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Authors

Enriquez, Sandy

Lamar Prieto, Covadonga

Starry, Rachel

et al.

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Transforming Digital Pedagogies with Heritage Speakers of Spanish

Collaborative Instruction and Latinx Archives

*Sandy Enriquez**¹

*Covadonga Lamar Prieto**

*Rachel Starry**

*Andrea Hoff**

*Krystal Boehlert**

humming ballads
corridos revolucionarios
instilling carnalismo
para nacer hermanos

Excerpt from "Concha Rivera," by Angela de Hoyos (1977)

Statement on Positionality and Terminology

In the spirit of transparency, and as part of a decolonial practice, we the authors wish to disclose our individual and collective positionalities. We recognize the importance of acknowledging our intersectional perspectives as part of the contextualization of this project. We also wish to acknowledge that we presently work on the ancestral

1 * equal authorship

lands of the Tongva, Cahuilla, Serrano, and Luiseño peoples, now called Riverside, California. In sharing our individual positionalities, we aim to make visible the ways our identities impact our work and our connections with the communities we serve. Sandy Enriquez is the Special Collections Public Services, Outreach, and Community Engagement Librarian at the University of California, Riverside (UCR or UC Riverside) Library. She is a first-generation, U.S.-born, Spanish and Quechua heritage speaker of Peruvian Andean descent. As part of the Special Collections and University Archives (SCUA) team, she provided instructional support and helped facilitate the use of digitized primary sources during the course. Covadonga Lamar Prieto is a recent immigrant to the U.S., first-generation college student, and first of her family to obtain a degree beyond high school. As a faculty member in the Department of Hispanic Studies in UCR, she teaches, serves, and conducts research focusing on California Spanish and those who speak it. Rachel Starry is the Digital Scholarship Librarian at UC Riverside Library. She is a white, cisgender woman with multiple degrees, who is a U.S.-born English speaker and beginner level Spanish speaker. As the Digital Scholarship Program lead, she contributed to digital scholarship instruction during the course. Andrea Hoff is the University Archivist at UC Riverside. She is a U.S.-born English speaker. She contributed instructional support regarding the use of Special Collections and University Archives as well as background and context about the Tomás Rivera archive during the course. Krystal Boehlert is a white, U.S.-born English speaker and beginner level Spanish speaker. As the Digital Initiatives Specialist in the Digital Library Division of the UC Riverside Library, she supports digitization and digital scholarship. For this course, she contributed to the technical infrastructure and digital scholarship instruction. Each of us brought our different perspectives in support of this course, which is reflected in our writing. We aspire to a collaborative working style that strengthens the project as a whole, and that cohesion is also reflected in this chapter. We acknowledge again that Spanish 130 was the result of the labor, approaches, and knowledge of everyone involved.

Likewise, we wish to acknowledge that there is no single terminology that effectively and equitably encompasses all peoples that we, within the context of Western or American culture, typically call “Latino” or “Latinx.” Monolithic terms like these erase the intersectional realities, perspectives, and experiences of the people who originate from countries and diasporas within the North and South American territories.

We choose to use these recognizable terms in an effort to make this information accessible and searchable, but we want to acknowledge that these terminologies are complex and will continue to evolve past the printing of this work. This chapter utilizes “Latinx” in reference to peoples who have migrated, or descended, from ancestral lands in the Americas. Whenever possible, we aim to respect the terminology used by each individual or community to describe themselves. For instance, we use “Chicano/x” when speaking specifically within the context of the course, since the focus of that class was on Tomás Rivera who identified as Chicano. In the literature review, we use the same terminology as the authors we cite. Lastly, we utilize “Latinx/Chicanx” to be inclusive of all genders and identities, while acknowledging that this choice may privilege English-speakers due to this term’s prevalence within a uniquely diasporic-U.S. context.

Introduction

Collaboration between different constituents in higher education is fundamental for developing inclusive digital pedagogies that aim to break the cycle of silencing of Latinx voices, among others, in both the archives and in broader academic conversations. This is the spirit in which we developed an inclusive research opportunity for undergraduate students at the University of California, Riverside. Through a quarter-long Spanish upper division course (SPN130 course designation, referred to informally in this chapter as Spanish 130), Latinx students majoring in Hispanic Studies were offered the chance of working with previously unpublished manuscripts and other materials from the Tomás Rivera Archive. While this chapter discusses the course as it was taught in Winter 2021, it continues to be revised and offered.

