

Carlos Hernandez

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In-Class Journal

Writing 10

In-Class Journal

- *January 16:* No class; Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday.
- *January 18:* Today was the first time our class met. We began the class by introducing each other and then begun composing our writing diagnostic on the given prompt. The prompt dealt with technology being able to scar someone life's forever. The internet has the ability to retain anything, including any post in a website. The prompt gave an example of a university student who was denied her teaching degree because of an inappropriate picture posted years ago.
- *January 23:* Our class was required to bring in our laptops and a printed copy of the class syllabus. We were introduced to a blogging website called Word Press. The website seems interesting, especially since you can customize the appearance of the page. We each created an account and were told to create several pages. I then emailed my instructor my URL for the Word Press site. Next, we went over the syllabus and set up our Group Led Discussion team. Each group has to lead the class two times throughout the semester. Each presentation has to be around 40-50 minutes. The longest presentation I have done was about 5 minutes! So I am nervous about having to do these presentations.
- *January 25:* Today was the first hybrid day we've had. This means we do not have to be physically present in the class, but are still responsible for completing the assigned work. Today we had to re-write our diagnostic essay and upload it to Word Press. I also scanned my original copy of the essay and uploaded it to my "process" page. After uploading the copy, I personalized my page and added a background picture.
- *January 30:* We began the class by having our first Group Lead Discussion (GLD) by Meghana, Daisy, and Carla. They went over the novel *In Cold Blood*, by Truman Capote. The group only analyzed the first chapter of the novel. Some techniques they utilized in order to engage the class was asking questions throughout the presentation and handing out candy. After the GLD, Anne went over the prompt for our very first essay: a narrative

perspective essay. Next, our class went over how to properly cite sources using MLA format. An exercise we did in order to practice citing was to pull three quotes from the book and cite them.

- *February 1:* Second Group Lead Discussion in which the group goes over the second chapter of *In Cold Blood*. The chapter describes the town's reaction to the gruesome murder. Everyone distrusts one another, since they believe the killer resides within their community. The next main portion of the chapter was about Perry. We learn about Perry's background and treasured memories. For the rest of the class, we wrote a list of what interested us in the book. This was our brainstorm for our first essay. We also went over the structure of our first essay is to contain. Some of the ideas I wrote down were: The mystery of why the Clutters were the ones killed. The clueless murder. Town's reaction to the murder, if the Clutters, a very well-known and respected family were murdered and the murderers got away with it, then how does that make the other residents feel?
- *February 6:* Today was a nerve racking day. I gave my first GLD with my partner Luis Gonzalez. Our third partner, Omar, dropped the class, so it was only Luis and I. We brought plenty of goodies to encourage group involvement during our presentation. We began by splitting the class into smaller groups and then gave our PowerPoint presentation on the third chapter of *In Cold Blood*. At first we were nervous; the longest I have presented to a class was about 5 minutes! However, after a couple of minutes, the nerves went away and we were able to complete our presentation, which lasted for about 45-50 minutes. After the presentation, Anne drew the structure of our essay. A triangle pointing down, two boxes after the triangle, and another triangle pointing up. We exchanged our rough drafts with our partner and identified the topic and thesis sentences. Then we discussed with our partner how they can be re-written to create much clearer sentences. After that, we shared our thesis sentence with the whole class.
- *February 8:* We began the class by having a GLD covering the last chapter of *In Cold Blood*. This chapter dealt with the trial of Dick and Perry. They were sentenced to death and were hanged five years after they were convicted. The rest of the class consisted of editing our essays and choosing three awkward sentences of our partner's essay. After that, we went over the paramedic method. This method usually results in a clearer and concise sentence. To see the paramedic method in action, Anne took a sentence from a student's essay and created

a clear and crisp sentence, free of redundancies. After, we discussed the task for the next hybrid day.

