Intersections of Genre and Assessment:
Systems, Uptakes, and Ideologies

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Abstract

Intersections of Genre and Assessment: Systems, Uptakes, and Ideologies seeks to discover and examine the intersections between rhetorical genre studies and writing assessment. Rhetorical genre studies (RGS) and writing assessment have separately provided means for influencing and understanding the teaching of writing in first-year English classrooms. Likewise, scholars in RGS and researchers in writing assessment have made significant contributions suggesting ways of examining the values and beliefs that exist within any system. This dissertation encourages Rhetoric & Composition to explicitly consider how RGS can be a framework for analyzing writing assessment and combines RGS concepts with writing assessment practices to further illuminate the writing classroom, moving towards an understanding of the complex systems that make up writing assessment and instruction. This research study does so by focusing on different genre systems of assessment, the complex web that exists—the interactions occurring between genres—and the uptakes and ideologies that arise within those systems. Additionally, this work expands opportunities for future research and teaching by encouraging scholars to examine the assessment systems they use in their local writing classrooms, and the effects those systems have on participants, both teacher and student. This dissertation sheds light on the momentous nature of assessment systems, for example, the ways in which students take up and remember teacher response to student writing, and how assessment acts and is acted upon. To fully understand the intersection(s) between RGS and writing assessment, I will draw on survey data and interviews that will reveal how students take up, remember, and interpret teacher response genres (e.g. marginal comments) and other genres (e.g. assignment prompts) working in the classroom-based assessment system. I conclude by paying special attention to ideologies embedded in assessment systems and genres, and how ideologies shape actions and participants.

Preface

When I reflect on some of my biggest professional and personal life experiences and some of my most challenging memories, I find myself contemplating where I was, what I was doing, who I was with, and what I was thinking at that moment in time. I become introspective and self-analytical. At times, I'm enthralled by nostalgia, which occasionally debilitates me from clearly discerning my circumstances and analyzing what was really going on, but more often than not, I'm in a state of remembering actualities I've taken from those specific moments. This dissertation, the labor and process of writing this text, will certainly be one of those memories in the future. I'll think about the early mornings and late nights in the writing process, the hundreds of hours brainstorming and producing words for this text, the hours revising and taking words out of this text, the people who encouraged me throughout the process, and the consistent mind-spinning through research and data. I've been shaped by so many things. Some of those things are culturally and socially situated. For example, I tend to wear my "kid-from-Kentucky" cultural identity on the front pocket of my shirt, right next to my "self-conscious" sleeve; my cultural and social identity are interwoven in my fabric, my humanness. We are all intricate individuals, puzzles that can never fully be solved.

So are genres. So are writing assessments. Through the research and writing process of this dissertation, genres and writing assessments took the form of an unimaginable maze. As I explored both areas of interest, I arrived at dead ends and new paths. I was, ultimately, in search for something that could inform teaching and research because I believe both are inextricably connected. From my observations, or the ways in which the maze led me to discover specific ideas, I came to a significant realization: Genre and writing assessment each provide something

different and do great things for research in Rhetoric & Composition and the teaching of writing, so why not see what can happen when we integrate the two.

Intersections of Genre and Assessment: Systems, Uptakes, and Ideologies wishes to explore the multitude of complexities and possibilities that genre studies, specifically rhetorical genre studies (RGS), can afford writing assessment research and practices. This study wishes to move beyond assessing simple genres of writing (e.g. academic research paper) and move towards the complex theories that RGS can provide writing assessment, like how RGS concepts can be seen as a framework for writing assessment. Primarily, my research attempts to show how RGS can inform assessment, or what Rhetoric & Composition and writing teachers can learn about writing assessment through RGS. In this dissertation, I'm asking us—writing teachers and researchers—to consider everything we've done in genre and writing assessment, and I'm asking us to think about how the two subfields intersect. I want to know what we can learn through the intersections. I want to see what happens. The majority of this dissertation embarks on uncovering the "why not?" Why not intersect RGS with writing assessment? The simplicity of this question bears the resemblance of a statement made by Pablo Picasso, one of the greatest artists of all time: "Others have seen what is and asked why. I have seen what could be and asked why not." Picasso's exploration took art to new revelations, new styles, new forms, and new techniques. His "why not" helped find Cubism and collage, which led to art as the assemblage of different material, pushing against traditional forms and moving towards more abstract constructions.

Asking and examining "why not" has the potential for incredible discoveries that can change things, like the way we think and the way we act (and react). In this dissertation, I'm attempting to "change" the way we see writing assessment by illuminating its complex nature.

Rhetoric & Composition is like abstract art because it's a field of diverse interests, research, and theories—an arrangement of a little bit of everything—quite possibly, synonymous with "interdisciplinary." At the same time, Rhetoric & Composition is its own discipline and has its own niche in most university English departments. In many ways, this dissertation is an attempt to insert my own ideas in the already dynamic nature of Rhetoric & Composition by intersecting genre theory with writing assessment. I'm no Picasso, but I hope this experimental approach will lead to something that can help inform our first-year writing classrooms, whether that be giving us new ideas about genre and writing assessment, or an illustration of the genres working in our assessment systems, or a refreshing insight on pedagogical practices, or a simple reminder of the influence of teacher response to student writing, or a small urge for research to consider more work on genre and writing assessment and the possibilities that exists when we ask "why not."

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Introduction:
Why Intersect Genre & Assessment?

The following 200+ pages are focused on genre, genre theory, and rhetorical genre studies as a means of providing a framework for writing assessment in first-year writing classrooms. The first thing I noticed about genre theory, specifically Rhetorical Genre Studies (RGS), was its dynamism. I saw that perceiving genre through RGS allowed me to peek into the dynamic nature of what genres do, how they act and are acted upon by other genres and participants. That insight allowed me to connect writing assessment, another convoluted system, with genre theory. My original conceptualization of genre theory was obsolete. In *Theorizing Failure in Composition Studies and Writing Classrooms*, my master's thesis, I mentioned the word "genre" only a handful of times, predominately on one-page referencing Summer Smith's article on the genre of the end comment and teacher response to student writing. Before moving to Lawrence, Kansas and walking into an English Department with phenomenal genre theory scholars, Amy J. Devitt and Mary Jo Reiff, my experience with genre scholarship was relatively non-existent. Like my knowledge on genre, my perception on assessment was also far too limited, even though my thesis was focused on theorizing failure in writing assessments, thanks to the help of my wonderful mentor Asao B. Inoue. Over the past four years, my knowledge on genre and assessment has undoubtedly shifted—increasing in depth, clarity, and understanding. I feel like I'm an assessment scholar by trade that has somehow fallen into the perfect situation, a department that has challenged and broadened my horizon on a different aspect of Rhetoric & Composition that has equal importance to the teaching and learning of writing—genre theory.

Throughout the last four years at the University of Kansas, I've wrestled with genre terminology and meaning, often not understanding the entirety of the word or concepts, but all the while trying to connect genre to writing assessment research and practices. RGS seemed

useful in helping me understand the complex layers of systems, genres, participants, and ideologies in assessment. I knew I wanted to contribute research that intersected genre with writing assessment, research that attempted to bring together two valuable subfields within our discipline as a means for informing what we do inside the writing classroom. I began searching for what and how I could add to the larger conversation occurring in scholarship on genre and assessment. Through my examination and exploration, I came to a greater realization: I noticed there was a significant gap; there was very little explicit connection between genre and assessment in scholarship. There would be occasional offhanded references, but nothing that attempted to fully amalgamate these two areas with rich histories and theories.

After observing this gap existed, I began to ask questions: what does an intersection of genre theory and writing assessment really look like, and can it provide Rhetoric & Composition with something substantial, something that could help inform research and the teaching of writing? The connections I began making with genre and assessment, my interest in seeing the dynamic nature of genre theory as a means for better understanding writing assessment systems, and the questions I began asking myself in the process of slowly combining the two, might have been the product of coming from one university to another and merging interests, but I'd like to think something else was going on. My exploration began with curiosity. This introduction, after all, is titled "Why Intersect Genre & Assessment?" I only titled the introduction this way to respond with another question, "Why not intersect genre and assessment?" The why-not-question seems a lot more applicable to my dissertation than the why-question because of my genuine curiosity, my interest in knowing where genre and assessment can take us (and whether that direction is fruitful and worthwhile). I don't have the answers to why genre and assessment haven't already been fully connected in research. Additionally, the "why not" question is more

appropriate because it's more open-ended, more exploratory, more freeing. The question-on-a-question, responding "why not" to "why," might be cliché, but I find it a meaningful one to ask. In a world that might be too often quick to categorize, classify, and put things (and people) in a specific box, I wonder how much we're losing out on by not exploring possibilities that exist through combinations, through asking "why not" and seeing where it takes us.

For the purposes of my dissertation, I'm recommending we think about the possibilities, knowledge, and potential discoveries that could happen if we were to focus specifically on RGS and writing assessment. I'm advocating that we examine genre theory and we study our writing assessments to see what we can learn and where we can go. I'm asking, "why not?" What's to gain, and what's to lose from investigating writing assessment through a genre framework? *Intersections of Genre and Assessment: Systems, Uptakes, and Ideologies* attempts to answer larger questions about connecting genre theory to assessment: how can writing assessment be enlightened from a better understanding of genre theory, and how can RGS shape and alter what we do with our writing assessments in our first-year writing classrooms? For example, I believe we can examine genres, like university catalogs and departmental handbooks, to see how institutional and program systems help shape writing assessment in classrooms. Additionally, I believe we can study student memories of teacher response to student writing to see how feedback works, to see what genres are at play within teacher response, and what genres students take up when they receive teacher comments. One of my research questions—what genres do students remember taking up while writing and after receiving feedback? —is the impetus of my exploration on teacher response to student writing, intersecting genre theory with writing assessment.

My dissertation desires to advocate RGS as a much-needed framework for understanding the dynamism of writing assessment. The entirety of my dissertation, therefore, attempts to close the gap that exists between genre theory and writing assessment by exploring how writing assessments are complex genre systems full of different genres communicating with other genres in the system; the interactions between genres within writing assessment systems; the genre sets within systems; the uptakes, and the memories participants have with genres make writing assessment complex and multifaceted. Throughout this dissertation, I encourage writing teachers to consider genre studies as a lens for writing assessment through an examination of RGS concepts' influence on writing assessment. Combining RGS concepts with writing assessment would inform writing assessment practices and "aid the learning environment for both teachers and students" (Huot 8). Furthermore, an intertwining of genre theory and writing assessment will provide opportunities for future research and further examinations of the complexity of writing classrooms, urging teachers and students to sift through the genres, systems, sets, uptakes, and ideologies that exist in their local contexts.

The first half of my dissertation seeks to provide an analytical and theoretical framework for both genre and assessment, offering a clear indication as to how the two subfields intersect and can work alongside each other through RGS concepts. This first portion briefly describes the histories of genre theory and writing assessment, analyzes genre systems of assessment and the ideologies inherent in these systems—including documents that help construct and form practices in the first-year writing classroom at the University of Kansas—and describes genre sets within those systems. The second half of my dissertation picks up on the first half by locating a study within the classroom-based assessment system and embracing empirical data, drawing on student surveys and interviews, to better understand what students take up and

remember about writing assessment, specifically teacher response to student writing. This portion examines uptake and memory, RGS concepts that provide an opportunity to fully comprehend how genres shape individuals and what other genres are at play in the classroom-based assessment system. I conclude with implications from my research, as well as an articulation of how ideologies outside the classroom in other systems and contexts influence the writing classroom.

Literature review: Explicit and inexplicit connections in genre theory and writing assessment

While RGS and writing assessment are individually abundant with contributions to the writing classroom, there has been little cross-talk between the two subfields within Rhetoric & Composition. This dissertation attempts to make explicit connections, to provide clarity as to how the subfields can intersect and inform the writing classroom collectively. There are some ways in which genre theory and writing assessment have informed each other to help understand practices in the writing classroom already, like teacher response to student writing. Teacher response is a well-established research area, which includes conversations on the nature of teacher comments (Knoblauch and Brannon; Connors and Lunsford), different ways of forming feedback (Haswell; Straub), how to approach "error" in writing (Shaughnessy; Williams; Horner; Anson), and how to navigate revision (Beason; Elbow and Belanoff; DeJoy). Some scholars have addressed the actual space(s) where teacher response occurs. For example, compositionists have explored what teachers do in the margins (Calhoon-Dillahunt and Forrest) and at the end (Smith) of students' texts. The recurrence of teacher response in the writing classroom, the fact that teacher response happens almost by default on specific spaces of student writing, like in the margins or at the end, across various writing classrooms, and the reality that teacher response is meant to produce another action—revision—helps establish its typification, revealing that

teacher responses can indeed be considered genres, Smith does a great job establishing this through her study on the genre of the end comment.

Most research on teacher response doesn't explicitly connect to genre theory, though. Nonetheless, some research alludes to rhetorical factors within feedback, which can be taken up through genre theory. For example, in Robert Connors and Andrea Lunsford's article, we see how teacher feedback acts as "rhetorical audiences" for students. Additionally, through Connors and Lunsford's study, we see how teacher response often takes a "rhetorical formulae," and we hear them encourage us to study the "genres and tropes of response we tend to privilege" (219). The rhetorical nature of teacher response to student writing, and the repeated patterns of response invoked by "formulae" and "tropes," helps establish a connection between RGS and writing assessment. Smith picks up on Connors and Lunsford's suggestion and writes that studying teacher response "will help us understand our commenting roles and help new teachers enter our community" (251). Smith's study establishes how teacher response, specifically the end comment, can be considered a genre based on its construction and typification. The end comment responds to a specific situation—student writing often guided by an assignment prompt. Smith describes this phenomenon by communicating how the end comment includes certain features that help construct its very nature: "The teacher…develops a pattern of response…and because other teachers face the same situation, they develop similar patterns" (250). Smith's analysis of end comments reveals stability in teacher response as she "identifie[s] a complex set of commenting conventions" (264). Smith's study also provides a way of understanding teacher response through genre theory, which I build on in Chapter 4 by applying RGS concepts— uptake and memory—to further stretch our understanding of teacher response to student writing,

including the inner workings and interactions of genres within writing assessment systems, and to continue intersecting the two subfields.

The writing classroom's embrace of multimodal pedagogy and multimodal frameworks might provide another means to connect the rhetorical nature of genres and writing assessment. As writing studies continues to make a turn toward digital and multimodal compositions (Shipka; Bowen and Whithaus; Lutkewitte), and as multimodal theorists continue to suggest ways of assessing multimodal projects, particularly examining the link between how multimodal genres respond to rhetorical situations (Elkordy; De Hertogh), there are new openings for more dialogue between genre theory and writing assessment. For example, Ed Nagelhout and Denise Tillery explain how digital conceptualizations provide new "genres of assessment technologies" in their writing program at UNLV (3). Nagelhout and Tillery use these genres of assessment technologies to "develop goals and assessment tools" (3). Understanding and knowing how to work within digital structures can provide another way to build a relationship between genre and writing assessment. In fact, once again, in teacher response to student writing research, we see new devices and new emerging genres of response, like screencast response technologies, and the effects those responses have on students in the writing classroom (Anson, et al.). Digitally mediated technologies of response could potentially be explored through RGS concepts, like genre systems, that move to a more complicated, intricate understanding of what writing assessment does in the confines of technology and for what purposes. My plan, in this dissertation, isn't to work within the bounds of digital technology and multimodality, but instead to create a better presence of intersecting RGS with writing assessment and to do so thoroughly through genre systems, uptakes, and ideologies. By building that presence, I'm attempting to encourage others to examine and analyze what can be taken up and done through RGS and

assessment, like multimodal feedback. In this dissertation, one way I'll connect RGS to writing assessment will be through teacher response to student writing in first-year writing classrooms at the University of Kansas.

But teacher response is just one possibility for considering potential intersection of genre and assessment. Another consideration of genre and assessment comes through intersecting what is at play and who is at play within any given writing assessment system. Ed White, Irv Peckham, and Norbert Elliot focus on genre as a means of assessing writing programs. In *Very Like a Whale*, White et. al assert that "the assessment of writing programs is a genre," and indicate how entities like accreditation agencies help shape writing programs and writing program assessment. White et. al map out how different factors, like admission, retention, and graduation, play a role in the "program assessment construct," and one of their purposes is to illustrate how the writing program is acting and acted upon by various forces. Their research is primarily centered on writing assessment theory, but they do define writing program assessment as genre to illuminate how "unique institutional ecologies" influence the program construct. In Chapter 5, I draw on my research on teacher response to student writing and attempt to emphasize the significance in locating ideologies and analyzing how they shape our classroom-based assessment system. Analyzing outside contexts and studying explicit writing assessments can be a valuable resource in understanding and intersecting genre and assessment.

Sarah W. Beck and Jill Jeffrey, for example, study the construction of "high-stakes writing assessments" and the extent in which those assessments complement secondary education goals. They analyze the "genre demands" of high-stake writing assessments from California, Texas, and New York, and they explore the role "genre knowledge" plays in measuring writing competence. Beck and Jeffrey suggest that high-stake writing assessments

need more consistency and clarity of expectations, and they argue that genre knowledge allows them to analyze and better understand student performance, specifically student performance on high-stakes writing exams. Their analysis also leads them to consider what genres are specified in writing tasks and what genres are implied through benchmark student papers: "Analyzing the genre expectations implied…allows us to consider the consequences of validating a particular construct of writing competence" (61-62). Genre knowledge has been shown to correlate with success in writing (Berkenkotter and Huckin; Beaufort; Beck and Jeffrey).

Genre knowledge and genre analysis, then, is another possibility for intersecting RGS and writing assessment. Anne Ruggles Gere et. al and Brad Jacobson use "genre analysis" to better understand writing assessments in their writing classrooms and programs. Gere et. al perform a genre analysis on their local directed self-placement method to validate their writing assessment methods, whereas Jacobson uses a genre analysis to examine the effects of Common Core on the teaching and learning of writing. A genre analysis of specific writing assessments can help us better see some of the elements at play within our assessments; a genre analysis can reveal generic structures of writing assessments and writing tasks; and a genre analysis can reveal certain ideologies existing in genre systems of writing assessment. Jacobson, for example, offers a genre system framework to "clarify the ways in which…different genres speak to, from, and with each other as [education] reform is implemented" (n.p.) and argues that a "social and historical view of genre is instructive for understanding how writing tends to stabilize institutions and institutional practices" (n.p.). Genres are social actions, and examinations of genres and genre systems allow us to understand how and what actions are occurring. Jacobson's work helps us see the intertextual nature of genres influencing our writing classrooms. RGS allows us to explore different concepts that will help us better understand the relationships that exists inside

and outside the construction of assessments. Smith, White et. al, Gere, and Jacobson are a few sources of research that use ideas of genre theory to help establish and build work on writing assessment.

Other scholars inexplicitly draw on genre theory. Asao B. Inoue, for example, invokes the concept of "genre systems" as he pushes for an antiracist writing assessment approach in the classroom: "A large part of designing a writing course is considering how the assessment of writing creates the ecology of the classroom in which students and teacher interact and learn together" (283). Inoue doesn't use the term "genre systems," but he confesses that writing assessment is a "complex system made up of several interconnected elements," which is similar to how RGS scholars define genre systems through intertextual genres (9). Chris Anson et. al notice problems with rubrics, one "genre" of writing assessment, and believe rubrics are ineffective because of how they reflect "generalized standards." Uncovering the values and beliefs and ideologies of rubrics as well as how rubrics function in the larger system might provide more clarity and information. These explicit and inexplicit connections give us something to consider as we begin to think about RGS as a framework for writing assessment. But more has to be done. More can be done and will be done through my study on assessment systems, assessment genres, and teacher response to student writing. I'll begin by laying some groundwork, describing the reconceptualization of genre through RGS research, and distinguishing between larger concepts within RGS, which will help guide the rest of my dissertation. After providing a foundation of RGS work, I'll connect RGS concepts, like genre systems, to writing assessment in order to bring attention to the intricate, complex nature of writing assessments and the genres that work within the writing assessment systems we use.

<u>Chapter overviews</u>

In Chapter 1, "Considering Genre & Assessment: Genre Systems, Sets, Uptakes, & Ideologies," I begin with a brief historical account of genre and provide two overarching stances on genre theory: the traditional, formal lens, and the (re)conceptualized, dynamic lens. The reconceptualization of genre provides a framework for the rest of my dissertation, bringing to life rhetorical genre studies. RGS is the impetus of this chapter because RGS perceives genres as dynamic, flexible, rhetorical actions that shape individuals, systems, and other genres. This chapter defines and locates key concepts within RGS and applies those concepts to writing assessment. For example, I explain how the concept of genre sets allows writing teachers to see what genres are connected to writing assessment and how those genres are interacting with assessment, which can encourage writing teachers to further examine what's being communicated through genres and focus on uptake and memory, two other concepts in RGS. The interconnectedness of RGS concepts becomes a theme throughout my dissertation. This chapter reflects how intersecting RGS and writing assessment can benefit the first-year writing classroom and reveals opportunities for Rhetoric & Composition to analyze and learn more from intersecting the two subfields. The main aim of this chapter is to connect RGS with writing assessment through genre systems, genre sets, uptakes, and ideologies, and to provide a foundation for exploring writing assessment systems.

Chapter 2, "Writing Assessment Systems & Assessment Genres," further intersects RGS with writing assessment by focusing specifically on "genre systems," while also intertwining the conceptual orientations established in Chapter 1. The purpose of this chapter is to apply genre systems to writing assessment and to begin seeing the dynamic, complex nature of writing assessment systems, as well as how writing assessment systems carry ideologies (values and beliefs). This chapter examines three unique writing assessment systems: the institutional writing

assessment system, the program-based writing assessment system, and the classroom-based writing assessment system. Additionally, this chapter breaks down the classroom into three potential assessment systems—product-based, process-based, and labor-based—and analyzes "assessment genres" working within each system. Genre systems can overlap and share similar or identical genres. Nonetheless, each system operates and functions differently. The interconnectedness of genre systems and genres make for a dynamic understanding of the actions they help produce. This chapter describes writing assessment systems, and how those systems can tell us a lot about what is going on within writing assessments, like potential embedded ideologies working for and against teachers and students in the writing classroom.

While Chapter 2 focuses on the broader nature of writing assessment systems, Chapter 3 explores genre systems and sets within a local institutional context. "Genre Systems & Sets in a Local Context" examines more closely different texts that operate with and against writing assessments in the first-year writing classroom. The purpose of this chapter is to further frame RGS concepts with writing assessment inside and outside the first-year writing classroom and program at the University of Kansas by analyzing different institutional, program, and classroom-based documents that help construct writing assessment. This chapter seeks to provide a clear map as to how assessment can be viewed as a genre system full of different genres interacting and exchanging values and beliefs. I begin by analyzing genres that help construct the institutional-based assessment system, like university catalogues, and then eventually move toward classroom-based genres, like the syllabus. This genre analysis will indicate what genres are communicating and how genres are interacting within assessment systems. Exploring different genre systems of assessment at the University of Kansas will help illuminate structures at work as well as show how genres are interconnected and related to one another. Genre systems

influence participants and provide a dynamic way of seeing writing assessment, the flexibility and limitations of both programs and classrooms.

Chapter 4 continues to analyze classroom-based assessment genres but focuses specifically on teacher response to student writing through surveys and interviews. Chapter 4, "Uptake & Memory of Teacher Response to Student Writing," draws on uptake and memory to examine the inner workings of teacher response in the first-year writing classroom at the University of Kansas. This chapter clarifies how response genres work in the classroom-based assessment system. My study focuses on what genres students report taking up and remembering, like marginal comments, and how marginal comments, as a genre, help students revise their writing in English 101 and English 102 at the University of Kansas. Additionally, this chapter seeks to better understand other genres at play within the classroom-based assessment system working with teacher response, like the assignment prompt or syllabus. If teacher response gets taken up, then what other genres do students consult while writing and after receiving feedback? This chapter explores the interconnected nature of genres working with teacher response to student writing and responds to the groundwork provided in Chapter 2 and 3, extending the discussion on genre systems and local assessment genres through surveys and interviews that examine genre uptake and memory, illuminating what genres are "at play" in teacher response.

I conclude my dissertation with implications from my study on teacher response to student writing at the University of Kansas. In Chapter 5, "Hey, Teacher, Teacher: A Reflection on Teacher Response and Ideologies," I indicate significant characteristics and exchanges that are occurring in the classroom-based assessment system through teacher response which might help alter pedagogies and assessments, or at the very least, change the way we perceive writing

assessments. In this chapter, I explain three implications of my study from a teacher and student perspective, and then consider the nature of ideologies working within and outside assessment genres and assessment systems. Genres and ideologies have a unique relationship. This chapter attempts to bring to light the power established and asserted between participants through assessment genres in the classroom, including teacher response genres. Genre is a window on professional practice. If we can understand how a genre functions, we can understand how information and power is circulated. Chapter 5 concludes by considering the affordances, both pedagogically and research-centered, for intersecting genre and assessment.

Chapter 1:
Considering Genre & Assessment: Genre Systems, Sets, Uptakes, & Ideologies

"We need to use our assessments to aid the learning environment for both teachers and students"
(8) – Brian Huot, *(Re)articulating Writing Assessment*

Introduction

Over the past four decades, scholars in genre studies and writing assessment have made significant contributions to the teaching and learning of writing, often having teachers consider and reconsider the theories and practices within their first-year writing classrooms. These two subfields, separately, are replete with good, informative research that challenges teachers to reexamine values and beliefs, pushing pedagogy to a more developed, more nuanced, and more dynamic understanding of Rhetoric & Composition. Each subfield is full of diverse theories that complicate and somewhat confuse their meanings and values. In this first chapter, I wish to parse out various concepts associated with genre studies, specifically Rhetorical Genre Studies (RGS), and start considering how RGS can connect to writing assessment. This chapter will focus on the reconceptualization of genre as dynamic and rhetorical, will explain key concepts embedded within RGS, and will begin merging those concepts with writing assessment research and practices. This type of examination and articulation embodies the impetus of my dissertation: what can Rhetoric & Composition learn from the intersection of genre studies and writing assessment?

In this chapter, my main aim is to provide a theoretical understanding of RGS, to move towards writing assessment with an understanding of the reconceptualization of genre through genre systems, sets, uptake, and ideologies. So far there has been little work that explicitly extends or applies RGS to writing assessment, and a gap in Rhetoric & Composition seems to exist in looking at RGS as a substantial means for framing writing assessment. I believe these

four concepts will allow us to further complicate our examinations of writing assessments, which is something I do more in-depth in my next two chapters. For now, knowing the nature of RGS concepts, like genre systems and genre sets, can help frame how we approach writing assessment. For example, understanding the way in which genres work will allow us to see the inner workings of our writing assessment systems. Knowing what genres are available within writing assessment systems and what genres are working together, interacting and informing participants through genre sets will provide even more clarity to our assessments. We will be able to discern how our writing assessment systems are acting and being acted upon more clearly (and more dynamically). I'll begin by providing a brief overview of RGS reconceptualization of genre to help frame the rest of my dissertation, which relies on core concepts of RGS. These concepts will ultimately provide a foundation for exploring and complicating our notions of writing assessment.

Rhetorical Genre Studies (RGS): A reconceptualization of genre

One of the earliest notions of genre traces to classical rhetoric and Greek philosopher Aristotle. Aristotle's perception of genre emphasizes genres as classifications through sorting of texts; his labels on rhetoric and discourse, including the rhetorical canons (invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery) and rhetorical genres (forensic, deliberative, and epideictic), can be viewed as a set of classifications and can be connected to genre theory. A (re)definition of genre—one that moves away from genres as mere classifications and moves toward genres as social actions—is much more widely accepted in Rhetoric & Composition. Genre is multifaceted and multidisciplinary; social scientists, literature scholars, linguists, compositionists, and rhetoricians have all embarked on some consideration of genre. Anis Bawarshi and Mary Jo Reiff note, "Across various areas of study, genre has come to be defined

less as a means of organizing kinds of texts and more as a powerful, ideologically active, and historically changing shaper of texts, meanings, and social actions" (4). Genres are now seen as rhetorical and connected to social purposes. This dynamic perspective moves away from formal features and moves toward a fuller understanding of genres as purposeful and intentional social actions that shape and are shaped by the relationships that exist between genres and individuals. This fuller stance allows the learning and teaching of writing to be more compelling on various fronts, including the cultural and social significance genres possess and maintain.

Genre scholars and theorists have provided accounts of the history of genre and the use of genres in multidisciplinary contexts (Todorov and Berrong; Cohen; Devitt; Bawarshi and Reiff). In their extensive overview of genre theory, Bawarshi and Reiff confess, "An entire book, let alone a few chapters, will not be able to capture the complexity of this history in all areas in which genre theory has played a significant role" (13). The depth of genre theory has too many roots to till. Bawarshi and Reiff do an incredible job explaining different approaches, like literary traditions, Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), and English for Specific Purposes (ESP), and various histories of genre theory from literary to linguistic to cultural to rhetorical. Other great scholars have influenced and extended genre theory, like works from Gerard Genette, Tzvetan Todorov, Jacques Derrida, Mikhail Bakhtin, Gunther Kress, Michael Halliday, J.R. Martin, and John Swales. My purpose isn't to dive into the various approaches to genre theory, but instead to provide a foundational framework and to position my dissertation within RGS and the reconceptualization of genre, which is most relevant to exploring an intersection with writing assessment.

While linguistic approaches to genre help inform and situate how genres act (and even where genres are located), RGS materialized in the 1980s when Carolyn Miller began theorizing

genre as social actions. Like Miller, Karlyn Campbell and Kathleen Jamieson were some of the earliest scholars to comment on the complex nature of genres by describing genres as a "constellation of substantive, situational, and stylistic elements" (18). Campbell and Jamieson's work also mentioned the "recurring" nature of genres, the way in which a genre acts through appearing and appearing and appearing again, which creates a relation of recurrence to the concept of system. Over the past thirty years, composition scholars have explored the nature of genre (Miller; Devitt; Bawarshi and Reiff), changing it from a historical perspective of genre as stable classification to a newer perspective of genre as dynamic. RGS is often traced back to Miller's groundbreaking article, "Genre as Social Action," where she describes the nature of genres as "indeterminate" and argues the way in which genres respond "depends upon the complexity and diversity of the society" (163). Miller's understanding of genre isn't tied to just literary notions or linguistic configurations of genre, but instead to genres as actions. In her 1984 article, Miller defines genres as "typified rhetorical actions based in recurrent situations" (159). Since then, other genre theorists and scholars have taken up the call to research and write on the complexity of genre through a rhetorical, social action-based understanding of what genres are and what genres do. This rhetorical understanding of genre has cultivated and encouraged compositionists to examine the "situation" in which genres are acting and being acted upon by members within the society.

Social action occurs when an individual has some knowledge as to how the genre functions, when and where the genre is to be used, and what to do with it. Miller believes "situations are social constructs that are the result, not of 'perception,' but of 'definition'" (156). Miller responds to and critiques the construction of situation presented by Lloyd Bitzer who defines "rhetorical situations" as a "complex of persons, events, objects, and relations" (6). Since

"situations" cannot recur—since no situation is precisely the same—Miller turns to the "social" aspect that exists between genres and situations. Devitt explains, "People construct genre through situation and situation through genre; their relationship is reciprocal and dynamic" (21). Each person is unique; each situation is unique. Recurrence occurs, then, when an individual "recognizes an existing genre" (Devitt 21). The relationship between the genre and situation is bi-directional. Devitt writes, "Situation and genre are so tightly interwoven as to be interlocked" (22). We can't separate genres from situations and vice versa. Rhetorical situations aren't concrete, and neither are genres. Devitt provides another beneficial definition of genres as a "nexus between an individual's actions and a socially defined context. Genre is a reciprocal dynamic within which individuals' actions construct and are constructed by recurring context of situation, context of culture, and context of genres" (31).

In looking at Miller and Devitt's similar but separate definitions of genre, we can begin to better understand how writing assessment can be perceived as knowledge constructing "systems" made up of "genres" within writing classrooms. The typified rhetorical action of assessment is the process of the symbol (e.g. letter-grade) being produced and distributed to the student through a course grade at the end of the semester. The symbol, in and of itself, doesn't make writing assessment "genred." Instead, the continual engagement in the process of production and distribution is what "typifies" writing assessment and constructs it as a system working through genres acting and being acted on by participants. Miller writes, "It is through the process of typification that we create recurrence" (157). The recurrence of writing assessment in the writing classroom helps show how writing assessment is a social action. We could begin intersecting RGS with writing assessment by understanding the reconceptualization of genre and perceiving *writing assessment as social action*.

We're already acquainted with the typified situation. In the context of the typical first-year writing classroom, students are placed in a "recurrent situation," a writing classroom that expects them to engage in the writing process by constructing and composing writing through the course of the semester. After all, a fundamental value of the writing classroom is for students to write and receive assessment. This process is far more complex than a simple exchange of a letter-grade from teacher to student or a mere comment on a piece of student writing due to the nature of genre systems and the reality that writing assessment systems are acted on by different participants and beliefs, including individualized teacher goals and program-based values. But despite teacher and program expectations, the writing classroom operates as a recurrent situation: students produce writing, and students receive assessment. Writing assessment connects participants to situations and to contexts. Writing assessment is also made up of various genres that carry out "patterned, typical, and therefore intelligible textual forms" that embody meaning for (and to) participants, the teacher and the student, and the structure of these systems create a flexible boundary in which the participants can perform (Bazerman 311). Connecting and reconfiguring writing assessment as social action through RGS notions of genre as social action is one way of considering and intersecting genre theory and writing assessment. The social action takes place in a much larger genre system through the messiness of various genres working within the system.

Like Devitt, many RGS scholars situate genre through the complexity of the individual participant (and their action) and the society (the context), thus providing a dynamic framework with at least two overpowering undercurrents. This view of genre seeks to recognize and uncover how genres shape and are shaped by the individual members that construct the society and the context or space that's inhabited, which carries its own ideologies. Charles Bazerman describes

the social interaction an individual has through typified actions that are "accomplished through the performance of genres that have highly specific, systematically contextual requirements, and well-defined consequences" (67). David R. Russell adds, "Genres can be defined…as typified tool-mediated ways of purposefully and dialectically interacting among people in some social practice (and across various linked social practices)" ("Rethinking Genre in School and Society"). A reconceptualization of genre intensifies the nature of genre by acknowledging that genres can influence people differently and that individuals can influence genres differently. Furthermore, a dynamic view of genre complicates the static notion of genre in that it shows how genres aren't isolated, but instead working with and against individuals and their actions. Devitt writes, "Genres must be flexible synchronically and changeable diachronically" (89).

Russell describes genres as "material tools" that help define and respond to situations and participants: "A genre is the ongoing use of certain material tools (marks, in the case of written genres) in certain ways that worked once and might work again, a typified tool-mediated response to conditions recognized by participants as recurring" ("Rethinking Genre in School and Society"). Action, typification, situation, and recurrence help define genre. Genres also interact with other genres. Genre(s) aren't *working with and against* just individual members of society, but are also *working with and against* other genres. Richard Cohen describes the interrelated and connected nature of genres and how genres are working within and beside each other in his article:

> A genre does not exist independently; it arises to compete or to contrast with other genres, to complement, augment, interrelate with other genres. Genres do not exist by themselves; they are named and placed within hierarchies or systems of genres, and each is defined by reference to the system and its members. A genre,

therefore, is to be understood in relation to other genres, so that its aims and

purposes at a particular time are defined by its interrelation with and

differentiation from others. (Cohen 207)

Genres work together through other genres, and genres use other genres to help drive their

function and purpose, to help create change, to cultivate action, and to establish prominence

within a society and within a system of other genres. *Genres communicate*. In Tzvetan Todorov

and Richard M. Berrong's systematic analysis of the origins of genres, Todorov and Berrong

write about genres interacting within societies: "Genres communicate with the society in which

they flourish by means of institutionalization" (163). Genres might "flourish" for a moment in

time in part due to the context in which they're acting and responding to, but as Devitt notes,

"contexts change, so genres change" (91). In RGS, the relationship a genre has with situations,

contexts, other genres, and the intertextuality that occurs within systems might be best described

through four concepts: genre systems, genre sets, uptakes, and ideologies.

Genre systems

RGS views genres as dynamic rhetorical forms (Berkenkotter and Huckin), as social

actions (Miller), and as organizing structures (Yates and Orlikowski). Carol Berkenkotter and

Thomas Huckin write, "Genres are inherently dynamic rhetorical structures that can be

manipulated according to the conditions of use" (437). Additionally, JoAnne Yates and Wanda

Orlikowski explain how genres are "established within a particular community serv[ing] as an

institutionalized template for social interaction" (15). Genres have purpose, and as Catherine

Schryer notes, genres are "stabilized-enough sites of social and ideological action" (108). The

social nature of genre distinguishes RGS from other genre theory traditions and approaches.

Genres are moving, acting, and being acted upon; genres talk to one another; genres are

interconnected, working with and against each other in larger genre systems. Yates and Orlikowski discuss the "linked" and "communicative" nature of genres: "In some cases genres are linked or networked together in a way that constitutes a more coordinated communicative process" (15). Yates and Orlikowski's idea of interconnectedness allows us to see how genres aren't isolated. Genres are within systems with other genres, genres are linked together, genres help establish hierarchical positions, and genres are actions.

Following on Devitt's explanation of how genres work together as a "genre set," which I explore further in the next section, in 1994, Bazerman first introduces *genre systems* as a "system of a complex societal machine in which genres form important levers…the genres in which we participate are the levers which we must recognize, use and construct" (79). Bazerman distinguishes between being a "cog" in the machine-like system and being an active participant, an individual who can make choices and produce actions within the system. Bazerman, ultimately, agrees with the latter position and analyzes how the overall system works: "The machine itself only stays working in-so-far as we participate in it and make our lives through its genres precisely because the genres allow us to create highly consequential meanings in highly articulated and developed systems" (79). Bazerman's notion of genres being "highly articulated and developed systems" helps reveal what happens as participants interact with genres and how genres influence participants within situations. The reciprocal relationship that occurs within genre systems creates a dynamic system.

There are different interpretations as to what the word "genre system" provides us as researchers, teachers, and theorists; there's even tension between using "systems" as opposed to "ecologies;" and ultimately, there are similarities and differences between both concepts. In 1997, Aviva Freedman and Graham Smart coined the term "genre ecologies," and the word was

taken up and studied more in-depth a few years later by Clay Spinuzzi. Ecologies, or interrelated webs of communicative actions and participants, have been compared to genre systems. In their discussion on computer documentations and technologies, Spinuzzi and Mark Zachry describe genre ecologies as "dynamic and unprecedented clusters of communication artifacts and activities," and define genre ecologies as an "interrelated group of genres…used to jointly mediate the activities that allow people to accomplish complex objectives" (170-172). Their definition is undeniably similar to how Bazerman defines genre systems as "interrelated genres that interact with each other in specific settings" (97).

Genre ecologies create an understanding of the dynamic, complicated relationships that exist within and outside a system. Ecologies are larger than genre systems; ecologies subsume systems. Furthermore, ecology becomes a framework for analyzing how people use clusters of genres to produce actions, and both Spinuzzi and Zachry believe these clusters are "best described as *genre ecologies*…ruled by contingency, decentralization, and relative stability" (171). They adopt the ecology metaphor because the word focuses on an "open-system approach," as opposed to a closed-system, and seeks to understand the relationship between the individual and the environment(s). The plurality of environment seems of special interest to the concept of genre ecologies. Spinuzzi and Zachry attempt to move away from genre's traditional definition of being a "static form," and their use of the word "ecology" allows them to account "for the dynamism and interconnectedness of genres," both official and unofficial genres (173). Genre systems push against traditional definitions of genres, too, because of the layers of genres working within any given system. Spinuzzi and Zachry's acknowledgment of ecologies accounting for official and unofficial genres and coming from other environments slightly extends our notion of genre systems.

Nonetheless, Spinuzzi and Zachry acknowledge that "genre ecology" is "genetically related" to genre systems, and Spinuzzi even admits that Bazerman's early work as well as Russell's 1997 article on genre systems is "quite similar" to his genre ecology framework. In a 2009 blog post, Spinuzzi also entertains the idea of substituting the word "genre ecology" with "genre network," only to come to the conclusion that "the metaphor of network, like the metaphor of ecology, only gets us so far" (http://spinuzzi.blogspot.com/2009/07/what-if-i-had-called-them-genre.html). Multiple metaphors can create a sense of complexity attempting to portray the dynamic relationships that exist between genres, inside and outside systems. But, like Spinuzzi, they can only get us so far. Genre systems adequately portray what I'm attempting to reveal through writing assessment and can sufficiently depict bi-directional relationships between contexts, texts, subjects, and genres. Kate Pantelides writes in her dissertation, "Genre systems are often mapped within larger activity systems to show how context, text, and subjects interact" (12). Genre system captures the kinds of relationships I'm interested in studying, like the relationship between the institutional assessment system and the classroom-based assessment system or the relationships between different genres involved in teacher response, like marginal comments interacting with end or summary comments. "Ecologies" is a pretty diffuse and abstract concept, whereas "system" allows me to focus on and study specific institutional contexts like writing programs. For my purposes, I'm going to stay with the initial conceptualization of genres as dynamic social systems.

I'm going to use the concept of genre systems throughout this dissertation because it meets my purpose in displaying the relationships between contexts, texts, and participants. Genre systems of assessment are "complex societal machine[s]" that consist of "interrelated genres that interact with each other" (Bazerman 97). Genres are connected to each other within writing

assessment systems and are known best by the participants that operate within the community. Writing assessment systems, and writing assessment genres within those systems, work for and against participants, and for and against other assessment genres in the system. Yates and Orlikowski accurately capture this type of relationship between systems and genres: "A genre system consists of interdependent genres that are enacted in some typical sequence (or limited set of acceptable sequences) in relation to each other, and whose purpose and form typically interlock" (15). Genre systems are "composed of a coordinated, interconnected set of communicative actions that together accomplish an interaction" (Yates and Orlikowski 15). Writing assessment systems are full of genres communicating actions and interacting with other genres within the system. Some genres within writing assessment systems work directly with one another creating a sort of thread or chain for actions to occur and recur. Analyzing and understanding how writing assessment systems work, how genres are connected within assessment systems, and how assessment genres communicate to participants, will shed light onto the core of writing assessment. I will further examine these connections in my next chapter. Likewise, recognizing a chain of genres within an assessment system provides even further clarity to interactions.