The year 2020 was historic for many reasons. On the one hand, it marked the first time Latinx and Chicanx students comprised the highest demographic (36%) from California to be admitted to the UC system (Cowan, 2020). At UCR specifically, that number rose to 41.8% of admitted undergraduate students identifying as either Chicano or Latino (Institutional Research, 2021). More than half of these students also identify as first-generation and are the first in their families to attend college. As such, the university has developed several outreach and service programs to meet the needs of students of the global majority, such as First-Year Experience Programs for students in the College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences, as well as Costo Hall, which

houses the campus student programs including Chicano Student Programs, Native American Student Programs, Undocumented Student Programs, LGBT Resource Center, and many others. In 2018, UCR welcomed its first full-time immigration lawyer to expand legal services for UCR's immigrant students (UCR News, 2018). Despite the success of enrollment, outreach, and additional services, the most recent statistics from 2016 indicate that approximately only 60% of admitted Chicano/Latino students graduate after four years (Graduation Rate Overall, 2020). These statistics indicate that the university must do more to serve and support Latinx students, particularly first-generation undergraduates. Unique offerings like Spanish 130, which combined hands-on pedagogy with curated library resources and a curriculum relevant to Chicanx student experiences, are one avenue we can explore to better support all Latinx students.

This case-study helps fill a gap in the literature regarding Latinx student engagement with archives and digital pedagogies centered on that engagement. It also serves as an example of a successful cross-departmental collaboration that called on the joint expertise of librarians, library staff, instructional designers, and faculty to design a learning experience specifically for Latinx students. We hope that in sharing our pedagogical approaches and experiences, we can encourage others to develop similar courses or projects that facilitate educational and culturally empowering experiences for underrepresented students.

Course Design

The development of the Spanish 130 course took place within the context of a new, collaborative program called "Teaching with R'Stuff." The R'Stuff program provided grant funding to faculty members as well as a cross-departmental support team that included archivists, librarians, instructional designers, and other library staff members. The program was a multi-unit collaboration between the UCR Library and XCITE, the Exploration Center for Innovative Teaching and Engagement at UCR. Teaching with R'Stuff was led initially by the Director of Teaching and Learning at UCR Library, Dani Brecher-Cook, and subsequently by our Primary Source Literacy Teaching Librarian, Robin Katz. The authors of this chapter formed the Spanish 130 team along with a colleague from XCITE, Samantha Eastman.

Applications for the pilot R'Stuff program, to run during the 2020-2021 academic year, were open to all faculty members and required that they incorporate a library collection into their instruction, whether a general collection or a notable collection from Special Collections and University Archives (SCUA). Applicants were also recommended to include a non-traditional research project in their proposed course in order to “create opportunities for undergraduate students to create substantive scholarly or creative projects, think through information ethics, and gain technical skills” (UC Riverside Library, n.d.).

The program was developed prior to the pandemic, and originally a core theme was the importance of location and materiality. The program steering committee had hoped that library workers, faculty members, and students would engage with each other closely on-site with the physical collection materials. Unfortunately, the pandemic required us to rethink the program entirely from a new virtual lens. We will speak to ways this shifted both our goals and implementation further below.

The R'Stuff program formalized assessment in the form of pre- and post-surveys of students, with anonymous feedback and self-assessments of learning outcomes conducted using Qualtrics. The purpose of the pre- and post-surveys were to gauge the efficacy of student engagement and identify areas for program revision. They asked students to self-identify their familiarity with the library's role in supporting their coursework and more specifically their comfort levels describing what archives and special collections were, as well as their comfort levels learning new digital tools in their classes. As the surveys were designed for program evaluation and internal use only and not subject to Institutional Review Board (IRB) oversight, we are unable to share specific results related to student responses.

We would also like to share some broader context for the creation of the Spanish 130 course, called Digital Dialectology, within the Hispanic Studies department at UCR. This course takes a revisionist approach to the traditional concept of dialectology, which is the study of different dialects of a language. The idea behind the course was to bring dialectology into the digital realm, but it is important to clarify the use of this terminology here. In some instances, particularly in common usage, the term “dialect” carries the implied colonial accusation of being a “lesser” variety of a language, as the term can be used pejoratively to identify such “lesser” varieties of a language

spoken by underprivileged populations. This is not the case with the use of dialectology here. Spanish 130 reappropriates the terms “dialect” and “dialectology” to refer to the interaction between dialects. The concept of digital dialectology examines the use and uses of natural language and its dialects within a digital realm; it encompasses all human-machine, human-human, and machine-human interactions in which at least one of the elements of the communication system is digitally created, transmitted, or produced. The phrase digital dialectology also refers to the different interactions, relations, and links between two or more languages or dialects in the digital production by an individual. By examining digital materials, undergraduates engaged in a new form of communication with the works of Tomás Rivera and with the UCR Library and SCUA.

