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Spanish Tutoring Center—A Peer Review of Teaching Project Inquiry Portfolio

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Inquiry Portfolio 2013

[SPANISH TUTORING CENTER FIRST YEAR EVALUATION]

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Summary of the Impact and Success of the Spanish Tutoring Center
(Fall 2012-Spring 2013)

• **Undergraduate Peer Tutoring and Graduate Student Leader:**

During the year, we selected three undergraduate majors in good academic standing. The opening positions for peer tutors were announced in our *Blackboard* for Undergraduate Majors. We reviewed applications, scheduled interviews and administered a grammar and vocabulary test.

Selected Undergraduate Spanish Majors: Martina Barinova, Jordan Dudley, and Matt Harmier.

Graduate Student: Ana María López-Aguilera, leader of the Center, specifically developed all the materials included in the Web component of the Center. Also, she helps upper level students in the face-to-face Writing module of the Center.

• **Impact of the Tutoring Center in the Spanish Program:**

Face to face component: During the Fall semester we had more than 50 students and during the Spring semester more than 60 students visited the Center.

Web Tutoring: This is a valuable tool that helps students in the acquisition of essential grammatical skills for their classes. Furthermore, it contains sensible advice for developing sound writing practices tailored to particular courses of the major and minor sequences: SPAN 204 (Intermediate Level), SPAN 304 (Advanced Level Composition, ACE 1), SPAN 303 (Reading for Comprehension, ACE 2), SPAN 321 (Spanish Civilization, ACE 9), SPAN 305 (Literary Analysis in Spanish, ACE 5), SPAN 498/898 (Film, Popular Culture and Human Rights: Iberia and Iberian-America), and SPAN 445/845 (Spanish Golden Age Drama, ACE 10).

• **Population of Students Who Are the Direct Beneficiaries of the Writing and Tutoring Center:**

- 200 majors
- 465 minors

• **Thanks to the Spanish Tutoring Center, We Are Capable of...**

Creating an Environment for Learning. This is due to the collaborative atmosphere students of all abilities and learning styles find in 1126 Oldfather, which is the location of both the Student Resource Center and the Spanish Tutoring Center.

Increasing Student Performance. The Spanish tutoring center fosters success in at-risk students. Instructors identify students with grammar problems, and our undergraduate peer tutors help them to overcome those deficiencies. Specifically, we welcome students from the Basic Program (SPAN 101-102, 201-202, and 210).

Positively Influencing Tutors. The Spanish Tutoring Center seeks to enhance the academic and pre-professional experience of our tutors. In fact, thanks to the confidence they got in their Spanish language skills, Martina and Matt are going to work on a Thesis next semester.

Enhancing Collaborative Efforts with Other Areas of the College, the University, and the State. The Spanish Tutoring Center is joining forces with faculty and staff from other schools, programs, and institutions to enhance the learning and instruction of Nebraskan students. For instance, I will soon visit Vickie Scow, Director of Language Division in the State, to offer our Web resource to all primary and secondary education institutions in Nebraska. In this way, our learning community will expand and, indeed, the Spanish Tutoring Center will attract students from the State to study at UNL.

• **Survey Results**

Question: 1) *How did students learn about the Tutoring Center?*

40%	My instructor told my class about the Spanish Tutoring Center
5%	A Spanish Tutoring Center representative came to one of my classes.
15%	My instructor required our class to go to the Tutoring Center or use the Web page to clarify a grammar point.
10%	My instructor suggested I go to the Tutoring center to learn how to organize my compositions.

30%	Advertising in the Majors Blackboard, advertising in the Hall of the A&C College, advertising in the Students Resource Center (1126 OLDH), advertising in the door of major adviser (1218 OLDH) and word-of-mouth advertising.
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Question: 2) *What aspects of writing did you work on the Tutoring Center?*

Most students (75%) came to the Tutoring Center seeking help with the writing process (thesis development, organization and paragraphing), including concerns related to style and content (conciseness, grammar, punctuation, and editing). The rest of the students (25%) came seeking grammar explanations (one of the most popular was about the form and uses of the subjunctive verbal mode).

Question: 3) *How would you rate your own writing ability?*

Students visiting the Tutoring Center, both face to face and online, generally rated their writing ability as normal or average.

Question: 4) *How would you rate the skills of the tutor and peer tutors in helping students with their writing?*

75% rated the tutors' competence as excellent, 25% felt that the tutors' competence was very good.

Question: 5) *How could the experience be improved?*

Students in general will like extra time during final papers and final week.

In conclusion, the Spanish Tutoring Center is valued as a High-Impact Educational Practice in the Spanish Section of the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures. Summary of the Impact and success of the Spanish Tutoring Center respectfully submitted by,

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<http://modlang.unl.edu/content/under/spanish/tutoring/tutoringcenter.shtml>

Future Plans for the Tutoring Center

My goal in this assessment is one examination of the data and one surveillance of the impact of the Tutoring Center on students who have used vs. those who have not used the Center either face to face or the Web page in terms of success, as measured by courses grades, and student retention. This data over four semester will be used to inform Spanish curriculum design and development and, if the impact of the Center is demonstrate as anticipated, will lead to the expansion of the model to other languages in the department.

In placing the usefulness of our Spanish tutoring center, I have to relate the significant circumstances our UNL is facing, we are part of the big ten universities, and also the learning outcomes that are the value of our Undergraduate Programs. It is very important to develop intellectual and practical skills, including proficiency in written, oral and visual communication; inquiry techniques; critical and creative thinking; quantitative applications; information assessment; teamwork; and problem-solving.

