Week 14, Days 38, 39, and 40 (November 28-December 2)

Suggested Activities

Review the Conversation Metaphor
The students are just coming back from a relaxing Fall break, and they will probably need to become reacquainted with the class. Showing the conversation metaphor and reviewing where they started in CO150 and the process they've complete should help re-orient them with the course. It will also prepare them to begin their reflection process.

Since students have turned in Assignment 4, they may think they're done using the conversation model for CO150. Though they have successfully completed the stages one time through, the final assignment asks them to go through each of the phases again – but this time they are listening to the conversation they have created through their own writing in the course, drawing conclusions about their own progress and using those documents as their "research," then joining the conversation about their own learning and their own progress through a final forum post.

Introduce Assignment 5
Introduce the assignment as you have the others, distributing copies or asking students to print them out and bring them to class. Review the salient points and answer questions.

Be sure to explain to the students that this assignment puts them in a much different rhetorical situation than any of the others. It is asking them to reflect upon what they've already done and to look forward to how they will use those skills in the future. It also asks them to use their own work as evidence to support their experiences, growth, and changes as a writer.

When class began, students were introduced to the concept of writing as a conversation. This model is how the entire course was structured, so the students went through the entire cycle and process. They "eavesdropped" on a contemporary conversation (in this case, the internet and social media), understanding closely and critically what the conversation was about. Then they began to think critically about how the ideas they were encountering could be applied in different contexts (expanded the conversation). Students were then ready to begin their own inquiry, collecting information through good research strategies and focusing especially on how different stakeholders had different needs, values, and opinions about their issue. Once sources were collected and critically examined, students were ready to contribute their argument to the existing conversation. Throughout this process, students were asked to think about their writing. They did in-class activities and workshops, they kept forums that asked them to reflect on their own role in the conversation, they wrote major assignments that they reflected upon prior to turning in, and that received feedback from both peers and instructor. All of these events helped to shape their position as a writer. Now students are being asked to think about their position as a writer and the process they went through to get there. In other words, students are asked to remember where they began at the beginning of the semester, what their expectations were of the course, what they
went through, and how they have changed as a writer. Then students will think about how to apply all they have learned to other classes.

**Group Activity with the Conversation Metaphor**
Put an image of the conversation metaphor on the overhead. Ask students to get into small groups. The students will brainstorm ideas about what they were doing in the course that corresponded to each stage in the conversation metaphor. Since they are working in groups, there should be a rich discussion full of vivid details (since every student’s experience is different). Every student should take his/her own notes during this activity to use for their reflection.

**Meta-cognition Activity**
Meta-cognition simply means “thinking about your thinking.” Meta-cognition is not new for the students. After each major assignment, students were asked to reflect upon the writing process they just completed before they turned it in; these are their post-scripts. Post-scripts are a meta-cognitive action that focuses upon a limited writing experience, examining that process for meaning. Assignment 5 is similar to these meta-cognition acts, except it is more detailed and encompasses a broader experience to examine for meaning. Try the following notes and questions to help guide your reflection process:

- **Metacognition**
  - *meta-cognition is a reflective practice that helps someone discern general patterns in their own views and abilities.*
  - *meta-cognition may be an important tool in helping students move to more developed stages of understanding and learning by modeling self-awareness in ever evolving, dynamic contexts.*
  - *So how do we begin thinking about our own thinking?*

- **You can start by identifying the types of knowledge you’ve gained. There are three types of knowledge that you gain in any class, including this one.**
  - **Declarative knowledge:**
    - Factual information that you know – it can be declared (i.e. spoken or written).
    - Example: knowing a formula or a fact (momentum = mass x velocity)
  - **Procedural knowledge:**
    - Knowledge of how to do something or of how to perform steps in a process.
    - Example: identifying the mass of an object and its rate of speed before doing the calculation
  - **Conditional knowledge:**
    - Knowledge about when to use a procedure or skill and when not to; why a procedure works sometimes but is not appropriate in other circumstances; why one procedure or process is better than another.
    - Example: You get a word problem in a math class and have to figure out that you need the formula for momentum, then have to identify the component parts.

- **The final assignment of the semester asks you to think metacognitively about the writing and thinking you’ve done so that you can identify what you’ve learned, how your thinking has changed and evolved, and to consider how you’re going to be sure that this connects to what you do in other classes down the line.**
Devise an activity that will help to really establish the concept behind metacognitive reflection. Usually games need some kind of self-reflection; think about card games like poker or gin or blackjack. These could be used as an example of how you have to think about where you’re coming from and where you want to be. Alternatively, you could ask students (individually or in groups) to identify declarative, procedural, and conditional knowledge they've gained as the semester progressed.

**Explanation and Narration**

Assignment 5 is a combination of an explanation essay (explaining the process you went through as a writer) and a narrative (telling the story of your discoveries as a writer). Therefore it is important to examine both kinds of writing. The PHG has an entire chapter devoted to explanation that you can use.

Narration is simply telling the story of the students’ writing process from the beginning of the semester to the end.

