

# Graduate Research Guide Final Report

---

## 1. GENERAL INFORMATION:

- a. **GRG name:** Rachel Jones-Summan
- b. **Instructor name:** Julie Ann Ward
- c. **Course number & name:** SPAN 3853 Readings in Spanish Literature

## 2. OVERVIEW:

Student groups conducted research leading to the production of an original scholarly edition of a Spanish literary text. Each group chose a different work, and throughout the semester I met with groups and individual students for research coaching and mentoring, check-ins, and to monitor progress on the project. At the end of the project, students participated in a presentation day of their respective works, and ultimately the critical editions they created are to be used in an open-access Spanish textbook.

## 3. BACKGROUND:

### a. Course description:

This course is an upper-division Spanish literature class wherein students are introduced to a variety of Spanish literary texts, both Peninsular and Latin American. This is the first required Spanish literature course for both majors and minors of Spanish.

### b. Typical students:

Most students are juniors or seniors, and either majoring or minoring in Spanish. Most had some experience with research projects, but the concept of a critical edition was new to the students and most needed coaching. Once clear on the nature of the project, however, they were able to draw on past research projects for other classes.

## 4. LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

### a. Need for project:

This project is invaluable in that it teaches students what a critical text is, how to use one, and most importantly the research values and standards that govern modern language studies. This is the first time I have seen undergraduate students working intensively with critical texts, and furthermore the production of critical editions by undergraduates is unheard of. As GRG I was able to aid the professor in introducing and explaining to students what makes a critical literary text, and how they could create one themselves. The primary challenges I helped students deal with were motivation and reassurance of their abilities to complete the project.

**b. Learning objectives:**

<b>LEARNING OBJECTIVES</b> “Students will understand/will be able to...”
Students will understand what makes a critical edition and explain the elements of such a text.
Students will be able to conduct original research culminating in the production of a critical edition of a Spanish literary text, participating in a rigorous editorial and review process.
Students will learn to both give and take constructive criticism of scholarly work, and contribute their fair share of work to the group project.

**5. IMPLEMENTATION:**

**a. GRG Activities:**

In addition to designated Research Days in class, we had mandatory meetings in the library with each group. Also, groups created a shared Google Doc in which we could all comment, add, edit, and share resources. Dr. Ward also provided students with various materials on teamwork and evaluations for students to gauge their progress and identify possible issues in their group dynamic.

**b. Activity log:**

<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b># HOURS</b>
1. Research question consultation.	14 hours
2. Research design methodology (general).	11 hours
3. Research design methodology (specific).	15 hours
4. Refining their research process.	2 hours
5. Assisting with the drafting of a final product.	3 hours
6. Assisting with the refinement of a final product.	6 hours
7. Professional development	6 hours
8. Coordinating instruction from other OU units (libraries, Writing Center, etc.).	2 hours
9. Meeting/planning with main instructor of course.	3 hours
10. Other (please list). Presentation day: 2 hours In-class Research day: 2 hours	4 hours
<b>TOTAL HOURS:</b>	<b>66 hours</b>

**6. DISCUSSION:**

**a. Effectiveness of research project:**

The project was highly effective, thanks in large part to Dr. Ward's extensive planning and preparation of students. All student groups produced their critical editions and, with one exception, attended the presentation day to showcase their work. Throughout the semester I was able to coach students and also serve as a resource for their research issues, questions, and doubts. As an authority figure without the grading function of a TA, students felt comfortable asking questions and expressing their doubts.

**b. Plans for revision:**

There are no changes I would make to the project itself, but if I were to do it over again I would spend more time checking in with students. Sometimes an email or a quick hello aren't enough; some students need more prodding and active intervention from a research guide. I would also try to spend more face-to-face time with the students, as that was highly beneficial.

**c. Have any other tips for future GRGs and instructors?**

I encourage you to meet with the instructor leading the course as soon and as often as possible. I was incredibly lucky to have Dr. Ward as my own guide in working as a research guide. It's important to remember that even as a mentor, there will always be more to learn and ways in which you can grow or improve yourself. Also, spending time with the students is incredibly helpful and establishes both familiarity and trust that are indispensable to a working relationship.

Also, if you have any opportunities for mentorship training, be sure to take advantage! It is easy to forget what it was like to be an undergrad, but it's important to understand where your mentees are coming from and what you can do to be an effective mentor.

**7. PERMISSION:** Please indicate in which of the following ways, if any, you would be comfortable with the Office of Undergraduate Research sharing this report with others.

a.  I am willing to have this report shared strictly with future GRGs and instructors. We would include your name with your report.

b.  I am willing to have this report shared with others on a public website (on OUR website, etc.). The Office will contact you and the instructor of the course for final approval before publishing content online. *Note: if you are willing to share this report on our website and have any photos of class activities, please email us those photos along with this report.*