violations group (M = 5.19, SD = 1.12). The model testing oral engagement behaviors and credibility (competence) violations was not significant, F (1, 239) = 1.84, $p = 0.17$, $p\eta^2 = 0.01$, power = 0.27. The model testing thinking engagement behaviors and credibility (competence) violations was significant, F (1, 239) = 8.42, $p = 0.004$, $p\eta^2 = 0.03$, power = 0.82. Participants in the met expectations group reported more thinking engagement behaviors (M = 5.51, SD = 1.37) than those in

the negative violations group (M = 4.89, SD = 1.48). The model testing out-of-class engagement behaviors and credibility (competence) violations was significant, F (1, 239) = 11.74, p = 0.001, $p\eta^2$ = 0.04, power = 0.92. Participants in the met expectations group reported more out-of-class engagement behaviors (M = 5.31, SD = 1.25) than those in the negative violations group (M = 4.64, SD = 1.35). Regarding credibility (competence), these results provide partial support for H_1 and H_2. Specifically, only oral engagement behaviors were similar across violation groups whereas silent, thinking, and out-of-class engagement behaviors were higher for those who had their expectations met by instructors.

4.1.2 Credibility: Goodwill

The model testing silent engagement behaviors and credibility (goodwill) violations was significant, F (1, 239) = 23. 55, $p < 0.001$, $p\eta^2$ = 0.09, power = 0.99. Participants in the met expectations group reported more silent engagement behaviors (M = 5.98, SD = 0.87) than those in the negative violations group (M = 5.33, SD = 1.20). The model testing oral engagement behaviors and credibility (goodwill) violations was significant, F (1, 239) = 7.85, p = 0.005, $p\eta^2$ = 0.03, power = 0.79. Participants in the met expectations group reported more oral engagement behaviors (M = 5.02, SD = 1.61) than those in the negative violations group (M = 4.42, SD = 1.64). The model testing thinking engagement behaviors and credibility (goodwill) violations was significant, F (1, 239) = 45.25, $p < 0.001$, $p\eta^2$ = 0.16, power = 1.00. Participants in the met expectations group reported more thinking engagement behaviors (M = 5.80, SD = 1.17) than those in the negative violations group (M = 4.63, SD = 1.50). The model testing out-of-class engagement behaviors and credibility (goodwill) violations was significant, F (1, 239) = 12.59, $p < 0.001$, $p\eta^2$ = 0.05, power = 0.94. Participants in the met expectations group

reported more out-of-class engagement behaviors ($M = 5.38$, $SD = 1.22$) than those in the negative violations group ($M = 4.77$, $SD = 1.36$). Regarding credibility (goodwill), these results support hypotheses 1 and 2. Specifically, silent, oral, thinking, and out-of-class engagement behaviors were higher for participants whose expectations were met by instructors.

4.1.3 Credibility: Trustworthiness

The model testing silent engagement behaviors and credibility (trustworthiness) violations was significant, F (1, 239) = 22.29, $p < 0.001$, $p\eta^2 = 0.08$, power = 0.99. Participants in the met expectations group reported more silent engagement behaviors ($M = 5.97$, $SD = 0.99$) than those in the negative violations group ($M = 5.33$, $SD = 1.04$). The model testing oral engagement behaviors and credibility (trustworthiness) violations was not significant, F (1, 239) = 2.75, $p = 0.09$, $p\eta^2 = 0.01$, power = 0.38. The model testing thinking engagement behaviors and credibility (trustworthiness) violations was significant, $F(1, 239) = 15.72, p < 0.001, p\eta^2 = 0.06$, power = 0.97. Participants in the met expectations group reported more thinking engagement behaviors ($M = 5.63$, $SD = 1.44$) than those in the negative violations group ($M = 4.90$, $SD = 1.28$). The model testing out-of-class engagement behaviors and credibility (trustworthiness) violations was significant, F (1, 239) = 14.35, $p < 0.001$, $p\eta^2 = 0.05$, power = 0.96. Participants in the met expectations group reported more out-of-class engagement behaviors ($M = 5.39$, $SD = 1.27$) than those in the negative violations group ($M = 4.75$, $SD = 1.27$). Regarding credibility (trustworthiness), these results partially support hypotheses 1 and 2. Specifically, only oral engagement behaviors were similar across violation groups, whereas silent, thinking, and

out-of-class engagement behaviors were higher for those who had their expectations met by instructors.

4.2 Rapport

4.2.1 Summative Rapport

The model testing silent engagement behaviors and rapport violations was significant, F (2, 239) = 18.77, $p < 0.001$, $p\eta^2 = 0.14$, power = 1.00. Scheffe post-hoc analyses indicated that participants in the met expectations group reported more silent engagement behaviors ($M = 5.72$, $SD = 0.89$) than those in the negative violations group ($M = 5.11$, $SD = 1.33$, $p = 0.01$). Additionally, participants in the positive violations group reported more silent engagement behaviors ($M = 6.25$, $SD = 0.83$) than those in the met expectations ($M = 5.72$, $SD = 0.89$, $p = 0.02$) and negative violations groups ($M = 5.11$, $SD = 1.33$, $p < 0.001$).

The model testing oral engagement behaviors and rapport violations was significant, F (2, 239) = 16.37, $p < 0.001$, $p\eta^2 = 0.12$, power = 1.00. Scheffe post-hoc analyses indicated that participants in the positive violations group reported more oral engagement behaviors ($M = 5.66$, $SD = 1.38$) than those in the negative violations group ($M = 4.05$, $SD = 1.79$, $p < 0.001$). Additionally, participants in the positive violations ($M = 5.66$, $SD = 1.38$) group reported more oral engagement behaviors than those in the met expectations group ($M = 4.64$, $SD = 1.53$, $p < 0.001$).

The model testing thinking engagement behaviors and rapport violations was significant, F (2, 239) = 24.43, $p < 0.001$, $p\eta^2 = 0.17$, power = 1.00. Scheffe post-hoc analyses indicated that participants in the met expectations group reported more thinking

engagement behaviors ($M = 5.66$, $SD = 1.38$) than those in the negative violations group ($M = 4.05$, $SD = 1.79$, $p < 0.001$). Additionally, participants in the positive violations group reported more thinking engagement behaviors ($M = 4.64$, $SD = 1.53$) than those in the met expectations ($M = 5.66$, $SD = 1.38$, $p = 0.001$) and negative violations groups ($M = 4.05$, $SD = 1.79$, $p < 0.001$).

The model testing out-of-class engagement behaviors and rapport violations was significant, F (2, 239) = 28.24, $p < 0.001$, $p\eta^2 = 0.19$, power = 1.00. Scheffe post-hoc analyses indicated that participants in the met expectations group reported more out-of-class engagement behaviors ($M = 5.12$, $SD = 1.10$) than those in the negative violations group ($M = 4.25$, $SD = 1.47$, $p < 0.001$). Additionally, participants in the positive violations group reported more out-of-class engagement behaviors ($M = 5.92$, $SD = 1.06$) than those in the met expectations ($M = 5.12$, $SD = 1.10$, $p < 0.001$) and negative violations groups ($M = 4.25$, $SD = 1.47$, $p < 0.001$).

These results support hypotheses 1 and 2. Across all types of engagement behaviors (i.e., silent, oral, thinking, and out-of-class), those who had their summative rapport expectations met or exceeded by their instructors reported higher engagement than those with negatively violated expectations.

4.2.2 Rapport: Enjoyable Interaction

The model testing silent engagement behaviors and enjoyable interaction violations was significant, F (2, 239) = 21.61, $p < 0.001$, $p\eta^2 = 0.15$, power = 1.00. Scheffe post-hoc analyses indicated that participants in the met expectations group reported more silent engagement behaviors ($M = 5.74$, $SD = 0.88$) than those in the negative violations group ($M = 5.04$, $SD = 1.25$, $p = 0.01$). Additionally, participants in the positive violations group

reported more silent engagement behaviors ($M = 6.22$, $SD = 0.89$) than those in the met expectations ($M = 5.74$, $SD = 0.88$, $p = 0.005$) and negative violations groups ($M = 5.04$, $SD = 1.25$, $p < 0.001$).

The model testing oral engagement behaviors and enjoyable interaction violations was significant, $F\ (2, 239) = 11.81$, $p < 0.001$, $p\eta^2 = 0.09$, power = 0.99. Scheffe post-hoc analyses indicated that participants in the positive violations group ($M = 5.49$, $SD = 1.54$) reported more oral engagement behaviors than those in the met expectations ($M = 4.65$, $SD = 1.52$, $p = 0.002$) and negative violations groups ($M = 4.13$, $SD = 1.74$, $p < 0.001$).

The model testing thinking engagement behaviors and enjoyable interaction violations was significant, $F\ (2, 239) = 29.57$, $p < 0.001$, $p\eta^2 = 0.20$, power = 1.00. Scheffe post-hoc analyses indicated that participants in the met expectations group reported more thinking engagement behaviors ($M = 5.42$, $SD = 1.15$) than those in the negative violations group ($M = 4.25$, $SD = 1.50$, $p < 0.001$). Additionally, participants in the positive violations group reported more thinking engagement behaviors ($M = 6.05$, $SD = 1.29$) than those in the met expectations ($M = 5.42$, $SD = 1.15$, $p = 0.005$) and negative violations groups ($M = 4.25$, $SD = 1.50$, $p < 0.001$).

The model testing out-of-class engagement behaviors and enjoyable interaction violations was significant, $F\ (2, 239) = 20.49$, $p < 0.001$, $p\eta^2 = 0.15$, power = 1.00. Scheffe post-hoc analyses indicated that participants in the met expectations group reported more out-of-class engagement behaviors ($M = 5.08$, $SD = 1.21$) than those in the negative violations group ($M = 4.39$, $SD = 1.27$, $p = 0.003$). Additionally, participants in the positive violations group reported more out-of-class engagement behaviors ($M = 5.80$, $SD = 1.17$)

than those in the met expectations ($M = 5.08, SD = 1.21, p = 0.001$) and negative violations groups ($M = 4.39, SD = 1.27, p < 0.001$).

These results support hypotheses 1 and 2. Regarding silent, thinking, and out-of-class engagement behaviors, those who had their enjoyable interaction expectations met or exceeded by their instructors reported higher engagement than those with negatively violated expectations. Additionally, regarding oral engagement behaviors, those who had their enjoyable interaction expectations exceeded by their instructors reported higher engagement than those with met or negatively violated expectations.

4.2.3 Rapport: Personal Connection

The model testing silent engagement behaviors and personal connection violations was significant, $F\ (2, 239) = 12.12, p < 0.001, p\eta^2 = 0.09$, power = 0.99. Scheffe post-hoc analyses indicated that participants in the met expectations group reported more silent engagement behaviors ($M = 5.71$, $SD = 0.99$) than those in the negative violations group ($M = 5.28, SD = 1.23, p = 0.03$). Additionally, participants in the positive violations group reported more silent engagement behaviors ($M = 6.24$, $SD = 0.77$) than those in the met expectations ($M = 5.71$, $SD = 0.99$, $p = 0.007$) and negative violations groups ($M = 5.28$, $SD = 1.23, p < 0.001$).

The model testing oral engagement behaviors and personal connection violations was significant, $F\ (2, 239) = 15.35, p < 0.001, p\eta^2 = 0.11$, power = 0.99. Scheffe post-hoc analyses indicated that participants in the met expectations group reported more oral engagement behaviors ($M = 4.71$, $SD = 1.53$) than those in the negative violations group ($M = 4.07, SD = 1.83, p = 0.04$). Additionally, participants in the positive violations group ($M = 5.71$, $SD = 1.29$) reported more oral engagement behaviors than those in the met

expectations ($M = 4.71$, $SD = 1.53$, $p < 0.001$) and negative violations groups ($M = 4.07$, $SD = 1.83$, $p < 0.001$).

The model testing thinking engagement behaviors and personal connection violations was significant, $F\ (2, 239) = 22.63$, $p < 0.001$, $p\eta^2 = 0.16$, power = 1.00. Scheffe post-hoc analyses indicated that participants in the met expectations group reported more thinking engagement behaviors ($M = 5.33$, $SD = 1.25$) than those in the negative violations group ($M = 4.54$, $SD = 1.63$, $p = 0.001$). Additionally, participants in the positive violations group reported more thinking engagement behaviors ($M = 6.24$, $SD = 1.05$) than those in the met expectations ($M = 5.33$, $SD = 1.25$, $p < 0.001$) and negative violations groups ($M = 4.54$, $SD = 1.63$, $p < 0.001$).

The model testing out-of-class engagement behaviors and personal connection violations was significant, $F\ (2, 239) = 19.22$, $p < 0.001$, $p\eta^2 = 0.14$, power = 1.00. Scheffe post-hoc analyses indicated that participants in the met expectations group reported more out-of-class engagement behaviors ($M = 5.16$, $SD = 1.10$) than those in the negative violations group ($M = 4.04$, $SD = 1.48$, $p = 0.001$). Additionally, participants in the positive violations group reported more out-of-class engagement behaviors ($M = 5.86$, $SD = 1.19$) than those in the met expectations ($M = 5.16$, $SD = 1.10$, $p = 0.002$) and negative violations groups ($M = 4.04$, $SD = 1.48$, $p < 0.001$).

These results support hypotheses 1 and 2. Regarding silent, oral, thinking, and out-of-class engagement behaviors, those who had their personal connection expectations met or exceeded by their instructors reported higher engagement than those with negatively violated expectations.

4.3 Confirmation

4.3.1 Summative Confirmation

The model testing silent engagement behaviors and confirmation violations was significant, F (2, 239) = 15.85, $p < 0.001$, $p\eta^2 = 0.11$, power = 0.99. Scheffe post-hoc analyses indicated that participants in the met expectations group reported more silent engagement behaviors ($M = 5.91$, $SD = 0.89$) than those in the negative violations group ($M = 5.32$, $SD = 1.16$, $p < 0.001$). Additionally, participants in the positive violations group reported more silent engagement behaviors ($M = 6.43$, $SD = 0.79$) than those in the negative violations group ($M = 5.32$, $SD = 1.16$, $p < 0.001$).

The model testing oral engagement behaviors and confirmation violations was significant, F (2, 239) = 14.26, $p < 0.001$, $p\eta^2 = 0.11$, power = 0.99. Scheffe post-hoc analyses indicated that participants in the met expectations group reported more oral engagement behaviors ($M = 4.93$, $SD = 1.56$) than those in the negative violations group ($M = 4.26$, $SD = 1.65$, $p = 0.009$). Additionally, participants in the positive violations group reported more oral engagement behaviors ($M = 6.08$, $SD = 1.11$) than those in the met expectations ($M = 4.93$, $SD = 1.56$, $p = 0.004$) and negative violations groups ($M = 4.26$, $SD = 1.65$, $p < 0.001$).

