These guidelines are based upon the University procedures, with a few minor changes for our majors/minors.

PURPOSE: Research Honors provides you with the opportunity to pursue a project of original research in Hispanic Studies. Original work does not mean that you are expected to produce a thesis, view or theory on par with a unique or insightful theoretical, historical or cultural monograph. However, you are expected to come up with an idea or an approach that is distinctly your own. The university in fact requires that the work be "consistent with the kind of scholarly projects undertaken by professionals within the field."

The Hispanic Studies Department has copies of completed Honors Research Projects. You may find these helpful to peruse; they might give you ideas about how to go about planning and designing your project.

ELIGIBILITY: You may seek Research Honors in Hispanic Studies if you are a major in Hispanic Studies or if you have completed six course units in Hispanic Studies. You must have an overall 3.25 cumulative average and a 3.50 in Hispanic Studies. Research Honors may be done only in your senior year. In addition, you should be a self-motivated student who is self-disciplined and intellectually independent. In the Hispanic Studies Department, students typically undertake Research Honors following their Senior Research Project or another 400-level course, building on or extending that original required project.

PROCEDURES:

1. Begin early. If you are interested in doing Research Honors, you should start thinking about it before the end of the spring term of your junior year.

2. Documents: Pick up two documents pertaining to Research Honors at the Associate Provost's Office. "Research Honors, Eligibility and Procedures," and the "Research Honors Record."

3. Research Honors Record: You should declare your intent, in writing, to attempt research honors with the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs during the semester immediately preceding achievement of senior standing. You do this by completing and filing the Research Honors Record form early in the fall of your senior year. (See following items 4-6).

4. Project Advisor: A faculty member in the Hispanic Studies department must agree to serve as your project advisor. Develop a fairly definite proposed project
before meeting with the faculty member you would like to work with. Do not expect your professor to come up with a proposal or topic for you.

5. Proposal: The honor's proposal should be no more than two pages in length. It should include the following:

* a working title for your project

* a brief overview of the state of the question for the problem or issue you will address with your position clearly defined as an original contribution to this question; this should reflect an extension of the work that you already accomplished or planned to accomplish through the Senior Research Project or another 400-level course.

* your plan for research, including a description of the methods you will employ in your research, the primary texts to be consulted, and the approach or perspective adopted

* a tentative statement of your thesis

On separate pages, include a reading list or bibliography of no more than two pages.

After consulting with your project advisor, you may have to refine or refocus your project description. Bear in mind that your proposal is just that, a proposal. It is not meant to unduly limit your actual project as it unfolds. Your project may change or be redefined as your work progresses.

6. Work Schedule: In the spring, you and your project advisor must agree in writing on a work schedule. Your schedule will state when you agree to hand in initial drafts of sections of your paper, when the draft and final paper are due, and when the Honors Committee Hearing will take place. The draft must be available for your advisor and the Research Honors Committee members at least four weeks before your scheduled project hearing so that members can provide you with feedback before the final draft is completed.

It is expected that you will meet regularly with your advisor and at least once with each member of the Research Honors committee to report on your progress and provide an opportunity for feedback from your committee. The meetings with the other members of the committee must take place at least 3 weeks before the scheduled Honors hearing, so that you can discuss with them the progress of your work.

It is your responsibility to adhere to this schedule and the guidelines for research and writing. If you fail to adhere to these, your Research Honors will be dropped.

7. Expectations for the Final Paper
Your final paper must be completed at least two weeks prior to your scheduled Hearing Committee Meeting, with reading copies delivered to all members of the Honors Committee. It is expected that the finished paper include:

* writing that is free from grammatical and typographical errors

* a carefully structured introduction that provides (1) the context for the completed project, specifying what has already been accomplished by scholars and the need for the present study; (2) a summary of the trajectory of the research leading up to the Research Honors paper; (3) a brief statement of the method(s) used for the paper; and (4) an overview of the paper’s main claims.

* your finding or contributions to the field, in the body of the paper

* a conclusion

* a bibliography of works consulted and cited

It is expected that the final Research Honors paper be no less than 25 pages and no more than 60 pages; any exception to this must be accepted by the Honors Committee as a whole.

8. Hearing Committee: In order to qualify for research honors your project must be reviewed and accepted by a project Hearing Committee. You will identify, in consultation with your research advisor, the members of your committee. Your committee will include your advisor and three additional faculty members. One of these latter must be from a field outside the Department of Hispanic Studies. Begin selecting your committee early, to make sure that each professor will be available when your paper is complete. As noted above, you must meet with your advisor regularly, and with each member of the Hearing Committee at least once as you work through your project. You must provide copies of your completed paper to members of this committee at least two weeks before your scheduled hearing, and arrange a time, date and place for your hearing which is suitable for all the members of the committee.

The Department of Hispanic Studies usually requires you to give an oral presentation and defense of your project. This must be scheduled before the spring semester Reading Days, so that there is sufficient time for any mandated revisions for the paper.

After the oral defense of your thesis, your Hearing Committee as a whole will determine whether or not you have earned University Honors, and whether any revisions must be made to the Honors paper before it is accepted as such.

9. FILING FINAL COPY. After completion of your project, you must file a copy of your approved paper-- with any necessary changes completed with any and
all corrections or changes stipulated by the Honors Committee --with the Associate Provost and with the Department of Hispanic Studies.

We recommend that senior Hispanic Studies majors begin their honors projects with their research project, undertaken as Hispanic Studies 490 in the fall term of their senior year or another 400-level course. Once that research project has been successfully completed, the Research Honors Proposal extends that completed work in a significant and meaningful way, beyond the scope of the original project. It is expected, then, that the completed Honors Paper will represent the very best student work that might be accomplished over a year: an innovative, insightful, creative, and thorough accomplishment worthy of University Honors.

You will register to do an independent study course in connection with your project during the term in which you carry out your research project by registering for Spanish 499, “Independent Study.” Typically, this will occur during the spring semester of your senior year. That course is taken for one unit of credit, and you will receive a grade for the work done from your advisor; your committee will determine at the hearing whether you receive IWU honors for your project.