Genre sets

These genres, genres in a thread working together, are considered as being in a "genre set." Yates and Orlikowski explain the concept of genre sets through the "hiring process" and discuss some of the genres at play within the system, including the "job ad, job letter and resume, invitation to interview (or rejection letter), interview, and job offer (or rejection letter)" (15). Each genre works for and through the hiring process for a specific reason which helps produce specific actions. For example, the job ad is noticed by job seekers, a participant in the hiring

process or considering the hiring process. The job ad acts on job seekers, causing them to pick up the call and pay closer attention to the parts of the hiring process. Then, job seekers start interacting with other genres in order to make their way through the process. The ad, the letter, the invitation, and the job offer are all a part of the genre set of the genre system of the hiring process. Bazerman chooses to describe genre systems as "complex webs of interrelated genres" through the US patent application process, while Devitt, who was the first scholar to coin *genre sets*, explains the inner workings of genres through her analysis of tax accountants. Devitt examines the "definition and function" of texts within the tax accountant professional community, describes the interwoven nature that help "form a complex network of interaction, a structured set of relationships," and establishes the interactions between texts: "No text is single, as texts refer to one another, draw from one another, create the purpose of one another" (336). Bazerman, through Devitt, connects genres sets to genre systems: "The system of genres [is] the full set of genres that instantiate the participation of all the parties…this would be the full interaction, the full event, the set of social relations as it has been enacted" (99). Genre sets refer to the kinds of texts available to a certain community, to participants and individuals within a specific setting or context (e.g. tax accountants). In contrast, the genre system is the entirety of the interactions through other individuals and other genre sets; genre systems are much larger than genre sets. Genre systems may best be defined as "complex webs," and genre sets may best be described as the "full range of the kind of texts" (98-99).

For writing assessment research, genre sets allow us to see the different kinds of texts that are working with writing assessment genres. Analyzing assessment systems should provide clarity to the genres sets within writing assessment systems, and will help us see what genres are working together, interacting, and even creating pathways (or obstacles) for participants within

assessment systems. Genre sets include genres that respond to one another or a subsequent genre that takes up a previous genre. If we consider how genre sets tell us how genres respond to one another, or how one genre takes up another one, then we'll have a more detailed understanding of the intricate nature of assessment; we'll have a clearer picture of the complexity of our assessment systems, the genres available and the ways in which genres move and respond to one another within systems. In my following chapters, I explore individual assessment systems, like the institutional system of assessment at the University of Kansas, and reveal genres, like the application to the university, which works with other genres in a set. The application acts and is acted upon by participants (e.g. prospective students) in the assessment system. The genre set of the application includes other genres that interact and work alongside it, like a list showing senior-year coursework and self-reported ACT or SAT test scores. Prospective students must engage in the application process and include required materials in order to be considered for admission into the university. Prospective students, then, have to be aware of other genres and take up those genres in the genre set of the application. Through discovering genre sets within assessment systems, we could potentially see how one assessment genre enables another genre, which enables another genre within the set. Additionally, we might be able to locate specific genre sets embedded within specific assessment systems, which could reveal how sets provide functionality for systems.

Uptakes

The complexity of genres exemplified through genre systems and genre sets in RGS becomes even more intricate through the concept of *uptake*, which was first introduced in Anne Freadman's 1987 article "Anyone for Tennis?" and then further explained in her 2002 article "Uptake." Uptake exists through the intersection of two genres, between the interaction an

individual has with one genre which causes them to "take up" certain aspects and qualities and apply what they know to another genre. Bawarshi and Reiff articulate how uptake designates "the complex ways genres relate to and take up one another within systems," and they locate Freadman's concept of uptake through its relationship with genre: "Freadman applies uptake to genre theory, arguing that genres are defined in part by the uptakes they condition and secure" (83, 85). In her well-known analogy of uptake as a game of tennis, Freadman imagines how genres work and relate to one another through meaningful exchanges and explains how different moves create meaning within the "game" and "knowing a genre is also knowing how to take it up" (65).

As Freadman further explains, the notion of "shot" and "return" in a game of tennis carry different meanings: "Each shot is formally determined by the rules of the game, and materially determined by the skill of the players, and each return shot is determined by the shot to which it is a response" (38). Freadman goes on to argue that we know what to do with genres based on our understanding of them. There are different parts that work with and against the genres we pick up; these parts help construct the genre, but also provide the "rules" for playing within the genre. Bawarshi and Reiff summarize this exchange nicely: "The ability to know how to negotiate genres and how to apply and turn genre strategies (rules for play) into textual practices (actual performances) involves knowledge of what Freadman refers to as *uptake*" (85). Responding is taking up a genre call, answering and producing action in response to the demands and expectations of the genre. To understand uptake, Freadman explains how uptake "happens when you accept an invitation to a conference" and write the conference paper ("Uptake" 39). Freadman provides another example of uptake by how a "sentence" becomes an "execution" as different processes, texts, and actions occur that ultimately accumulate to a conclusive decision:

"The execution is an uptake of the verdict…the two are mediated by the sentence, which is the upshot of the trial" (43-44). Uptake has the capability of "select[ing], defin[ing], and represent[ing] its object," and uptake is the "taking of an object…the object is taken from a set of possibles" (48). Uptake draws participants to the game, the genre. The genre is a part of other genres working in, above, below, beyond, and between the system. Uptake sheds light on the complex inter- and intra-actions that occur within genre systems.

Uptake also allows us to see dynamic nature of genre systems. Bawarshi writes, "Uptake helps us understand how systematic, normalized relations between genres coordinate complex forms of social actions—how and why genres take up other genres and how and why they are taken up within a system of activity" ("Genres as Forms of In(ter)vention" 80). Uptake helps us form what to expect, or what we consider to be "normal," and uptake can help shape what actions are produced based on what we remember or recall from past experiences with the genre. Bawarshi talks about the relationship between imitation and invention, the complex interactions that exist between the two, and how "we can think of uptake as defining a horizon of possibility" (81). We can't understand the possibilities for uptake unless we clearly see and examine the genres working within the genre system. We have to see what genres are embedded within the genre system, what the genres are doing, what communication is occurring through the other genres in the system, and what is being taken up when we interact with the genre itself.

Knowing the genre and the complexities that exist in the genre system is extremely important. Knowing the participants within the system that act and are being acted upon by the genres is equally important. Heather Bastian explains that "understanding uptake as a process emphasizes the active nature of uptake—uptakes are not set or static but, instead, are processes in which an individual acts and creates" (42). Bastian shows how the individual is a "primary

component of uptake as an uptake needs a designer in order to occur" (42). She emphasizes the different levels of complexity surrounding uptake and writes that "knowing a conventional uptake…means more than simply knowing how to respond to another text; it also means knowing how to act and not to act, what one can do and not do, and what one can be and not be" (35). Uptake gives us the opportunity to respond, but even more than that, provides the means for understanding what actions are possible and what can be done through the genre within the system. Through uptake, we can see what genres students are interacting with, or taking up, as they receive and respond to our assessments. Bastian describes the process of taking up a genre: "While the ways in which we can take up a text are theoretically limitless, our uptake of it is influenced by and often limited to the way in which we ourselves and others have taken up similar texts within similar contexts in the past" (n.p.). Genre uptake tells us something about past experiences with similar (or the same) genres, often having us recall our memories with the genre, or what we know about it and what the genre has previously done.

Another key element within uptake is the "intertextual memory of uptake" (Freadman, 48). Genres, according to Freadman, are connected to and influenced by uptakes, and these uptakes carry "long, ramified, intertextual, and intergeneric memories," intensifying what genres do to the individuals working with or against them (40). The knowledge an individual has about a genre is carried through the uptake because uptakes have memories: "Knowing a genre is…knowing how to take it up" (Freadman 63). The process of taking up genres within systems is imbricated in power relations, values, and beliefs. Freadman's concepts of uptake and memory enlighten genres, genre systems, and genre sets working between participants and other genres. Kimberly Emmons study on biomedical subjects and her conversations on generic uptake show the relationship between uptake and participants: "Attention to the dynamics of uptake

illuminates the formation of subjectivities in and through genres, and thus explicates the complex

relationships" (151). One significant dynamic in the process of uptake is memory which helps

shape what we do and how we take up a genre. Our genre expectations are shaped by these past

experiences and the ways in which we've approached the same or similar genres which

influences our actions. Angela Rounsaville writes that uptake memory "indexes an arena of

possible choices and must make a series of selections that will delimit it and make it meaningful

for the user and for the rhetorical situation" (n.p.). Not only is an individual drawing on memory,

but they're relying on their memory to make choices that have significant consequences to their

current situation and the genre they're interacting with, a genre that's also acting on the

individual and being acted upon by the individual. Bastian writes that memory has the power to

make "our uptakes automatic." Since genre uptake can be automatic through memory, analyzing

genres within systems, and knowing the uptakes that exists, will allow us to better understand

our experiences with specific genres, and will also illuminate what decisions we're prone to

make when interacting with certain genres.

Uptake can provide a means in helping us comprehend the inner workings of genres and

genre systems, including genre systems of assessment which give us the opportunity to peek into

past experiences our students have with writing assessment, and can encourage us to form and

construct effective writing assessments within the writing classroom. In Chapter 4, my empirical

study focuses on the uptake and memory of teacher response to student writing and what genres

students are "taking up" in first-year writing classrooms at the University of Kansas. Students'

past experiences with writing assessment can tell us a lot, and uptake memory gives us the

framework for knowing the power of memory. If a student has familiarity with a specific writing

assessment genre, like peer review, then their genre knowledge could help them know

expectations and work through, or within, the assessment genre. By understanding genre uptake and memory, we might be able to comprehend responses students have with assessment genres and the potential power those reactions might have in our writing classrooms which could help reshape our writing assessments.

Ideologies

Uptake memory is shaped by ideologies. Recalling aspects of a genre, or how an individual takes up a genre and what the individual chooses to do with it, becomes even more convoluted through an understanding of ideology. Genres and genre systems are immersed in ideologies, and reify those ideologies as well. In recent work on ideology, Manfred Steger and Paul James define ideologies as "patterned clusters of normatively-imbued ideas and concepts, including particular representations of power relations" (23). For my purposes, I'm viewing ideologies as situated *values and beliefs* which ultimately help construct how a community works and what participants hold onto. Genres are indoctrinated with an ideological perspective from the culture and the participants interacting with it; the surrounding context and culture of genres provide value to the genre which helps dictate the genre's use. My definition of ideology also draws on Thomas O. Beebee: "Ideology is a magnetic force that simultaneously holds a society together by allowing it to communicate with itself in shorthand and pushes society apart" (18). While ideology is often positioned in political spheres, Rhetoric & Composition has embraced ideology as a means for analysis (Schilb) and RGS extends our understanding of ideology, and the role ideologies play in our writing classrooms, through genres and genre systems.

Bawarshi and Reiff explain the intricate nature of genres through ideology: "It is within this social and rhetorical economy that a genre attains its use-value, making genre one of the

bearers, articulators, and reproducers of culture—in short, ideological. In turn, genres are what make texts ideological, endowing them with a social use-value" (27). Ideologies cultivated in genres help establish position and power within genre systems. Devitt's analysis of tax accountants shows the conflicting realities of access and power within tax accountant genres. Other genre scholars reveal ideologies within genre systems of education and institutions (Luke; Paré). Catherine Schryer investigates veterinarian medical records and notices how genres "enact their ideology." Her analysis of new and old ways of keeping medical records helps reveal how different participants, young clinicians vs. older clinicians, using different medical systems, Problem Oriented Veterinary Medical Record (POVMR) vs. Source Oriented Record (SOR), creates and maintains division in power and access. Schryer concludes, "Genres are evolving and function as ideological vehicles that represent values to of certain groups" (230).

As genres go, so do ideologies. Participants approach genres, which are full of ideologies, and participants interact with those genres. At the same time, participants are informed by cultural ideologies, things they've picked up from other genres and other systems, things they carry with them as they interact with newer systems and genres. George Kamberelis explains the role of the participant: "Every individual speaker and writer is constrained by his or her knowledge of the ideologies and genres from which he or she mines language and information to create texts as well as the internal constraints imposed by those ideologies, genres, and the relations between and among them" (146). The relationship between the participant, rhetorical situation, genre, and system allows us to see what ideologies are manifesting and how power is being positioned. At the very least, the relationship tells us what action is taking place against and for whom, which also reveals some degree of power within a community or situation.

The reality of ideologies being carried through genres that separate participants and creates boundaries of access and privilege has been taken up by scholars through genre case studies. A genre-based lens embraces critique and criticism, at the very least, a genre-based lens attempts to analyze distributed power and hierarchical positions that are asserted and reasserted through systems and genres. For example, Schryer uses ethnographic research techniques to study how POVMR and SOR systems were being used by participants in a North American veterinary college. Schryer examines how clinicians and practitioners were using the two systems, and she discovers that the systems were acting and being acted upon differently by different participants, creating boundaries of access and understanding. Some clinicians were critical of the SOR system, and others were more skeptical of the POVMR system, a more recent innovation at the college where Schryer conducted her research. The younger clinicians preferred the POVMR system, whereas older clinicians trained through the SOR system were resistant to the POVMR system. Through her observations, Schryer mentions how "complaints related to professional standards" and "issues of professionalism" were being raised through whatever record keeping system was being used. Depending on the situation and participants involved, one record keeping system could be more accepted and valued than the other. If an individual didn't have familiarity with the system, they wouldn't have access because of their inadequate knowledge.

Schryer explains how genres analyses can reveal ideologies: "The concept of genre, when viewed from rhetorical, dialectical, and dialogic perspectives, can illuminate much of the work and ideology of such textual practices." (204). Schryer notes how, due to the ever-changing nature of genre systems and genres, genres can be perceived as "stabilized-for-now" sites. When we view genre systems and genres, we're encountering a snapshot that is relevant for a while

with an undetermined expiration date. The stability of genres, then, are somewhat dependent on the situation and the participants working within and against the system. Nevertheless, "Genres are inherently ideological" (209). The ideologies working within and being carried by genres will eventually evolve and adapt to cultural values and whatever is communally acceptable at the time. Ideologies are always present. Ideologies are always a part of the larger context. Ideologies are always embedded within genres. Ideologies are always influencing participants.

Like Schryer, Dylan Dryer conducts a genre case study that investigates how genres are acting and being acted upon by participants, and how those genres are isolating individuals within the system. Unlike Schryer, Dryer examines "zoning codes" and attempts to understand "the persistence of exclusionary systems of genres" (504). Dryer shows how zoning codes instruct and exclude participants within the genre; he illustrates how zoning codes are "impossible to take up" without distributing and reinforcing "deeply problematic assumptions about cities" (508). One of the main points of emphases in Dryer's article is the concept of uptake and understanding how genre uptake can affect what participants do, what is and what isn't familiar, what is and what isn't permissible. Dryer believes genres and zoning codes are inextricably connected in nature: "Just as genres produce zones of social interactions and delimited ranges of discursive possibilities, so municipal zones produce, as it were, genres of neighborhoods that reflect and produce forms of urban life" (508). Zoning codes help shape and reshape communities, and zoning codes, due to their unreadable language use and linguistic choices, creates separation between identities.

Zoning codes are also interconnected with legality concerns. Participants trying to access and understand the system are overwhelmingly forced to comprehend county, city, and state laws pertaining to proper regulations. Dryer's exploration of zoning codes illustrates how codes

segregate participants, including how applications fees, considerations for zoning revisions, and other resources all cost money which creates a barrier for who can act within the system. Likewise, the amount of time it takes to learn and engage with materials dissuades participants to act: "The inculcation of reading and writing practices…invites would-be participants to conclude that they do not, themselves, know how to perform the requisite kinds of readings and writings appropriate for the right kinds of engagement with this genre" (521). Zoning codes, like all genres, are infiltrated with ideologies.

        Genres within the writing classroom, like writing assessments, are indoctrinated with ideologies as well. The writing classroom is permeated with manifestations of power. Allan Luke does a nice job explaining the embeddedness of ideologies in education: "Approaches to curriculum, instruction and evaluation have been built on a range of doctrinal and disciplinary 'truths' about literacy…the history of literacy education thus is about power and knowledge" (308-309). We can assume writing assessment falls under Luke's "evaluation," and if we consider how writing assessment informs curriculum and instruction, we are left mystified. The intertangled nature of systems and genres continues to rear its head over and over. The interconnectedness of what happens within systems through genres is perplexing. Luke parses out his argument on power: "It is about power not solely in terms of which texts and practices will 'count' and which groups will have or not have access to which texts and practices. It is also about who in the modern state will have a privileged position in specifying what will count as literacy" (309). Luke comments on the two-fold nature of power, both in the sense of who has access and who has a "privileged position." These two characteristics of power help shape and reinforce ideologies within systems and genres. Later in his article, Luke recognizes how power is connected to rhetorical situations and strategic timing; power is dependent on the deployment

of a strategy at just the "right" time. We understand the embeddedness of ideology within systems and genres acting on participants through, in many ways, a genre-based lens and a genre-based pedagogy. Genre pedagogy requires us to consider, examine, and explore the messiness of systems, including the existence of ideologies and the inner workings of power within genre systems of assessment.

Conclusion: Considering genre and writing assessment through RGS concepts

The reconceptualization of genre through RGS, and these four concepts, genre systems, genre sets, uptakes, and ideologies, will help guide the intersections of RGS and writing assessment throughout this dissertation. By laying the framework for these concepts, my hope is that we can begin picking them up and applying them to aspects of writing assessment research and practice. RGS can inform writing assessment, bringing greater value and better understanding to the already good work we do inside and outside our classrooms. I'm going to start filling the gap between genre theory and writing assessment by asking: how can an understanding of genre systems, uptakes, and ideologies help inform our understanding of complex systems of assessment, genres of assessment, uptakes of those genres, and the ideologies that permeate assessment approaches? In my next chapter, I'm starting with the concept of genre systems by perceiving writing assessments as dynamic systems full of genres and ideologies. My next chapter examines the institutional assessment system, the program-based assessment system, and the classroom-based assessment system. All three writing assessment systems are unique, complex structures that are indoctrinated with ideologies (values and beliefs) which are embedded within genres that act and are acted on by participants within each system. Additionally, each system is multi-layered, which I'll examine more closely through the classroom-based assessment system in my next chapter.

Chapter 2:
Writing Assessment Systems & Assessment Genres

"Genres are dynamic rhetorical forms that develop from responses to recurrent situations and serve to stabilize experience and give it coherence and meaning" (479) – Carol Berkenkotter and Thomas Huckin, "Rethinking Genre from a Sociocognitive Perspective"

<u>Introduction</u>

This chapter continues to embrace the reconceptualization of genre as a social action asserted by Rhetorical Genre Studies (RGS) research, and relies on RGS concepts, such as genre systems, genre sets and ideologies to provide a framework for perceiving writing assessment as dynamic rhetorical structures. I'll turn my attention to uptake, another core concept that was analyzed in my previous chapter, through an investigation of teacher response to student writing in Chapter 4. For now, genre systems, genre sets, and ideologies will provide a good foundation for perceiving writing assessment through genre theory and will move us toward observations and discoveries that can come from intersecting genre and assessment. For example, through an RGS based understanding of genres, we can acknowledge how genres, participants, situations, and contexts influence what occurs and recurs, helping to establish the interactions that exist within assessment systems. We can also see genres at play within writing assessment systems and embedded ideologies that exist within writing assessments which influence what is done and what is taken up in our writing classrooms. For my purposes, this chapter breaks down writing assessment into three larger genre systems: the institutional writing assessment system, the program-based writing assessment system, and the classroom-based writing assessment system. Each writing assessment system includes genre sets, and each genre within those sets possesses different ideologies, or values and beliefs.

An analysis of each assessment system will help illuminate the inner workings of genres within assessment systems and show how writing assessment research and practices can grow

from a more dynamic, complex perception of assessment. In this chapter, my aim is to begin

with the institutional writing assessment system and then trickle down to the classroom-based

writing assessment system. My purpose is to define and articulate each individual assessment

system through the RGS conceptual groundwork previously established. Genre systems can be

applied to systems of writing assessment. Genres influence what writing assessment systems do

and how participants interact within writing assessment systems. Each larger writing assessment

system structures different actions, embraces different ideologies, and works with and against

different participants.

<u>The institutional assessment system, ideologies, and genres</u>

An investigation of the institutional assessment system will allow us to see some distinct

ideologies in the larger assessment system—ideologies that could be affecting other assessment

systems, like the program-based assessment system, as well. Tracing the history of early U.S.

university writing assessment will show us how assessment systems were constructed, and how

they've evolved. Norbert Elliot's *On a Scale: A Social History of Writing Assessment in America*

provides a thorough, in-depth look at the system of writing assessment in the university. I'm

merely grazing the surface to begin connecting RGS concepts with writing assessment systems

by indicating potential ideologies existing within those systems, which will serve as an

illustration of what we can learn about institutional assessment. Admission, one of the earliest

means of institutional assessment in the U.S. university, is a significant part of the complex genre

system of university assessment and can be viewed as an embedded value within the institutional

context. Charles W. Eliot, the longest tenured Harvard president (1869-1909), uses strong

language to describe the function and purpose of admission: "The rigorous examination for

admission had one good effect through the college course: it prevents a waste of instruction upon

incompetent persons" ("President Eliot's Inaugural Address"). The core of the institutional

assessment system, through processes like admission, was historically filtered by ideological

indoctrinations that separated "competent" students from "incompetent" ones. Admission

became a systematic function for the university in creating barriers on accessibility and

removing, or disallowing certain identities to participate in the institutional system. Current

writing assessment systems and writing assessment genres might still contain residue from

historical ideological positions. Additionally, current writing assessment systems and genres,

apart from historical remnants, possess their own set of assertions and ideological stances.

Therefore, an investigation into distinct writing assessment systems might provide clarity as to

how those genre systems are functioning through unique genres, and for what purposes, as well

as how those genres work for or against participants within those assessment systems.

Exploring the nature of our assessments systems, then, allows us to discover potential

genres that assert and re-assert certain ideological positions. Admission, which is inherently tied

to assessment, is a process that continues to occur within university settings, and from that, it can

be assumed that the university believes in the process of admission, or the ideologies that are

communicated through the process of admission. Admission can be broken up into at least two

different branches. There's broader admission—into the institution or university itself—and then

more central admission—into a specific department or program within the institution. Admission

varies depending on the context of situation and purpose; and genres within the admission

process vary across contexts. Carolyn Miller communicates the "number of genres current in any

society is indeterminant and depends upon the complexity and diversity of the society" (163). In

the institutional assessment system, the admission process is constructed by a genre set made up

of various genres, like the application for admission, which help shape actions.

Since genres "change, evolve, and decay," as indicated by Miller, even within the process of admission in the institutional assessment system, we have to seek to understand the genres involved within the rhetorical situation itself, which is dependent on the context and participants. For example, institutions and programs have certain admission standards, and admission is often dictated by various assessments genres (e.g. entrance examinations). An entrance examination can be considered one genre in the genre set of admission into the institutional system. Another genre within the genre set of admission is the application to the university. Students have to perform within the expectations of the application genre in order to fulfill the necessary requirements to properly apply to the university. The application genre expectations could vary depending on the rhetorical situation, or the university in which the student is applying. The application genre works with other genres in the institutional assessment system, like the entrance exam or the personal essay, which might guide the admission process. Depending upon the institutional perceived value of entrance exams, the exam itself may be greatly valued or possess very little value at all. Admission is often displayed through another important genre in the set—an acceptance letter. The acceptance letter notifies the participant acting within the institutional system of whether the individual has been admitted and has access to the system.

Uncovering the institutional assessment system, and pulling back its interconnected layers, or the genres working and interacting within the system, reveals how admission functions and has a specific purpose within the ideological institutional system. Genre systems, after all, are full of ideologies. Mary Lovett Smallwood astutely traces characteristics of the early U.S. university: "The aims of a college are the expression of its philosophy, and from the very beginnings of education a receptive group of people, called students and scholars, have believed in the philosophy and have accepted examinations as a measure of their own approach to its

realization" (3). Admission is a form of assessment that has historically catered toward a specific "receptive group of people." The early admission process in the U.S. university privileged certain identities and carried ideologies that determined who was (and wasn't) allowed to participate in the system. The process of admission was shaped by ideological constructions that embraced a specific "group of people" while discouraging, or not providing access to others. Mark Durm in "The History of Grading" writes, "There is no doubt that colleges from the very beginning had some method of student evaluations…[D]ifferentiating between students in the very earliest days of American colleges and universities seemed to center around social class" (1). Additionally, Eliot shares in his memoir the purpose of the U.S. university: "A society of scholars, of men who were actuated by a love of student and reflection, of experiment, and of reaching out for the facts of all nature, including man, and who found delight in associating with men of like mind" (43). But from Eliot's earlier articulation of the process of admission, we see an ideological presence of the rhetorical situation; the purpose of the university was to allow "competent" students to participate in "reaching out for the facts of all nature." From a historical perspective, the "society of scholars" admitted into the university is clearly delineated by social class, race, and gender. Like Eliot confesses in his memoir, Smallwood acknowledges the impact social class had within the institutional system, and she explains how students were arranged in early university records: "The American colleges did not place their students in alphabetical order but attempted for years to list them according to the social position of their families" (41).

The historical U.S. university admission process carried ideological underpinnings privileging socioeconomic status along with race and gender. Admission became an institutional norm that worked against certain participants and helped establish positions of power. RGS provides writing assessment a framework for sorting through the complexity of genre systems,

like admission in the institutional assessment system, and draws our attention to the communication that is occurring between genres within the system. RGS encourages us to explore genres and genre systems that are rich with ideologies that act on participants, causing us to be aware of the potential divisiveness being produced by our systems. If we see how genres, such as entrance exams and applications, are talking to one another, and how they are asserting hierarchies through the ideological embeddedness of the genres, then we can start questioning our own writing assessment systems. If we begin analyzing our assessment systems, then we will start seeing how genres are working within the system, shaping what we can or cannot do. Additionally, an examination of genres and genre systems of assessment gives us the opportunity to see what our assessments are doing and to what specific ends. Through RGS, we get to see the undertow of our writing assessment systems, not just the product of the system—like a letter-grade.

The institutional assessment system is just one genre system, though. The interconnected nature of genre systems can be represented through the dynamic nature of the institutional assessment system. For example, the institutional assessment system embraces the program-based assessment system and the classroom-based assessment system. Genre systems overlap. The institutional system can be perceived as the overarching system that informs other constructions of assessment systems in the university. Some writing assessment systems include some of the same genres, genre sets, and ideologies. For example, the institutional assessment system involves university policies that help inform and establish value in the context of the institution. Likewise, the program-based assessment system adheres to these university policies, and often uses them to help construct program values that are framed by assessment practices. These policies can also be seen in the classroom-based assessment system through genres like

the syllabus, which detail the nature of the writing classroom, including expectations and requirements. Nonetheless, each assessment system has a different purpose, different genres, different genre sets, different ideologies, and different participants that make each assessment system unique despite the overlapping nature between systems. The institutional system functions differently than the program-based system, and the program-based system functions differently than the classroom-based assessment system. Each system embraces different values and beliefs that help structure and inform what can (and cannot) be done.

The program-based assessment system based on "waves," or genre shifts in values and beliefs

Understanding the nature of how the program-based assessment system works, and the embedded ideologies within different genre shifts and values in program-based assessment, allows us to more clearly identify what has informed writing programs and what has shaped writing classrooms. Much like the institutional assessment system's emphasis on the process of admission and the ideologies emphasized through the different genres of admission, including different shifts in admission standards through the history of the university, which brings to light the values and beliefs of the system, the program-based assessment system has encountered its own genre shifts. There have been different moves in writing theory and practice that have contained specific ideologies since the culture-shifting writing-as-process movement in the 1960s, which largely helped inform and develop writing programs and writing classrooms. Kathleen Yancey examines different "waves" in writing assessment research, and she articulates two dominating ideologies embedded in the program-based and classroom-based assessment system—validity and reliability. Yancey writes that validity means "measuring what you intend to measure," and she defines reliability as measuring what you intend to measure "consistently" (487).

Conversations on validity and reliability in writing assessment continue to emerge in prominent Rhetoric & Composition journals like *The Journal of Writing Assessment* and *Writing Program Administration*. Articles and books have helped shape constructions of assessment in writing programs and have helped instill certain ideologies, including perceptions on validity and reliability. In Peggy O' Neill, Cindy Moore, and Brian Huot's book, *A Guide to College Writing Assessment*, the authors articulate the influence validity and reliability has had on writing assessment research: "The two most important terms in educational measurement in general and writing assessment in particular have remained *reliability* and *validity*" (17). The program-based assessment system often attaches itself and branches from an understanding of validity and reliability, or the embedded ideologies within those concepts, and helps inform the way in which we construct our writing assessments in the classroom-based assessment system. While Yancey describes these changes in ideologies as "waves," I'd argue that her notion can be perceived as *shifts in genre systems of assessment*, subsequently altering the ideologies embedded within the program-based assessment system.

By focusing on these shifts and embedded ideologies, we can analyze how the program-based assessment system has been historically shaped, and we can better understand potential residual ramifications that continue to exist within our writing programs. Yancey explains how writing assessment has transformed over time (being first referred to as *testing*), and elucidates how, despite changes, shifts in assessment contain "overlap." Through RGS, we see a clear picture of genre systems by her word choices: genre systems overlap in nature, genres shift and move, and ideologies come and go. There's never a full switch from one movement to the next; instead the genre system simply evolves and slowly changes due to the rhetorical situation and the flexibility of the genres within the system. Yancey's wave analogy reveals how traditions

aren't simply removed and replaced, but instead are informed by what's happened previously and what has come before them. This description connects to RGS research, which would interject and say that the "new" genre, or the reconfiguration of the old genre, might be so masked in the past that there are constraints as to what the genre does and can do (see Jamieson and Devitt's conceptualization of "antecedent genres"). Furthermore, pre-existing ideologies embedded in older genres and genre systems affect newer genres and genre systems. In many ways, we have to know what's come before our classroom-based system, or what helps inform our classroom-based system, and we can do that through a genre analysis of the program-based assessment system.

Since the program-based assessment system helps shape the writing classroom, examining the nature of the program, including its ideologies, should provide clarity to the classroom-based assessment system and the genres working within the classroom; the program-based system contains ideologies that pour into the classroom-based system, shaping what we do in our classrooms through our writing assessments. According to Yancey, there have been three unique shifts ("waves") in genre systems of writing assessment, and dominant genres full of different ideologies have emerged from those genre shifts: the first, objective tests (1950-1970), the second, holistically scored essays (1970-1986), and the third, portfolios and program assessment (1986-present). These three shifts were embraced by writing programs, which influenced writing classrooms. A closer look at each genre shift of writing assessment from a program perspective will reveal how certain values and beliefs are communicated through writing assessments, including the assessment genres we use in our writing classrooms.

Yancey describes the first assessment system as being attached to "objective" forms of writing assessment, like "multiple choice tests, largely of grammar and usage" (486). More

recent traces of the historical progression of writing assessment and measurement theory provide clarity to the nature of testing in the first genre system of assessment: "In the 1950s, the test-score tradition represented by classical test theory remained a dominant force in the U.S. measurement community with its continued emphasis on the reliability of test scores" (Behizadeh and Engelhard Jr. 199). According to Nadia Behizadeh and George Engelhard Jr., during the first assessment system, "Measurement theory had the greatest influence on writing assessment practices" (200). The first assessment system's embrace of test-driven measurements influenced what was being done in writing assessment practice in the writing classroom: "Perhaps the standardized tests that focused on form drove English educators and writing theorists alike to consider ways to increase the reliability of test scores" (Behizadeh and Engelhard Jr. 200-201). Standardized tests could be seen as a part of the genre set of the first shift of writing assessment; as a genre, standardized tests communicate values and shape participants working within the system, including participants, like students, trying to access the writing program. Behizadeh and Engelhard Jr. indicate an ideological position focused on "reliability" during the first shift, and they reveal tests as an assessment genre that were used to embody reliability.

Behizadeh and Engelhard Jr.'s more recent observation confirms Yancey's belief that the first assessment system was dominated by reliability standards and was more concerned with the cost and efficiency of writing assessment, or the "best and fairest job of prediction with the least amount of work" (489). Tests were created by testing experts through organizations like Educational Testing Services (ETS) in 1947, which was an extension of an elaborate College Board research agenda. Elaborate initiatives were taking place and tests, like the English Composition Test (ECT), were attempting to reliably score student writing (O' Neill, Moore, and

Huot). In many ways, the first assessment system's emphasis on "reliability" helped form writing assessment genres that weren't based on writing at all. Paul Diederich, who was in operations at ETS, said, "The best test to use at the college entrance level to pick out good, average, and poor writers is not a writing test at all but a long, unspeeded reading test" (qtd. in Valentine 90). The first assessment system had ideological currents concerned with measurement constructed by testing experts attempting to find reliability. Writing programs used assessment genres, like reading tests, which were designed to sort individuals, much like the admission process used in the early institutional assessment system. Reading tests were a part of the genre set and would communicate whether participants had knowledge that reflected adequate success by the permissible standards of the program-based system. Of course, a significant ideological position behind these reading tests was the belief that tests were in fact reliable standards of assessment. While shifts in values and beliefs in writing assessment have occurred since then, many writing programs continue to embrace testing measurements, like placement tests, to provide students opportunities to exempt out of first-year writing courses. Placement tests, therefore, are an assessment genre in the program-based assessment system that sorts and separates individuals.

Students who succeed on placement tests are granted access to another part of the system, usually an advanced course, whereas students who fail are not exempt from writing program standards and expectations. Placement tests, consequently, can help create a sort of hinged barrier of access which might advantage or disadvantage participants. Placement tests can be viewed as one genre in the genre set working within the program-based assessment system which influences the classroom-based writing assessment system. Yancey believes another ideological position was being asserted in the first assessment system. She argues the first shift attempted to measure "something assumed to be related to the behavior, but not the behavior itself (e.g., items

like comma usage questions and pronoun reference corrections)" (Yancey 486). This reveals at least two ideologies during the first assessment system—a value on rightness, and a value on behavior. Both ideologies could influence the expectations of the classroom-based assessment system. For example, if the first system emphasized "comma usage," or correctness, this ideology could be reasserted through language use expectations and standards in the classroom-based assessment system.

In the 1970s and 1980s, a new shift was starting to develop in writing theory and practice. According to Yancey, the second and third shift in genre systems of assessment moved toward more "direct" measurements of assessment. Behizadeh and Engelhard Jr. confirm, "The 1980s saw writing theory entrenched in the idea and content tradition, assessment practices shifting slightly with the incorporation of direct writing assessments" (202). Even though writing assessments were moving towards direct measurements, Behizadeh and Engelhard Jr. still indicate how traces of the older system and ideologies within that system were still present in assessment practices. The residue of past beliefs and values inserted within assessment genres seems to re-appear consistently as new values and new genres emerge. The 1980s were moving away from multiple-choice tests (Behizadeh and Engelhard Jr.), which was an important genre in the genre set communicating certain ideologies to the program, and starting to consider the validity of writing assessments, or the consistency of measuring writing. Of course, ideologies from the first assessment system were still influencing the second due to the overlapping nature of genre systems. Nonetheless, the second genre system of assessment in the writing program was concerned with and controlled by validity.

Writing programs were beginning to form a niche in English departments, and Rhetoric & Composition research was flourishing with different writing classroom practices. Pedagogical

theories, like cognitivism (Flower and Hayes; Bizzell) and expressivism (Elbow), were taking

shape inside the writing classroom. Traditional genres of assessment, like objective tests, were

coming under more critique: "Given what we were learning, it made increasingly less sense to

use tests whose chief virtues were reliability and efficiency" (Yancey 489). The writing program

was beginning to welcome more progressive forms of assessment that aligned more with newer

pedagogical theories. The second assessment system was moving toward direct measurements

while also attempting to deconstruct the notion that standardized tests were even "reliable" in the

first place. Student writing, itself, became a prominent genre in the second shift because it

provided writing programs a way to directly measure what students were doing and how they

were meeting the expectations of the writing task and overall writing program. Student writing

was a genre in the genre set that allowed programs to engage in ideological conversations

centered around validity. Ed White and Richard Lloyd Jones began taking initiative in moving

assessment to a greater emphasis on "validity" over reliability. Assessment genres like the

holistic scoring method which are (usually) constructed by a numerical scale of 1-4 or 1-9 were

beginning to take shape and act as genres working for the participants within the program-based

assessment system. The holistic scoring assessment genre placed emphasis on the teacher (or

rater) and encouraged them to make an evaluation on their general impression of student writing

based on certain criteria.

In many ways, the holistically scored essay, which Yancey notes as the impetus of the

second assessment system, transformed the writing classroom because other genres in the genre

set became more visible to participants. For example, writing tasks were tailored to help students

engage in the writing process. Rubrics, another genre in the system, were becoming clearer and

more identifiable, and the student's text—by itself—was meant to help guide the scoring

process. Genres working in second assessment system could be used in the writing classroom, which was a huge point of emphasis at that time for writing studies. Writing teachers, through the holistic scoring method, could construct tasks that allowed students to write for a specific purpose and audience, and writing teachers designed assessments that would analyze the student performance based on specific criteria often established through rubrics. The holistic scoring method also stretched outside the writing classroom and had a large impact on large-scale assessment genres. Peggy O' Neill explains the holistic scoring process from a "professional development" based perspective:

> The holistic scoring sessions became…a means of professional development as readers discussed anchor papers and practiced scoring samples to internalize the scoring rubric so they could apply it in a consistent way. These scoring sessions also required careful record keeping and checks for agreement between two independent raters. (O' Neill n.p.)

Faculty members gathered and discussed the nature of the writing task, rubric, and student writing, all which were a part of the genre set, and they used these situations for faculty development purposes, to teach and train teachers. Faculty workshops, then, became a genre in the genre set, working in the system and communicating to other genres in the second shift. Faculty workshops would inform teachers of program standards and expectations on specific writing tasks, and teachers could use these experiences to generate assessments, like rubrics. The interconnected nature of genres communicating to other genres within genre sets provides a way to clearly see the interactions and ideologies that exists within systems. The second assessment system, due to its focus on more direct measurements of assessment, helped form another value and belief in writing studies and writing programs by focusing on the importance of inter-rater

reliability, or agreement between raters. The dynamics shifted from "reliability," a point of emphasis in the first genre system, to "validity" and "inter-rater reliability," which helped establish accuracy in scoring writing.

Then, the third assessment system emerged: "Waves feed into other waves: just as the first wave fed into the second wave, the second wave itself began to make room for the third…if one text increases the validity of a test, how much more so two or three texts?" (Yancey 491). The second assessment system sought to historically evaluate student writing according to set criteria, whereas the third assessment system focused on assessing multiple student writing performances. Peter Elbow and Pat Belanoff helped re-imagine the writing classroom by having students compose in different genres of writing for different purposes and by forming assessments based on those multiple performances. New genres of assessment, like portfolios, were responding to pedagogical moves emphasizing process and revision. Portfolios became a recognizable genre in the genre set of the third assessment system. Likewise, other pedagogical theories, like collaborative learning (Bruffee; Bruffee; Trimbur), began to form and respond to new values being inserted into the writing classroom. In the third assessment system, there were shifts in the role of participants within the system, such as students, who became stakeholders in the process of assessment. Students were viewed as equal participants in the writing assessment process and were asked to reflect on their thinking and writing processes to help form assessment. There was a greater emphasis on peer-to-peer assessment and other collaborative assessments, like forming rubrics together as a class. The portfolio assessment genre penetrated university writing programs. Writing programs began using portfolios as a means for assessing their own values and beliefs. Portfolios became a representation of the writing program; portfolios became a window into the writing classroom for program administrators, too. While

Yancey's "waves" can be perceived as shifts in ideologies in assessment systems, her article has been praised, critiqued, and expanded by other assessment scholars (Huot).

A shift in ideologies—to honoring cultural and linguistic diversity—may currently be bringing about the emergence of new assessment genres and a fourth assessment system. For example, since Yancey's overview ends at the turn of the 21st century, some scholars have picked up on her conversation and re-constructed a new shift in (large-scale) assessment that "honors the cultural and linguistic diversity of students" (Behizadeh and Pang 39). Nadia Behizadeh and Myoung Eun Pang write, "We hope that the next wave of writing assessment in the United States will yield both increased use of direct sociocultural models of assessment and a negotiated balance of power for all stakeholders in the assessment process, especially increased autonomy and support for teachers" (39). A turn toward inclusivity, for creating more ethically-centered writing assessments, is becoming a critical part of the evolving nature of assessment genres. This move influences participants (e.g. students) by helping to deconstruct barriers that disadvantage certain identities. But, like in any genre shift, ideologies and assessment genres of older assessment systems continue to arise. In their 2016 article, Behizadeh and Pang describe how large-scale assessment is at a crossroads due to the Common Core standards that have been widely accepted in the United States. Their study reveals "98.0% of state writing assessment was scored externally," and most states are "primarily using on-demand essay assessment, often in conjunction with multiple choice and short answer items" (32). Large-scale assessment purposes and ideologies have resulted in a return to old, possibly ineffective, assessment genres. Yancey's third shift, a change in ideologies in the assessment system that moved towards recognizing process-based methods through embracing portfolios, now seems disconnected, and maybe irrelevant to large-scale statewide assessment practices. Behizadeh and Pang indicate that "no

state in the United States was using large-scale portfolio assessment" (32). Clearly, portfolio

assessments that gained some traction in the third shift in genre systems of assessment aren't as

visible in large-scale assessment practices. Some assessment scholars over the past five years are

working to construct and utilize writing assessment genres in programs and classrooms that bring

more critical awareness to diversity, social justice, and ethics (Inoue; Poe; Inoue and Poe; Poe

and Inoue; Kelly-Riley and Whithaus; Zwick).

