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Affinity-Seeking: Student Desirability and Motivation in the Classroom

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**AFFINITY-SEEKING: STUDENTS DESIRABILITY AND MOTIVATION IN THE
CLASSROOM**

A Master's Thesis

Presented to

The Graduate College of
Missouri State University

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts, Communication

By

Taylor Dylan Corlee

May 2021

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AFFINITY-SEEKING: STUDENTS DESIRABILITY AND MOTIVATION IN THE CLASSROOM

Communication

Missouri State University, May 2021

Master of Arts

Taylor Dylan Corlee

ABSTRACT

Affinity-seeking research once provided teachers with effective strategies to create an overall better classroom environment. Over the last twenty years there has been no continuation of this research and the effectiveness of these strategies seemed to be agreed upon. The purpose of this study is to bring affinity-seeking research back into the modern era and see how motivation is affected for both in-person and online classes. This study is a contribution that adds to these strategies for effectiveness in both in-person and online classrooms.

KEYWORDS: affinity-seeking, instructional communication, classroom environment, motivation, rapport building, online classroom, instructional resources

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In the interest of academic freedom and the principle of free speech, approval of this thesis indicates the format is acceptable and meets the academic criteria for the discipline as determined by the faculty that constitute the thesis committee. The content and views expressed in this thesis are those of the student-scholar and are not endorsed by Missouri State University, its Graduate College, or its employees.

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I dedicate this thesis to all educators who have lost their lives as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

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INTRODUCTION

The classroom is changing, and teachers must learn to adapt to create a more effective classroom environment. Specifically, it is important to motivate students in times of change. This “change” is learning in an online classroom environment. Affinity-seeking is a great tool to use when it comes to creating a better classroom and motivating students. The research presented will focus on 25 effective strategies that teachers can use in their classroom to create an overall liking of the class. This study will look into what student’s desire most from their teachers when it comes to the 25 affinity-seeking strategies.

When students like their class, they tend to be more motivated and successful. Even though there have been numerous studies on affinity-seeking in the classroom, the research is outdated. Affinity-seeking research was at its peak during the late 80s through the late 90s. After that time, it seems that the research was agreed upon and that the highly effective affinity-seeking strategies remained untouched. Since then, there have been a few studies that focused on individual affinity-seeking strategies such as immediacy and verbal aggressiveness, but the research is very limited. In the past 20 years, learning in the classroom has changed in terms of culture and teaching styles. The research on affinity-seeking is important to instructional research and that is why it is important to bring this topic back to the surface. Not only have teaching styles changed, but the format that they teach in has changed as well. Online classrooms were not a common alternative style of teaching 20 years ago, but today it is more relevant than ever. The main purpose of this study is to take affinity-seeking research into the modern era and understand how it has changed in terms of student's desirability and how motivation is affected in both in-person and online classrooms.

Throughout the literature review, there will be four studies presented specifically on the 25 affinity-seeking strategies and the classroom environment. These strategies will be ranked as highly effective, moderately effective, and least effective. There will be a discussion about the term motivation and what it means to affinity-seeking research. Finally, there will be a discussion on alternative classroom formats, online classes, and how this topic is relevant to affinity-seeking research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Affinity-Seeking Research

Affinity-seeking was first studied by Bell and Daly (1984). They developed a list of strategies that correlated with a person's likeability. There were 25 strategies that they concluded were effective in gaining likeness from others. They did not intend this idea to be solely related to the classroom, but instead, this idea was a generalization of affinity-seeking. McCroskey and McCroskey (1986) wanted to use the idea of affinity-seeking in the classroom. Based on Bell and Daly's (1984) typology, they studied the 25 strategies and how they are effective in the classroom. They then developed 25 affinity-seeking strategies that teachers can use to get students to like them. Since then, researchers have used McCroskey and McCroskey's (1986) affinity-seeking approach and applied it to their research about the classroom. Following McCroskey and McCroskey's (1986) study on affinity-seeking, Gorham, Kelley, and McCroskey (1989) continued to research the use of affinity-seeking in the classroom setting. They identified which strategies were most often portrayed in the classroom. Richmond (1990) conducted a study on motivation and affinity-seeking. This study discovered several affinity-seeking behaviors that increased student motivation.

Frymier and Thompson (1992) decided to test these strategies and they wanted to understand how affinity-seeking is associated with motivation in the classroom. Their study discovered that previous affinity-seeking strategies that were once considered highly effective, are now considered moderately effective or least. The effectiveness of affinity-seeking strategies continued to change with each recent study. Frymier (1994) continued her research using a trait and state motivation scale. Another study conducted by Myers (1995) used the same affinity-

seeking model and a classroom climate questionnaire. He also discovered that the scale of effectiveness has changed for certain affinity-seeking strategies. Dolin (1995) argued that 25 affinity-seeking strategies were too much and did not provide accurate results. She then created her scale which was a shorter form of affinity-seeking strategies in the classroom. Gorham and Christophel (1990) did a similar study, in which they created a different scale of affinity-seeking about the use of humor and immediacy in the classroom. Even though these alternative scales have been useful in past studies, they will not be used for the current study.

Research on affinity-seeking continued till the late 1990s and early 2000s. Wanzer (1998) used Gorham and Christophel's (1990) affinity-seeking scale to better understand teachers' and students' perceptions of affinity-seeking in the classroom. The most recent study that uses McCroskey and McCroskey's (1986) affinity-seeking scale is Myers and Zhong (2004) and they conducted a study among Chinese college students and how the affinity-seeking scale relates to Richmond's (1990) motivation scale. Myers and Zhong's study were not included with this current study's comparison because their study focused on a specific demographic and it would not be relatable to the current study. Out of all the studies conducted over affinity-seeking strategies done in the classroom, four studies were chosen that focused specifically on the 25 affinity-seeking strategies and their relations to the overall classroom environment. The studies being compared are Richmond (1990), Frymier and Thompson (1992), Frymier (1994), and Myers (1995). These studies will be used to rank the strategies as highly effective, moderately effective, and least effective.

The highly effective strategies are chosen by which study found them highly effective in comparison to those who found it moderately and least effective. If the affinity-seeking strategy has more highly effective results, than moderately and least effective, they were ranked as highly

effective. If the affinity-seeking strategy had more least effective results than highly effective, they were ranked as least effective. Finally, if the results between highly and least effective were tied, or there were no results, they were ranked as moderately effective.

Highly Effective Strategies

This section will be discussing the highly effective affinity-seeking strategies when it comes to creating an overall better classroom environment. There will be four studies presented and these affinity-seeking behaviors have been ranked highest compared to the other four studies. This was done by having three to four studies in agreement.

Assume Equality. McCroskey and McCroskey (1986) defines *Assume Equality* as: “teacher attempting to get a student to like him/her presents self as an equal of the other person... he/she avoids appearing superior or snobbish and does not play the ‘one-upmanish’ games” (p. 161). Three of the four studies discovered that *Assume Equality* was effective in gaining likeness in the classroom. Richmond (1990) discovered that *Assume Equality* is an effective strategy. Frymier (1994) discovered that *Assume Equality* was an effective affinity-seeking strategy when looking at motivation in the classroom. Last, Myers (1995) discovered that *Assume Equality* is an effective strategy for a teacher to use in the classroom to create an overall better classroom environment.

Dynamism. McCroskey and McCroskey (1986) defines *Dynamism* as: “teacher attempting to get a student to like him/her presents him/herself as a dynamic, active, and enthusiastic person... he/she acts physically animated and very lively while talking with the student, varies intonation and other vocal characteristics, and is outgoing and extroverted with the student” (p. 161). Three of the four studies found this strategy to be effective. Frymier and

Thompson (1992) concluded *Dynamism* to be in the top five highly effective strategies in creating a better classroom environment. Frymier (1994) found that *Dynamism* is an effective strategy to use when looking at motivation. Finally, Myers (1995) concluded that *Dynamism* was one of the most effective strategies in creating a better classroom environment.

Elicit Others Disclosure. McCroskey and McCroskey (1986) defines *Elicit Others Disclosure* as: “Teacher attempting to get a student to like him/her encourages the student to talk by asking questions and reinforcing the student for talking. The teacher inquires about the student’s interest, feelings, opinions, views, and so on... he/she responds as if these are important and interesting and continues to ask more questions of the student” (p. 161). Three out of the four studies found this strategy to be highly effective. Frymier and Thompson (1992) discovered that this strategy was highly effective in creating a better class environment. Frymier (1994) concluded in a later study that *Elicit Others Disclosure* is in the top five effective affinity-seeking strategies. Finally, Myers (1995) discovered in his study that *Elicit Others Disclosure* is an effective strategy in creating a better overall classroom environment.

Facilitate Enjoyment. McCroskey and McCroskey (1986) defines *Facilitate Enjoyment* as:

Teacher attempting to get a student to like him/her seeks to make the situations in which the two are involved very enjoyable experience. The teacher does things that students will enjoy, is entertaining, tell jokes and interesting stories, talks about interesting topics, says funny things, and tries to make the classroom conducive to enjoyment. The teacher attempting to get a student to like him/her includes of...the students in his/her social activities and group of friends. He/she introduces the student to his/her friends, and makes the students feel like one of the group. (p. 161)

All four studies found this strategy to be highly effective in affinity-seeking. Richmond (1990) discovered that *Facilitate Enjoyment* was a highly effective strategy. Frymier and Thompson (1992) also found this strategy to be highly effective. Frymier (1994) concluded in her study that

Facilitate Enjoyment was in the top five affinity-seeking strategies used to motivate students in the classroom. Finally, Myers (1995) determined that *Facilitate Enjoyment* was an effective strategy in affinity-seeking.

