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Examining Student Feedback in Writing Assessment: Validation Inquiry in a Writing Placement Program

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EXAMINING STUDENT FEEDBACK IN WRITING ASSESSMENT: VALIDATION
INQUIRY IN A WRITING PLACEMENT PROGRAM

A Dissertation

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in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

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This qualitative study investigated the use of student feedback as support in a validation study of university writing placement practices. Using interviews with seventeen incoming first year students, this study examined student experiences constructing and submitting writing portfolios as opposed to taking a timed essay test. Also, this study was interested in determining the viability of using student data as validation evidence.

The results showed that students make important considerations about the decision being made on behalf of the assessment when completing the assessment task. Additionally, audience, voice, and performance are three of the major themes to emerge out of the data.

Additionally, the results indicate that student feedback is valuable data when used to support a validation argument. Students provided descriptive and insightful feedback into the writing assessment process that at times challenged the conventional thinking of writing assessment practitioners.