An RGS framework challenges us to be more aware of how ideologies within genres

might position participants, possibly revealing how genres could be working against certain

races. Through RGS, we're encouraged to more fully examine shifts in assessment systems to

expose unethical ideologies and standards. Mya Poe and Asao B. Inoue provide insight into

another concept of validity: "Do more recent conceptions of validity as inquiry into the

consequences of assessment results on various stakeholders provide a robust enough theoretical

framework to understand the complex and varied ways our students interact with writing

assessment technologies?" (9). Poe and Inoue shed light on the visibility (or lack thereof) of race

in writing assessment practices utilized in program-based systems and through classroom-based

assessment genres. They argue for a shift toward a greater presence of race, a more defined

theory embracing race and writing assessment, and more research on the influence writing

assessments have on different racial formations. This work could be complemented through

intersecting RGS and writing assessment. Educational equality and concern for understanding

the relationships between participants and writing assessment can illustrate ideologies within our

multi-layered assessment systems and assessment genres.

In many ways, this new genre shift paying attention to ethics in assessment allows us to

see potential ramifications of the writing assessments we design, construct, and implement in our

program-based assessment system. These ramifications call our attention to ethical issues in our writing assessment practices. Diane Kelly-Riley and Carl Whithaus address a gap in writing assessment research by focusing on "concerns about fairness" (n.p.). Their special issue collection in *The Journal for Writing Assessment* addresses ethics and fairness in educational measurement and writing assessment practices, drawing on ethical theories from philosophy and education in the light of Common Core State Standards that ultimately shape the program-based assessment system in the institution. Understanding large-scale assessment is valuable in knowing more about the situation and context of the institutional assessment system and writing program. An RGS framework can show us the mismatch between genres and ideologies of writing program and large-scale assessment and can also reveal unique insights about ethical assessments. RGS provides us with conceptual orientations that allow us to explore each writing assessment system, like the program-based assessment system, and allows us to see what is going on with writing assessment genres, including those genres and ideologies that are working within our programs influencing our classroom-based assessment systems.

The classroom-based assessment system and an analysis of assessment genres through ideologies

The interconnectedness of writing assessment can be seen through the overlapping nature of the institutional, program-based, and classroom-based assessment system. In the late 18th century, the classroom-based writing assessment system began emerging in the U.S. university though various genres of assessment. Smallwood acknowledges that Yale was the first U.S. college to "grade" students in 1785. A grade can be considered an assessment genre of the classroom-based assessment system, functioning for the purposes of the writing classroom through its participants, both teacher and student. Classroom-based assessment became the focus in measuring student performance, meeting the expectations of student progress in the U.S.

university and the institutional assessment system. First, a number system took shape in the university classroom. Yale began the process of placing a numerical system of assessment on students with a belief focused on evaluating correctness; the numerical scale became a significant genre of the classroom writing assessment system. Roger Hatch writes, "To learn to write correctly it is necessary, not that the pupil should write so much, but that he should write everything he does write as correctly and clearly as possible" (340). This ideological position was asserted earlier in Yancey's discussion of the first genre system of assessment, one that emphasized "correctness," like proper comma usage.

Like any other situation involving genres and shifts occurring within genre systems, there's always ideological residue as mentioned previously. Genre systems might change form, but the values within those systems are so tightly embedded that a transition doesn't remove past beliefs or ideologies. For example, when Harvard began evaluating students in 1877 on a new six-tier scale (similar to the 4.0 scale), remnants of socioeconomic status favoritism and correctness could have easily remained. Years later, writing assessment started slightly changing, new systems were becoming more accepted. The classroom-based assessment system moved from the six-tier scale to the first mention of a letter-grade documented by Harvard in 1883, mentioning a student making a "B," thus, revealing the evolution of the genre and the changing of values within the system. The shifting of classroom assessment genres reveals the flexibility of genres, which in turn shapes the writing assessment system. Universities, writing programs and classrooms use classifications, like a letter-grade, which might cause one to assume that genres are fixed and stable. But, that's not the case. The writing classroom has embraced (and continues to embrace) various assessment genres, like portfolios and grading contracts, that don't mirror the same values or beliefs of the traditional letter-grade per se. For example, the letter-

grade might symbolize a value in product, whereas portfolios might represent a value in process. Even though most classroom-based assessments draw on the construction of assessment in 1877 and the 1883 Harvard terminology, it's important to note how we can see the inner workings of assessment systems. Other genres, like the assignment prompt, syllabus, and rubric, are a part of a genre set that work alongside assessment genres like portfolios and grading contracts. Genres in the set interact, inform, and carry embedded ideologies that shape writing assessments. RGS provides us with a rich understanding of the multifaceted nature of these genres and systems.

To peel back the layers of classroom-based assessment systems, and the interactions of genres that exist within each system, I want to take a closer examination of the assessment genres we frequently use in our writing classrooms because writing assessment systems and assessment genres determine our actions in the classroom. In this section, I'm identifying three different classroom-based assessment systems—product-based, process-based, and labor-based. Like any genre system, these three assessment systems are challenging because they carry their own genres and genre sets with situated ideologies that help form action. Each classroom-based assessment system has its own heartbeat, its own primary genre that communicates, helps produce actions, informs, and interacts with participants and other genres in the assessment system. I'm calling this unique, primary genre within each classroom-based assessment system the *assessment genre*.

Assessment genres are knowledge-constructing, meaning-filled structures that embody different ideologies and function for different purposes depending on the rhetorical situation. Each writing assessment system is enacted through assessment genres, and each type of assessment genre has meaning and ideologies. The system is constructed in an idiosyncratic manner because of the values and beliefs of the assessment genre. The immediate context is the

writing classroom, which is informed by research, pedagogies, practices, genres, and other participants like the university, department, program, teacher, and student. All these participants occupy the overall larger institutional system. I believe examining these individual classroom-based assessment systems through their corresponding assessment genres—product-based / letter-grade, process-based / portfolio, and labor-based / grading contract—will allow us to distinguish how different assessment genres act and are acted upon differently in writing classrooms. Assessment genres are meaningful; they are shared socially among participants, they create means for communication, and they recur within the writing classroom.

First, it should be noted that all three classroom-based assessment systems produce and distribute a letter-grade at some point or another. I'm analyzing these systems and assessment genres as classroom-based assessments, an assessment used throughout the entirety of the course that helps structure and guide its participants, and helps direct actions. The way in which the letter-grade is processed and the way in which it is being communicated in the product-based assessment system through its construction differs tremendously from the way the letter-grade is perceived in the process-based assessment system. There's no way to fully escape writing assessment, especially the delivery of a letter-grade for the purposes of the institutional assessment system. There are only a handful of colleges, like Evergreen State College, that have removed letter-grades from their institutional assessment system, and therefore their classroom-based assessment system. Writing teachers have to give writing assessment, have to give a letter-grade, and have to consider how writing assessments can be most effective and sustainable for students. Writing teachers can determine how sustainable assessments are by analyzing the assessment systems and assessment genres, which reveal ideologies and other genres in the genre set. If writing teachers want writing assessments to be complementary to teaching and learning,

and if writing teachers want writing assessments to improve teaching and learning, writing teachers need to evaluate the systems, genres, actions, situation, sets, ideologies, and participants. Writing teachers can do this through an RGS framework. The following sections attempt to shed light on different classroom-based assessment systems and the inner workings of those systems through their assessment genres and the interactions and ideologies that permeate each individual system.

The product-based assessment system and the traditional letter-grade assessment genre

The product-based assessment system functions through the traditional letter-grade assessment genre and values the written product. Ideologically, a focus on correctness, spelling, and grammar could pervade the product-based assessment system. Maxine Hairston's article provides a great understanding of composition's "traditional paradigm," one that idolizes a specific writing "method" and emphasizes the "written product." According to Hairston, the traditional paradigm was prescriptive: "A view that defines the successful writer as one who can systematically produce a 500-word theme of five paragraphs, each with a topic sentence" (78). Hairston argues that the traditional paradigm, which she also refers to as the "product-centered paradigm," emphasizes a systematic form, focuses on a linear process, and assumed "teaching editing is teaching writing" (78). Richard Young provides even more description: "The emphasis on the composed product rather than the composing process; the analysis of discourse into words, sentences, and paragraphs; the classification of discourse into description, narration, exposition, and argument; the strong concern with usage (syntax, spelling, punctuation) and with style (economy, clarity, emphasis)" (31). The traditional paradigm taught "finished writing," not process (Murray 4). These pedagogical ideologies inherently influence the writing classroom space and writing classroom genres, like writing assessment. While the letter-grade is not

exclusive to the product-based system, its focus on finished writing does correlate with the letter-grade as an evaluation of a final product.

Teachers and students working within the product-based assessment system might pay special attention to more formulaic-based understandings of writing, like whether spelling was executed correctly or whether punctuation was placed in its appropriate location. Some ideologies existing within the product-based assessment system might be based on language use and linguistic standards, specifically through notions of English Only (Matsuda). Since the product-based system focuses on "product," including an emphasis on grammar and sentence-level construction which is predominately based on academic English standards, the product-based assessment system is more prone to projecting a visible ideology on language as opposed to other assessment systems, like the process-based system. The letter-grade assessment genre also possesses an ideological stance on motivation. In the product-based assessment system, the letter-grade assessment genre elicits extrinsic motivation to get students to participate in writing.

The letter-grade influences student behavior, as psychologist Alfie Kohn mentions, and produces a "do this in order to get that" type attitude (4). Every classroom-based assessment system indisputably functions under that attitude to differing degrees. After all, the product-based, process-based, and labor-based assessment system eventually assigns a letter-grade. The argument, which will come up again in the labor-based assessment system, is connected to "motivation." In the product-based assessment system, where the letter-grade is given on each individual assignment, the letter-grade assessment genre functions as the ends to motivation. Kohn argues that the letter-grade, by itself, is counterproductive because of its ideological extrinsic motivation-based nature. The attitude that should be garnered in the classroom, from a psychological perspective, is dependent on intrinsic motivation. Students might desire the letter-

grade in the product-based system because the letter-grade projects a specified value on their writing and also symbolizes that they've finished the writing process and don't need to revise anymore, again, asserting a belief in a "finished product." The letter-grade is polysemic and has some flexibility (+/-): each letter-grade (A/B/C/D/F) has its own situated meaning and value within the context of the university and writing classroom.

The traditional letter-grade also serves various participants within the product-based system—the institution, the program, the classroom, the teacher, and the student—and each participant could interpret and communicate the purpose(s) of the traditional letter-grade differently. The institution may focus on the necessity of the production and distribution of the letter-grade, whereas the student may focus on the "need" to receive it. Additionally, the letter-grade communicates the institutional value of continuation or regression of progress in academia for the student as indicated through other genres in the system, like the university catalogue. The university catalogue reflects guidelines and requirements for academic success in the institution. The letter-grade, as a genre, denotes, or at the very least reflects, student success and failure to a certain extent because of its embedded values and cultural acceptance of those values. The letter-grade assessment genre, in some ways, becomes a means for separating participants within the classroom-based system and institutional system because of its categorical divisions and associated values (e.g. C letter-grade equates to average).

The letter-grade, then, functions for purposes in the institutional assessment system and classroom-based assessment system. In many ways, the traditional letter-grade asks writing teachers to rate, rank or evaluate student performance. In the context of the writing classroom, this evaluation occurs through the written product. Does the student meet the expectations of the course and the writing assignments throughout the course? If a student fails to meet those

expectations, then, in most cases, especially in the required first-year writing course, the student is obligated to retake the class; the failing course grade halts the student's progress. The letter-grade may be used to reinforce learning and acquisition and to continue the systematic function of the university. Depending on the institution, program, and classroom, the traditional letter-grade might work within a slightly different system. For example, the +/- assessment genre provides more elasticity in distinguishing and narrowing the perceived quality through specific criteria of a student's writing. Regardless of the traditional letter-grade or the +/- assessment genre, the letter-grade provides concrete evidence to student work.

The letter-grade indicates an audience—a reader, usually the teacher—and shows a response, a perception of how the reader responded to the writing. In the product-based writing assessment system, the traditional letter-grade is largely focused on evaluating student writing on every writing performance throughout the entirety of the semester. The teacher, one participant in the system, perceives and responds to the student, another participant, through the letter-grade. At the end of the course, those grades are calculated into one final course grade. Unlike other classroom-based assessment systems (e.g. process-based and labor-based), a traditional letter-grade is assigned to each writing assignment. The process-based and labor-based assessment systems are less dependent on assigning the letter-grade on each assignment and are usually hesitant in assigning a letter-grade at all until the end of the semester.

The product-based system focuses on formal (rather than rhetorical) qualities, which can be more objectively assessed with a letter-grade. The delivery of the letter-grade usually occurs in a timely fashion. Even though all writing assessment takes time, like teacher response to student writing, assigning and distributing the traditional letter-grade allows teachers to respond to student writing with an exact value in an efficient manner (more so than portfolio grading).

John A. Smith acknowledges how assigning and distributing a traditional letter-grade offers tangible evidence to students: "Grades are easily quantified, allowing educators and employers rapidly to rank skill attainment" (427). The letter-grade fits well in the product-based assessment system, which is often focused on the number of errors, which helps quantify assessment. The letter-grade assessment genre in the product-based assessment system is complemented by other assessment genres, like rubrics. Rubrics can function in other assessment systems, though, in the product-based system, rubrics often provide a tangible, quantifying representation of written performance. Rubrics, which can possess genre flexibility in how they're created, are constructed by more rigid criteria for qualities which coincide with the ideologies in the product-based system; the criteria for qualities often corresponds with a holistic scoring scale (e.g. 1-4). A holistic scoring rubric consists of a single scale that provides students with an overarching assessment, or an overall judgment, of their writing.

A holistic rubric doesn't provide specific feedback to student writing, but instead offers broader interpretations of writing. For example, if a student produces writing that has too many errors, which is a point of emphasis in the product-based assessment system, the entire paper will be judged to represent that deficiency. A holistic scoring rubric is different than an analytic scoring rubric which provides an individual score for each set of criteria. A holistic rubric, in many ways, minimizes the amount of time a teacher has to spend in reading and responding to student writing due to the nature of the score symbolizing an overall impression which complements the immediate production and delivery of the letter-grade assessment genre found most frequently in the product-based assessment system. In the product-based assessment system, the teacher, one of the main participants in the assessment system, often constructs these holistic rubrics individually and reads and assigns a single score through the basis of the criteria.

The teacher usually determines what letter-grade a student receives on each assignment in the product-based assessment system, which might differ from the process-based assessment system that might cater towards collaboration and teachers coming together to assess student writing collectively. Nonetheless, there are other participants at play in the product-based system. For example, the teacher is also influenced by the institutional system that might require a specific assessment system to be used in which the teacher has no control over. The traditional letter-grade has positive qualities like any other assessment genre, but unlike others, the traditional letter-grade has unwavering solidity; academics have placed a great deal of faith in the letter-grade, which is recognizable through its continual production and distribution and can be demonstrated through its historical relevance, one of the earliest methods of assessment in the U.S. university. The distribution of the letter-grade in the form of a singular symbol is extremely popular and functions as a placement of performance with clear communicated value, which provides the student, another participant in the system, a visible mark with correlating value of their written performance with an emphasis on the end product.

The process-based assessment system and the portfolio assessment genre

The process-based assessment system is best illustrated through the portfolio assessment genre because portfolios, often constructed by a collection of multiple student compositions in different genres and for different situations, reflect "process" and values students producing multiple drafts. The purpose of portfolios, unlike the product-based assessment system that assigns the letter-grade to each writing task, is to value process over product. The portfolio assessment genre is designed to illuminate the process of student writing, arguably one of the most important aspects of current first-year writing classrooms. Through portfolios, students are given the opportunity to conduct multiple drafts, reflect on their recursive writing process, and

revise according to the feedback they've received from their peers and teacher. One of the ideologies embedded within the process-based system is that multiple writing performances more accurately reflect an individual's writing ability or capability of moving between different genres of writing successfully. Additionally, the process-based assessment system values time because time allows students the opportunity to embrace the writing process. The more time a student can spend writing, the better. The portfolio assessment genre answered the call to the writing-as-process movement and gained significant popularity in writing classrooms in the 1990s, both in research and in pedagogical practices.

The portfolio, ideally, is designed to show the amount of time and work a student put into writing, which is often marked by multiple drafts written for each individual assignment. Ed White writes that writing teachers liked the emergence of portfolios in writing classrooms because it "supported teaching, fostered revision, and offered much increased validity by using multiple writing samples over an extended period of time" (582). White's reference to "validity," an ideological point of emphasis in many writing programs and classroom-based writing assessments, draws our attention back to Yancey's discussion of "waves," or shifts in writing assessments and writing assessment values. The portfolio assessment genre "increased validity" and provided teachers more time fostering student attention on the act of composing. Through the process-based assessment system, teachers can cultivate a greater sense of community within the writing classroom through peer-to-peer review and communal rough draft workshops, which are other genres in the system. Rough draft workshops, a genre in the genre set, can interact with the portfolio assessment genre, informing students how to revise their writing, and influencing the drafts collected in the portfolio itself.

Through the portfolio assessment genre, students are more likely to focus on the act of composing rather than the "letter-grade"; the process-based assessment system doesn't assign a letter-grade until the end of the semester after an evaluation of many drafts and multiple student writing performances. The ideology, once again, asserts that more writing performances will more accurately portray the ability to which students can write because students will ideally spend more time on the process of writing and revision. While process is accounted for through portfolios, the likelihood of increased student anxiety of not knowing their letter-grade, or not knowing where they stand in the class, is something that might resonate through a process-based assessment system. Though, portfolio enthusiasts might combat this idea by questioning why the letter-grade would even have that much authority, or power in causing such a strong emotional response in the first place. Teachers and students, through the process-based assessment system, rely on revision. For writing teachers, maybe the portfolio assessment genre takes away another ideology that exists in assessments—the potential capitalistic nature of receiving grades as if letter-grades were a commodity in the socially-constructed classroom. The portfolio assessment genre might resist the cultural "need" for a letter-grade, or the value the culture has placed on receiving a letter-grade, specifically in the context of the U.S. educational system. At the same time, writing teachers don't have the pressure of comparing one student writing to another student writing when producing and distributing their feedback in the process-based system, which is a potential temptation when delivering a traditional letter-grade in the product-based assessment system.

One ideology that might be present in the process-based assessment system comes through reconstructing the writing classroom, or deconstructing the hierarchical position between participants. Students might perceive their colleagues as the primary giver of writing assessment

due to multiple peer rough draft workshops that happen throughout the semester. In the process-based system, the peer is as valuable as the teacher in providing feedback and helping to improve writing. Another ideology, then, comes from attempting to cultivate collaboration in the writing classroom: "The portfolio permits us to invade teachers' classrooms. The portfolio more or less forces them to emphasize drafts and revisions-and almost forces them to use peer feedback" (Elbow and Belanoff 37). In rough draft workshops, students have a greater role and are often viewed as stakeholders in the feedback process. Students can take up the feedback they receive from these rough draft workshops and use it to revise. Revision is a significant part in the process-based assessment system because revision embodies process. Revision pushes against the notion of a "finished product."

In the process-based assessment system, ideally, students become less concerned about the letter-grade through portfolios and more concerned about the learning and writing process, and more willing to understand that assessment can play a completely different role, one that moves away from the product-based assessment system. There's still always the potential for students to become more concerned about their letter-grade through the process-based assessment system because they aren't receiving that immediate placed value the letter-grade provides in the product-based assessment system. If teachers receive resistance from students under the portfolio assessment genre, from a pedagogical perspective, there might be a sense of reassurance because the purpose of a portfolio driven classroom is to embrace process, not product. Though, once again, there's the reality that the "product" is eminent because the deliverance of a letter-grade eventually occurs. The letter-grade, ultimately, is still given, just in a different location and position in the process-based assessment system. Therefore, maybe an ideology in the process-based assessment system is to challenge the traditional paradigm of

assessment that relies heavily on the immediate production of value in the form of a letter. The portfolio assessment genre might resist views of assessment perpetuated through institutional assessment genres, like the university catalogue. Likewise, portfolios can be used within different systems for different purposes.

The portfolio assessment genre doesn't act just inside the classroom-based assessment system. It also has value in the program-based assessment system, showing the flexibility of the genre and showing how genres communicate and move from system to system. For example, in the program-based system, writing program administrators can use portfolios as a means of accountability in the writing program: what's working pedagogically? How are students responding to assignments? The First- and Second-year English (FSE) program at the University of Kansas collects student writings to form a portfolio to measure and evaluate how the goals and outcomes of the program are being met. The portfolio assessment genre is multifaceted depending on how the program or classroom chooses to use it. White reasserts the multifaceted nature and flexibility in the portfolio assessment genre: "We must recognize that portfolios…take many different shapes for many different purposes, and therefore will require many variations of scoring" (583). White adds to the portfolio assessment genre by proposing a method "highly dependent on the reflective letter" (592). This goes to show, again, the flexibility of assessment genres in systems. It also shows that adjustments in assessment genres can slightly shift what ideologies are reflected. In White's construction of the portfolio assessment genre through the process-based assessment system, for example, he values how students are thinking about writing and how they can communicate their process, draft after draft after draft, to an audience. White's portfolio assessment genre is based on how the student communicates the evidence of their progress—represented by the wholeness of the portfolio—in their reflective

letter, which is a part of the genre set. The reflective letter interacts with the portfolio assessment genre, often times providing an account or rationale for the entire portfolio, explaining the choices the student writer made. The reflective letter becomes an instrumental part of the process; like other genres in the set, the letter is embedded with ideologies.

The portfolio, in White's creation of it, isn't defined just by the drafts and the writing, but also in the student reflection, and how the student can reflect on the course goals and outcomes, which are a part of the genre set of the portfolio, as well as carrying out the purposes and rhetorical situation of the writing assignment. White calls his assessment system "Phase 2 scoring," and he argues that this type of portfolio "supports student learning by requiring self-assessment and responsibility" (594). One of the primary reasons for this type of process-based assessment system, and many portfolios, is for students to assess their own work and acquired knowledge over the course of the semester. The reflective letter could be viewed as documentation of what was communicated and received by each individual student, which could be used for pedagogical revision or program revision. Ideally, the teacher gets a glimpse into the learning process of the student through the reflective letter in the portfolio. There are various constructions of portfolios, which contain varied genres, which are full of embedded ideologies, in writing studies and writing assessment research.

Peter Elbow and Pat Belanoff, like White, value the writing process, but measure it in different ways through the portfolio assessment genre. For example, Elbow and Belanoff have a mid-semester portfolio assessment and an end of the semester assessment, whereas White waits until the end of the semester to assess his students' portfolios. The mid-semester portfolio, a genre in the genre set for some process-based system configurations, might be perceived as an opportunity for students to see their progress in the class, to see where they stand. Some teachers

might think the mid-semester portfolio is counterproductive to the process-based assessment system, especially if a teacher chooses to assign a letter-grade to the mid-semester portfolio. Some teachers might find the reflective letter significant, like Elbow, Belanoff, and White do, whereas others might want to see rough drafts of each writing assignment and the final draft in order to understand how students revised throughout the process. Rough drafts included in the portfolio assessment genre might provide a good sample of how students are engaging in the process, what students are thinking about as they continue to approach and revise their writing. Usually, regardless of preference in minor details, portfolios contain multiple pieces of writing responding to different rhetorical situations; portfolios are multi-genre. Beyond portfolios being comprised of student work, as an assessment genre, portfolios can reflect pedagogical ideologies and preferences: an emphasis of process over product, a value of multimodal assignments over traditional texts, a claim that multiple rough drafts increase writing effectiveness, and a hope that peer feedback creates a more collaborative classroom. RGS allows us to discern between assessment systems, which reveal assessment genres full of ideologies that work with other genres in a set.

The labor-based assessment system and the grading contract assessment genre

The labor-based writing assessment system values student labor, or the quantity and quality of student work, by providing time for students to work and by negotiating requirements and expectations of work. The labor-based system ideologically resists traditional means of assessment, like the production of a letter-grade on student writing, or perceiving student writing as a product at all, and asserts process, much like the process-based assessment system. The grading contract assessment genre, which is at the heart of the labor-based system, is somewhat constructed like the portfolio assessment genre in that a letter-grade isn't normally placed on

individualized writing assignments. Jane Danielewicz and Peter Elbow argue that one of the primary ideologies of the grading contract is to improve learning and teaching, and that the grading contract aligns with ideologies embedded within most writing classrooms: "Contracts help us make our own teaching truer to our values, easier, and more satisfying" (244). Therefore, one purpose of the grading contract assessment genre is to potentially mirror disciplinary beliefs with classroom practices.

In an analysis of the writing classroom, William Thelin communicates that teachers want to give students a voice that disrupts traditional power relationships and potential hierarchies. The grading contract, then, can be perceived as a genre that attempts to work against traditional norms of power in the first-year writing classroom, thus attempting to provide a near equal footing to the participants involved within the genre system. The grading contract, ideally, provides an opportunity for students to share their voice, allowing students to see writing assessment as negotiable. Students become active participants in the process-based and labor-based assessment system; both systems inherently value promoting student agency. The grading contract creates space for conversations about assessment: "Contract grades essentially transform the grading process from teacher-developed criteria into an agreement between teacher and student" (Radican 285). The grading contract assessment genre is dependent on negotiation, or an agreement between participants—the teacher and students—within the labor-based system.

Some writing teachers rely on the genre flexibility of negotiation in the grading contract (Shor; Inoue). The grading contract assessment genre allows students to be a part of the assessment design and construction—through negotiation, students are given the opportunity to voice how they want to be assessed in the writing classroom—which might not be as prevalent in the product-based writing assessment system centralized on the letter-grade assessment genre.

The grading contract is usually produced and distributed at least two different ways in the writing classroom: individually or holistically. The teacher can decide whether each student will negotiate and construct their own individual contract, or whether the whole class will negotiate and construct a singular contract. Some grading contracts are formed by the teacher beforehand to provide a framework for negotiation. The holistic classroom-based grading contract is less time consuming and, more than likely, more productive in terms of encouraging a collaborative environment. The production of this type of grading contract assessment genre is often done on the first and second day of class, establishing the importance of consensus, while also implementing the significance of assessment conversations that will happen throughout the entirety of the semester. The labor-based assessment system provides the teacher and student the opportunity to negotiate the terms of the contract. The terms of the contract are based on student labor, or the student's production of work and effort—quantity of writing, quality of writing, attendance, participation, and other assignments.

The grading contract strives to create a writing classroom that becomes a space of equal (or near equal) authority where both participants (the teacher and the student) feel like they are contributing to the holistic environment (the writing classroom) because both participants agree on and develop the contract together. Danielewicz and Elbow suggest that the grading contract "reduces unfairness," and they argue that the contract takes away the capitalistic nature of grades which might be asserted in the product-based assessment system through extrinsic motivation. Additionally, the grading contract, according to Danielewicz and Elbow, potentially addresses follies within other assessment systems, like the belief that a teacher is going to assign a student a letter-grade on a writing assignment based off comparison, based off the teacher not being interested in the student's work, or based off the teacher not personally "liking" the student.

Danielewicz and Elbow believe students find it hard to respond with—*the teacher doesn't like me*—because the grading contract assessment genre is based on their labor, not teacher perception. In some ways, though, their claim reveals another ideology embedded in the labor-based assessment system: the assumption that the grading contract *isn't really* based on teacher perception.

Ideologically, the labor-based assessment system might assume that a teacher's perception is less biased due to the grading contract. But teachers still provide assessment to student labor, and teachers still have to perceive how to assess that labor. There are plenty of ideologies within every system. The labor-based assessment system values student participation, involvement, engagement, work, timeliness, process, and good faith. The grading contract, as the main assessment genre in the labor-based assessment system, also contains ideologies, possibly a classism-based favoritism that delineates participants within the system. The grading contract might contain a bias toward students who don't have as much freedom to meet labor requirements due to other obligations; it could be an assessment genre that works against students who have less time to devote to the class—who would miss an assignment because their work schedule was changed, who had a sick child at home and were single parents, who didn't have as much time to devote to any of the labor-based assignments in class. In universities that contain students with a wide range of income levels and life situations, the quantity of time and labor available is vastly disparate among different student populations. Labor, or the amount of actual labor an individual has time to exert, can be a concern through the labor-based writing assessment system.

Labor negotiations in the grading contract assessment genre usually focus on "quantity," which is similar to the ideologies in the process-based assessment system and the portfolio's

emphasis on "drafts." In some research and academic conversations on writing assessment, the grading contract has been positioned as an assessment system that carries a debate on "quality vs. quantity," and quite frequently the conversations make teachers pick sides. Questions like these arise: isn't quantity the most important thing in the grading contract? What about the quality of student work? Do writing teachers dismiss quality for quantity? First, I'd argue quantity and quality aren't mutually exclusive constructions. Grading contract users will say that the grading contract doesn't dismiss the importance of quality at all. Asao B. Inoue approaches this subject nicely: "A focus on quantity is not paramount to disregarding quality" (81). The grading contract can provide students more time to write on the same assignment to keep improving the "quality" of their work, much like the portfolio assessment genre. Some teachers might argue that the more time an individual spends on writing, the better "quality" the writing will be. At the very least, the more time students practice writing, the more familiar they are with writing and their own writing process.

The grading contract assessment genre attempts to shift the focus off the traditional letter-grade, moving away from placing letter-grades on every assignment and combating the perception of the "need for a grade" which is often found in the product-based writing assessment system: "The contract helps strip away the mystification of institutional and cultural power in the everyday grades we give in our writing courses" (Danielewicz and Elbow 249). The grading contact assessment genre can potentially cultivate conversations about the expectation of assessment in the culture of academia, and the values of writing assessment in the writing classroom in hopes of mirroring pedagogical beliefs. It appears one ideology in the grading contract assessment genre is based on "motivations," but a different type of motivation than asserted through the product-based assessment system. The grading contract isn't absent of a

recognition of quality, but instead is observant of motivating students in the "right" way (Bauman). Marcy Bauman believes that motivation is created by people and contexts, and that a "grading contracts' emphasis on quantity (and not grades)…creates an environment for such intrinsic motivation" (Inoue 80). Inoue acknowledges that "motivation as a measure of effectiveness of contracts, however, is difficult to assess" (80). Nonetheless, the grading contract assessment genre communicates precise expectations and requirements, and the construction of the grading contract can be viewed as an "agreement" of labor between teacher and student.

The notion of agreement, though, is somewhat subjective and inherently ideological even in the labor-based writing assessment system. Do the teacher and student have equal footing in the negotiation and agreement of the grading contract, or is the teacher the primary executor of setting the labor requirements and contractual terms? Participants in the labor-based assessment system, ideally, have equal footing, but since there's already a position of power in the writing classroom space separating the teacher from the student, the process of coming to a complete agreement where both participants are fully satisfied and content seems to be too idealistic. Additionally, what if the majority of students don't have a desire to work under the grading contract? What if students prefer the letter-grade being assigned on each individual assignment? If negotiation was truly valued, would the teacher respect and accept that position? The default voice in the contractual conversations, then, seems to be the voice of the teacher, who ultimately has the power to decide requirements and construct assessment, and who often does so already through other assessment genres, like teacher response to student writing. Danielewicz and Elbow's grading contract is already constructed for their writing classroom and doesn't involve students in the process of construction. Maybe Danielewicz and Elbow didn't want to release full control of constructing assessment and labor requirements for their writing classrooms. Or,

maybe Danielewicz and Elbow realized that you can't fully remove the power dynamics in the classroom between teacher and student, so they decided to form the labor requirements knowing that the default voice, or the person who has the power to overrule, was going to be their own.

Nonetheless, the grading contract assessment genre has inherent ideologies that make it different than other assessment genres. The process-based and labor-based assessment system have some similarities in value, like an emphasis on process over product, but also substantial differences. Unlike the portfolio assessment genre, the grading contract can allow students to understand where they stand in the course. The grading contract is designed to provide clarity to its participants, both teacher and student, by asserting clear expectations and requirements. The portfolio assessment genre might be less understood by students because the nature of the assessment genre, the way in which the assessment takes place either by one teacher, or multiple teachers assessing student portfolios. The portfolio assessment genre challenges the "need" for a letter-grade for validation but can also potentially leave students a bit more in the dark as to where they stand in the class. The grading contract assessment genre is more transparent, often explaining the labor involved and the direct letter-grade correlation to that expended labor. Students, under the grading contract, should know the standards and expectations throughout the course, and should have a good grasp as to the consequences for certain labor failures.

In Danielewicz and Elbow's contract, students are guaranteed a "B" letter-grade if they meet ten requirements based entirely on "conscientious effort and participation" (246). The quality of student writing is only considered when differentiating between a "B" letter-grade and an "A" letter-grade: an "A" letter-grade is based on the teacher's perception of *exceptionally high quality*. Danielewicz and Elbow's grading contract incorporates a portfolio-based aspect to it as well: "We don't distinguish among grades higher than B until the end of the semester, when

we have student portfolios in hand" (246). Danielewicz and Elbow's grading contract is just one

example of how grading contracts can be produced and distributed. Once again, we see the

flexibility of assessment genres, and we also see the interconnectedness of assessment genres

being able to work together. In fact, here, we see the portfolio working alongside the grading

contract for the purposes of the labor-based assessment system. Both assessment genres are in

the classroom-based assessment system, and both can be used for entirely different purposes.

Inoue moves discussions on the grading contract further by detailing how the grading

contract is a more anti-racist writing assessment genre, as opposed to traditional forms of

assessment like the production and distribution of the traditional letter-grade in the product-based

assessment system. Inoue explains how the grading contract helps deconstruct the traditional

hegemony of one accepted "standard," and how the grading contract is a more effective

assessment method for minority students. Once again, the ideological position of the grading

contract tends to move towards a resistance of traditional ideologies embedded within traditional

assessment genres, like the letter-grade. The application of a mono-linguistic standard, often

manufactured through expectations of Standard Edited American English (SEAE), which I

brought up in association with the product-based assessment system, is deeply embedded with

ideologies that disadvantage people of color. SEAE is often associated to the "quality" of student

writing in the English classroom, and quality, in the writing classroom, often correlates to ability

to write in academic English. In the labor-based assessment system, one potential purpose for the

grading contract is to create a more aware space that acknowledges the diverse participants

working within the system, participants that are being influenced differently by genres and the

things genres are communicating to one another. For example, if a teacher uses a rubric in the

product-based system that asserts the need for students to produce writing that adheres to

"correct" language use and academic standards, then the rubric, as an assessment genre, is communicating to the student, who is taking up another genre—the writing task—the need to follow acceptable language use conventions while producing the writing task.

Knowing the classroom-based assessment system allows us to see the assessment genres within the system and makes us informed writing teachers that can move back-and-forth between genres. Additionally, knowing the system and genre allows us to see embedded ideologies which should help us make choices as to what writing assessment best complements our pedagogy and our writing classrooms. RGS provides a wonderful framework for understanding writing assessment.

Moving forward: From a broader understanding of writing assessment systems to local a context

I've made progress in intersecting RGS and writing assessment through genre systems and assessment genres, and I've explored genre sets, ideologies, and the role participants play in writing assessment systems. An understanding of writing assessment, when writing assessment is perceived as a complex, dynamic genre system full of genres working with and against participants, provides clarity to what our assessment systems do and how they function in our writing classrooms. Writing assessment also connects the individual classroom, operating under the classroom-based assessment system, to the university, operating under the institutional assessment system; writing assessment in the first-year writing classroom functions as part of a larger system of assessment being communicated through specific genres, affecting what it does and how it does it to the individuals within the writing classroom which influences the work of writing programs. For example, assessment genres like portfolios and grading contracts can work to resist institutional assessment values, such as grades, because the process-based and labor-

based system seems to resist "objective" standards and criteria and considers student processes and labor.

A broad understanding of assessment systems and assessment genres can only provide so much, though. A more local examination of writing assessment systems is necessary in order to fully understand the multifaceted nature of genre systems, and how systems and genres overlap. As Norbert Elliot and Les Perelman write, "All writing assessments, even national ones, have local components and local constituencies" (26). In my next chapter, I examine central genres in different writing assessment systems at the University of Kansas. Genre systems offer us abundance in peeling apart the layers of interconnectedness that exist within the process of design, construction, and collaboration of writing assessments. Genre systems help reveal genre sets and ideologies within systems, and genre systems might provide the best means of seeing the intertextuality of writing assessments through an RGS-based lens. An in-depth analysis of local assessment systems at the University of Kansas will allow us to begin seeing new perspectives of what occurs within assessment systems, which will ultimately help inform our teaching and researching.

Chapter 3:
Genre Systems & Sets in a Local Context

Rhetorical Genre Studies (RGS), through its frameworks and concepts, offers writing

assessment research new ways of seeing the dynamic relationships that exist within writing

assessments. Writing assessments are easily recognizable, yet complex, actions that act and are

acted upon by various participants; they are genre systems, like the labor-based assessment

system in the writing classroom, that work through assessment genres, like the grading contract.

The plurality of "systems" is profoundly significant: writing assessment cannot be defined as one

genre system. There are multiple *writing assessment systems*: institutional assessment, program-

based assessment, and classroom-based assessment can all be considered different systems of

assessment. They can also be perceived as systems that overlap. Each of these writing

assessment systems carries different genres that interact with other genres to help form

communication and action. Each system has genre sets; each system has participants; each

system possesses ideologies. The interactions between the genres in the genre set within the

genre system establish value and direction as well as work with and against participants in the

system. And the genres embrace cultural ideologies that also provide or inhibit access to the

system. Writing assessment systems are dynamic, rhetorical, multi-layered "complex webs."

The purpose of this chapter is to map out the institutional assessment system, move

towards the program-based assessment system, and then move to the classroom-based

assessment system at the University of Kansas to reveal the complex genres and the genre sets at

play working with and against participants in local systems. My main aim is to help uncover the

values, beliefs, interactions, participants, and ideologies within these complex webs. Genre

systems and sets provide a dynamic way of seeing writing assessments, including the flexibility

and limitations of assessment systems. By analyzing these different but overlapping writing

assessment systems, we should begin to see the intricate complex web that exists in writing assessment, and we should be able to analyze what genres are communicating to one another through those systems to help us see whether the genres effectively respond to the systems and ideologies (values and beliefs) in which they function.

<u>Differentiating between writing assessment systems: the institutional system, the program-based system, and the classroom-based system at the University of Kansas</u>

Writing assessment theorists urge writing assessment to be looked at in and through the local context (Huot; O'Neill, Moore, and Huot; Broad; Elliot and Perelman; White, Peckham, and Elliot). Analyzing the local context helps us understand what practices are working effectively and how those practices are shaping teaching: "Good assessments…motivate and guide the best teaching and learning" (Broad). Writing assessment models can be set up and transferred from one university to another, but most researchers agree that even those models should take a different shape in their new context. Not all writing programs and first-year writing classrooms have the same values, beliefs, goals, and aims. Even classroom writing assessments can have the same name but function in completely different ways. For example, the grading contract, a classroom-based assessment system focused on student labor, has taken various forms (Mandel; Knapp; Shor; Danielewicz and Elbow; Inoue). The same can be said for portfolios (Belanoff and Dickson; White) which have taken shape through ePortfolios (Neal; Elliot, Rudniy, Deess, Klobucar, Collins, and Sava; Marshall, Bartlett, Duffy, and Powell), and letter-grades which can take the form of a +/- scale. It's necessary to alter pre-existing constructions of assessment to best fit program and classroom environments in the local context of the institution.

If the rhetorical situation changes, then so might the genres responding to the situation within the system. A shift in genre might modify the rhetorical situation, too. Like writing assessment theory, RGS focuses on understanding genre through local contexts, analyzing genres

in the situation in which they're acting and being acted upon in order to fully comprehend the dynamics at play in the relationships between genre(s) and participant(s). By emphasizing and analyzing writing assessment systems and genres within those systems in their local contexts, we should be able to better see the "complex web" that exists. And by seeing the complex web, we see the interactions occurring between genres within the system, and we see a fuller picture of our writing assessment systems. Analyzing assessment systems, and genres within those systems, allows us to discern the values and beliefs situated within individual writing assessment systems, the actions or uptakes being produced through those systems, and the role participants have in the situation.

But first, we need to know how genres work and what genres do in writing assessment systems, we need to seek to understand the construction of the system and the genres within those systems, and we need to see genres as "only the visible realization of a complex of social and psychological dynamics" (Bazerman). Furthermore, we need to try to comprehend what is being communicated in and through writing assessment systems. Bazerman writes extensively on how genres create both communication and action:

> [Genres] are frames for social action. They are environments for learning. They are locations within which meaning is constructed. Genres shape the thoughts we form and the communications by which we interact. Genres are the familiar places we go to create intelligible communicative action with each other and the guideposts we use to explore the unfamiliar. (Bazerman, "The Life of Genre")

If genres are indeed the "places we go" and the "guideposts we use," then understanding the different writing assessment systems and the genres embedded within them should tell us a lot about the multifaceted layers of assessment. There are at least three different overarching types

of writing assessment systems: the institutional system of assessment, the program-based system of assessment, and the classroom-based system of assessment. These three systems overlap and inform one another, communicate values and beliefs to each other, even interact with some of the same genres and include some of the same participants. Nonetheless, they are different genre systems. Writing assessment systems are reciprocal. The institutional assessment system acts on the program-based assessment system and vice versa. The program-based assessment system acts on the classroom-based assessment system and vice versa. For example, the portfolio assessment genre can be used in the classroom-based system, and can also be used to help redesign program goals. Institutional assessment genres within the larger system of assessment include university catalogues, institutional policies, and university requirements. The program-based assessment system embraces local genres like teacher evaluations, annual reports, and department-based texts. And the classroom-based system of assessment includes genres like portfolios, end comments, marginal comments, and draft conferences.

In this chapter, I'm going to draw on central genres within three different genre systems of assessment, thus providing a glimpse into the genre system and sets at play in my local context, in hopes of better understanding the ideologies that are embedded within the systems and the communicative action being asserted through the genres. The purpose is to help show the complex web of writing assessment systems and the guideposts we listen to and follow in our constructions of writing assessment, and to further our understanding of the intersections between RGS and writing assessment. For my purposes, I've chosen an illustrative genre to analyze within each genre system, and I've concentrated on a few examples of the genre set. It wouldn't be possible within the scope of this dissertation to focus on the full range of genres or

genre sets within each assessment system. I'm starting with the institutional assessment system, and eventually trickling down to the other writing assessment systems.

