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# College Students' Perceived Behavioral Expectancy Violations by Instructors in the Zoom Classroom

Kaleb Kronimus
kak5153@rit.edu

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Kaleb Kronimus

School of Communication

College of Liberal Arts, Rochester Institute of Technology

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The members of the Committee approve the thesis of
Kaleb A. Kronimus presented on April 26th, 2023.

[redacted]

Nickesia Gordon, PhD
Associate Professor
School of Communication
Thesis Advisor

[redacted]

Grant Cos, PhD
Professor
School of Communication
Thesis Advisor

[redacted]

Eun Sook Kwon, PhD
Associate Professor and
Director of Graduate Program
School of Communication

[redacted]

Tracy Worrell PhD
School Director
School of Communication

## Table of Contents

**Abstract**

As of the COVID-19 pandemic, video conferencing briefly usurped face-to-face as the primary medium of communication for education and professional settings. Even now in 2022 as the impact of the pandemic begins to be felt less, video conferencing remains an integrated part of educational settings, with Zoom being the most prominent video conferencing application in education. This study used expectancy violations theory to explore both the behavioral expectations students have of their instructors on Zoom, as well as what instructors themselves believe their students' expectations to be when on Zoom. This paper explores both the general expectations held by students, as well as their expectations regarding instructor competency, investment, and attitude. The findings of this qualitative study indicate that student expectations of instructors when on Zoom differ very little from expectations they hold for instructors when in-person, but that it is more important that those expectations be met for the student to evaluate their instructor positively when online. Student opinions also indicated that they hold a more negative opinion of learning through video conferencing in general when compared to in-person, and that on Zoom it is both easier for mistakes to be made by instructors and that they perceive mistakes to be more disruptive when on Zoom. Instructors' beliefs about student expectations were accurate to actual held student expectations when they were also ones held by students in-person, but instructors experienced pervasive uncertainty about student expectations when those expectations were changed or created with the new medium.

*Keywords*: Expectancy Violations Theory, Zoom, Video Conferencing, Student Expectations, Instructor Expectations

## Introduction

This paper uses expectancy violations theory (EVT) to examine the behavioral expectancies of instructors and ways those behavioral expectancies can be violated in a classroom setting that is held through video conferencing on the Zoom application. It further asks the question of whether the expectations set for instructors differ in an online versus an offline setting. An application of EVT can help educators understand how students may respond to violations, whether it be through imitating the violating behavior or compensating for it (Griffin et al., 2022).

The use of video conferencing, the Zoom application in particular, is now a ubiquitous technology that has been used widely since the COVID-19 pandemic prevented in-person meetings from taking place. This ubiquitous usage of the video conferencing platform gives us reason to better understand how communication and teaching interactions may vary from in-person settings. Furthermore, the knowledge that world events can force education into online spaces creates an impetus to be more prepared and well-informed in the event these actions ever need to be taken again.

Video conferencing as a means of education delivery has a relatively shallow pool of research behind it. Even when research of video conferencing for education has been conducted, it is difficult to say conclusively that those results would apply to video conferencing as it exists now, because the technology has changed frequently over time in terms of quality, capacity, and accessibility. However, world circumstances have thrust video conferencing into the position of a necessary technology faster than it may have naturally progressed otherwise. This study seeks to begin exploring the subject in order to contribute to closing the gap. This study explores the

expectancies students hold of their instructors in the Zoom classroom, and when possible it compares how they may differ from those held in an in-person classroom. Student expectancies of instructors were selected because of the two groups in a classroom — instructors and students — the instructor's behavior has been found to be able to impact student learning and motivation either negatively (Sidelinger & Bolen, 2016) or positively (Houser, 2006). Additionally, while there already exists a research foundation of expectancy violations theory as it applies to education settings, this study will be among the first to explore the theory within an education setting that is held on a video conferencing platform.

This study is exploratory in nature. It is a preliminary foray into this cross section of theory and subject. It is the intention of the researcher that the themes found within this exploratory study be used to inform future research on both the theory and medium. The findings within are not intended to be drawn as conclusive or widely applicable.

## Literature Review

### *Covid-19 & Zoom*

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic the landscape of education was required to make a grand and rapid shift in format. In 2020, the majority of the global education system was moved online. By the Fall 2020, 75% of all undergraduate students were enrolled in at least one distance education course and 44% of all undergraduate students were enrolled in exclusively distance education courses, a 97% increase in distance learning enrollment to the pre-pandemic year (National Center for Education Statistics, 2022) . Distance education can take the form of synchronous, in which all students and instructors are interacting concurrently through a virtual

medium, or asynchronous, where all students and instructors interact with course content non-concurrently.

With the pool of research regarding video conferencing being relatively shallow the research that does exist is often regarding its applications in education and training. In the instance of using the medium for training, a study found that it did not enhance trainee learning or satisfaction, but did find support that it increased trainee perception of trainer credibility (Stephens & Mottet, 2007). For its use in education it was found that in distributed learning classrooms, a classroom in which all parties are all in physical classrooms but separated by distance and using technology to interact, communication occurring through the video conferencing medium did not affect student perceptions of instructor verbal immediacy, but that students did perceive a difference in their instructor's nonverbal immediacy (Freitas et al., 1998).

The Zoom video conferencing application was the platform of choice for higher education in the United States (Reuters, 2020). Zoom sported a few benefits that made it the most popular choice, but a primary reason was that the application sported a robust free version of its software that could be acquired with a simple download. While many schools likely used a paid plan with Zoom for smoother integration and access to more features, even if no money was paid at it was a stable and effective video conferencing app that could host up to 100 people per call (Zoom, 2022), which could be more than enough for many courses already.

The circumstances of the pandemic situation highlighted existing inequities in the higher education structure that disproportionately affected contract instructors by applying additional psychological, social, and technological pressures to perform in this new medium (Stewart et al., 2021). In addition, there was overarching fear that improper performance during such a high

pressure time could cost them their position (Stewart et al., 2021). But it wasn't just instructors stepping into a new environment with new rules, it was the students as well.

Students had much of their education moved into online spaces, and while they were no strangers to classrooms, the differences in behavior brought on by the new environment were apparent. Sarah M. Parsloe and Elizabeth M. Smith (2022) conducted in-depth interviews with disabled students who experienced online classrooms during the COVID-19 pandemic. The disabled students reported the perception that instructors had loosened their rigid restrictions around concepts of what ideal behavior from a student looks like (Parsloe & Smith, 2022). Some of the disabled students found the changes of moving to an online environment to be helpful, letting them approach the classroom on their own terms and in the setting of their homes (Parsloe & Smith, 2022). In many cases attending class online meant a person did not need to be identified by their peers as disabled, and the ease by which instructors could record their class sessions and post them online for students reduced the opportunity cost of not being present for course lectures (Parsloe & Smith, 2022). Other disabled students found the shift to cause very little change in how much they needed to adjust, while some found the shift to be more difficult as Zoom placed them into a literally two-dimensional environment, with much less stimuli than an in-person course (Parsloe & Smith, 2022).

While this research gives extremely valuable insight into the perception of disabled students, it does not show the perceptions of non-disabled students, so it couldn't be said whether non-disabled students' perceptions aligned with their disabled peers. Additionally, changes in instructor attitude and behavior noticed by students in the immediate fallout of the pandemic cannot be confidently attributed to the new medium. Behavioral changes in instructors could also

be explained by the overarching pressure of the larger context, uncertainty in how to approach a new medium, or intentional leniency meant to relieve pressure on the students who also needed to operate under a high stress context. At the time of that study being conducted, it would be impossible to determine what changes would be lasting and what were due to the high stress and pressure of the early pandemic. Time could reveal that what students perceived as loosening of restrictions by instructors was actually the result of any number of temporary conditions caused by the high stress context. This study intends to give insight into both the intentionality and longevity of the changes students observed from their instructors early on, as well as provide insight into how student attitudes towards these differences may have changed now that time has passed.