The model testing thinking engagement behaviors and confirmation violations was significant, F (2, 239) = 22.06, $p < 0.001$, $p\eta^2 = 0.16$, power = 1.00. Scheffe post-hoc analyses indicated that participants in the met expectations group reported more thinking engagement behaviors ($M = 5.65$, $SD = 1.26$) than those in the negative violations group ($M = 4.70$, $SD = 1.44$, $p < 0.001$). Additionally, participants in the positive violations group reported more thinking engagement behaviors ($M = 6.37$, $SD = 1.02$) than those in the met

expectations ($M = 5.65$, $SD = 1.26$, $p = 0.04$) and negative violations groups ($M = 4.70$, $SD = 1.44$, $p < 0.001$).

The model testing out-of-class engagement behaviors and confirmation violations was significant, $F\ (2, 239) = 16.86$, $p < 0.001$, $p\eta^2 = 0.12$, power = 1.00. Scheffe post-hoc analyses indicated that participants in the met expectations group reported more out-of-class engagement behaviors ($M = 5.37$, $SD = 1.13$) than those in the negative violations group ($M = 4.62$, SD = 1.34, $p < 0.001$). Additionally, participants in the positive violations group reported more out-of-class engagement behaviors ($M = 6.02$, $SD = 1.31$) than those in the met expectations ($M = 5.37$, $SD = 1.13$, $p = 0.05$) and negative violations groups ($M = 4.62$, SD = 1.34, $p < 0.001$).

These results support hypotheses 1 and 2. Across all types of engagement behaviors (i.e., silent, oral, thinking, and out-of-class), those who had their summative confirmation expectations met or exceeded by their instructors reported higher engagement than those with negatively violated expectations.

4.3.2 Confirmation: Responses to Student Questions and Comments

The model testing silent engagement behaviors and responses to student questions and comments violations was significant, $F\ (2, 239) = 16.02$, $p < 0.001$, $p\eta^2 = 0.12$, power = 1.00. Scheffe post-hoc analyses indicated that participants in the met expectations group reported more silent engagement behaviors ($M = 5.75$, $SD = 0.91$) than those in the negative violations group ($M = 5.34$, $SD = 1.10$, $p = 0.02$). Additionally, participants in the positive violations group reported more silent engagement behaviors ($M = 6.30$, $SD = 0.96$) than those in the met expectations ($M = 5.75$, $SD = 0.91$, $p = 0.005$) and negative violations groups ($M = 5.34$, $SD = 1.10$, $p < 0.001$).

The model testing oral engagement behaviors and responses to student questions and comments violations was significant, F (2, 239) = 6.11, p = 0.003, $p\eta^2$ = 0.05, power = 0.88. Scheffe post-hoc analyses indicated that participants in the positive violations group reported more oral engagement behaviors (M = 5.56, SD = 1.58) than those in the met expectations (M = 4.65, SD = 1.56, p = 0.01) and the negative violations groups (M = 4.52, SD = 1.58, p = 0.005).

The model testing thinking engagement behaviors and responses to student questions and comments violations was significant, F (2, 239) = 17.73, $p < 0.001$, $p\eta^2$ = 0.13, power = 1.00. Scheffe post-hoc analyses indicated that participants in the met expectations group reported more thinking engagement behaviors (M = 5.46, SD = 1.34) than those in the negative violations group (M = 4.75, SD = 1.35, p = 0.002). Additionally, participants in the positive violations group reported more thinking engagement behaviors (M = 6.09, SD = 1.28) than those in the met expectations (M = 5.46, SD = 1.34, p = 0.02) and negative violations groups (M = 4.75, SD = 1.35, $p < 0.001$).

The model testing out-of-class engagement behaviors and responses to student questions and comments violations was significant, F (2, 239) = 13.29, $p < 0.001$, $p\eta^2$ = 0.10, power = 0.99. Scheffe post-hoc analyses indicated that participants in the positive violations group reported more out-of-class engagement behaviors (M = 5.84, SD = 1.30) than those in the met expectations (M = 5.10, SD = 1.22, p = 0.002) and the negative violations groups (M = 4.75, SD = 1.23, $p < 0.001$).

These results support hypotheses 1 and 2. Regarding silent and thinking engagement behaviors, those who had their responses to student questions and comments expectations met or exceeded by their instructors reported higher engagement than those

with negatively violated expectations. Additionally, regarding oral and out-of-class engagement behaviors, those who had their responses to student questions and comments expectations exceeded by their instructors reported higher engagement than those with met or negatively violated expectations.

4.3.3 Confirmation: Demonstrated Interest

The model testing silent engagement behaviors and demonstrated interest violations was significant, $F\ (2, 239) = 18.20, p < 0.001, p\eta^2 = 0.13$, power = 1.00. Scheffe post-hoc analyses indicated that participants in the met expectations group reported more silent engagement behaviors ($M = 5.87$, $SD = 0.91$) than those in the negative violations group ($M = 5.21, SD = 1.18, p < 0.001$). Additionally, participants in the positive violations group reported more silent engagement behaviors ($M = 6.31$, $SD = 0.77$) than those in the met expectations ($M = 5.87, SD = 0.91, p = 0.05$) and negative violations groups ($M = 5.21$, $SD = 1.18, p < 0.001$).

The model testing oral engagement behaviors and demonstrated interest violations was significant, $F\ (2, 239) = 13.69, p < 0.001, p\eta^2 = 0.10$, power = 0.99. Scheffe post-hoc analyses indicated that participants in the met expectations group reported more oral engagement behaviors ($M = 4.99$, $SD = 1.51$) than those in the negative violations group ($M = 4.06, SD = 1.64, p < 0.001$). Additionally, participants in the positive violations group reported more oral engagement behaviors ($M = 5.56$, $SD = 1.58$) than those in the negative violations group ($M = 4.06$, $SD = 1.64, p < 0.001$).

The model testing thinking engagement behaviors and demonstrated interest violations was significant, $F\ (2, 239) = 22.84, p < 0.001, p\eta^2 = 0.16$, power = 1.00. Scheffe post-hoc analyses indicated that participants in the met expectations group reported more

thinking engagement behaviors ($M = 5.51, SD = 1.30$) than those in the negative violations group ($M = 4.62, SD = 1.34, p < 0.001$). Additionally, participants in the positive violations group reported more thinking engagement behaviors ($M = 6.31$, $SD = 1.26$) than those in the met expectations ($M = 5.51$, $SD = 1.30$, $p = 0.005$) and negative violations groups ($M = 4.62$, $SD = 1.34$, $p < 0.001$).

The model testing out-of-class engagement behaviors and demonstrated interest violations was significant, $F\ (2, 239) = 19.04, p < 0.001, p\eta^2 = 0.14$, power = 1.00. Scheffe post-hoc analyses indicated that participants in the met expectations group reported more out-of-class engagement behaviors ($M = 5.33$, $SD = 1.12$) than those in the negative violations group ($M = 4.48$, SD = 1.33, $p < 0.001$). Additionally, participants in the positive violations group reported more out-of-class engagement behaviors ($M = 5.85$, $SD = 1.29$) than those in the negative violations group ($M = 4.48$, SD = 1.33, $p < 0.001$).

These results support hypotheses 1 and 2. Across all types of engagement behaviors (i.e., silent, oral, thinking, and out-of-class), those who had their demonstrated interest expectations met or exceeded by their instructors reported higher engagement than those with negatively violated expectations.

4.3.4 Confirmation: Teaching Style

The model testing silent engagement behaviors and teaching style violations was significant, $F\ (2, 239) = 23.75$, $p < 0.001$, $p\eta^2 = 0.16$, power = 1.00. Scheffe post-hoc analyses indicated that participants in the met expectations group reported more silent engagement behaviors ($M = 5.98$, $SD = 0.78$) than those in the negative violations group ($M = 5.30, SD = 1.18, p < 0.001$). Additionally, participants in the positive violations group reported more silent engagement behaviors ($M = 6.66$, $SD = 0.48$) than those in the met

expectations ($M = 5.98, SD = 0.78, p = 0.01$) and negative violations groups ($M = 5.30, SD = 1.18, p < 0.001$).

The model testing oral engagement behaviors and teaching style violations was significant, F (2, 239) = 19.27, $p < 0.001$, $p\eta^2 = 0.14$, power = 1.00. Scheffe post-hoc analyses indicated that participants in the met expectations group reported more oral engagement behaviors ($M = 5.08$, $SD = 1.55$) than those in the negative violations group ($M = 4.21, SD = 1.57, p < 0.001$). Additionally, participants in the positive violations group reported more oral engagement behaviors ($M = 6.26$, $SD = 1.12$) than those in the met expectations ($M = 5.08$, $SD = 1.55$, $p = 0.006$) and the negative violations groups ($M = 4.21, SD = 1.57, p < 0.001$).

The model testing thinking engagement behaviors and teaching style violations was significant, F (2, 239) = 27.12, $p < 0.001$, $p\eta^2 = 0.18$, power = 1.00. Scheffe post-hoc analyses indicated that participants in the met expectations group reported more thinking engagement behaviors ($M = 5.73$, $SD = 1.18$) than those in the negative violations group ($M = 4.73, SD = 1.45, p < 0.001$). Additionally, participants in the positive violations group reported more thinking engagement behaviors ($M = 6.60, SD = 0.87$) than those in the met expectations ($M = 5.73, SD = 1.18, p = 0.02$) and negative violations groups ($M = 4.73, SD = 1.45, p < 0.001$).

The model testing out-of-class engagement behaviors and teaching style violations was significant, F (2, 239) = 14.31, $p < 0.001$, $p\eta^2 = 0.10$, power = 0.99. Scheffe post-hoc analyses indicated that participants in the met expectations group reported more out-of-class engagement behaviors ($M = 5.35$, $SD = 1.14$) than those in the negative violations group ($M = 4.74$, SD = 1.31, $p = 0.002$). Additionally, participants in the positive violations

group reported more out-of-class engagement behaviors ($M = 6.16$, $SD = 1.35$) than those in the met expectations ($M = 5.35$, $SD = 1.14$, $p = 0.02$) and negative violations groups ($M = 4.74$, SD = 1.31, $p < 0.001$).

These results support hypotheses 1 and 2. Across all types of engagement behaviors (i.e., silent, oral, thinking, and out-of-class), those who had their teaching style expectations met or exceeded by their instructors reported higher engagement than those with negatively violated expectations.

4.3.5 Confirmation: Absence of Disconfirmation

The model testing silent engagement behaviors and absence of disconfirmation violations was significant, $F\ (2, 239) = 9.39$, $p < 0.001$, $p\eta^2 = 0.07$, power = 0.98. Scheffe post-hoc analyses indicated that participants in the positive violations group reported more silent engagement behaviors ($M = 6.11$, $SD = 0.78$) than those in the met expectations ($M = 5.63$, $SD = 1.11$, $p = 0.008$) and negative violations groups ($M = 5.37$, $SD = 1.16$, $p < 0.001$).

The model testing oral engagement behaviors and absence of disconfirmation violations was significant, $F\ (2, 239) = 4.93$, $p = 0.008$, $p\eta^2 = 0.04$, power = 0.80. Scheffe post-hoc analyses indicated that participants in the positive violations group reported more oral engagement behaviors ($M = 5.25$, $SD = 1.44$) than those in the met expectations ($M = 4.55$, $SD = 1.77$, $p = 0.01$) and negative violations groups ($M = 4.56$, $SD = 1.56$, $p = 0.05$).

The model testing thinking engagement behaviors and absence of disconfirmation violations was significant, $F\ (2, 239) = 9.37$, $p < 0.001$, $p\eta^2 = 0.07$, power = 0.98. Scheffe post-hoc analyses indicated that participants in the positive violations group reported more

thinking engagement behaviors ($M = 5.89$, $SD = 1.08$) than those in the met expectations ($M = 5.13$, $SD = 1.56$, $p = 0.001$) and negative violations groups ($M = 4.99$, $SD = 1.38$, $p = 0.001$).

The model testing out-of-class engagement behaviors and absence of disconfirmation violations was significant, F (2, 239) = 3.93, $p = 0.02$, $p\eta^2 = 0.03$, power = 0.70. Scheffe post-hoc analyses indicated that participants in the positive violations group reported more out-of-class engagement behaviors ($M = 5.47$, $SD = 1.20$) than those in the met expectations group ($M = 5.00$, $SD = 1.37$, $p = 0.04$).

Regarding absence of disconfirmation, these results support hypotheses 1 and 2. Across all types of engagement, engagement was higher for those who had their expectations met or positively violated by instructors.

4.4 Digital Literacy

4.4.1 Summative Digital Literacy

The model testing silent engagement behaviors and digital literacy violations was significant, F (2, 239) = 15.18, $p < 0.001$, $p\eta^2 = 0.11$, power = 0.99. Scheffe post-hoc analyses indicated that participants in the met expectations group reported more silent engagement behaviors ($M = 5.63$, $SD = 1.01$) than those in the negative violations group ($M = 4.87$, $SD = 1.17$, $p = 0.008$). Additionally, participants in the positive violations group reported more silent engagement behaviors ($M = 6.16$, $SD = 0.93$) than those in the met expectations ($M = 5.63$, $SD = 1.01$, $p = 0.001$) and negative violations groups ($M = 4.87$, $SD = 1.17$, $p < 0.001$).

The model testing oral engagement behaviors and digital literacy violations was significant, F (2, 239) = 8.43, $p < 0.001$, $p\eta^2 = 0.06$, power = 0.96. Scheffe post-hoc analyses indicated that participants in the positive violations group reported more oral engagement behaviors ($M = 5.41$, $SD = 1.52$) than those in the met expectations ($M = 4.53$, $SD = 1.63$, $p = 0.001$) and negative violations groups ($M = 4.32$, $SD = 1.64$, $p = 0.02$).

The model testing thinking engagement behaviors and digital literacy violations was significant, F (2, 239) = 10.52, $p < 0.001$, $p\eta^2 = 0.08$, power = 0.98. Scheffe post-hoc analyses indicated that participants in the positive violations group reported more thinking engagement behaviors ($M = 5.92$, $SD = 1.42$) than those in the met expectations ($M = 5.12$, $SD = 1.37$, $p < 0.001$) and negative violations groups ($M = 4.76$, $SD = 1.09$, $p = 0.004$).