- *February 13:* Today was a hybrid day. We watched the film “Capote” and had to blog with our classmates about the translation between the book and the film. Blog on “Capote”: “The biographical film “Capote” dealt mostly with the research Truman Capote conducted on the Clutter’s case. The film begins by Laura Kinney, not Nancy Ewalt, discovering the gruesome scene of Nancy’s dead body lying in bed. Unlike the book, no members of the family were described and Dick and Perry were not mentioned until they were arrested. Also, we are introduced to Truman Capote himself, where as in the book he remained an unmentioned character. Capote is interested in Perry as soon as he meets him and his affection grows stronger after he learns about his life and nurses him back to health. Capote tries to find a good lawyer for both criminals so they can appeal and so Capote can be able to conduct more research. He visits Perry frequently and after visiting Perry’s sister, hears Perry’s confession. Capote works extensively on his non-fiction novel. When Perry is sentenced to death, Capote becomes depressed. He visits them at the last minute and witnesses their death, since it was what they wanted. Overall it was a good movie and covered basically Capote’s research rather than the actual accounts of the townspeople and other events”. (Posted comments to: Luis Gonzalez, Brian Bamsch, and Victoria Caudill). Also uploaded Essay 1 to Word Press in the craft section.
- *February 15:* This Wednesday, we gave our second GLD. We covered the whole short novel, “Breakfast at Tiffany’s” by Capote. We were unable to obtain an adapter for the laptop in order to present our PowerPoint, so we had to talk and write down the group questions we presented on the board. Other than that, I believe the presentation went smoother than our first one. We were able to finish on time and cover all the points necessary. Since Anne was unable to make it to class, we had a short day. She skyped the class and gave us our homework for the next hybrid day.
- *February 20:* No class; holiday.
- *February 22:* Today we had another hybrid day; we watched the film “Breakfast at Tiffany’s” and had to blog with our classmates. Blog on “Breakfast at Tiffany’s”: “The movie “Breakfast at Tiffany’s” begins the same way as the short novel: a man following Holly to her apartment and Holly ringing Mr. Yunioshi’s doorbell, which is portrayed as

an extremely clumsy man. The first difference from the novel was that the narrator rings Holly's doorbell instead of her ringing his doorbell in the middle of the night. He asks Holly for the phone and after they converse in her apartment. A major difference in the movie was that the narrator comes along with his "decorator"; in the book he is meant to be alone, an outsider. Another difference was the absence of Joe Bell and the narrator is actually given a name, Paul. We find out Holly is a call girl and Paul does the same thing. The ending is purposely different from the actual short novel in order to bring in more revenue. The movie has the famous happily ever after ending. This ending is pleasant; however it does not fit the meaning the novel meant to convey. Holly is a wild thing; the filmmakers even quoted this part of the book, when she was justifying her refusal to go with Doc back home. Holly represents freedom itself, a sense of adventure and constantly feels the need to escape from things and people. Holly eventually staying with Paul defeats whole meaning of the book". (Posted comments to: Tommy Stickle, Luis Gonzalez, and Meghana Shah).

- *February 27:* We began class by having a Group Led Discussion on "The Revolt of the Cockroach People" (pg. 1-133). The group gave some brief background on the book and Oscar Zeta Acosta himself. We learn some symbolism used throughout the book such as the "Big Bird" on pg. 70. The "Big Bird" can be interpreted as an omen to the United States being bombed. Also, the term "drop fire" is historical context since it is being compared to the Vietnam War occurring during that time period. The group also used visual aid such as YouTube videos. The next half of the class discussed the prompt for Essay 2. We went over diction; we cannot use the word "very". Also we formed into groups and I decided I am going to write about the Red Scare as a historical context for *In Cold Blood*.
- *February 29:* Monday's group gave their second GLD. They presented from where they left off, pg. 133-end of the book. We were given a quick summary and then given background information on the Chicano movement in general. After the presentation, we had a guest speaker whom discussed the rising costs of tuition throughout UC's. Jeff's presentation was named "Teach the Budget". He presented a documentary on some students who graduated with a tremendous amount of debt. He also demonstrated a graph which recorded the rising costs of tuition over the years (2000-2011). By 2015, freshman students are predicted to pay around \$25,000-30,000 a semester. Once the guest speaker left, we wrote about our ideal writing situation in order to practice our descriptive writing.

