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OF TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS

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S. SCOTT GARRISON

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COMMUNICATIVE DIMENSIONS
OF TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS

BY

S. Scott Garrison

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
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ABSTRACT

COMMUNICATIVE DIMENSIONS OF TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS

By

S. Scott Garrison

The purpose of this study was to explore three communication variables -- perceived communication competence, style and immediacy -- in an effort to begin clarifying the behavioral (i.e. communicative) dimensions of teaching effectiveness. Each of these three communication variables was measured with respect to its impact upon the following indices of teaching effectiveness: student affect (toward course content, toward the instructor, and toward advocated communication practices); behavioral commitment (adopting suggestions and enrolling in another course of related content); and cognitive achievement (test scores).

Based on a review of the literature, three behavioral independent variables (student perception of their teachers' communicative competence, style and immediacy) were evaluated with respect to their impact on one dependent variable, teaching effectiveness.

Eight hundred sixty-seven undergraduate students enrolled in one basic communication course at Michigan State University participated in the investigation.

Results indicated that communication practices in the classroom have a profound influence on education outcomes. Specifically, Perceived Communication Competence, Teacher Style, and Communicative Immediacy consistently predicted teaching effectiveness variables such as student affect, behavioral commitment, and cognitive achievement. Also, results indicated that (1) the most important predictors of student affect toward