Nonverbal Immediacy. McCroskey and McCroskey (1986) defines *Nonverbal Immediacy* as: "Teacher attempting to get a student to like him/her signals interest and liking through various nonverbal cues the teacher attempting to get a student to like him/her... the teacher frequently uses eye contact, stands or sits close to the student, smiles, leans towards the student, uses frequent head nods, and directs much gaze towards the student" (p. 162). All four studies found this strategy to be highly effective. Richmond (1990) discovered that *Nonverbal Immediacy* was an effective affinity-seeking strategy. Frymier and Thompson (1992) found that this strategy was highly effective. Frymier (1994) found later that it was still considered a highly effective strategy for the classroom. Last, Myers (1995) found this strategy to be highly effective in creating a better classroom environment.

Optimism. McCroskey and McCroskey (1986) defines *Optimism* as:

Teacher attempting to get a student to like him/her presents self as a positive person-- an optimist-- so that he/she will appear to be a person who is pleasant to be around. He/she acts in a 'happy-go-lucky' manner, is cheerful, and looks on the positive side of things. He/she avoids complaining about things, talking about depressing topics, and being critical of self and others. (p.162)

All four studies found this strategy to be considered a highly effective affinity-seeking strategy. Richmond (1990) found that this was a highly effective strategy. Frymier and Thompson (1992) also concluded that *Optimism* is effective and created a sense of caring in the classroom that led to student motivation. Frymier (1994) concluded that *Optimism* to be in the top five effective strategies in affinity-seeking. Finally, Myers (1995) found this strategy to be highly effective as well. For these reasons, these strategies mentioned above should still be seen as highly effective

affinity-seeking strategies in the classroom.

H1: Highly effective affinity-seeking strategies will score highly effective in traditional classroom environments.

Moderately Effective Strategies

This section will be discussing the moderately effective affinity-seeking strategies when it comes to creating an overall better classroom environment. There will be four studies presented and these affinity-seeking behaviors have been ranked moderate compared to the other four studies. This could be done by having two to four studies in agreement with either high or moderate or two of the four studies finding it least effective.

Altruism. McCroskey and McCroskey (1986) defines *Altruism* as:

Teacher attempting to get a student to like him/her tries to be help and assistance to the student in whatever he/she is currently doing...the person holds the door for the student, assist him/her with his studies, helps him/her get the needed materials for assignments, and helps run errands for the student. The teacher also gives advice when it is requested. (p. 161)

Two of the four studies found this to be highly effective. Frymier and Thompson (1992) discovered that the teachers use of *Altruism* was effective in motivating students. They associated *Altruism* with the teacher's credibility and student motivation within the classroom.

Myers (1995) also concluded that *Altruism* was an effective strategy.

Assume Control. McCroskey and McCroskey (1986) defines *Assume control* as:

"Teacher attempting to get a student to like him/her presents self as a leader, a person who has control over his/her classroom...he/she directs the conversations held by students, takes charge of the classroom activities the two engage in and mentions examples of where he/she has taken charge or served as a leader in the past" (p. 161). One study found this strategy to be highly

effective while one study found this to be a less effective strategy. The other two found it to be moderately effective. Myers (1995) found this strategy to be highly effective in creating a better overall classroom environment. Frymier (1994) concluded that *Assume Control* was not an effective strategy in gaining likeness in the classroom.

Conversational Rule-Keeping. McCroskey and McCroskey (1986) defines

Conversational Rule-Keeping as:

Teacher attempting to get a student to like him/her follows closely the culture's rules for how people socialize with others by demonstrating cooperation, friendliness, and politeness. The teacher works hard at giving relevant answers to questions, saying the right thing, acting interested and involved in conversation, and adapting his/her message to the particular student or situation. He/she avoids changing the topic too soon, interrupting the student, dominating the classroom discussions, and making excessive self-references. (p. 161)

Only two studies found this strategy to be highly effective. Frymier and Thompson (1992) determined that *Conversational Rule-Keeping* is a highly effective strategy and that it demonstrated an interest in the classroom. Myers (1995) also concluded that *Conversational Rule-Keeping* was an effective strategy.

Concede Control. McCroskey and McCroskey (1986) defines *Concede Control* as:

“Teacher attempting to get a student to like him/her allows the student to control the relationship and situations surrounding the two...he/she lets the student take charge of conversations and so on. The Teacher attempting to be liked also lets the student influence his/her actions by not acting dominant” (p.161). Two studies found this strategy to be the least effective strategy in creating a better overall classroom environment. Frymier and Thompson (1992) concluded that the use of *Concede Control* was not an effective strategy in affirmative seeking. Myers (1995) also concluded that *Concede Control* was not an effective affinity-seeking strategy between the teacher and students.

Comfortable Self. McCroskey and McCroskey (1986) defines *Comfortable Self* as:

Teacher attempting to get a student to like him/her acts comfortable in the setting the two find themselves, comfortable with him/her, and content. He/she is relaxed, at ease, casual, and content. Distractions and disturbances in the environment are ignored. The teacher tries to look as if he/she is having a good time, even if he/she is not. The teacher gives the impression that nothing is bothering him/her. (p. 161)

Only two studies found this strategy to be highly effective. Frymier and Thompson (1992) concluded *Comfortable Self* is a highly effective strategy to use in creating motivation within the classroom. Myers (1995) concluded that this was an effective strategy as well.

Inclusion of Others. McCroskey and McCroskey (1986) did not include a definition to this term in their study, so this study will use Bell & Daly's original definition of *Inclusion of Others*, which is: "Including others in social activities and group of friends" (Bell & Daly, 1984). Two studies found this affinity-seeking strategy to be least effective in the classroom. Richmond (1990) discovered that this strategy was least effective in creating motivation in the classroom, Myers (1995) concluded that *Inclusion of Others* is not an effective affinity-seeking strategy to use in the classroom. Myers continues to discuss that the *Inclusion of Others* is a way of establishing common ground between the student and teacher and can be violated by the teacher.

Influence Perceptions of Closeness. McCroskey and McCroskey (1986) defines *Influence Perceptions of Closeness* as: "Teacher attempting to get a student to like him/her engages in behaviors that lead the student to perceive the relationship as being closer and more established than it has actually been... she/he uses nicknames of the students" (p. 162). One study found this strategy to be highly effective and one study found it to be least effective. Myers (1995) concluded in his study that *Influence Perceptions of Closeness* was a highly effective strategy to use in the classroom. In contrast, Richmond (1990) found that this strategy was least effective.

Listening. McCroskey and McCroskey (1986) defines *Listening* as:

Teacher attempting to get a student to like him/her pays close attention to what the student says, listening very actively. They focus attention solely on the student, paying strict attention to what is said... demonstrates that he/she is listening by being responsive to the student's ideas, asking for clarification of ambiguities, being open-minded, and remembering things student say. (p. 162)

Only two studies found this strategy to be highly effective, while the others found it moderate.

Frymier and Thompson (1992) discovered this strategy to be highly effective and Frymier (1994) found in her later study that this continued to be a highly effective affinity-seeking strategy.

Openness. McCroskey and McCroskey (1986) defines *Openness* as: "Teacher attempting to get a student to like him/her is open. He/she discloses information about his/her background, interest, and views. He/she may even disclose very personal information about his/her insecurities, weaknesses, and fears to make the students feel special and trusted" (p. 162). Only Myers (1995) found this strategy to be least effective in creating a better classroom environment. The other studies found this strategy to be moderate.

Physical Attractiveness. McCroskey and McCroskey (1986) defines *Physical Attractiveness* as: "the teacher attempting to get a student to like him/her tries to look as attractive as possible in appearance and attire. He/she wears nice clothes, practices good grooming, shows concern for proper hygiene, stands up straight, and monitors appearance (p. 162). One study concluded that *Physical Attractiveness* is not an effective strategy to use in the classroom. Myers (1995) found that this was one of the least effective strategies in creating a better overall classroom environment.

Self-Concept Conformation. McCroskey and McCroskey (1986) defines *Self-Concept Conformation* as:

Teacher attempting to get a student to like him/her demonstrates respect for the student, helps the student feel good about how he/she views her/himself...the teacher treats the

student like a very important person, compliments the student, says only positive things about the student, and treats the things the student says as being very important information. He/she may also tell other teachers about what a great student the individual is, in hopes that the comment will get back to the student through third parties. (p. 162)

Two of the studies found this *Self-Concept Conformation* to be a highly effective affinity-seeking strategy. While the remaining two studies found it to be moderate. Richmond (1990) found that this was a highly effective affinity-seeking strategy. Myers (1995) also found this strategy to be highly effective.

Present Interesting Self. McCroskey and McCroskey (1986) defines *Present Interesting Self* as:

Teacher attempting to get a student to like him/her presents self to be a person who would be interesting to know... he/she highlights past accomplishments and positive qualities, emphasizes things that make him/her especially interesting, expressing a unique idea, and demonstrates intelligence and knowledge. The teacher may discreetly drop the names of impressive people, he/she knows. He/she may even do out standish thing to appear unpredictable, wild, or crazy. (p. 162)

Two studies concluded that *Present Interesting Self* was one of the most effective affinity-seeking strategies, while the other studies found this strategy moderate. Frymier and Thompson (1992) concluded that Present Interesting Self was an effective strategy in the classroom. Myers (1995) also determined in his study that *Present Interesting Self* was an effective strategy within the classroom. Myers also discussed that teachers who demonstrate their knowledge in a personal way and showing characteristics of fairness may build a climate in which interaction is valuable and encouraged.