- *March 5:* There is no class today.
- *March 7:* This Wednesday our class met at the library. Anne was unable to attend, so we had Susan Mikkelsen teaching. We wrote down some “Library Lingo” terms and their definitions such as: journal, database, abstract, citation, truncation, and Boolean logic. Susan taught us how to take full advantage of UC Merced’s library database. We compared Google with the scholarly resources our library has to offer. Another important topic we discussed was how to distinguish scholarly resources from popular ones. A major difference was a cited page. A scholarly resource has more cited sources than a popular one. We also searched for scholarly resources for our historical context essay.
- *March 12:* Today our class discussed the poetic readings from Arteaga’s book “Chicano Poetics”. The GLD analyzed the first poem “Arrival”. The group also gave some background information Arteaga provides, such as difrasismo. Our class then read some of “House of the Blue Bed”. We see the crossover between this book and Acosta’s book, “The Revolt of the Cockroach People”. These two books discuss the same event and were even written in the same place; however, they are conveyed differently. Lastly, we discussed Essay 2 and gave back our partner’s essay we revised.
- *March 14:* Our class began today by having a Group Led Discussion on the Annotated Wizard of Oz. The group described each character individually and also discussed deeper themes that occur throughout the book. After the GLD we worked on revising Essay 2 with our partner. We went over fixing our thesis sentences, making sure they were clear and concise as possible. Next, we reviewed our sources. We checked for in-text citations and made sure our works cited list was correct.
- *March 19:* The class began with the Wizard of Oz GLD, from chapter 12 to the ending. After the discussion, we went over our partner’s essay once again, making final revisions. We identified the thesis sentences, topic sentences, and three sentences that needed further clarification. After the revision, we went over the prompt for Essay 3, a compare and contrast essay. We then did further revision on our essays by working on the paramedic method on some of our sentences. The paramedic method is as follows:
 - Circle prepositions.
 - Draw a box around the “is” verb forms.
 - Ask, “Where’s the action?”

- Change the “action” into a simple verb.
 - Move the doer into the subject.
 - Eliminate unnecessary slow wind-ups.
 - Eliminate redundancies.
- *March 21:* Today was a hybrid day and the film our class had to watch was the Wizard of Oz. [Blog on the Wizard of Oz](#): “The Wizard of Oz film was a shortened, but pretty accurate plot of the book. There were some minor details which were different from the book. Dorothy’s slippers are red in the film where in the book they are silver. During this time period, there was dispute on which currency should be used, silver or gold. The silver slippers in the book can be interpreted as the silver standard and the yellow brick road as the gold standard. However, this interpretation no longer holds in the movie since they changed the color in order to increase the contrast of red with yellow. Another difference was the addition of the tree farm hands, which were not mentioned in the book. The Wicked Witch makes her appearance early in the film in order to present danger and make the film more interesting instead of them wandering for awhile like in the book. The overall plot was very alike, Dorothy ends up killing the Wicked Witch and ends up home, even though the film makers portrayed it as if the whole journey was a dream. The movie was much more interesting than the book since it was shortened and did not seem like a drag”. (Posted comments to: Victoria Caudill, Thomas Stickle, and Nathan Legge). I also submitted Essay 2 final draft and rough drafts.
 - *March 26:* Spring break; no class.
 - *March 28:* Spring break; no class.
 - *April 2:* Today we had a GLD focusing on the book “Wicked”. The group gave a description on the characters, followed by the overall summary of the section. After the GLD, the class each discussed their ideas for Essay 3. I will be writing on the translation between Breakfast at Tiffany’s the novel and the film. Next we had an in-class writing in where we jotted down some ideas for our Essay. Some ideas I wrote down were: the difference of the narrator due to the translation between the book and the film, the completely different ending, the omission of Joe Bell and the introduction of Paul’s “decorator”.
 - *April 4:* The group gave their second GLD on the section of “Wicked” (Boq 1- The Charmed Circle 8). After the GLD we exchanged our rough draft of Essay 3 with a classmate. We

identified the thesis sentence and the topic sentences. After identifying the sentences, we choose 3 sentences that need further revision. The class went over a sentence from a student and implemented the paramedic method.