### *Expectancy Violations Theory*

Expectancy violations theory (EVT) is an interpersonal theory that focuses on the betrayal, or violation, of expectations that have been built based on social norms. Particularly it discussed the negative and positive effects violations can have on interaction outcomes and planned future interactions (Burgoon, 1993). The theory looks at communication as a transactional exchange of behaviors on behalf of the participants, where each participant has expectations of one another that can be violated by behaving contrary to those expectations. A violation is a behavior that is outside the range of expected behaviors. A violation occurring causes the expectation holder to evaluate the violating action, which generally concludes either negatively or positively, with many mediating factors influencing the outcome of whether the violation had a positive or negative valence in the participant's eyes. These factors include the existing relationship between the participants, larger context, and past experiences (Griffin et al.,

2022). Figure 1 shows the structure visually, as information about the communicator, the relationship one has with said communicator, and the larger context all contribute to the formation of expectations. The expectations themselves are largely based on past interactions (predictive), expectations based on what the social norm is for the context or environment (prescriptive), and what reward/punishment the participant expects (communicator reward valence), which themselves inform the interpretation of a behavioral violation and overall evaluation of the interaction (Burgoon, 1993).

### *EVT & Education*

Classroom expectancies can be broken down into two groups, one for each of the two parties involved: expectations for students and expectations for instructors. Some studies specifically identified ways in which students break expectations by actions such as talking out of turn, generalized disruptive actions, and by not paying attention (Kearney et al., 1991). Instructors break expectations through actions that convey indolence, incompetence, or offensiveness. Indolence is a trait of seeming absent minded, uninvested, or forgetful. Incompetence is the perceived trait of low skill in the field or position as an instructor. Offensiveness is perceived as mean or rude (Kearney et al., 1991). A study of 155 university students in 1999 assessed that students expect instructors to respect and be considerate to students, grade work fairly, and be properly prepared to instruct (Shelton et al., 1999). This same study found that students saw themselves in a more passive role in the classroom learning dynamic and saw the role of the instructor in the classroom as consisting primarily of guiding students, teaching, grading, and to be clear and informative about course content (Shelton et al., 1999).

Studies support that instructor expectancy violations can impact student learning and satisfaction. One study found that negative violations of instructor clarity expectations negatively predicted cognitive learning and state motivation for students (Houser, 2006). The positive violations of instructor affinity-seeking negatively predicted learning and motivation for nontraditional students (Houser, 2006). Previous research also established a negative relationship between students' perception of compulsive communication by instructors and a students' communication satisfaction (Sidelinger & Bolen, 2016). Research also supports that violations of expectations by instructors can influence violation thresholds held by students, with a study showing that instructor immediacy positive violations had a seeming neutralizing effect on student compliance with workload demands given by the instructor (Mottet et al., 2006). Another study showed that student perceptions of instructors as humorous increased likelihood of rhetorical dissent on the part of the students, and that instructor-relevant humor moderated the relationships of inappropriate conversations and both expressive and vengeful dissent on the part of the students (Sidelinger & Tatum, 2019).

A pre-COVID study looked at classroom expectations of instructors as they applied to the digital space of electronic messages, finding that when instructors betrayed expectations, the effect each broken expectation had on motivation to communicate was similar to if the interaction was in person (MacArthur & Villagran, 2015). However, it also found that the student responses to violation behaviors varied depending on the existing relationship between the student and the instructor, but that students never let offensive behavior slide (MacArthur & Villagran, 2015).

### *EVT & Technology*

A number of explorations of EVT have been applied in a partially or entirely digital format in the last decade or so. One observed Facebook, examining how the social norms across the platform evolved over time, which changed the self-presentation and relationship goals of its users as norms evolved. The study found that negative violations were judged by the severity of damage it could inflict to the user it was targeted at, with smaller violations being hidden away from sight or ignored, while larger warranted the breaking of the connection or the direct deletion of the content (McLaughlin & Vitak, 2012). It was also observed that positive violations were found to be more likely to come from acquaintances than from close friends (McLaughlin & Vitak, 2012). Other examinations of EVT in various online communities include one which found that the means an individual assessed rewards of violation or deviance was different in online contexts, focusing on the aspects of trust, online community, and amount of information available (Nicholls, 2016).

One important feature of video conferencing platforms, including the Zoom platform, is the chat feature. Chat offers an additional, parallel channel of communication that can be used to directly message the entire call or privately message a single individual. While on a Zoom call, the chat box can take up as much as one-third of the screen, and in an education setting is often utilized by students to ask questions or used by professors to post additional resources without disrupting the voice  communication. A study looking at EVT's use in predicting responses to brand advertising in video games found EVT was able to significantly predict purchase intentions and brand attitude (Evans & Bang, 2019).

More broadly, Piercy and Underhill (2021) found that mobile phone use during meetings generated the highest expectancy violation and received the lowest evaluation of the effectiveness of the meeting (Piercy & Underhill, 2021). One could extrapolate this as being relevant in terms of how it deals with the connection between technology and meeting effectiveness, as well as implicitly dealing with visual focus of attention (with mobile phones drawing a user's visible attention away from others). EVT has been applied to classrooms, and it has been examined how the expectations can be affected by other sources, such as websites like Rate My Professor, though it was found that the outside influence of such websites to have a benign impact on learning (Simpson, 2019).

### *Research Questions*

**Research Question 1.** How do college students describe the behavioral expectations they have of their instructors in a Zoom instructional setting?

**Research Question 2.** What do instructor behavioral violations look like on Zoom?

**Research Question 3a**. How do instructors describe the behavioral expectations they believe they are held to by their students in a Zoom instructional setting?

**Research Question 3b.** In a Zoom instructional setting, is there incongruity between student-held perceptions of expectations and violations, and the instructor-held beliefs of their students' expectations?

This study primarily seeks to answer research questions (RQ) 1 & 2. The study then seeks to use RQ3a to build off the findings of the first two RQs by asking what the instructor's perspective is in regards to these same unspoken rules and expectations and how the two settings

are perceived to differ in their expectations. Lastly, the study uses RQ3b to go further, inquiring whether or not there is congruence between the actual expectations of students and the expectations that instructors anticipated or perceived students to have. If such a mismatch exists, it could be detrimental to a learning environment if behavior is not changed.

## Methods

This researcher conducted in-depth interviews to explore both the behavioral expectations students hold of their instructors, as well as the beliefs of instructors regarding the expectations they are held to. A qualitative investigation is warranted because qualitative research focuses on how people interpret and assign meaning to their experiences (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). The nature of what this study seeks to understand requires an in-depth exploration of participant beliefs. Additionally, expectancy violations theory recognizes that some expectations are partly or entirely particular to the individual, based on their unique experiences, background, or understandings (Burgoon, 1993).

A large portion of research that applies EVT examines the data through quantitative methods, however there is a growing precedent for qualitative examination of EVT as well. Multiple studies have used interviews in their methodologies when applying expectancy violations theory (Tu et al., 2019; Smith, 2017; Cleland, 2011; McCalman & Madere, 2009). One group of researchers applied focus group methods, which better enabled the researchers to explore how the norms and violations of Facebook users changed over time (McLaughlin & Vitak, 2012). Employing qualitative methods in this study allowed the researcher to prompt participants to directly compare the two classroom experiences, and make note of how expectations and violations have changed overtime. Looking at how it changes over time is

particularly important as it could provide insight into what impact the pandemic context had on those perceptions.