The model testing out-of-class engagement behaviors and digital literacy violations was significant, F (2, 239) = 21.30, $p < 0.001$, $p\eta^2 = 0.15$, power = 1.00. Scheffe post-hoc analyses indicated that participants in the met expectations group reported more out-of-class engagement behaviors ($M = 5.01$, $SD = 1.22$) than those in the negative violations group ($M = 3.88$, $SD = 1.41$, $p = 0.001$). Additionally, participants in the positive violations group reported more out-of-class engagement behaviors ($M = 5.75$, $SD = 1.13$) than those in the met expectations ($M = 5.01$, $SD = 1.22$, $p < 0.001$) and negative violations groups ($M = 3.88$, $SD = 1.41$, $p < 0.001$).

These results support hypotheses 1 and 2. Regarding silent and out-of-class engagement behaviors, those who had their summative digital literacy expectations met or exceeded by their instructors reported higher engagement than those with negatively violated expectations. Additionally, regarding oral and thinking engagement behaviors,

those who had their summative digital literacy expectations exceeded by their instructors reported higher engagement than those with met or negatively violated expectations.

4.4.2 Digital Literacy: Attitude Statements

The model testing silent engagement behaviors and attitude statements violations was significant, $F\ (2, 239) = 15.78, p < 0.001, p\eta^2 = 0.11$, power = 0.99. Scheffe post-hoc analyses indicated that participants in the positive violations group reported more silent engagement behaviors ($M = 6.24, SD = 0.76$) than those in the met expectations ($M = 5.58, SD = 1.01, p = 0.001$) and negative violations groups ($M = 5.17, SD = 1.37, p < 0.001$).

The model testing oral engagement behaviors and attitude statements violations was significant, $F\ (2, 239) = 7.93, p < 0.001, p\eta^2 = 0.06$, power = 0.95. Scheffe post-hoc analyses indicated that participants in the positive violations group reported more oral engagement behaviors ($M = 5.39, SD = 1.45$) than those in the met expectations ($M = 4.56, SD = 1.61, p = 0.002$) and negative violations groups ($M = 4.31, SD = 1.87, p = 0.009$).

The model testing thinking engagement behaviors and attitude statements violations was significant, $F\ (2, 239) = 12.37, p < 0.001, p\eta^2 = 0.09$, power = 0.99. Scheffe post-hoc analyses indicated that participants in the positive violations group reported more thinking engagement behaviors ($M = 5.99, SD = 1.27$) than those in the met expectations ($M = 5.13, SD = 1.42, p < 0.001$) and negative violations groups ($M = 4.81, SD = 1.28, p < 0.001$).

The model testing out-of-class engagement behaviors and attitude statements violations was significant, $F\ (2, 239) = 16.19, p < 0.001, p\eta^2 = 0.12$, power = 1.00. Scheffe post-hoc analyses indicated that participants in the met expectations group reported more

out-of-class engagement behaviors (M = 5.05, SD = 1.15) than those in the negative violations group ($M = 4.23, SD = 1.65, p = 0.005$). Additionally, participants in the positive violations group reported more out-of-class engagement behaviors (M = 5.70, SD = 1.18) than those in the met expectations ($M = 5.05, SD = 1.15, p = 0.002$) and negative violations groups ($M = 4.23, SD = 1.65, p < 0.001$).

These results support hypotheses 1 and 2. Regarding out-of-class engagement behaviors, those who had their attitude statements expectations met or exceeded by their instructors reported higher engagement than those with negatively violated expectations. Additionally, regarding silent, oral, and thinking engagement behaviors, those who had their attitude statements expectations exceeded by their instructors reported higher engagement than those with met or negatively violated expectations.

4.4.3 Digital Literacy: Technical

The model testing silent engagement behaviors and technical violations was significant, F (2, 239) = 8.65, p < 0.001, $p\eta^2$ = 0.07, power = 0.97. Scheffe post-hoc analyses indicated that participants in the positive violations group reported more silent engagement behaviors ($M = 6.10, SD = 0.91$) than those in the met expectations (M = 5.54, $SD = 1.08, p = 0.001$) and negative violations groups ($M = 5.40, SD = 1.10, p = 0.04$).

The model testing oral engagement behaviors and technical violations was significant, F (2, 239) = 5.57, p = 0.004, $p\eta^2$ = 0.04, power = 0.85. Scheffe post-hoc analyses indicated that participants in the positive violations group reported more oral engagement behaviors (M = 5.24, SD = 1.63) than those in the met expectations group (M = 4.50, $SD = 1.59, p = 0.004$).

The model testing thinking engagement behaviors and technical violations was significant, F (2, 239) = 12.17, $p < 0.001$, $p\eta^2 = 0.09$, power = 0.99. Scheffe post-hoc analyses indicated that participants in the positive violations group reported more thinking engagement behaviors ($M = 5.93$, $SD = 1.40$) than those in the met expectations ($M = 5.08$, $SD = 1.28$, $p < 0.001$) and negative violations groups ($M = 4.72$, $SD = 1.71$, $p = 0.006$).

The model testing out-of-class engagement behaviors and technical violations was significant, F (2, 239) = 10.95, $p < 0.001$, $p\eta^2 = 0.08$, power = 0.99. Scheffe post-hoc analyses indicated that participants in the positive violations group reported more out-of-class engagement behaviors ($M = 5.60$, $SD = 1.32$) than those in the met expectations ($M = 4.97$, $SD = 1.16$, $p = 0.001$) and negative violations groups ($M = 4.26$, $SD = 1.59$, $p = 0.001$).

These results support hypotheses 1 and 2. Across all types of engagement behaviors (i.e., silent, oral, thinking, and out-of-class), those who had their technical expectations exceeded by their instructors reported higher engagement than those with met or negatively violated expectations.

4.4.4 Digital Literacy: Cognitive

The model testing silent engagement behaviors and cognitive violations was significant, F (2, 239) = 11.80, $p < 0.001$, $p\eta^2 = 0.09$, power = 0.99. Scheffe post-hoc analyses indicated that participants in the met expectations group reported more silent engagement behaviors ($M = 5.65$, $SD = 0.98$) than those in the negative violations group ($M = 5.11$, $SD = 0.92$, $p = 0.03$). Additionally, participants in the positive violations group reported more silent engagement behaviors ($M = 6.09$, $SD = 1.07$) than those in the met

expectations ($M = 5.65, SD = 0.98, p = 0.01$) and negative violations groups ($M = 5.11, SD = 0.92, p < 0.001$).

The model testing oral engagement behaviors and cognitive violations was significant, $F\ (2, 239) = 4.19, p = 0.01, p\eta^2 = 0.03$, power = 0.73. Scheffe post-hoc analyses indicated that participants in the positive violations group reported more oral engagement behaviors ($M = 5.12, SD = 1.77$) than those in the negative violations group ($M = 4.18, SD = 1.51, p = 0.02$).

The model testing thinking engagement behaviors and cognitive violations was significant, $F\ (2, 239) = 6.84, p = 0.001, p\eta^2 = 0.05$, power = 0.92. Scheffe post-hoc analyses indicated that participants in the positive violations group reported more thinking engagement behaviors ($M = 5.75, SD = 1.53$) than those in the met expectations ($M = 5.22, SD = 1.31, p = 0.03$) and negative violations groups ($M = 4.78, SD = 1.26, p = 0.004$).

The model testing out-of-class engagement behaviors and cognitive violations was significant, $F\ (2, 239) = 12.08, p < 0.001, p\eta^2 = 0.09$, power = 0.99. Scheffe post-hoc analyses indicated that participants in the met expectations group reported more out-of-class engagement behaviors ($M = 5.05, SD = 1.17$) than those in the negative violations group ($M = 4.34, SD = 1.36, p = 0.02$). Additionally, participants in the positive violations group reported more out-of-class engagement behaviors ($M = 5.57, SD = 1.30$) than those in the met expectations ($M = 5.05, SD = 1.17, p = 0.01$) and negative violations groups ($M = 4.34, SD = 1.36, p < 0.001$).

These results support hypotheses 1 and 2. Regarding silent and out-of-class engagement behaviors, those who had their cognitive expectations met or exceeded by their

instructors reported higher engagement than those with negatively violated expectations. Additionally, regarding oral and thinking engagement behaviors, those who had their cognitive expectations exceeded by their instructors reported higher engagement than those with met or negatively violated expectations.

4.5 Summary of Hypotheses

To summarize, H_1 was supported, with negatively violated credibility, confirmation, rapport, and digital literacy expectations leading to lower silent, oral, thinking, and out-of-class engagement behaviors when compared to those with met expectations and/or positive violations.

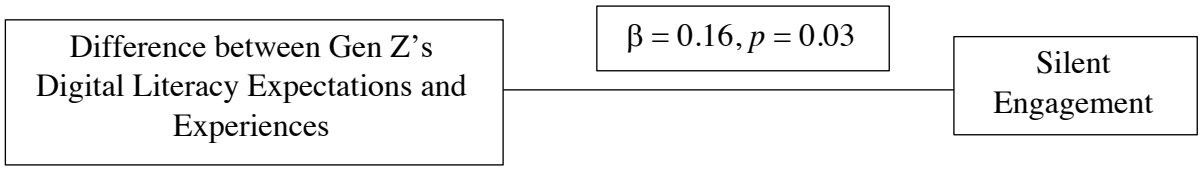
To summarize, H_2 was supported, with met and/or positively violated credibility, confirmation, rapport, and digital literacy expectations leading to higher silent, oral, thinking, and out-of-class engagement behaviors when compared to those with negative violations.

4.6 Theoretical Model

Finally, the expectancy violations model for instructor behaviors was tested using linear regressions, which allowed for the determination of whether the proposed model was a good fit to the data. Prior to analysis, a difference in expectations and experiences variable was created by subtracting each participant's expectations and experiences for each of the variables under study (i.e., credibility, rapport, confirmation, and digital literacy). These differences then served as the predictor variables in the regression analyses, while the type of engagement (i.e., silent, oral, thinking, and out-of-class) served as the response variable.

Multiple linear regression was used to test if the differences between credibility (competence, goodwill, and trustworthiness), rapport, confirmation, and digital literacy expectations and experiences significantly predicted silent engagement. The overall regression was statistically significant ($R^2 = 0.09$), F (6, 239) = 3.91, $p = 0.001$. It was found that digital literacy significantly predicted silent engagement, $\beta = 0.16, p = 0.03$, but that credibility (competence; $\beta = 0.01, p = 0.88$), credibility (goodwill; $\beta = -0.90, p = 0.36$), credibility (trustworthiness; $\beta = 0.12$, $p = 0.16$), rapport ($\beta = 0.43$, $p = 0.66$), and confirmation ($\beta = -0.04, p = 0.84$) were not significant predictors of silent engagement (see Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1 Final expectancy violations model, examining if the differences between expectations and experiences predict silent engagement.



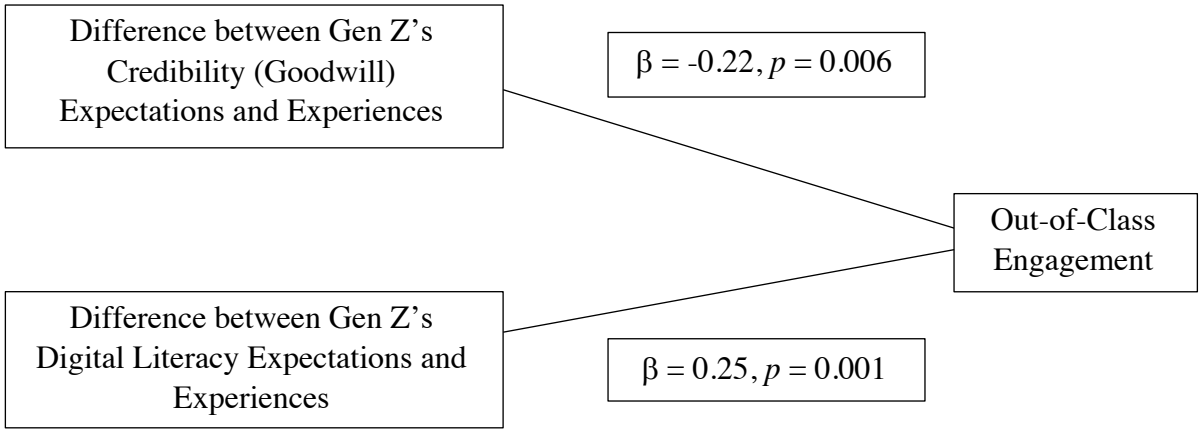
Multiple linear regression was used to test if the difference between credibility (competence, goodwill, and trustworthiness), rapport, confirmation, and digital literacy expectations and experiences significantly predicted oral engagement. The overall regression was statistically significant ($R^2 = 0.09$), F (6, 239) = 4.01, $p = 0.001$, but it was found that none of the variables, credibility (competence; $\beta = -0.05$, $p = 0.53$), credibility (goodwill; $\beta = -0.13$, $p = 0.11$), credibility (trustworthiness; $\beta = -0.008$, $p = 0.93$), rapport ($\beta = 0.11$, $p = 0.59$), confirmation ($\beta = -0.21$, $p = 0.27$), and digital literacy ($\beta = 0.08$, $p = 0.25$) were not significant predictors of oral engagement.

Multiple linear regression was used to test if the difference between credibility (competence, goodwill, and trustworthiness), confirmation, rapport, and digital literacy expectations and experiences significantly predicted thinking engagement. The overall regression was statistically significant ($R^2 = 0.12$), F (6, 239) = 5.58, $p < 0.001$, but that credibility (competence; $\beta = 0.02$, $p = 0.83$), credibility (goodwill; $\beta = -0.04$, $p = 0.62$), credibility (trustworthiness; $\beta = 0.08$, $p = 0.34$), rapport ($\beta = 0.02$, $p = 0.91$), confirmation ($\beta = -0.28$, $p = 0.13$), and digital literacy ($\beta = 0.04$, $p = 0.56$) were not significant predictors of thinking engagement.

Multiple linear regression was used to test if the difference between credibility (competence, goodwill, and trustworthiness), rapport, confirmation, and digital literacy expectations and experiences significantly predicted out-of-class engagement. The overall regression was statistically significant ($R^2 = 0.15$), F (6, 239) = 6.98, $p < 0.001$. It was found that credibility (goodwill; $\beta = -0.22$, $p = 0.006$) and digital literacy ($\beta = 0.25$, $p = 0.001$) significantly predicted out-of-class engagement, but that credibility (competence; β

= -0.78, p = 0.33), credibility (trustworthiness; β = 0.16, p = 0.07), rapport (β = 0.11, p = 0.57), and confirmation (β = -0.11, p = 0.56) were not significant predictors of out-of-class engagement (see Figure 4.2).

Figure 4.2 Final expectancy violations model, examining if the difference between expectations and experiences predict out-of-class engagement.