This course was designed for a group of 25 undergraduate students, all of whom are bilingual speakers of Spanish and English. In short, students received a set of scanned documents from the Tomás Rivera collections and were tasked with transcribing the materials, examining the contents and their iterations, and also creating an Airtable database and an Omeka digital exhibit page. The primary learning objective for this course was that students would develop their bilingual digital literacy. If “digital literacy” in general refers to students’ ability to “understand and use information in multiple formats from a wide range of sources,” (Gilster, 1997) approaching it from a bilingual perspective with digital media would be a step forward from most linguistics approaches. On the one hand, this idea of bilingual digital literacy immediately validates the speaking of Spanish in the United States as a source of knowledge, while at the same time it prompts questions about the standardization of the Spanish language in education. This concept also speaks to the erosion of the auctoritas of the sources and the re-evaluation of the ways in which knowledge is produced.

In more practical terms, digital dialectology and bilingual digital literacy are anchored in the lived experiences of our students. Tomás Rivera was the first Chicano chancellor within the University of California, and his works were written in both Spanish and English. The sources therefore speak to students in both the languages that they speak, and both the languages are at the same height of elaboration and elegance of expression. The bilingualism of Rivera’s writings foresees a community of readers able to deeply engage with English and Spanish at the same time. The existence of the Tomás Rivera Archive thus provided a unique opportunity to create a community of digital

practice in which students become the agents and subjects of their own sociolinguistic research project that in a way, echoes their own lived experiences.

In addition to working directly with archival materials, students were encouraged to develop skills with digital humanities tools and approaches. This course introduced students to the experience of documenting archival materials, organizing information, and creating digital exhibits to contextualize the archival materials for a broader audience. Working with two tools, Airtable and Omeka S, students had the opportunity to build critical digital competencies and collaboratively produce their own digital scholarship.

Background and Context

The Legacy of Dr. Tomás Rivera

It is difficult to find a figure whose importance looms larger in the history of UCR than Tomás Rivera. In many ways, his leadership helped UCR become one of the most diverse of the ten UC campuses. Tomás Rivera was chancellor at UC Riverside from 1979-1984. He was the first Chicano chancellor as well as the first person of color to serve in this role in the UC system. Rivera was a noted author and poet who often wrote about themes related to his upbringing as the son of migrant farmworkers. He was both an example and a strong proponent



Figure 1 Chancellor Tomás Rivera seated at desk, circa 1979-1984.

of social mobility through education (Hinojosa, 1988). Social mobility continues to be an important metric of success for UCR today (UCR News, 2021).

Rivera's upbringing played a critical role in his identity, especially as a writer and later in his role as chancellor. Rivera hailed from Crystal City, Texas. His parents were both migrant farm workers, and his family moved around throughout his childhood for work (Olivares, 1986, p. 7). He lived in many states throughout the Midwest, including Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, and North Dakota. He actually included migrant farm labor on his CV throughout his career, a fact which is cited throughout the literature on Rivera (Hinojosa, 1988, p. 64).

Rivera had experience working in education at multiple levels in multiple roles before becoming an administrator. He earned a BS in English Education and taught English and Spanish in high schools in Texas in the early part of his career. He then earned a Masters in both Educational Administration and Spanish Literature. In 1969, he completed a PhD in Romance Languages and Literatures. He became a professor at Sam Houston State University and University of Texas, San Antonio before becoming chancellor at UCR in 1979 (Rivera, 1988, pp. 54-55).

Rivera was in charge during a particularly difficult period for the university in terms of budget cuts. In 1982, several programs, including Black Studies and Chicano Studies came under scrutiny due to their low enrollment. UCR Dean David Warren's proposal to dissolve these programs was met with criticism from many student groups on campus. In November 1982, about 50 student protesters marched from the Bell Tower to a dining hall in University Commons where Chancellor Rivera was having lunch with a group of high-ranking UC officials from Berkeley. Rivera responded to the students' concerns saying, "My philosophy about the need and importance to develop minority communities is well-known. And I don't intend to back away from that" (Rodriguez, 1982, p. B-3). In the end, these programs were retained, and their retention remains an important part of Rivera's legacy.

Rivera died unexpectedly of a heart attack in 1984 while serving as chancellor, at 48 years of age (Kolb, 1984). His papers came to the library in 1985 as a result of an agreement between Interim Chancellor Daniel Aldrich and Rivera's widow, Concepción Rivera. The archive consists of almost 200 boxes in a wide variety of formats. It is the only collection at UCR that has its own dedicated room. An advisory committee was established in conjunction with the archive in the hope

that the collection would be used to support research on Rivera and to promote his legacy (Martinez, 1992).