In-depth interviews were conducted remotely, on the Zoom platform, and recorded in order to collect data for this study.

### *Data Collection*

In-depth interviews were conducted with 10 participants over the course of five months. The interviews averaged to be about twenty minutes in length. This type of qualitative interview encouraged participants to describe how they are feeling about their world and allowed researchers to uncover the meaning behind both individual and collective experiences (Merriam & Tisdell, 2002). The semi-structured interview included open-ended questions and optional follow up questions the investigator could ask if appropriate. Being able to make these adjustments help prevent redundantly asking a question that has inadvertently already been answered, as well as open up the opportunity to request elaboration or clarification of given responses. As a whole, this flexibility offered by the format can allow the investigator to form a more detailed idea of the participants' beliefs, expectations, and perceptions (Merriam & Tisdell, 2002). The interviews were conducted remotely through the Zoom platform. Each interview was recorded and then later transcribed.

### *Participants*

To be interviewed, the participants had to have been a college student that has taken at least one online course that regularly met synchronously or been an instructor for at least one online college course that regularly met synchronously. In total, the study interviewed six

students and four instructors who met this criteria. Five students and all four instructors attended or worked at the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) and one student attended Wake Forest University. Of the students, two were undergraduate students and four were graduate students. Four students majored in communication, one student majored in game design and development, and the final student majored in advertising and public relations. For the instructors, two worked for the department of communication at RIT, one for the college of liberal arts at RIT, and the last instructed for the department of criminal justice at RIT. Each participant has been assigned a designation *P1* through *P10* for the purposes of identifying quotes used in the findings section of this paper. Table 1 in the appendix lists the previously discussed demographic information as well as displays which participant designation that information is attached to.

### *Sampling*

Sampling method was largely purposive, in which a researcher seeks out participants with specific characteristics the researcher desires to study (Griffin et al., 2022), but multiple methods were applied to recruit the participants. I sampled three instructors and three students via a mass email calling for study volunteers, used snowball sampling to recruit two students and one instructor, and recruited one student by directly messaging those I knew who fit the participant criteria. While there is no lower limit to the sample size a qualitative study must have (Patton, 1990), this study aimed to interview a total of ten participants. In total, 6 students and 4 instructors were interviewed for the study, rounding out the aimed for ten. This study does not intend to make any conclusive inferences meant to apply to all students and instructors in all regions. It only wishes to provide a snapshot into the minds of student and instructor at this time,

and hopefully only prompt further questions from future studies about education in the video conferencing medium.

## Findings and Analysis

### *Coding Procedure*

A total of six college students and four college instructors were interviewed, totaling ten interviews in total with an average length of 21 minutes per interview. To examine the data I used the Nvivo qualitative data analysis software. Nvivo is used for qualitative research to analyze structureless text like transcribed interviews. I imported the interview transcripts and then began to openly code the data and see what themes emerged. Next, I utilized Nvivo's auto-code feature which uses an automated process to categorize data into nodes. Both my own open coding as well as the auto-codes generated by Nvivo were taken into consideration to assure that analysis was consistent. Then using the research questions as a guide, the relevant codes were further refined to create a codebook. The creation of the codebook and strict definitions with inclusion and exclusion criteria enabled a second round of coding. The codes found in the first wave of coding were grouped together by the common emergent themes among them, and these groups were: adapting to the medium, advantages of Zoom's interface, instructor uncertainty exacerbated by Zoom format, cannot avoid calling students by name, negative attitude toward learning on Zoom, and infectivity of the hybrid format. These themes will be expanded on in the next section.

## Emerging Themes

Overall, most participants expressed a preference for attending or instructing classes in-person. Both students and instructors said that it is more difficult to stay engaged on Zoom than it is in-person. Students and instructors largely seemed to agree that there was an expectation on instructors to compensate for this engagement gap, or otherwise stated that the experience is improved with more engagement. Many themes emerged from the data, the most notable were: adapting to the medium, advantages of Zoom's interactive features, uncertainty of student perceptions, identification of students by name only, video conferencing as a limiting factor to engagement, and distaste for the hybrid format.

### *Adapting to the Medium*

Participants unanimously identified that the role and responsibilities of the instructor does not change between Zoom and in-person; instructors are expected to be present, give instruction on the course material, and answer questions when asked. Both instructors and students identified that adjustments must be made as to how these goals are achieved satisfactorily, to adjust for differences in the mediums. This is to be expected, as the context did not change, only the medium it is held through.

> ***P1:*** " I have rubrics for participation for example, and there is a version of the rubric for the on campus class, and there's a version of the rubric for the Zoom class. And then the rubric takes into account the fact that that is a different environment."

> ***P3:*** " It's differently directed effort. Yes, because in the in-person setting, there are going to be things that we can't do in the Zoom setting as well"

> ***P6:*** "[I expect] that they transfer the content that they're teaching. Like it's the same quality of content that they would have in an in-person classroom. That they efficiently set up an efficient and effective lesson plan because, obviously, teaching on Zoom isn't the same as teaching in person."

### *Advantages of Zoom's Interactive Features*

Both categories of participants recognized advantages unique to both video conferencing as well as Zoom specifically. Instructors largely called out the chat box, which can be used to share information in parallel with whomever is speaking, but without interrupting the speaker. The instructor participants said they use the chat box to leave feedback on student presentations, as an action item to guide discussion or poll students, and as a repository where students can leave questions they have during lecture, which allows instructors to answer it at an organic time rather than needing to wait for raised hands. One instructor described synchronous online courses as an opportunity to implement tools that would be harder to use in an in-person environment, specifically because you can put a link in chat and everyone present in the call has immediate and instant access to it.

> **P1:** "And that's unique to the Zoom environment because that would be the equivalent to, say, in the classroom, somebody commenting things to the person next to them kind of in a low voice, is the running commentary. But in a classroom that would be considered rude."

On the other side of the coin, students did not have much to say regarding the unique benefits of the medium or application. One student remarked that it is probably easier to share

media in Zoom than in person, since you're dealing with buttons on your screen rather than plugging in various cables and wires. The chat box came up in acknowledgement but the student participants did not laude it as the instructors had, but a few did mention that breakout rooms are a good feature, with one student saying breakout rooms had advantages over small group work in an in-person classroom because there was no noise and distractions of other groups speaking, just you and your group.

***Instructor Uncertainty Exacerbated by Zoom Format***

Instructors identified the Zoom "classroom" as producing a degree of uncertainty not present in the physical classroom. Some of the participants attribute this to the fact that Zoom quite literally has less dimension, occurring on a relatively small two-dimensional screen rather than within a three-dimensional environment. One of the issues this causes is increased uncertainty because there is less non-verbal feedback.

> **P1:** "I think, do you know the biggest difference between Zoom and the classroom is that in Zoom, your attention is directed at this very small space in front of you. And so instead of being in an environment in which you have other students around you and you have the classroom, the board, in which your mind may kind of bounce around and then come back to what is being talked about. In zoom, if your mind bounces around, you find yourself in an entirely different environment"

Instructors identified that it is often difficult to get non-verbal feedback when on Zoom. If a student has their camera off, instructors can't even be confident that they are still present, let alone paying attention. In an in-person classroom, empty seats are empty, there is no ambiguity

about whether a student is inside a classroom. Similarly, if a student isn't paying attention in-person, it is relatively easy to spot. Online however, students can be distracted by any number of websites, apps, or even Zoom's built-in private message function and still appear as they always do; looking at their computer screens. Additionally, unlike an in-person classroom where you can see all people at once, your students are now a small cluster of squares on your screen, not all of which may be visible at any one time. All of these factors make it difficult to assess nonverbal responses, gauging reactions to information or class morale can be considerably more difficult. Because of factors such as these, every instructor expressed some amount of uncertainty regarding what their students think, feel, and expect.