Taken together, these results revealed that the difference between credibility (competence, goodwill, and trustworthiness), confirmation, rapport, and digital literacy expectations and experiences significantly predicted all four types of engagement (i.e., silent, thinking, oral, and out-of-class engagement). It is important, however, to note that the model associated with each type of engagement differed; only some instructor behaviors under study in this dissertation predicted silent and out-of-class engagement. A different behavior or set of behaviors not under examination in this dissertation might also have predicted these engagement outcomes as well.

4.7 Conclusion

In sum, these results suggest that instructors are significantly negatively violating participants' credibility and confirmation expectations, and significantly positively violating digital literacy expectations. Additionally, violations of participants' credibility, confirmation, rapport, and digital literacy expectations have an impact on their engagement. Specifically, there is a difference in level of engagement not just between those with met expectations and those with negative violations, but also between those with positive violations and the other groups as well. Finally, the theoretical models suggest that a difference in expectations and experiences—specifically, credibility (goodwill), rapport, and digital literacy—can predict varying types of student engagement.

The next chapter will discuss the meanings of these results, examine the practical implications of this study for instructors and higher education administrators, examine theoretical implications for expectancy violations theory, and discuss limitations and future directions for this study.

CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION

As noted by Seemiller et al. (2021), the field of study related to Generation Z in the college classroom is "sparse" (p. 2), as much of the current literature on this new generation of students focuses on their adolescent years (Seemiller & Grace, 2016). This dissertation aimed to add to the literature on college-aged Gen Z students and their perceived expectation violations in the classroom. This chapter will discuss several key findings. First, students have moderate expectations of an instructor's rapport and high expectations of an instructor's credibility (competence, goodwill, and trustworthiness), confirmation, and digital literacy. Second, these credibility, confirmation, and rapport expectations were negatively violated, while digital literacy expectations were positively violated, based on instructors' behaviors demonstrated in the first several weeks of class. Third, these perceived violations have a significant impact on students' levels of engagement, with participants with met or positively violated expectations reporting higher engagement than those with negatively violated expectations.

5.1 What Do Gen Z Students Expect?

5.1.1 Student Expectations

RQ_1 asked what Gen Z students expect of their instructors in terms of (a) credibility, (b) rapport, (c) confirmation, and (d) digital literacy. Results revealed that participants expected moderate levels of rapport and expected high levels of credibility (competence, goodwill, and trustworthiness), confirmation, and digital literacy in the classroom.

In terms of confirmation, rapport, and credibility (goodwill), these findings were partially consistent with the Gen Z literature. Gen Z, Seemiller and Grace (2019) argue, is

a "relationally-minded" (p. 17) generation and value those who seek to build personal connections with them (Spotify for Brands, 2019); thus, it seems apt to assume that Gen Z students' expectations related to all relational variables, like rapport, would be high, but that was not the case in this dissertation. Here, participants expected just a moderate amount of rapport in the classroom. This assumption about the importance of personal connection and compassion does hold true, however, when looking at their expectations related to confirmation and credibility (goodwill) in the classroom. In this dissertation, Gen Z students expected that their instructors would demonstrate a high level of confirmation and competence (goodwill) in the classroom, meaning that these instructors cared and communicated that these students were valuable and significant individuals (Ellis, 2000) and were concerned with them, had their interests at heart, and were sensitive and understanding in the classroom (McCroskey & Teven, 1999). Perhaps it is more important to Gen Z students that their instructor generally show interest in doing what is best for *all* students (e.g., "understanding" and "sensitive," as found in McCroskey & Teven, 1999), rather than each of them individually (e.g., "have a harmonious relationship with my instructor," as found in Frisby & Martin, 2010), fitting with the generation's well-documented interest in social justice and the collective wellbeing of others (e.g., Spotify for Brands, 2019; Twenge, 2018).

When looking at the other credibility dimensions (i.e., competence, trustworthiness), Gen Z's expectations were much more consistent with the Gen Z literature. Spotify for Brands (2019) found that Gen Z-ers value transparency in all aspects of their lives; they want to know the motivations behind why others are communicating with them, and they want that communication to be fair and honest. In this dissertation,

participants expected a high level of credibility (trustworthiness) in the classroom, meaning that they expect instructors to be honest, trustworthy, honorable, moral, ethical, and genuine in the classroom (McCroskey & Teven, 1999), thus supporting results from and generational assumptions made in previous studies (Seemiller & Grace, 2016; Selingo, 2018; Spotify for Brands, 2019). Similarly, in terms of credibility (competence), participants expected that their instructors would be intelligent, trained, expert, informed, competent, and bright in the classroom. These results support those from previous studies, which found that Gen Z students valued "the career on the horizon" (Selingo, 2018, p. 26) above all else in college, and thus, also greatly valued those who could adequately prepare them for those future careers (Twenge, 2018).

Gen Z's digital literacy expectations were also consistent with previous research. Gen Z students, as noted by Selingo (2018), are "reliant on technology" (p. 30) and see technology access as a valuable component of their education; as a result, they become frustrated by instructors and administrators who do not know how to use technology effectively or even use outdated technology in the classroom (Twenge, 2018). A study by Schrodt and Witt (2006), for example, found that instructors are rated the most credible when they are using technology in the classroom as opposed to ignoring it altogether. Drawing from this literature, it seems that Gen Z students' expectations related to digital literacy would be high, and that was found to be true in this dissertation. Participants wanted their instructors to not just be aware of new technologies but also integrate them into the classroom to allow for collaboration and research to improve their learning (Ng, 2012).

Additionally, these findings were consistent with the instructional communication literature. Myers (2001) wrote that instructor credibility was "perhaps one of the most important variables affecting the college instructor-student relationship" (p. 354), and that was certainly proven to be true in this dissertation. Credibility expectations across all three dimensions (i.e., competence, goodwill, and trustworthiness) were so high that, when grouping students into expectancy violation groups, there were no students in each dimension's respective positive violations group. This result could be due to a ceiling effect with McCroskey and Teven's (1999) scale, where most of the responses were gathered at the high end (i.e., a score between 5 and 7), but that has not been found in previous credibility research. What this result suggests, then, is that there is, simply put, no margin for error when it comes to displays of instructor credibility in the college classroom; instructors must be competent, have goodwill, and be trustworthy when interacting with Gen Z students to meet, let alone exceed, their expectations.

Looking at the instructional literature, previous studies (e.g., Faranda & Clarke, 2004; McLaughlin & Erikson, 1981) found that relational-building variables (i.e., warmth, friendliness, approachability, care), like those that make up the constructs of confirmation and rapport, were the most oft-identified characteristics of an "ideal instructor." More recently, however, a study by Goldman et al. (2017) found a different result. When asking students to "design their preferred instructor" (Goldman et al., 2017, p. 287) by "purchasing" qualities from a list, relational qualities like care and rapport were perceived to be luxury items and thus were not deemed absolutely essential for learning to take place. The results from this current dissertation are more in line with those from Goldman et al.

(2017), where rapport was expected to be present but not at as high a level as credibility, confirmation, or digital literacy.

Finally, in terms of digital literacy expectations, these findings were consistent the digital literacy and instructional literature as well. In his seminal work on digital natives, Prensky (2001) argues that digital immigrant instructors, particularly those who eschew the use of technology for more traditional teaching methods, would be negating the needs and expectations of their digital native students. The instructional literature supports this claim, finding that instructors who use technology in their classes, as opposed to relying solely on face-to-face lectures or online-only delivery, are perceived more favorably by their students (e.g., Ledbetter & Finn, 2018; Schrodt & Witt, 2006; Vallade & Kaufmann, 2018). It is clear from the results of this dissertation that Gen Z, our first cohort of true digital native college students, expects that their digital immigrant teachers will be aware of and integrate technology into their lessons, just as Prensky (2001) hypothesized.

This result in particular, that Gen Z students expect a high level of digital literacy from their instructors, was the most surprising when answering RQ_1. In the Gen Z college classroom, instructors cannot simply be averagely digitally literate—they must be well-versed in technologies that can be used for learning and integrate them effectively into their lessons. This high expectation might be due to COVID-19, as data collection for this dissertation took place during the second year of the pandemic after many, if not all, of the participants had spent time learning virtually either in high school or college. After watching their instructors pivot quickly to online learning environments (e.g., Zoom, Google Classroom) with varying degrees of success at the beginning of the pandemic, Gen Z students might have developed high expectations for their future instructors' digital

literacy and technology use in the classroom, expecting that an instructor was able to use the full range of digital tools to supplement rather than hinder their learning.

Comparing these results to similar ones from the previous generation of millennial college students provides some interesting contrasts. Millennials saw their instructors as academic professionals first, considering their relational priorities with these individuals second (Chory & Offstein, 2017). In the present dissertation, Gen Z students did not place as hefty a price on relational connection as scholars (e.g., Seemiller & Grace, 2019) had previously suggested, but relationships were still of a moderate level of importance. While credibility, confirmation, and digital literacy were of the utmost importance, Gen Z students still expected that their instructors would put some emphasis on connecting with them on a relational level (i.e., rapport) in class. Perhaps the starkest contrast, however, is between these two generations' digital expectations. Millennials were also considered to be technologically savvy but not overtly dependent on devices to learn (Isaacs et al., 2020). Here, Gen Z students not only expected that their instructors would not only see the value in using technology for learning but also that their instructors would be digitally literate enough to navigate their own technology in the classroom setting. Drawing on these contrasts, the results from this dissertation suggest that what Selingo (2018) proposed is true: that Gen Z represents "a clear break from the past" (p. 8) and that what previously might have worked with millennial learners will not hold with a new generation in the classroom.

Although the results of this dissertation support the extant Gen Z literature, there are still several new contributions worthy of note. While previous scholars have asked Gen Z students what they expect and want to see from their instructors (e.g., Selingo, 2018),

this dissertation provides quantitative levels of expectation—particularly as they relate to communication in the classroom—for relational and technological variables. We now know that Gen Z does, for example, value relationships but not at the expected level; they expect instructors to use a moderate amount of rapport in the classroom while concentrating most of their effort on credibility, confirmation, and digital literacy. Knowing what is expected in relation to these variables and their respective scales can provide specific, tangible ways that instructors can differentiate their teaching to better support Gen Z (e.g., appearing competent, compassionate, and trustworthy in the classroom, as opposed to simply "communicating clearly," as found in Selingo, 2018, p. 27).

5.1.2 Instructor Expectancy Violations

RQ_2 asked how, if at all, student expectations were met or violated by instructors' behaviors. Results revealed that participants' credibility (competence, goodwill, and trustworthiness) and confirmation expectations were significantly negatively violated, while their digital literacy expectations were significantly positively violated. Additionally, rapport experiences were lower than expectations, but this difference was not statistically significant.

These findings were consistent with the Gen Z literature. In their essay on Gen Z in the classroom, Bertolone-Smith and Spagna (2019) noted that there is a mismatch between "what Gen Z needs and what [educators] are currently providing" (p. 106), and that is certainly true in this dissertation. Gen Z's credibility (competence, goodwill, and trustworthiness) and confirmation expectations were significantly higher than their perceptions of their instructors' use of these behaviors in the classroom, meaning that their expectations were negatively violated. While their rapport expectations did not differ

significantly from their experiences, Gen Z students still held higher expectations of their instructors' use of rapport behaviors than what they were currently receiving. It is concerning that such a significant divide exists between expectations and experiences, as Gen Z students are not receiving the level of relationally focused instruction that they seek and often need to thrive (Seemiller & Grace, 2019). It will continue to be difficult to convince Gen Z students—who are already apprehensive toward higher education (e.g., Bertolone-Smith & Spagna, 2019; Seemiller & Grace, 2016; The Washington Post, 2021)—that investing in a college education is "worth it" if this trend continues.

The only surprising finding for RQ_2 was that digital literacy expectations were significantly positively violated. Drawing on the earlier argument that COVID-19 instilled specific technological expectations in Gen Z students, perhaps the same is true about instilling digital literacy and technological skills in instructors. After adjusting so quickly to the ever-evolving online learning landscape amidst the early days of the pandemic, instructors who would not have otherwise engaged with or depended on instructional technology might have learned new skills and thus become more digitally literate than they were before COVID-19. It is important that instructors continue this upward trend of digital literacy in the classroom and see the value in using technology for pedagogical purposes in the post-pandemic years.

These findings, generally, were also consistent with the instructional literature. As early as 1991, instructional scholars have documented the fact that instructors are not infallible and that they are negatively violating expectations in the classroom in a myriad of ways (e.g., Houser, 2005, 2006; Koermer & Petelle, 1991; Lannutti et al., 2001; Mottet et al., 2007; Schrodt & Witt, 2006; Sidelinger & Bolen, 2015). In the current dissertation,

primarily negative violations took place, with instructors negatively violating credibility (competence, goodwill, and trustworthiness), confirmation, and rapport expectations. As suggested by these results, and supporting the recent arguments made by Gen Z scholars, instructors are not meeting the expectations of the Gen Z students currently populating their classrooms.

These findings were also consistent with the expectancy violations theoretical literature. Expectations operate "within a range" (Burgoon & Hale, 1998, p. 60), as operationalized in this dissertation by grouping participants into expectancy violations groups based on their mean expectations and standard deviations from those means, and they can be violated both positively and negatively by behaviors falling outside of that expected range. As articulated by Burgoon (1993), EVT is built upon the premise that these expectations are more often violated than they are met. This idea certainly holds true in the present dissertation, where instructors violated expectations, both positively and negatively, across all variables. Like all communicators, instructors can violate expectations in ways that significantly impact communication outcomes, as demonstrated by the findings related to student engagement.

In addition to confirming the extant Gen Z, instructional, and expectancy violations literature, this dissertation offers several unique contributions of its own. Gen Z scholars (e.g., Bertolone-Smith & Spagna, 2019; Cheema & Zhang, 2021) have consistently proposed the idea that there is dissonance between what Gen Z students expect and what their instructors provide. This dissertation provides quantitative backing for this assumption, finding that expectations for two out of four variables (i.e., credibility, confirmation) were significantly negatively violated. This dissertation also bucks the trend

in the Gen Z and digital native literature that assumes instructors are not meeting digital and technological expectations in the classroom (e.g., Cooper & Frey, 2021; Seemiller & Grace, 2016), finding that digital literacy expectations were not just met but positively violated by instructors. Just as knowing expectations can help instructors modify their teaching, knowing how they are violating those expectations can assist in that adjustment as well—particularly when, as demonstrated below, those violations can have an enormous impact on Gen Z students' engagement.