<u>A brief genre analysis of the institutional assessment system: the university catalogue at the University of Kansas</u>

Genres within any given system are interconnected, talking to one another and influencing each other. If we agree with Bazerman that genres are our guideposts and they tell us something, then what can we learn from university catalogues about the nature of the institutional system of assessment? The university catalogue plays a significant part in communicating, framing action, and shaping the multitude of participants and the other genres within the genre set of the institutional system of assessment at the University of Kansas (and in other university contexts as well). The catalogue helps represent institutional assessment norms. Since the university catalogue is a genre within the institutional system of assessment, helping to form and construct some ideas and beliefs about assessment in the local context of the university, then what is the university catalogue communicating to other genres and participants within the system? I believe that by tracing the movement of the university catalogue—the ways in which the university has historically defined and situated writing assessment—we will be able to see what the genre does, and how it can affect other systems, like the program-based system of assessment and the classroom-based system of assessment, and other genres within those systems, like our teaching manuals and our syllabus, which are genres a part of the genre set. What is the university catalogue saying to other genres and participants? For my purposes, I examined some of the earliest university catalogues and some more recent catalogues based on alterations in the way assessments were constructed at the University of Kansas.

On February 20, 1863, Kansas Legislation passed a document for "an institution of learning" to be constructed in Kansas, leading to the charter of the University of Kansas in 1866.

According to the 1866 university catalogue, admission, which I briefly discuss in my previous

chapter as one form of assessment, measured students by "good moral character": "Candidates

for admission to the collegiate department must be at least fourteen years of age, and are

expected to present satisfactory evidence of good moral character" (14). "Good moral character"

isn't explicitly defined, nor is "satisfactory evidence." Both of those characteristics of assessment

for admission seem to be communicating something outside the current system of assessment,

which usually emphasizes quality of work, intellect, and/or labor. The phrase—good moral

character—could be subjective (who decides what's good moral character?). The decision-maker

for admission, whoever that may be, is in a position of power within the institutional system to

exert some degree of analysis, maybe from set ethical criteria, over the student's moral character.

Clearly, the phrase indicates how genres, like the university catalogue, reflect and are

shaped by ideologies. The cultural value and belief in "good moral character" is communicated

in and through the genre, thus providing access or inhibiting certain identities in the university.

"Satisfactory evidence" also seems relatively subjective: what counts as satisfactory evidence,

and who decides? The university catalogue, from this indication, is a genre within the

institutional system of assessment that cultivates and maintains cultural ideologies. Whatever

counts as "evidence" might be considered other genres in the genre set of admission in the

institutional assessment system. The catalogue confirms who can participate within the

institution, who has access into the university. Admission helps shape the university and is a

form of assessment that cannot be dismissed due to its high stakes in allowing participants to

actually participate in the institution. The university catalogue interacts with other genres in other

assessment systems, like the program-based system of assessment, and communicates these

culturally indoctrinated values and beliefs. Even though we might associate "assessment" most

commonly with some notion of "grading," especially in the classroom-based system of assessment, we have to realize that assessment is much more than that, particularly in the institutional genre system of assessment. In fact, the 1866 University of Kansas catalogue doesn't mention "grades" at all.

The major genre of assessment was enacted through "exams" for admission into the university. In the 1893 university catalogue, which still no documentation of assessment being attached to "grades," assessment was based on seven requirements fulfilled through exams— Physical Geography, General History, Civil Government, Algebra, Geometry, Physics, and Language. Exams can clearly be viewed as a genre within the genre set working with admission in the earlier institutional assessment system. The University of Kansas' institutional assessment system was similar to what other universities were doing. In fact, Harvard was one of the first schools to add English Composition to entrance tests in the mid-1870s (Brereton). John Brereton closely analyzes the Harvard entrance examinations which provides context to the nature of entrance tests sweeping the nation in the 1870s: "The subsequent widespread institution of entrance exams in writing and first year composition courses…might well be seen as an accommodation to the kind of students colleges everywhere were getting" (40). The relationships genres have with other genres in systems greatly influences what is done and what can be done inside assessment systems. For example, the early admission process is intertwined with examinations, which is a genre that works for and against the institution and other participants within the system, like students who took exams to gain access to the institution. Assessment systems are full of genre sets made up of genres that help produce actions within the system. Genres also shape participants involved in the system. The institutional assessment system had certain "requirements," which were tied to the exam (an assessment genre) that influenced

students directly and, through passing or failing the exam, communicated back to the institution the readiness for a student to perform at a university-defined level.

The move towards requirements based on academic subjects, though, is significant in that it communicates something a bit less subjective to "examine." The cognitive element is being emphasized through these specific requirements, and this might be the earliest move toward examining "quality" of work at the University of Kansas. At the very least, it looks like knowledge of particular subjects is significant in acceptance and admission. In the 1893 university catalogue, another form of admission was permissible through a "certificate of the president, superintendant [sic], or principal of any college, academy, or other incorporated institution of learning" (22). The certificate of approval from an external source, then, can be considered another genre in the genre set that is communicating to admission in the institutional assessment system. The certificate, more or less, indicated that a student completed appropriate preparatory work for admission into the university. The cultural context of this form of admission might have been greatly influenced by newly established land-grant universities and institutions occurring through the United States by the Morrill Acts of 1862 and 1890, though the University of Kansas was not one of these land-grant universities. The university catalogue genre was shifting, and the system of admission was influenced by and responding to a larger context.

Word choice, and the absence of specific words, is noticeable throughout the catalogues. In 1866 and 1893, the term "examination" is emphasized over "assessment" (and any other synonymous word): "Examinations, oral and written, are held as frequently as the judgment of the instructor commends" (77). According to the Oxford English Dictionary, the first citation for the word "assessment" used to mean evaluating academic work is in 1956. The absence coincides with its not having that meaning yet (and in the OED, that meaning refers to

assessment as exams). The instructor, one of the main participants within the system, decided when students, another participant within the system, took examinations. Examination, then, took a significant role as an assessment genre within the institutional context. We also see the overlapping nature of writing assessment systems. The university catalogue is not just communicating with the institutional system of assessment, but is also in dialogue with the classroom-based system of assessment. The university catalogue is shaping and organizing what can be done within the classroom for measurements of student assessment. Through an analysis of the university catalogue, we also see that "examinations" could come in the form of writing in 1893, and therefore, an element of *assessing writing* became a part of the function of the university.

Another vibrant term, "judgment," pops out in this statement from the university catalogue, which is commonly referenced in writing assessment research and practice—judging student writing. The genre of the university catalogue reflects, through its language, certain ideologies. Judgment carries an ideological reflection of cultural power. In a different context, within a different system, the "judge" has the final say in courtroom hearings and proceedings. Judgment carries connotations of punishment as well. Judgment being mentioned in the catalogue is given to the role of the teacher, thus asserting a level of power and hierarchy over the other participants within the system, the students. Further, due to the new implementation of examination through writing, another element was at play within the system: the teacher had control over another context within the situation, a measuring of performance through writing. While "examinations" and "judgment" are mentioned, "grades" are still absent from the university of catalogue genre.

The first reference of "grades" that I found at the University of Kansas is in the 1899-1900 catalogue index with the label "Grades and failures." Even though the index references "grades," there's no clear, distinct discussion of the word. The index leads to assessment as still being connected to examinations: "Examinations are held at regular stated periods and at such other times as may be provided for by the regulations of the several faculties…absence from examination or failure in more than one-third of his work, in any one term, severs a student's connection with the university" (36-37). Failure is linked to examination and coursework. A summary of students' work is given to another participant within the institutional system—the registrar. This summary of student work document can be considered a genre in the genre set working within the institutional assessment system. The 1899-1900 university catalogue states, "At the close of each term, a summary of students' work is reported to the Registrar, for entry upon the general record. At the end of each half year, the parent or guardian of each student, or the student, if requesting it, may be furnished a copy of the entries relating to that student" (36-37). I contacted the lead archive researcher at the University of Kansas and asked if they had any documentation of the summary of student work noted in the 1899-1900 university catalogue. Unfortunately, the archivist could not find any reports under that label. Maybe this report is like our current genre of the academic transcript or report card?

Regardless, the genre was functioning within the institutional assessment system for some greater purpose. The 1899-1900 university catalogue communicates a few new things within the institutional genre system of assessment: a new form of assessment, or at least a new word (grades) within assessment, and an attachment of grades to "failure," which seem to be a significant contribution to the assessment system since both grades and failure continue to be a part of our institutional assessment at the University of Kansas. The word "failure" carries plenty

of cultural ideologies, usually perceived through a negative lens: failing to succeed, failing to live up to expectations, failing to advance, and so on. The first mention of "grades" in relationship with "failure" might say something about the nature and makeup of assessment. The relationship and spacing between the two words, at the very least, calls for some consideration of other questions: is assessment focused on failure?

Were grades formed from the concept of failure? Even though the 1899-1900 university catalogue doesn't define "grades," we clearly see an association of grades with failure, which is referenced most commonly, now, with letter-grades, specifically the "F" being a symbolic letter of failure. The combination of grades and failure seem to be communicating at least one significant ideology in the institutional assessment system: the need to produce and distribute *something* that can represent or symbolize assessment and a student's standing in the university, and possibly a student "failing" to meet some standard or expectation set forth by the university or teacher. Shortly after the word "grades" are brought up in the 1899-1900 university catalogue, grades disappear again within the genre of the catalogue.

In 1904-1905, the university catalogue stops indexing the word "grades." Assessment is connected explicitly to the word "failures," and again, is tied to examinations: "All failures in examinations must be made good at the earliest possible date, not more than one year from date of the failure" (84). Examinations, clearly, seem to be a prominent genre within the genre set of the early institutional assessment system. Like the 1899-1900 university catalogue, the 1904-1905 communicates that failure (in one-third of work) severs the student from the university. I'm uncertain as to how and why "grades" stopped being referenced in the university catalogue, and I'm perplexed as to how and why "failures" persisted. For example, I wonder if the 1899-1900 assessment system based on some notion of "grades" was a pilot that somehow failed to get off

the ground; I wonder if the "grade" didn't do what the university and classroom wanted it to do, or if it didn't effectively measure what the classroom wanted to examine; I wonder if students didn't take up the grade well. I wonder if there was some resistance to it. Or, I wonder if the grade was still at play and just not recorded; I wonder if the grade was just assumed; I wonder if it was simply removed from the university catalogue because it was background knowledge. There are a lot of possibilities. An investigation of the submitted student summary reports to the registrar, which we see mentioned in the 1899-1900 university catalogue, might be able to provide more answers, but unfortunately those reports can't be found.

Nonetheless, the grade disappears but "failure" perseveres in the institutional assessment system. Institutional assessment, once again, attaches itself to the concept of failing, which holds deeply rooted ideologies. Student work has the possibility of failing, and the teacher, who has power and control in the situation, reports that to the university. Was the University of Kansas experimenting with assessment systems? Was the university shifting the way they conducted classroom assessments? According to Richard J. Shavelson, "The first third of the twentieth century marked the beginning of the use of standardized, objective testing to measure learning in higher education" (6). Objective tests weren't the same as early entrance examinations used for admission into the university. Knowing the context, like larger educational philosophies and trends while the University of Kansas was constructing assessment historically, is extremely important to any situation and to any genre system because context helps provide information about the nature of the system, including the other genres at play and the participants within the system.

All these parts help form the "complex web." At the University of Kansas, the university catalogue changes again in 1911-1912 by going back to mentioning "grades." In fact, grading

becomes an even bigger part of the system, and the visibility of the construction of the assessment system is articulated in the catalogue:

> *Grade One* is used to indicate that the work of the student has been excellent in quality and performed with marked fidelity and decided interest.
>
> *Grade Two* is used to indicate that the work of the student has been good and his application reasonable.
>
> *Grade Three* is used to indicate that the work of the student has been fair and that his attainments are at least sufficient to prepare him to purse the succeeding courses in the department or courses in other departments in any way dependent upon the course graded. (*1911-1912 Undergraduate Catalogue* 123)

In 1911-1912, the assessment system is divided into three categories with student "work" being a high priority. Student work, in the university catalogue, is associated with various descriptive adjectives that are common in assessment: excellent, quality, good, reasonable, and fair. In many ways, these terms permeate various assessment systems, like rubrics which are a part of the genre set, that are still constructed and used on a regular basis in writing classrooms. Rubrics can communicate to various writing assessment systems. It's important to note how writing assessment systems and terminology within those systems are influenced by past writing assessments and how characteristics, values, and beliefs of old systems remain with new systems. This is a perfect example of antecedent genres in RGS. Genres precede other genres; old genres help shape new genres. There's no such thing as a full removal of genres and ideologies because genres rub against one another and communicate to each other, even through the reconfiguration of one genre slowly being used in place of another. Our current writing

assessment systems are greatly influenced by the genre system and the genres that constructed the old systems.

For example, the adjectives within the 1911-1912 university catalogue are still present in the current university catalogue, which I'll describe a bit later. But even more than that, the ideologies behind these terms influence how we perceive and even approach student writing (Williams). The adjectives are somewhat subjective in nature, and the words possess an ideological underpinning through the use of "quality" attached to student work. The indoctrinated ideology situated through a simple word like "quality" affects different participants within the system. In our current writing assessment system, we might even think about Standard Edited American English (SEAE) as an expectation placed on student writing that is, more or less, based on aspects of "quality" and mostly affect participants who are non-native English speakers and English speakers who possess dialects that aren't considered the "standard." This leads to privileging certain identities over others in the writing classroom. If genres are indeed guideposts for social action, and if writing assessment is a social action, then what exactly are these terms saying and doing to the other genres within the system and to the participants that take up these genres? For example, what does the university catalogue mean by "excellent quality," and how does the university catalogue help shape writing assessment genres we use in our current writing classroom, like rubrics?

As the University of Kansas' catalogues develop, and as the university potentially experiments with different writing assessment in the early 1900s, another assessment genre eventually reveals itself—the letter-grade. In the U.S. university, letter-grades are a modern innovation. While Yale has been accredited with assigning the first "grade" via a numerical system in 1785, Harvard has been acknowledged with giving the first "letter-grade" in 1883. But

it wasn't until 1897 at Mount Holyoke that the letter-grade genre, one much like the one we use, was constructed (Durm, 1993). The letter-grade transcended assessment inside the university. At the University of Kansas, the first mention of the "letter-grade," not just "grades," appears in the 1916-1917 university catalogue (about twenty years after Mount Holyoke). Kansas' letter-grade, then, is only 100 years old. The catalogue mentions the new assessment, but doesn't describe the value or nature of the letter-grades:

> By recent action of the Senate it has been determined: (1) That the letters A, B, C, D shall be employed to indicate the four passing grades; (2) that the letters I and F shall be employed to indicate 'incomplete work' and 'failure'; (3) That the new system shall be put in effect the first of the school year 1917-'18. (*1916-1917 Undergraduate Catalogue* 52)

The University of Kansas' implementation of the letter-grade was probably in response to the experimentation of letter-grades happening at other U.S. universities in the late 1800s and early 1900s. The newfound assessment genre was in response to the culture and the context of other universities. A year later, in the 1917-1918 academic year, the University of Kansas adopted the letter-grade. The 1917-1918 university catalogue provides clarity to the construction of the *new assessment* and includes the assigned value for each letter-grade:

> The letter A is reserved for work of marked excellence, and indicates high honor. The letter B indicates very good work, of much more than average quality. The letter C indicates that the work has been of good average character, better than that which deserve merely a pass. The letter D indicates work the lowest in quality that would enable a student to pursue, without undue lack of material or of method the next dependent course, whether the latter be in the same department

or in a related department. The letter I indicates that work is incomplete. The

letter F indicates failure. (*1917-1918 Undergraduate Catalogue* 50-51)

Once again, we see how older writing assessments and ideologies within those assessments help

shape current writing assessment systems and assessment genres; we can examine current

assessment systems to see how traditional values and beliefs remain. For example, the A being a

mark of "excellence," representing the highest "honor" is still the case in writing assessment.

The 1917-1918 assessment system, and the values associated with the different letter-grades in

the university catalogue, is nearly the same as our current system. Likewise, through this

analysis, we even see how an older system of assessment influenced the 1917-1918 system. The

1917-1918 system draws on beliefs, focusing on student "work," from the 1911-1912 system

constructed by three divisions (*Grade One*, *Grade Two*, *Grade Three*). Even the terminology

describing the nature of student work as "excellent" in the 1911-1912 system carries over to the

1917-1918 university catalogue. The biggest difference between the two systems is the

implementation of an actual "letter-grade," the production and distribution of the grade itself

being placed on student work. Since the letter-grade has stood the test of time (so far), there has

been little to no deviation from the 1917-1918 system recorded in the university catalogue.

Within the institutional assessment system, we have the genre of the university catalogue, and

interacting with that genre, we have the genre of the letter-grade. Experimentation of assessment

in the institutional assessment system has deteriorated, though a slight addition to the letter-grade

was added in the 1925-1926 catalogue; the addition was a significant one for the operation of the

university. Grade points were constructed and became associated with letter-grades:

Grades points are earned as follows: Each hour of A grade carries three grade

points; each hour of B grade, two grade points; each hour of C grade, one grade

point per credit hour. The grade of D carries no grade points, and the grade of F,

minus one grade point per credit hour. (*1925-1926 Undergraduate Catalogue* 19)

In 1925-1926, receiving an "A" letter-grade carried "three grade points." The letter-grade symbol

represents something else—grade points—which continues to function in the institution (again,

showing the overlapping nature of genre systems). This slight addition carries great weight for

the overall institution: grade point averages (GPA) guides many other requirements and

standards, including other systems that are at play in the broader institutional assessment system.

For example, a low GPA has the possibility of affecting a student's admission into a department

or program at the university in the 1925-1926 university catalogue. The letter-grade, with its

grade point companion, is sought after with greater fervor because it carries great consequences.

This also affects the relationship among students and teachers, or participants within the genre

system of assessment. The roles of participants within the assessment system can change

depending on the genres used within the system and the ideologies indoctrinated within those

genres. The implementation of grade points communicates an almost gate-keeper like function in

the university, which creates another layer of depth to the letter-grade itself.

I continued my examination of university catalogues at the University of Kansas by

selecting catalogues every few years to see whether changes in assessment were noticeable,

whether new structures or revisions of assessment were occurring in the institutional system.

From 1925-1926 to 1977-1978, I didn't notice any change. In the 1978-1979 catalogue, there

was a slight adjustment to the grade point system: "A—4 points, B—3 points, C—2 points, D—1

point, F—0 points" (72). Instead of the "F" receiving a negative point, as stated in the 1925-1926

catalogue, the "F" represents zero points in its new reconfiguration. This shows the adaptability

of genres; the university catalogue can adjust and change to reflect new values and beliefs. At the

same time, this also shows how the grading system can be reconfigured without hesitation. The 1978-1979 system with its four-point grading scale and its letter-grade construction resembles the current assessment system at the University of Kansas. But, now, we even have more flexibility within the system with the addition of a +/- scale. The foundation of the entire system, though, can easily be traced to the 1917-1918 university catalogue which explains and resembles the construction of our current system. The most recent 2016-2017 university catalogue explains our assessment system:

> 2.2.1 The letters A, B, C, D, S (satisfactory), CR (credit), and + shall be used to indicate passing work. 2.2.1.1 The grade of A will be reported for achievement of outstanding quality. 2.2.1.2 The grade of B will be reported for achievement of high quality. 2.2.1.3 The grade of C will be reported for achievement of acceptable quality. 2.2.1.4 The grade of D will be reported for achievement that is minimally passing, but at less than acceptable quality. 2.2.2 The letters F, U (unsatisfactory), and NC (no credit) shall indicate that the quality of work was such that, to obtain credit, the student must repeat the regular work of the course.
>
> (*2016-2017 Undergraduate Catalogue* 17)

There are consistent similarities in the 2016-2017 university catalogue assessment system and the 1911-1912 and 1916-1917 catalogues. The letter-grade as the impetus of assessment is identical, and the somewhat subjective adjectives, like "outstanding" describing student "work," and the system's emphasis on "quality," are noticeable. The 2016-2017 assessment terminology can be interchanged with the 1917-1918 words: *outstanding* in 2016-2017 is *excellence* in 1917-1918; *high* in 2016-2017 is *good* in 1917-1918 is; and *acceptable* in 2016-2017 is *fair* in 1917-

1918. The use of the word "grade," though, has dramatically increased in the university catalogue since its first mention in the 1899-1900 catalogue.

"Grade" is referenced 2,649 times in the 2016-2017 university catalogue. For contextual purposes, there are only 2,359 pages in the catalogue. To me, that's a lot. In order to show just how much the word grade is used, I decided to compare it to other institutional values, values that are significant to the function of the university that also play a role in assessment. For example, the word "attendance," which I feel like is an inherent ideology of the university by its very nature of providing classes and requiring students to meet specific expectations to graduate, is mentioned 111 times. The word grade is used 2,538 more times than the word attendance. The word "absences" is mentioned even fewer times, 17. Shouldn't attendance and absences play a significant role in the institutional assessment system? After all, can students truly learn, which some might argue as the purpose of the university, without showing up to the classes that have to assign students a final course grade? The final course grade is produced and distributed by the teacher. The final course grade could be considered a product of the classroom. I feel like the essence of the university is the classroom where teachers provide assessments of students based on their performances. Reports for the institution—student progress in the university—comes from work in the classroom. Yet, the word "classroom" is only used 652 times in the 2016-2017 university catalogue. That's a quarter the amount of times the word grade is used.

It's clear that grading permeates the institutional system of assessment, especially through one of its most well-known genres—the university catalogue. The institution and the university catalogue are obviously more developed and more expansive than they once were. Nonetheless, assessment plays a significant part in its beginnings and in its current state. The university catalogue, one genre in the institutional assessment system, allows us to see the inner

workings of the system, what genres are communicating to each other, what action(s) genres are producing, and how genres are influencing what we do as participants within the system. For example, an analysis of the university catalogue shows changes and shifts in assessment, like the emergence of the letter-grade, it indicates other genres at play in the genre set of the institutional assessment system, like examinations, and it also reveals ideologies and beliefs embedded within systems that ultimately separates participants, like terminology that positions the teacher as the "judge" of student work, creating a hierarchical, power-filled structure.

We can also see who is involved in the system. The institutional system of assessment has numerous participants, including Higher Learning Commissions, Dean of the Colleges, Department Chairs, faculty, and students. Genres within the institutional system act and are acted upon by various participants, creating different actions depending on inner workings of the movement of the genres, the participants, and the context. We can still see traces of these historical assessment systems, such as letter-grades and rubrics, in our current writing assessments. For example, as emphasized previously, the 1917-1918 and the 2016-2017 university catalogue have strikingly similar terminology referencing letter-grades corresponding to student work. The system also positions participants in certain ways. For example, the teacher has a more powerful position than the student in the classroom, and the university catalogue helps uncover this reality. The university catalogue reinforces the institution's desired actions: teachers assign examinations or other work, assign grades to students, and report those grades back to the university. This reinforced institutional desire seems to work against pedagogical values of students' active participation in their learning and student ownership, which is often at the core of effective writing pedagogies. An analysis of the university catalogue helps us to see how assessment has been formed and how assessment is being formed in the institution, which

plays a role in influencing individual departments and programs in the university. It also reveals

genres and genre sets within the system and what those genres are communicating to one

another, like examinations, which I mentioned earlier as a genre working within the institution.

A genre set in the institutional assessment system interacting with the university catalogue

Some genres working in the institutional system of assessment with the university

catalogue, specifically, include the application to the university, policy-based texts, and

academic transcripts. The university catalogue at the University of Kansas is relevant to students

who have applied and who have been accepted at the university; thus, one of the primary

participants of the genre is students, while another participant is teachers. The impetus of the

catalogue is to provide information about the university, the various departments and programs,

policies, classes, and so on. This information is beneficial for students, especially incoming

students, because it provides a detailed, larger-scale picture of the university, including

institutional beliefs, program constructions, and even course offerings within programs. While

this information might be good for students considering studying at the University of Kansas, it

is most applicable to students who have applied (and been accepted) to the university, and who

are planning on being a part of the larger institutional community. This information provides

students a framework.

For the university catalogue to have any sort of relevance, a student must apply and be

admitted into the institution. One of the most important genres to the institutional writing

assessment system that is intertextual to the university catalogue, then, is the application to the

university. The application can be viewed as a text that helps form the university catalogue (and

vice versa), and a text that "both enables understanding and potentially delimits what people can

perceive" (Devitt 158). Without the application, and without enrollment, there's no need for the

university catalogue. If the university catalogue has a degree of power over the institution and its participants within the system, then the application to the university is the prelude, providing the means of sorting who is accepted into the university. As we know, admission is a form of assessment that functions in the institutional assessment system, and the application is a textual document that ultimately determines admission. The genre of the application carries its own weight and authority and is a necessary text in the genre set of the institutional system.

At the University of Kansas, the application has multiple requirements: an application fee, reporting of ACT/SAT score, reporting of high school GPA, and a list of coursework during the student's senior year of high school (https://admissions.ku.edu/freshman-requirements-deadlines/applying-to-ku), which connects to the old requirement of certification in seven fields as noted in early university catalogues. This list of requirements shows even more genres within the genre set of the application, which is a part of the institutional system of assessment. For example, the ACT/SAT is a genre that communicates to the application, which ultimately communicates to the university. At the University of Kansas, there is specific ACT/SAT score requirements that the student is expected to meet to be accepted into the institution (21+ on ACT with a 3.25+ GPA, or 24+ on ACT with a 3.0+ GPA), and a specific score to receive credit for the writing requirement (27+ on ACT). The ACT/SAT score is a common genre that functions and informs the institutional assessment system as well as the program-based assessment system, which shows the interconnectedness of assessment systems: "At the college level, SAT and ACT scores are still considered significant factors in admission decisions at most universities and four-year colleges, with many using these scores in composition placement" (O'Neill, Moore, and Huot 31). Some writing assessment research has intensively criticized these scores being used for placement purposes (Elliot, Deess, Rudniy, Joshi). The ACT/SAT carries cultural

ideologies and is one part of the genre set interacting and corresponding with another genre, the application, in the institutional writing assessment system.

Now, for some writing assessment scholars and theorists, these tests might hold very little value. But, we can't disregard the fact that most writing programs accept certain scores to place out of 101/102 composition courses, or place into honors composition courses. These tests have become measurements that hold substantial weight in the application process, and, in many ways, we see these tests as "requirements" for admission into nearly every university or program. These tests can function as a sort of "gatekeeper," as a delineator of identities. What if a student can't afford ($62.50) to take the test because of their socioeconomic status, or the economic resources available to them? Why is the ACT/SAT a "requirement" that only signifies that a student will be "considered" by the university, and doesn't really guarantee "admission" into the university? Not all institutions require ACT/SAT scores for admission. Nonetheless, over two million students took the ACT alone in 2017, and the number of test takers continues to increase each year (www.act.org). While the expectation of an ACT/SAT score seems stable in the institutional system, some aspects of the application are more pliable.

There's some flexibility, for example, in the way in which the participant can approach the application: the potential student can either submit the application through an online portal or through a mailed-in/faxed paper copy. The application asks basic information details (first name, last name, date of birth, mailing address, educational information). At the same time, the application correlates to the university catalogue in that it asks the applicant to indicate an academic interest and provides a list of the departments and programs offered at the university. The application simply lists the majors whereas the university catalogue provides greater detail into specific requirements for each program. In many ways, the last page on the application is a

broad stroke of the more detailed information in the catalogue. Applicants may also engage with the university catalogue in order to complete this part of the application process.

Another genre within the genre set of the university catalogue are policy-based texts which the university functions and operates from. Policy-based texts include regulations pertaining to the university's modus operandi, including withdrawal from a course and academic forgiveness. These policies are briefly mentioned in the university catalogue, but they also operate as genres outside the text itself. One of the most significant policy-based texts at the University of Kansas is the University Senate Rules and Regulations (USRR). The USRR is a collection of various articles, policies, guidelines, and statements about the function of the university, and the genre is meant to help guide faculty, staff, and students (http://policy.ku.edu/governance/USRR). Article II, "Academic Work and Its Evaluation," for example, explains how to record the evaluation of student performance and provides a clear chart illustrating the "grading system." The grading system represented in Article II of the USRR mirrors the information provided in the university catalogue: A is for "outstanding quality;" B is for "high quality;" C is for "acceptable quality;" D is for "less than acceptable quality;" and F indicates a student must repeat the work for the course. The terminology is identical to what can be found in the university catalogue in the institutional assessment system.

The USRR communicates with the university catalogue, both genres are updated with revisions and amendments consistently, and both include additions and subtractions which frame the rules and regulations of the university. The university catalogue will reference the USRR and will even point participants to the USRR for further examination and descriptions of certain policies. The USRR, because it communicates specific values and beliefs that are marked as rules and policies that must be followed, influences the classroom-based writing assessment

system, as well. For example, the classroom-based assessment system embraces the language and assigned value of the letter-grades positioned and described in Article II of the USRR. The interconnected nature of systems and genres, and what genres communicate within and between systems, is shown through the USRR genre. The institutional writing assessment system is guided by the university catalogue, which includes the USRR in its genre set, and the USRR shapes other assessment systems (e.g. program and classroom-based). The two genres, the university catalogue and the USRR, have separate roles within the institutional system, each helping the system function. Other participants are working in the institutional system through the USRR.

The USRR is approved by the University Senate, which includes elected representatives of faculty, staff, and students, and the Chancellor. These two participants act and are acted upon by the genre, which is reviewed annually for updates. The USRR corresponds with another governing policy-based genre—the University Senate Code—which details the structure and organization of committees and boards. Devitt's acknowledgment of how "no text is single" and how texts "create the purpose for one another" is certainly true in understanding the genre set of the university catalogue within the institutional writing assessment system (336). Policies help shape programs and individual classrooms as well. For example, Article IX in the USRR defines plagiarism at the University of Kansas, which is often taken up in the form of classroom-based policies communicated, most often, through the syllabus.

Additionally, academic transcripts are a genre in the institutional system that helps communicate assessment and works with the university catalogue. In fact, the nature of the transcript at the University of Kansas is documented in the university catalogue: "The academic transcript lists all courses attempted and completed and other academic information" (14). One

of the primary functions of the transcript is to record and represent assessment, specifically the

letter-grade. Students who enroll and complete courses receive a letter-grade, which is outlined

through the university catalogue, and in return, the letter-grade is reflected in the academic

transcript. On the transcript, letter-grades are calculated into a grade-point average. Usually the

academic transcript is broken up semester by semester. So, the university and student know what

classes were taken each semester and what grades were received in each class. Therefore, since

the letter-grade is associated with individual classes, the transcript is interconnected to the

classroom-based assessment system as well. The transcript's functionality is only as good as the

courses a student takes and the letter-grade a student receives. Without the course and grade, the

transcript wouldn't have much use at all.

The transcript serves the university by documenting assessment, and serves the student

by representing progress in the university. Academic transcripts can serve outside audiences, too.

For example, if a student chooses to apply for graduate school, they are often required to provide

their academic transcripts to the school and/or program. Some universities use these transcripts

to see the progress and results of assessment for the applicant or incoming student. Some

universities can even use the academic transcript to make judgments on admission by seemingly

predicting student "success" through past course work and assessment. Additionally, some

undergraduate and graduate programs require a minimum grade point average (GPA) to be

accepted. The academic transcript provides easy access to a student's GPA for students, the

university, and potentially, an outside institution. Furthermore, the academic transcript includes a

degree of flexibility for how the genre is generated and used. Some universities allow students to

access an "unofficial" transcript, which is basically the same thing as the "official" academic

transcript, but a different audience in mind. The "unofficial" academic transcript is more for

student purposes and advising, whereas the "official" transcript is for external use, like graduate school. For an official transcript at the University of Kansas, students have to submit a request for the transcript to be delivered; the transcript can be delivered electronically (PDF) or via mail. There's usually a cost associated with requesting and receiving an official academic transcript. An electronic copy at the University of Kansas is \$12, and a paper copy is \$15. If you stack that cost with applying to graduate schools, which also has an application fee (usually in the \$60-80 range), then the financial burden has the potential to delineate identities, especially if students are applying to multiple (e.g. 5-10) graduate programs. The financial obligation for continuing higher education is relevant to my earlier discussion of the ideologies inherent in admission as assessment. Genres embedded within the institutional assessment system, and the processes required to produce actions, can reinforce power which can allow some identities to interact within the system while other identities are excluded from participating.

The institutional assessment system includes an eclectic genre set. One of the genres in the set, the university catalogue, works alongside other genres, like the application to the university, policy-based texts, and academic transcripts that help form the system. The interaction between genres in the institutional assessment system is indeed complex and intertextual, and examining the interactions between different genres at play in the institutional system tells us something about the values, beliefs, ideologies, and participants in our systems. Since the institutional system of assessment interacts with the program-based system of assessment through genres like the university catalogue and policy-based texts that help inform what a program can (and can't) do, then an analysis of that system should tell us even more.

A brief genre analysis in the program-based assessment system: the *Manual for Teachers* in the first-year writing program at the University of Kansas

The university catalogue is a genre that functions for the institutional assessment system, whereas the *Manual for Teachers of English 101, 102, 203, 209-211, and Related Courses* (MAT) is a genre located within a different system, the program-based assessment system. MAT is designed for and by the First- and Second-year English (FSE) program within the English department at the University of Kansas and acts and is acted upon by participants within the writing program; it doesn't act on the entire English department, nor is it designed to do so. MAT structures assessment in the FSE program. Like the university catalogue for the institutional assessment system, MAT functions in many of the same ways for the program-based assessment system. For example, both reveal governing policies that possess value, beliefs, and ideologies that help shape participants. The program-based assessment system can be perceived as a tier below the institutional assessment system; it's individualized and serves specific departments in the university. Unlike the institutional assessment system, the program-based assessment system doesn't influence the whole university. No other department or program at the University of Kansas is under the ordinances of MAT. But, the institutional assessment system and program-based assessment system still interact and work with one another. The institutional system shapes the program-based system in terms of grades, types of assessment, and standards. For example, the standards for letter-grades in the university catalogue have been embraced and incorporated in MAT. One of the biggest differences between the university catalogue and MAT is the context of the genre and the audience, or participants within the system. A closer examination of MAT will reveal how it frames and illuminates the nature of writing assessment for the FSE program.

The University of Kansas' first-year writing program is constructed by English 101: Composition and English 102: Critical Reading and Writing. The FSE title denotes second-year

English courses, but those 200-level courses are not a part of the first-year writing sequence; the second-year English courses were previously a part of a three-course requirement. The first-year writing program, now, is made up of English 101 and English 102, which individually have their own set of values and beliefs. MAT serves faculty, but not necessarily tenure-track faculty who don't teach English 101 and English 102, and influences students in the FSE program at the University of Kansas. Some departments have genres resembling the nature of MAT that help construct different goals, outcomes, requirements, policies, and assessments in their local context, like the "Green Book" (for undergraduates) and "Red Book" (for graduates) in the Department of Geography & Atmospheric Science at the University of Kansas. MAT can best be perceived as another guidepost, another genre like the university catalogue, that communicates its purposes to its participants and tells them what to do and where to go:

> The *Manual for Teachers of English* (MAT) articulates the common goals that bind the First- and Second-year English (FSE) program together and offers support for individual teachers. To meet these goals, it has three more specific functions: 1. to clarify policies and expectations of the FSE program and the University for English teachers, 2. to provide resources to assist teachers in daily classroom activities, and 3. to provoke reflection and assessment of teachers' own developing teaching philosophies and practices. (MAT vvi)

MAT provides direction and clarity, and the genre asserts a need for action. Teachers, one of primary participants in the program-based assessment system that interacts with MAT genre, shape and are shaped by its values, beliefs, and ideologies. The ideologies of the writing program are articulated through MAT, offering explicit expectations and best practices of the writing classroom, including forms of assessment.

MAT is broken into two larger chapters. Chapter One is titled "Policies, Course Goals, and Requirements" and focuses on the nature of English 101, English 102, English 203-211, including the goals, requirements, descriptions, and assessments for each course. Chapter One details policies that participants have to follow in the FSE program. Teachers and students can examine Chapter One to better understand FSE program procedures, expectations for each course, and grading policies. Chapter Two, "A Pedagogical Guide for Creating Your Own Course," on the other hand, includes instructions for effective teaching practices, like creating a syllabus, conducting peer-response workshops, and facilitating class discussions. In many ways, Chapter Two acts on one participant—teachers—more so than others, like students. Based on the content, Chapter Two focuses on pedagogical applications and resources for teachers, which might exclude one participant—students—from acting on the text. At the very least, students might be less likely to continue reading MAT after reading the first chapter due to its narrower focus on teaching practices.

In regards to writing assessment practices, MAT differentiates between at least two different types: how the writing program goes about assessing goals and outcomes for itself, and how the writing teacher can form different types of assessment in the writing classroom. The first discussion on assessment is indexed as "Assessment of the program" and is located on page eleven. Under the title "Assessment," MAT explains how "FSE administrators are responsible for assessing ENGL 101 and 102 for the KU Core learning outcomes and for the Kansas Board of Regents" (11). Through this description, we see at least one other genre acting within the writing program, interacting with MAT: KU Core learning outcomes. We also see another participant within the program-based assessment system—Kansas Board of Regents. The FSE program at the University of Kansas assesses its program by collecting "student papers from

instructors for assessment…[and] reporting the results of the assessment to these entities" (11). Additionally, the writing program administrators in the FSE program use these reports to "create staff and professional development workshops" (11). The purpose behind collecting student papers and assessing the writing program, ideally, increases "teaching quality." In many ways, by assessing the writing program through collecting student writing, writing program administrators can see whether course goals are being met within writing classrooms and reveals how effective the outcomes are coming across through student writing. The program assesses itself to help re-emphasize, and possibly re-form or revise, its values and beliefs while also increasing effective teaching. Another benefit includes "more informed outcomes and teaching practices, [and] improved student writing" (11).

MAT explains how the writing program collects student writing and assesses itself: "To determine which student work to collect as part of assessment, we randomly select instructors of the relevant course based on a sample stratified to reflect the number of total instructors of the course who have three or more years of experience, two years of experience, and are in their first year of teaching" (12). After the instructor is randomly selected, the writing program randomly selects a section of the course and a student from that section. The writing program administrators "collect the major papers that the student wrote for the class, and other materials necessary to assess the learning outcomes" (12). The primary means for assessing the writing program at the University of Kansas comes through analyzing student writing through the learning outcomes. From my experiences in the FSE program, the writing program chooses to use criteria through a holistic trait scoring method (and a focus on inter-rater reliability) to assess program goals. The three participants who are a part of the program-based assessment system are the writing program administrators, teachers, and students. Though, students seem most distant

in the program assessment process. In fact, it seems as though students don't even know that their work is being collected and assessed by the program. MAT doesn't mention whether instructors inform students that they're collecting their work. Additionally, MAT communicates how teachers can be involved in the assessment process through various opportunities like "staff development sections, program meetings, pilot studies, and as portfolio readers," but fails to mention if students are involved or can be involved in the process at all (12). Therefore, from my analysis of the program assessment section of MAT, there seems to be separation of power, or at the very least, distinguishable levels of who has access in the program assessment process.

The program assessment section in MAT encompasses about three paragraphs, and the next time assessment comes up in MAT, specifically mentioned in relation to "grades," is under the "Policies that Apply to All FSE Courses" section through the subheading "Late Semester Procedures." The first bullet-point under the subheading addresses grade inquiries from students. The paragraph explains the possibility of students coming to teachers at the end of the semester and asking what they need to "get on the final project to get an A/B/C in the course" (17). MAT advises teachers not to commit "too hastily to an estimate of the student's present 'average,'" and recommends teachers take sufficient time to "compute the present grade as carefully as they will when they figure the course grade" (17). This bullet-point seems to encourage teachers to be thoughtful and attentive to the student's request, but not to make a rash judgment or promise when attempting to answer the student's question. The fourth bullet-point under the same subheading addresses turning in grades and urges teachers to turn grades in "as soon as possible" and to "enter them online" (17). One of the primary purposes of this section seems to be about assigning an "Incomplete." MAT reminds teachers to "consult with the FSE Director or Associate Director" before assigning an "Incomplete" to a student (17). There's a clear signal of

power asserted here, specifically a power differential between FSE administration and the teacher. The teacher has to go through FSE administration before assigning an "Incomplete," even though the student and the students' work not finished (or "incomplete") occurs in the writing classroom, which is mainly facilitated by the teacher. MAT works to instruct and remind teachers about assessment policies in the program as well as affirm power structures in the program-based system. This section of MAT primarily addresses teachers and the teacher's role in specific procedures concerning grades.

The majority of the discussion on grades and assessment in MAT comes later on in the "Policies that Apply to All FSE Courses" section under various subheadings, like "Portfolio-based Assessment Option for Grading" and "Plus-and-Minus Grading." On page twenty-seven, MAT describes one option for assessment in FSE courses—portfolios, which, as discussed in my last chapter, can be a genre used in the program-based assessment system and classroom-based assessment system. In this section of MAT, portfolios are situated in the classroom-based context: "An option for approaching FSE courses is to use portfolio-based assessment as the primary means of evaluating students' work" (27). MAT goes on to define a portfolio as "a collection of a student writer's work over time and includes multiple drafts of individual papers, accompanied by a reflection essay" (27). The portfolio assessment genre is clearly an option for teachers in the FSE program at the University of Kansas, and it seems as though the construction of the portfolio in the FSE program resembles constructions asserted by Ed White, Peter Elbow, and Pat Belanoff (see last chapter). MAT describes one primary ideology of the portfolio assessment genre—"to underscore the importance of revision" (27). An embedded ideology within the portfolio assessment genre is an emphasis of process over product.

While MAT offers portfolios as one assessment genre in the writing classroom, there also seems to be some guidelines as to who has access, or who can participate and use portfolios in the writing program. For example, MAT indicates that "new instructors without prior experience in portfolio assessment" can't use the portfolio until "after one semester of teaching" in the program (27). Then, after "eligibility," instructors can choose to use the portfolio but they "must talk to the FSE Associate Director before implementing portfolio assessment in the classroom" (27). There are also stipulations for using the portfolio, such as portfolios can't count for more than 70% of the student's total grade. There are, potentially, some ideologies at play within this requirement in the program-based system of assessment. One ideology might be that portfolios require "experience" to facilitate and use in the writing classroom. Another might be that the program prefers the +/- assessment genre, and therefore hedges access to portfolios. And finally, one ideology might be that portfolios aren't adequate enough to stand for 100% of the course grade. Some of the language use in MAT, specifically in this section, might discourage teachers from implementing the portfolio assessment genre. From my experiences in the FSE program, it appears that the +/- system is encouraged and set by default. When I contacted the Associate Director of the FSE program, I was told that, in the past two semesters (Spring 2017 and Fall 2017), zero instructors chose to use the portfolio assessment genre offered in MAT. In the fall alone, ninety-three sections of English 101 and forty-one sections of English 102 were offered. This information is surprising and somewhat telling about the implementation of assessment in the FSE program and the nature of classroom-based assessment because it reveals the reality that one of two assessment genres presented in MAT—portfolios—aren't used out of 134 sections.