- *April 9:* Today was another hybrid day. As the semester winds down to an end, we are now working on our cover letters for our portfolio. Our assignment was to write our introduction and our collaboration cover letters. Once they were written, we shared our collaboration cover letter with our classmates and blogged about them. Blogging about Collaboration Cover Letters: “The aspect of collaborating as a class in Writing 10 has helped convey ideas more effectively. Through Group Led Discussions, peer editing, class discussions, and blogging, I have found it helpful to be able to express and develop my ideas with other classmates. Interacting with other classmates on the same topic brings different perspectives and enhances the learning process. Discussing the class work engages classmates to share their different ideas or simply add to an existing idea. I do believe I have made a positive difference in the class through collaborating daily in class and hybrid days. By either in class discussions, peer editing, or blogging, I have contributed in having a different perspective on the subject which adds to the discussion. Collaborating as a class is crucial to further enhance learning. A beneficial work from collaborating is the Group Led Discussions. When we were first assigned groups to present for 40-50 minutes on an assigned reading, I was terrified. The longest presentation I had done before was less than 5 minutes, and I thought that was a long time. However, I was fortunate enough to have a partner who was also willing to dedicate a large portion of his time for the presentation. We were the 3rd group to present. At first it was difficult since the third person in our group decided to drop the class, which meant a larger workload for the both of us. After witnessing the first group’s techniques to engage the class and taking into account the professor’s critiques, we were able to deliver a well developed presentation to engage the class. We decided a PowerPoint presentation would be best. We met up after class and worked extensively on the presentation. We had plenty of quotes from the novel, “In Cold Blood”, to support our analysis of the book, and plenty of questions for the groups so they would be engaged in our presentation. The beginning of the presentation was a bit nerve racking, but we got used to it. Luis and I were able to present for a full 45 minutes, which was a huge accomplishment for both of us. Our next presentation on “Breakfast at Tiffany’s” went by smoother since we had more experience from our first

presentation. The presentations from other classmates are also helpful since they clarify portions in the book which were a bit difficult to understand. I enjoy having our classmates go over the readings in detail and most often find information that would normally be overlooked. Peer editing is also another great aspect of collaboration. Being able to help out other classmates and also be helped out is great. Having someone else review my work helps bring a different perspective and makes me look at my writing in a whole new perspective. Normally, it is difficult to spot one's own mistakes since the writer has the idea conveyed in their mind, but may not be as clear on paper. The technique we were taught, reading the thesis sentence and only the topic sentences that follow, helped develop our essays into a more clear and concise one. Lastly, blogging was an effective way of sharing our different perspective with others. Once we viewed a film or any work of art, we blogged about it with our classmates and shared our own opinions. It is a great experience since a great amount of diversity develops over the same exact thing we all watch. Reading over everyone's thoughts and being able to reply to their opinions is a great learning tool. Each and everyone's comments create scholarly discussions and we are able to see things we might have overlooked, which is insightful". (Posted comments to: Nathan Legge, tnguyen24, and Luis Gonzalez). Our introduction was not posted since they are a bit more personal. In our intro, we identify what grade we feel we deserve for the course.