> **P1:** "I guess it is less certainty that they're even there, right? Because if they're in the classroom they may not be paying attention. But they're sitting in the classroom. While if a camera is running-- I mean, if the class is running, but the camera is always off. Somebody can literally turn on, let it run, go to the kitchen and make a sandwich for themselves. And nobody will know, right?"

> **P1:** "You're doing your own thing, texting on your phone even if it's somebody in the place, but if you're on Zoom, you can totally fake attention and be looking at the Zoom meeting, but then be texting somebody else about whatever other things through the chat function"

> **P4:** "But that could also be because they're just not paying attention. Most of the times, when I have had classes held over Zoom and I was teaching, no one turned their cameras on. So if it was a violation, I would never even have that feedback to know."

### *Cannot Avoid Calling Students By Name*

The lack of a spatial element can require unexpected adjustments to behavior and mannerisms. For instructors this took the form of trouble with student names. Two instructors identified that they could no longer point or gesture at a student with a raised hand. Neither did these instructors feel they could identify the student by saying something they are wearing, nor is it possible to identify them by where they are sitting. They felt that these gestures, which are innocuous in-person, could come off as odd or even rude to students online. In a Zoom call every participant has their name listed on their video; if you are looking at someone, then you can also see what their name is. However, the ability to see what the letters of a student's name is does not necessarily reduce the anxiety an instructor can feel that they may mispronounce that name. Similarly, pronouns end up being a mild concern for instructors due to the same factors. One instructor expressed the belief that students would see the use of incorrect pronouns as especially rude on Zoom, because they are commonly listed after a students name. However, these can often be cut off by the character display limit of Zoom if it follows a particularly long name, if the student listed both first and last name before the pronouns, or when the character display limit of Zoom becomes low due to display settings. The instructor believed this created a disconnect, students expect instructors to have easy access to this information when that information may be obfuscated from the instructor perspective. Another instructor expressed the aforementioned limitations and difficulty identifying pronoun labels as something that suppressed their ability to refer to students with honorifics such as sir or mam, something meant to convey respect in their home culture.

Overall though, these anxieties and issues did not seem to severely impact conduct. No instructors identified this as something that deterred them from calling on a student using the raised hand function, and that they either often asked for confirmation that they said the name correctly, or were otherwise just receptive to student corrections. Student participants did not seem to express opinions regarding this phenomenon specifically. One student commented that on Zoom it is easier to be talked over, which could be due to one or more of the previously mentioned factors, but was not more specific as to why they thought that to be the case.

> **P1**: “If you're on Zoom you're more likely to call somebody by name, because you see all the little titles of people. So you say, hey, I see whoever, I don't know, Jessica has her hand up. And so if somebody has a name that's unusual, you have a harder time saying, which in the classroom you can be like, yes, please. And kind of address the person without actually saying, hey, you in the blue dress, right? Or the name. So yeah, that's true. That you have ways to get around things in person that on Zoom you can't.”

> **P2:** “A few times when I've accidentally mixed up people's pronouns, I've always been worried that that has come off offensive when it's not from a place of malice. It's just me forgetting in the moment. And I used the wrong one.”

> **P4:** “And I grew up [in a culture outside the United States]. And so it's a much more formal culture than the United States. And so, to me, when I say, sir, ma'am, whatever, I'm being-- to me, that's very much a sign of respect that I think I'm offering to students. And it's not necessarily what is expected now, on some level. And definitely, if a student reaches out to me and says, ‘I go by these pronouns.’ I make an effort in class.”

**P10:** “But in Zoom, it's so easy to be talked over.”

### *Negativity Toward Learning on Zoom*

Students seem to perceive Zoom classes more negatively than in-person classes. The common thread of most criticisms seems to relate back to it being a format that both limits engagement and makes engagement more difficult. Two students directly say that they do not learn as well when taking a class on Zoom compared to taking a class in-person, which one of the students identifies as being because they find Zoom to be less engaging than being in a classroom environment, because it's all just on their small computer screen. That student placed more emphasis on the importance of instructors encouraging engagement in online classes.

**P7:** “it probably goes back to because I prefer in-person classes. I prefer being in a classroom environment and just that engagement.”

**P8:** “I'm able to learn better in person”

Two other students regard that the reason they are more forgiving of mistakes, particular technological difficulties, is because they are just so much more frequent online compared to an in-person class.

**P5:** “I think there’s more opportunity for things to go wrong when you’re in a Zoom environment.”

**P9:** “Whereas in person, I feel like it’s less of a chance of occurrence. So when it does happen, it’s kind of a little bit more noticeable.”

Two students shared the sentiment that the Zoom environment facilitated or enabled low investment states from instructors. They see it as easier for an instructor to engage less with the students and course content when on Zoom, intentionally or otherwise.

> **P7:** "Even to raise, little raise hands emoji, that you sometimes use, not acknowledging the student in that way and just kind of moving along with the lecture. I feel like it could be a little more easy to say, 'Oh, I didn't see it.' The emoji hand goes away after a couple of minutes, so."

> **P10:** "professors who just throw us all into breakout rooms, which wouldn't really happen in an in-person class for the entire duration. They wouldn't just set us aside and tell us to discuss and no way to talk to the instructor themselves. And yeah, I think that only is facilitated by an online environment."

Half of the student participants called the Zoom environment out as being treated as a more "casual" environment, or otherwise noted a change in the instructor's disposition toward being more casual than they would be in person. This seemed to diminish their perception of the platform as a whole, generalizing that this is simply how classes on Zoom were.

> **P9:** "I mean, sometimes you would have a teacher or a professor whose kind of demeanor would maybe change a little bit when they're on Zoom. They might seem more laid back."

> **P10:** "I think other things that were pretty common in online classes were the change in how casual we were. Professors would let a lot more slip because they felt like they were just kind of on a call and we were just hanging out."

One of these students expressed the belief that both students and instructors are under less obligation to follow the norms of a classroom when it takes place in an online setting. The student seemed to be implying that there is less obligation to participate or engage, giving the example of how students are obligated to answer questions posed to them, though they were not more specific. A similar sentiment was shared by an instructor, who said that your appearance specifically matters less to students when you instruct online compared to in-person, another instance of the perception being that the 'standards' are lower on Zoom.

> **P4:** "I think presentation of your physical self, I think, when you're in person, maybe matters more than it does when you're on Zoom."

> **P6:** "Not much. I think I expect the same from a professor when I'm physically attending that class. More or less, yeah, but I just feel like the professor in a very physical setting basically, offline setting, they would have certain kind of obligation to follow these norms, but they might not have the same obligation while they're on Zoom. I mean, that's kind of the same thing with the students as well. If you are in a class, then you have to maybe-- at some point, you have to answer a few questions, but you can totally ignore the questions if you're in a Zoom class. So I think it goes both ways."

This study is not concluding the online platform to be invariably worse for education, there are limitations and advantages to all mediums. However, the attitude held by students was unanimously a lower opinion of online compared to in-person. This study cannot make any predictions as to whether this attitude could change over time and which ways it could trend. The possibility exists that attitudes are still heavily influenced by the still-recent memories of the

pandemic forcing a switch to remote learning, a time irrevocably entwined with memories of stress and uncertainty.

### *Infectivity For the Hybrid Format*

Though this study intended to look at fully synchronous online courses, in which all students and instructors are in an online environment, I nonetheless ended up receiving information regarding hybrid environments. Hybrid environments usually involve some portion of the class, often including the instructor, being in person while another portion of the class is attending virtually through Zoom. One instructor shared the opinion that a hybrid environment only works if it is lecture-only, and that for a shared learning space it ends up coming at the detriment of one or both parties, which is why they never utilized that class format. Another instructor shared their experience teaching in this hybrid way, remarking that it was a great deal harder to get the Zoom end of the class to engage, and that it eventually reached a point where they just addressed the class as a whole and call on whoever speaks up to respond; but that the online students are almost never the ones to speak up.