Tutoring centers across the campus are able to build learning communities and this is one objective that we can accomplish every semester thanks to the Spanish Tutoring Center.

Appendices

i. Rubric for Evaluation of a Tutoring center

Tutoring Center Assessment

From:

Associate Professor of Practice and Adviser: Lola Lorenzo

Leader of Tutoring Center: Ana María López-Aguilera

To: All major students

Please, send your comments

Dear all,

We need to present one Assessment of the Spanish Tutoring Center. Your evaluation and subjections are **very important**. We need your comments by Wednesday, **April 10**. You can send me one email with your commentaries or print this document and place in my mailbox, 1107 Oldfather.

1. How did you learn about the Spanish Tutoring Center?
2. What aspects of writing did you work on at the Spanish Tutoring Center?
3. How would you rate your own writing ability?
4. Do you think your visits to the Tutoring Center helped to improve the grades on your papers, and do you think the Tutoring Center improved your writing?
5. Do you consult or use the materials on the Spanish Tutoring Center Website?
7. Is the link to the Tutoring Center Website included on the Blackboard of your Spanish class?
8. How would you rate the skill of the tutors in helping students with their writing?

Do you have any other comments of subjections about the Spanish Tutoring Center?

ii. Test in Spanish to assure the level of Peer undergraduate tutors

Identifica los errores gramaticales en este texto, **explica por qué son errores** y **corrígelos**.

(The test has **20 mistakes** that the students need to **identify, explain way** and use the **correct form**).

El gobierno de México envía a Gloria **en** España. No es una casualidad que las primeras imágenes que vemos de Madrid sean de la plaza de toros de las Ventas reflejadas en los cristales del autobús. En ese autobús va Gloria cargando una maleta camino de su casa. Cuando Gloria llega a su piso, llama a la puerta. Una mujer envejecida abre: ella **está** Julia. Gloria **pregunta a** Juan y Julia le contesta que está donde ella lo dejó hace tres años cuando se fue. Juan **es** en coma, ni siquiera tiene los ojos abiertos. Era torero: lo vimos al principio de la película mientras rezaba un padrenuestro, y un toro lo hirió gravemente.

La madre de Juan, Doña Julia, da clases particulares a niños de primaria y secundaria. **Un radio** y unas postales de México son el regalo **por** Julia, aunque a ésta lo que más le importa es saber si su nuera ha dejado de beber. Ella contesta que sí. Pero no es verdad.

Mientras tanto, en México, aparece Doña Amelia. **Esta** cumpliendo con sus deberes de jefa del cartel haciendo una visita a la hija de Eduardo que **es** muy enferma. Doña Amelia es “la señora”. Aprovechando **la** oportunidad le pregunta a su empleado quién avisó a los policías. Eduardo **la** dice y el traidor **tendra** su merecido a su debido tiempo.

En Madrid, Gloria va a una peletería. Es uno de los negocios conectados con la banda de “la señora”. Por suerte, el piso de arriba se alquila. Nuestra heroína roba en un semáforo la cartera a una chica **por** alquilar el piso sin que la descubran. Gloria ha pensado un plan para que su familia **onscigue** el dinero que necesitan para pagar la hipoteca de su casa.

En México la están buscando. Eduardo pregunta a otras prostitutas, a una de **ellas la** ofrece dinero. La chica lo dice que está en Madrid. Además le enseña una foto que le regaló. En la fotografía **son** Gloria y Juan el día de su boda, jóvenes, resplandecientes, ella con un vestido blanco **minifaldera**. En el revés de la fotografía **puede se leer** una frase dicha por Gloria y favorita de la muchacha interrogada: “Los pobres son príncipes que tienen que reconquistar su reino”.

Gloria se ocupa ahora de **cuidando** a su marido. Le dice a Julia que ha encontrado **trabaho** en una peletería. En realidad, Julia quiere sobre todo que Gloria **estudia** para conseguir el bachillerato (Graduado escolar).

iii. Reflexion by Ana María López Aguilera. Graduate student and leader of the Tutoring Center.

Being Leader Tutor at the Spanish Tutoring Center has provided me with an extraordinary opportunity to take part in a new and exciting project. I have carried out two tasks for the Tutoring Center: i) face-to-face tutoring for upper level Spanish students and ii) design and implementation of learning materials for Spanish students.

My experience as a tutor was extremely rewarding and it has helped me improve as a language teacher. I worked with students individually and I could see that a face-to-face approach, not only improved their language knowledge, but it made them more confident in their own work and aided their development as independent and autonomous learners. Moreover, tutoring students helped me create materials for the Tutoring Center website. Their questions led me to think on what issues and topics should be included as materials and resources on the Tutoring Center website.

Creating and organizing these materials have improved my teaching in different ways. It has given me a broader perspective on how to approach Spanish teaching since I had to think about the needs of the whole Spanish student body, which is very diverse and covers different levels. Also, in order to prepare the material and resources I researched existing textbooks, handouts and language websites giving me a broad knowledge of the resources for Spanish teaching that are available nowadays.

Finally, having two Spanish undergrads with me at the Tutoring Center has been great. They helped with the tutoring of students from lower level classes and they contributed to the materials for the website. As a Spanish teacher I was very glad they could put into practice the Spanish language they have studied in class by helping their fellow students