Sensitivity. McCroskey and McCroskey (1986) defines *Sensitivity* as:

Teacher attempting to get a student to like him/her acts in a warm, empathetic manner toward the student to communicate caring and concern. He/she also shows sympathy to student problems and anxieties, spends time working at understanding how the student sees his/her life, and accepts what the student says as an honest response. (p.163)

Two studies concluded that this strategy is highly effective in motivating students in the

classroom. The remaining two studies found it to be moderate. Frymier (1994) concluded that *Sensitivity* was a highly effective strategy in creating motivation in the classroom. Myers (1995) also found this to be a highly effective affinity-seeking strategy.

Trustworthiness. McCroskey and McCroskey (1986) defines *Trustworthiness* as: “Teacher attempting to get a student to like him/her presents self as trustworthy and reliable... he/she emphasizes his/her responsibility, reliability, fairness, dedication, honesty, and sincerity. He/she also maintains consistency among his/her stated beliefs and behaviors, fulfills any commitments made to the student, and avoids ‘false fronts’ by acting natural at all times” (p. 163). Two studies considered *Trustworthiness* to be a highly effective affinity-seeking strategy while the other two studies found it moderate. Frymier and Thompson (1992) concluded that trustworthiness was a highly effective affinity-seeking strategy. Myers (1995) found this strategy highly effective and agreed that students who trust their teacher are more likely to view other positive attributes of the teacher.

Similarity. McCroskey and McCroskey (1986) defines Similarity as:

Teacher attempting to get a student to like him/her tries to make the student feel that the two of them are similar in attitudes, values, interests, preferences, personality, and so on. He/she expresses the views that are similar to the views of the student, agrees with some things the student says, and points out the areas that the two have in common...the teacher deliberately avoids engaging in behaviors that would suggest differences between the two. (p. 163)

One study found this strategy to be highly effective. Only two studies concluded that similarity was one of the least effective strategies in the classroom. Myers (1995) discovered that similarity was a highly effective strategy. In contrast, Frymier (1994) concluded that *Similarity* is considered to be not effective with affinity-seeking in the classroom. Frymier and Thompson (1992) also concluded that it is not an effective strategy in gaining likeness in the classroom and that this strategy is inappropriate for the student-teacher relationship.

Supportiveness. McCroskey and McCroskey (1986) defines *Supportiveness* as:

Teacher attempting to get a student to like him/her is supportive of the student and the student's position by being encouraging, agreeable, and reinforcing to the student. The teacher also avoids criticizing the student or saying anything that might hurt the student's feelings and sides with the student in disagreements he/she has with others. (p. 163)

Only one of the studies found this affinity-seeking strategy to be highly effective, while the other three found it to be moderate. Myers (1995) found this strategy highly effective and mentions in his results that teachers that engage in supportive behavior set the tone for the students and the classroom. This tone allows students to not only feel supported but engage with other students in support. For these reasons, it seems that these strategies mentioned above should still score as moderately effective affinity-seeking strategies in the classroom.

H2: Moderately effective affinity-seeking strategies will score moderately effective in traditional classroom environments.

Least Effective Strategies

This section will be discussing the least effective affinity-seeking strategies when it comes to creating an overall better classroom environment. There will be four studies presented and these affinity-seeking behaviors have been ranked the lowest compared to the other four studies. This was done by having three to four studies in agreement.

Personal Autonomy. McCroskey and McCroskey (1986) defines *Personal Autonomy* as:

Teacher attempting to get a student to like him/her presents self as independent, free-thinking person, the kind of person who stands on his/her own, speaks his/her mind regardless of the consequences, refuses to change his/her behavior to meet the expectations of others, and knows where he/she is going in life...if the teacher finds that he/she disagrees with the student on some issue, the teacher states his/her opinion anyway, and is confident that his/her view is right and may even try to change the mind of the student. (p. 162)

Only one study found this strategy highly effective while the other three studies found this to be

the least effective strategy. Myers (1995) concluded that this was one of the most highly effective affinity-seeking strategies. Richmond (1990) discovered this strategy to be least effective in creating motivation in the classroom. Frymier and Thompson (1992) concluded that *Personal Autonomy* should be avoided by teachers because they have negative correlations with the teacher's credibility. Frymier (1994) continued to find that *Personal Autonomy* is not an effective affinity-seeking strategy.

Reward Association. McCroskey and McCroskey (1986) defines *Reward Association* as: "Teacher attempting to get a student to like him/her Presents self as an important figure that can reward the student for associating with him/her...he/she offers to do favors for the other and gives the students information that would be valuable. The teacher's basic message to the student is 'if you like me, you will gain something'..." (p. 162). All four studies found that *Reward Association* is the least effective strategy to use in the classroom. Richmond (1990) discovered this to be the least effective strategy. Frymier and Thompson (1992) also determined that *Reward Association* is not an effective strategy. Frymier (1994) found that this strategy continued to be the least effective strategy. Myers (1995) also concluded that *Reward Association* was not effective for creating an overall classroom environment.

Self-Inclusion. McCroskey and McCroskey (1986) defines *Self-Inclusion* as: "Teacher attempting to get a student to like him/her sets up frequent encounters with the student... the teacher will initiate encounters with the student, attempt to schedule future encounters, try to be positively close to the student, and puts him/herself in a position to be invited to participate in the student social activities" (p. 163). Three studies found that *Self-Inclusion* was least effective in motivating students in the classroom. Richmond (1990) concluded that *Self-Inclusion* was one of the least effective affinity-seeking strategies when motivating students in the classroom. Frymier

and Thompson (1992) concluded in their study that *Self-Inclusion* was not an effective strategy to use and that is considered inappropriate to use in a classroom. Frymier (1994) also concluded that *Self-Inclusion* to be in the bottom five least effective affinity-seeking strategies. For these reasons, it seems that these strategies mentioned above should still score as the least effective affinity-seeking strategies in the classroom.

H3: Least effective affinity-seeking strategies will score least effective in traditional classroom environments.

Motivation

The affinity-seeking behaviors have been ranked in the importance of effectiveness in creating a better overall classroom environment. This study will specifically look over one aspect of the classroom environment and that is motivation. Motivation is extremely important to a student's success in the classroom. There has been a lack of research done on affinity-seeking and student motivation. Student motivation can be defined in several different ways, but Frymier (1994) defined it as: "drive reduction or the satisfaction of needs...people are motivated to do things that are reinforcing by reducing drives or by satisfying needs. In other words, an individual may be motivated to be friendly to others to meet his/her needs for affection" (p. 90). With this study being conducted during a global pandemic, it is very important to focus on the motivation aspect of the classroom environment. College and school, in general, have changed since the 2020 pandemic and there is a lot of uncertainty when it comes to making decisions about attending college or not. Even in times of uncertainty, it is crucial to motivate students in the classroom. Some students and teachers aren't comfortable with online classrooms and it is important to help motivate students and provide teachers with the right tools and resources

necessary to do so.

The scale for motivation used for this study was created previously from Richmond's (1990) study. This scale is simple but effective in measuring student motivation in the classroom. Richmond conducted a study on student motivation about affinity-seeking and she created a motivational scale to better help understand student motivation. She discovered that motivation plays a major role in creating an overall better classroom environment. Two prior studies focus on motivation and affinity-seeking. The first study was conducted by Frymier and Thompson (1992) and they wanted to explore the relationship between affinity-seeking and motivation using Richmond's (1990) motivation scale. Their study discovered that motivation had a big role in creating an overall better classroom environment. The most recent study was conducted by Frymier (1994) and she focused more on motivation in terms of state and trait motivation. She measured trait and state motivation by operationalizing Richmond's (1990) motivation scale. The benefit of this study was that it allowed Frymier to discover which strategies were effective and which ones weren't effective in the overall classroom environment. For the current study, looking at motivation and affinity-seeking strategies may be beneficial to understand enhancements to student learning. As a result, the following research question is offered:

RQ1: How will affinity-seeking strategies affect student motivation in the classroom.

Online Classroom Environment

Research on affinity-seeking is outdated and no research focuses on affinity-seeking in an online environment. There is a need for research on online classrooms and effective affinity-seeking strategies when it comes to motivation. It is important to understand the differences in how affinity-seeking behaviors affect motivation in an online setting. This study will be looking

at in-person and online affinity-seeking behaviors about student motivation. There are differences in how affinity-seeking strategies are portrayed online compared to in-person.

Teachers are consistently adapting to new technology and ways of communicating online. No study discusses the differences between affinity-seeking in an online classroom compared to an in-person classroom and this is why this current study is important. This research study will help teachers learn what affinity-seeking behaviors can benefit an online classroom. One thing to take into account for this current study was the definitions of affinity-seeking strategies. This is because the prior definitions were focused strictly on in-person classroom situations. With this study focusing on online affinity-seeking behaviors, it was crucial to change many of the affinity-seeking behaviors definitions to relate with online classes. Current studies focus on motivation in an online classroom, but none of them focus directly on affinity-seeking behavior. This study will open up a new door for future research for effective skills teachers can use online to help motivate students. To investigate, the following research question is proposed:

RQ2: Will there be a difference in scoring of affinity-seeking strategies in online classrooms than in traditional classrooms?

METHOD

Participants

A total of 185 students participated in the study. There were 111 females (60%), 73 males (39%), and 1 who preferred not to answer (1%). Participants were recruited from the general education course and were 18 years of age or older, as required. Of the total participants, ethnicity showed that there were 157 Caucasian (84%), 12 Black or African-American (7%), 5 Asian (3%), and 11 noted as multiracial, biracial, or other (5%). The average age of participants was 21 and the range was 18 to 24.