5.2 Connecting Gen Z's Expectations with Engagement

5.2.1 Negative Violations and Lower Engagement

Consistent with H_1, students whose expectations were negatively violated would report lower engagement. Specifically, participants with negatively violated credibility (competence) expectations reported lower silent, thinking, and out-of-class engagement; participants with negatively violated credibility (goodwill) competence expectations reported lower silent, oral, thinking, and out-of-class engagement; and participants with negatively violated credibility (trustworthiness) expectations reported lower silent, thinking, and out-of-class engagement. These findings were consistent with the instructional communication literature, which has consistently found that students who perceive their instructors as uncredible have poorer learning outcomes, such as state motivation (Frymier & Thompson, 1992), communication satisfaction (Sidelinger & Bolen, 2016) and affective learning (Mottet et al., 2007), in the classroom. Here, Gen Z students whose instructors were not perceived to be competent, compassionate, or trustworthy suffered greatly, reporting not just lower in-class engagement behaviors like

attendance, participation, or active listening but also fewer study behaviors and thoughts about utilizing the course material outside of class as well (Mazer, 2012).

The same was true for participants with negatively violated rapport expectations, who also reported lower silent, oral, thinking, and out-of-class engagement. Specifically, participants with negatively violated enjoyable interaction and personal connection expectations reported lower engagement across all four dimensions than those with met and/or positively violated expectations. These findings were consistent with the instructional communication literature that links lack of rapport to decreased communication outcomes like state motivation (Frisby & Myers, 2008) and perceived learning (Frisby & Gaffney, 2015). In this dissertation, participants whose instructors were perceived to have not built rapport in the classroom were significantly less engaged both in- and outside of the classroom than those with instructors who did.

Additionally, participants with negatively violated confirmation expectations reported lower silent, oral, thinking, and out-of-class engagement. Specifically, participants with negatively violated responses to student questions and comments, demonstrated interest, teaching style, and absence of disconfirmation expectations reported lower engagement across all four dimensions than those with met and/or positively violated expectations. These findings were consistent with the instructional communication literature, where a lack of confirmation (or even disconfirmation) has been linked to lower communication outcomes like motivation to communicate with an instructor (Goodboy & Myers, 2008) as well as emotional interest in and affect toward the course (Goldman & Goodboy, 2014). Participants whose instructors did not meet confirmation expectations—and thus, could be said to have been disconfirming by showing a demonstrated lack of

interest in their students—were significantly less engaged with the course material than their confirmed counterparts.

Finally, participants with negatively violated digital literacy expectations reported lower silent, oral, thinking, and out-of-class engagement. Specifically, participants with negatively violated attitude statements, technical, and cognitive expectations reported lower engagement across all four dimensions than those with met expectations and/or positively violated expectations. These findings were consistent with the digital literacy literature, which as early as 2001 has proposed that digital natives (i.e., Gen Z college students) do not respond as well to instructors who are not digitally literate or interested in using technology to supplement learning (Prensky, 2001). These findings were also consistent with the instructional communication literature, where instructors' digital illiteracy (i.e., not integrating technology successfully into courses) has been linked to lower levels of student empowerment (Ledbetter & Finn, 2013) and affect (Ledbetter & Finn, 2018). The same was true in the present dissertation, as participants whose instructors did not meet digital literacy expectations were less engaged in the learning process in- and outside the classroom than those whose expectations were met or exceeded.

Taken together, these findings were also consistent with the expectancy violations literature. Burgoon (1993), in her final articulation of the theory, argues that expectations exert "significant influence [not just] on people's interaction patterns…[but also] on the outcomes on their interactions" (p. 41). Certainly, in the present dissertation, expectations played a significant role in not just Gen Z students' perceptions of their instructors but also in their own communication patterns like utilizing engagement behaviors in the classroom. As found by other instructional EVT scholars (e.g., MacArthur & Villagran, 2015;

McPherson et al., 2003), participants suffered greatly when their instructors did not meet their expectations; their choice to avoid rather than engage with their instructors and the course content aligns with Burgoon and Hale's (1988) later-stage model of EVT, where one communicator may choose to disengage from the other in order to show their displeasure at the violated expectations. These results, then, perfectly illustrate what Burgoon and Jones (1976) proposed in their first publication—that actions do, in fact, have dire consequences, particularly when those actions are expectancy violating with a negative valence.

These findings, generally, were also consistent with the engagement literature. As found in an earlier study by the author (2018), students whose expectations of both the academic and social life of their university were negatively violated were less academically and socially engaged than those with met or exceeded expectations, which was again found to be true here. Engagement is an essential component of the learning process, often "the gold standard by which [we] gauge learning" (Frymier & Houser, 2018, p. 54); particularly for Gen Z, it is one of the key variables by which we can predict their satisfaction and learning (Liberman, 2021). Gen Z is perceived to be less engaged than previous generations, partly because of their interest in multitasking with technology as digital natives (Prensky, 2001) and partly because of their distrust in higher education (Twenge, 2018), so it is vital that instructors keep these students engaged in any way they can. It is concerning, then, that students in the negative violations group reported significantly lower levels of engagement across all dimensions (i.e., silent, oral, thinking, out-of-class) than their peers in the met and/or positive violations groups. These students might be suffering academically both in the classroom (i.e., silent and oral engagement) and outside of it (i.e.,

thinking and out-of-class engagement) simply because their instructors are not meeting their credibility, confirmation, rapport, and/or digital literacy expectations.

There could be several additional explanations for why participants with negatively violated expectations reported lower engagement. First, it might be that these students are not well-matched to their universities in terms of fit and belongingness. Strayhorn (2012b) argues that students must be fully integrated into both the academic and social environments of a campus to feel as though they belong, or to "generate feelings among students that they matter" (p. 115). Students who feel as though they belong are more inclined to engage in their coursework and report more out-of-class work hours (i.e., out-of-class engagement) than those who do not (Strayhorn, 2012). If students' expectations are being negatively violated because there is not a good fit between themselves and their university, that might explain their lower levels of engagement. Second, these students might also be generally less motivated than their peers and might simply be engaging accordingly, with violated expectations not even factoring into the equation. Third, these students might be reporting on a class that is a general education or core requirement, where they are not as emotionally invested or interested as they might be in a class for their major and, as a result, are engaging at a lower level than their peers. It might also be that the class those students reported on (i.e., their first face-to-face class each week) was perceived to be "easy" for them, resulting in them engaging accordingly. Fourth, coming into their third academic year impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, these students might be less engaged because they are following the generational trend of perceiving themselves to be negatively impacted by the virus. Nearly half of the Gen Z respondents in a recent poll reported that their academics have been negatively impacted by the pandemic, while 45 percent reported

that the pandemic has had a negative impact on their mental health (The Washington Post, 2021). Simply based on the pandemic's impact on life itself, not to mention the impact it has had on college classrooms, it is apt to assume that it might play some role in students' level of engagement as well.

5.2.2 Met or Positive Violations and Higher Engagement

As predicted in H_2, students whose expectations were met and/or positively violated would report higher engagement. Participants with met credibility expectations reported higher engagement, as there was no positive violations group. Specifically, participants with met credibility (competence) expectations reported higher silent, thinking, and out-of-class engagement; participants with met credibility (goodwill) expectations reported higher silent, oral, thinking, and out-of-class engagement; and participants with met credibility (trustworthiness) expectations reported higher silent, thinking, and out-of-class engagement. It remains unclear what happens when these expectations are positively violated as there was no positive violations group. These findings on met expectations can be explained by the instructional communication literature, where studies have found that instructors meeting or exceeding expectations (e.g., using moderate amounts of technology in the classroom, resisting the "college lite" approach) are rated as more credible by their students (e.g., Mottet et al., 2007; Schrodt & Witt, 2006) and that, in turn, these credible instructors encourage better outcomes, like higher communication satisfaction (Sidelinger & Bolen, 2016) and affective learning (Mottet et al., 2007), in the classroom. Those findings certainly held true in this dissertation, where Gen Z students whose instructors were perceived to be meeting or exceeding credibility expectations across all three

dimensions reported higher engagement behaviors, including active listening and note taking during class as well as studying outside of class.

The same was true for participants with met or positively violated rapport expectations, who also reported higher silent, oral, thinking, and out-of-class engagement. Specifically, participants with met or positively violated enjoyable interaction and personal connection expectations reported higher engagement across all four dimensions than those with met negatively violated expectations. These findings can again be explained by the instructional communication literature that connects increased perceptions of rapport in the classroom to better communication outcomes like affect toward the course and instructor (Frisby & Martin, 2010), participation (Frisby et al., 2014), and out-of-class communication with the instructor (Sidelinger et al., 2016). Of particular note for rapport was that the only significant group difference for oral engagement occurred between the met expectations and positive violations groups, meaning that not only did students with met expectations engage more across the board than their negatively violated peers but also that those with exceeded expectations engaged even more than those with met expectations. These results suggest that building rapport in the classroom is important to Gen Z students, and that meeting or exceeding these expectations can encourage higher engagement.

Additionally, participants with met or positively violated confirmation expectations reported higher silent, oral, thinking, and out-of-class engagement. Specifically, participants with met or positively violated responses to student questions and comments, demonstrated interest, and teaching style expectations reported higher engagement across all four dimensions than those with met negatively violated expectations. Participants with met absence of disconfirmation expectations also reported higher silent and thinking

engagement. These findings can be explained by instructional communication literature where more confirming instructors have been linked to better communication outcomes like affective learning (Goodboy & Myers, 2008), willingness to talk in class, and communication satisfaction (Goldman & Goodboy, 2014). This trend held true in this dissertation, where Gen Z students with instructors whose confirmation behaviors met and/or exceeded their expectations showed higher levels of silent, oral, thinking, and out-of-class engagement behaviors than their negatively violated counterparts.

Finally, participants with met or positively violated digital literacy expectations reported higher silent and out-of-class engagement. Specifically, participants with met or positively violated attitude statements, technical, and cognitive expectations reported higher engagement across all four dimensions than those with met negatively violated expectations. These findings can be explained by the digital literacy literature, confirming what Prensky (2001) posited about digital natives two decades ago—that they crave access to technology and perform better when it is available to them in the classroom setting. Students who perceive their instructors to be digitally literate, and thus sharing their positive sentiments about the use of technology in the classroom, believe themselves to be more engaged and that they will earn higher grades in that instructor's class (Martin & Zahrndt, 2017). It makes sense that Gen Z students, a group of digital natives, would report higher engagement behaviors in a classroom where a teacher met or exceeded their high expectations for technology use and integration in the classroom.

That there were consistent, significant differences not just between the negative violations and the other two groups but also between the met expectations and positive violations groups as well as is particularly interesting. Instructors who met expectations

generally encouraged higher engagement than those who did not, but for those select few who exceeded expectations for confirmation, rapport, and digital literacy, their students reached an even higher level of engagement across all four dimensions. This is especially true for students with positively violated digital literacy (i.e., attitude statements, technical, cognitive) expectations, where there was only a significant difference found between the positive violations group and the other two groups, rather than between the met expectations and negative violations group as well, in terms of silent, oral, and thinking engagement. Looking specifically at the positive violations, these results suggest that there is a great return on investment for instructors who seek to go the extra mile—not simply meeting Gen Z's high expectations, but exceeding them.

These results contribute to the ongoing conversations in both the Gen Z and instructional literature about what makes a "good" instructor. An early study by Faranda and Clarke (2004) found that the top three components of the "ideal instructor" were building rapport, being clear and enthusiastic in content delivery, and being fair in providing feedback and grades to students. Students also valued the instructor's credibility and organizational skills, but these characteristics were less important. A later study by Goldman et al. (2017) found that the top three characteristics students "bought" for their ideal instructor in a budgeting activity were clarity, relevance, and competence, with relational items like care and humor only coming into play when the budget was expanded. Finally, a study by Selingo (2018) focusing exclusively on Gen Z students found that their ideal instructor was one who made class interesting, was enthusiastic about teaching, and communicates clearly. Key to all of these studies is the notion that rhetorical variables, like clarity and relevance, have been and remain top-of-mind for students when evaluating an

instructor's effectiveness and alignment with their expectations, but that relational variables like rapport were not entirely unimportant either. Instructors should aim to meet relational expectations as they are able, but if they attempt to exceed expectations, they may see a richer return in terms of student engagement, as evidenced by the results of this dissertation. A good instructor, then, might not just be one who meets rhetorical and relational expectations but one who exceeds them, encouraging the utmost engagement from their students in their classroom.

This idea of exceeding expectations is perhaps most important when looking at oral engagement in the classroom, as participants with positively violated rapport and confirmation expectations reported higher oral engagement in the classroom than those with met or negatively violated expectations. Oral participation is a term often used interchangeably with engagement, though scholars suggest that they are not equivalent constructs (e.g., Meyer, 2007, 2008) and that participation is merely a component of engagement (Fredricks et al., 2004). However, as oral participation is often prioritized in the fast-paced, lecture-based higher education environment (Lee, 2009), it has become one of the key ways by which instructors gauge learning (e.g., Frymier & Houser, 2016, 2018). Instructors seeking to use oral participation as a way to ascertain if students are learning should be aware of the role that exceeded expectations can play in encouraging that specific type of engagement. The results from this dissertation suggest that students whose rapport and confirmation expectations are exceeded—or, where their instructors are creating a more welcoming environment—are more willing to take that risk in vocalizing their thoughts out loud, aligning with their instructors' oral engagement priorities.

Taken together, these findings were consistent with the expectancy violations literature. As proposed by Burgoon (1993), violated expectations led to a difference in communication outcomes across all three violation groups (i.e., negatively violated, met, positively violated). Participants whose instructors at a minimum met expectations, let alone exceeded them, were more encouraged to show what Burgoon and Hale (1988) labeled as approach behaviors, where they engaged at a higher level than those with negatively violated expectations. These results aligned with previous instructional studies making use of the theory (e.g., Koermer & Petelle, 1991), where instructors who met or exceeded expectations were viewed as better instructors and were thus more likely to be approached by students, than those who did not. Instructional scholars using emotional response theory (ERT) as a theoretical framework have also categorized engagement as an approach behavior, where students of instructors who were incompetent or less relationally-minded in the classroom (and thus, perhaps not meeting expectations) had students who were less likely to demonstrate that approach behavior of engagement in class (e.g., Broeckelman-Post et al., 2016; Mazer, 2013). Interestingly, as Burgoon (1993) posited, those with positive violations reported the highest level of engagement across all dimensions, suggesting that simply meeting expectations is not enough—instructors (and communicators of all types) would be well-served to aim higher and exceed Gen Z's moderate-to-high levels of expectations.