Understanding what assessment genres are available and what assessment genres are actually being used in the writing program by participants in the system (e.g. writing instructors)

helps direct attention to potential disconnections between program and writing assessment. After all, MAT corresponds to the program-based assessment system, which also helps reveal ideologies within the system. For example, there's a grading standard within the FSE program that teachers are somewhat required to meet:

> FSE Director should inform any teacher whose grades across at least three sections are much higher or lower than those of the other sections of the same course. If a teacher's standards continue to vary considerably from the Department's average, the FSE Director or Associate Director should work with the teacher to bring their standards closer to the Department's, and the teacher should work to comply. Failure to do so may influence the teacher's annual evaluation. (MAT 28)

The "Consistency of Grading Standards" section seems to reveal positioning of authority and power within the department through assessment, and even indicates potential consequences for teachers not meeting expectations. There's the ideological representation of a "standard," or maybe the possibility of a hidden genre at play. The standard isn't defined or documented within MAT itself. From personal knowledge and experience, the grading standard is based on the average grades assigned in all English 101 and English 102 courses. So, if a teacher's grades are higher than the average, they are contacted by the FSE Director or Associate Director through another genre—a letter with the average grades reported—and advised to meet with the Director or Associate Director to better meet the expectations and standard of the program. In some ways, this meeting between teacher and director could be best described as a "norming." Some might perceive this norming as the FSE program working against the possibility of "grade inflation," and acting on its participants, teachers, to fulfill the expectation of the writing program in terms

of grade distributions. The standard, then, changes from semester to semester, but is based on the holistic average among all courses, which might tend to lean towards the university's standard for average (e.g. C letter-grade) which shows the interconnectedness of the assessment systems, and doesn't necessarily take into account an individual classroom that might be full of great students, or great pedagogical strategies. In many ways, this mystery potentially creates uncertainty as to whether a teacher's assessment is going to meet the (un)stated standard, thus, affecting what the teacher, one of the primary participants of the genre, does or will do.

There are numerous ways this affects the teacher. Since there's a standard, there must be an expectation to meet the standard. But what happens if the teacher fails to meet the expectation? "Failure to do so may influence the teacher's annual evaluation" (MAT 28). The standard has power over the teacher. MAT communicates that there's a consequence: the consequence for not meeting the standard, or the expectation, is somewhat weighty for the teacher. In some ways, this implies that if the teacher doesn't meet the standard, then the teacher's evaluations will be hindered, potentially even affecting pay, future job searches, and hiring. The teacher doesn't want to receive a "bad" annual evaluation, another powerful genre in the program-based assessment system. There's too much at stake. So maybe the teacher makes assessment decisions based on attempting to meet the standard set by the FSE program, knowing that there are consequences for assessment decisions, and not by the actual labor and work of her students. This doesn't necessarily mean that this happens in the writing classroom, but, nonetheless, the possibility exists because the genre includes authority-based statements that might influence the actions of the participants acting within the system.

The "Plus-and-Minus Grading" section in MAT explains how the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences adopted the grading scale in fall 2008. Then, the section illustrates how the +/-

scale works through grade points and their corresponding values: A+/A = 4 grade points, A- = 3.7 grade points, B+ = 3.3 grade points, B = 3 grade points, B- = 2.7 grade points, and so on. MAT states, "Grade points are numerical grades assigned to completed hours of academic work" (28). The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences leaves it up to the instructor to decide whether to use the scale. Regardless of what the teacher chooses to implement, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences requires teachers to include a statement on their assessment policy in their syllabus. Following the "Plus-and-Minus" section, MAT includes a section on recording course grades and communicates that grades are "submitted electronically." Therefore, another genre being used in the program-based assessment system specifically through recording grades is the University of Kansas' Enroll & Pay portal, the electronic database where teachers have to submit grades. There's also restriction of access to the portal: "Teachers must have a KU Online ID to access grade rosters" (29). MAT explains the process for submitting end of the semester grades. Additionally, MAT describes what to do about inquiries on grades.

The "Inquiries About Grades" section in MAT describes legality issues with reporting and posting student grades. For example, MAT states, "Posting final grades by name or student number is illegal, a violation of federal privacy law. Even leaving student papers in folders for students to pick up potentially violates students' privacy, as does emailing grades to students" (31). MAT functions in the program-based assessment system by helping inform one of its primary participants—teachers—as to how to go about handling assessment practices inside and outside the classroom. Furthermore, MAT establishes principles that help keep teachers safe. MAT explains that requests of grades by individuals outside University officials "must be denied" because teachers would be in "violation of federal law if they supplied the information

requested" (31). The genre describes the process in handling situations involving assessment and often directs teachers back to the program, specifically the FSE Director or Associate Director.

The final way assessment is talked about in MAT is in association with classroom-based writing assessment practices, like teacher response to student writing, which can be found in "Chapter Two: A Pedagogical Guide for Creating Your Own Course" in MAT. For my purposes, since the second chapter of MAT is more related to classroom practices, I will address the interactions that exist between MAT and the classroom-based assessment system through my following analysis of the classroom-based system. Genre systems overlap which can clearly be seen in a local analysis of writing assessment systems. For example, the program-based system interacts with classroom genres, like writing tasks, helping to form expectations that meet program standards and goals. Writing tasks communicate something to the other genres within the system as well. In their *Writing Program Administration* (WPA) journal article, Sonya Lancaster, et. al effectively describe the "network communication" that exists in writing program assessment, and they explain how we're only getting a miniscule representation of the greater process: "When we map, we necessarily bring to the forefront only selected nodes and pathways within a larger, evolving network that encompasses all sorts of communication among and within institutions of higher education" (96). Lancaster, et. al illustrate the entities that are working with and against the writing program, like the State Legislator and Board of Regents. In the FSE program at the University of Kansas, MAT is a central genre in the program-based assessment system because it can be a source for understanding various genres at play within the larger system, helping to reveal ideologies within the system as well as relationships among participants with different levels of power. MAT is a genre, a guidepost to writing assessment in the writing program and first-year writing classroom. If we examine some other genres within

the system more closely, we might get a sense of the complex interactions that exist in the program.

A genre set in the program-based assessment system interacting with MAT

The program writing assessment system, like the institutional writing assessment system, is full of genres that work alongside one another. In fact, MAT interacts with the institutional genre set. For example, the program borrows the grading system—of A through F—from systems in the university catalogue; the program-based system is shaped by the institutional system. One genre that influences and shapes MAT and the writing program at the University of Kansas is the KU Core. The KU Core is mentioned on the very first page of MAT: "English 101 and 102 are central to the core curriculum of the University and are designed to help students build on their core skills of written communication. English 101 and 102 fulfill this learning outcome for the KU Core" (1). The written communication learning outcome states, "Students will be able to generate, explore, organize, and convey ideas in writing, using language and other media (for example, digital texts, images, and graphs) to present those ideas clearly, confidently, and in a manner appropriate to specific communication situations" (http://kucore.ku.edu/goal2).

The FSE program at the University of Kansas abides by the written communication outcome established in the KU Core. English 101 and 102 courses have to meet the following four aspects to the writing communication outcome:

> 1. Include instruction that will require students to:
>
>> a. Analyze how language and rhetorical choices vary across texts and different institutional, historical, and/or public contexts.
>>
>> b. Demonstrate rhetorical flexibility within and beyond academic writing.
>>
>> c. Revise and improve their own writing.

2. Require writing assignments (a minimum of 2000 words/course) in English and

include at least three different types of writing for different purposes, audiences,

or media.

3. Deliver structured feedback to students that leads to revision and sequential

improvement of their texts (for example, through the revision of successive

drafts).

4. Evaluate the quality of students' written communication, and use this

evaluation for a supermajority of the final course grade.

(http://kucore.ku.edu/goal2)

These four aspects, particularly the fourth, alongside potential department and FSE program

goals, help the program establish a means for assessment, and provides an opportunity for the

writing program administrator to examine the effectiveness of the FSE program through

analyzing student writing. We see here that the end result of the writing course is based on the

"evaluation" of student writing for the "final course grade." Assessment is tied to writing and is

also tied to the formation of a "grade." The written communication outcome interacts with MAT,

and in many ways, dictates assessment or the expectation of assessment in the writing classroom.

The interaction between these two genres greatly influences what is done in the writing program

and classroom, especially through writing assessments.

Teachers form writing assessment to coincide with specific goals, like the written

communication outcome adopted by the writing program at the University of Kansas. By

analyzing genre systems and sets, we see how goals and outcomes inform what teachers and

students do, including how assessments are formed and what ideologies are being embedded in

those constructions. Ultimately, every writing program has a different set of goals and outcomes

that help establish their local context. Genres like MAT can help reveal those outcomes and ideologies. Another genre in the genre set interacting with MAT, influencing goals and outcomes, or attempting to complement outcomes in the writing program, is the textbook—the texts the FSE program has adopted and is using in the writing classrooms. Textbooks play a significant role in working with the program goals—values and beliefs—and act explicitly on participants, teachers and students, within the program-based system of assessment. In the FSE program, each year, we have a textbook subcommittee that evaluates texts on a three-year cycle, and we divide the three-year cycle into three different types of texts we use in our first-year writing courses in our program: English 101 course/textbook, English 102 course/textbook, and the handbook for English 101/102 courses.

The textbook selection process in the FSE program is described in MAT: "Textbooks for English 101 and 102 are selected by the First- and Second-year English Committee. At the beginning of each year, the committee normally starts screening texts for adoption in the next academic year" (5). The textbook committee selects two or three textbooks for teachers to choose from for each course. MAT, once again, reasserts its strong position as a guidepost that helps establish the structure of the FSE program and communicates to other genres that directly influence the writing classroom; textbooks are one of those fundamental genres. We also see, through this analysis, how another participant is at play in the program-based system of assessment—committee members. And we see how the textbook selection process creates a fence around participants, allowing some participants to engage in the process and others to be left out. The subcommittee sends out a survey to all teachers and their input does affect whether a textbook is replaced and what new books are considered, but even then, the larger FSE committee makes the final decisions on textbooks. Textbook committee members select texts,

usually two textbook options for English 101 and English 102, and teachers get to choose what option they want to incorporate in the writing classroom. One participant within the assessment system that doesn't seem to have equal access or freedom in selecting or choosing texts is the student.

Students are relatively passive recipients in the textbook selection process, yet textbooks frequently act on students and students act on textbooks. Students purchase and read the text to succeed in the classroom. There seems to be a distribution of power when it comes to textbooks. For example, the textbook committee seems to have authority because they get to access a range of texts and choose a few texts for teachers to use; the teacher can pick whatever text they want; and the student is under the power of the teacher's choice in text. Furthermore, the functionality of the textbook is somewhat limited to how the teacher chooses to apply it in the classroom, which can be as much or as little as they wish. In the writing classroom, the textbook can be an anchor, a stable genre that dictates the entire semester. Like a captain on a ship, the anchor provides a means for stability. The captain has a choice, the flexibility to drop the anchor, release the rope or chain at any moment in time. Nonetheless, textbooks can be seen as a bridge to the dock of sorts: they connect program goals and requirements to the actual writing classroom, and they connect participants—committee members, teachers, and students. In the FSE program at the University of Kansas, textbooks are carefully chosen by how they meet the desired program requirements of the course. In fact, in the textbook selection process conducted by members in the textbook committee, textbooks are evaluated by a rubric that lists out program requirements, and members compare textbooks by the outlined course goals. Therefore, textbooks in the FSE program are meant to reflect values illustrated in MAT. And the committee and the rubric are all part of the genre set.

The KU Core is a genre in a genre set operating within the program-based assessment system and institutional assessment system that can overlap with the classroom-based assessment system. For example, institutional goals articulated by the writing program can be incorporated in the writing classroom through the writing assignment prompt, which helps shape writing assessment genres, like rubrics. MAT communicates to teachers the nature of the assignment prompt: "One of the most important components of an English course is the paper assignment. In addition to eliciting student writing, writing assignments help determine the structure of the course, articulate the goals of the course, and serve as examples of the teacher's writing" (56). The assignment prompt should "articulate the goals of the course," and should include criteria for evaluation according to MAT, which contains a detailed list of the features the assignment prompt genre should have. If we take into consideration the KU Core, the writing assignment prompt works to embrace the written communication goal. At the same time, students answer the prompt and the quality of work they produce helps establish the "supermajority" of the final course grade. The interconnectedness of assessment systems is a constant theme through an RGS based lens of writing assessment. Genre systems and genres work with and against one another.

MAT acknowledges genres at play in the system, like how the assignment prompt can reflect course goals and criteria. The assignment prompt might even be designed by the program or writing program administrators in the program-based assessment system. For example, new teachers, mostly new graduate teaching associates in the FSE program at the University of Kansas, are given the same first writing task to help them in their transition to the writing program. Incoming graduate students who are teaching English 101 are provided with a sequence of assignments, a day-to-day schedule of classes, and a couple of writing tasks to help them navigate their own classroom. The writing program administrator or teaching mentor often

provides these materials during orientation to help ease the graduate student writing teachers of any anxiety. Additionally, the program can examine writing tasks to assess how the writing program is doing meeting their goals and expectations.

In the FSE program at the University of Kansas, through the process of collecting student writing samples, if a teacher is one of the randomly chosen individuals with one of the randomly chosen students to assess program goals, then the teacher includes the assignment prompt, the rubric for assessment, and the student writing when submitting materials to the writing program administrator for program assessment. The assignment prompt provides context to the situation, or what is happening in the writing classroom and how the teacher is using these materials to help coincide with the program-based system of assessment. It allows the writing program administrator a glance inside the writing classroom and writing process of the student. The assignment prompt can serve various purposes inside the FSE program, and the assignment prompt interacts with other genres in the system to help its overall function.

The complex web of the program writing assessment system can be illustrated through MAT, a main genre in the assessment system and a great example of how various genres work together within one singular system. MAT is also a great reflection as to how genres crossover from one assessment system to another, which can be seen through MAT's embrace of the KU Core which functions in the institutional system. The KU Core, textbooks, and writing tasks are genres that are interconnected to the program and classroom-based assessment system, which further shows the fluidity of genres and genre systems. The institutional system of assessment and the program-based system of assessment greatly influence the classroom-based system of assessment. Knowing how the other two systems function, the values, beliefs, and ideologies, and the participants within those systems, provides a better understanding of the context of the

writing classroom and what happens (and what can happen) in the classroom-based assessment system.

A brief genre analysis in the classroom-based assessment system: the syllabus in the first-year writing classroom at the University of Kansas

Much like the university catalogue in the institutional assessment system, and MAT in the program-based assessment system, the syllabus helps guide and structure governances, policies, and assessment in the classroom-based assessment system. The syllabus, a text usually delivered by teachers to students on the first day of class, provides a foundational overview of course goals, values, beliefs, and assignments. In the institutional system and in the FSE program at the University of Kansas, the syllabus is a required text: "Every teacher must provide a written course syllabus at the beginning of the semester to establish shared expectations and a schedule for the course" (15). This can be found under the "Policies that Apply to All FSE Courses" subheading in MAT. Additionally, to further show the interconnectedness between assessment systems, the University Senate Rules and Regulations in the institutional system also notes that students must be given information about the requirements that should be fulfilled within a course in "print or electronic format by the 10th class day of the semester" (2.1.2). This policy is alluding to the distribution of a syllabus. The institutional, program, and the classroom-based system of assessment are clearly interacting with one another revealing how genres are interconnected, intermingling, and communicating to one another within and between systems.

The two primary participants of the syllabus genre are teachers and students. The teacher is the producer and giver of the genre, and students are the receivers. There's a positioning of power exerted, for most, on the first day of class just with the delivery of the syllabus. The syllabus holds an authoritative-type demeanor because it sets the expectations of the course, and ultimately, documents the classroom-based assessment genre that will be used during the

semester. The teacher often provides the structure for assessment and a rationale about the assessment genre they're using in the classroom to students. To emphasize that the understanding of writing assessment genre must be kept locally situated, I will analyze my own syllabus (Appendix 1) from my spring 2017 English 102 (Critical Reading and Writing) course to help provide context and clarity into the situation.

A closer analysis of a locally situated syllabus reveals its function and purpose, as well as its beliefs and ideologies, in the classroom-based system of assessment. In fact, many teachers regard the syllabus as a contractual agreement between students in the writing classroom. The first page of my syllabus presents basic information, like my name, email, office hours, course title, and course goals. "Statement of course goals" is in direct response to the institutional system of assessment, the KU Core documented in the university catalogue. The following bullet-points display how the course meets the KU Core Goal 2, Learning Outcome 2. The second page of my syllabus includes a grading policy, which intersects with MAT in the program-based system of assessment. The FSE program, as noted above in the numbers indicating that zero instructors used the portfolio in the spring and fall of 2017, defaults towards the traditional letter-grade assessment genre. I reached out on one or two occasions describing my interest in the portfolio assessment to gauge how the FSE program handles assessing portfolios before fall 2016, but it didn't seem to garner much traction. Therefore, I chose to continue operating in the +/- letter-grade assessment genre. In my syllabus, there's a clear indication of the classroom-based assessment system being executed through weighted percentages and the +/- letter-grade.

From the weighted percentages, we see aspects of what's most valuable in my spring 2017 English 102 writing classroom. First, we see that there are four writing "projects" that are

going to occur over the course of the semester, and that those writing projects comprise 75% of the final course grade. From this knowledge, we can see how "writing" is one of the most, if not the most, valuable aspect of my writing classroom. Though, there's another significant value in my writing classroom: a well-developed emphasis and position on "participation." In fact, "participation, self-assessment, and other writings" makeup 25% of the final course grade, which, when separating the values out individually, we notice is the highest percentage of the five items listed. It's clear my pedagogy values participation through the syllabus alone. The next paragraph describes the +/- assessment genre that will be used to over the course of the semester, and the following paragraph re-asserts my value in "participation" and "labor." I clearly state in my syllabus that I value those two things—participation and labor—the most in my writing classroom, and I provide a philosophy as to why I value participation and labor so much.

Therefore, we see an added element into the classroom-based system of assessment with my emphasis on participation and labor in the syllabus. And we also see somewhat of an embedded ideology: a value of participation and labor over "products." I have high expectations for students in fulfilling those two values in my English 102 class, and the syllabus documents that more than any other text. The syllabus functions as a compass, as a guide to see and follow the expectations for the entire course. Of course, that also means there's a hierarchical position that is being asserted through the genre. I'm positioning myself, begrudgingly so, as the giver of "judgment," to use some of the language in the university catalogue in the institutional system of assessment. But I'm not the only provider of assessment. The impetus of my writing classroom embraces process and collaboration, so a lot of feedback comes from peer review and rough draft workshops. For each writing task, I include multiple rough draft workshops to focus attention on the process of writing. Students work together in pairs and small groups, often prompted by a list

of questions, or a "lens" that allows students to examine their peer's writing. These responses are guided by the good work found in Peter Elbow and Pat Belanoff's *Sharing and Responding*. Rough draft workshops are just one way I incorporate process and collaboration, attempting to cultivate student agency in writing assessment and the assessment process. I usually incorporate at least one unit that's entirely collaborative where I'm the secondary giver of assessment; students are responsible for over 50% of their peers' grade. Additionally, we collaborate and form rubrics together for each writing task. After examining and understanding the genre in which they're composing, students bring that genre knowledge when constructing rubrics as a class. Students, then, are never left not knowing what's going to be on a rubric, or how I'm going to be analyzing and providing feedback to their writing.

While I incorporate process and collaboration, in some ways attempting to take affordances from the portfolio assessment genre and implement those ideologies in my writing classroom, I still assess and grade the final drafts of each larger writing task. There are plenty of smaller, low-stakes writing tasks (about twenty) I assign throughout the semester that aren't ever assigned a letter-grade. Even on the larger tasks, I choose not to place the +/- grade on the page itself. I give students my feedback on their writing and allow them to read my response, ask questions, and attempt to engage in more conversations about their writing with me or with their peers. The purpose in doing this is to deconstruct the "need" for the letter-grade, and to remove the focus on the letter-grade itself. Once again, this embraces portfolio-based affordances. Pedagogically, I don't want students to feel like their work and labor need to be validated by a letter-grade. After a few days, and after conversations on my responses and follow-up discussions about the writing task, I upload the +/- letter-grade on Blackboard. Since I do, ultimately, assign a +/- grade on the final draft of student writing, there's a clear separation of

power between me and my students in the classroom-based assessment system. Under the construction of the +/- letter-grade assessment genre, I'm given that power, though students do have the possibility of submitting course grade appeals, which is documented in the university catalogue and MAT. At the same time, though, the syllabus illustrates how writing is only one part of my classroom-based assessment system. Attendance/participation and labor play a key role when it comes to final course assessment. In fact, a student can receive an A+ on every larger writing task and still fail my writing course. Attendance/participation and labor position the student as the main "actor," the main participant.

In many ways, the syllabus both constrains me (in terms of adopting the institutional grading system as well as the preferred program assessment genre) and enables some flexibility in asserting my own pedagogical values (on labor). In my syllabus, I provide a philosophy where I get to assert what I deem as valuable in my own writing classroom, while also adhering to the rules of the greater institutional system by following the structure of letter-grade genre. While the +/- letter-grade illustrates the end product of assessment for the course, what happens in between—participation, attendance, and in-class and out-of-class work—is up to the student. The student chooses how much labor they want to put in to the class. There's also corresponding consequences. My attendance and late work policy can directly correspond to the +/- grade the student earns by the end of the semester. If the student misses seven classes, for example, the student will receive an F letter-grade. The labor—the student's unwillingness to come to class and be a participant in discussion—resulted in the final course grade. In this case, the student's writing isn't the cause of the letter-grade at all.

The "attendance/tardy policy" and "late work policy" reflect my pedagogical values in most my writing classrooms. Students ultimately decide when they come to class, if they're late

to class, and if they produce and submit work on time. Now, in many ways, I provided the framework, or the "rules" for playing the game. I set the allowable number of absences and the number of late assignments before the student's "grade" is influenced. Like most writing assessment systems, the students choose what to do with it, and how they're going to approach both values knowing the consequences. Those two policies work directly with the classroom-based assessment system, but also with the greater institutional assessment system and program-based system. They help guide and inform the assessment genre system and greatly impact the final course grade. The "philosophy for attendance and late work policy" demonstrates how those two beliefs work with and communicate to the assessment system: "The attendance policy and late work policy can influence your grade regardless of how well you do on the four projects. For example, if you make an A on all four writing projects, but are absent three times, you can only earn a B in the class."

The philosophy statement in the syllabus refers to the expectations for the course and the assessment for the course. In many ways, there's an established governing authority, then, that is somewhat outside myself—the students who are going to take up the attendance and late work policy, and how their decisions play a significant role in determining the final course grade. In the first two pages of the syllabus, the reader gets a relatively good understanding of the framework for the course, including the classroom-based assessment system. The genre of the syllabus works to describe the assessment system and provide expectations and consequences embodied in the assessment system. The last three pages of the syllabus include more generalized policy-based statements that work for the university and the institutional assessment system, like the statement on plagiarism. For example, the syllabus explains how plagiarism takes the students outside the classroom-based system and makes them aware of the larger

assessment system, which helps govern the individual classroom context: "All incidents of plagiarism will be penalized, reported, and kept on file in the English Department, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and the University Provost's Office." Once again, we see how assessment systems talk to one another. The power of the institution trickles down in the classroom-based system through genres like the syllabus.

A genre set in the classroom-based writing assessment system interacting with the syllabus

The first-year writing classroom-based assessment system can function through various overarching assessment systems and genres, which I discussed in Chapter 1 through a broader lens of Rhetoric & Composition. But for now, since I've been focusing on specific genres at the University of Kansas, I want to seek to understand other genres in the classroom-based assessment system working and interacting with the syllabus. Analyzing these individual writing assessment systems and the genres within those systems help showcase the dynamic and complex nature of genre systems. Three genres that help structure the classroom-based assessment system that work alongside the syllabus in communicating and cultivating action(s) are quizzes/exams, the rubric, and teacher response to student writing as illustrated in genres like marginal comments and end comments.

While quizzes/exams aren't used in my writing classrooms in the FSE program, nor are they documented in my syllabus as a means of assessment or mentioned in MAT, some of my colleagues choose to use quizzes to help form classroom assessment, and they include a weighted percentage (usually 5-10%) of how much quizzes will count towards the overall course grade in their syllabus. The syllabus may even communicate how quizzes will be considered in the course grade. At the same time, quizzes carry their own value, and thus are a part of the genre set with the syllabus that supports the classroom-based assessment system. Quizzes, in many

cases, are designed to help demonstrate knowledge and comprehension. In the writing classroom, quizzes can be composed as a means for seeing if students read a text, and what students remember about the text. Quizzes can take different design elements: multiple choice, fill in the blank, word box, and open-ended questions. Quizzes, as a genre, have some flexibility in its construction, and works against the notion that genres are stable, but still represent first-wave values of "objectivity." Different teachers might create different quizzes for different situations. Like the syllabus, participants include teachers and students; once again, teachers are positioned in a more authoritative role through the production and distribution of quizzes.

Another significant genre to the classroom-based assessment system are rubrics. Rubrics often respond to another genre in the genre set, the writing assignment prompt. I described how the assignment prompt works in the program-system of assessment, and, you see here, how the genre is also a part of the classroom-based assessment system. Genre systems and genre sets are incredibly multi-layered. Bob Broad critiques the use of traditional rubrics from a large-scale, program perspective: "Traditional rubrics and scoring guides prevent us from telling the truth about what we believe, what we teach, and what we value in composition courses and programs" (2). Depending on the context and situation, rubrics may or may not be valued inside and outside writing classrooms. Nonetheless, scholars continue to explain their experiences with rubrics and re-creating rubrics in the classroom-based system. For example, David Martins writes, "I have attempted to design rubrics that remain in constant dialogue with course content, express my expectations for the writing that I ask students to complete, and invite students to talk back about what they have done in the writing" (129). Other scholars, like Peggy O'Neill, Cindy Moore, and Brian Huot, even offer sample rubrics to "give readers a sense of different ways of structuring scoring guides" (169). O'Neill et. al provide samples of a holistic scoring rubric, analytic rubric,

portfolio rubric, and a primary trait rubric. Peter Elbow writes, "Rubrics have come in for some fair criticism when they are crude prepackaged lists of conventional features…however a rubric can be used by an *individual teacher*, he or she can design it to fit his or her particular values" (308). There's a vast amount of scholarship on the ineffectiveness and effectiveness of rubrics, which I don't wish to cover in its totality here.

In the writing classroom, the rubric can be constructed in various forms by the individual teacher. Rubrics work differently depending on the larger classroom-based assessment genre. For example, my English 102 course assessment system operates by the +/- letter-grade. Rubrics, in my class, are a collaborative effort, formed by both me and my students. In many ways, this collaborative assessment counteracts some of the values embedded in rubrics, like some of the values imbued by institutional standards that merely focus on the letter-grade. I often provide a starting framework, a list of bullet-points that are non-negotiable and should be a part of the criteria for assessment based on the nature and the specific requirements of the assignment prompt. Then, I have students work in groups to form other bullet-points that should be included in the criteria. As a class, we create a fuller list that becomes our "rubric." The rubric communicates expectations for the writing assignment, and helps coincide with the +/- letter-grade by clearly categorizing and articulating the required elements for each corresponding letter. In the past, I've also used portfolios, and rubrics take a different shape and form, once again, like quizzes, showing the flexibility of the genre within the system. In a portfolio-based assessment system, the rubric, for me, signals areas where the student could revise more, or indications of certain characteristics in the writing that needed more work, or suggestions for revisiting something new in the writing process. The rubric also works alongside teacher comments.

Teacher response to student writing, genres like marginal comments and end comments, are a big part of the classroom-based assessment system because they often help inform writing assessments. To summarize the scholarship on teacher response, again, like rubrics, stretches well beyond this section and chapter. Conversations on the nature of teacher response, the best ways to form response, and even what students are doing with teacher responses are almost always ongoing within writing assessment research. For example, in Missy-Marie Montgomery's 2009 investigation exploring student perception on teacher response, Montgomery finds that "a surprising number of students do not read the feedback thoroughly or seriously, and of those who do, many misinterpret that feedback" (vi). Three years later, Chris Anson asks an important question: "What would it mean for us to delve far more deeply into the complexities of the relationship between what teachers say to students about their writing?" (194). My next chapter attempts to answer that question in some regards by exploring the exchanges happening between genres in the classroom-based assessment system and teacher response to student writing. The overlapping nature of genres is actualized within teacher response to student writing. For example, the marginal comment connects to the rubric, can help inform the student where criteria is (or isn't) being met, and can even draw on some of the same language as the rubric itself. The teacher can choose whether to write something new, ask a probing question within the margins, or simply direct the student back to the rubric. Marginal and end comments are embedded with different values. The marginal comment can be seen as direct annotated interaction on the page between teacher and student, and the end comment often responds to a specific line of inquiry or a specific moment in student writing.

The teacher might use the marginal comment to push students to continue that line of inquiry or to do something else: "Another reason for marginal notes is to link the teacher's

criticisms directly to the composition at hand" (MAT 58). The end comment, which is also known as a "summary" comment, has its own values. The end comment might explain the reasoning for an assigned grade, or could provide broader takeaways and suggestions for student writing. In the writing program at the University of Kansas, MAT provides some direction and values of the end comment: "It is desirable to put a summary comment on every paper. It need not be long, but it should give the main reasons why a teacher has assigned a certain grade to the paper. It should list both strong and weak points, thereby telling students what things they are doing well and what things need more attention, especially in revision" (58). This elucidation of the end comment might possess a potential problem—when end comments are used as justification for a grade rather than to facilitate further exploration of a topic or motives to improve.

MAT includes the functionality and relationship between marginal and end comments: "Comments in the margin are best used to point out details and to exemplify summary comments" (58). Here, we see how the marginal comment and end comment can interact and communicate with one another. We also see how MAT could shape classroom approaches to teacher response. The two systems, the program-based system and the classroom-based system, are working to inform one another and even influence practices. Teacher response to student writing can also inform or respond to the +/- letter-grade. Students might be able to gauge their written performance on how the teacher responds, or what the teacher has to say about their writing, because the response can correlate to the grade itself. The genre set of classroom-based assessments working with the syllabus runs deep; the genres intersect, cross over, interact, and help form the structure of the entire classroom-based assessment system.

Intersecting RGS with writing assessment through uptake and memory in teacher response

In this chapter, I explored three different writing assessment systems—the institutional assessment system, program-based assessment system, and classroom-based assessment system—and analyzed three individual genres within those systems. Then, I focused on the genres sets, or the intertextual interaction happening within those genres systems. Complex webs and intersecting guideposts are messy. Each writing assessment system interacts with each other, like the institutional system interacting through the genre of the university catalogue, which informs the program-based system how assessment has to be constructed, or the program-based system guiding the classroom-based system through MAT describing the nature of the marginal comment in teacher response to student writing. Each genre communicates something within those systems, often providing direction, helping frame the possible movements and actions that can happen in the system. For example, institutional policies in the institutional assessment system inform the writing classroom about what is not acceptable (e.g. plagiarism). The policy gets taken up in the classroom-based system through the syllabus. Genre systems allow writing assessment research to fully see the interconnectedness of the various genres that construct the individual assessment systems, and genre systems opens our eyes to the different values and ideologies that are embedded within those genres, especially the ones we choose to use in our writing classrooms.

Genre systems allow us to see the genres available to us. At the same time, through applying genre systems to writing assessment, we can better understand the genres that we aren't necessarily familiar with, but that are still working for or against us in our writing programs and writing classrooms. We might even be able to see where ideologies are most at play in our assessment systems, and we might attempt to resist certain genres and actions that create or deny access to specific participants. The extent to which RGS can inform writing assessment research,

theory, and practice is immeasurable. Genre systems, alone, give us an entirely new framework, new concepts, new ways of thinking about and understanding the complexity that exists within writing assessment. Genre sets further that knowledge by illuminating the range of texts that help define rhetorical situations. Bazerman, along with his notion of genres as "guideposts," refers to genres as "levers" within systems. I like Bazerman's notion a lot, and I'd like to extend the guidepost analogy a bit more toward a more technologically-mapping analogy. Genres are global positioning systems (GPS). They guide, they structure, they provide direction, they produce action, they act and are acted upon, and they are updated. With new technology, new roads, or reconstructed roads, with traffic jams, with quicker routes, a GPS changes and adapts to its context and situation. A GPS influences its participants and shapes what they see and where they go. And if drivers follow the GPS guidance too blindly, it might lead them to drive the wrong direction. Genres do the same thing. Like a GPS, genres are temporarily stable, everchanging markers. Genres can cross over from writing assessment system to writing assessment system; genres can serve different participants in different ways within the same system or within entirely different systems. It's important to note how genres can also enable resistance to institutional constraints, as with the grading contract, or even portfolios, for instance. Genres are absolutely guideposts, but they are even more dynamic than that.

This chapter scratches the surface as to how RGS can intersect and inform writing assessment by thinking about assessment as "systems," various methods of assessment as "genres," and considering other genres within the "set." A brief analysis of each writing assessment system, locating a genre in the system, and highlighting other genres included in the genre set can only take us so far. By examining the institutional, program-based, and classroom-based assessment system at the University of Kansas, this chapter has provided a context for my

empirical study on first-year writing students inside first-year writing classrooms at the University of Kansas. My next chapter illuminates how within genre systems and interactions of genre sets, shaped by participants in systems and their ideologies, another undeniable concept emerges that further intensifies the nature of writing assessment systems. In my next chapter, I continue intersecting RGS concepts with writing assessment by turning attention to genre uptakes and memories. My study examines teacher response to student writing, located in the classroom-based assessment system, and I uncover what genres students are taking up, and what genres and experiences students remember having within the genre system.

Chapter 4:
Uptake & Memory of Teacher Response to Student Writing

"Although commenting on student writing is the most widely used method for responding to student writing, it is the least understood" (148) – Nancy Sommers, "Responding to Student Writing"

Thirty-four years after Nancy Sommers' often-cited article on the nature of teacher response to student writing, writing teachers may still be positioned in a similar situation of not fully understanding the complexity of assessment genres, specifically genres of response, in the classroom-based assessment system. While writing assessment research is rich with thought-provoking work on teacher response to student writing that has influenced pedagogies and helped shape the way writing teachers understand feedback, there's still consistent questions emerging in prominent composition journals about how teachers form response, what good it is, what's good enough, and what students actually do with teacher response (Elbow; Anson; Calhoon-Dillahunt and Forrest). In this chapter, I wish to build on the already established, pedagogically challenging contributions in research on teacher response to student writing by following the impetus of my dissertation—how can we see and complicate the nature of teacher response to student writing in the classroom-based assessment system through Rhetorical Genres Studies (RGS)? This chapter specifically examines teacher response through uptake and memory—which were defined in Chapter 1—as an opportunity to examine, analyze, and interpret what occurs more fully through teacher response to student writing.

Teacher response is a part of an intricate classroom-based assessment system that helps structure and communicate action to participants, mainly the teacher and student. This chapter—by focusing on survey and interview data from students in English 101 and English 102 at the University of Kansas—argues that an understanding of teacher response through uptake and memory will shed light on the nature of the classroom-based assessment system and the

exchanges and interactions that occur between genres through teacher response. This study, specifically, analyzes students' uptake and memory of response genres and other genres working within the classroom-based assessment system helping to inform and shape their actions in the first-year writing program. Uptake occurs between the interactions of genres within systems and requires participants to take up an "object," according to Anne Freadman, "from a set of possibles" (48). Freadman carefully notes that uptake depends on conscious and unconscious selection, not causation. The selection of an object, then, moves toward a more nuanced understanding of what happens through the process of uptake, specifically regarding memory. Participants access memories of prior uptakes and are informed by the selection and responses of past experiences with genres. In this chapter, I argue that intersecting genre and assessment through teacher response allows composition studies to better understand what happens as writing teachers give feedback and as students take up genres of response, including what response genres students use most for revision, what response genres students most remember, and what other genres in the classroom-based assessment system help students write, revise, and interpret teacher feedback. This type of research challenges writing teachers to consider the complexity of teacher response, the different interactions that occur within the assessment system, and the way in which participants are influenced by genres and the exchanges between genres, including embedded ideologies in response.

The influential nature of teacher response and the significance of exploring genre uptake and memory

I concluded Chapter 3 with an examination of the classroom-based assessment system at the University of Kansas, specifically through analyzing the genre of the syllabus that helps guide and direct participants' understanding of assessment within the system. Another significant activity working in the classroom-based assessment system comes through teacher response

genres. Teacher response to student writing might be one of the most influential genres in the classroom-based assessment system, regardless of whether a writing teacher is operating under the product-based, process-based, or labor-based assessment system. Teacher response to student writing, often, directly complements what assessments are made on individual writing tasks and corresponds to the letter-grade at the end of the semester. Analyzing how students take up response and what students remember about response is a worthwhile endeavor in understanding the complexity of the classroom-based assessment system and the genres that are interacting with each other to help produce actions, influence perception, and position participants in the system.

We all have experiences with response, whether producing or receiving feedback, and we might be able to recall and locate a specific memory when we received feedback. As a writing teacher, I try to intentionally provide feedback knowing the weight of my words and how words can be interpreted various ways depending upon the individual receiving them. Even through a mindful attempt at constructing response, I can only hope my feedback is productive and meaningful to students reading and interpreting them. I never fully know how my response is being taken up by students, I never fully know what response genres are working more effectively to encourage revision, and I never fully know what other genres, like the assignment prompt or writing task, students are looking at as they write, revise, and interpret my feedback. Therefore, a strategic study focused specifically on students' genre uptake and memory will allow writing teachers to know what gets taken up and how students are remembering past experiences with feedback.

Amy Devitt's notion of the power of genres can be connected to the influential effect teacher response can have on students: "Genres have the power to help or hurt human interaction, to ease communication or to deceive, to enable someone to speak or to discourage

someone from saying something different" (1). Teacher response to student writing is made up

of various genres, like marginal comments and end or summary comments. Each genre carries

great weight, having the capability to "enable someone to [write] or to discourage someone"

(Devitt 1). Teacher responses have the power to encourage and the power to tear down; the

power to provide a voice, to promote student agency and the power to disable agency; the power

to leave students wanting to write more and the power to leave students never wanting to write

again. Each genre of response embraces power and the ability to communicate and influence

participants (e.g. students) in the classroom-based assessment system. Uptake and memory will

provide a window into the inner workings of the classroom-based assessment system, which will

help composition studies see what actions and exchanges are taking place as writing teachers

respond to student writing.

An examination of which uptakes students perform after receiving teacher response can

expand our notion on the interactions within and between "genres" and move towards a fuller

picture of the nature of teacher response, specifically how our responses are taken up, which

responses are taken up, what students do with our responses, and what other genres in the genre

set students access. From my previous chapters, we can clearly acknowledge how genre systems

of assessment contain different assessment genres that interact with one another, how one genre

is a part of a set of other genres, like how marginal comments and end comments in the

classroom-based assessment system can work in a bi-directional relationship and can "talk" with

one another. Writing teachers might draw on marginal comments to construct their broader, more

holistic end comment response. Marginal comments and end comments are two different

response genres, they function differently, they have different purposes, and they are located at

different spaces on student writing, but they still interact with one another because they are a part

of the genre set. Elizabeth Hodges describes the relationship between marginal and end comments even though she doesn't explicitly mention RGS: "A clear relationship between margin and end comments is crucial…margin comments need to lead like trail markers to the end comments… the student must be able to follow the comments and this means that what we put into the margins must be direct and complete" (86). Additionally, Hodges identifies how marginal and end comments are a part of a larger complex web of connections and interactions: "Margin and end comments connect our readings to students' texts, connect us to our students, and thus help students reconnect with what they have written so they can return to it with some distance" (86). Genre systems are intensified by the interactions that happen between genres within the system. RGS, specifically a study on student uptake and memory, allows us to discern what is happening between the interactions and exchanges between response genres, and what is being taken up and remembered by students in the classroom-based assessment system.

Teachers and students experience different genre uptakes because they are different participants in the classroom-based assessment system. This study focuses on student uptake and memory, which will ideally help inform what writing teachers do in the classroom-based assessment system by providing a glimpse at what response genres are encouraging students to write and revise, and what genres students are depositing in their memories. Anne Freadman's foundational work on uptake and memory (explained more thoroughly in Chapter 1) can be intersected with writing assessment and can allow us to see a new facet of teacher response, specifically how genres work within response and how genres get taken up and remembered by participants. The act of one genre taking up other genres illuminates the complexity of communication happening between genres, and through the lens of teacher response to student writing, we can understand what is being taken up by students in the classroom-based assessment

system. Intersecting uptake and memory with teacher response will further what we know about feedback and will reveal more possibilities for exploring the nature of teacher response to student writing. There's a lot to learn from what happens within those intersections, what happens between the spaces—what occurs in the shadows of what we don't necessarily know or see. Throughout my research, I incorporate and use the term "feedback" to fully capture the different kinds of responses within the classroom-based assessment system. Feedback moves beyond interactions between teacher-and-student and can include interactions between student-and-student through genres like peer review.

Context for study design and research questions

In fall 2017, the University of Kansas offered ninety-three sections of English 101 and forty-one sections of English 102. English 101 and English 102, as noted in previous chapters, construct the first-year writing program at the University of Kansas. English 101 is designed to instruct students through the writing process by practicing writing in a variety of rhetorical contexts, both academic and non-academic genres. English 102 builds on goals in English 101 by focusing more specifically on critical thinking, careful reading and writing, and composing and evaluating academic research. Typically, incoming first-year students enrolling at the University of Kansas will take English 101 in the fall semester and English 102 in the subsequent spring, though, there's always other options, like taking English 101 and English 102 elsewhere and transferring credits, or testing out of English 101 altogether. At the University of Kansas, for example, a student can test-out of English 101 with an ACT score of 27-31, or an SAT score of 600-649, or an AP exam score of 3, or an IB score of 5. By earning credit for English 101, a student would be able to enroll in English 102, potentially in the fall semester of their incoming year.