- *April 11:* The class began with a GLD focusing on the third part of "Wicked". After the presentation, we discussed the remaining work for the semester. Anne mentioned to make sure we each have comments on our Word Press concerning our essays. Since we were talking about Word Press, we were told the work for Monday: a hybrid day in which we write 3 more cover letters and we have to mention the supporting evidence we will use. It is best if we introduce our evidence first, such as: In "page" I include "evidence", "evidence", "evidence" as evidence. These items highlight "idea". We also went over our final essay, essay 4. Essay 4 focuses mainly on the precision of our writing. Lastly, we peer-edited our classmate's introduction cover letter.
- *April 16:* This hybrid day focused on our Word Press portfolio. Since the semester is coming to an end, we are to complete a major portion of our cover letters. These cover letters are each a reflection of the progress we have made throughout this class. We were to write three of the six cover letters for today which included: process, rhetoric, and ethics. After writing

these cover letters, we posted our process letter on Word Press and blogged with our classmates about them. Since we each shared our process cover letter, each one of us was able to see the process each one of us takes to create our final work. [Blogging about Process Cover Page](#). “In Process, I include three drafts of each essay, my written evaluations, my hand-written diagnostic, and my revised diagnostic as evidence to demonstrate my academic process. These items highlight the importance of revising one’s own work. As I have progressed in this course, I have realized how important it is to constantly revise my written work. Public speaking had to be one of the most difficult obstacles I had to overcome. The Group Led Discussions were one of the most nerve-racking assignments I completed. I was extremely nervous when I first found out we had to create a 40-50 minute presentation, especially with classmates who I still did not know. My longest presentation had been a 5 minute one. To make things worse, my group was the 3rd one to present and one of our group members dropped the class. However, I was fortunate enough to have a partner who also was willing to dedicate a large portion of his time to go into the presentations. Not only did we overcome our nervousness during the presentations, but we were also able to fulfill the requirements that were needed to make a great presentation: “Make sure that you not only give an overview of the reading, but also focus on several points into which you will go in-depth. On these points you will engage the class in discussion by having a list of questions, and/or creating text-driven games, and/or group exercises. Ask your peers questions” (Writing 10 Syllabus). Both our presentations covered the overview of the readings and went into the deeper meanings of the texts. We had plenty of questions to engage the class and rewarded them with treats. Most importantly, we were able to manage our time and finish in about 45 minutes. This assignment helped sharpen my public speaking skills and made me able to convey my ideas more efficiently. An aspect of the writing process that I have improved on is the ability to efficiently use certain ideas from academic sources and utilize it as supportive evidence. Before, it was difficult for me to use certain readings and integrate them to my own writing. However, through revision and with the help of peer-editing, I have found it much easier to compare and synthesize information. For example, in my second essay, the subject I wrote about was the second Red Scare. After revision, I was able to successfully integrate quotes from “In Cold Blood” to support my ideas, such as comparing the distrust between the people of Holcomb to the distrust between

Americans during the Red Scare. Having to create at least 3 drafts for each essay helped me develop my essays much better. With peer-editing, I was exposed to different perspectives and could synchronize those ideas with mine. Another useful tool was the paramedic method. This method helped remove redundancies in my writing and left me with a clear and concise sentence” (Posted comments to: Wesley Osorio, Brian Bamsch, and Luis Gonzalez).

- *April 18:* Today there was no GLD presentation. Rather, it was a portfolio and Essay 4 workshop. Each of us brought in our laptops and we began by creating our final cover letter, craft. We had 30 minutes to write, since 30 minutes is about the perfect amount of time, not too much, not too little. After we wrote our cover letter, we cleared up any questions we might have. We discussed our thesis sentence with the rest of our class for Essay 4. I am writing on the details and symbols that re-occur throughout *Breakfast at Tiffany's* to create the overall theme of isolation. After class, I handed my partner my rough draft so he can revise it.
- *April 23:* This is the last journal entry for the semester. Time flew by in this class, I still cannot believe the semester is almost over. For today, we began with a GLD on the final section of “Wicked”. What was unique about this presentation was that the class was asked to draw a witch. As we were busy drawing, they went ahead and gave their summary on their section. When they were done, the group asked the class why we drew the witch the way we drew it, which was a bit interesting. After the presentation we completed the final evaluation for this course. Next we signed up for individual consultations. My appointed time is at 11:30 on Tuesday next week.