Procedure

This study was conducted at a large midwestern university and the participants were students enrolled in the basic public speaking course. After receiving IRB approval (Appendix A), survey instruments were added into the Qualtrics system (Study #: IRB-FY2021-205, Oct 20, 2020). The survey (Appendix B) was administered through Qualtrics using two surveys to measure both affinity-seeking behaviors and students' motivation in class. To obtain consent to perform this study in the basic speaking public speaking course, permission was obtained from the basic course director to implement the survey in several sections of any course where the teacher agreed to participate. Along with the basic course director, the graduate instructors signed an informed consent form to allow students the opportunity to participate in their classroom. This study was given as an assignment for the students in the class, and if they chose not to participate, an alternative assignment was given in its place. The survey was administered after five weeks into the semester.

The first part of the survey consisted of an informed consent form, where students gave their consent to participate. It was then followed by demographics that sought to find the participant's sex, age, and race. After answering about their demographics, students were randomly assigned to one of two questionnaires which asked them about affinity-seeking strategies in the in-person, or online, classroom. Each item used a 7-point Likert scale that ranged from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The types of questions asked included, "I desire my teacher to..." and some examples of the questions are as followed. "Do well with following normal social rules of conversations (e.g. being polite, friendly, and professional)... Engage with the class in a way that makes me comfortable to share my personal life stories, goals, hobbies, and other interests... Pay close attention when I'm speaking and provide constructive feedback when necessary...". These same types of questions were adapted to an online setting. These are how the questions differed: "Help me by providing study/instructional materials on the course site and give guidance when necessary...Make me feel like I am just as human as them. That they are not better than me... Do well with following normal social rules of conversations (e.g. email etiquette, formatting of text, and use of shorthand language/phrases)...".

The final portion of the survey took each participant to a set of items which asked them about their level of motivation in a class, if the teacher displayed affinity-seeking qualities using Richmond's (1990) 7-point Likert scale. They were asked to use the scale to answer the following; motivated/unmotivated, excited/bored, uninterested/interested, involved/uninvolved, dreading it/looking forward to it. The last part of the survey redirected them to a separate page where they can provide their name and class to receive credit for this assignment. The last part of the survey will not be linked to any of the previous surveys/answers, and it is only used to give the information to the instructors of which students participated.

Instrumentation

Affinity-Seeking. Based on McCroskey and McCroskey's (1986) typology of affinity-seeking strategies. The original scale asked participants if the person displays a certain type of affinity-seeking behavior. If answered "yes" they would then use a 4-point Likert scale to determine how often that behavior is displayed. In this study, the "yes" or "no" option was removed, and the 4-point Likert scale was changed to a 7-point Likert scale. This scale ranged from "disagree" to "strongly agree". The typology for the affinity-seeking behaviors was adapted to fit an online classroom environment. Instead of asking "if their teacher displays", they were instead asked, "I desire my teacher to". The alpha reliability of McCroskey and McCroskey's (1986) scale is scored as $\alpha = .87$

Motivation. Based on Richmond's (1990) motivational scale. This scale is a 7-point Likert scale that ranked towards what they agreed/disagreed with the most: motivated/unmotivated, excited/bored, uninterested/interested, involved/uninvolved, dreading it/looking forward to it. The alpha reliability of Richmond's (1990) scale is scored as $\alpha = .94$.

RESULTS

The first hypothesis was that highly effective affinity-seeking strategies will score highly effective in traditional classroom environments. To investigate this hypothesis, means were calculated for each affinity-seeking strategy in the data set. Using a 5-point Likert scale, means were assigned high (4-5), medium (3), or low (1-2). The results showed that only one strategy remained highly effective in an in-person classroom and that was *Nonverbal Immediacy*. The other strategies that were ranked as highly effective were *Comfortable Self*, *Conversational Rule-Keeping*, *Self-Concept Conformation*, and *Supportiveness*. Therefore, hypothesis one was partially supported.

The second hypothesis was that moderately effective affinity-seeking strategies will score moderately effective in traditional classroom environments. To investigate this hypothesis, means were calculated for each affinity-seeking strategy in the data set. Using a 5-point Likert scale, means were assigned high (4-5), medium (3), or low (1-2). The results showed a total of fourteen moderately effective strategies for in-person classes. From the prior listings, only eight of the strategies remained the same. These were, *Altruism*, *Concede Control*, *Listening*, *Physical Attractiveness*, *Present Interesting Self*, *Sensitivity*, *Similarity*, and *Trustworthiness*. The other strategies that ranked as moderately effective changed from previous rankings of low and high. The remainder of the moderate effective strategies were, *Assume Equality*, *Dynamism*, *Elicit Others Disclosure*, *Facilitate Enjoyment*, *Optimism*, and *Personal Autonomy*. Thus, hypothesis two was partially supported.

The third hypothesis was that the least effective affinity-seeking strategies will score the least effective in traditional classroom environments. To investigate this hypothesis, means were

calculated for each affinity-seeking strategy in the data set. Using a 5-point Likert scale, means were assigned high (4-5), medium (3), or low (1-2). The results showed that only two of the strategies remained low. These strategies were *Reward Association* and *Self-Inclusion*. The remainder of the least effective strategies were, *Assume Control*, *Inclusion of Others*, and *Openness*. As a result, hypothesis three was partially supported.

The first research question asked how will affinity-seeking strategies affect student motivation in the classroom? A simple linear regression was calculated to predict strategies' effect on student motivation. The results showed that there was some motivation in the classroom, but there was no significant difference. The regression equation was not significant ($F(1,23) = 4.12, p > .05$) with an R^2 of .227. Therefore, research question one found that affinity-seeking strategies did not have a significant effect on student motivation in the classroom.

The second research question asked will there be a difference in the scoring of affinity-seeking strategies in online classrooms than in traditional classrooms? The overall mean scores, from both classroom environments, were calculated using the mean scores from each individual strategy. Once calculated, these total mean scores were compared ($M = 5.66$ Online, $M = 5.63$ In-Person). Therefore, research question two found that there was no significant difference, overall, in affinity-seeking strategies between in-person and online classroom environments. The following strategies ranked the same for in-person and online: *Altruism*, *Assume Control*, *Assume Equality*, *Concede Control*, *Dynamism*, *Elicit Others Disclosure*, *Facilitate Enjoyment*, *Inclusion of Others*, *Listening*, *Openness*, *Optimism*, *Personal Autonomy*, *Physical Attractiveness*, *Reward Association*, *Self-Concept Conformation*, *Supportiveness*, and *Trustworthiness*.

DISCUSSION

The main purpose of this study was to take affinity-seeking research into the modern era and understand how it has changed in terms of student's desirability and how motivation is affected in both in-person and online classrooms. It is necessary to understand the student's desire for their teacher to possess these strategies in the classroom and if/how these strategies affect motivation among the students. This discussion will refer back to both research questions of this study. They are "how will affinity-seeking strategies affect student motivation in the classroom?" and "will there be a difference in scoring of affinity-seeking strategies in online classrooms than traditional classrooms?". The data suggested that students were motivated in the classroom, but it was not significant enough to show an increase in motivation. The data also suggested that there were some small differences between in-person and an online classroom. Students seemed to desire a traditional form of interaction for an in-person classroom, but also desired a more informal interaction in the online classroom. This discussion will be separated into several parts that will discuss the changes of effectiveness in affinity-seeking strategies. There will then be a discussion about the new list of affinity-seeking strategies in an online classroom. After that, there is a discussion about what happened to student motivation and what does this research contribute to the field of Communication.

There are several key findings when it comes to affinity-seeking strategies effectiveness and the two research hypotheses. There is a new list of strategies that agreed with all three hypotheses in which they remained the same in terms of effectiveness from previous rankings. Not only will the hypothesis be discussed, but the research questions will be discussed as well. There was motivation in the classroom, but not enough to show that affinity-seeking drove

motivation in the classroom. There are also differences in which strategies are effective for in-person and online classrooms which led to a brand-new list of effective strategies for online classrooms. Finally, the current study provides valuable insight into the field of Communication and how it contributes to further discussion of how this field is changing. Even though this research is an updated version of previous research in affinity-seeking, it introduces online learning into the research on affinity-seeking strategies.

Changes of Strategies Effectiveness for In-Person Classroom

This section will discuss the findings concerning all three hypotheses, in which they predicted that the strategies that were ranked, high, moderate, and low, would remain the same. The first two sections will discuss strategies that moved up and moved down in effectiveness. Then there will be a discussion about strategies that remained that same.

Strategies That Moved Up. The results from this current study provided valuable insight into what strategies became more effective over the last 20 years. Five strategies went up in effectiveness from the previous studies. Four of these strategies (*Comfortable Self*, *Conversational Rule-Keeping*, *Self-Concept Conformation*, and *Supportiveness*) moved from moderate to high. There are several things these results could suggest, and these suggestions are interpreted by the affinity-seeking definitions. They are then translated into what it could mean to students in terms of desirability. First, the results for *Comfortable Self* could mean that students desire their teacher to engage in conversations with them and other students and that their teacher show they are happy to take time to speak with them. Next, *Conversational Rule-Keeping* could mean that students want their teacher to follow normal social rules of conversations (e.g., being polite, friendly, and professional). *Self-Concept Conformation* might

tell us that students want their teacher to treat everyone with respect and make them feel valued, important, and praised for hard their work. The last suggestion is from the strategy *Supportiveness* and it could tell us that students want their teachers to show empathy for their problems and class-related stress. Myers (1995) also ranked *Supportiveness* as highly effective because he believed that students who have supportive teachers are more likely to see the overall classroom environment as supportive. This could encourage student interactions, provide positive reinforcements, and discourage depreciation of students.