English 101 and English 102 courses are often capped at twenty students and are taught by lecturers and Graduate Teaching Associates (GTAs) in the English Department. GTAs are pursuing different levels of education (MA, MFA, PhD) and studying literature, creative writing, or rhetoric and composition. These writing teachers are trained to use certain genres of response which are promoted by the *Manual for Teachers* (MAT), which was discussed more in-depth in my last chapter as a genre working within the program-based assessment system influencing the writing classroom. There are some response genres that are explicitly noted in MAT, including marginal comments, end or summary comments, peer review, and teacher conferences. These types of feedback are encouraged within the first-year writing program at the University of Kansas and are often taken up and used by writing teachers. For example, MAT explains the purpose and function of peer review: "Class activities that ask students to respond to their classmates' writing can help improve their reading and revision skills…in all peer response workshops, students should be encouraged to make suggestions and observations, but the writers should be encouraged to make the final decisions about how to revise" (64-65). This instruction helps guide writing teachers in implementing peer review in their writing classroom. But how are genres of response, like peer review, being taken up and remembered by students?

My study was designed to locate genre uptake and memory in teacher response to student writing, and was designed to capture what genres of response students recall using in their writing and revision processes in order to better understand whether program promoted genres of response are being taken up and used in the writing classroom by students, and more broadly, in order to get a glimpse of the classroom-based assessment system and the multitude of genres working within the system. I conducted empirical research through a qualitative study, then, to capture what genres students recall taking up and what experiences students remember having

through teacher response to student writing in English 101 and English 102 at the University of Kansas to analyze the classroom-based assessment system and the genres interacting within the system. My research methods were conducted through surveys and interviews, and the following questions helped guide the construction of both methods:

- What types of feedback do students report receiving on their writing at the University of Kansas in their English 101 and English 102 courses?

- What genres of feedback do students report using when they revise?

- What genres do students remember taking up?

- What feedback is most memorable for students and why?

- What other genres do students consult while writing, while revising, and while interpreting feedback and how often do they consult these genres?

By pairing the survey and interview, I was hoping to provide ample opportunity for students to reflect on experiences in their English 101 and English 102 courses with teacher response. The survey was the main instrument for data analysis, and the interviews were complementary to my research and used as an opportunity to extend some of the questions presented in the survey. The surveys and interviews happened sequentially—surveys first, interviews second—and the interview method followed semi-structured protocols, each interviewee was presented the same pre-determined questions. At times, I asked follow-up questions for further clarity or further explanation. My goal was to intersect genre and writing assessment and to collect information about the complex web of the classroom-based assessment system, specifically the intricate nature of teacher response to student writing and what uptake and memory can tell writing teachers about what happens when they respond and as students pick up response.

Data collection and participants

I submitted an original application for Human Subject Approval during the fall 2016 semester with the hopes of collecting information in the spring 2017 semester. The Institutional Review Board's (IRB) Human Subjects Committee approved my study, and I began collecting data in the spring. Through the process of writing my review of dissertation proposal (RDP) and after having a meeting with my core committee members in late spring 2017, we collectively noticed that the scope of my research was going to be too big with the survey and information I had already drafted, been approved of, and collected. My original survey was directed toward "affective" dimensions, like what were students feeling or what they remember feeling about teacher response, and what students "like/dislike" about certain classroom writing assessment practices. After listening to the advice of my core committee members in the RDP, I redrafted a new survey (Appendix 2) during summer 2017 and added another research element—interviews. My revised survey and accompanying interview questions (Appendix 3) focused more on genre uptake and memory, and what genres students were interacting with through the process of writing and receiving teacher feedback which gave a better understanding of the teacher response assessment system and showed a clearer picture of the value of combining RGS with writing assessment. In summer 2017, I submitted a Human Resource Protection Program (HRPP) request for modifications form suggesting modifications to a change in research methods and change to survey instrument. The modifications drastically shifted the scope of my research. After receiving approval, again, through the IRB's Human Subjects Committee for the modifications, I began administering my surveys in the fall 2017 semester.

I emailed the first-year writing program list-serv, which encompasses all first-year writing instructors at the University of Kansas, in September 2017 for help in the survey process. I chose to wait until after the first few months of the semester to deliver the surveys in hopes that

students had already received feedback on at least two pieces of writing in their English 101 or

English 102 course. The data, then, would diversify responses and would give students the

opportunity to think about what genres they remembered taking up and what genres they used to

revise their writing in English 101 or English 102. The survey was designed to collect

information on what genres of response students remember receiving, what feedback they use for

revision purposes, and what other genres they recall using while writing and after receiving

feedback. The survey (Appendix 2) offered a variety of options for answering questions,

including checking one, checking all that apply, ranking/listing, and leaving room for students to

fill in responses to open-ended questions. The interview, as a complementary research method to

the survey, was designed to capture the processes, memories, and experiences students have had

with teacher response to student writing in English 101 and English 102. The interview was

based on preconstructed questions (Appendix 3), which were not shown to the interviewee

beforehand, and were conducted and recorded in my office at the university.

Eight writing instructors replied to my email and agreed to distribute the surveys. In total,

262 students completed the survey across sixteen sections of English 101 and English 102. The

information is divided up evenly: eight sections of English 101 and eight sections of English 102.

135 students in English 101 and 127 students in English 102 completed the survey. Of the 127

English 102 students, twenty-five had taken English 101 at the University of Kansas. The fall

semester offered ninety-three sections of English 101 and forty-one sections of English 102.

Assuming there was an average of twenty students in every class, the total available sample size

is 2,680 (93 + 41 = 134 x 20 = 2,680). With a 90% confidence interval and a 5% margin of error,

since 262 students participated in the survey, I can conclude that I have a 5.24% margin of error.

There was no reward or compensation for writing teachers agreeing to distribute the surveys, and

no benefits for students completing the surveys. At the beginning of November 2017, I emailed

the same writing teachers asking if they'd be interested in participating and announcing (via

email or in-class) a call to conduct follow-up student interviews for research purposes. All eight

teachers agreed to pass along the information to their students about the interview process. The

interview was constructed to be secondary, knowing that more students would complete the

surveys due to mere convenience. Like the surveys, there was no added benefit for students

completing the interviews. A total of eighteen students responded to be a part of the interview

process; fifteen were from English 101.

English 101 and English 102 fulfill general education requirements at the university, so

student demographics for those courses can best be reflected by overall university statistics. As

recorded by the Office of Institutional Research and Planning at the University of Kansas, in fall

2016, 75.3% of students reported being undergraduate at the Lawrence campus; 51.2% of

students reported female and 48.6% of students reported male; 69.6% reported White, 6.5%

reported Hispanic, 4.2% reported Asian, 4.1% reported Black, and 4.5% reported two or more

races; 89.7% of students reported living on campus and 10.3% reported living off campus.

Data analysis

After receiving the completed surveys, I chose to individually hand tally the results to

each question to quantify the data. First, I decided to go packet by packet tallying the

corresponding answers individually, and I separated the data for English 101 and English 102, so

I could get an accurate understanding as to how students in each course were interpreting and

using genres of response and other genres that construct the classroom-based assessment system.

Then, I created an Excel spreadsheet based on the questions on the survey and the tallies for each

question. I began adding the tallies up for each packet and inserting those numbers into the Excel

document based on the survey questions. The Excel document containing data, again, was divided by English 101 and English 102 to capture how students were responding in each section. I created another column in the Excel document that incorporated a formula which divided the total number of participants in each corresponding course by the answers to the survey questions. Therefore, the spreadsheet data incorporated the total number of tallies for each question as reported by English 101 and English 102 students as well as a percentage-based formula that represented how often students answered in a particular way.

After gathering and recording the information, I analyzed the data for themes related to my research questions (noted above) and searched for information in surveys and interviews that helped provide information about those questions. For example, my first research question, which attempted to gauge the types of feedback students were receiving in English 101 and English 102, was most supported by Question #2 in the survey. Likewise, my second research question attempting to better understand what genres of response were being used for revision was best articulated by survey Question #3. Through my analysis, I highlighted data that indicated similarities and differences between responses from English 101 and English 102 students and marked what was relevant to the question I was considering. The research questions helped guide my data analysis and became a starting point for reporting the information on uptake and memory of teacher response to student writing; the research questions encapsulated my purposes for the study and provided a means for intentionally examining the surveys, or what students reported taking up and remembering from a genre perspective.

I conducted interviews after all the surveys were turned in. The interview questions had students recall experiences with teacher response to their writing and describe instances where they took up feedback and ignored feedback. The purpose was to gauge student memory as they

interpreted response genres. The interviews were recorded through the voice recorder on my cell phone and usually lasted between five to ten minutes. After I finished reporting the survey data in an Excel document, I would frequently re-visit and listen to the recordings to look for themes that emerged from the research questions, tracing commonalities between surveys and interviews and attempting to discern where answers complemented or contradicted each other from individual respondents. Additionally, I wanted to record actual memories and stories students told me about teacher response. I transcribed quotes from each interview on a separate Word document. My data analysis ended up complementing the research questions and was driven mainly by the survey questions/answers with occasional inclusions of interview responses. I decided to synthesize the reported information from English 101 and English 102 students based on my research questions to see how teacher response was working within those two separate classroom constructions. The surveys and interviews, ultimately, portray a clear picture of what genres get taken up and remembered by students through teacher response to student writing in the classroom-based assessment system. My next section is divided up based on the patterns of responses that emerged to the research questions.

<u>Data results and discussion on uptake and memory in English 101 and English 102</u>

What types of feedback do students report receiving on their writing at the University of Kansas in their English 101 and English 102 courses?

This research question resulted in fascinating discoveries on what genres of response students are familiar with in their English 101 and English 102 courses at the University of Kansas, which helps inform the writing program as to what genres are being used by writing teachers in these courses. But to understand the situation, I found it useful to see what types of feedback students reported receiving prior to English 101 and English 102. Knowing what genres

of response students interacted with prior to the University of Kansas would provide even greater clarity as to how students take up, remember, and use genres in the first-year writing program. "Genres Experienced Before KU" (Table 1) indicates what genres students reported to receiving prior to their English 101 and English 102 course at the University of Kansas.

Genre	English 101	English 102
Points or percentages	85.18%, n=115	88.18%, n=112
Marginal comments	79.25%, n=107	92.12%, n=117
Letter-grades	79.25%, n=107	82.67%, n=105
Ratings or rubrics	77.77%, n=105	79.52%, n=101
Peer review	69.62%, n=94	75.59%, n=96
End or summary comments	65.92%, n=89	76.37%, n=97
Teacher conferences	39.25%, n=53	29.13%, n=37

Table 1: English 101 and English 102 students – familiarity of genres received prior to the University of Kansas

This data is important to note because individuals rely on past memory to take up and participate in genres. English 101 and English 102 students, according to this data, then, have high familiarity with experiencing points or percentages prior to the University of Kansas, which can influence how they remember the genre, including its embedded ideologies when implemented in the first-year writing classroom. For example, English 101 and English 102 students might equate points or percentages with "product," or might associate points or percentages with a completed final draft due to previous memories and interactions with the genre. Interactions and exchanges with less familiar response genres, like the end or summary comment, could be influenced by memories of points or percentages, too. After all, participants attempt to rely on memories to understand new situations and less familiar genres. Understanding how interactions

and memories of genres help shape what we do, how we approach, and how we use genres is a vital step in the process of analyzing uptake and memory from a teacher response to student writing perspective. Students' prior experiences with genres of response can inform and tell us how students are interpreting genres of response in writing classrooms. Students' familiarity and unfamiliarity with genres of response can teach us how a genre is being taken up and remembered, and even potentially reveal how response genres were being deployed by other instructors who taught them. For example, teacher conferences are reported as the least familiar response genre prior to the first-year writing program for both English 101 and English 102 students. For high school instructors, teacher conferences might be less feasible and less likely to occur due to traditional schedules (6-7 periods a day), constant class preparations, and class sizes. Teacher conferences are considerably lower than even the second least familiar response genre experienced by students prior to English 101 and English 102. Contextual information and knowledge about what genres students are experiencing prior to the first-year writing program could help inform teaching writing at the university.

The survey data reveal that English 101 students were most familiar with points or percentages (85.18%), letter-grades (79.25%), and marginal comments (79.25%) prior to the University of Kansas, with ratings or rubrics close behind (77.77%). English 102 students reported experiences with the same genres in a slightly different order prior to the first-year writing program at the University of Kansas: marginal comments (92.12%), points or percentages (88.18%), and letter-grades (82.67%). English 102 students reported marginal comments at a much higher rate than English 101 students, which could be a result of English 102 students remembering marginal comments in English 101 and reflecting on those experiences, influencing their report. Knowing students' prior experiences with response genres

can provide writing teachers a better understanding as to whether students know what genres

they choose to use inside the writing classroom. To English 101 and English 102 teachers, this

information reveals what response genres students are familiar with prior to the first-year writing

course and could dictate whether a teacher wants to spend substantial time explaining the

purpose and function of certain response genres to students. This data could also help writing

teachers teach response genres that are less familiar to students prior to the University of Kansas

but are used consistently inside the first-year writing classroom.

After all, the familiarity of response genres prior to English 101 and English 102

compared to the familiarity of genres used inside the English 101 and English 102 classroom is

noticeably different. "Genres Experienced in English 101 and English 102 at KU" (Table 2)

represents how the familiarity of response genres shifted from prior experiences to present

experiences, and the statistics indicate that some genres are now being used at a much higher

percentage inside the first-year writing classroom. This information allows us to see what genres

students were experiencing in English 101 and English 102, to see how those experiences were

different from previous experiences before the first-year writing program, and to see similarities

and differences between experiences in English 101 and English 102. I decided to bold the top

three genres in both columns (Table 2) since the familiarity differed in English 101 and English

102, and consequently, couldn't seamlessly be listed in a sequential order.

Genre	English 101	English 102
Peer review	**92.59%, n=125**	**86.61%, n=110**
Marginal comments	**80.74%, n=109**	**83.46%, n=106**
End or summary comments	80.00%, n=108	**77.95%, n=99**
Teacher conferences	72.59%, n=98	61.41%, n=78

Ratings or rubrics	62.22%, n=84	35.43%, n=45
Letter-grades	53.33%, n=72	70.86%, n=90
Points or percentages	**87.40%, n=118**	56.69%, n=72

Table 2: *English 101 and English 102 students – familiarity of genres received in English 101 and English 102*

Analyzing Table 1 and Table 2 provides a clearer picture of student memory and response genre familiarity reported by students in English 101 and English 102. "Response Genres Experienced" (Figure 1) further illustrates the data with the use of a column bar chart and reveals substantial differences between genres of response from high school (or other previous experiences) to English 101 and English 102. The vertical axis shows the percentage of students who reported having familiarity with the specific response genres, and the horizontal axis reveals the different genres of response. The vertical axis begins with twenty-five percent since no percentage was lower than that and ends with ninety-five percent since no percentage was higher than that. The reduced range magnifies the data, making it clearer and easier to analyze.
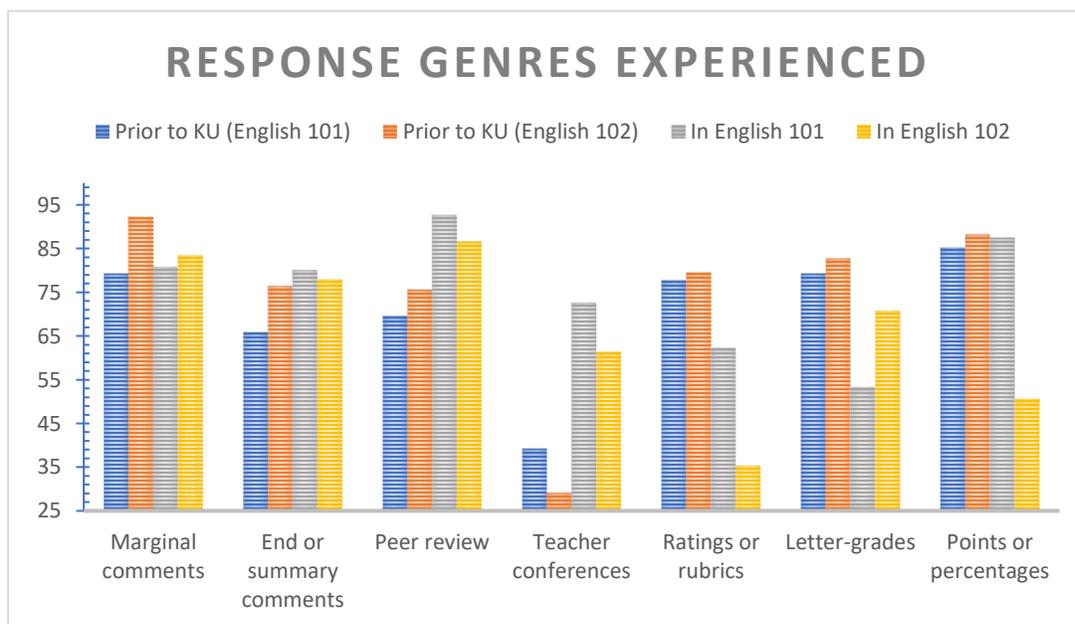

Figure 1: *Response genres experienced by English 101 and English 102 students prior to KU and in the first-year writing program*

The chart reveals how experiences with genres of response have changed since students entered the first-year writing classroom, which can help provide insight into known genres as well as unfamiliar genres. For example, teacher conferences, which were reported at the bottom of the list of genres experienced prior to the University of Kansas, are used at a much higher rate in English 101 and English 102 courses. Additionally, 69.62% of English 101 students reported as being familiar with peer review prior to English 101, which was fifth (almost sixth) on the list of seven possibilities. That number, now, is drastically different in terms of the familiarity of peer review reported being used inside English 101 – 92.59%, which ranks first on the list of seven.

This information should reveal opportunities for teaching, like an opportunity for teaching the functionality and purposes behind peer review; it should also indicate that students shouldn't be told to just give feedback to each other, but instead, should be given clear instruction and direction to help frame the importance of peer review. In fact, one student commented during an interview that peer review is only helpful when "you get a good partner" (Audio #2). Peer review becomes about getting a "good partner" when students aren't familiar with the function and purpose behind the genre. Lack of familiarity with peer review prior to English 101 makes for a difficult transition in understanding the genre when it's suddenly emphasized in the first-year writing classroom. For most students, it appears peer review is a relatively unfamiliar genre, and a genre that needs taught in order for it to be effectively taken up and used by students.

Teaching the genre of peer review and cultivating a genre awareness of peer review might be beneficial for English 101 students. There's great research on peer review practices, writing groups, and workshops in the writing classroom (Bruffee; Gere; Bean; Roen, et al.; Nilson; Hansen and Liu). Peer review, from my research, is a significant genre of response

(86.61%) in English 102 courses, too. The high percentage of peer review, which often occurs before teachers respond to student writing, indicates that students in English 101 and English 102 are frequently experiencing students' comments, and therefore, could reflect a more collaborative classroom which might, in turn, also represent an initiative of the first-year writing program to promote collaborative engagement and communal learning. The degree in which peer review is used in the first-year writing classroom at the University of Kansas, at the very least, offers us an opportunity to explore the effectiveness of the genre. Peer review could mediate students' uptake of teacher response, particularly if peers note some of the same or different things teachers note. Students are givers of feedback, and students depend on their peers to receive feedback, which is a valuable enterprise in a collaborative composition classroom.

According to the data, English 101 students also reported experiencing points or percentages at a high-rate (87.40%), which was second on the list of seven genres or response. Comparatively, English 102 students reported to receiving points or percentages less frequently – 56.69%, second to last. This is an interesting statistic from a writing program perspective, especially if the program desires unity and cohesiveness in the use of response genres within both first-year writing classrooms. Various conclusions could arise from this information, like the possibility that points or percentages don't carry over as a genre being implemented from English 101 to English 102. Or, maybe English 101 students are so familiar with points or percentages (85.18%) prior to the University of Kansas that they continue to remember and report their experiences with that genre of response, which will be discussed a bit more when I focus specifically on memory. Furthering that possibility is the reality that English 102 students are often more removed from their high school experiences and memories with points or percentages, which lead to them reporting to receiving that genre of response less often. While

points or percentages are less frequently reported as being used in the English 102 classroom,

English 102 students did report that letter-grades (70.86%) were serving a significant role in the

writing classroom, fourth in the list of seven possibilities, whereas English 101 students reported

as having less familiarity with the letter-grade response genre (53.33%). There could be

overlapping ideologies, like an emphasis on product, between points or percentages and letter-

grades, which, in turn, eases the transition for students from English 101 to English 102.

Marginal comments, which English 101 students reported as being the third most familiar

genre (80.74%) and English 102 students reported as being the second most familiar genre

(83.46%), seem to be evenly used and remembered across both first-year writing courses. This

information shows that marginal comments have a significant part in the process of teacher

response to student writing in the first-year writing program at the University of Kansas.

Marginal comments, from the data, are also a genre of response that students were familiar with

prior to English 101 and English 102. Knowing that students have familiarity with marginal

comments before entering the university writing classroom, and knowing that students are

experiencing marginal comments inside English 101 and English 102, should indicate that

students have a good grasp on the genre—they know what the genre does and how it functions,

how it interacts with their writing. Therefore, writing teachers might not have to spend as much

time explaining the purpose of marginal comments. Somewhat surprising is that English 102

students reported being more familiar with marginal comments prior to English 102 (92.12%).

Marginal comments often interact with end comments, which the data do a nice job representing

through the closeness in percentages inside the English 101 and English 102 classroom. Maybe

one-on-one teacher conferences, which are experienced at a lot higher rate in English 101 and

English 102 compared to previous experiences, are functioning in similar ways as marginal

comments where the teacher often provides specific comments within the text. Teacher conferences, if done in the drafting process, and when done effectively, usually focuses on specific elements within the text, much like marginal comments, which could help with revisions, providing students with a clear understanding and direction. Response genres can be used for a variety of reasons and, in many cases, can be used as complements, like marginal and end comments. In an interview, one student shared excitement in receiving different kinds of responses: "I love getting feedback. I want to make my paper the best it can be" (Audio #17). Understanding the significance of what genres of response encouraged more revision, then, became an important aspect of my research on uptake and memory.

What genres of feedback do students report using when they revise?

This research question is best complemented by Question #3 on the surveys, which had students rank (1-7) genres of response and revealed the extent in which students use specific genres of response for revision. In my data analysis, I decided to provide more clarity on this question by tallying up how many times English 101 and English 102 students responded with "1" – the genre of response used most often for revision – and "7" – the genre of response used least often for revision. I wanted to get a sense of those two extremes, what students were willing to confidently mark as most helpful and least helpful in feedback. "Genres Used Most/Least Often for Revision for English 101 Students" (Table 3) illustrates the wide range of use, and, most notably, differentiates the extremes between genre use effectively.

Genre	% used most often for revision	% used least often for revision
Marginal comments	40.74%, n=55	5.92%, n=8
End or summary comments	19.25%, n=26	2.22%, n=3
Teacher conferences	17.77%, n=24	9.62%, n=13

Peer review	8.14%, n=11	17.03%, n=23
Letter-grades	5.92%, n=8	22.96%, n=31
Ratings or rubrics	5.18%, n=7	8.14%, n=11
Points or percentages	2.96%, n=4	31.85%, n=43

Table 3: *English 101 students – genres used most and least often for revision*

According to the data, English 101 students reported that marginal comments (40.74%) were used most frequently for revision and points or percentages (31.85%) were used least often for revision. From follow-up interviews with students, I gathered that marginal comments were widely used for revision because of the local, contextual nature of where teachers were commenting on the page and how close those comments were responding directly to a specific sentence or line of thinking in the writing itself. One student said, "[The] number one thing I normally look at are the teacher's revisions…most times…in the margins" (Audio #1). In fact, students often perceived end comments (19.25%), the second most used genre of response for revision, as too broad or too general which shows why, even though it was the second most used genre, the percentage is not that high compared to marginal comments. Another student said that end or summary comments were far too "vague," and that end comments don't clearly provide a picture as to where revision needs to occur within their writing (Audio #5).

English 101 students reported that points or percentages were used least often for revision purposes which, in some ways, makes sense since a score can only reflect the product and not indicate anything about the process of revision. Nonetheless, points or percentages were the second most familiar genre in the English 101 classroom, which might reveal a potential failure in the classroom-based assessment system if points or percentages are the only genre of response being used. Or it reflects the different purposes of these kinds of responses. Points or percentages aren't necessarily meant to prompt revision. But marginal comments and end or summary

comments are; that's one of their primary purposes. Points or percentages, then, should always be a part of a genre set and can only be taken up if accompanied by marginal or end comments that encourage students to revise. Students can't take up and use a singular symbol or percentage. The data clearly reveals that points or percentages and letter-grades (22.96%) are used least often for revision among English 101 students, which could potentially be an indication as to where and when those response genres occur—on final drafts. This information, at the very least, tells us that points or percentages and letter-grades, by themselves, don't encourage first-year students to keep writing.

To me, this data has significance to the classroom-based assessment system, especially for the assessment genres that are used as a primary means of feedback in the first-year writing classroom. In Chapter 2, I focused on the complex nature of the classroom-based assessment system and analyzed three different systems (product-based, process-based, and labor-based) and the corresponding assessment genre within each system (letter-grade, portfolio, and grading contract) that helps communicate and enforce ideologies within the system. I'd argue that points or percentages, as an assessment genre, would most likely be found in the product-based assessment system due to its embedded ideologies valuing the written product; the function of points or percentages is like the letter-grade, often placed on each individual piece of writing, and is perceived as a final, conclusive summative assessment. The data indicate that points or percentages don't encourage students to revise their writing, quite possibly, due to the assessment system that the genre is operating under. Points or percentages, then, would clearly have to work with other genres in the set to motivate students to revise, and even then, the writing classroom would have to consistently emphasize a greater value on process over product through other practices, like low-stake writings that aren't assigned a point or percentage.

It's fair to assume that most writing teachers aren't just assigning a letter-grade or points or percentages without including other genres of response. Nonetheless, this might bring up questions as to whether students are reading comments after a point or percentage or letter-grade is delivered. There's a possibility that the point or percentage undermines comments left in the margins, and even precludes attention to comments that might motivate students to revise. Genres of response can work against each other and can promote different values. Analyzing exchanges occurring between two fundamentally different genres of response can shed light onto what gets taken up by students, including whether one genre of response overpowers and prevails over another. In an interview, one student indirectly described this conflict between response genres: "Normally I don't look into [marginal comments] that much more, I might just to get an idea of why I got that grade" (Audio #16).

Interviews provided clarity as to how students perceived points or percentages and letter-grades (combined for 54.81%), and why those genres aren't used as frequently for revision. During one interview, a student said, "After [my writing] gets graded, I don't look over it" (Audio #13). The student explained that letter-grades stop them from engaging in teacher comments. I followed up by questioning whether the student read any of the comments after seeing the grade, and the student confessed that they chose not to read those comments because the grade had already been placed on their writing, the final judgment on the product had been made. This finding, in many ways, illustrates purposes for using portfolios as mentioned in previous research on the nature of portfolios encouraging students to engage more with teachers' comments and do more revision when there's no grade attached to writing (Belanoff and Dickson; Black; Hamp-Lyons and Condon). Now, some fault for not taking up teacher comments can be directed toward the student and not the letter-grade itself. For example, maybe

a student is unwilling to take time to read the comments, or maybe they don't have much motivation behind taking the class and engaging in the writing task in the first place, or maybe cultural ideologies that promote a consumeristic mindset have become a part of their expectation in academia, and now they only see and care about the grade, or maybe the grade reflects a "finality" and end to the process, thus failing to motivate revisions. This information provides an opportunity to analyze first-year writing program goals, English 101 goals, and an individual teacher's goals in designing and implementing curriculum and assessment in their writing classroom.

For example, if one of the main goals in English 101 (for the program or individual teacher) is to have students engage in the writing process consistently through revision, then this data sheds light on the classroom-based assessment system and assessment genres that support and encourage that value. Marginal comments and end or summary comments, once again, undeniably motivate students to revise and continue the writing process. If we are to believe that points or percentages and letter-grades are primarily used within the product-based assessment system due to their embedded ideologies, then English 101 courses that desire to encourage revision might consider operating within the process-based assessment system that uses portfolios or labor-based assessment system that uses grading contracts. The process-based and labor-based system work against the need to assign points or percentages or letter-grades on each individual writing assignment. Prewriting, peer review, teacher conferences, and writing marginal and end or summary comments could be signs of embracing process, but points or percentages and letter-grades might be working in direct conflict with a process-based assessment system. Points or percentages and letter-grades adopted in a process-based classroom could be contradicting the inherent values in deploying a process-based approach to teaching

writing. That's not to say that writing teachers who use points or percentages and letter-grades aren't operating within a process-based assessment system. That would be an oversimplification. It's extremely important, though, to investigate the classroom-based assessment system and the genres being deployed within the system to get a clearer picture of what is being communicated and taken up by participants, both teachers and students. From a larger classroom assessment genre perspective, in spring 2017 and fall 2017, zero writing teachers chose to use portfolios in the first-year writing classroom. This data, at the very least, shows that writing teachers at the University of Kansas could use portfolios to help encourage revision and embrace process in the writing classroom. Portfolios might be a viable option in not sending conflicting messages on product or process.

The data reported by English 102 students for the most used and least used response genre for revision is extremely similar to English 101 which might reveal some good crossover in what genres are being used in the writing program and the consistency in those genres encouraging students to revise their writing. "Genres Used Most/Least Often for Revision for English 102 Students" (Table 4) offers a good representation of what genres are being taken up and used for revision among English 102 students, and what genres are being ignored.

Genre	% used most often for revision	% used least often for revision
Marginal comments	45.66%, n=58	3.14%, n=4
Teacher conferences	18.89%, n=24	14.17%, n=18
Peer review	13.38%, n=17	13.38%, n=17
End or summary comments	7.87%, n=10	2.36%, n=3
Ratings or rubrics	7.87%, n=10	7.87%, n=10
Letter-grades	6.29%, n=8	28.34%, n=36

Points or percentages	2.36%, n=3	26.77%, n=34

Table 4: *English 102 students – genres used most and least often for revision*

English 102 students, like English 101 students, take up and use marginal comments (45.66%) the most for revision, followed by teacher conferences (18.89%) and peer review (13.38%). The biggest difference between English 101 and English 102 students were how they perceived the usefulness of end or summary comments when it came to revision. English 101 students reported that end or summary comments were the second most used genre for revision, whereas English 102 students ranked it tied for fourth with ratings or rubrics (7.87%). This information relates back to earlier proclamations on students finding end or summary comments as being too vague and abstract. Peer review, which was the most familiar genre of response for both English 101 and English 102 students, is being used at a higher rate for revision among English 102 students. This information might indicate that English 101 is familiarizing students with peer review, and subsequently, since English 102 students would have a greater familiarity with peer review due to English 101, students are beginning to use the genre for revision purposes.

Through interviews, despite rubrics being tied for the fourth most used genre for revision for English 102 students, it became noticeable that rubrics caused some hesitation in terms of revision application, which supports what English 101 students reported in their surveys. English 101 students ranked rubrics as the second to last most used genre for revision. One student said, "I don't really like comments on a rubric because by then it's already too late…the only time I see comments on rubrics are after I turn in my paper and have received a grade" (Audio #2). The student acknowledged that rubrics could be provided by teachers while writing was still occurring, which could in turn help the writing before turning it in, but the student suggested that rubrics lacked specificity which, again, connects back to students desiring more focused comments. The student believed rubrics were too general, attempting to accommodate every

piece of student writing turned in. This student's response can also show the complexity of assessment—how letter-grades, as an assessment genre, can interact with other genres, like rubrics, through teacher response, which can reveal opportunities to explore the extent to which response genres are acting and being acted upon, the exchanges occurring between genres, and the way in which students are perceiving certain genres of response. The interviewee believed that rubrics "limit revision" due to the letter-grade accompanying them, which to the student, finalized the writing process. From a teacher response perspective, rubrics can also be used during the writing process without an attached letter-grade, which complicates the nature of writing assessment because it positions us to consider timing, or when response genres are given and how timing influences how they are perceived by students. Hearing and seeing what response genres students are taking up and using for revision, without a doubt, is useful in knowing what's happening in the complex web of teacher response to student writing.

For example, from the survey, the uptake of peer review for revision was ranked fairly low, and through follow-up interviews, it became apparent that some of the most used genres of response—like peer review—weren't being used for revision inside the English 101 and English 102 classroom. This information sheds light onto the interactions that exist between genres and participants, and the embedded ideologies that might potentially limit uptake. Peer review was the third least used genre for revision among English 101 students, and the fourth least used genre for revision for English 102 students. Peer review can take various forms in addition to the traditional peer review approaches, like group conferences with teachers, and rough draft exchanges that use a double-blind peer review model, which may or may not have been fully considered by students. Some remarks from students in interviews continued to circle back to how peer review, at times, was too general to take up and use. A theme arose as students talked

about not being able to use comments like "good paper," which were often heard through peer review. Students felt like the generality of those comments didn't provide a sense of direction as to how they could revise their writing. For the most part, students didn't mind revising, but didn't feel compelled to revise if comments lacked depth or clarity. One student said, "I like people telling me how I can improve my writing," (Audio #6) but noted that students often relied on broad statements. Broad statements, ultimately, don't encourage students to revise their writing, and don't motivate them to continue to engage in the writing process. There's a clear sense as to what response genres were, in fact, being taken up and used for revision. The nature of comments being used for revision carried specificity, like marginal comments, and explicitly pushed students to take up and respond to what was being communicated.

The surveys reveal how English 102 students use marginal comments for revision, so maybe the most shocking observation from this data is the reality that the second most used genre of response (teacher conferences) is substantially lower than marginal comments. Marginal comments are being used for revision at over twice the rate of the next closest genre which shows, ultimately, that marginal comments encourage revision, and if any genre of response is to be included more on student writing, it should be feedback in the margins. Additionally, the results might also show that teacher conferences might be central to revision and might be an area worth further attention since teacher conferences rank third among English 101 students and second among English 102 students in terms of motivating students to revise. Conversely, letter-grades and points or percentages should rarely be used, once again, if the purpose of providing that feedback is to encourage more revision from students. English 102 surveys show that letter-grades and points or percentages are least frequently used for revision among students, and that providing just a letter or just a point or percentage will not get taken up. Therefore, based on my

sample of students, there can be some qualified conclusions made that English 101 and English 102 students aren't doing anything with their writing if they receive just a number, percentage, or symbol, and that other genres in the set, like marginal comments, should be utilized to encourage further revision.

The letter-grade, according to some student interviews, outweighs comments in the margin, even though marginal comments, according to the data, encourage more revision. This information might reflect how much a student remembers in terms of actual feedback delivered by teachers to student writing on final drafts as opposed to during the writing and revising process. In revision, students take up and use certain types of feedback, like marginal comments, but once a letter-grade is delivered, and without any need to continue revising, the perception of writing becomes more of a relic. This brings greater attention to complex notions of memory within genre uptake, specifically what response genres get remembered by students and why. Genres are undeniably influenced by uptakes, which carry "long, ramified" memories. Studying the memories that come from taking up teacher response to student writing provides insight into what actions get produced and for what purposes.

What genres do students remember taking up?

My previous research question attempted to identify what genres of response get taken up for revision, which is important in knowing what students do when they receive teacher response, or what responses best encourage students to continue writing. This research question is equally beneficial to writing teachers and writing classrooms because it captures what genres of response get remembered by first-year writing students, or what genres bring about the most and least amount of memories—in other words, what genres of response in writing classrooms stick out to students. Understanding genre memories in writing assessment allows writing

teachers the opportunity to examine what experiences students have with teacher response to student writing and how those memories could shape student actions and reactions, or the ways in which students take up genres of response: "The writer moving among locations carries along a set of writing experiences, including the genres acquired in those locations. That set of acquired genres, that genre repertoire, serves as a resource for the writer when encountering an unfamiliar genre" (Devitt, 220). Student memory of response genres illuminates what genres are present and what genres are serving as a resource—in many ways, a memory bank—which informs how students take up response and what students do when they receive feedback.

Angela Rounsaville argues that by looking at genre knowledge we're able to consider transfer, or what knowledge is being moved from one context to another, helping to inform what occurs within new locations as participants interact with genres: "[Participants] not only carry generic conventions but also the attendant field of practices, ideologies and activities that they have come to associate with that genre over time" (n.p.). Genre uptake has memory, which positions us in spaces where we attempt to make-meaning and make sense of genres. According to Rounsaville, this activity is "a complex process of selecting and translating prior knowledge" (n.p.). What genres of response get remembered and transferred among English 101 and English 102 students at the University of Kansas? Question #4, on the survey, encouraged me to better understand student memory of feedback happening in the first-year writing classroom. For English 101 students, memory seems to follow similar trends to what response genres get taken up for revision, as noted in "Genres Remembered Most/Least Often by English 101 Students" (Table 5). Students were, again, asked to rank (1-7) their memories with response genres; for consistency, I tallied the extremes like I did for the previous question.

Genre	% most often remembered	% least often remembered

Marginal comments	28.88%, n=39	4.44%, n=6
End or summary comments	19.25%, n=26	4.44%, n=6
Letter-grades	17.77%, n=24	15.55%, n=21
Teacher conferences	17.03%, n=23	14.07%, n=19
Peer review	8.14%, n=11	16.29%, n=22
Points or percentages	6.66%, n=9	28.88%, n=39
Ratings or rubrics	2.22%, n=3	15.55%, n=21

Table 5: *English 101 students – genres most and least often remembered*

English 101 students, much like they reported in terms of what genre gets used most often for revision, recalled remembering marginal comments (28.88%) the most, followed by end or summary comments (19.25%).

Points or percentages (28.88%) were remembered the least, followed by peer review (16.29%), and then letter-grades and ratings or rubrics (15.55%) among English 101 students. Points or percentages come with a startling realization—for whatever reason, the response genre isn't being stored in the memory of English 101 students which coincides with data revealing points or percentages aren't prominent response genres students use for revision. This data gets complicated, though, when we think about the nature of memory and experiences English 101 students had with genres of response prior to the University of Kansas as well as current response experiences inside English 101. As briefly mentioned earlier, English 101 students reported that points or percentages were the most familiar genre of response prior to the university. Additionally, English 101 students reported that points and percentages were the second most familiar genre of response inside the English 101 classroom. How is it that points or percentages, one of the genres students are most familiar with outside and inside the English 101

classroom, are reported as being the least remembered genre of response? The answer might best come through an understanding of memory, translation, and rhetorical situation. Rounsaville writes, "As writers travel across literacy domains and encounter new rhetorical situations, they not only carry generic conventions but also the attendant field of practices, ideologies and activities that they have come to associate with that genre over time" (n.p.). The frequency in which English 101 students reported experiencing points or percentages prior to the university might have influenced how they reported the genre of response inside English 101.

After all, the second most familiar response genre inside the classroom is the least retained which could reveal a difference in what is most familiar and what is most valued, in terms of being worth remembering or committing to memory for students. English 101 students could've also transferred their previous knowledge of points or percentages prior to English 101 and placed the frequency of that genre inside the English 101 classroom, possibly making the genre more visible than it actually is inside the classroom. In short, there could be a problem with the reliability of students' reports (past vs. present memories). Students might be drawing on past experiences and transferring that knowledge into English 101, which eventually leads them to reporting that points or percentages aren't remembered. This claim might even be supported by earlier data: English 102 students, after all, reported that points or percentages were their second least familiar genre of response inside the university writing classroom, despite reporting that points or percentages were their second most familiar response genre prior to the University of Kansas.

Anne Freadman emphasizes and specifically describes the nature of memories as being long and intertextual. Memory is essential to uptake. Rounsaville writes, "Uptake has memory, which indexes an arena of possible choices and must make a series of selections that will delimit

it and make it meaningful for the user and for the rhetorical situation" (n.p.). In considering how students remember teacher response, including the rhetorical situation in which response is occurring in the writing classroom, writing teachers might have to examine connections between memory and effectiveness, or meaningfulness. Can uptake and memory tell writing teachers about what genres of response are most meaningful to students? For English 101 students, if we consider connections between what response genres get remembered and what genres are meaningful to students, then it might be fair to conclude that points or percentages aren't that effective due to the fact that they are the least remembered genre of response. Points or percentages also place a value on the product but unlike marginal or end comments they don't include the teacher's voice or affective qualities of praise/criticism that might be remembered by students. Understanding what is meaningful to the "user," which in teacher response is most notably the student, can provide insight into what gets taken up, used, and transferred.

Additionally, this information further captures the inner workings of the classroom-based assessment system at the University of Kansas, including how familiarity and use of response genres inside the classroom doesn't necessarily equate to memory. For example, peer review is the most familiar genre of response in English 101 and English 102, which might indicate a collaborative classroom space and potentially a writing program that values student engagement, but peer review is the second least remembered genre of response according to English 101 students. Peer review was the fifth out of seven most remembered genres. Now, this might relate back to students' previous experiences with peer review. Both English 101 and English 102 students reported that they had little experience with peer review compared to other genres of response prior to the university. Peer review was the third least familiar genre of response among English 101 students and was the second least familiar genre of response among English 102

students prior to the university writing classroom. Students, then, are moving from one rhetorical situation that contained small interactions with peer review to a new rhetorical situation that fully embraces the genre of peer review. There's a strong possibility that students don't have as much genre knowledge on peer review and are pulling from these past memories as peer review becomes an extremely valuable genre in English 101 and English 102. This inadequate genre knowledge, or even poor experiences with peer review, can influence how students perceive and remember peer review inside English 101 and English 102, thus leading to peer review being unmemorable. Students might not have a solid framework, or might be relying on those previous sporadic memories and experiences with peer review, which aren't yielding meaningful results inside the writing program at the University of Kansas.

Analyzing student memory, then, allows us to see what response genres are being recalled by students in writing classrooms. Additionally, data on memory allows us to explore the potential causes for why some response genres are remembered more by students than others. Uncovering student memory might provide greater insight into why some information is stored and encoded while other information is dismissed and forgotten. My research allows us to compare and contrast English 101 students' memory with English 102 students' memory. "Genres Remembered Most/Least Often by English 102 Students" (Table 6) provides a glimpse at the diverse memories English 102 students have with response genres.