> **P1:** "What I didn't do, which some people did, was livestream a class that was happening on campus and had that kind of hybrid environment in which you have some people on Zoom, some people on campus. Because I attended a demo where they showed that, and I thought that did not work out for either group. If I'm on campus, I'm hating that I made the effort to show up and park and walk to the building, and the instructor is preoccupied with whoever is on Zoom in pajamas at home, right? And if I was on-- when I was on Zoom in that demo, I really did not like that I'm not in the classroom."

**P4:** When I teach on Zoom, there's very little discussion. And so I do not know what students' expectations are for discussion. I just know that I'm not good at engendering a lot of discussion on Zoom. So when I taught split AB, the students who are on Zoom never said anything. And I honestly didn't really engage them. I mean, they were there listening. And if they wanted to say something, they could, but almost never would a[n online] student do that.

Only one student spoke in detail about their experience with hybrid format, but they experienced it a great deal during and in the months following the height of the pandemic. This student discussed that when on the online side it was difficult to understand an instructor speaking through a mask, but the mask had to be worn for the safety of the students in-person. This student described it as incredibly offensive when an instructor removed their mask on-camera if they were also teaching students in person, that it was perceived as greatly irresponsible even if this student themself was online and not endangered, though this is exclusively through the context of the early pandemic. Additionally, this student shared the perspective from the in-person side of hybrid as well, how it seemed that the students on Zoom were often ignored, “when we had students in our cohort who got COVID, they would just become a laptop in the classroom. And I always found it sad and also rude when the professors wouldn't acknowledge them as students.” *(P10)*.

**P10:** “I had a professor, Doctor Pinecone*, who in-- so the class was hybrid. It was half in-person, half online. I was online. And I was distance learning at the time. And in the class, he took off his mask because he was just like, "I can't talk," or whatever, like, "My

mask is off, "and that completely changed every single way that I ever felt about him because he just disregarded the safety of the students who were sitting in the class."

*This is a pseudonym used by the student, not a real name.

**Discussion**

**RQ1.** How do college students describe the behavioral expectations they have of their instructors in a Zoom instructional setting?

This study was able to identify that in a synchronous video conferencing classroom, students hold the following expectancies of their instructors: instructors will be present in the class and instructing on course material, instructors will be available to meet outside of class time, instructors will communicate information and course content clearly as well as answer questions and have the information available online and/or in the syllabus, instructors will encourage participation and engagement from students, instructors will have adapted their content presentation style to fit the video conference medium, instructors will respect student time, and that the instructors will be proficient with the technology required, but also that small delays or interruptions due to the instructors having difficulty working the software is an inevitable part of the experience of taking a video conferencing course. Many from this list parallel the findings of the 1999 preliminary study of student expectations (Shelton et al., 1999). The expectations identified in this study of the instructor being present and instructing, have adapted content and delivery to the medium, and proficient with the technology being used can all be seen as falling under the umbrella of shelton et al.'s (1999) "being properly prepared to instruct a class", with the aspects of what exactly preparedness looks like just having changed

along with the medium. The Shelton et al. (1999) study's "be informative and answer questions" rule of instructors can be likened to the expectations of communicating course content clearly and availability to meet outside of class time. Lastly, this study identified the expectation for instructors to encourage engagement and participation from their students, which falls within the purview of Shelton et al.s (1999) expectation for instructors to make class interesting. The only one of the student expectations identified by Shelton et al.'s (1991) study is the expectation that instructors respect and be considerate of students, however the findings further on regarding instructor violations seem to imply that this expectation still exists, and is likely considered implicit. The only expectation identified in this study that does not fit neatly with past literature is the expectation that technological mistakes and delays are an inevitable part of the experience of a synchronous online course.

While many of these expectations were not unique to the format, and instead seem to be norms attached to the context of a classroom instructor/student relationship, students did stress that it felt more important that these expectations are met when taking an online course. Emphasis was placed on expectations of availability to answer questions and meet outside of class, clear communication of course content, and the most emphasized was the expectation that instructors encourage their students to engage more. In the eyes of the students, encouraging engagement looks like pushing for all student cameras to be on, as well as starting and pushing in-class discussions. Students also emphasized that the perception of the instructor being engaged was especially important, which was signaled by instructor participation in discussions, the instructor having their own camera on, and the instructor being attentive to questions and comments left in the Zoom chat as well as attentive to what students are using the hand raised function of Zoom.

Put together, these findings imply that students still view the Zoom classroom as a classroom. However students did recognize that the experience is different and requires a different approach from instructors, though it wasn't easy for students to put to words the changes they believe instructors need to make other than the increased importance of instructor immediacy behaviors. Overall, the data seemed to suggest that while no student consciously believed that they expected more from their instructors on a Zoom course versus their instructors in-person course, it does seem that when on Zoom it is easier for an instructor to make a mistake that is evaluated negatively by students. There are many possible explanations for what has caused the change, as it does not seem to be a conscious change. The data of this study seems to suggest that, from the student perspective, the change is not that the students have lowered the threshold for what constitutes a violation, but rather that certain violations when made in a video conference medium are more negatively impactful than would be in an in-person classroom. Whether this is the only factor behind it and whether or not the threshold for violations has changed is beyond the purview of this study.

**RQ2.** What do instructor behavioral violations look like on Zoom?

Students identified the following instructor behaviors as those that they would evaluate negatively: poorly communicating course concepts and class information, misrepresenting level of subject knowledge, consistently demonstrated technical incompetence, going over allotted class time, instructor disengagement, insufficient disability accommodation, aggressive conduct or attitude, talking over students, unprofessional appearance, and unsympathetic attitudes or dispositions. These findings are consistent with the literature, with all of these being able to be attributed to one of the three categories of instructor 'misbehaviors' identified in previous

research, that being instructor incompetence, offensiveness, and indolence (Kearney et al., 1991). Violations that were emphasized to be viewed particularly severely when in a Zoom course were instructor disengagement and consistently demonstrated technical incompetence. Instructor disengagement could take the form of instructor camera not being on or being frequently turned off, over utilizing student-autonomous strategies such as breakout rooms, and failure to participate and contribute to class discussions. Technical incompetence was noted to only be a violation in the instances where it was persistent or particularly disruptive. This makes sense seeing as some amount of technological struggle is a part of the baseline expectations students have.

Students identified positive violations as instructor additional effort put into course content, humor, promoting interaction and engagement, and sympathy. Humor and instructor immediacy have both been shown to have a neutralizing effect on student perceptions of violations, by Sidelinger & Tatum (2019) and Mottet, Parker-Raley, Beebe, and Raffeld (2006) respectively. This neutralizing effect shows these actions to have a documented positive valence in the eyes of students. In terms of instructors promoting engagement, in education engagement was found to be one of the best predictors of student learning (Carini et al., 2006) and in online learning interactivity was found effective in enhancing the efficacy of online training (Stephens & Mottet, 2008). These factors support that students would view the action of promoting engagement more favorably. The outlier is “putting additional effort into course content”, which is not a strictly definable behavior or action. It is best described as being assigned when the instructor performs above and beyond the student’s expectations. However, it seems reasonable to equate it as the culmination of various components, likely those of instructor competency, instructor immediacy behaviors, as well as successful cultivation of student engagement.

Overall, violations seem to appear the same across the two mediums. Students appear to be less tolerant of behaviors they see as indolent when they are online, and more tolerant of technical difficulties unless they occur with high frequency or consistency.