Of the five strategies that moved up in effectiveness, only one strategy moved from low to moderate. The strategy *Personal Autonomy* might suggest that students want their teachers to discuss a variety of topics, including ones they may not agree with to challenge their perspectives. Looking back at prior research, Frymier and Thompson (1992) concluded that *Personal Autonomy* should be avoided by teachers because they have negative correlations with the teacher's credibility. What is interesting with the most recent results is that it went up in terms of effectiveness. It is possible that more challenging topics are being discussed in the modern era and students might feel more confident and comfortable talking about issues such as race, religion, sexual orientation, sexual identification, etc.

There are many suggestions on why these strategies changed in effectiveness, but it seems that students are desiring their teachers to be supportive and respectful towards them in class. They might also be wanting to maintain a traditional student-teacher relationship, in which the roles in the classroom remain the same. Frymier and Thompson (1992) mentioned in their study that teachers who use affinity-seeking strategies that demonstrate respect and interest for the student could benefit teachers in terms of motivation. What they mentioned is that strategies that attempt to get too close or personal with students, do not benefit teachers. This could help

explain why students are not wanting to get personal with their teachers in an in-person classroom, but instead, they are wanting to maintain that "traditional" style of student-teacher interaction, in which they are respected and valued for their hard work.

There is no sign that students want a “free-pass”, but they want their hard work to be noticed and that their teachers understand the stresses that come along with it. One way a teacher can display this is by feedback. This is because often feedback can express to students that teachers are noticing their hard work. Shin et al., (2018) discuss that providing college students with informative feedback that supports their competence during their work can give them a better sense of motivation. This is because students are trying to fulfill a life purpose when attending college and that motivation and feedback can help students develop their sense of purpose. Even though they suggest that feedback can help create a better overall student “life purpose”, it is clear that many students attend college for a purpose and that they want to feel valued and praised for their accomplishments.

Strategies That Moved Down. This next section discusses strategies that moved down in terms of effectiveness. There was a total of eight strategies that moved down in effectiveness from the previous rankings. Five of these strategies (*Assume Equality, Dynamism, Elicit Others Disclosure, Facilitate Enjoyment, Optimism*) moved down from high to moderately effective. As previously discussed on why strategies moved up in effectiveness, there are several suggestions on why these strategies moved down. These suggestions are interpreted by the affinity-seeking definitions and translated into what they could mean in terms of student desirability. The result on *Assume Equality* tells us that students might be less interested in their teachers perceiving themselves as better or more important than the students. The result on *Dynamism* tells us that students seem to care less about teachers showing their excitement in either their body

movements or facial expressions. When looking at *Elicit Others Disclosure* it could mean that students are becoming more hesitant in sharing their personal lives such as their goals, hobbies, and other interest with their teachers. *Facilitate Enjoyment* could suggest that students seem to care less about their teachers being entertaining by telling jokes, stories, etc. Finally, the result on *Optimism* might tell us that students do not care as much about their teachers attempt to being positive, cheerful, or optimistic.

There are also three strategies (*Assume Control, Inclusion of Others, Openness*) that moved from moderate to least effective. These suggestions are interpreted by the affinity-seeking definitions and translated into what they might mean in terms of student desirability. The results for *Assume Control* might tell us that students are caring less about teachers taking charge of the classroom. This is also for how teachers create deadlines for assignments and how closely they are sticking to these deadlines. *Inclusion of Others* could be telling us that students are not wanting their teachers acting as a friend, but that they want them to behave like a traditional teacher. Finally, *Openness* could tell us that students might care less about the teacher's personal life stories about their home or family life.

Strategies that moved up in terms of effectiveness are the reason most of the strategies moved down in terms of effectiveness. As other strategies become more effective, these strategies become less effective. As discussed earlier, students want a traditional classroom in which the teacher is taking on the traditional task. Most of the strategies that moved down in effectiveness focused more on the classroom environment, such as relationships among students, or class enjoyment. This could suggest that students are desiring their teacher to focus more on being the teacher and ensuring that their students are successful. One thing that should be taken into account is the global pandemic that occurred during the study, Covid-19.

With classes changing from in-person to online and the uncertainty of what the future holds, students could be more focused on getting through their classes successfully instead of how much they enjoy their classes. In a recent study about Covid-19 and student's mental health, Browning, Larson, Sharaievska, Rigolon, McAnirlin, Mullenbach, Cloutier, Vu, Thomsen, J., Reigner, Metcalf, D'Antonio, Helbich, Bratman, & Alvarez (2021) concluded that over 1.5 billion students across the world were affected by Covid-19. They continue to discuss that "rates of student psychological distress were as high as 90%...students must 'Maslow before they can Bloom' in other words, their basic physiological, psychological, and safety needs must be met prior to them focusing on -much less excelling- in academic life." (p.19). *Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs* is defined by Fradera (2018) as: "proceeding from physiological needs like water or warmth, through safety, love, esteem and then self-actualization...lower needs occupy our attention when they are unmet and make it more difficult to fulfill the higher ones" (p.14). What this is all trying to say is that students, during this time of the study, had to scale back on *Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs* in which their safety and mental health must be met first before they can focus on school.

Strategies That Remained the Same. Several strategies remained to be aligned with the three hypotheses. The hypothesis suggested these strategies would remain the same in terms of effectiveness. Only one strategy that remained to be highly effective compared to previous studies and was *Nonverbal Immediacy*. This could suggest that students are still desiring their teachers to show they are interested in what they are saying by giving nonverbal cues such as eye contact, head nodding, etc. This will be discussed more in-depth later in this section.

There was a total of eight strategies (*Altruism, Concede Control, Listening, Physical Attractiveness, Present Interesting Self, Sensitivity, Similarity, Trustworthiness*) that remained to

be moderately effective compared to previous research. There are several suggestions on why these strategies remained the same in effectiveness. These suggestions are interpreted by the affinity-seeking definitions and translated into what they could mean to students in terms of desirability. The first strategy *Altruism* could suggest that students are still wanting their teachers to provide study materials and give guidance when necessary. *Concede Control* could be telling us that students are still wanting their teachers to be flexible, with deadlines and due dates on assignments. *Listening* has also maintained moderate in which, students are still desiring their teachers to pay close attention to them by providing feedback when necessary. Not only that, but *Physical Attractiveness* could suggest that students seem to have the same perception about their teachers having good hygiene and dressing nicely. When looking at the results from *Present Interesting Self* it could be that students are still wanting teachers to be interesting, with which the students can see themselves being friends. Students are still finding *Sensitivity* moderately effective in which their teachers to show empathy for class-related stress and that their teachers keep true to their words and/or commitments. Finally, the results on *Trustworthiness* could suggest students are still wanting their teachers to refer to relatable topics.

There were two strategies (*Reward Association, Self-Inclusion*) that remained least effective. These results could suggest that these strategies are least effective and that teachers could use these strategies last out of the other strategies. There are two suggestions on why these strategies remained the same in effectiveness. These suggestions are interpreted by the affinity-seeking definitions and translated into what it could mean to students in terms of desirability The first suggestion is based on *Reward Association* and that students might not want their teachers to give out extra credit or reward students in return to be more liked. Next, *Self-Inclusion* might suggest that students desire the least that their teachers request to have a conversation

before/after class or even outside of class. Even though these strategies have remained least effective, doesn't mean that they aren't effective strategies. Current and previous research shows that these 25 strategies can create a better overall classroom environment, but some strategies remain more effective in doing so.

There are a handful of reasons these strategies remained the same in effectiveness, and some of these strategies must be addressed further. The first strategy that will be addressed further is *Nonverbal Immediacy*. *Nonverbal Immediacy* was defined in this current study as teachers maintaining eye contact with students when communicating and displaying an interest in what the student is saying. This finding was fascinating because it is in alignment with other research on *Nonverbal Immediacy* in the classroom. Frymier et al., (2019) found that this strategy builds positive teacher-student relationships. When a teacher displays this behavior in class, it reduces the psychological distance in which helps build relationships and connections in the classroom. They also suggest that *Nonverbal Immediacy* increases a student's perception of relatedness and intrinsic motivation. They suggest that to develop intrinsic motivation, the student's psychological needs must be satisfied first, in which *Nonverbal Immediacy* does so. Khan, Mohammad, Shah, and Irfanullah (2016) suggest teachers can be more effective in their classroom with the use of eye contact. Using eye contact helped teachers establish goals and develop objectives for students. Not only that, but eye contact showed the students their commitment, devotion, and dedication.

The first strategy mentioned to remain least effective across the board is *Reward Association*. This could be because students might see *Reward Association* negatively. A student who is rewarded for their association with a teacher can be seen as a "teacher's pet", or even seen as the teacher's favorite. Rewarding students for being associated with you can create conflict

among the classrooms. Myers (1995) mentions that *Reward Association* is not an effective strategy and that it can cause discomfort and uneasiness among students. The next strategy to remain least effective was *Self-Inclusion*. The way this strategy was interpreted was the teacher's attempt to set up future encounters that are more casual. This could be when a student talks about an activity they enjoy, the teacher attempts to set time aside to discuss this further with the student. It could also mean that the teacher is attempting to build a relationship with the student outside the classroom. Frymier and Thompson (1992) had a similar interpretation of this strategy. They described *Self-Inclusion* as teachers and students partake in the same social events and that this strategy is considered unacceptable for a teacher to use. Myers (1995) also mentions that *Self-Inclusion* might create feelings of discomfort and uneasiness among the students. In this case, then it could mean that students do not want to engage in conversations before or after class that might relate to social groups or activities that they are both interested in.

