

## **ABSTRACT**

**DISSERTATION:** Reporting, Assessment, and Accountability: A Genre Study of Writing Center Reports

**STUDENT:** Kelsie H. Walker

**DEGREE:** Doctor of Philosophy

**COLLEGE:** Sciences and Humanities

**DATE:** December 2018

**PAGES:**

Broadly, this dissertation is an investigation of writing center reporting practices. Using Rhetorical Genres Studies, I surveyed writing center administrators and examined twelve writing center reports to understand the reports' social action, or what reports accomplished for their users and audiences. My findings showed that reports primarily act to provide accountability to audiences, regardless of the report author's intentions to transform or not. Another goal of my dissertation was to understand uptake, or to what extent reports were taken up by their audiences. My participants indicated that, for the most part, audiences responded to their reports when matters of institutional finances were raised, and participants themselves were primarily responsible for taking up their reports to enact other changes such as improving center operations. Ultimately, my findings contribute empirical evidence of directors' real experiences with reporting, assessment, and accountability—something writing center professionals have often made assumptions about in our scholarship through anecdotes and lore. My project complicates these assumptions and encourages writing center scholars to revisit the assessment has been discussed, including articulating more firmly the differences and intersections among accountability, assessment, reporting, and even research.