**RQ3a.** How do instructors describe the behavioral expectations they believe they are held to by their students in a Zoom instructional setting?

Instructors stated that when instructing a Zoom class they believe their students expect them to be present and instructing on class material, to have technology functioning correctly, content to be delivered differently than it would be in-person, to still feel like a community, to have their own cameras on, and to have the same accessibility and resources they would have in an in-person class. Instructor beliefs regarding student engagement expectations were mixed, two expressed uncertainty, one expressed that students expect to be engaged in a way that emulates or compensates for the difference between Zoom and in-person, and one expressed the belief that students want to be engaged less when on Zoom than in-person.

Instructors expressed uncertainty regarding student expectations that seemed to be more severe than uncertainty they might feel in-person. EVT could explain this phenomenon as being due to limitations of the video conference medium, and that those limits disrupt the instructor's communicator reward valence assessment. Communicator reward valence is an evaluation of the other participants of a communication interaction, and it is a culmination of the positive and negative attributes of the other person(s) within the encounter (Griffin et al., 2022). Nonverbal behaviors of listeners inform the assessment created by the speaker, which can be positive behaviors of the listeners such as nodding, making eye contact, and responding actively, or negative behaviors such as avoiding eye contact, yawning, and doing something else during

(Burgoon et al., 1986). The video conference format limits a student's capacity to respond actively or otherwise limits those responses to text chat rooms, replaces true eye contact with looking into the camera, and makes it difficult to observe all students which can make it easy to miss gestures such as nods or a change in facial expressions. The difficulty engaging with the medium reported previously by students could cause an increase in negative nonverbals like yawning, lack of eye contact (looking away from the camera), and cause uncertainty to whether a student is paying attention or doing something else. These factors of the medium could result in higher difficulty assessing students responses when instructing on Zoom, and uncertainty would follow as a result.

**RQ3b.** In a Zoom instructional setting, is there incongruity between student-held perceptions of expectations, and the instructor-held beliefs of their students' expectations?

Instructors beliefs about student expectations in a Zoom class were largely congruent with actual student expectations. Both groups were in agreement that the role of the instructor has not changed with the medium. This finding makes sense, expectancies in EVT are highly context specific (Griffin et al., 2022) , and it follows logically that these core roles are informed by context, and the medium may have changed but the context of being a college classroom has not. A majority of both students and instructors expressed the belief that Zoom classrooms require a change in approach from instructors, that they require the instructor to adapt and change from how they would approach an in-person classroom. This seems to follow with the previous conclusion, the context has remained the same and as such context-related expectations carry over, but the medium has changed and brings with it the expectation that these changes will be acknowledged and adapted to.

On student engagement expectations, instructors expressed differing opinions. Two instructors stated they believed that students expect to be engaged just as much as they do in-person. These instructors note their belief that Zoom as a medium required additional engagement to compensate for what it lacks compared to an in-person classroom, and that Zoom requires more effort directed towards promoting student engagement to produce the same result as in-person. A third instructor stated their belief that students want to be engaged less when taking a Zoom course, and the fourth instructor expressed uncertainty on the matter, but that students consistently not speaking up in online classes indicated to them that students wanted to interact less. This study found the actual student expectation to be for instructors to encourage additional engagement, congruent with the former two instructors and incongruent with the beliefs of the latter. This is supported by literature, with student engagement being linked to motivation and increased likelihood to communicate with their instructors in educational settings (Umbach & Wawrzynski, 2005). This is also supported by the attitudes of the instructors themselves, with the instructors who expressed the dissenting opinion also expressing more negative feelings towards instructing on Zoom and synchronous online courses in general than the other two instructors.

Instructors expressed a perception that students are quite forgiving of technological mistakes and delays, with some instructors saying this was particularly true in Zoom classrooms while others believed it to be true in both mediums. Student data does indeed indicate this to be the case, that students are more tolerant of small technological mistakes and delays and see them as intrinsic to the experience of taking a Zoom course. In terms of EVT, standards of conduct for low valence communicators are lower than those of high valence communicators, which means actions have to be more severe to be registered as a violation by the observer (Burgoon, 1993).

This principle seems to imply that when taking a course on Zoom students inherently have lower expectations for their instructors in regards to technical proficiency.

Lastly, instructors expressed uncertainty about student expectations of camera requirements. Instructors had identified that students expect the instructors to have their own cameras on, but unilaterally expressed uncertainty as to what camera requirements students expected to be enforced by the instructor. One instructor expressed that they require student cameras to be on, but still expressed uncertainty on whether this was expected by their students, and that they enforced it because they believed that student video feeds enhanced the Zoom class experience. Another expressed uncertainty and did not enforce camera requirements on students, fearing it may be an unfair request of students for any number of reasons or circumstances. However, this same instructor also reported that student cameras frequently being off had a consistent negative effect on their experience instructing on Zoom. Students unanimously expressed that other students having their cameras on improved their own class experience, and that it was part of the responsibility of the instructor to encourage or enforce student cameras be on. The conclusion that cameras being on enhances student learning on Zoom remains consistent with engagement's positive impact on student learning (Carini et al., 2006). However, there exists a logical discrepancy in this conclusion. The idea that students see fellow students having cameras off as a pervasive problem implies that they encounter this frequently in their online courses, which itself requires that there be students whose preference or default behavior is to have their own camera be off, or otherwise a reason that students often have their cameras off in class despite lowering their engagement with that course. This could be the result of ambivalence toward the course, requiring consistent privacy due to living situations, or the result of conformity to other students having cameras off, but more research is required.

Instructor expectation beliefs were congruent with actual student expectations when those expectations are related to the education context. When expectations were created or modified by the medium instructor expectations beliefs were most uncertain or incongruent when the expectation was modified or created due to the change in medium. Even when their actions were congruent with the expectations of students, instructors remained uncertain about student expectations. This study attributes this largely to difficulty assessing reactions of students when on Zoom, which itself is the result of Zoom limiting communication channels and communication capacity. This reduction in being able to assess response and nonverbal feedback is an especially concerning factor because the interviewed instructors' approach to Zoom was exclusively informed by trial and error and experience. With this being the case, needing to develop new strategies and approaches based on student feedback while in a medium that restricted that feedback, it is not a surprise that half the interviewed instructors had negative experiences with and distaste for the Zoom format.

### *Unexpected Findings*

Though it wasn’t a focus of the study, I was surprised to discover that from the instructors interviewed, all of their techniques and strategies used online seem to have been developed from trial and error. One instructor mentions having experienced training for asynchronous online classes, but there were no mentions of training or resources they used, implying that the process of learning to educate in the medium may still be “sink or swim”, even three years after the unexpected switch.

Additionally, I was surprised to find that when interviewing students who began taking online classes in high school before coming to take them at college, they seemed to have slightly

laxer expectations than that of students who only ever experience video conference classes in college. On average they listed less specific expectations from their instructors, and both listed a positive violation as being when an instructor puts in the additional effort to make coursework engaging, something some of the college-only students had as part of their baseline.

### *Limitations*

The limitations of this study include its sample size, sample variety, researcher count, time constraints, and interview length. Conducting longer, more thorough interviews with about 15 total participants, 10 students and 5 instructors, would have been ideal. The sample was also of low variety, while some of the graduate students had done their undergraduate studies at other universities, nearly all of the sample was conducted from students and instructors from the same institution, half the sample was involved in the communication discipline, nearly all of the sample was within the umbrella of liberal arts, and only one participant was from a discipline within the STEM field. Future research can either lean more broadly, collecting from as wide a sample as possible, or lean more narrowly, looking exclusively at a specific discipline, field, or institution. A research team of 2-3 for data collection and coding would have enhanced the speed and efficacy of the study, ability to find participants and interview length was limited by only being able to be performed by a single researcher. Time constraints put pressure on the researcher to begin finding participants sooner rather than later, and a wider window of time could have allowed the interviews to be a few questions longer, to increase interview depth without compromising project scope.