This Spanish 130 course allowed Rivera's legacy to come full-circle by providing Latinx students first-hand access to his letters, photos, and poetry manuscripts. The research opportunities built into this course were designed to encourage students to critically engage with the Tomás Rivera Archive. Students were invited to reflect on how their own lived experiences and cultural knowledge may influence their understanding and interpretation of Rivera's papers through facilitated talks, exercises, and activities. Encouraging this self-reflexive analysis helped break the barriers of exclusivity and whiteness that typically surround archival research. Instead, students were able to witness how their culture and language expertise provides a unique lens by which to navigate the archive. This became particularly important as they engaged with bilingual materials that originated from a Chicano perspective predating the use of Latinx, an identity with which many students align themselves today.

Research Landscape

To fully outline the contribution of this case-study to the disciplinary landscape, we should briefly discuss ways in which the relationship between libraries and the Latinx community has fluctuated significantly over time. For example, during the first World War, public libraries were tasked with the 'Americanization' and assimilation of Latinx immigrants (Flores & Pachon, 2008). Although outreach to Latinx communities would eventually evolve and improve through community engagement, bilingual services, and diverse collection development, caution and mistrust of the library would again resurface for some Latinx users with the USA Patriot Act of 2001 (Kravitz, 2003). Recently, Latinx opinions and perceptions of the library have shifted to a more positive light. The Pew Research Center found that in 2015, 75% of Hispanic people surveyed strongly agreed that libraries "give everyone a chance to succeed" and 71% felt libraries "improve quality of life in [the] community" (Brown & Lopez, 2015).

A survey of the academic literature on Latino perspectives of the library, drawn over a period of 35 years, finds that Latino users are consistently "looking for cultural and linguistic reinforcement; educational support, including study space; a space free of value judgments... and a space in which they can learn about those elements of their

culture that conflict with the established order” (Adkins and Hussey, 2006, p. 460). Since those conclusions were drawn primarily from users of public libraries, Adkins and Hussey interviewed Latino college students to learn how their perspectives may be similar or may differ. Students generally reported positive associations with academic libraries, though some did experience alienation, yet the consensus was to dismiss the academic library as a “source of cultural reinforcement” since they experienced very little (if any) representation there, in contrast to public libraries which they felt were more “culturally relevant and responsive” (Adkins & Hussey, 2006, p. 476). This echoes a later study by Dallas Long (2011) which posits that Latino students have different expectations for academic libraries that, when unmet, may contribute to their lower rate of academic library use and proficiency compared to other ethnic groups. Long found that Latino undergraduates interpret libraries as spaces for cultural support based on their experiences in public libraries growing up. Since “students perceive libraries as cultural spaces, yet no attempts are made in academic libraries to engage Latino students culturally,” they may be alienated and not wish to spend as much time in the library, which may help explain why Latino students are less likely to utilize the library than their white peers (Long, 2011, p. 511). This can be especially detrimental as research indicates that first-year students who use library services may be more likely to academically succeed, as demonstrated by higher grade point averages and higher rates of retention (Soria, Fransen, & Nackerud, 2013, p. 160).

This illuminates the reality that for many Latinx communities, and perhaps other BIPOC or underrepresented communities, public libraries are generally seen as more culturally supportive and engaged than academic libraries. This is not unintentional. From the elitism of early colonial colleges, to the manifest destiny enacted by land-grant colleges, academic libraries in the United States have traditionally functioned as sites of knowledge formation for, as well as exclusivity and conformity to, white, heteronormative, patriarchal power structures. The culture and structure of academia is changing, however, in no small part because of the activism and support of students, staff, and faculty of color (for one case-study example, see Santa-Ramirez, 2021). Affirmative programs and designations are also ways universities can be motivated to better serve and support underrepresented students. While the Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) designation only tracks student population percentages and does not include a

mandate to serve Latinx students, other federal programs do exist to promote support of Latinx students. A significant one is Title V, the Developing Hispanic-Serving Institutions program, which aims to expand educational opportunities, improve academic attainment, enhance academic offerings, and generally help larger numbers of Hispanic students complete their degree programs (Santiago & Andrade, 2010, p. 5). Programs like this, coupled with the research indicating Latinx undergraduates would benefit from greater library engagement and representation, suggest that the academic library is a prime site for building Latinx student support services.

In particular, special collections and archives (hereafter abbreviated to “archives”) are an under-utilized resource for Latinx student support within the academic library. While the historical absence of multicultural collections is often a consequence of the inherent whiteness and coloniality of archives, the field’s gradual move towards social justice over the past four decades (see Punzalan & Caswell, 2016) indicates that these conditions are changing. This transition is exemplified by growing support among archival institutions for social justice-oriented initiatives like inclusive collecting, community archives, and post-custodial frameworks. However, it is not enough to simply acquire or preserve more diverse materials. Diverse materials must be put into connection with diverse audiences through culturally sensitive and empowering exchanges. Therefore, this transition towards diversifying the archive must occur alongside inclusive outreach and intentional instruction that specifically benefits underrepresented communities like Latinx students. Archives have unique holdings that can provide an important opportunity for Latinx students to engage with elements of their culture and history in tactile and creative ways.