Genre	% most often remembered	% least often remembered
Letter-grades	37.79%, n=48	11.02%, n=14
Marginal comments	18.11%, n=23	5.51%, n=7
Teacher conferences	16.53%, n=21	14.96%, n=19
End or summary comments	13.38%, n=17	3.93%, n=5

Peer review	9.44%, n=12	22.04%, n=28
Ratings or rubrics	3.93%, n=5	14.17%, n=18
Points or percentages	3.14%, n=4	22.04%, n=28

Table 6: English 102 students – genres most and least often remembered

One of the most drastic shifts in the data came from how English 101 and English 102 students remembered the letter-grade. 37.79% of English 102 students reported that the letter-grade was the most remembered genre, compared to 17.77% of English 101 students. The letter-grade holds little worth to English 102 students when it comes to writing and revising, which are often considered two primary goals in the first-year writing classroom. But the letter grade holds great worth to English 102 students when it comes to their memories. This information is perplexing for various reasons: wouldn't actual teacher comments on student writing, like marginal comments and end or summary comments, stand out more to students? Wouldn't understanding what genres helped students re-see or further engage in the writing process be remembered most? There's no denying the almost perpetual influence of the letter-grade. After all, the grade is what students carry with them—throughout the institutional assessment system (e.g. GPA, final transcript)—which might make the grade a more memorable genre of response.

The grade, then, moves beyond the first-year writing classroom and holds great value outside of it. In many ways, the grade is what gets transferred. Maybe memory is dependent on the different classroom-based assessment systems that help construct the writing classroom—product-based, process-based, and labor-based. In a product-based classroom, the grade is more present, which, in turn, could be remembered more by students due to its function. One student, in a roundabout way, attempted to put words to this during an interview, emphasizing the grade as being the most remembered genre because it's the summation of all the feedback on a piece of writing. The student explained how the grade was assigned after every piece of writing and the

letter-grade, as the student continued to explain, was somewhat meaningless in terms of taking up the response genre and doing something with it other than merely remembering it. The students' explanation raises an important question that highlights genres of response operating in a genre set. Marginal comments and end or summary comments can work together with grades, which might not necessarily represent conflicting goals, but rather might show dialogue and exchanges occurring between genres in a classroom-based assessment system.

For English 102 students, the least remembered genre of response was a tie between peer review and points or percentages (22.04%). Again, this data reveals something significant about how peer review, as a response genre, isn't quite working effectively, or at the very least, isn't working well enough to be remembered by students despite students frequently engaging in the genre inside the classroom which problematizes the rhetorical situation. From the list of possible options, peer review was one of the most collaborative genres of response which might imply a major challenge to the idea of collaborative learning, though, there could be subtle flaws in the deployment of peer review inside the classroom. This information could also reveal challenges for the writing program, specifically if the first-year writing program intentionally asks teachers to incorporate peer review in their classrooms. The construction of peer review, then, could use some adjustments in the writing program at the University of Kansas if the purpose is for students to better see and understand how they can revise their writing through the genre, or even if the purpose is to have students engage and acknowledge writing-as-process. English 102 students, from the data, are remembering the product—the letter-grade—at a much higher rate compared to more process-based genres of response like marginal comments, which were the second most remembered genre. Students are still responsible in taking up peer review and finding value in how their peers are responding to their writing. Focusing on uptake and memory

in teacher response allows writing teachers to see how systems can be strengthened, how genres can be taught with more clarity, and how certain genres of response can be more encouraged in hopes of them becoming memorable to students.

What feedback is most memorable for students and why?

Questions on memory, or how students were recalling and retaining certain genres of response, continued to arise during interviews which led to conversations on the nature of memorable comments and what feedback, if any, created distinct memories and why. This research question, then, was best articulated and answered through student interviews because students had the opportunity to expand and describe personal experiences on what made teacher response memorable to them. One of the biggest takeaways across interviews was students' strong position on what type of comments were *least helpful*. The default answer to the question, then, seemed to focus on the aspects of teacher response that didn't work effectively. Students almost uniformly agreed that there were three types of comments that discouraged them to take up and use teacher response, thus being the most memorable: (1) feedback that took away their agency as a writer, (2) responses that were too broad, and (3) comments on grammar or spelling. All these responses could happen during peer review, but students almost always described the nature of these comments in relationship to actual teacher feedback. Therefore, these three types of comments could easily be connected to previous uptake memories, or negative experiences and interactions with teacher response causing students to remember the effects these comments previously had on them. The first type of response, the removal of student agency, was explained through interviews as teachers attempting to "control" student writing, and many students described the nature of these comments as teachers asking them to change topics they were most interested in, or convey a different message that they weren't trying to communicate, or when

teachers marked out sentences on their paper and told them what to write instead. One student said this type of feedback was "almost like [teachers] writing your paper" (Audio #4). There's a clear positioning of power, or at the very least, a complicated notion of power roles in the classroom-based assessment system through teacher response to student writing.

The teacher, after all, is often the giver of the writing task as well as the giver of writing assessment, but the student is the one writing. Students unanimously agreed that they disliked teacher feedback that jeopardized their voice—their power—in their writing. One student acknowledged that when a teacher makes comments that conflicts with what they want to say, then it's no longer "[their] type of writing" (Audio #1). These comments, from a students' perspective, remove agency and instill a different agenda. One student described an experience where the teacher wanted the student to change their "topic," but the topic "really meant something to me" (Audio #11). The student was at odds, struggling between writing about something they wanted to write, a topic they were personally invested and interested in, versus writing what the teacher wanted to hear, or what the teacher wanted them to explore. These student experiences with response came up more than once which seems to reinforce previous teacher response scholarship that cautions against appropriating student writing. Negative memories with teacher response can impact student uptake of response. When considering the first-year writing classroom and the ways in which teacher's respond to student writing in the classroom, it could be extremely useful to listen to student memories of past teacher feedback. Understanding past experiences can provide insight and make teachers more aware of the types of responses students associate with a negative memory, which influences how they might take up response.

Additionally, almost unanimously, students stated that broad comments were anti-climactic and unbeneficial. From interviews, students pointed out that general comments, or as one student noted "unspecific" comments like "great job" and "needs work," aren't substantial in helping them understand the meaning or purpose behind the comments: "If I'm doing good on an essay, I want to know why I'm doing good, and if I'm doing bad, I want to know what I'm doing wrong" (Audio #11). Another student echoed that sentiment but framed it around the quantity of teacher feedback: "I would rather [teachers] say more than less…I would rather them give me more feedback than nothing at all…if [teachers] don't put anything on my paper, I'm going to assume it was fine" (Audio #17). Most students preferred comments that were pointing to in-text sentences or claims, which indicates that there needs to be some relationship between the comment and the text for students to do something with teacher response. This also reinforces my earlier findings about the importance of more targeted marginal comments, and in relation to uptake, it makes sense that pointing out issues as they occur would make it easier to take up feedback in revision (and to remember that feedback).

While there was a consensus among students about the need for specificity in teacher response, there was disagreement in the positive and negative binaries that students often divided and associated feedback with. Almost all the positive vs. negative conversations came up when I asked students, "What type of feedback on your writing is most memorable to you? Why is it memorable?" (Question #4). One student said that positive feedback was most memorable because "it makes me feel good about myself" (Audio #4), whereas another student said negative feedback is most memorable because "you get to the point of what you did wrong and what you can improve" (Audio #3). For some students, positive feedback helped build their "confidence in writing" (Audio #1). For others, positive feedback "doesn't really help get anything done"

(Audio #3). Fleshing out what exactly makes feedback positive or negative from a students'

perception, or at least attempting to define and associate those terms with actual teacher

feedback, would be a difficult task to take up. It's interesting that, dependent on the student and

their disposition, either negative or positive feedback can be more motivational.

Despite the messiness of certain aspects of student perception on feedback, the interviews

revealed that comments on grammar and spelling were unnecessary, or perhaps needed to be

better connected to larger rhetorical concerns. Students often cited that they could fix grammar

mistakes themselves if they simply re-read their writing, and that commenting on spelling was

pointless. Students referred to the meticulous nature of marking grammar and questioned

whether teachers were reading the actual content of their writing, or whether teachers were

simply scanning with the intent to find mistakes. Circling words, underlining, and crossing out

sentences were examples students brought up in reference to this type of feedback. One student

said they liked when teachers try to "understand what I'm writing about, not just writing 'this is a

run-on [sentence]'" (Audio #15). The student contrasted meaningful teacher responses,

comments that attempted to respond to their agency as a writer, to responses on grammar. One

student even confessed that grammatical corrections from teachers created an emotional response

of frustration: "I don't like it when teachers just scan my papers for grammatical errors and just

mark it up everywhere to the point where I can hardly read it. It's just frustrating for me" (Audio

#1). Another student added that they ignore comments when teachers "cross out a word…[and]

rewrite a different word" (Audio #4). Commenting on grammar doesn't seem to possess much

substance among students in first-year writing courses and the University of Kansas, and from

my interviews, students don't equate these comments as a learning opportunity for writing or

revising. Only one student thought otherwise: "I feel like [comments on grammar] are most

beneficial in improving writing…sentence structure, punctuation, stuff like that…the quality of your writing improves and can really take your paper to the next level" (Audio #11). While most students communicated how teacher response was memorable from an ineffective perspective, students could also clearly articulate stories about what feedback was most useful to their writing during interviews, which coincided with what students reported in the surveys. Marginal comments and local, text-specific suggestions from teachers were overwhelmingly favorites among students. My interest in understanding what genres students were taking up and remembering, ultimately, led to my curiosity in knowing what other genres students would consult in teacher response and the frequency in which students would consult these genres.

What other genres do students consult while writing, while revising, and while interpreting feedback and how often do they consult these genres?

This research question illuminates the complexity of the exchanges and interactions with genres communicating to other genres in the classroom-based assessment system through teacher response to student writing. The frequency—or how often do students consult genres while writing and while interpreting feedback—became a point of emphasis when I was analyzing the survey data. There are various genres at play working with teacher response in the classroom, like the assignment prompt. "Frequency Using Other Genres for English 101 Students" (Table 7) attempts to capture the regularity with which English 101 students use other genres while writing and while interpreting teacher response. According to the survey, English 101 students reported consulting genres more while writing as opposed to while interpreting teacher response, which might be perceived as an interesting phenomenon in the exchanges between genres after students receive feedback.

	% of how often students use other genres while writing	% of how often students use other genres while interpreting response
Frequently	38.51%, n=52	25.92%, n=35
Sometimes	42.96%, n=58	54.07%, n=73
Rarely	18.51%, n=25	15.55%, n=21
Never	0.74%, n=1	4.44%, n=6

Table 7: *English 101 students – frequency using other genres while writing/interpreting response*

Question #6 in the survey provides further context by asking English 101 students to mark what genres they use while writing, and allowed students the opportunity to check all the genres that applied to them as they were in the writing process. The reported top three genres English 101 students use while writing was the assignment prompt (82.22%), syllabus (56.29%), and class notes (54.07%). The assignment prompt usually helps orient students with a writing task, provides clear direction for the writing process, and sometimes illuminates criteria for the assignment. I'm not surprised the assignment prompt comes in first, and does so decisively, though, I'm somewhat surprised the percentage is only 82.22%. I assumed the number would be in the mid-to-high 90s since the genre of the assignment prompt is so important in guiding writing and understanding the task at hand.

The data, to me, reveals an even larger realization in terms of the frequency of English 101 students consulting other genres: the majority of English 101 students "sometimes" consult genres while writing. From the data, there doesn't seem to be a sense of urgency to consult other genres, and there doesn't seem to be a need to take up genres to help understand the writing process, or to help through the writing process. About 20% of English 101 students reported "rarely" or "never" taking up genres while writing. Understanding and interpreting this data should reveal a stronger need for English 101 courses to teach students how to use other genres

while writing, or to show students how using other genres can benefit them through the writing process. For example, maybe teaching genre awareness through teacher response, encouraging students in class to observe and examine the different genres that are available to them, genres that are at their disposal in helping them in the writing process, such as writing center tutorials or prewriting genres or sample student projects, might be most beneficial to students. English 101 students, quite possibly, aren't familiar with the complex classroom-based assessment system, including the genres they can consult while writing, or potentially aren't motivated to consult other genres through the writing process.

Data results on what English 101 students do while interpreting response are equally beneficial in understanding the intricate nature of the classroom-based writing assessment system. The survey data show that around 80% of English 101 students "frequently" to "sometimes" consult genres to help them understand teacher feedback, which is a good, noteworthy percentage. Though, the majority of English 101 students, again, only "sometimes" uses other genres to interpret response. Question #8 on the survey provides more context by revealing what genres English 101 students use to help them interpret feedback. According to the survey, the assignment prompt (65.92%) is taken up the most among English 101 students while interpreting teacher response. The assignment prompt, as a genre in the classroom-based assessment system included in the genre set interacting with teacher response to student writing, is taken up the most while English 101 students are writing and while they're interpreting teacher response. The assignment prompt, then, seems to be a valuable genre that helps guide English 101 students as they write and after they receive teacher response. This could represent a positive sign—that English 101 teachers are constructing good assignment prompts that are helping students engage in the writing task and that are also somewhat of an anchor in helping students

understand what teachers are saying, or responding to in their writing. In RGS, Anis Bawarshi explains the different roles students play when interacting with writing assignments, and Irene Clark offers genre analysis to uncover the "hidden assumptions" assignment prompts might possess which, in turn, influences uptake. There's also the possibility writing teachers are referencing the assignment prompt in their marginal and end or summary comments which position students to revisit the assignment prompt, to see what the assignment was asking them to do, and how, through their writing, students were meeting or not meeting the expectations of the assignment. This would clearly show the exchanges and interactions occurring between genres in the classroom-based assessment system.

Maybe the connectedness of genres and the influence other genres can have through the writing process isn't as visible to students as writing teachers would like to think. Some teachers might be aware of the various genres at play and might encourage students to take up and visit those genres while writing. A lot depends on the individual teacher and individual student. Nonetheless, if students are reporting that they aren't taking up other genres, then it might be useful to consider more effective ways to incorporate those genres in the classroom, so students can get a better sense of how those genres can be used productively. For example, students don't seem to be regularly visiting the assignment prompt, even though it's the genre being taken up the most by English 101 students, or the syllabus, which could also help students better understand assessment in the classroom. Maybe providing clearer instruction as to how other genres in the genre set might mediate student uptake of response is necessary in the English 101 classroom. Articulating how genres outside of marginal comments and end or summary comments, or other comments directly written on student writing, might help students get a fuller picture as to why responses are the way they are. For example, the assignment prompt is a frame

for providing response and could be explained as a lens into perceiving writing. Maybe first-year writing students aren't familiar with how other genres, such as peer review or rubrics, can inform teacher response. Or maybe the classroom-based assessment system is influencing whether they pick up other genres to interpret feedback.

The classroom-based assessment system, again, might provide some clarity as to whether students are consulting other genres to help them interpret teacher feedback. The assessment system, which is being pushed by primary assessment genres, like the letter-grade, portfolio, and grading contract, are full of embedded ideologies that might encourage or discourage genre uptake after receiving teacher response. For example, in a process-based assessment system working through portfolios, maybe students are more likely to look at other genres after they receive teacher feedback because students are being asked to revise, to further see how they can continue engaging in the writing process. In the product-based assessment system that assigns a letter-grade after each writing task, students might not be as willing to look at other genres, including the assignment prompt, when consulting teacher feedback because they aren't really being asked to do anything else with their writing.

In an interview, one student said, "If I receive feedback from a paper, and if it's already turned in, I normally won't go back and revisit it" (Audio #1). The student was referring to seeing the letter-grade on a final draft. Another student commented on how they look at feedback "only when I revise," and never when they move onto another assignment (Audio #5). The finality of the letter-grade in the product-based assessment system might not be positioning students to look at other genres to help them understand feedback. Likewise, the product-based assessment system might not be showing students how feedback can be transferred, or at least how previous feedback can help students in other writing tasks. Maybe the product-based

system, due to its focus on a finished product, which creates a sense of finality to writing, isn't allowing students opportunity to explore other genres in the set or other genres within the system like a process-based or labor-based assessment system would do.

These types of responses from students became a consistent theme throughout interviews, and they reveal the interconnectedness between writing assessment and the situation in which writing assessment is acting and being acted upon. Students don't seem to be picking through other genres to provide direction for interpreting feedback, nor do they seem to be looking at past teacher feedback as a means for transferring knowledge from one writing situation to another. Through interviews, I became aware that the idea of using feedback from one assignment to the next to help students in a new writing situation was a strange concept to students. Students, from my research, thought about feedback as a past artifact that didn't have relevancy in present writing tasks unless the writing task is asking them to do the exact same thing as a past assignment. This information, to me, says something about transfer, or potentially that students aren't transferring knowledge from past teacher responses to different writing tasks, even if the writing task is provided by the same exact teacher.

From a first-year writing program perspective, there's extremely encouraging data findings that come across through this research question, though, specifically between the differences in percentages among English 101 and English 102 students taking up genres while writing and while interpreting response. "Frequency Using Other Genres for English 102 Students" (Table 8) reveals how English 102 students are more frequently consulting other genres compared to English 101 students, which hopefully indicates that there's growth in genre knowledge and a better comprehension of the genres available to students that can help them with the writing process (and with understanding and interpreting feedback).

	% of how often students use other genres while writing	% of how often students use other genres while interpreting response
Frequently	45.66%, n=58	33.07%, n=42
Sometimes	44.09%, n=56	51.18%, n=65
Rarely	9.44%, n=12	11.02%, n=14
Never	0.78%, n=1	3.14%, n=4

Table 8: *English 102 students – frequency using other genres while writing/interpreting response*

Table 8 shows a 7% increase in frequency of consulting other genres while writing. 45.66% of English 102 students reported that they frequently use other genres while writing (as opposed to 38.51% of English 101 students). Additionally, less than 10% of English 102 students reported to rarely using other genres while writing, compared to almost 20% of English 101 students.

The top genres consulted by English 102 students while writing is the assignment prompt (92.12%), the syllabus (74.80%), and class notes (66.14%) which are all being consulted at a higher percentage among English 102 students compared to English 101 students. For instance, 74.80% of English 102 students reported that they consult the syllabus while writing, compared to 56.29% of English 101 students. The syllabus is an important genre in the classroom-based assessment system that often provides an account for how each assignment is going to be valued from an assessment perspective, and also, at times, provides a framework for requirements and expectations. The syllabus interacts and works with the assignment prompt, and can help communicate and provide insight about assessment practices and writing expectations to students. Analyzing Table 7 and Table 8 together offers the writing program a glimpse into the writing classroom, specifically what occurs in the classroom-based assessment system, or the frequency of use of other genres when students write and when they interpret feedback.

"Frequency Using Other Genres" (Figure 2) provides a clearer depiction of the differences in percentages between English 101 and English 102 students consulting other genres while writing and while interpreting feedback.
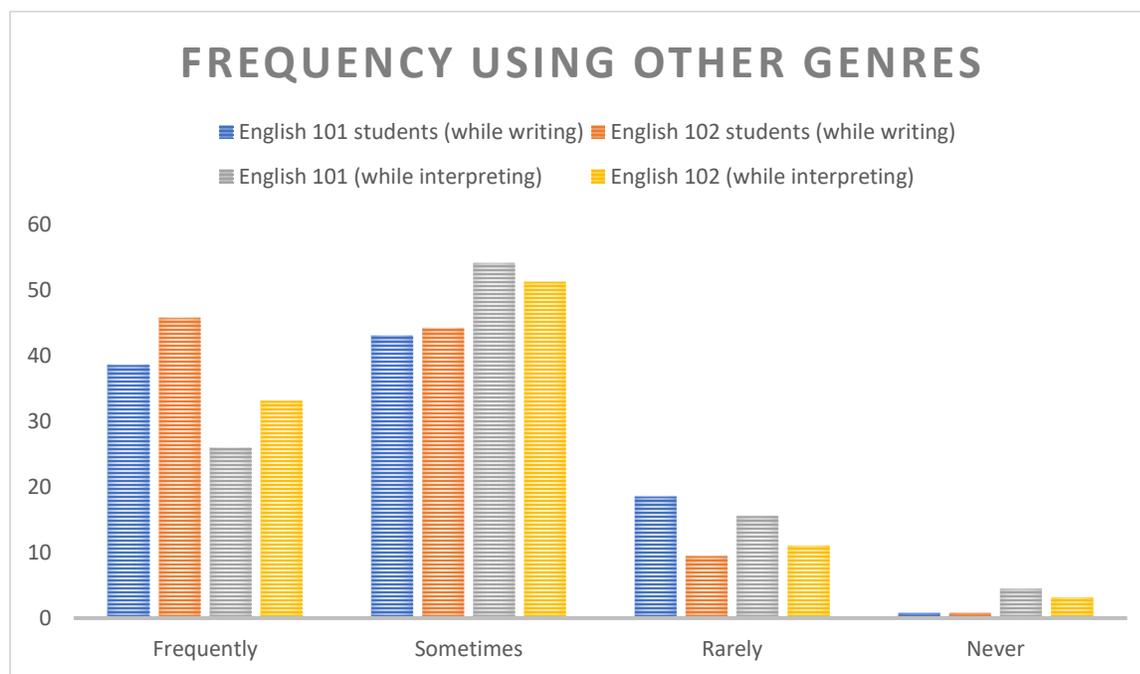
Figure 2: The frequency using other genres while writing and while interpreting feedback for English 101 and English 102 students

English 102 students reported more frequency (7% increase) consulting other genres while writing and more frequency (8% increase) while interpreting feedback. 33.07% of English 102 students, compared to 25.92% of English 101 students, reported using other genres while interpreting feedback. Maybe the most amazing statistic is that every single genre listed on the survey as a genre used for interpreting teacher feedback had a higher percentage among English 102 students than English 101 students. English 102 students are clearly using other genres at a much higher frequency than English 101 students when interpreting teacher response to their writing. The assignment prompt, a genre that helps communicate to students about the writing task and should ideally help guide their direction as well as provide some framing for

assessment, contained the most drastic difference in terms of percentage. 81.88% of English 102 students reported to consulting the assignment prompt to help them interpret teacher feedback, which is a 15% increase from English 101 students. English 102 students, from the data, take up and see value in how the assignment prompt acts on them. The increase in percentage might be due to English 102 students having more experience as writers or having had a previous writing course, like English 101, in which they learned about genres that might aid them in interpreting and taking up teacher feedback. English 102 students use the assignment prompt more to help them interpret, calculate, and discern as to why their writing met or didn't meet the expectations of the task.

Conclusion: Interpreting data on uptake and memory and moving toward a critical lens of assessment

Connecting RGS to teacher response to student writing is an incredibly valuable enterprise for composition studies. The mass amount of information we can see and understand by examining the teacher response tells us a lot about what's happening through the process of composing and receiving feedback, and the interactions that exist between genres through uptake and memory. For example, a process-based assessment system that deploys portfolios might encourage students to take up other genres in the genre set, like the assignment prompt, more than a product-based assessment system that assigns the letter-grade after each assignment. The implementation of a portfolio carries a sense of continuation and not finalization after assignments have been responded to. The act of composing and the possibility for revisiting genres like the assignment prompt in a process-based assessment system, then, can be perceived as an on-going activity throughout the semester, instead of an act of completion and moving on to the next assignment, which could easily be the case in a more product-based assessment system. Through portfolios, maybe there's more time for teachers and students to incorporate

conversations about the importance of revisiting the assignment prompt while writing, which might be better remembered by students for future writing tasks as well. If that's true, students will, ideally, be able to recall their experiences using the assignment prompt as a means for strengthening and improving their writing.

The number of minutes and hours a writing teacher accumulates responding to student writing is unparalleled. If a writing teacher responds to one piece of student writing (e.g. the final draft) per writing task, and if they have three classes with twenty students in each, and if they assign four writing tasks in each class, and if they spend thirty minutes responding to each student, then that teacher would've commented on 240 papers and spent around 7,200 minutes, or 120 hours providing feedback throughout the semester. Every semester writing teachers spend substantial time providing feedback to student writing. But writing teachers rarely do this for just one year. In fact, let's say the same writing teacher does this for fifteen years—they will spend 1,800 hours responding to student writing, or seventy-five days of their life. And that's providing feedback on just the final draft, not to mention commenting on other drafts, or smaller assignments or low-stake pieces of writing throughout the semester. There's also always the possibility of reviewing a colleague's writing wanting to publish, or revising department texts with committees, or providing feedback to students working on their thesis or dissertation, or sending comments as an anonymous reviewer for a peer-reviewed journal, and so on. Needless to say, feedback takes up a massive amount of time in our professional lives.

Teacher response to student writing is clearly one of the premier elements in every writing classroom across every writing program at every university. Feedback, ideally, helps push students to see writing differently, creating nuances about what writing does and how it does it, often calling for a revision or a different way of thinking about writing. Teacher response

helps communicate values and goals, from a pedagogical point of view and from a department perspective, and positions students to think about a specific rhetorical situation and to engage in that situation through the writing process. Without teacher response to student writing, the writing classroom loses one of its most valuable characteristics and one of our discipline's most signature aspect because the impetus of the writing classroom is *composing*, and composing requires a *response*. Composing is done by both the student and teacher, and teacher response to student writing demonstrates and emphasizes the necessity and process of composing. The writing classroom places all its eggs in one basket, so to speak, by having students compose and by providing response to student compositions through the entirety of the semester. Understanding the weight of teacher response to student writing through the classroom-based assessment system and through genre uptake and memory provides a completely different element to our programs, classrooms, and research. My study indicates how writing classrooms and assessment can be examined and can be used to help instruct and transform the writing classroom. For example, English 101 and English 102 students acknowledged that points or percentages held little value in taking up and using the genre while writing and revising, and points or percentages were rarely retained in student memory.

Through an inquiry and examination of genre and assessment, we become more informed responders, more aware responders, better responders. We become more knowledgeable about what happens in and through teacher response to student writing. We can talk more about the inner workings of various genres within the system, instead of simply describing how we respond to students. We can see how teacher response gets taken up and how students remember our feedback. For example, in my study, through interviews, students moved back and forth between what type of feedback was most motivational—positive or negative. But their memories

on what feedback was most helpful in helping them understand response and continue writing was extremely consistent—local, specific, contextual comments.

In some ways, the amount of time I spent analyzing surveys and interviews made me think of the cultural stereotypical notion of how and where teacher response happens—in a dark room with the teacher lurking over a student paper with a red ink pen. The picture isolates the writing teacher and positions the teacher in a villain-like role. The scenario doesn't account for the messiness of systems, genres, and ideologies. Now, knowing what I know about the multi-layered nature of assessment systems, assessment genres, and uptake and memory, the simplicity of that portrayal is preposterous. That imaginative situation doesn't paint the picture of the "complex web" of the classroom-based assessment system and the fullness of teacher response to student writing. It doesn't exemplify the inner workings of the uptakes and memories that exist through the process, or the interactions of the genres within the classroom-based assessment system, or account for the individualized contexts of each teacher and each student approaching the response, or the local context of the writing program and university, and so on. I'd argue that RGS opens the heart of writing assessment and allows writing teachers the ability to fully examine the facets that lie within assessment systems and genres in the writing classroom.

When writing teachers see how RGS intersects with writing assessment and that uptake and memory offers great value in understanding what happens in writing assessment systems, then writing teachers can truly understand what lies beneath and between the interactions that exist in genre systems. Anis Bawarshi explains how uptakes "can be understood as the ideological interstices that configure, normalize, and activate relations and meanings within and between systems of genres" (80). A lot happens in the exchanges between genres. In RGS, genres are typified rhetorical actions in recurring situations, and according to Bawarshi, "uptake

coordinates typified relations between opportunities discerned and opportunities defined" (80). When we consider the possibilities of exploring writing assessment through comprehending the uptakes and memories that exist when we provide feedback and when students receive response, even the processes of taking up other genres when we form feedback and the different genres students take up when they engage in writing, we should see endless possibilities and opportunities to explore interactions in writing assessment systems.

Studying uptake and memory can also reveal the ideological underpinnings that are present within our assessment systems and assessment genres. Nancy Sommers describes how writing teachers read and respond to student writing: "We read student texts with biases about what the writer should have said or about what he or she should have written, and our biases determine how we will comprehend the text" (154). But we don't merely read student texts with "biases," we read with *uptakes and memories*. The notion of responding to student writing with thoughts about what students "should have said" is far too reductionistic for such a complex operation because it ignores some of the ideological factors that exist between genres and the exchanges of genres in the classroom-based assessment system. There's a lot more at play in the entirety of the genre system of assessment than "biases." Our writing assessments are embedded with ideologies, and the other genres we use to help us build our assessments are equally saturated in ideologies. Therefore, we shouldn't oversimplify writing assessment, including response genres like marginal comments or end or summary comments. As my study shows, what students take up, value, and remember may not match up with our values. For instance, peer review is the most familiar genre of response being recalled by students in both English 101 and English 102 at the University of Kansas. Peer review workshops are even explicitly encouraged in one of the most guiding genres (e.g. MAT) in the writing program. But the survey

and interview data reveal that peer review isn't being taken up or remembered by students. This information tells us that peer review can be taught more effectively, can be framed more beneficially, and can be executed more intentionally in writing classrooms.

In my next chapter, I extend conversations about teacher response to students writing by considering further implications of this study. I conclude this dissertation by thinking about how writing teachers can take up these discoveries and potentially apply this knowledge in writing classrooms and future research in intersecting genre and assessment. I also detail how embedded ideologies within assessment genres and assessment systems influence what we do in our writing classrooms, including how ideologies help structure power between participants in systems. Understanding what is going on in our classroom-based assessment system is a necessary investigation, and knowing what is happening in and through outside contexts informing our classroom assessments help complete a fuller picture. My last chapter wishes to summarize and analyze what's to gain from intersecting genre and assessment from a teacher, student, and researcher-based perspective, and reconsiders my original question – "why not" intersect genre and assessment?

Chapter 5:
Hey, Teacher, Teacher: A Reflection on Teacher Response and Ideologies

"Hey, teacher, teacher / tell me how do you respond to students?"
-Kanye West, "Dark Fantasy"

"A particular set of discourse conventions…implicitly embodies certain ideologies—particular knowledge and beliefs, particular 'positions' for the types of social subject that participate in that practice…and particular relationships between categories of participants" (129) –Norman Fairclough, *Critical Discourse Analysis*

Kanye West, arguably one of the most influential rappers and most criticized pop culture icons over the past two decades, asks a question that echoes the sentiments of Peter Elbow and Chris Anson in Rhetoric & Composition scholarship: how do we, writing teachers, respond to students? West's question is open ended, embracing a repetition of the word "teacher," and quite possibly, incorporating a strong emphasis on "you," implying that teacher response happens in an individual context at the local level. Even the word "students" shouldn't be perceived lightly as a broad umbrella term. Teacher response is an individualized action brought about through genres in the classroom-based assessment system as one teacher produces feedback for one student at one given time. Each student is uniquely different, and feedback can affect each student differently. Some song lyric-based sites even use the word "respawn" (as opposed to "respond"), which brings even more confusion as to what happens in the classroom: hey, teacher, teacher, tell me how do you respawn the students? West's play on words can be meticulously examined—both connotations create a sense of interaction and exchange between participants, the teacher and student, and even a separation of roles within the classroom-based assessment system. Teacher response increases in complexity through genre uptake and memory, as explored more in-depth in my previous chapter, as students take up and consult different genres working with and against response. The answer to West's question, then, is quite complicated, especially considering Norman Fairclough's notion of discourse and embedded ideologies in

relationship between contexts and participants. Teacher response genres, like marginal comments, act in writing assessment systems, specifically the classroom-based assessment system, that are convoluted with other genres, like assignment prompts, and embody ideologies that interact and respond to one another. Each genre communicates various values and influences participants differently within the system.

West brings up this question in *My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy*, but a critical look at his preceding albums might provide clarity on the context of his question. His first three studio albums, *College Dropout*, *Late Registration*, and *Graduation*, all reference education in the title, and a portion of his lyrics throughout each album intersects education and culture. In "Dark Fantasy," on his fifth studio album, he brings this to light by referencing teacher response to student writing while articulating the ideologies that encourage or discourage certain identities in the institutional assessment system, which influences the classroom-based assessment system. West's first album, *College Dropout*, alludes to stereotypes and racism that permeate the institutional assessment system, like in his song "We Don't Care": "Sittin' in the hood like community colleges / This dope money is Lil' Trey scholarship // We ain't retards, the way teachers thought." West positions his audience to critique cultural stereotypes placed on identities (e.g. drug dealers/money) and challenges systems in place (e.g. high tuition rates and test scores) that potentially limit access to certain participants, like racially and socio-economically disadvantaged students. West further extends his discussion on racism in his next song "All Falls Down," specifically calling attention to the role racism plays in the broader culture, the community in which participants act and are acted upon by various genres, which influences systems like the university: "We buy our way out of jail, but we can't buy freedom / We'll buy a lot of clothes, but we don't really need 'em / Things we buy to cover up what's

inside / 'Cause they made us hate ourself and love they wealth." The lyrics are tailored to make the listener think about access and identity and discern the value of cultural narratives that are frequently pushed on communities that offer a prescriptive perception of success, which shapes participants and moves participants to produce actions through that one-dimensional understanding.

West relentlessly confronts systematic racism, which starts in the culture and bleeds to other systems like the university, eventually moving towards the classroom-based assessment system through teacher response. Fairclough's book, *Critical Discourse Analysis: The Critical Study of Language*, provides more clarity as to how ideologies work within discourse which creates struggle and separation among participants: "Hegemonic practice and hegemonic struggle to a substantial extent take the form of discursive practice, in spoken and written interaction" (129). By studying teacher response to student writing through genre uptake and memory, writing teachers can potentially understand what response genres create struggle. For example, uptake and memory potentially reveals what genres of response cater towards the hegemony, which isolates certain students in the classroom. Additionally, uptake and memory can reveal how students struggle in understanding certain genres of response, like peer review, which alters how they take up and use those genres. This type of research allows us to focus on what's occurring within our assessment systems and assessment genres, including "naturalised discourse conventions" in the first-year writing classroom like teacher response to student writing. Teacher response to student writing links systems and participants. For example, writing program genres, like the *Manual for Teachers* (MAT) at the University of Kansas, encourage certain response practices inside the writing classroom. Further, policies in the institutional assessment system requiring the delivery of a final course grade influence participants, both teachers and students,

within the writing classroom, which also shapes how teachers respond to student writing.

Catherine Schryer and Philippa Spoel explain how genres "constitute and are constituted by

networks of power relations with ideological implications…genres locate individuals within the

power relations of institutional activities" (256).

As we analyze writing assessment systems and assessment genres through genre theory,

and as we provide thoughtful feedback to student writing, we need to carefully consider the

relationships and ideologies that exist within those systems and genres. Are we paying attention

to the complicated, intricate nature of assessment systems, including the genres acting within

those systems, like teacher response? Are we critically thinking about the multitude of genres at

play in the classroom-based assessment system, and are we considering what those genres are

carrying ideologically and how they are influencing our students? Are we analyzing the broader

context, the other systems that are shaping our classroom-based assessment system? This chapter

wishes to add depth to West's lyric on teacher response and Fairclough's focus on how

ideologies are embedded in discourse and relationships among participants in a system by

articulating implications for my research intersecting genre and assessment. There are at least

two larger implications for this study: what this research provides writing teachers and students,

and how this research provides a clearer understanding of embedded ideologies in writing

assessments and broader systems.

Implications for writing teachers and students

There are a few observations that come from my data on uptake and memory in teacher

response to student writing in the classroom-based assessment system at the University of

Kansas. Three discoveries became apparent from a pedagogical perspective by challenging

writing teachers, including myself, to provide more opportunities for learning while also

engaging in intentional conversations about the intersections between genre theory and writing assessment: (1) effectively utilizing and re-imagining peer review, (2) teaching feedback as transferable from writing task to writing task, and (3) encouraging genre awareness as students consult other genres while writing and after receiving feedback. All three observations, which are in no particular order of importance, can be implemented in the writing classroom and can influence how teachers and students interact within the classroom-based assessment system.

Utilizing and re-imagining peer review

The first implication comes through data revealing that peer review isn't a familiar genre to many students as they approach the first-year writing classroom at the University of Kansas, but students are quickly and frequently asked to immerse themselves in peer review and engage in the genre once they get here. Peer review was reported by both English 101 and English 102 students as the most familiar genre of response inside the writing classroom. Unfortunately, students don't really have previous genre knowledge or experience with peer review, so peer review, from the survey data and interviews, isn't being taken up and used for revision, which would be the easiest conclusion as to why students aren't using peer review or even remembering it as they engage in revision and writing. But it's more than likely a lot more complicated than that. In my writing classroom, for example, I have students engage in at least two different peer review workshops for each writing task, which shows the frequency and familiarity students have with the genre. After my research, more specifically, after knowing that students aren't taking up and remembering a genre I frequently use in the classroom-based assessment system, I'm left with a significant decision: do I keep utilizing peer review knowing that students aren't taking up/remembering the genre, or do I attempt to alter the way I teach and incorporate peer review in my writing classroom? The data both discourage and encourage me.

The statistics discourage me because peer review, as a response genre, is seemingly ineffective and unmemorable to students, but encourage me from a pedagogical perspective because it provides a teaching opportunity—how can peer review be taught more effectively as a useful, meaningful genre of response?

First and foremost, the data challenge me to think about how I'm incorporating and teaching peer review in my writing classrooms through a flurry of questions: am I providing enough information and context about peer review? Am I sufficiently teaching the genre, or am I glossing over how it functions? Am I emphasizing the importance of receiving feedback from peers? Am I cultivating a space that makes students aware of how the genre can be transferred and used in the revision process? Additionally, how might I incorporate peer review after providing feedback to students? My research also makes me consider predispositions that students might have with peer review: how are past experiences influencing current interactions with peer review? How can peer review not be perceived as a stale genre? Are students trusting their peers' voices? Why or why not? Overall, my research indicates that writing teachers ought to thematize peer review with students, we ought to make the genre an object of reflection and discussion. The data reveal that conversations on peer review, more than likely, need to be more explicit about the usefulness of the genre especially since it seems that students are constantly engaging in peer review in English 101 and English 102. Peer review, from an ideological perspective, embraces collaboration and even a position that decenters power in the classroom— making students be evaluators and assessors, not just teachers. So, are students buying into that? Are they considering themselves as an equal to the writing teacher in providing and using feedback? Peer review is one of the few spaces for offering feedback without grades attached and where we might focus on process without process being in conflict with a product-based

ideology (e.g. letter-grade). Peer review also encourages student agency by fully allowing students to be in control of their own writing, to make decisions about their writing. Agency, from the interviews, was a consistent ideology that came up while talking to students about teacher response—students want agency, they want their writing to be *their writing*.

If the writing classroom is attempting to assert a pedagogical value of collaboration, and if the classroom is attempting to do that through assessment genres like peer review, then it appears students aren't fully cooperating with the ideology that they are equal stakeholders in feedback. After all, students are rarely doing anything with the feedback they receive from peers, and they're rarely remembering it. In English 101, peer review was the second least remembered genre. In English 102, peer review was tied for the least remembered assessment genre. As a teacher, this information makes me wonder why it isn't a memorable assessment genre; it makes me question the purpose and functionality of the genre and how students aren't, seemingly, getting something from it, or at least doing something with it. One implication, then, is a reconsideration of the design and structure of peer review in the writing classroom. How can peer review be created and formed as an assessment genre that is used and remembered by students? If one ideology in the classroom is to promote collaboration and cultivate student agency in providing feedback, then how can writing teachers meet that value through more effective peer review workshops and practices?

There are opportunities to learn and implement new practices that encourage peer review to be taken up and utilized in the writing classroom due to my research on uptake and memory. For example, one solution might be asking students to summarize both peer and teacher feedback, including areas of overlap and differences occurring within those responses, which might make the feedback more memorable. Students would be intentionally engaging in both

peer response and teacher response and, ideally, be holding those responses as equals by articulating what was being asked of them. Another solution might be if teacher response referenced peer comments. Teachers, in this situation, would need to see and work with peer review directly and encourage students to see how their peers commented on their writing. This would also re-situate power and authority—teachers would be deferring to students in the classroom as a viable source for feedback. A final solution might be using a genre already familiar in the process-based assessment system working with portfolios—a reflection letter. Maybe writing teachers can refocus the reflection letter by specifically encouraging students to reflect on how they incorporated peer feedback in revision. This peer review focused reflective letter can also challenge students to think about and articulate what they learned through peer workshops and how they would alter those conversations in the future to further help them with writing.

Teaching feedback as transferable

The second discovery from a classroom-based assessment system, specifically teacher response to student writing taking place in the system, involves some notion of transfer, or at least the knowledge of feedback being applicable from one situation to the next. From my surveys and interviews, it became clear that students chose to not look back at teacher feedback, whether that be feedback from the same teacher assigning a different writing task, or whether that be feedback from two different teachers in two different courses. Through my study, specifically through survey Question #5, I became aware that students didn't take up and use teacher feedback, which says something about the perception of feedback as well as application of feedback. In English 101, 11.11% of students reported to frequently consulting past teacher feedback. In English 102, even fewer students (8.66%) reported to frequently consulting past

teacher feedback. Pedagogically, this provides opportunity to talk about the nature of feedback, to teach feedback as an opportunity for learning, not just a simple exchange of goods—your writing for my feedback.

If students do perceive feedback as unmovable, then there's a problem with how we're talking about response, and possibly, a problem with how we're constructing our responses. Ideally, students see actual value in our feedback, not just passive value that acknowledges our suggestions and then uses them to change or alter their writing to better meet our expectations, which ultimately takes away student agency. Actual value comes through actively understanding feedback, using response to not only revise in present situations but also as a tool to critically think about and remember the nature of comments in future writing situations. This, in many ways, embraces transfer. How can we start teaching the perception of feedback as a living, breathing conversation and not as a dead, cold artifact? As a teacher, the findings from the data make me consider follow-up classroom and individual conversations on feedback. Am I doing a poor job communicating the significance to response once its delivered? How often do we respond and then move on to the next writing task? How often are we, as teachers, turning the page to the next thing without carefully considering how past feedback has great future value?