### *Future Research*

Future research would benefit from a closer and more thorough examination of the instructor perspective. Additionally, future research could conduct longer interviews and try to delve deeper into expectation formation; where do students/instructors believe their expectations for online courses come from? Are they from experience? Etc. Lastly, I think future research could make sure to either examine a wide breadth of college student and instructor experiences with different majors or otherwise look at a narrow category, as this study looked at students and instructors from more than one discipline.

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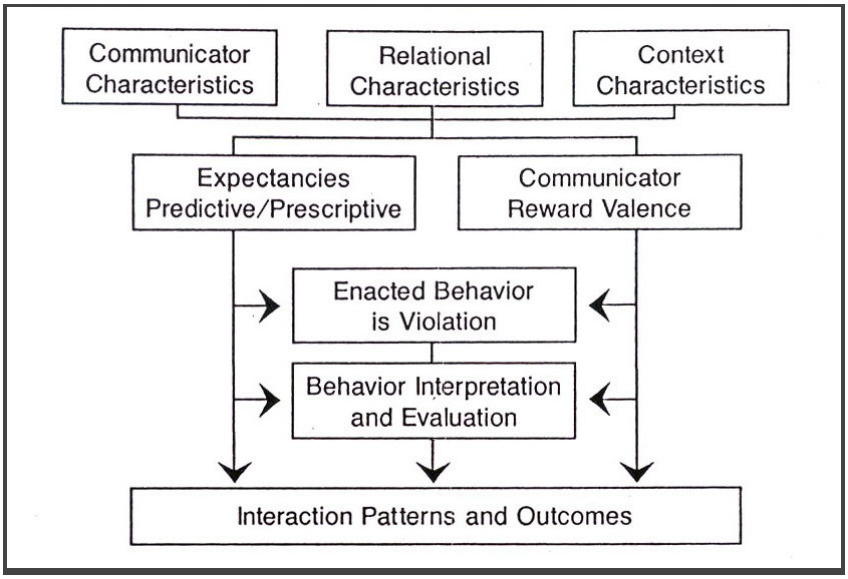
## Appendices

### *Appendix I - Figures*

**Figure 1**

*Expectancy Violations Theory (Burgoon, 1993)*




***Appendix II - Tables***

The designations P1-P10 accompany any quotes used from the interview transcripts. They represent the 10 participants of the study, the information accompanying each designation is outlined below.

| **Designation** | **Role** | **Institution** | **Discipline** | **Years Instructing** | **School Level** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| P1 | Instructor | RIT | Communication | 10+ Years | - |
| P2 | Instructor | RIT | Humanities, Computing, and Design | 2 Years | - |
| P3 | Instructor | RIT | Communication | 12 Years | - |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| P4 | Instructor | RIT | Criminal Justice | 20 Years | - |
| P5 | Student | RIT | Communication | - | Graduate |
| P6 | Student | RIT | Communication | - | Graduate |
| P7 | Student | RIT | Communication | - | Graduate |
| P8 | Student | RIT | Game Design & Development | - | Undergraduate |
| P9 | Student | RIT | Advertisement & Public Relations | - | Undergraduate |
| P10 | Student | Wake Forest University | Communication | - | Graduate |

***Appendix III - Interview Script***

*Version 1: for Students*

**Explanation.**

The following is a survey for collecting information from willing participants who have taken an all-online class

You are invited to participate in a research study about expectancy violations in the classroom. The purpose of this study is to examine how there may be differences between expectations we have of our instructors in person and expectations we have of our instructors online.

I ask that you read this form before we begin the interview to ensure that your consent in participation is sufficiently informed.

**Study Purpose**

The purpose of this study is to assess the expectations students have of their instructors when on zoom, and how those expectations can be violated

**Procedures For The Study**

If you agree to be in the study, you will conduct an interview estimated to take between 15 and 30 minutes, but in some cases may go longer. You will be asked questions concerning your experiences, thoughts, and opinions regarding specific circumstances in Zoom classrooms, and may be asked for elaboration on your responses at the researcher's discretion.

==========

*Version 2: for Instructors*

**Explanation.**

The following is a survey for collecting information from willing participants who have instructed an all online course.

You are invited to participate in a research study about expectancy violations in the classroom. The purpose of this study is to examine how there may be differences between expectations we have of our instructors in person and expectations we have of our instructors online.

I ask that you read this form before we begin the interview to ensure that your consent in participation is sufficiently informed.

**Study Purpose**

The purpose of this study is to assess the expectations instructors believe their students have of them.

**Procedures For The Study**

If you agree to be in the study, you will conduct an interview estimated to take between 15 and 30 minutes, but in some cases may go longer. You will be asked questions concerning your experiences, thoughts, and opinions regarding specific circumstances in Zoom classrooms, and may be asked for elaboration on your responses at the researcher's discretion.

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*Within Both Versions*

**Contacts for Questions or Problems**

For questions about the study, you may contact the researcher Kaleb Kronimus at (607)-282-0236. For larger questions you may contact the research supervisor Dr. Eun sook Kwon exkgpt@rit.edu

**Voluntary Nature of Study**

Taking part in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to take part or may leave the study at any time. Your decision whether or not to participate in this study will not affect your current or future relations with the investigator.

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*Script 1: For Students*

"Can you list roughly 4-5 things you expect from your instructors while taking a course on Zoom?"

"Do you feel that these expectations are different from those you hold of your instructors when you're in person?"

(Request elaboration) (Do you think you expect more from them, less from them, or about the same?, etc.)

"Can you describe a time where an instructor in an online course did something you didn't expect and it **negatively** affected how you thought of them - even if it was just something small?"

(Follow-up if yes) "What did you think of it? Do you think it affected how you interacted with that instructor?"

"Could you give an example, real or hypothetical, of something an instructor could do during a Zoom class that would make you concerned that they were incompetent, or otherwise maybe not as good at their job as you would have expected them to be?"

(Follow up if appropriate: "If an instructor did that in person, would it have the same effect on how you saw them?")

"Could you give an example, real or hypothetical, of something an instructor could do during a Zoom class that would make you think they didn't care very much about what was going on, or were otherwise more carefree or aloof than you might have expected?"

(Follow up if appropriate: “If an instructor did that in person, would it have the same effect on how you saw them?”)

“Could you give an example, real or hypothetical, of something an instructor could do during a Zoom class that would make you consider them rude or offensive?

(Follow up if appropriate: “If an instructor did that in person, would it have the same effect on how you saw them?”)

“Can you describe a time where an instructor in an online course did something you didn’t expect and it **positively** affected how you thought of them - even if it was just something small?”

(Follow-up if yes) “What did you think of it? Do you think it affected how you interacted with that instructor?”

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*Script 2: For Instructors*

“What do you feel are your student’s expectations of you when you conduct a class on Zoom?”

“Do you feel there are expectations held of you on Zoom that wouldn’t be expected of you in a real classroom?”

(Follow up: “Vice versa?”)

"In your experience do you think that students have different standards for conduct on Zoom than for conduct in person?

"Can you describe any unique strategies you use when introducing yourself to a Zoom class that you are teaching?"

(Follow up: "Are these strategies different from strategies you would employ in person? Or are they the same?")

"Can you describe a time during a Zoom class when you may have found yourself worried that you had done something that might make you seem less competent at your job than you actually are?"

(Follow up if appropriate: "Can you describe any strategies you have used that are specifically intended to avoid seeming incompetent")

"Can you describe a time during a Zoom class when you may have found yourself worried that you had done something that might make you seem aloof or uninvested in what was going on?"