These findings were also consistent with the engagement literature. The hypotheses proposed, in line with decades of instructional research on the construct, that certain conditions in the classroom (i.e., met or violated expectations) would give rise to lower or higher levels of engagement. Of particular use in explaining these results is Handelsman et

al.'s (2005) study that argued that engagement is the result of effective teaching, where an instructor focuses not only delivery of academic content but on building relationships with their students as well. Interpreting the present dissertation's results with this statement in mind, effective teaching, for Gen Z, means meeting or exceeding their expectations particularly as they relate to credibility, rapport, confirmation, and digital literacy; only then will they engage at the desired level in the classroom. These findings can also be related back to Mazer's (2012) initial proposal from his creation of his student engagement scale, that high emotional interest (i.e., investment in the class and in a relationship with an instructor) significantly predicts engagement. If an instructor is meeting or exceeding expectations, perhaps they are evoking a higher level of interest from students that then precipitates a higher level of engagement.

It could, of course, be possible that participants with met or positively violated expectations reported higher engagement for other reasons. First, as suggested by engagement scholars (e.g., Martin, 2009, 2010; Skinner & Belmont, 1993; Skinner et al., 2008), students who report higher engagement are typically also more academically motivated than their peers. It might be that students in the met expectations and positive violations groups were more academically motivated than their peers to begin with, meaning that they would have reported higher engagement regardless of whether their expectations were met. Second, pulling from the argument made for H_1, these students might also be well-matched to their respective institutions in terms of fit and belongingness than those in the negative violations group. As found in a previous study by the author (2018), students whose expectations were met or exceeded by their university—from proximity to larger cities to performing arts to academics and student life—reported higher

academic and social engagement than those with unmet expectations. If these students feel as though they fit and belong on campus, they might again be more engaged based on that fact alone without bringing expectations into the picture. Finally, these students might have reported on their experiences and engagement in a class where they already have a previous positive relationship with their instructor (i.e., an advisor, a repeat instructor from a previous semester) and might be managing their expectations and engaging accordingly.

In addition to confirming the extant literature, this dissertation makes a contribution worthy of note in connecting violated expectations to different levels of engagement. Previous studies (e.g., Mazer, 2012, 2013) have suggested that variations in levels of interest and motivation can impact a student's level of engagement, but rarely has the impact of violated expectations been examined in relation to that specific outcome. From the results of this dissertation, it is clear that those with negatively violated expectations are less engaged than their peers with met or positively violated expectations, partially placing the onus of engagement on the instructor rather than solely on the student.

5.2.3 Expectancy Violations Model

Finally, this dissertation proposed a model, where the difference between expected and experienced instructor communication behaviors (i.e., credibility, rapport, confirmation, digital literacy) would predict each type of engagement (i.e., silent, oral, thinking, out-of-class). All four of the models were statistically significant and accounted for eight to fifteen percent of the variance in engagement. Specifically, digital literacy predicted silent engagement, and credibility (goodwill) and digital literacy predicted out-of-class engagement. These results demonstrate that each of the four types of engagement are unique and that instructor communication behaviors have the potential to lead to

entirely different student outcomes, prompting instructors to consider their learning objectives and communication goals both in and out of the classroom.

In the first model, the difference between digital literacy expectations and experiences significantly predicted silent engagement. This finding was consistent with the digital literacy literature, which has linked the use of digital technology by instructors to increased engagement from students (e.g., Bergdahl et al., 2018; McGuinness & Fulton, 2019). Specifically, this finding was consistent with a meta-analysis of the digital literacy and engagement literature by Bond et al. (2020) that found that the most common type of engagement increased by technology use in the classroom is behavioral—which, like Mazer's (2012) conceptualization of silent engagement, covers a wide range of behaviors, from attendance to active listening to paying attention during class. With digital literacy violations significantly predicting silent engagement, instructors should integrate the moderate levels of technology expected into their lessons and communicate the value of technology in learning to their students to increase engagement behaviors like attendance and paying attention.

The results provide two key insights into the relationship between this variable and silent engagement. First, relational variables like credibility, rapport and confirmation do not appear to play a role in silent engagement; students may not need to perceive their instructor as credible, to feel as though they have a connection with their instructor, or to feel confirmed in the classroom to listen attentively, provide their full attention, and attend classes. This finding suggests that while relational variables might be important to elicit other types of engagement, they are not as important at this most basic level. Building relationships with students likely does not encourage them to come to class, to listen

attentively during class, or to pay attention. What is interesting, however, is the second idea that digital literacy does encourage those behaviors. Instructional scholars have found that students prefer instructors who integrate technology into their courses (Ledbetter & Finn, 2018), experiencing more empowerment (Ledbetter & Finn, 2013) and less psychological reactance (Tatum et al., 2018) when they have access to technology during class. Perhaps the same is true in the present dissertation, where having a digitally literate instructor who integrates technology into and encourages technology use in their classroom promotes engagement at its most basic level of attending and paying attention during class.

In the second model, none of the variables significantly predicted oral engagement. Recall that oral engagement, in Mazer's (2012) conceptualization, equates to active, verbal participation during class and lectures. This finding can potentially be explained by the engagement literature, which has found fault with equating participation with engagement as "at best there is a slight relationship between oral participation and engagement" (Frymier & Houser, 2016, p. 99). The problem, then, might be with the conceptualization of the construct for this dimension of the scale, where engagement is aligned with participation. Additionally, required oral participation is sometimes seen as a controversial way to engage in the classroom; it is beneficial for some students but not for communicatively apprehensive others who experience anxiety and are distracted from learning when forced to participate for a grade (Frymier & Houser, 2016). As such, it seems logical that the choice to orally engage might be a personal one, tied to student variables like motivation and communication apprehension than to instructor ones (i.e., credibility, confirmation, rapport, digital literacy). Certainly, instructors should try to foster

environments in which students feel comfortable participating orally, but whether their students choose to do so may be out of their hands.

Similarly, in the third model, none of the variables significantly predicted silent engagement. Mazer (2012) conceptualizes silent engagement as thinking about utilizing course content in everyday life and future careers. This finding can potentially be explained by the same line of reasoning above—that thinking about course content on one's own time is a personal choice, and may be dictated by student-centered variables (e.g., motivation, affect) more than those tied to their instructor (i.e., credibility, rapport, confirmation, digital literacy). As more than half of Gen Z students see their instructors as role models (Seemiller & Grace, 2016), instructors can model how to engage in these thinking engagement behaviors in class by encouraging students to make connections between their coursework and the outside world during lessons.

Finally, in the fourth model, the difference between credibility (goodwill) expectations and experiences negatively predicted and the difference between digital literacy expectations and experiences positively significantly predicted out-of-class engagement. For credibility (goodwill), this finding was not consistent with the literature, where out-of-class communication has been found to have a positive relationship with credibility (e.g., Jones & Schrodt, 2012; Myers, 2004; Nadler & Nadler, 2001). It might be that students are equating "nice" with "easy," meaning that an instructor extending goodwill might be seen as an easier instructor and thus encouraging lower levels of out-of-class engagement. An instructor that extends goodwill might also be perceived as one who takes the time to thoroughly explain course content and who provides time to work on assignments in class, encouraging lower out-of-class engagement.

For digital literacy, this finding was consistent with the literature, which has linked the construct to civic engagement (Moon & Bai, 2020) and general participation and engagement in their digital and non-digital worlds (Connolly & McGuinness, 2018). These previous links to various out-of-class behaviors fit with Mazer's (2012) conceptualization of out-of-class engagement, which includes everything from studying for tests and quizzes to locating additional materials related to the course topic. Additionally, an instructor's ability to use technology effectively in an online course setting has also been previously linked to perceptions of approachability during office hours (O'Sullivan et al., 2004). It seems that when students have an instructor who appears to be credible in their extension of goodwill and/or is perceived to be digitally literate encourages out-of-class engagement behaviors like studying for exams, reviewing notes, and looking up supplemental materials. With credibility (goodwill) and digital literacy violations significantly predicting out-of-class engagement, instructors should appear digitally literate—thus, meeting expectations—in the classroom to encourage relevant out-of-class behaviors (e.g., studying) related to their course content.

Across all four models, confirmation and rapport did not emerge as significant predictors of engagement. While the literature supports that confirmation and rapport are certainly desired by and important to students and by associating them with positive outcomes like affective and cognitive learning (Hsu, 2012), this dissertation does not position these variables as important to certain learning behaviors captured by the engagement construct (e.g., participation). Pulling from previous studies on the ideal instructor (e.g., Faranda & Clarke, 2004; Goldman et al., 2017), behaviors that are considered to be part of the confirmation and rapport constructs (e.g., demonstrated interest

and care, interactive teaching style) were selected by students as desired components but were less important than other characteristics like credibility. While confirmation and rapport might not be important to encouraging engagement, they are, however, expected by students and can be of use to encourage better additional outcomes in the classroom.

Of particular note in this dissertation is that the first and fourth models and subsequent results align with the nonverbal expectancy violations model proposed by Burgoon and Hale (1988) early in the EVT literature, where expectations are either met or violated, a valence is attributed to those violations, and communication patterns and outcomes are impacted by that valence. Just like the first and fourth models in this dissertation, multiple predictors, including communicator characteristics (e.g., gender, age), relational characteristics (e.g., prior history), and context, play a role in expectations and in the perception of violations. Specifically, these two models aligned with their original model—that those with met or positively violated expectations would report better communication outcomes than those with negatively violated expectations. These models, where expectations about credibility, rapport, confirmation, and digital literacy were violated, show that credibility (goodwill) and/or digital literacy violations can significantly predict engagement. As such, instructors should be mindful of and attempt to at the very least meet (or even exceed) Gen Z's expectations related to these variables to encourage higher engagement in their classes.

5.3 Practical Implications

This dissertation has several implications for the college classroom and for higher education instructors and administrators. First, since instructors are negatively violating

credibility (competence, goodwill, and trustworthiness) and confirmation expectations, instructors would do well to adjust their teaching styles to better fit the expectations and needs of their Gen Z students. These students expect high levels of credibility and confirmation in the classroom, and it is important to remember that this group of students places great value on instructors being compassionate and kind in addition to being knowledgeable about their discipline (Seemiller & Grace, 2019). Relationships, argue Felten and Lambert (2020), should be "the beating heart of the undergraduate experience" (p. 1). Creating a harmonious relationship with Gen Z students cannot be overlooked in favor of career prep-focused instruction, as they still expect to see at least some care and consideration from their instructors in the classroom. Attending trainings or workshops rooted in Gen Z research might help instructors to not only learn more about this generation's unique attributes but also come closer to meeting expectations.

Of particular importance is meeting or exceeding credibility expectations across all three dimensions, as expectations are so high that there is room for mistakes. Instructors need to, according to McCroskey and Teven's (1999) scale, take great pains to appear intelligent, trained, informed, sensitive, understanding, trustworthy, ethical, and genuine in the Gen Z college classroom to be seen as credible. Similarly, for digital literacy, instructors should continue to build on the skills they gained during the COVID-19 pandemic and integrate technology into their pedagogy whenever appropriate and/or possible. Focusing on these variables specifically, where expectations are astronomically high, would allow instructors to come closer to meeting expectations across the board and encourage higher student engagement.

As far as instructors are concerned, however, what is clearest from these results is that Isaacs et al. (2020) were exactly right in their assertion that what worked pedagogically for previous generations will simply not work for Gen Z. Instructors relying on techniques and interaction patterns that seemed to engage and meet expectations for millennials will no longer meet the expectations of their Gen Z students. Gen Z students expect that their instructor will devote at least a moderate amount of time to developing a relationship with them, and will appear highly competent, compassionate, and trustworthy during lessons, highly confirming, and highly digitally literate during instruction. What is expected here is not monumental structural changes to content but rather minor adjustments to ways in which it is delivered that ask faculty to consider the importance that their communication behaviors have on the classroom. Failing to differentiate teaching accordingly, after all, will have a significant impact on student engagement in their classes, as demonstrated in this dissertation.

It is also important to note that the problem of unmet expectations is not entirely the fault of instructors. It might be that instructors are attempting to learn more about their Gen Z students and are not receiving the support they need or have been focused on putting out pandemic-related fires before returning to ones rooted in generational difference. It might also be that instructors have been attempting to read up on Gen Z in the college classroom but, as suggested by Seemiller and Grace (2016), have come up short in finding studies that examine the group outside of the K-12 context. As argued by Ojeda-Hecht and Parks (2021), generation is an identity categorization that is "often overlooked in research about diversity, difference, and communication across cultures" (p. 46) and, as a result, not often included in discussions about how to make pedagogical adjustments for diverse

groups. As Gen Z students make the choice to hold their instructors, who are members of different generational cohorts, to their generation's expectations (Ojeda-Hecht & Parks, 2021), it is important for instructors to endeavor to understand their students' generational needs and expectations. It is also important for administrators to consider adding generation as a cultural difference discussed in diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) trainings.

There is, of course, a dark side to making these adjustments to Gen Z. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, college instructors are currently leaving the ivory tower in droves and experiencing higher levels of burnout, anxiety, and stress than ever before (The Chronicle of Higher Education, 2020), and making sweeping changes to their pedagogical approaches might only increase their burden. It is important to understand, however, that what Gen Z students expect does not require major changes to lesson materials and content but rather in the general approach toward and philosophy of teaching. They are looking for deeper relational connection in a time where they have felt more disconnected and isolated from others than ever before, hidden behind Zoom screens or masks. Changing their orientation toward the classroom to be a more relational, as opposed to strictly rhetorical, one can benefit students greatly in terms of engagement.

Instructors, then, should strive to focus not just on content delivery but also on developing relationships with their students, making use of rapport-building strategies and confirming their presence in the classroom. They should also strive to appear competent, compassionate, and trustworthy in all their interactions with students, from before-class conversations to in-class interactions to office hours visits, and they should integrate some technology into their lessons if they have not already done so. It is easy for instructors to

assume that, in teaching a generation of digital natives, that mastering and integrating more technology into their lessons might be the end-all, be-all solution to the unmet expectations problem. They should remain cautious, integrating technology with purpose, where it is most beneficial, rather than broadly without focus. As argued by Patnoudes (2016), instructors seeking to improve should look inward first and focus their time and energy on exploring how they themselves can create powerful and effective learning environments before adding technology in, where it can then "serve as rocket fuel and take [their] instruction to the next level" (para. 15). Again, meeting the expectations of Gen Z students does not require tremendous, systemic changes to lesson content and structures, but it does require a respect for and empathy toward students and the ways in which the perils of the modern world have shaped their instructional expectations that is not always shown.