Motivation for both In-Person and Online Classroom

The study's main purpose was to look at the effectiveness of affinity-seeking strategies, how they changed over the last 20 years, and how to rank in an online classroom. The first research question (RQ1) asks how affinity-seeking will motivate students in both in-person and online classrooms. There was motivation but not a large enough number to show an increase of motivation. In this current study, motivation was looked at concerning the affinity-seeking strategies for both in-person and online. The data might suggest that there are other factors in what motivates students in the classroom. It is possible that teachers are not responsible for student's motivation, but students themselves are responsible. There are a couple of studies that discuss outside factors such as a student declared major and their gender. Even though these

studies focus on these factors, it doesn't mean that these are the only factors that need to be examined. The following studies are being discussed to help support the idea that motivation can come from factors outside the control of the teacher. Hobson and Puruhito (2018) discovered that there is not one single variable that contributes to motivation, but there are many. One area they looked into was the role of gender, but even though they suspect gender to have a role in student success and motivation, their data was inconclusive. One key finding had to do with the student's major in school. What they discovered is that students taking classes in their given major had a greater sense of motivation for the class.

There was another study that looked into motivation in the classroom. Zhao and Mei (2016) discovered there to be a difference between gender and motivation. They studied different types of motivation types such as affect, emotion, and course relevance. They found that females scored higher in affect and emotion while males scored higher in course relevance. These results suggest that genders are being affected by motivation in different ways. What these two studies have in common is that they are discovering that other factors such as, demographics and degree majors, play a role in motivation in the classroom. This could explain why teachers are not the driving force of motivation in the classroom, but it is instead there are many factors outside of what a teacher can control. There can be a handful of other factors that play into motivation among students, This could be something like students wanting to maintain a higher grade for recreational or personal reasons. It could also come from parents who pressure their children to do well. Another factor could be students need to maintain scholarships to be funded for school. Just like grades, international students have a GPA to meet to maintain their scholarship. Regardless of what is the driving factor, many outside factors will need to be taken into account to have a better understanding of motivation in the classroom.

List of Effective Strategies for the Online Classroom

The second research question (RQ2) wanted to see if there would be any differences between in-person and online classrooms. Many strategies remained the same, but there were some key differences in strategies that were considered highly effective. Students are seeking out to see their teacher from a different perspective in online classes compared to an in-person class. Students may not have the same opportunities for interactions with their teachers in an online class as they do in an in-person classroom.

One of the largest values of this current study is that it provides not only an updated chart of effective affinity-seeking strategies, but it provides a brand-new list of effective strategies for an online classroom. Table 1 provides an updated list of the 25 strategies with their ranks of effectiveness for both in-person and online. There has been no study conducted on the use of affinity-seeking strategies in an online classroom. Not only is this important to the field of communication, but it is important to any area of higher education. This new list of strategies is the groundwork for future research in online affinity-seeking strategies. The following is the new list of effective affinity-seeking strategies to use in an online classroom.

Highly Effective Strategies. The following strategies were found to be moderately effective in an online classroom: *Present Interesting Self*, *Self-Concept Conformation*, *Sensitivity*, *Similarity*, and *Supportiveness*. When comparing these results to prior rankings, none of the new highly effective strategies were previously ranked as “high”. Two of these strategies (*Self-Concept Conformation*, *Supportiveness*) were also ranked high for in-person classes. Both of these strategies suggest that in-person and online students are desiring their teacher to make them feel respected and supported. The main difference is that in an online setting, students are

wanting a causal relationship with their teacher online. This could be that students are used to using social media to interact and build connections with others. When they start online classes, they still try to build connections with their teachers just like they do with other people on different social media outlets. Ang (2020) suggests that people have different psychological needs in an online setting. This study suggests that people who are active in an online setting tend to have a desire to create an online relationship/friendship to fulfill their loneliness. Since social media is a way to create relationships/friendships this could explain the reason students are desiring a less traditional relationship with their teachers in an online classroom compared to an in-person classroom where they might already be developing that relationship with other students.

Moderately Effective Strategies. The following strategies were found to be moderately effective in an online classroom: *Assume Equality, Altruism, Concede Control, Dynamism, Elicit Others Disclosure, Facilitate Enjoyment, Listening, Optimism, Physical Attractiveness, and Trustworthiness*. Most of these strategies remained the same in terms of effectiveness when compared to in-person classes. There are some notable differences on why some strategies in an online classroom remained moderate while strategies in an in-person classroom ranked differently. An example of this would be how *Nonverbal Immediacy* was ranked high for in-person but moderate for online. This could be because the use of *Nonverbal Immediacy* is more difficult to display in an online classroom and students might not even expect this behavior to be seen in an online class. Another example would be how *Self-Inclusion* ranked low in prior research and in-person classrooms while it became moderate in an online classroom. This could be that *Self-Inclusion* students are wanting to see their teacher as a “friend” in an online classroom. For an in-person classroom, where students are not seeking out teachers as friends,

this strategy would be considered inappropriate. For an online classroom, where students are wanting to see their teacher as a friend, this behavior would be seen as more appropriate.

Least Effective Strategies. The following strategies were ranked as least effective in an online classroom: *Assume Control*, *Conversational Rule-Keeping*, *Inclusion of Others*, *Openness*, and *Reward Association*. Some of these strategies were ranked alike in prior research and in-person classrooms. One major difference in effectiveness was *Conversational Rule-Keeping*. This was ranked high in the current study when it came to in-person classes but ranked low when it came to online classrooms. This could be that conversations that are written, instead of spoken, can be easily misinterpreted. When engaging in a verbal conversation it is easier to determine the overall tone of the conversation. This might be why it is desired in an in-person classroom because a teacher's verbal conversation can impact the overall mood and tone of the class. The same might go for online classrooms, but many conversations are done through writing, and are widely known among students that the tone of the message can be easily interpreted the wrong way. This could be one possible reason in explaining why students are not desiring social rules to be followed in conversations online. There is no denying that rules should be followed when communicating by writing and teachers can benefit from trying to get their overall tone of message across.

Contribution to Communication Discipline

This research is crucial for developing online learning strategies to enhance the classroom environment. To understand its importance to the field of Communication, it is important to understand the history and work of this field regarding Instructional Communication. Instructional Communication is defined by Conley and Yun (2017) as: “area of research that

investigates the communication dynamics of teaching and relative to the exchange of meanings between, and among teachers and students, situated in any context or setting, about any subject matter, of any field” (p.452). This current study is relevant in which it examines the exchanged meanings between and among students. Instructional Communication is not a new term in the field of Communication, but it has not been around as long as some other fields. There is an argument on when the field of Instructional Communication first began. Some argue that it can be traced back to 1972 (Sellnow, Limperos, Frisby, Sellnow, Spence, & Downs, 2015). While others argue that it is traced back to 1952 when there was a journal name Speech Theater. Either way, the first division of Instructional Communication was introduced in 1972 in the International Communication Association (Conley & Yun, 2017). Instructional Communication has been used since to help teachers and educators understand the relationships between teacher and student and how to enhance the classroom environment.

Regardless of when it started, there has been plenty of research to help teachers in many areas of the classroom. Conley and Yun (2017), point out that since 1972 Instructional Communication has grown largely with the bulk of research focused on understanding student-teacher relationships and their communication within a class. The most common areas of this include, teacher credibility, communication apprehension, teacher clarity, teacher immediacy, and humor. More recently the topics of discussion have grown to include, teacher self-disclosure, teacher relevance, teacher power, teachers' misbehaviors, student motivation, student resistance, and classroom justice. These are all great topic areas to explore and many good things have come out from research in these areas, but there has been one problem within Instructional Communication and that is a majority of research in this field tends to focus on previous work, instead of exploring new and different topics. Conley and Yun (2017) continue to discuss that a

majority of current research in this field tends to focus on elaborating/refining already established topics such as communication apprehension, clarity, credibility, affective and cognitive learning, and various forms of immediacy. They believe that new research should focus on newer topics such as online education, the influx of technology, computer-mediated communication, etc.

The lack of new topics in the field of Instructional Communication has also been discussed in other journals. Sellnow et al., (2015) agree that the bulk of research in this field focuses on previous work in student-teacher relationships in a traditional classroom. They suggest the research should look into broader topics that explore new areas, such as online learning. They continue to suggest that researchers should look beyond teachers transferring in-person experiences into the online environment, but instead develop tools and resources that relate directly to the online environment. This is what the current study on affinity-seeking aims to do. Even though this current study focused on previous research for in-person classes, this study was able to develop a new list of strategies, with new definitions, that are relatable strictly for the online environment. Some may argue that bringing back affinity-seeking research is part of the problem of not exploring a different topic, but this study looked into a whole new topic of affinity-seeking and that is online classrooms. Affinity-Seeking provided a fantastic list of strategies that teachers can utilize, but unfortunately, these strategies became outdated. That is why the current study explores this topic in the modern era and its relation to an online classroom. This leads to further discussion on what is considered effective in an online classroom.

Online learning is not a new term to the field of Communication, and it has been explored in past research. Even though the term is not new, there are still many aspects of online learning

that are not yet discovered. Dyer, Aroz, & Larson (2018) provide interesting insight when it comes to teacher/student relationships in an online classroom. They stress the importance of relationships among teachers/students and what can be done about bringing the proximity closer in an online setting. They focus on the argument of proximity that an online classroom will lead to students staying off task. Even though they don't deny this to be true, they do however provide some guidance on how teachers can maintain proximity in an online classroom. They suggest that teachers should emphasize these three things (engagement, relationship, personalization) to bridge the distance between students and teachers. In other words, online teachers should focus on engaging their students, building relationships, and ensuring that there is a personal connection/interaction with the students, and this is what the use of affinity-seeking aims to accomplish.