As we diversify the collections and audiences we serve, we must also recognize that not all students respond and connect to archives in the same way. Students from marginalized backgrounds may have distinct interactions with materials that share their cultural, social, or ancestral roots. For instance, Vos and Guzman describe how a primary source literary workshop led one BIPOC student to feel an emotional connection to the archives after she learned how her hometown contributed to the civil rights movement (2019). Similarly, the “Transforming Knowledge/Transforming Libraries” project at the University of California, Irvine, which connected Ethnic Studies students with local community archives, documented several student responses to the impact of seeing (or not seeing) their own cultures represented

in the archive (Tribbett, Dang, Yun, & Zavala, 2020). Unfortunately, affective impact may also manifest as trauma when interacting with painful histories or silences in the archive (see Sloan, Vanderfluit, & Douglas, 2019). Whether positive or negative, affective impact within the archives should not be ignored or erased. Acknowledging this impact may help students feel empowered or, in the event of trauma, heard and supported. Drawing from feminist and queer studies frameworks, research on emotional labor and affective impact within archives has emerged primarily from the literature on community archives (see Caswell, Cifor, & Ramirez, 2016) or from the perspective of the archivists or memory workers themselves (see Cifor, 2016). However, it is essential we also recognize and leave space for these experiences among students in academic repositories.

Like archives, library digital scholarship initiatives have a responsibility to become more equitable and inclusive in the ways we conduct outreach and support Latinx and other underrepresented students through our pedagogies. Tara McPherson outlined in the contribution to *Debates in the Digital Humanities* titled “Why Are the Digital Humanities So White?” ways in which histories of race and computing in the humanities have structured the very tools we use, in addition to the ways they privilege certain sources of knowledge and encode that knowledge in seemingly objective terms (McPherson, 2012). It takes an explicit commitment to teaching digital tools and methods through the lens of critical pedagogy to avoid reifying these tools’ ability to privilege white, patriarchal ways of knowing at the expense of other, marginalized forms of knowledge. At the same time, equitable collaboration has been a topic of ongoing discussion among digital practitioners who are based in libraries. As Roxanne Shirazi notes, “power relations...are embedded in the hierarchies that make up academia, in both the social stratification of varying job ranks and the hierarchical classification of service and scholarship,” calling for more nuanced approaches to both conducting digital scholarship and teaching digital skills and methods to younger generations of scholars (Shirazi, 2014).

From a sociolinguistic perspective, Latinx students are routinely exposed to micro- and macro-aggressions related to their use of language (Zentella, 1997; Mendoza Denton, 2008; Holguín Mendoza, 2018; among others). The variety of Spanish language in use in California, as well as that in use in other border areas, has been traditionally misconstrued as a transitional variety (Alvar, 2000) and at the same time without roots (Perissinotto y Moreno de Alba, 1998) and without future

(Silva Corvalán, 1994). More recent investigations shed light upon the solidity of the variety (Parodi, 2009) as well as its past (Lamar Prieto, 2018) and its future (Guerrero y Parodi, 2012; Carr, 2020). While this more recent research has begun to percolate into K-20 textbooks and mindsets, we have the responsibility to offer tools and resources to those who will be bilingual professionals in the future, as is the case for many of our undergraduate students.

Collaborative Instruction

Special Collections and University Archives

Materiality, and by extension tactile exploration, are key aspects of primary source instruction. The UCR Library department of Special Collections and University Archives (SCUA) supports hands-on, active learning activities during instruction so students can dive deeper into the materiality, history, and context of the collections. Direct engagement with archives helps students better understand the function, need, and wealth of potential within archival research.

However, due to the need for remote instruction at the time the Spanish 130 course was held, we suddenly had to select and digitize hundreds of pages from the Tomás Rivera collections without being able to properly search them on-site, in order to make sure that students had ample material to work with remotely. We also had to find creative ways to engage students in the archives without the tactile activities and lessons we typically focus on. To that end, we developed two virtual activities to conduct with students over Zoom. Our goals for this project were to introduce students to the history and legacy of Tomás Rivera, pique student interest in archival research, and help students develop the preliminary skills needed to engage in archival research. In addition, we wanted to empower students to conceptualize their own heritage and cultural knowledge as valuable tools and assets within their research journeys.