This potential for student disengagement resulting from unmet expectations should also concern administrators and leadership at higher education institutions. Problems with engagement precipitate a whole host of problems for higher education institutions, from recruitment to retention to alumni giving after graduation (Selingo, 2018). As such, administrators should develop and encourage attendance at Gen Z-specific professional development opportunities aimed at instructors at all levels, from teaching assistants to adjuncts to tenured faculty. Administrators should aim to hold their instructors to the same higher standard that their students do, for addressing this issue at its most basic level is a step in the right direction in ensuring that instructors are at least attempting to meet students' expectations.

Administrators should also be aware that an institutional reputation of unmet expectations and (as a result) decreased engagement could have a trickle-down effect on

enrollment for a generation of students that is already difficult to recruit. Gen Z students are already wary of higher education, distrusting of post-secondary institutions and the promises of guaranteed return on investment they make. During the COVID-19 pandemic, many of these already-cautious Gen Z-ers have chosen to steer clear of college altogether. Enrollment has shrunk by over one million students since the fall of 2020 (Saul, 2022), and many higher education institutions simply cannot afford to lose any more students. To ensure that Gen Z students are not only matriculating into, but also persisting through their degrees at institutions of higher learning, administrators should encourage their faculty to meet expectations whenever and wherever possible, lest these students become disengaged and drop out.

5.4 Theoretical Implications

This dissertation applied the theoretical lens of expectancy violations theory to examine the expectations of Gen Z in the college classroom, as well as the impact of violated expectations on students' engagement. It continues the long line of research that confirms the tenets of the theory, as Gen Z students' expectations were both negatively and positively violated by their instructors, and these violations had significant impact on the engagement behaviors those students displayed in the classroom. This dissertation also provides support for Burgoon and Hale's (1988) model of the theory. Their model proposes that expectations exist, can be met or violated, and that the perceived violation holds weight when the communicator determines how to respond (e.g., approach or avoid) to those violations, drawn as a flowchart that descends down from expectations. The model proposed supports this structure, with the difference between expectations and experiences (i.e., perceived violations) impacting communication outcomes (i.e., engagement). In

addition, this dissertation offers several theoretical implications and expansions to the EVT literature.

First, the results of this dissertation suggest that the theory can be applied to the expectations of a group, rather than a single communicator. EVT has been used this way in several expectancy violations studies over the past three decades, examining the expectations and perceived violations of students (e.g., Houser, 2005, 2006; Koermer & Petelle, 1991; MacArthur & Villagran, 2015; McPherson et al., 2003), but is not proposed as such in the original expectancy violations literature (Burgoon, 1993). This dissertation provides backing for the continued use and expansion of the theory in this setting, particularly within the instructional communication field when students are often studied as a whole.

Second, the results of this dissertation suggest that violations can be perceived in response to both verbal (i.e., credibility, confirmation, rapport) and nonverbal (i.e., digital literacy) communication, adding support for the theory's revision to encapsulate a "wide range" (Burgoon & Hale, 1988, p. 31) of communication patterns and behaviors versus simply nonverbal ones as initially proposed (Burgoon & Jones, 1976). With this finding in mind, it is important that instructional communication researchers continue to examine both verbal and nonverbal communication in relation to expectancy violations in the classroom. This dissertation proves that both kinds of communication can be expectancy violating, and that violations of verbal and nonverbal expectations can exert significant influence on communication outcomes.

Finally, this dissertation lends support to using EVT to examine violations of all kinds rather than simply negative ones. The theory's misnomer suggests that expectancy

violations must, as suggested by the connotation of the word "violation," be negative in valence. Not only were negative violations found in this dissertation but positive ones as well; there were also statistically significant differences in the engagement behaviors reported by *all* violation groups, not only between those with perceived negative violations and met expectations. Instructional researchers, in particular, tend to apply expectancy violations theory in ways that primarily or exclusively focus on negative violations (e.g., MacArthur & Villagran, 2015; McPherson & Liang, 2007; Sidelinger & Bolen, 2015, 2016), positioning the theory as one that explores the dichotomy between negative violations and met expectations rather than a range that encompasses a range of violations (including positive ones) as well. It is important to endeavor, in future studies, to continue unearthing the role that positively violated expectations can play in the classroom as well, because exceeding students' expectations might precipitate even better communication outcomes than simply meeting them as they did presently.

5.5 Limitations and Future Directions

There are several limitations to this dissertation. First, this dissertation only reached seven higher education institutions, three of which were located in the central Kentucky area. While there is some diversity amongst these institutions in terms of regions represented (i.e., Midwest, South), the size of undergraduate populations, and Carnegie classifications, there is limited racial and socio-economic diversity. Several Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs) were contacted at the beginning of the Time 1 survey, but they declined to participate due to their institutions' IRB policies. Future studies on Generation Z in the college classroom should strive to include Historically Black Colleges and

Universities (HBCUs), Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), and other MSIs, as well as community colleges, for greater diversity in their samples.

Second, in an ideal world, all participating institutions would have started their academic years at the same time, meaning that all participants would have received the surveys at the same point in time (i.e., week numbers) during the fall semester. While most institutions started on August 23, there were a few outliers, resulting in some variance in terms of the point in the semester at which participants received the surveys (e.g., Week 3 at one institution might be Week 4 at another). Future studies should strive to find institutions that are operating on a similar academic calendar, ensuring that all participants are reporting on expectations and experiences at the exact same points in their semesters. Additionally, data was only collected at the beginning of the semester and at midterms, meaning that the data does not account for changes to classes and/or instructor-student relationships that can happen between midterms and final exams. Future studies aiming to have a longitudinal approach to data collection should also survey students at the end of the semester, ensuring that the full semester of teaching, rather than just the first half of it, is taken into account.

Third, this dissertation was limited by its design in other minor but still meaningful ways. Due to the makeup of the sample and the sampling techniques, female students as well as students from one particular institution (i.e., University of Kentucky) were overrepresented in the sample, which may have skewed results to show the expectations and impact of violations on those specific populations of Gen Z students. The survey also did not include items about motivation and interest, which might have helped to further dissect the results from the hypotheses and determine if students in the met expectations or

positive violations groups were, in fact, more motivated and interested at a base level than their negatively violated peers. Additionally, no data was collected on the type of classes that students reported on in survey two (e.g., large lecture versus discussion-based course), which could also have skewed results for their reported engagement behaviors. Future studies should, again, seek to recruit widely and diversely and to ask about states and traits that might have an impact on expectations. Also, when asking participants to report on a specific class at such a wide range of institutions, they should ask students to report on what type of class they are in to assist in the interpretation of results.

Fourth, this dissertation was limited by its use of Ng's (2012) digital literacy scale. The scale is one of the few digital literacy scales that comprehensively examines digital attitudes and skills in an academic setting, while others with a similar approach are either context-bound (e.g., UNESCO, 2018) or out-of-print (e.g., iSkills assessment, published by ETS, 2008). As a result, its use has been limited in the digital literacy literature. In this dissertation, just two of the four dimensions were found to be consistently reliable; one dimension (cognitive) was approaching reliability while another (social-emotional) was found to be unreliable and removed from analysis altogether. Future studies seeking to measure digital literacy should either further modify Ng's (2012) scale or find a better scale that can quantify digital skills and attitudes in the academic setting.

Fifth, this dissertation collected data during the second year of the COVID-19 pandemic, where all but one participating institution required the use of face masks in all shared campus spaces (e.g., classrooms). This dissertation received IRB approval prior to the announcement of these mask policies, meaning that the surveys were not modified to retroactively include questions about masking in the classroom. While this dissertation

strove to negate the impact of COVID-19 policies on campus by asking participants to report on their first in-person class (as opposed to one that might have been hybrid or met asychronously online), it is reasonable to expect that the use of face masks in the classroom setting, as well as the pandemic generally, had some unknown and unforeseen impact on students' expectations and experiences as reported in the surveys. Seeking the relational connection that they have missed out on after two years of online or hybrid learning, quarantine isolation, and masking, for example, might have led them to report inflated expectations for relational variables like rapport and confirmation. Future studies should seek to replicate this survey process after the pandemic has ended to determine if the expectations and experiences reported here were tempered by the pandemic.

Sixth, a little more than half of the participants from the Time 1 survey returned for the Time 2 survey, which means that there was a 46.5% attrition rate. While most longitudinal studies typically experience a 30% attrition rate, the one for this dissertation was obviously much higher than desired and might have resulted from the extended (i.e., four-week) gap between surveys. Future studies, when seeking IRB approval, should ask for permission to contact participants between studies to remind them that the Time 2 survey will be arriving in their inboxes within a certain number of weeks. Additionally, as most of the participants lost between the Time 1 and Time 2 surveys were those outside of the University of Kentucky (i.e., not receiving credits toward a course grade for completing both phases of the study), future studies should find new and exciting ways to incentivize those participants to return for survey 2 beyond raffling off $5 Starbucks gift cards.

Finally, this dissertation was limited methodologically by approaching the communication problem of Gen Z's expectations in the classroom strictly from a

quantitative and student perspective. To start, the instructional literature proposes a wide variety of variables from which to choose when selecting components of a study, but this dissertation only made use of four instructor behavior variables (i.e., credibility, rapport, confirmation, and digital literacy). Given the low variance accounted for by the theoretical models, it is apt to assume that any number of variables left out of the study (e.g., immediacy) might have an impact on student engagement as well. Future studies should select some of these other variables for analysis to determine if violations related to them have a similar or greater impact on student engagement as those used in this dissertation. Second, while several studies (e.g., Christman & McCall, 2021; Faulkner et al., 2021) have examined Gen Z students from a qualitative perspective, future studies should seek to explore the nuances of Gen Z students' expectations and experiences from a qualitative or mixed methods perspective to foster a deeper understanding of where their expectations come from and why their expectations exist. An experimental approach might lend even further depth and nuance to this area of study, giving the ability to make causal claims about the relationship between violations and engagement. Lastly, future studies should seek to add to the limited instructional literature that looks at communication problems through the instructor lens. While this study can offer recommendations for how instructors can adapt to Gen Z students' expectations, the instructors themselves might be able to offer insights into how those expectations (and violations of them) play out in their classroom and in their teaching evaluations.

5.6 Conclusion

By examining Generation Z college students, their expectations of their instructors, and how these expectations are violated by their actual experiences in the classroom, this dissertation aims to add to the burgeoning field of Gen Z research in the higher education setting. The knowledge gained provides new insights into what Gen Z students expect from their instructors and how those expectations are violated, as well as how those violations can both positively and negatively impact students' engagement. This dissertation also has implications for instructors, who could be doing more to meet Gen Z's expectations, and administrators, who would do well to offer Gen Z-specific trainings and workshops for their instructors so that expectations can be met or positively violated. Most importantly, however, this dissertation adds quantitative support to back the assumptions long made by Gen Z scholars (e.g., Bertolone-Smith & Spagna, 2019; Isaacs et al., 2020; Selingo, 2018; Twenge, 2018; Seemiller & Grace, 2016) from market research and generational cohort studies—that Generation Z has specific expectations about their instructors' behaviors and skills that are not being met, and that those violated expectations are significantly impacting their engagement in the classroom.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A. TIME 1 SURVEY

When answering the questions in this survey, please consider your general expectations for in-person college instructors.

Please view the individual instructions for each set of questions.

In responding to items 1-18, please consider the behaviors you expect an instructor in a face-to-face, traditional classroom to use. I expect my professor to be:

Competence								
1. Intelligent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Unintelligent
2. Untrained	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Trained
3. Inexpert	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Expert
4. Informed	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Uninformed
5. Incompetent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Competent
6. Bright	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Stupid
Goodwill								
7. Cares about me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Doesn't care about me
8. Has interests at heart	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Doesn't have interests
9. Self-centered	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Not self-centered
10. Concerned with me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Not concerned
11. Insensitive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Sensitive
12. Not understanding	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Understanding
Trustworthiness								
13. Honest	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Dishonest
14. Untrustworthy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Trustworthy
15. Honorable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Dishonorable
16. Moral	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Immoral
17. Unethical	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Ethical
18. Phoney	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Genuine

In responding to items 19-45, please consider the behaviors you expect an instructor in a face-to-face, traditional classroom to use. I expect my professor to:

19. Communicate that he/she is interested in whether students are learning.

0	1	2	3	4
Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree

20. Indicate that he/she appreciates students' questions or comments.

0 1 2 3 4
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

21. Make an effort to get to know students.
0 1 2 3 4
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

22. Belittle or put students down when they participate in class.
0 1 2 3 4
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

23. Check on students' understanding before going on to the next point.
0 1 2 3 4
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

24. Give oral or written feedback on students' work.
0 1 2 3 4
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

25. Establish eye contact during class lectures.
0 1 2 3 4
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

26. Talk down to students.
0 1 2 3 4
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

27. Be rude in responding to some students' comments or questions during class.
0 1 2 3 4
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

28. Use an interactive teaching style.
0 1 2 3 4
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

29. Listen attentively when students ask questions/comments during class.
0 1 2 3 4
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

30. Display arrogant behavior.
0 1 2 3 4
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

31. Take time to answer students' questions fully.
0 1 2 3 4
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

32. Embarrass students in front of the class.

0	1	2	3	4
Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree

33. Communicate that he/she doesn't have time to meet with students.

0	1	2	3	4
Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree

34. Intimidate students.

0	1	2	3	4
Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree

35. Show favoritism to certain students.

0	1	2	3	4
Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree

36. Put students down when they go to the teacher for help outside class.

0	1	2	3	4
Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree

37. Smile at the class.

0	1	2	3	4
Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree

38. Communicate that he/she believes that students can do well in the class.

0	1	2	3	4
Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree

39. Be available for questions before and after class.

0	1	2	3	4
Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree

40. Be unwilling to listen to students who disagree.

0	1	2	3	4
Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree

41. Use a variety of teaching techniques to help students understand material.

0	1	2	3	4
Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree

42. Ask students how they think the class is going.

0	1	2	3	4
Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree

43. Incorporate exercises into lectures when appropriate.

0 1 2 3 4
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

44. Be willing to deviate slightly from the lecture when students ask questions.
0 1 2 3 4
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

45. Focus on only a few students during class while ignoring others.
0 1 2 3 4
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

In responding to items 46-56, please consider the relationship you expect to have with your professor in a face-to-face, traditional college classroom.

46. In thinking about my relationship with my instructor, I expect to enjoy interacting with them.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

47. I expect my instructor to create a feeling of "warmth" in our relationship.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

48. I expect my instructor to relate well to me.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

49. In thinking about this relationship, I expect to have a harmonious relationship with my instructor.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

50. I expect my instructor to have a good sense of humor.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

51. I expect to be comfortable interacting with my instructor.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

52. I expect to feel like there is a "bond" between my instructor and myself.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

53. I expect to look forward to seeing my instructor in class.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

54. I expect to strongly care about my instructor.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

55. I expect my instructor to take a personal interest in me.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

56. I expect to have a close relationship with my instructor.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

In responding to items 57-73, please consider the behaviors you expect a professor to use in a face-to-face college classroom.