This current study provides new research on what differences occur between an in-person and online classroom. Hewett and Bourelle (2017) discuss the challenges that teachers face when teaching online, they say “to succeed in online environments and with online media, professionals cannot solely rely on methods deemed ‘successful’ in conventional onsite situations; rather, they need new instructional approaches that address distinctive qualities of teaching and learning online” (p.220). This means that traditional face-to-face methods of teaching might not work as well in an online environment and that just because it works well in an in-person classroom doesn't mean it will work well in an online classroom. The results from this current study agree with this argument because the results point out differences between affinity-seeking strategies in an online and in-person classroom.

What makes this study important is that it contributes new resources, to the field of Instructional Communication, that teachers can utilize in times where they have to quickly

transition online. During the Covid-19 pandemic, many institutions had to quickly transition their classes online and many teachers may have felt underprepared. It could be that institutions were focusing more on transitioning content online and had less time to focus on how teachers should teach online. This study not only provides an effective list the teachers can utilize in their face-to-face classroom, but now they have a list of strategies that are specific to the online classroom. Even in situations where teachers teach partially online and the remainder in person, they too can go back and forth with this list and use it simultaneously.

The new list of effective strategies also contributes to research on building rapport in the classroom between teachers and students. Building Rapport is a term that is often used in Instructional Communication and Frisby and Gaffney (2015) define it as: “the overall perception of instructor and encompasses the belief that there is mutual trusting, and prosocial bond, including a personal connection and enjoyable interactions” (p.341). A teacher must build rapport with their students both in-person and online because it enhances the overall classroom environment. Frisby (2019) discovered that when instructors build rapport with their students when it comes to emotional support, it may lead to a positive state in which the student is focused and motivated. Not only does building rapport influence student success, but it can also give an instructor satisfaction in their job. When rapport is built in the classroom students are likely to participate more, become more motivated, and have less anxiety. Even though there is no clear evidence, research suggests that teachers take a sense of ownership of the outcomes and it leads to an increase in their job satisfaction. The 25 affinity-seeking strategies can be used to build rapport with students. Building rapport is different for an in-person and online classroom in which these 25 strategies can help fill the gap. As discussed earlier, there are particular strategies

that students desire for both in-person and online classrooms. The use of those strategies can help build connections and bonds between the student and teacher.

Limitations and Future Research

There are several limitations to this study that should be looked at in future research. The study was conducted over a majority of first-year students who are either decided or undecided on their major. There were no questions in the survey to understand the student's grade level or degree major. It would benefit future studies to see if these factors play a role in student motivation. The study also focused on student's desirability of classes overall and not on a specific class or classroom. Future studies should look into specific classes to see if there are any differences in strategies' effectiveness. One thing that is important to note is that this study was conducted under a small amount of time to be in accordance with the school deadline for submission. Another limitation is that the strategy *Influence Perceptions of Closeness* was left out of this current study by accident, and it would benefit future studies if this strategy were included. This study was also done during the middle of a global pandemic, in which results could have been based on factors related to Covid-19. Another limitation is that there was no incentive for this program as it was required for class credit. This study only focused on general motivation and future studies should look at specific types of motivation in the classroom. Finally, future research should investigate the effective strategies individually. With these suggestions, future research on affinity-seeking can benefit teachers in creating an effective and better classroom environment.

CONCLUSION

The main purpose of this study was to take affinity-seeking research into the modern era and understand how it has changed in terms of student's desirability and how motivation is affected in both in-person and online classrooms. Frymier (1994) once said the following: "although it is unrealistic to expect the use of affinity-seeking by a teacher will make all students like that teacher, it is realistic to expect that more students will like and learn from the teacher than not if the teacher successfully uses appropriate affinity-seeking strategies in the classroom." (p. 103). This research is important to educators because these tools may not help all students, but some students may benefit from the use of these strategies. After collecting the data, the results suggest that strategies that were once considered to be high, moderate, and least effective have changed over the past 20 years. These strategies were updated in terms of effectiveness and there is a whole new list of strategies developed specifically for an online classroom. When looking at Motivation in the classroom, the data suggested there was motivation, but it was not significant and future studies should explore other areas that make up a classroom environment and student success. A major benefit to this study is that it provides a list of new effective strategies that teachers can use in their online classrooms. There is a clear difference between the strategy's effectiveness in an online and in-person classroom. This research also benefits the field of Communication in which it focuses on a whole new topic of affinity-seeking in an online classroom that could help teachers build effective affinity with their students both in-person and online.

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TABLES

Table 1

Affinity-Seeking Strategies: In Person and Online with Definitions

Strategy	In-Person “I want my teacher to...”	Online “I want my teacher to...”
Altruism	(Moderately Effective) Help me by providing study materials and give guidance when necessary.	(Moderately Effective) Help me by providing study/instructional materials on the course site and give guidance when necessary
Assume Control	(Least Effective) Lead class conversations and take charge of the classroom environment. They should set all the deadlines/submission dates and stick to them	(Least Effective) Lead class conversation threads and take charge of the classroom environment. They should set all the deadlines/submission dates and stick to them
Assume Equality	(Moderately Effective) Make me feel like I am just as human as them. That they are not better than me	(Moderately Effective) Make me feel like I am just as human as them. That they are not better than me
Comfortable Self	(Highly Effective) Engage in conversations with myself and other students, being happy to take time to speak with us	(Moderately Effective) Engage in conversations with myself and other students, being happy to take time to speak with us, via email or video chat
Concede Control	(Moderately Effective) Be flexible and allow me or others to make up a missed assignment or missed due dates	(Moderately Effective) Be flexible and allow me or others to make up a missed assignment or missed due dates

Table 1 (continued)

Conversational Rule-Keeping	(Highly Effective) Do well with following normal social rules of conversations (e.g., being polite, friendly, and professional)	(Least Effective) Do well with following normal social rules of conversations (e.g., email etiquette, formatting of text, and use of shorthand language/phrases)
Dynamism	(Moderately Effective) Show excitement when communicating by smiling, using gestures/body movements, and facial expressions	(Moderately Effective) Show excitement when communicating by smiling, using nonverbal signals, facial expressions, and textual cues
Elicit Others Disclosure	(Moderately Effective) Engage with the class in a way that makes me comfortable to share my personal life.	(Moderately Effective) Engage with the class in a way that makes me comfortable to share my personal life.
Facilitate Enjoyment	(Moderately Effective) Be entertaining by telling jokes, stories, and making class enjoyable	(Moderately Effective) Be entertaining by sharing videos, pop culture material, and using other creative things to make the online class enjoyable
Inclusion of Others	(Least Effective) Be more like a friend by using phrases like "we" and "us" when communicating	(Least Effective) Be more like a friend by using phrases like "we" and "us" when communicating in emails or announcements
Influence Perceptions of Closeness	(No Data) To be very approachable and act like a friend more than a teacher. I want them to use terms such as "we" and "us" instead of "you" and "I"	(No Data) To be very approachable through email or discussion boards and acts like a friend more than a teacher. I want them to use terms such as "we" and "us" instead of "you" and "I"

Table 1 (continued)

Listening	(Moderately Effective) Pay close attention when I'm speaking and provide constructive feedback when necessary	(Moderately Effective) Pay close attention when I'm speaking and provide constructive feedback when necessary
Nonverbal Immediacy	(Highly Effective) Keep eye contact with me when communicating and show interest in what I'm saying	(Moderately Effective) Keep eye contact with me when communicating, through video chat, and show interest in what I'm saying
Openness	(Least Effective) Show vulnerability by sharing personal life stories related to home or family life	(Least Effective) Show vulnerability by sharing personal life stories related to home or family life
Optimism	(Moderately Effective) Be generally cheerful and positive, avoiding complaining or being excessively negative	(Moderately Effective) Be generally cheerful and positive, avoiding complaining or being excessively negative
Personal Autonomy	(Moderately Effective) Discuss a variety of topics, including ones that I may not agree with, to challenge my perspectives	(Moderately Effective) Discuss a variety of topics, including ones that I may not agree with, to challenge my perspectives
Physical Attractiveness	(Moderately Effective) Be presentable by having good hygiene, dressing well, and looking their best at all times	(Moderately Effective) Be presentable by appearing to have good hygiene, dressing well, and looking their best at all times, through videos or live video chat

Table 1 (continued)

Present Interesting Self	(Moderately Effective) Be unique by expressing their personality, someone I could see myself being friends with	(Highly Effective) Be unique by expressing their personality, someone I could see myself being friends with
Reward Association	(Least Effective) Express reward for students they like or get along with. Allowing “rewards” when students express liking for them	(Least Effective) Express reward for students they like or get along with. Allowing “rewards” when students express liking for them
Self-Concept Conformation	(Highly Effective) Treating everyone with respect. Making them feel valued, important, and praise for hard work	(Highly Effective) Treating everyone with respect. Making them feel valued, important, and praise for hard work
Self-Inclusion	(Least Effective) Engage in conversation, before or after class, and request face-to-face meetings	(Moderately Effective) Engage in conversation outside of class discussion boards/posts and encourage video-based interaction
Sensitivity	(Moderately Effective) Show empathy for my problems and class-related stress	(Highly Effective) Show empathy for my problems and class-related stress
Similarity	(Moderately Effective) Refer to topics that are relatable, showing interest in things that I like	(Highly Effective) Refer to topics that are relatable, showing interest in things that I like

Table 1 (continued)

Supportiveness	(Highly Effective) Express encouragement and belief in student success, feeling like they are on my side	(Highly Effective) Express encouragement and belief in student success, feeling like they are on my side
Trustworthiness	(Moderately Effective) Keep their commitments, by staying true to their word and deadlines	(Moderately Effective) Keep their commitments, by staying true to their word and deadlines

APPENDICES

Appendix A: IRB Approval

To:

Stephen Spates
Communications

Date: Oct 20, 2020 3:36 PM CDT

RE: Notice of IRB Exemption

Study #: IRB-FY2021-205

Study Title: Affinity-Seeking in Classroom

This submission has been reviewed by the Missouri State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) and was determined to be exempt from further review. However, any changes to any aspect of this study must be submitted, as a modification to the study, for IRB review as the changes may change this Exempt determination. Should any adverse event or unanticipated problem involving risks to subjects or others occur it must be reported immediately to the IRB.

