Abstract
The purpose of this study was to relate aspects of communication in online class discussion boards to class completion rates. The discussion boards from courses with the highest and with the lowest class completion rates at Forsyth Technical Community College during the Fall 2002 semester were studied. MANOVA testing revealed that differences existed between the communication patterns of students who persisted and students who failed to persist when examining student discussion board postings across Anderson, Rourke, Garrison, and Archer’s (2001) 12 communication types, with displaying emotion, using humor, disclosing self, using vocatives, and using inclusive pronouns demonstrating significant influence. In addition, this study found a difference in student persistence by faculty member; however, excluding gender, no other demographic factors impacted student persistence. Recommendations for practice and faculty training are included, as are suggestions for further studies focusing on analyzing courses by discipline and by additional course formats.