57. I expect my instructor to use technology for learning.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

58. I expect that my instructor will use technology so I can learn better.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

59. I expect that my instructor will use technology to make learning more interesting.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

60. I expect my instructor will use technology to motivate me to learn.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

61. I expect my instructor will allow me to obtain help on my university work from my friends using technology.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

62. I expect my instructor will allow me to use technology to be a self-directed and independent learner.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

63. I expect my instructor to be able to solve their own technical problems.
1 2 3 4 5

Not at all true Always true

64. I expect that my instructor can learn new technologies easily.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

65. I expect that my instructor keeps up with important new technologies.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

66. I expect that my instructor knows a lot of different technologies.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

67. I expect that my instructor has the technical skills they need to use technology for learning and to create artifacts (e.g., presentations) that demonstrate their understanding of what they are teaching.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

68. I expect that my instructor has search and evaluation skills in regard to obtaining information from the Web using technology.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

69. I expect that my instructor sees a lot of potential in the use of technology for learning.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

70. I expect that teachers/lecturers should use technology in their teaching of my classes.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

71. I expect that my instructor will use technology to enable me to collaborate with my peers on project work and other learning activities.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

72. I expect that my instructor has good technological skills.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

73. I expect that my instructor is familiar with issues related to web-based activities (e,g., plagiarism).
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

For questions 74-90, please consider your own behaviors during your first face-to-face, traditional class each week.

74. I like using technology for learning.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all true				Always true

75. I learn better with technology.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all true				Always true

76. Technology makes learning more interesting.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all true				Always true

77. I am more motivated to learn with technology.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all true				Always true

78. I frequently obtain help with my university work from my friends using technology.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all true				Always true

79. Technology enables me to be a self-directed and independent learner.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all true				Always true

80. I know how to solve my own technical problems.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all true				Always true

81. I can learn new technologies easily.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all true				Always true

82. I keep up with important new technologies.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all true				Always true

83. I know about a lot of different technologies.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all true				Always true

84. I have the technical skills I need to use technology for learning and create artifacts (e.g., presentations) that demonstrate my understanding of what I have learnt.

1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

85. I am confident with my search and evaluation skills in regard to obtaining information from the Web using technology.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

86. There is a lot of potential in the use of mobile technologies for learning.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

87. Teachers/lecturers should use more technology in their teaching of my classes.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

88. Technology enables me to collaborate better with my peers on project work and other learning activities.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

89. I have good technological skills.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

90. I am familiar with issues related to web=based activities (e.g., plagiarism).
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

For questions 91-103, please report on your behaviors during your first face-to-face, traditional class each week.

91. I listen attentively to my instructors during class.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Never Very often

92. I give my instructors my full attention during class.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Never Very often

93. I listen attentively to my classmates' contributions during class discussions.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Never Very often

94. I attend my classes.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Never Very often

95. I participate fully during class discussions by sharing my thoughts/opinions.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Never Very often

96. I orally (verbally) participate during class discussions.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Never Very often

97. I think about how I can utilize the course materials in my life.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Never Very often

98. I think about how the course materials are related to my life.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Never Very often

99. I think about how the course materials will benefit me in my future career.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Never Very often

100. I review my notes outside of all my classes.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Never Very often

101. I study for tests or quizzes.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Never Very often

102. I talk about course materials with others outside of class.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Never Very often

103. I take it upon myself to read additional materials in all course topic areas.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Never Very often

Finally, for our last set of questions, please tell us a little bit more about yourself.

104. Gender Identity

☐ Male
☐ Female
☐ Trans/Nonbinary

105. Race:

- ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
- ☐ Asian
- ☐ Black or African American
- ☐ Hispanic/Latinx
- ☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- ☐ White
- ☐ Not Listed: _____

106. Year in school:

- ☐ First-year
- ☐ Sophomore
- ☐ Junior
- ☐ Senior

107. Do you receive financial aid from the University of Kentucky to attend school? Check all that apply.

- ☐ University grants
- ☐ Scholarships
- ☐ Federal loans
- ☐ Federal work study

108. Are you the first person from your family to attend college?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

109. Age: _____

110. Major: _____

111. Name of College or University Currently Attending: _____

112. How did you hear about this survey?

- ☐ Friend
- ☐ Instructor
- ☐ Social Media
- ☐ SONA Research System
- ☐ Prefer Not to Say

113. To match your data with your responses from the upcoming second survey, please provide the last four digits of your phone number: _____

114. To receive the second survey link (and thus, enter to win a Starbucks gift card or to receive your study credit after the completion of survey two), please provide your email address: _____

APPENDIX B. TIME 2 SURVEY

Now that you have completed several weeks of college classes, please consider your experiences in these classes when answering questions in this survey.

Please view the individual instructions for each set of questions.

In responding to items 1-18, please consider the behaviors of the professor of your first face-to-face, traditional class each week. My professor is:

Competence								
1. Intelligent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Unintelligent
2. Untrained	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Trained
3. Inexpert	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Expert
4. Informed	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Uninformed
5. Incompetent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Competent
6. Bright	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Stupid
Goodwill								
7. Cares about me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Doesn't care about me
8. Has interests at heart	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Doesn't have interests
9. Self-centered	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Not self-centered
10. Concerned with me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Not concerned
11. Insensitive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Sensitive
12. Not understanding	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Understanding
Trustworthiness								
13. Honest	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Dishonest
14. Untrustworthy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Trustworthy
15. Honorable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Dishonorable
16. Moral	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Immoral
17. Unethical	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Ethical
18. Phoney	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Genuine

In responding to items 19-45, please consider the behaviors of the professor of your first face-to-face, traditional class each week. My professor:

19. Communicates that he/she is interested in whether students are learning.

0	1	2	3	4
Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree

20. Indicates that he/she appreciates students' questions or comments.

0	1	2	3	4
Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree

21. Makes an effort to get to know students.
0 1 2 3 4
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

22. Belittles or put students down when they participate in class.
0 1 2 3 4
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

23. Checks on students' understanding before going on to the next point.
0 1 2 3 4
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

24. Gives oral or written feedback on students' work.
0 1 2 3 4
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

25. Establishes eye contact during class lectures.
0 1 2 3 4
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

26. Talks down to students.
0 1 2 3 4
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

27. Is rude in responding to some students' comments or questions during class.
0 1 2 3 4
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

28. Uses an interactive teaching style.
0 1 2 3 4
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

29. Listens attentively when students ask questions/comments during class.
0 1 2 3 4
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

30. Displays arrogant behavior.
0 1 2 3 4
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

31. Takes time to answer students' questions fully.
0 1 2 3 4
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

32. Embarrasses students in front of the class.

0 1 2 3 4
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

33. Communicates that he/she doesn't have time to meet with students.
0 1 2 3 4
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

34. Intimidates students.
0 1 2 3 4
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

35. Shows favoritism to certain students.
0 1 2 3 4
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

36. Puts students down when they go to the teacher for help outside class.
0 1 2 3 4
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

37. Smiles at the class.
0 1 2 3 4
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

38. Communicates that he/she believes that students can do well in the class.
0 1 2 3 4
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

39. Is available for questions before and after class.
0 1 2 3 4
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

40. Is unwilling to listen to students who disagree.
0 1 2 3 4
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

41. Uses a variety of teaching techniques to help students understand material.
0 1 2 3 4
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

42. Asks students how they think the class is going.
0 1 2 3 4
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

43. Incorporates exercises into lectures when appropriate.
0 1 2 3 4
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

44. Is willing to deviate slightly from the lecture when students ask questions.

0	1	2	3	4
Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree

45. Focuses on only a few students during class while ignoring others.

0	1	2	3	4
Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree

In responding to items 46-56, please consider the relationship you have with the professor of the first face-to-face, traditional class you have each week.

46. In thinking about my relationship with my instructor, I enjoy interacting with them.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree					Strongly Agree	

47. My instructor creates a feeling of "warmth" in our relationship.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree					Strongly Agree	

48. My instructor relates well to me.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree					Strongly Agree	

49. In thinking about this relationship, I have a harmonious relationship with my instructor.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree					Strongly Agree	

50. My instructor has a good sense of humor.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree					Strongly Agree	

51. I am comfortable interacting with my instructor.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree					Strongly Agree	

52. I feel like there is a "bond" between my instructor and myself.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree					Strongly Agree	

53. I look forward to seeing my instructor in class.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree					Strongly Agree	

54. I strongly care about my instructor.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

55. My instructor has taken a personal interest in me.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

56. I have a close relationship with my instructor.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

In responding to items 57-73, please consider the behaviors of the professor of your first face-to-face, traditional class each week.

57. My instructor uses technology for learning.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

58. My instructor uses technology so I can learn better.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

59. My instructor uses technology to make learning more interesting.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

60. My instructor uses technology to motivate me to learn.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

61. My instructor allows me to obtain help on my university work from my friends using technology.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

62. My instructor allows me to use technology to be a self-directed and independent learner.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

63. My instructor is able to solve their own technical problems.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

64. My instructor learns new technologies easily.
1 2 3 4 5

Not at all true Always true

65. My instructor keeps up with important new technologies.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

66. My instructor knows a lot of different technologies.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

67. My instructor has the technical skills they need to use technology for learning and to create artifacts (e.g., presentations) that demonstrate their understanding of what they are teaching.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

68. My instructor has search and evaluation skills in regard to obtaining information from the Web using technology.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

69. My instructor sees a lot of potential in the use of technology for learning.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

70. My instructor uses technology in their teaching of my classes.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

71. My instructor uses technology to enable me to collaborate with my peers on project work and other learning activities.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

72. My instructor has good technological skills.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

73. My instructor is familiar with issues related to web-based activities (i.e., plagiarism).
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

For questions 74-90, please consider your own behaviors during your first face-to-face, traditional class each week.

74. I like using technology for learning.

1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

75. I learn better with technology.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

76. Technology makes learning more interesting.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

77. I am more motivated to learn with technology.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

78. I frequently obtain help with my university work from my friends using technology.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

79. Technology enables me to be a self-directed and independent learner.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

80. I know how to solve my own technical problems.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

81. I can learn new technologies easily.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

82. I keep up with important new technologies.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

83. I know about a lot of different technologies.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

84. I have the technical skills I need to use technology for learning and create artifacts (e.g., presentations) that demonstrate my understanding of what I have learnt.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

85. I am confident with my search and evaluation skills in regard to obtaining information from the Web using technology.

1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

86. There is a lot of potential in the use of mobile technologies for learning.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

87. Teachers/lecturers should use more technology in their teaching of my classes.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

88. Technology enables me to collaborate better with my peers on project work and other learning activities.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

89. I have good technological skills.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

90. I am familiar with issues related to web-based activities (e.g., plagiarism).
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all true Always true

For questions 91-103, please report on your behaviors during your first face-to-face, traditional class each week.

91. I listen attentively to my instructors during class.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

92. I give my instructors my full attention during class.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

93. I listen attentively to my classmates' contributions during class discussions.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

94. I attend my classes.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

95. I participate fully during class discussions by sharing my thoughts/opinions.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

96. I orally (verbally) participate during class discussions.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

97. I think about how I can utilize the course materials in my life.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

98. I think about how the course materials are related to my life.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

99. I think about how the course materials will benefit me in my future career.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

100. I review my notes outside of all my classes.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

101. I study for tests or quizzes.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

102. I talk about course materials with others outside of class.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

103. I take it upon myself to read additional materials in all course topic areas.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Please tell us a little bit more about yourself.

104. Gender Identity
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Trans/Nonbinary

105. Race:
- ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
- ☐ Asian
- ☐ Black or African American
- ☐ Hispanic/Latinx
- ☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- ☐ White
- ☐ Not Listed: _____

106. Year in school:
- ☐ First-year
- ☐ Sophomore
- ☐ Junior
- ☐ Senior

107. Age: _____

108. Major: _____

109. Name of College or University Currently Attending: _____

110. To match your data with your responses from the previous survey, please provide the last four digits of your phone number: _____

Finally, for our last set of questions, please tell us more about the instructor you thought of while completing the survey.

111. Instructor Gender Identity:

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Trans/Nonbinary

112. Instructor Race:

- ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
- ☐ Asian
- ☐ Black or African American
- ☐ Hispanic/Latinx
- ☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- ☐ White
- ☐ Not Listed: _____

113. Instructor Rank:

- ☐ Teaching Assistant
- ☐ Instructor of Record
- ☐ Lecturer
- ☐ Adjunct
- ☐ Assistant Professor
- ☐ Associate Professor
- ☐ Full Professor
- ☐ Unknown
- ☐ Not Listed: _____

114. Instructor Discipline: _____

115. If you are a student outside of UK, please provide your email address to enter to win a Starbucks gift card: _____

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Education

University of Kentucky — Lexington, Kentucky
M.A., Communication — May 2018
Thesis: *The Effect of Admissions Viewbooks on Students' Expectancies and Engagement*

Centre College — Danville, Kentucky
B.A., English — May 2016
Magna cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa, with minors in Creative Writing and Education
Semester Abroad: London, England (Spring 2015)
Undergraduate Thesis: *'Haven't You Got Your Caddy': Understanding Faulkner's Caddy Compson*

Teaching Experience

University of Kentucky — Lexington, Kentucky
Instructor of Record, School of Information Science — August 2017 – May 2018; August 2019 – May 2022

Governor's Scholars Program — Frankfort, Kentucky
Faculty, Journalism/Mass Media — Summer 2021

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The Arboretum, State Botanical Garden of Kentucky — Lexington, Kentucky
Education Intern, Kentucky Children's Garden — Spring 2018

Centre College — Danville, Kentucky
Student Teacher/Observer, Danville Independent Schools — 2014-2016

Consultant, The Writing Center — 2014-2016

Research Experience

School of Information Science, University of Kentucky — Lexington, Kentucky
Research Assistant — August 2018 – May 2019

School of Information Science, University of Kentucky — Lexington, Kentucky
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Honors & Awards

University of Kentucky
Graduate Teaching Excellence Award (2021).

Grad Teach Live! Finalist (2019).

Centre College
Phi Beta Kappa (2016).

Omicron Delta Kappa (2015).

Combs Achievement Scholarship (2015 – 2016).

Dean's List (2013 – 2016).

Performing Arts Scholar (2012 – 2016).

Publications

Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles

Joo, S., Cahill, M., Ingram, E., Hoffman, H.C., Olson, A., & Kun, L. (2021). An analysis of the literacy-enhancing potential of singing versus spoken language in public library storytimes: A text analytics approach. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*. https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/14687984211046652

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