This study was reviewed in accordance with federal regulations governing human subjects research, including those found at 45 CFR 46 (Common Rule), 45 CFR 164 (HIPAA), 21 CFR 50 & 56 (FDA), and 40 CFR 26 (EPA), where applicable.

Researchers Associated with this Project:

PI: Stephen Spates

Co-PI:

Primary Contact: Taylor Corlee

Other Investigators: Taylor Corlee

Qualtrics Survey

Teaching Strategies in the College Classroom

Start of Block: Consent

Q2 INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT **Teaching Strategies for the Classroom** INTRODUCTION

You are invited to participate in a research project. The purpose of this research study is to explore student preferences of instructor behaviors and its connection to motivation in classroom environments. Please read the following information carefully. If you feel that you can participate in this research project, please give your consent by continuing to the next page of the online survey.

INFORMATION ABOUT PARTICIPANTS' INVOLVEMENT IN THE STUDY

By continuing to the next page, you give your consent to participate in the following study. After giving consent you will be given several statements about teaching behaviors. Your responses to these statements will be recorded and analyzed for use in the research study. Your participation may range from approximately 15-20 minutes from start to finish.

RISKS

Given the anonymous nature of your responses, the information you will be exposed to while participating, and the topic of the questions you will be asked, participation in this study carries minimal plausible risk.

BENEFITS

By participating in this research project, you will be contributing towards a better understanding of relationships between students and teachers. The knowledge about instructional communication you help provide as a participant in this research project will also help advance the body of knowledge in communication research and what is currently known about communication behaviors of instructors in classroom environments.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All data collected will be maintained in a confidential matter. Your identity will never be connected with your responses to the researchers or teacher, and responses will only be presented in aggregate or summary form. Your responses will not be released to any individual outside of the research team

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures, (or you experience adverse effects as a result of participating in this study,) you may contact the researcher, Dr. Stephen Spates, at 368 Craig Hall, SSpates@missouristate.edu , by phone 417-836-6700, or you may also contact Taylor D. Corlee at 338 Craig Hall tc0604@live.missouristate.edu. If you have questions about your rights as a participant, you may contact the Missouri State University IRB Compliance Officer at irb@missouristate.edu or (417) 836-8362.

PARTICIPATION

Your participation in this study is voluntary; you may decline to participate without penalty. If you decide to participate, you may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty and without loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

CONSENT

By continuing to the next page, I am indicating that I am 18 years of age or older, I have read the consent form and am voluntarily agreeing to participate.

End of Block: Consent

Start of Block: Demographics

Q3 What is your sex?

- Male (1)
- Female (2)
- I prefer not to answer (3)
- Other (4)

Q4 Please enter your age

Q5 What is your ethnicity?

- American Indian or Alaska Native (1)
- Asian (2)
- Black or African American (3)
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (4)
- White (5)
- Other (6)

End of Block: Demographics

Start of Block: In Person Classroom_AF Strategies

Q6 Instructions: Each item below will ask you about what you prefer to experience with your instructor in a traditional classroom environment. For each item, please rate your level of agreement (ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree"). Consider the statement (below) for each item.

Q7 In the traditional classroom environment, I want my instructor to...

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neither agree nor disagree (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
Help me by providing study materials and give guidance when necessary. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lead class conversations and take charge of the classroom environment. They should set all the deadlines/submission dates and stick to them. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Make me feel like I am just as human as them. That they are not better than me. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Engage in conversations with myself and other students, being happy to take time to speak with us. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Be flexible and allow me (or others) to make up missed assignment or missed due dates. (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q9 In the traditional classroom environment, I want my instructor to...

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neither agree nor disagree (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
Do well with following normal social rules of conversations (e.g. being polite, friendly, and professional). (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Show excitement when communicating by smiling, using gestures/body movements, and facial expressions. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Engage with the class in a way that makes me comfortable to share my personal life stories, goals, hobbies, and other interests. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Be entertaining by telling jokes, stories, and making class enjoyable. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Be more like a friend by using phrases like "we" and "us" when communicating. (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Pay close attention when I'm speaking and provide constructive feedback when necessary. (6)

Q10 In the traditional classroom environment, I want my instructor to...

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neither agree nor disagree (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
Keep eye contact with me when communicating and show interest in what I'm saying. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Show vulnerability by sharing personal life stories related to home or family life. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Be generally cheerful and positive, avoiding complaining or being excessively negative. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Discuss a variety of topics, including ones that I may not agree with, to challenge my perspectives. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Be presentable by having good	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

hygiene,
dressing well,
and looking
their best at all
times. (5)

Page Break

Q11 In the traditional classroom environment, I want my instructor to...

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neither agree nor disagree (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
Be unique by expressing their personality, someone I could see myself being friends with. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Express reward for students they like or get along with. Allowing for extra credit or flexible due dates when students express liking for them. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Treating everyone with respect. Making them feel valued, important, and praise for hard work. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Engage in conversation, before or after class, and request face-to-face meetings. (4)

Show empathy for my problems and class-related stress. (5)

Refer to topics that are relatable, showing interest in things that I like. (6)

Express encouragement and belief in student success, feeling like they are on my side. (7)

Keep their commitments, by staying true to their word and deadlines. (8)

End of Block: In Person Classroom_AF Strategies

Start of Block: Online Classroom_AF Strategies

Q12 Instructions: Each item below will ask you about what you prefer to experience with your instructor in an online classroom environment (e.g. Blackboard). For each item, please rate your level of agreement (ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree"). Consider the statement (below) for each item.

Q13 In the online classroom environment, I want my instructor to...

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neither agree nor disagree (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
Help me by providing study/instructional materials on the course site and give guidance when necessary. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lead class conversation threads and take charge of the classroom environment. They should set all the deadlines/submission dates and stick to them. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Make me feel like I am just as human as them. That they are not better than me. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Engage in conversations with myself and other students, being happy to take time to speak with us, via email or video chat. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Be flexible and allow me (or others) to make up missed assignment or missed due dates. (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q14 In the online classroom environment, I want my instructor to...

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neither agree nor disagree (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
Do well with following normal social rules of conversations (e.g. email etiquette, formatting of text, and use of shorthand language/phrases). (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Show excitement when communicating by smiling, using nonverbal signals, facial expressions, and textual cues. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Engage with the class in a way that makes me comfortable to share my personal life stories, goals, hobbies, and other interests. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Be entertaining by sharing videos, pop culture material, and using other creative things to make the online class enjoyable. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Be more like a friend by using phrases like "we" and "us" when communicating in emails or announcements. (5)

Pay close attention when I'm speaking and provide constructive feedback when necessary. (6)

Q15 In the online classroom environment, I want my instructor to...

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neither agree nor disagree (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
Keep eye contact with me when communicating, through video chat, and show interest in what I'm saying. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Show vulnerability by sharing personal life stories related to home or family life. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Be generally cheerful and positive, avoiding complaining or being excessively negative. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Discuss a variety of topics, including ones that I may not agree with, to challenge my perspectives. (4)

Be presentable by appearing to have good hygiene, dressing well, and looking their best at all times, through posted videos or live video chat. (5)

Q16 In the online classroom environment, I want my instructor to...

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neither agree nor disagree (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
Be unique by expressing their personality, someone I could see myself being friends with. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Express reward for students they like or get along with. Allowing for extra credit or flexible due dates when students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

express liking
for them. (2)

Treating
everyone with
respect.

Making them
feel valued,
important, and
praise for hard
work. (3)

Engage in
conversation,
outside of
class
discussion
boards/posts,
and encourage
video-based
interaction. (4)

Show empathy
for my
problems and
class-related
stress. (5)

Refer to topics
that are
relatable,
showing
interest in
things that I
like. (6)

Express
encouragement
and belief in
student
success,
feeling like
they are on my
side. (7)

Keep their
commitments,
by staying true
to their word
and deadlines.
(8)

End of Block: Online Classroom_AF Strategies

Start of Block: Motivation

Q17 Instructions: Think about the items you previously responded to. For each item, please rate where you place yourself. *Assume that the instructor engaged in all the behaviors previously covered.*

Q18 If an instructor engaged in all of the behaviors previously listed, my feelings about studying content in a class would be...

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (7)	
Motivated	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Unmotivated
Excited	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Bored
Uninterested	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Interested
Involved	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Uninvolved
Dreading It	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Looking forward to it

End of Block: Motivation

Start of Block: Redirected Notice

Q17 You're **almost** done! Please click the arrow (below) to end this survey and be ***redirected*** to a **separate** site where you will be able to enter your information for course credit.

*You will need the **first** and **last** name of your COM 115 instructor for this next portion.*

DO NOT exit the survey. If you exit the survey right now, you **will not** be able to receive credit.