We chose to focus on only two documents from the Rivera archive to allow for deeper engagement and discussion. In a way, the Zoom platform provided an advantage to this type of individual analysis, since students could easily zoom in and out of the image and get a closer look without having to navigate around their peers to view a physical item. The first activity centered on Rivera's birth certificate and asked

students to reflect on how this document demonstrates social or cultural norms that are generally quite distinct from our own. Through this activity, we also discussed with students the important considerations of archiving such personal documentation and what research value these types of documents may have. For the second activity, we selected a bilingual English/Spanish poem written by the Chicana activist and poet Angela de Hoyos for Concha Rivera, Tomás' wife. We chose this particular poem because it gives students the opportunity to read and learn about Rivera's Chicana contemporaries and it introduces students to a woman's perspective and experiences within the Chicana community (see Hoyos 1977). Inviting Spanish heritage speakers to engage with a bilingual Chicana poem like this also opens the doors to new learning opportunities and cultural exchanges that might not have been possible with a different class. For instance, the poem contains several examples of code-switching and slang specific to Chicana culture, so students needed to draw on their own cultural heritage and knowledge to translate and discuss the poem's full meaning. During the debrief discussion, students who were unfamiliar with Chicana slang deferred to other students in the group who they felt had authority and knowledge to translate. Both of these documents highlight the nuance and intersectionality within Chicana and Latinx experiences. It is our hope that activities such as this encourage students to value their own social and cultural repertoires on par with the skills and knowledge traditionally valued by western society.

Digital Scholarship

Collaboration is a central value for the UCR Library's Digital Scholarship Program, which aligned closely with Covadonga Lamar Prieto's pedagogical approaches and the course learning goals for Spanish 130. The two primary digital scholarship components that were integrated into this course were the transcription and creation of metadata around archival documents, using the online relational database *Airtable*, and the development of small digital exhibits to contextualize the archival documents, using the digital collections tool *Omeka* (specifically the multi-site version, *Omeka S*).

Covadonga Lamar Prieto regularly implements digital projects in her teaching. As such, she had created an *Airtable* template for each team to share. Students received a link to their team's *Airtable* and, in a guided activity, they learned how to use the database for inputting

data. After that, they got access to the Tomás Rivera Archive and SCUA materials that had been assigned to their group. The selection of the materials for each group was done in consultation with the SCUA team, and issues of difficulty, total word count, and whether the document was a handwritten versus a typed manuscript were taken into account. They had the opportunity to annotate, translate, and transcribe handwritten letters, as well as to link image files of each document to its metadata. This process was collaborative in the sense that students were divided into small groups and shared access to a set of materials. They performed their translation, transcription, and metadata creation individually, and then shared it with their teams. Each team was responsible for the collaborative creation of a digital exhibit page for their materials.

Once the information was collected and described, the students could then begin to visualize how they would like to arrange those materials, describe them with longer-form narrative text, and share their own perspectives on them in the form of a small digital exhibit. Omeka S is an open-source digital publishing platform and one of the primary digital scholarship tools that is currently supported by the UCR Library. Rachel Starry and Krystal Boehlert formed the student-facing digital scholarship support team, but many of our library colleagues were involved in the broader systems support that made this project possible. Metadata preparation for the archival documents themselves was performed by Noah Geraci, the Metadata Digital Asset Management Librarian, and Omeka S server updates and maintenance were done by Scott Metoyer, our Lead Software Developer. Additionally, Spanish 130 course site setup and user management for the student accounts was managed by the library and handled primarily by Krystal. Supporting the students using digital tools in this course truly was a collaborative effort through every step of the process.

To provide students with essential information about using Omeka and to assess what level of technical experience the students were bringing to the course, the Digital Scholarship Librarian and Digital Initiatives Specialist facilitated a one-hour, in-class workshop about Omeka S for the Spanish 130 students. In addition to demystifying the tool interface and outlining its basic functionality, we also introduced students to the process of working collaboratively in the Omeka S system. Unlike other collaboration tools the students may have been familiar with, such as Google Drive and Google Docs, Omeka S is not designed for folks to work simultaneously to create items or exhibit

pages. For this reason, we also spoke with them about the challenges related to metadata management and what the process would look like to migrate the information they had created in their Airtable database into the item records inside of Omeka S. We then walked students through some of the options for arranging and displaying that content, including examples of how they could juxtapose images of the archival documents and combine those with their own narrative text within an exhibit page. We also wanted to help the students envision the end product and how they might want to present their research. By exploring these options early in the instruction process, we hoped that they might ask different questions of the archival materials, or consider their audience when synthesizing what they had learned. Finally, we also addressed some of the common strategies they could use for troubleshooting when something did not work as they expected in the system. Demonstrating how to ask for help and where to search for answers is an important skill and one we wanted to emphasize, particularly since most of the students in this course had no prior experience with this particular digital scholarship tool.