Students consistently sat in my office answering interview questions confessing that they didn't look back at teacher feedback as they engaged in their writing process. To me, the unilateral consistency echoing the same stance was a red flag. I might have been able to understand if students said they didn't look at an English teacher's feedback when engaging in a writing task for their History course. After all, crossing disciplines and even crossing teacher expectations in writing might be too different to consult past writing tasks and do something with them. But that wasn't the only thing that came up when talking about consulting teacher

feedback. I almost always followed up my original question by asking students if they would look at the same teacher's feedback delivered on one writing task when they started another writing assignment. Every single student said some iteration of rarely. Some students said maybe if the topic was the same, or if the assignment prompt was similar. But the majority answered no.

This discovery challenged me to think about how feedback can be taught as an active voice, and how the transfer of feedback might be a useful conversation to start having in writing classrooms. I'd argue that feedback—good, probing, useful teacher response—can carry over from one writing task to the next and even from one disciplinary course to another. Maybe the best way to talk about it would be to consider the content of the feedback, but we would have to do that somewhat broadly and less focused on assignment-specific, directed responses. For example, if a student, throughout an assignment, is insufficiently supporting or providing evidence for general claims, and if a writing teacher is commenting on the margins where that's happening and how the student could strengthen positions and portions of their writing by revising those sections, then I'd argue that those teacher comments can extend well-beyond writing tasks and disciplines. There could be great value in writing classrooms engaging in those conversations and students being taught that those comments shouldn't be perceived as a one-time consideration. Perhaps devoting a class to how a writer might develop and support a point would be one approach, or maybe using an example from a previous assignment and applying it to a current assignment could cultivate conversations on transfer. There could be great worth in re-directing students to see the purpose of feedback and the possibility of moving feedback knowledge from one writing task to another, or one discipline to another. Providing time and space in the writing classroom to have students go back and summarize feedback on a previous

assignment as a way to apply that feedback to the next assignment seems like a useful pedagogical practice.

This would have to take a core pedagogical initiative to not only respond to student writing, but also respond to responses and embark on conversations about the value in understanding and using feedback in different situations. We could have classroom discussions, or one-on-one conferences with students about how their development of points in one writing project might differ from their development of points in another writing task but that it's all the same general premise. This could also respond to students' reports that teacher feedback is too broad by having them focus on what feedback is situation-specific and what can be generalized across writing tasks. Even then, it would be up to students to take up those conversations and to take up past feedback and use it for future gain. I don't think this could be accomplished in casual passing or a one-time classroom discussion or one-time teacher conference. For feedback to be perceived as active, and for feedback to be applied in such a way, I think it would have to be a pedagogical emphasis in the classroom-based assessment system. These conversations and this type of work could provide an even better understanding of the nature of teacher response to student writing, and could also be a space for our research to grow as we continue to consider writing assessment and even transfer.

Some pedagogical strategies intentionally teaching feedback as transferrable, embracing the need to look at feedback, to analyze feedback, and to see the usefulness in applying feedback to new situations, could rejuvenate students' perception of teacher response. I offered a renewed reflective letter as a potential solution for embracing peer review, and I believe something similar in nature might help students understand feedback as transferrable. Instead of a reflective letter, which is often situated at the beginning of a project to help orient readers, I'd suggest a

"post-report" focusing on transfer. Students would turn in their writing task accompanied by a post-report, and the post-report would have three main functions: (1) to communicate how the writer used feedback from a previous writing task inside the writing classroom and transferred those comments to their present writing task, (2) to communicate how the writer used feedback from a previous writing task outside the writing classroom (e.g. History) and applied it to their writing, and (3) to explain what genres of response, like marginal comments or peer review, they transferred the most/least in their current writing task and why. These three purposes in the post-report embrace feedback, uptake, memory, and transfer, but also require consistent conversations on response genres which encourages genre awareness.

Encouraging genre awareness

The third discovery from my research might not require as much of a pedagogical initiative as embracing feedback as transferable, but still, nonetheless, would involve active conversations about genre and writing assessment inside the classroom-based assessment system. From my study, it became clear that students don't know the full range of genres that can help them engage in the writing process and understand teacher feedback. Of course, at the beginning of my research, I was unaware of all the genres at play in the classroom-based assessment system, too. The implication from this, then, might be best described as bringing a genre awareness of the genres interacting with student writing as students take up a writing task, and an awareness of the genres that can help students interpret teacher response. In English 101 (82.22%) and English 102 (92.12%), the assignment prompt was the most consulted genre while writing. Those numbers are relatively good, though one could argue that the assignment prompt should always be consulted while taking up a writing task because it sets and describes the conventions and genre expectations (as well as criteria for evaluation). The assignment prompt

can be perceived as a map of sorts, a genre that orients students and provides clarity and direction as they take up a specific rhetorical situation—what's being asked of them, for what purposes, and to what audiences. In English 101, the second most consulted genre was the syllabus (56.29%), which seems like a drop-off compared to the assignment prompt's percentage and reveals that the majority of students aren't actively and consistently consulting other genres.

The syllabus could be a genre that works with teacher response, or guides students to better understand the classroom-based assessment system, like the process-based assessment system, and the assessment genre, the portfolio, working within the system. The syllabus could explicitly state the purpose in embracing a process-based assessment system as well as provide direction as to how the portfolio is going to be implemented in the classroom. For example, the student can receive teacher response and go to the syllabus to better understand how portfolios operate and can also be encouraged to pick up the feedback and revise since the process-based system resists finalizing a writing task by intentionally not placing a letter-grade on an individual assignment. In this situation, the student can consult the syllabus to help interpret teacher response because the syllabus provides a framework—explanations and rationales for working with portfolios. The syllabus becomes a genre to encourage students to keep writing, to read the comments, to respond diligently and carefully, and to further engage in the writing process. The syllabus could even outline what writing task is next in the sequence of assignments, thus allowing the writer to understand how one assignment works with another assignment, and how feedback on one writing task can transfer to another, which can coincide with implementing intentional conversations about feedback being transferable in the writing classroom.

From a teacher perspective, this might provide an opportunity to teach the writing classroom about what genres are at play in the classroom-based assessment system as students

embark on the writing process. Are students familiar with how other genres, including the syllabus, might help them as they write? Are students familiar with how class notes, or even handouts or texts provided by the teacher might be useful during their composing process? While the assignment prompt is unequivocally an important genre to take up, it isn't the only genre available to the writing classroom. This type of genre awareness would also require teachers to think critically about their classroom-based assessment system, to consider what other genres can be taken up and what other genres can inform students as they write. In some ways, this might reveal pedagogical deficiencies in teaching writing. For example, upon examination of the classroom-based assessment system, a teacher might realize they aren't pointing to other genres outside the assignment prompt that can help students. Therefore, the teacher is limiting the opportunities for students to think about and consider the complexity of the classroom and the writing process, and the teacher isn't fully incorporating genres as a way to help students understand and interpret a specific writing task, which also might mean the teacher is not positioning students in the best situation for succeeding on an assignment.

I don't want to assume or even argue that teachers are limiting student success in writing, but I do want to argue that a fuller understanding of genres in complex assessments systems can bring about more opportunities for teaching and learning writing. Understanding the interactions and exchanges that occur between genres in the classroom-based assessment system, and bringing awareness to the numerous genres at play, including the numerous genres of response, such as the interaction between marginal and end or summary comments, can help students better see the writing and assessment process. Comprehending how genres can help in the writing process is only one opportunity for this type of research intersecting genre and assessment. Another potential implication is understanding what genres students take up after

they receive teacher feedback, which could potentially boost the frequency in which students pick up and use genres to understand feedback. In English 101, 25.92% of students reported to frequently taking up genres to interpret feedback. English 102 students reported a higher frequency (33.07%). It might be encouraging that the numbers increased from English 101 to English 102, and that might be a result of students becoming more familiar with the classroom-based assessment system, including the genres available to them as they write, revise, and interpret teacher response. Nonetheless, the infrequency in students taking up genres to understand feedback is somewhat disturbing when I consider the amount of feedback students receive during the semester.

How can the writing classroom, then, increase the frequency with which students take up genres to comprehend teacher feedback to student writing? This can be easily dismissed by an oversimplification of positioning students as the sole proprietor for taking up genres to understand feedback. But that's somewhat of an injustice to the writing classroom, including the feedback we produce, the amount of time we spend responding, and the expectations many of us have for our students. Genre awareness and practice interpreting response genres inside the classroom could help strengthen how students perceive teacher response as well as the frequency in which they look at it. So, what does this look like? I believe this takes the form of explicit investigations and critically engaged conversations on teacher response, including the genres working within the classroom-based assessment system that come alongside (and interact with) response genres. I'd argue that these investigations and conversations happen when students are writing, when teachers are responding, when teachers are delivering response, and when students have teacher response in front of them and are wondering what to do with it. I don't think this type of work happens at just one stage, or during one class session. This should be an active on-

going conversation continually developed and revisited in the writing classroom. For application purposes, let's consider when students have teacher response in front of them.

Instead of merely passing back feedback to students, and instead of having students interpret feedback individually, I'd argue for a collaborative conversation via a class discussion through questions intersecting genre and assessment: What do we do with this feedback, and how can we interpret this feedback in front of us? For example, if a teacher produces marginal comments and end or summary comments, then the class could examine how those genres of response are working in relationship to one another. The class can look at how an end or summary comment talking about a need to revise and focus more clearly on supporting claims can refer back to a specific instance noted within the margins that encouraged the student to further support an idea. These classroom conversations on how response genres are interacting with one another can be a resource as students pick up feedback and use it for revision. Or maybe most applicable to the writing program at the University of Kansas as indicated through the data, conversations on peer review and how peer review can be taken up and used to help interpret teacher response might be extremely useful. The classroom could analyze what comments from the teacher align with what their peers suggested during the writing process, and how taking up and using peer feedback could benefit them in future writing tasks. This would develop and cultivate genre awareness on teacher response.

Additionally, these conversations could extend to other genres interacting with response, creating more genre awareness about the classroom-based assessment system. Students could work collaboratively in small groups and analyze how the assignment prompt, and syllabus, and other texts, like an article assigned to students focusing on revision, can help illuminate teacher response. These small group examinations would encourage students to pick up other genres in

the classroom-based system and look at what might help them interpret teacher feedback. For example, if small groups see that the assignment prompt provides criteria for assessment, then they can examine how the teacher responded to their writing through that framework. This activity would also support student agency, encouraging students to be active participants in the classroom. There's also the possibility for small group conversations to illuminate the need for pedagogical revision. For example, small groups might determine the assignment prompt isn't clear enough to interpret teacher response or that the teacher responded in a way that was contradicting what was being asked of them to do. These discussions could lead to a collaborative reworking of the assignment prompt, which could also indicate to students how teaching materials need revision, further illustrating a writing classroom ideology—writing-as-process—and deconstructing power positions between participants.

These different activities can bring teacher response and genres working in the classroom-based assessment system to the forefront of the writing classroom, and can provide more opportunities for teaching and learning through intersecting genre and assessment. These small group and classroom conversations examining specific genres can bring about genre awareness as students write, revise, and interpret feedback. Students become aware of the various genres at their disposal and the amount of exchanges and interactions occurring between genres in the classroom-based assessment system. Teacher response becomes perceived as a much more complex process than merely making comments and delivering assessment done from a position of power. In fact, having students look at the various genres at play within the classroom that help shape assessment can also reveal structures, policies, and power in the institutional and program-based assessment system acting on the classroom-based assessment system. Students can analyze how university standards and expectations for delivering a final

course letter-grade influence what genres are available to writing teachers to use inside the classroom. Additionally, students can see how the writing program encourages certain genres of response, like peer review, which indicates how some response genres are more familiar to students than others, like rubrics. Explicitly increasing genre awareness of assessment systems and assessment genres, including teacher response to student writing, has the potential for creating dialogues about power and can reveal embedded ideologies in classroom-based assessment systems.

<u>Implications for understanding the power of embedded ideologies in assessment systems and assessment genres</u>

Ideology has played a significant role in intersecting genre and assessment throughout my dissertation. Most recently, in my previous chapter, genre uptake and memory revealed at least two different interpretations on ideologies: (1) ideologies embedded within genre systems and genres, and (2) ideologies students bring to genre systems and genres, which are often formed by other contexts, including culture. One of the most important things to acknowledge when considering the nature of ideology is that there's never just one ideology at play within any assessment system or assessment genre. Overlapping assessment systems interacting with each other, like the institutional assessment system influencing actions within the classroom-based assessment system through policies and other guiding genres, can tell us a lot about ideologies. As we now know, genres function in and for specific purposes, including writing assessments; are framed around rhetorical situations, like the writing classroom; and every rhetorical situation is constructed by and through participants, like teachers and students, acting and being acted upon by a complex genre system that communicates values and beliefs to other genres and participants within that system. Ideologies are "implicitly" embodied in beliefs and practices, and are embedded in assessment systems and assessment genres. Genres position participants in

assessment systems to think and act a certain way: "Genres locate or position individuals within the power relations of institutional activity" (Pare 59).

Anthony Pare argues that ideology has a "camouflaging effect," and that "no single, unadulterated ideological perspective prevails entirely" (60). Ideologies can be out of sight from participants, like occluded genres, and can frequently be working below the surface in the very fabric of the genre system and set. From my research, one implication for writing teachers is to consider how ideologies are a part of all writing assessments, how ideologies aren't easily removed and replaced, and how understanding assessment systems and assessment genres can help reveal embedded ideologies acting on participants, like students. There's multiple ideologies acting within and outside systems and genres positioning participants and re-enforcing hegemonies. Writing teachers need to move beyond assessment genres in writing classrooms in order to fully consider how embedded ideologies in other assessment systems work for and against the classroom-based assessment system and assessment genre; writing teachers have to be aware of and critically examine the role power plays within all assessment systems in order to identify ideologies existing in writing classrooms. According to James Berlin, "Power is an intrinsic part of ideology, defined and reinforced by it, determining, once again, who can act and what can be accomplished" (479). Power manifests through assessment systems and defines actions and roles for participants. Berlin adds, "The overall effect of these permutations tends to support the hegemony of the dominant class" (479). Power doesn't fade away in genre systems; it doesn't disappear. There are visible hierarchies, despite invisible ideologies, in assessment systems. Ideologies push and pull participants, often leading to hierarchies and the formation of hegemonies, like the teacher being considered the "judge" of writing, inheriting the role as the

deliverer of final assessment, often established through the letter-grade. Ideology reveals itself through the emergence of power.

If writing teachers take into consideration the context of the university, they can begin asking questions about the existence of power that runs through the institutional assessment system. Writing teachers can see how participants are placed in hierarchical positions that provide or limit access to specific actions. The teacher is positioned over the student; the department chair is positioned over the teacher; the dean is positioned over the department chair; the provost is positioned over the dean; and the president is positioned over the provost. There are clear hierarchical positions in institutional systems, including the university, that effect classroom practices, like teacher response to student writing. From a quick glance, teachers have power and authority in responding to student writing in the classroom. Though, a deeper analysis will reveal institutional authority placed on response, like how teachers are required to produce a final letter-grade which influences GPA and academic standing in the institution. Institutional authority, then, conflicts with teacher authority, altering what decisions are made through response and how assessment is given to student writing. Furthermore, institutional authority might even work against certain classroom-based assessment systems, like the process-based system, which wishes to, in many ways, de-emphasize the letter-grade assessment genre, which is an important genre in the institutional assessment system. Embedded ideologies within assessment systems shape what participants can do, and genres working within those assessment systems interact, exchange, and get taken up and remembered by participants.

George Kamberelis describes how genres are "crystallizations of previous systems of ideology and practice," and explains how "as changes in genre occur, changes in ideologies and practices occur as well" (128, 140). Ideologies within genres change as systems change and vice

versa, which I explored more in-depth in Chapter 2 through the program-based assessment system via Kathleen Yancey's writing assessment "wave" analogy. Changes in systems are messy. Participants can also help shape genres and systems, too. While there doesn't seem to be much uniformity between who or what initiates shifts in systems, Kamberelis does proclaim a key function of genres: "Genres are primary carriers of ideologies" (146). To understand what occurs in the writing classroom, writing teachers have to know what gets taken up and carried from other contexts and other assessment systems, like the institutional and program-based assessment system, to the classroom-based assessment system. Additionally, we can attempt to discern how genres and systems help reinforce certain power positions.

Even if we consider the production and distribution of feedback, like teacher response to student writing, which was explored more thoroughly in my last chapter, we notice two primary participants—teacher and student. Now, depending on the classroom-based assessment system and the ideologies and assessment genres used in the classroom, students can also be evaluators of writing through peer feedback. But teacher response to student writing, like marginal comments, always-already signals who is in the position of power. Notice the preposition "to" in the phrase "teacher response to student writing," and consider the directional movement. The phrase consists of a directional preposition, indicating that an action is being placed from one participant (the teacher) onto the other (the student). Teacher response is working against (or for) student writing. This positioning is further illustrated in the language use of the first sentence of Harvard College Writing Program's *A Brief Guide to Responding to Student Writing*: "Your comments on student writing should clearly reflect the hierarchy of your concerns about the paper" (1). The hierarchy isn't isolated to just the list of concerns, though. The hierarchy is represented by who does and who doesn't have power and privilege in the process of

constructing feedback. The participant producing the action is the teacher. In Harvard's Guide, the teacher, signified by the word "your," is placed in a position of power—*your comments / your concerns*. The teacher is the participant who has "concerns," not the student. From this brief analysis, the teacher could be considered the "judge" of student writing, the one who gives the final verdict. In many ways, the language asserted in the Harvard Guide, the positioning of word choices used to describe response, reinforces my earlier findings based on interviews with students—students are concerned about losing their voice and sense of agency in writing. Are genres outside the writing classroom influencing how we perceive ourselves as teachers, how we perceive our role in teacher response, at the cost of our students' voice?

The final verdict comes through the production of a final course grade, which is given to the student by the teacher. The position of power the teacher has over the student in the writing classroom through writing assessment is further exemplified through the delivery of the final course grade in the classroom-based assessment system. Who has the ability to assign a letter-grade at the end of the semester? Who has access to the university portal where you submit grades? The teacher. The position of power is confirmed through the final course grade. Other structures and assessment systems, like the institutional assessment system, might tell the teacher how they can/can't assess students which influences the actions they can produce in the classroom-based assessment system. Nonetheless, the writing classroom is inherently segregated by power from the moment the teacher steps into the classroom. The first day of class is a great illustration of the existence of segregation in education through genres like the syllabus. The teacher walks in; students may or may not already be in class, nonetheless, there's a spatial separation between student desks and the chalkboard (or white board) where the teacher often finds themselves; class starts; the teacher initiates communication; the teacher delivers the

syllabus; many times, the student has little to no help in constructing the syllabus; the power is reasserted; classroom assessment is represented on the syllabus; the teacher, then, explains the structure of the class, requirements, and expectations. The power is established even if the ideological undertones are invisible.

We can't ignore the power asserted in teacher response to student writing, or the delivery of the final course letter grade, or the production of assessment to individual writing assignments, or the first day of class, or the syllabus. This is the ideological reality of the classroom-based assessment system where the teacher and student are the two primary participants. But the existence of power isn't confined to just the classroom-based system, as we know. There are participants hovering over teachers in the hierarchical structure as well. The participants in those positions influence what the teacher can and can't do; the participants in those positions work in a system that asserts and reasserts their power over the teacher. Writing assessment reaffirms positions of power, what identities are separated and through what purposes, and how power exists in the institution and in the classroom. Power is never divided equally. Not everyone has the same access. Some participants have partial access, and some have no access at all. There's no way we can think of power through just one lens: "In the U.S., power usually is organized around three nodes of difference: gender, race, and economics" (Inoue 57). When considering writing assessment, we can think about the system and its separation of power through various questions: who has power in writing assessment? Who has had power in the construction of writing assessment? And who does writing assessment benefit?

These questions are multifaceted and lead to conclusions that indicate power and hegemonies are cultivated by different characteristics and traits that position identities over others. Analyzing writing assessment systems and assessment genres allows us to understand and

answer these questions. Asao B. Inoue writes, "Power is mostly exercised through the ability to judge, assess, and grade writing" (67). Through my research detailing the complexity of assessment systems and assessment genres, we should find ourselves searching for how power and ideology is present, has been, and will continue to be asserted through writing assessments. We need to consider our writing assessments through a genre framework, and draw on instances of established power that assert privilege and position identities over others within our assessments. A genre framework will better equip us to address the inequities of power in classroom assessment. Compositionists have already focused explicitly on different characteristics of identity and privilege (Villanueva Jr.) as well as language and power (Matsuda). Genre adds to our understanding of power, allowing us to peek inside our assessment systems and genres, including what ideologies are working with and against participants through those genres. Writing teachers can even use assessment genres, like portfolios and grading contracts, to resist traditional power structures that might value some student identities over others.

    We operate under structures like writing assessment systems that cultivate, assert, and reassert identity-based dominance and power due to ideological positions inherently embedded in our assessment systems and assessment genres. Inoue argues for an awareness of sustainable, fair assessment: "What students take from a writing course may not be solely because of the assessments in the course, but assessment always plays a central role, and good assessment, assessment that is healthy, fair, equitable, and sustainable for all students, determines the most important learning around writing and reading in a course" (9-10). Comprehending and establishing what makes good assessment "good" might be difficult, but striving for good assessment is a worthwhile endeavor to pursue. Intersecting genre and assessment allows us to

evaluate our assessment systems and assessment genres, which brings to light embedded ideologies and gives us the opportunity to see whether program and classroom goals are being met and whether our constructions are indeed fair.

<u>Conclusion: Intersecting genre and assessment as a continual, forever practice</u>

When I consider how genres are typified rhetorical actions as defined by RGS, and when I reflect on how I construct my own responses to student writing, there are similar patterns and forms my responses tend to take (as noted by Smith). Most of my own responses take the form of both marginal comments and end or summary comments. Logistically, I provide about ten marginal comments and one end or summary comment (about 200 words) per student writing, and I spend on average thirty minutes responding to each student. Overall, when responding, I attempt to embrace certain pedagogical practices: I attempt to know what I want to do and know my reading processes (Bazerman); I attempt to be a mindful listener of what students have to say, being careful to not remove student agency; I attempt to be conscious of how I'm approaching student texts (Williams); I attempt to be probing and encouraging in my responses (Straub); I attempt to be intentional and aware of how students might receive my comments; I attempt to push students to think about something new, something different, hopefully something that will make them ponder on how they can go deeper in their thinking and writing.

Before writing this dissertation, I could easily describe the nature of my responding process like I did in my previous paragraph to colleagues, friends, and family. Additionally, I could recite almost mindlessly my personal values and beliefs when it came to providing response to student writing. As writing teachers, I imagine we could all do that. Prior to this dissertation, though, I didn't realize how much was going on in the classroom-based assessment system, like how various genres interact and communicate with my responses, how students take

up my feedback in revising their writing, how students use other genres to understand my feedback, what students remember from past feedback, and how frequently students choose to examine feedback as well as other genres in the system. In my research and writing process, I've seen that assessment is *never* just about responding to student writing; assessment is *never* just about assigning or submitting grades; and assessment is *never* just about teachers and students. Writing assessment extends far beyond what we think and know about the assessment genres we use in writing classrooms, whether that be the letter-grade in the product-based assessment system, or the portfolio in the process-based assessment system, or the grading contract in the labor-based assessment system. Writing assessments interact with other genres we might not even think about, like our syllabus. This research has given me a clearer picture of various genres in different assessment systems. This research has given me a better understanding of the exchanges that exist between genres in assessment systems. This research has shown me aspects of uptake and memory in writing assessment that can only be understood through genre theory. All in all, this inquiry in intersecting genre and assessment allows us to see more clearly the inner workings of complex genre systems, assessment systems.

An examination of different assessment systems, including the institution, program, and writing classroom, can help reveal the interaction and exchanges occurring between genres and participants, and can bring greater awareness to the ideological happenings existing within assessment systems. I believe we can see how classroom-based goals and purposes are being met through assessment and we can revise our assessment practices by analyzing what assessment genres are working against our pedagogical values, which can be executed through understanding how students take up and remember certain genres of response. For example, from my survey and interview observations, I'd argue that grades, which inherently value product,

should be a response genre withheld during the drafting or revision process or that there should be opportunities for feedback without grades attached (like in teacher conferences or peer review) in the English 101 and English 102 classroom if teachers desire for students to remember writing assessment and to apply previous knowledge from experiences to other instances of writing. Additionally, we need to consider the complexity of the institution and program, including the embedded ideologies in each system. For example, the overarching institutional assessment system emphasizes points (e.g. GPA) and letter-grades which, in some ways, can work against program and classroom values that wish to focus on process and move away from product. If one of the purposes of the writing program is to create meaningful exchanges between teacher and student through response, it appears, from my data, some response genres are more meaningful and valued by students than others. Points or percentages after each assignment seems counterproductive in English 101 and English 102 if writing teachers want students to revise and remember their feedback. The rhetorical situation and the complexity of assessment systems, including how systems act on other systems, need to be accounted for when attempting to understand what's going on in the writing classroom.

The truth is, we might never know every genre, every interaction, and every effect/affect inside, outside, in-between, and underneath writing assessment systems and writing assessment genres. But I'd argue, as first suggested in my introduction, for "why not"? Why not continue seeing the possibilities and examine fully the intersections of genre and assessment? Why not continue seeing where it takes us and what we learn about assessment systems and assessment genres? These pages have been filled with an illustration as to how genre, specifically RGS concepts, allows us to see writing assessment in a different light, in a new way. These pages have inquired, explored, and discovered systems and genres in my local context at the University of

Kansas. As ideologies continue to change (as history reminds us), and as Rhetoric & Composition moves toward newer ways of composing, like through emerging technologies and multimodality, the existence of genre systems and genres and the necessity for providing assessment will always be present. RGS provides a complex, detailed understanding of genre systems that allows us to truly explore and examine writing assessment, including when assessment genres adapt and change like using screencasting technology to provide feedback to student writing digitally. Intersecting genre and assessment will always further improve our pedagogies and practices because questions similar in nature to West's "hey, teacher, teacher" will continually arise in both academic and non-academic circles. And writing teachers are always going to be expected to have answers to their practices (and rightly so).

Writing teachers will be better prepared to answer these questions when we consider intricate genre systems with complex interactions, like uptake and memory, between genres. Writing teachers will have a clearer understanding as to what *actually happens* in the writing classroom through assessment. By intersecting genre and assessment, teachers will be more well-versed in the systems, genres, and ideologies working with and against their pedagogies and assessments. Additionally, teachers will be more alert to the actions genres can produce in the writing classroom, like why a student chose not to take up peer review because of unfamiliarity with the genre. Teachers can get a better sense as to what genres students use, what genres students remember, and what genres are meaningful to students in the writing process. Intersecting genre and assessment indicates an attempt to understand what happens when participants interact with genres and how ideologies play a role in establishing and positioning power through discourse and relationships, as Fairclough notes. There's great need in being aware of assessment systems and genres that might delineate students. There's great

responsibility in listening to how students express how writing assessment makes them feel and what response genres make them do, including how teacher response might discourage them. Cultivating a mindful classroom, embracing and encouraging student agency through writing, and removing practices that work against students starts by knowing what occurs in the classroom, specifically the role systems and genres play in shaping pedagogy and learning. Writing assessment should carefully be examined through genre theory to strengthen pedagogical practices, support students, remove harmful ideologies, and "respawn" the heartbeat of the writing classroom. After all, assessment is the impetus of the institution, program, and classroom.

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Appendix 1: English 102 Syllabus

English 102: Critical Reading & Writing (S2017)
Instructor: Shane Alden Wood
Email: shaneawood@ku.edu
Office: Wescoe 2030 or the Underground
Office Hours: M: 1:30-4:00

This course has the following course goals and learning outcomes, which guide its structure, philosophy, and activities. By the end of the semester, a student should be able to demonstrate the following in an acceptably proficient manner.

Statement of course goals:
This course satisfies KU Core Goal 2, learning outcome 2.

1. Maintain and continue to improve the abilities gained in English 101

   a. Analyze how language and rhetorical choices vary across texts and different institutional, historical, and/or public contexts

   b. Demonstrate their rhetorical flexibility within and beyond academic writing

   c. Revise to improve their own writing

2. Use writing and reading for inquiry, thinking, learning, and communicating

   a. Work with demanding readings and learn to interpret and evaluate these readings

   b. Use writing as a problem-solving process that fosters the discovery, analysis, and synthesis of new ideas

   c. Analyze and synthesize multiple points of view so as to understand that multiple perspectives on an idea are in operation at the same time

3. Write in ways appropriate to academic rhetorical contexts

   a. Recognize and critically evaluate how a writer's choices (content, organization, format, rhetorical moves, style, grammar, etc.) reflect and represent multiple cultural and/or historical perspectives

   b. Engage in collaborative work at a variety of levels (research, inventions, writing, etc.) to prepare students for team/group situations, communication in the workplace, and lifelong learning

4. Engage in a variety of research methods to study and explore topics

   a. Propose, plan and complete research projects using research methods appropriate to the writing task

   b. Effectively integrate a variety of appropriate sources into their writings

        c. Learn and use at least one system of documentation responsibly

Required materials:
Greene and Lidinsky, *From Inquiry to Academic Writing*, 3rd ed. (Bedford/St. Martin's), 2014.

Grading:
Your final course grade will be based on the following weightings of graded work:

Project #1, Language & Identity	20%
Project #2, Ethnography	20%
Project #3, Restaurant Review	20%
Project #4, Research Methods	15%
Participation, self-assessment, & other writings	25%

In this course we will be using the +/- grading scale, approved by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences to describe intermediate levels of performance between a maximum of A and a minimum of F. Intermediate grades represented by plus or minus shall be calculated as .3 units above or below the corresponding letter grade.

There are <u>two</u> things I value the most when it comes to teaching: (**1) attendance/participation, and (2) labor**. I emphasize being in class, participating, and doing all the work with good faith and turning all the assignments in on time. I have high expectations for these two values.

Ultimately, I believe the following attendance policy and the late work policy best reflect these expectations and corresponding consequences.

Attendance / tardy policy:
You're allowed two absences. I do not differentiate between excused and unexcused unless it is a university required policy (e.g. athletic, religious). Therefore, it would be in your best interest to save those two absences for emergency purposes (e.g. sickness) only. After two absences, your letter-grade drops one whole letter-grade per absence (e.g. 3 absences: you can no longer earn an A in the course).

Please respect me and your classmates by showing up on time prepared to engage in discussion. A tardy is arriving to class late, even one minute after class starts. Three tardies will be counted as one absence.

Late work policy:
According to the Department of English policy, you must turn in all four major projects to pass this course, even if a project is so late that it will have earned an F. In this course, you should expect an assignment will be due before every class session. Most of these assignments are 200-300 word posts/reflections (e.g. journal entries) done via Blackboard.

You're allowed two late assignments. After two late assignments, your letter-grade drops one whole letter-grade per late assignment (e.g. 3 late assignments: you can no longer earn an A in the course).

Philosophy for attendance and late work policy:
Out of everything you do in this course, the attendance and late policy will, more than likely, help or hinder you the most in terms of assessment / end of the semester grading. The expectations are high, but the reward is great.

The attendance policy and late work policy can influence your grade regardless of how well you do on the four projects. For example, if you make an A on all four writing projects, but are absent three times, you can only earn a B in the class.

Writing expectations / writing workshops:
Please be willing to share your writing (in class and on Blackboard), to listen supportively to the writing of others, and, when called for, give full and thoughtful assessments that consistently help your colleagues consider ways to revise according to our class-defined assessments. This class is based on sharing and collaborating, working cooperatively in groups, and encouraging one another to be effective and productive readers, writers, and thinkers.

In this class, you will have multiple rough draft workshops and these workshops are extremely important. Failure to show up to these writing workshops will result in two absences (not one).

Individual / group conferences:
You will have at least one mandatory conference with me over the course of the semester. Failure to attend our conference will result in two absences (not one).

Academic honesty / plagiarism:
Stealing and passing off as your own someone else's ideas or words, or using information from another's work without crediting the source, is called "plagiarism." Some specific examples of actions that constitute plagiarism include pasting together uncredited information or ideas from the Internet or published sources, submitting an entire paper written by someone else, submitting a paper written for another class (and thus not original work), and copying another student's work (even with the student's permission). In order to avoid unintentional plagiarism and to represent your work honestly, you will need to be meticulous about giving credit to any and all sources, whether directly quoted (even a few words) or paraphrased. Please see your instructor if you have any questions about documenting sources.

Because one of the goals of this course is to help you improve your writing, plagiarism hurts you as much as it does anyone. If you plagiarize another's work, you will not be receiving the needed feedback to improve your own writing. There will be a zero tolerance policy for any type of plagiarism in this class. All incidents of plagiarism will be penalized, reported, and kept on file in the English Department, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and the University Provost's Office.

Writing center:
For help with your writing, I strongly encourage you to contact KU's writing centers, called Writer's Roosts. At a Writer's Roost you can talk about your writing with trained tutors or consult reference materials in a comfortable working environment. You may ask for feedback on your papers, advice and tips on writing (for all your courses), or for guidance on special writing

tasks. Please check the website at <http://www.writing.ku.edu/students/> for current locations and hours. The Writing Center welcomes both drop-ins and appointments, and there is no charge for their services. For more information, please call 864-2399 or send an e-mail to writing@ku.edu. The website is loaded with helpful information about writing of all sorts, so even if you consider yourself a good writer, check it out!

Accessibility statement:
The Student Access Center (Academic Achievement and Access Center) coordinates accommodations and services for all KU students who are eligible. If you have a disability for which you wish to request accommodations and have not contacted the AAAC, please do so as soon as possible. Their office is located in 22 Strong Hall; their phone number is785-864-4064. Their email address is achieve@ku.edu. Information about their services can be found at http://access.ku.edu. Please contact me privately in regard to your needs in this course.

Civility & academic creations:
Civility and respect for the opinions of others are very important in an academic environment. It is likely you may not agree with everything that is said or discussed in the classroom. Courteous behavior and responses are expected at all times. When you disagree with someone, be sure that you make a distinction between criticizing an idea and criticizing the person. Expressions or actions that disparage a person's or race, ethnicity, nationality, culture, gender, gender identity / expression, religion, sexual orientation, age, disability, or marital, parental, or veteran status are contrary to the mission of this course and will not be tolerated.

Since one of the aims of this course is to teach students to write for specific audiences, ungraded student-authored work may be shared with other class members during the semester in which you are enrolled in the class. Please do not submit materials on sensitive subjects that you would not want your classmates to see or read, unless you inform the instructor in advance that you do not want your work shared with others.

Other uses of student-authored work are subject to the University's Policy on Intellectual Property and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. If your instructor desires to use your work outside of this class (e.g. as a sample for another class or future classes), you will be asked to fill out and sign a written form authorizing such use.

Diversity & inclusion:
As a premier international research university, the University of Kansas is committed to an open, diverse and inclusive learning and working environment that nurtures the growth and development of all. KU holds steadfast in the belief that an array of values, interests, experiences, and intellectual and cultural viewpoints enrich learning and our workplace. The promotion of and support for a diverse and inclusive community of mutual respect require the engagement of the entire university.

Diversity relates to but is not limited to the following: age, creed, disability, ethnicity, gender, global perspectives, international background, language background, learning differences, marital status, multicultural perspectives, national origin, public assistance status, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, and veteran status. Each of these aspects of diversity relate to one's

identity. The University of Kansas values diversity in its student body and believes that the intentional creation of a diverse learning environment is essential to achieving the University's educational mission. The University fosters a multicultural environment in which the dignity and rights of the individual are respected.

Religious observances:
According to university regulations, in cases of conflicts between regularly scheduled class activities and mandated religious observances, the student is responsible for initiating discussion with the instructor to reach a mutually acceptable solution. Please speak with me privately if scheduled examinations/activities conflict with mandated religious observances, so that a make-up examination/activity may be scheduled for you at a mutually acceptable time.

Drop policy:
If you are having trouble succeeding in the course, it is especially important that you consult with me so that we can develop a plan of action that may enable you to complete the course. If you decide to drop this class, please refer to the Website below:
http://www.registrar.ku.edu/current/schedule.shtml

Class cancellation:
In the case of an unforeseen or unexpected event, I will notify the class via email about class cancellation. Unless noted otherwise, you should expect to be prepared and in-class every day we're scheduled to meet.

Technology statement:
You do not need to use your cell phone or laptop for this course, unless instructed otherwise.

Final note:
By staying in this course, you agree to the terms in this syllabus. Ultimately, all things in this syllabus are subject to change.

Appendix 2: Teacher Feedback on Student Writing Survey

Description

I am conducting this survey as part of research into feedback on student writing and student perception of teacher response. This study attempts to examine the uptake of teacher response genres (types of feedback), or what genres students take up, interact with, and remember engaging with and responding to while writing and after receiving feedback. This study will measure the type(s) of feedback students are familiar with and their memory of other teacher response genres. This information will be used for writing and research purposes, including dissertation purposes, and participation allows for this data to be used for those purposes only. My personal contact information is at the end of this survey. Completing this survey is voluntary and anonymous. You can choose not to complete the survey for any reason.

Please answer the following questions accurately and honestly. Thank you.

Basic information

Gender:

Male □ / Female □ / Prefer not to answer □

Ethnicity:

White □ / Hispanic or Latino □ / Black or African American □ / Native American or American Indian □ / Asian or Pacific Islander □ / Other □ / Prefer not to answer □

Age:

Under 17 □ / 17-18 □ / 19-20 □ / 21-22 □ / 23-24 □ / 25+ □ / Prefer not to answer □

English courses taken at KU (*check all that apply*):

English 101 □ / English 102 □ / Other English courses: _____

Questions

(1) In high school or other English classes you had before KU, what types of feedback did you receive on your writing? *Check all that apply.*

Marginal comments on your paper	□
End or summary comments	□
Ratings or comments on Rubrics (criteria lists)	□
Feedback from teacher conferences	□

Peer review responses   □
Letter-grades   □
Points or percentages   □
Other (please explain in space below)   □

(2) In your KU English 101/102 courses, what types of feedback did you receive on your writing (or what types of feedback have you received so far)? *Check all that apply*.

Marginal comments on your paper   □
End or summary comments   □
Ratings or comments on Rubrics (criteria lists)   □
Feedback from teacher conferences   □
Peer review responses   □
Letter-grades   □
Points or percentages   □
Other (please explain in space below)   □

(3) What feedback do you <u>use</u> <u>most often</u> for revision purposes? *Please rank 1-7 (with 1 being what feedback you use most often, and 7 being what feedback you use least often)*.

Marginal comments on your paper   _____
End or summary comments   _____
Ratings or comments on Rubrics (criteria lists)   _____
Feedback from teacher conferences   _____
Peer review   _____
Letter-grades   _____
Points or percentages   _____
Other (please explain in space below)

(4) What feedback do you <u>remember</u> the <u>most</u> after receiving? *Please rank 1-7 (with 1 being what feedback you remember most, and 7 being what feedback you remember least)*.

Marginal comments on your paper   _____
End or summary comments   _____
Ratings or comments on Rubrics (criteria lists)   _____
Feedback from teacher conferences   _____
Peer review   _____

Letter-grades   ____
Points or percentages   ____
Other (please explain in space below)

(5) How often do you consult past teacher feedback for a different writing assignment? *Check one.*

Frequently □ / Sometimes □ / Rarely □ / Never □ / Other □

If Other, please explain:

(6) What genre(s) do you consult <u>while writing</u> in your KU English courses? *Check all that apply.*

Textbooks   □
Handbooks   □
Composition & Literature (CAL)   □
Syllabus   □
Assignment prompt   □
Class notes   □
Other genres   □
I don't usually consult other genres   □

If Other, please explain:

(7) How often do you consult the genres listed in Question 6 <u>while writing</u> in your KU English courses? *Check one.*

Frequently □ / Sometimes □ / Rarely □ / Never □ / Other □

If Other, please explain:

(8) What genre(s) do you consult to help you understand the feedback you receive in your KU English courses? *Check all that apply.*

Marginal comments on your paper	☐
End or summary comments	☐
Ratings or comments on Rubrics (criteria lists)	☐
Syllabus	☐
Assignment prompt	☐
Class notes	☐
Other genres	☐
I don't usually consult other genres	☐

If Other, please explain:

(9) How often do you consult the genres listed in Question 8 to help you understand the feedback you receive in your KU English courses? *Check one.*

Frequently ☐ / Sometimes ☐ / Rarely ☐ / Never ☐ / Other ☐

If Other, please explain:

(10) What classroom-based writing assessment genre have you received <u>most often</u>? *Check one.*

Letter-grade	☐
Portfolio	☐
Grading contract	☐
Other (please explain in space below)	☐

(11) What classroom-based writing assessment genre have you received <u>least often</u>? *Check one.*

Letter-grade	☐
Portfolio	☐
Grading contract	☐
Other (please explain in space below)	☐

(12) What past piece of feedback (positive, negative, or neutral) has been most memorable for you and why?

If you have any questions about this survey or my use of it, feel free to contact me at shaneawood@ku.edu. You also may contact my research supervisor, Professor Mary Jo Reiff, at mjreiff@ku.edu

Appendix 3: Interview Questions on Teacher Feedback

Description

I am conducting this interview as part of research into feedback on student writing and student perception of teacher response. These interview questions are focused on understanding the types of feedback students remember receiving, their experiences with feedback, and their processes of revision after receiving feedback. This interview is focused on a consideration of all experiences with feedback, not strictly tied to English 101 and English 102 courses at the University of Kansas. This information will be used for writing and research purposes, including dissertation purposes, and participation allows for this data to be used for those purposes only. Completing this interview is voluntary and anonymous. You can choose not to complete the interview for any reason.

Please answer the following questions accurately and honestly. Thank you.

Questions

(1) What do you do after you receive teacher feedback on a piece of writing?

(2) Can you describe a time when you ignored teacher feedback when revising a draft? What did that feedback look like? Why did you choose to not use that feedback? Did that choice affect the quality/success of the paper (or subsequent papers)?

(3) Can you describe a time when you used teacher feedback? What did that feedback look like? Why did you choose to use that feedback? How did you use it for revision? Did that choice affect the quality/success of the paper (or subsequent papers)?

(4) What type of feedback on your writing is most memorable to you? Why is it memorable?

(5) How often do you revisit feedback? Why?

(6) What's the most important part or aspect of feedback to you? Why?

(7) What's the least important part or aspect of feedback to you? Why?