

## Spanish 211: Library Research Guide

Course Guide: <https://www.amherst.edu/library/find/courseguides/1516F/SPAN-211>

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### GENERAL SEARCH TIPS

- You can search any of the databases for keywords in Spanish or in English.
- As you type in a keyword, the database may auto-populate the field. It can do this for Spanish or English. You can always manually edit the auto-fill if it's not the word you're looking for.
- When you do an "advanced search" in any of the databases, you have the option of retrieving results in Spanish only. When you open the database, search for "advanced search" button, and once in an advanced search, select "Spanish" as the language for retrieved items (note: depending on the database, limiting to Spanish language only may reduce your results significantly, so be sure to search in English as well).
- Sometimes, a database will allow you to see basic information about a source, but will not provide you with the full-text of the item. Look for the "Get it @ AC" button, which will search the library's databases to find if we have the full version of the item somewhere:

**Get It @ AC**

**(That's the button to look for!)**

If "Get it @ AC" can't find the item, you can request it via Inter-Library Loan (PDF document requests often arrive within 24 hours, books take as long as a week): <https://www.amherst.edu/library/services/request> (use the "Interlibrary Loan or Purchase Requests" login).

### GENERAL SEARCH STRATEGIES

- Use "OR" to broaden your search (e.g., "literary criticism" **OR** "literary analysis")
  - Put "or" between similar terms that point to one idea. The database will look for either one of the terms.
    - For example: A search in *Discover* for literary criticism gets 238,713 results, and a search for "literary criticism" OR "literary analysis" gets 249,091 results
- Use "AND" to narrow down your search (e.g., "literary criticism" AND )
  - "AND" tells the database to only bring back results with both concepts.
    - For example: A search in *Discover* for *el cantar de mio cid* AND literary criticism gets just 9 results, as opposed to 238,713 for literary criticism alone
- Use quotation marks for phrases (e.g., "literary criticism" instead of *literary criticism*)
  - If you search for *literary criticism*, you will get results with "literary" and "criticism" anywhere in the item records
  - If you search for "literary criticism", it searches for the phrase with the words right next to each other
- Use the asterisk if you want to search for multiple words that start with the same root (e.g., *femini\** for *feminist*, *feminine*, *feminino*, etc.)
  - For example, searching *Discover* for *femini\** brings back over 1,000,000 results, whereas *feminist* brings back 560,858
- In an advanced search, you can limit your results to show particular types of sources, such as scholarly journals, books, magazine articles, etc. This is helpful if you are getting too many of one kind (e.g., videos when what you really want are scholarly articles).

### SEARCHING FOR INFORMATION ON YOUR TEXT

You might want to begin your search in Discover or any of the databases listed on the course guide by searching for the title of the work you are writing about (e.g., "*Lazarillo de Tormes*"). If you get too many results, you may want to add another keyword to your search. Your search could look something like:

- 1) "*Lazarillo de Tormes*"

Or, possibly

- 2) “Lazarillo de Tormes” AND “literary criticism”

Or, maybe you’d try:

- 3) “Lazarillo de Tormes” AND “literary criticism” OR interpretation OR analysis OR analisis (this way, you’re searching for the title of the work and a few different synonyms for criticism (including “analysis” in Spanish, which captures all the items that use any of those terms for criticism).

You do not have to limit yourself to just searching the title of your work—you can also search for its author, or different keywords related to the literary angle that you are considering. For example:

- 1) “Lope de vega” AND gender

Or, if that gives you too many unrelated results, you might try:

- 2) “lope de vega” AND gender AND fuenteovejuna

### **SEARCHING SPECIFIC DATABASES**

**Discover** – Searching with Discover allows you to search the Five Colleges Libraries Catalog along with many of the library’s periodicals databases. So, in this database you’ll find all kinds of resources: books, book reviews, magazine articles, scholarly articles, conference papers, newspaper articles, images, etc. This is a good place to start when you’re not sure where to go, but you will find more focused resources in some of the other databases listed.

**MLA International Bibliography** – Searching this database will feel similar to searching in Discover, though you are actually searching a much more refined set of resources related to literature, language, linguistics, and folklore.

**Literature Resource Center**- The default advanced search gives you three search boxes:

\_\_\_\_\_ (Keyword); \_\_\_\_\_(Name of work) \_\_\_\_\_(Person by or about); but you do not have to use all of those and you can change any of the drop-down menus after the search box to suit your needs. You may want to start by doing a search simply for the name of your work (e.g., “Naufragio” (name of work). Add other search terms if you are getting too many results. If you get no results for a search on your work with the “name of work” drop-down, try searching for the title of your work as a keyword instead. The results list is usually divided into different kinds of results (e.g., “literature criticism” and “biographies”), though you may want to look at all of the results, because sometimes the “biographies” contain literature criticism. You can also search for the author of your work in this database.

**JSTOR** – This database is a great place for finding articles, book reviews, and even e-books from scholarly publications in the humanities, social sciences, and sciences. You can use some of the strategies described above to search JSTOR.

Other databases you might try include: **Project Muse** or **Arts & Humanities Full Text**. To see all the databases the library subscribes to, visit <https://www.amherst.edu/library/find/alphalist>

### **NOTES ON SPECIFIC WORKS YOU ARE WRITING ABOUT**

#### **El cantar del mío Cid**

Search for “el cantar de mio cid”

*Not finding what you need? Contact me: Blake Doherty, at [bdoherty@amherst.edu](mailto:bdoherty@amherst.edu) to schedule a research appointment!*