Having learned that the students had mixed levels of comfort and familiarity with tools like Airtable and Omeka, we also offered one-on-one consultations with each of the small groups who would be working together on their final project for the course. Additionally, we created

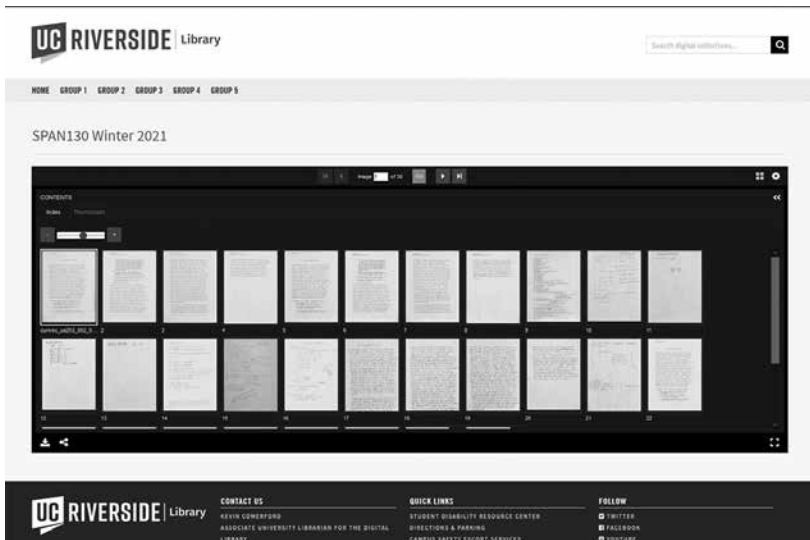


Figure 2 Screenshot of Omeka S page with thumbnails of a Tomás Rivera manuscript.

ad-hoc how-to videos for specific tasks as needed; this was particularly necessary when the Library's Omeka S version was updated in the middle of the quarter, changing some of the functionality. Following up the workshop with these short instructional videos allowed us to remain responsive to the specific needs of the students as they arose. As Spanish 130 was one of the first courses we supported using the Library's Omeka S platform, this had the added benefit of enabling us to learn what students found most challenging, so we could build support materials and technical documentation that addressed the most significant student needs and which could be repurposed and built upon in the future.

Reflections and Outcomes

One of the primary student learning objectives was to increase the linguistic self-esteem of this group of students. All of the students in this course were bilingual speakers of Spanish and English. As Spanish speakers in the United States, these students are often approached from a deficit model of thinking, where they are unfairly perceived as less capable or skilled as their monolingual English-speaking peers. There may be assumptions about their competence in English because they are bilingual. With this project we intentionally fought against that notion and aimed to create a space in which students could "own" their bilingualism. Bilingualism is a unique skill that these students have and brings a deeper understanding and linguistic knowledge to the subject matter. The goal of introducing students to the archival materials from the Tomás Rivera Archive was in large part to allow bilingual students to experience their bilingualism as a unique skill set and recognize it as an asset in their academic career. We found that the students were highly engaged with the materials because they could bring their own strengths and experiences into the research process, and we hope the students continue to draw on this confidence in their knowledge and expertise in their future endeavors.

Another course objective that we found to be successful was exposing the students to digital tools and methods and building their confidence in developing new skills and digital competencies. Creating and organizing metadata for archival documents played a central role in this project, as the students were responsible for both creating transcriptions or translations of the materials and summarizing information about people, places, and topics present in the texts in a

structured format. We encouraged them to think about the eventual publication of their research, even research conducted on a smaller scale with a group of archival documents for a single course project. The final project asked them to experiment with the arrangement and display of those materials on a webpage—quite a challenge for students who were overall new to this form of scholarly communication. Because each small group of students would be responsible for a single page on the larger course exhibit site, they also had to consider a hypothetical user’s navigation of those webpages. Troubleshooting collaboratively with their peers, using technical documentation and the larger Omeka S user forums, was another important skill we believed they could translate to technical projects in many other contexts in their academic careers.

The objective of introducing the students to archival research methods was also achieved, as students learned about both the process of conducting archival research and interacting with materials from the Tomás Rivera Archive, through the instruction session led by the University Archivist and the Special Collections Librarian. From the perspective of the classroom, the shift to a remote learning environment required changes in methodologies and modes of instruction and evaluation. At the same time, it provided an opportunity to reconsider the process of learning and acquisition of knowledge as a sequence of skills and competencies, and not as a memoristic exercise.

In addition to those successes, several challenges were met during this course. The first iteration of Spanish 130 took place during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, which contributed to student stress for a multitude of reasons. While the full impact of the pandemic on the health and well-being of students, as well as faculty and staff working in higher education, has not yet been addressed by researchers, our experience was also one of extreme uncertainty and stress as the pandemic affected each of our lives in different ways. The closure of the library to the public during the pandemic also meant that archival material could not be accessed by the students in-person, so the SCUA team had to improvise and coordinate with minimal on-site presence to both research and scan materials in unprecedented ways.