Sometimes it is easier to show the students what their reflection will look like, pointing out the explanation and narration writing techniques involved.

**Reviewing the Rhetorical Situation and Types of Purposes**

This is a good point in the semester to re-assign students the reading from the PHG they did earlier in the semester (p. 15-26). When they read it at the beginning of the semester, it is likely that it was so new they barely grasped it and relied on lecture and class activities to make it clearer for them. Now that they've had an entire semester of thinking rhetorically, this is likely to make much more sense to them and reinforce the ultimate rhetorical focus of the course.

You may also want to do a student-centered lecture or discussion in which you go over the differences between writer-based purposes, subject-based purposes, and audience-based purposes. Have students consider each of the assignments they've done this semester and categorize them. Then have them think about what kind of purpose Assignment 5 has.

- **Writer-based purposes**
  - When the ultimate goal of your writing is to do something for yourself
  - For example: to gain the satisfaction of expressing yourself, to learn something better.

- **Subject-based purposes**
  - When the ultimate goal of your writing is to focus on your subject.
  - For example: to inform others about a topic/issue, to explain what something means.

- **Audience-based purposes**
  - When the ultimate goal of your writing is to do something for your audience:
  - For example: to persuade others to believe or do something; to entertain your reader with a humorous anecdote, etc.
Show Sample Reflections
These are found in the appendix. You may select whichever student examples you would like. Walk your students through the strengths and weaknesses of each example essay.

Using your body of work as evidence
Students have been asked to bring in a collection of every piece of work they accomplished over the semester. Have the students look at this impressive collection; it shows their process and progress as writers over the entire course. Sift through your body of work, looking for patterns in your learning, shifts in your thinking, or differences in your writing. As you make connections through your body of work, ask yourself “how did this influence me as a writer?” Mark particular examples that reflect change to use as specific evidence in your reflection essay. Be sure to also look at feedback from peers and instructor, noting how other writers helped shape your own process.

You may also want to do a mini-lesson for students about how you expect them to cite their own work in their reflection paper. The most logical way to do this is to ask students to do a modified version of MLA style that indicates in parentheses the document they're taking their quotation or paraphrase from. For example, if they quote a line from their second assignment, their parenthetical citation could be (A2 3) indicating Assignment 2, page 3. If they're using a WTL, they could indicate that and put the date it was assigned in parentheses (WTL 9/9). Even though they're using their own work and may not feel that citation is necessary, this step reaffirms all previous lessons on the value of correct citation in academic writing.

Homework for Week 14
- Collect every piece of process work that was done over the semester. This includes in-class activities, workshop drafts with peer comments, final drafts with instructor comments and post-scripts, and any kind of outlining you did for each of the assignments. Also, examine each of your blog entries closely, perhaps printing out each entry. Bring all of these materials with you to class.
- Read about explanation in PHG (pps 285-294)
- Re-read the information in the PHG on the rhetorical situation in writing (pp. 15-26)
Suggested Activities

**Workshop**
Review the requirements and assessment criteria for Assignment 5. Then devise a workshop that best addresses the criteria. Look on Writing Studio for workshop ideas.

**Course Evaluations**
In your mailbox you will receive two packets with explicit instructions about how to administer course evaluations. Before giving out the evaluations, it can sometimes be beneficial to go through all of the accomplishments of the class (which should be relatively easy considering they are working on their reflection essay).

**Post-script and turn in Assignment 5**
Assign a post-script and collect Assignment 5.

**Explain Final Exam**
Make sure students understand what is expected of them during their final exam time.
Week 16/Finals Week (December 12-16)

CSU and the English Department require instructors to meet with their classes during scheduled times during finals week. Given the nature of CO150, we do not administer an exam—instead we conduct an activity that wraps up the semester in a meaningful way.

Assignment 5 acts as a comprehensive reflection of their inquiry during the semester. Beyond this reflection, you might offer them an opportunity to reflect on their own performance—things they wish they’d known at the beginning of the semester that they know now—and how they might apply these new skills and knowledge in other contexts in the future:

- What new writing strategies have your learned this semester, and which that you already knew have been particularly useful?
- How have you applied what you’ve learned in CO150 to other courses this semester? How do you think you will use what you’ve learned in this course in the future?
- If you were to revise your Academic Argument for another audience, whom would you chose to address and how would that choice change how you approached its writing?

Alternatively, you could provide students with these questions ahead of time and ask them to prepare a short presentation for the class that explains their argument and their rhetorical choices.

Another option for a final exam is to have students write a letter to future CO150 students giving them advice on how to succeed in the class, or have students write a letter to a future version of themselves (e.g., themselves 3 years from now) asking them to talk with themselves about how they see themselves as a writer, reader, and a person. Some instructors who have chosen this option actually bring envelopes and have students address them (using an address that will still be valid in 3 years, such as their parents’ address) and then actually mail them three years from now.

Brainstorm other ideas and discuss them with the E607 professor, the Director of Comp., or the Composition Administrators.