(Follow up if appropriate: "Can you describe any strategies you have used that are specifically make yourself seem invested?")

"Can you describe a time during a Zoom class when you may have found yourself worried that you had done something that might make you seem rude, or have accidentally said something more offensive than intended?"

(Follow up if appropriate: “Can you describe any strategies you have used that are specifically intended to avoid seeming rude?”)

## *Appendix IV - Codebook*

| Code | Definition | Description | Qualifications or Exclusions | Examples |
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| Adaptation | Statements regarding changes that need to be made when transitioning from an in-person classroom setting to a synchronous online classroom. | Talking about how instructors or students had to change for Zoom classes. | Identifies or describes specific changes in approach, attitude, philosophy, or strategy made by themselves or others when taking a class online, as well as on-specific statements that express a belief that switching environments does or does not require adapting to the | 00:10:54,324 - 00:12:40,355 I think with Zoom in the classroom, I mean, one thing that we have to do more often is keep lectures shorter. Because if you are in an actual classroom, I think you can hold the group's attention for longer. But on Zoom, it's very easy to get distracted, bored. |

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| | | | medium. | |
| Advantages of Zoom | Any statement identifying a positive that is literally or practically exclusive to the Zoom platform and not ever or often experienced in the in-person classroom. | Discussing an advantage the Zoom classroom has over an in-person classroom. | It cannot be something that can also occur in an in-person classroom with the same amount of effort. Statement must describe either something that cannot occur in-person, or something that Zoom makes easier to facilitate than in-person. | The chat function is unique to the Zoom environment, and that creates this whole other space for interaction because in a classroom, if somebody has a commentary, usually the person will just raise their hand and make the comment and then somebody else may build on the comment and then that's how the comment goes, right? |
| Appearance | Any statement regarding appearance of oneself or the others within the Zoom call, applying to clothes, accessories, and background. Statements are applicable if they discuss a belief regarding appearance or a | People discussing the importance of physical appearance on Zoom | Must be about the clothes or accessories of a person, or an opinion on whether those things matter. | I think presentation of your physical self, I think, when you're in person, maybe matters more than it does when you're on Zoom. I think there are potentially lower expectations in terms of how you present yourself, I think, on Zoom as opposed to in the classroom, if |

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| | statement about appearance. | | | that makes sense. |
| Argumentative or Berrating Behavior | Students discussing thoughts, opinions, or examples of instructor behavior that is argumentative or berating. | Students discuss perception of argumentative behavior. | Includes anything that discusses berating or argumentative behavior. | Offensive? Maybe if a student has asked a question and the professor is hell bent on proving the student wrong, then that would be like, "Okay, well, I'm just asking a question". |
| Availability | Statements regarding the availability of instructors to be approached or contacted outside of class hours, usually in the form of office hours. | People talking about instructor availability or whether availability is more, less, or of the same importance when taking a class in-person | It mentions availability of instructors outside of class time. | 00:05:22,486 - 00:06:27,128 I think it's expected on Zoom environments to be more accessible and have time set up for students to be able to come visit more because of the fact that it seems and feels sometimes like this is a boundary between me and the student, the student and I, so I found that they want to ask questions a lot of times, but they're not willing to ask questions on the Zoom call and they'll want to set up more meetings afterwards, so they'll email more often and have like a bajillion emails that they |

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| | | | | want to be answered. |
| Clarity | The expectation that content and important information be delivered clearly as well as the expectation that there be avenues and opportunities to clarify any confusion on class information. | Anything concerning the clarity of information, or the ease of getting information clarified. | Included if it's about important or relevant information not being clearly communicated, as well as being about difficulty in getting information clarified by the instructor. | And so having a professor that's kind of not communicative, when you resend an email, not communicative when it comes to office hours and keeping students updated, to me, would show that lack of concern for the students. |
| Credibility | Statements regarding instructor credibility, including knowledge of subject, competency in skills or strategies of engaging classroom, and social credibility aspects such as honesty. | Anything concerning thoughts, feelings, or statements that pertain to an aspect of instructor credibility. | Statements can include anything that students identify as either enhancing or diminishing the credibility of an instructor in their eyes, as well as any statement by instructors regarding their | he would share his screen on Zoom, you could see all the tabs he had open. And it would be the things that he was teaching us, like, what does this mean? Or say we were learning about the judicial system, his Google tabs was he would have a-- he would have open would be like, how many judges are there in the Supreme Court or something like that? And he didn't know the |

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| | | | own opinions on an aspect of credibility or how students perceive that aspect. | information himself, and you could see that he was googling it. |
| Limitations of Zoom | Identifying ways in which the synchronous online medium is limited, or seems to impose limitations on the users, when compared to the in-person medium. | Ways that the Zoom format limits interaction quality, capacity, or style. | Any statement describing a failing or limitation of Zoom that is imposed specifically because of the medium - and by extension excludes limitations if they are not caused or affected by the medium (limitations imposed by COVID-19 pandemic are not included unless they were also due to the medium). | you can normally be like, "Okay, who can help me?" But when it's just you in a room, it's like, okay. I can't ask you for help because you don't know what an experiencing too |

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| Participation and Engagement | Statements regarding classroom participation and engagement in any capacity, on the part of students or instructors. | Students or instructors discussing classroom participation or engagement. | This includes a broad category of statements, it can include statements of importance, discussion of instances of low participation, attribution of reasons for low participation, or opinions or speculation regarding engagement perceptions. The only exclusions are anything that doesn't discuss participation or engagement on the Zoom platform. | Two, it'd be really nice if they were trying to promote more social interaction because a lot of the Zoom classes online is just camera off. And they'll be like, "Turn on your cameras." And then some people don't. It's just like, "Okay, there's no social aspect of it in class. |
| Present and Instructing | Statements that indicate the expectation of students for their | Statements that indicate an expectation of instructors to be present | Excluded if it's in regards to in-person and not | So when I'm on a course on Zoom, I expect the teacher to, one, be there. |

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| | instructors to fulfill the baseline expectation, which is to be present within the call and instructing on course content. | and intention to instruct on material. | at all about Zoom/online. | |
| Technological Competency | Thoughts, perceptions, and expectations regarding the ability to understand and operate software and hardware used during instruction. | Discussing proficiency in technology, how it's responded to, and how different levels of proficiency are judged. | This includes the Zoom software and hardware *necessary* to run a synchronous online class. | I would expect that the Zoom links work, and that as a student, I don't have to go through any extra hoops trying to get into the class. |
| Time | Students discuss the treatment or importance of their own time when taking a class online on Zoom. | Students discussing instructor treatment of their time. | Includes any time a student discusses their own time, using that word. | Yeah. I think sometimes it can get easier, this happens once or twice, where you're in your home setting or you're not in a physical space where a next class is coming, that they go over the time allotted, right? And so you're hoping that this class ends at a certain time, but there's no rush because there's no class coming in next, you're not rushing to go home or walk to the parking lot half a mile away from the building. And there's kind of |

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| | | | | that comfort there. So they just extend it a little more. And I think that kind of loses the class's attention. It didn't happen very frequently. I think only once or twice, but I remember being like, okay, we were supposed to end five minutes ago. Let's get on with it. |
| Uncertainty | Instructors discuss uncertainty regarding the thoughts, feelings, opinions, and expectations of their students when instructing a synchronous online course. | Instructors discuss being uncertain. | Anytime an instructor discusses being uncertain or aspects of Zoom that increase uncertainty (or otherwise fail to reduce uncertainty). | And actually, I'm not sure what else the other expectations of students are because, to be honest, I don't think I've ever really spoken to students about what they expect of me when I teach via Zoom. |