Beyond the upheavals of the pandemic, the course faced the common challenge of finding a balance between teaching the disciplinary content and helping students overcome the learning curve of applying new technologies and digital skills in analyzing and reflecting on

the course content. Combining this balancing act with the temporal compression of a 10-week academic quarter exacerbated the struggle. Even under the best circumstances, introducing students to new tools can be incredibly time-intensive, depending on their previous exposure to similar tools. On the one hand, students were almost all able to complete their annotation, transcriptions, and translations of their assigned archival documents within the Airtable database, and accomplish other non-digital course assignments. On the other hand, while many students were certainly able to begin their work within the Omeka S platform and envision the published end product, the digital exhibition portion of the final project was not completed by the end of the term. Finding the right scale for the technical components of a course with these particular learning goals is a challenge that we will need to continue thinking through.

Another aspect worth mentioning as a challenge was the shift to remote teaching. Neither the faculty nor the students were completely prepared for this new environment. While for the faculty it required a new understanding of pedagogies, remote learning brought to the surface many inequalities that we have been trained to ignore when teaching in person. Being isolated and having access to class only online exacerbated difficulties in gaining access to reliable internet connections, as well as general shelter and care inequalities that are not equally visible when in person. Navigating those, in the middle of a public health crisis that has been more harmful to low income individuals than the global majority, was—and continues to be—a matter of concern.

Additionally, we faced some technical issues related to our Omeka S platform that added to the challenges of teaching with this tool. Some of the Omeka S server updates and customizations happening on the back end turned out to be disruptive to the students using it and to staff teaching around the tools. Another way we hope to address some of the Omeka S issues moving forward is to more actively develop our instructional approaches and materials. Instead of teaching “to the tool” specifically, we believe there is value in revising our instruction to better enable students to build on their existing knowledge about sharing images and text online, perhaps using other web content management systems.

In future iterations of the project, we would like to bring in our colleagues who have complementary expertise to advise on the project

much earlier in the process. Specifically, from the SCUA perspective, we had digitized hundreds of pages of archival materials so the students could access them virtually after the Library closed to visitors. Initially, we didn't think about how we would deliver the metadata about those documents alongside the actual files. We needed to bring in our colleague, the Metadata Librarian, to lend his expertise. He wrote a script that automated the process of linking document metadata and attaching that to the PDF files, allowing us to facilitate the transfer of that information to Covadonga Lamar Prieto and the students in the course. In the future, we would definitely want to bring colleagues on board earlier to promote transparency around staff labor and streamline our collaboration workflows.

Conclusion

Spanish 130: Digital Dialectology provided a unique and important opportunity to collaborate across departments and specialties in support of Chicano/a, Latino/a, and Hispanic students. While this course was embedded in the Department of Hispanic Studies, as a part of the 2020 Teaching with R'Stuff program at UCR Library it benefited from additional support by a team of academic staff from Research Services, Special Collections and University Archives, and the Digital Library along with staff at the Exploration Center for Innovative Teaching and Engagement at UCR. While this class was held during a time of significant stress and uncertainty due to the global pandemic, ultimately all parties came together to successfully plan and execute a course designed towards the unique strengths of Spanish heritage speakers. Amongst ourselves, we also learned and honed new skills, such as managing instruction through Zoom, in order to ensure the success of the course. Several aspects of this course, including the digitization of hundreds of documents from the Rivera archive, will have a lasting impact on the university as they increase preservation of and access to the materials for future scholars.

While the first iteration of this course is now complete, we aim to continue finding innovative ways to support Latinx students across campus. From the SCUA perspective, collaborating with BIPOC campus and community partners is a crucial part of our outreach strategy and has resulted in successful projects and events. One upcoming example of this is SCUA's partnership with Chicano Student Programs to develop specialized workshops for students to continue exploring Latinx

representation across the collections and unpacking the impact of Latinx history on UCR itself. On a broader scale, SCUA is also creating asynchronous resources to support access, research, and engagement with BIPOC collections and materials, such as the research guide for BIPOC LGBTQ+ Representation in Special Collections (Enriquez, 2021) and African American Resources in Special Collections & University Archives (Hoff, 2021). The Digital Scholarship Program is also committed to seeking out opportunities to connect with and support Latinx students and scholars, and has plans to develop a summer training program that utilizes BIPOC materials from Special Collections and University Archives in the coming year. Spanish 130 is being offered again during the Fall 2021 quarter; current and future iterations of this course will build on what we learned from this experience, as well as incorporate student suggestions and comments. All in all, we believe this kind of collaboration is vital for higher education instruction, and we look forward to continuing to contribute to UCR's engagement of Latinx students.

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