

Before I could begin or draft my research essay, I knew that I would have to utilize the UW's library online database, which has academic, contemporary journals that would support my purpose. Narrowing my research topic and finding a subject that would pique my interest, and need further investigation, while also relating to my course's objectives was a self-reflective process. In my life, I have encountered grief in strange ways I never knew were possible. As I was working through this class, which focused on emotions and processing the world and reality through the frame of culture and language, I found myself curious about how grief, such a complicated and lengthy process, can depend on one's culture and language. After all, a person's views and values depend on their upbringing and culture. I was personally invested in researching the effects that culture and language can have on emotional expression because I was raised in a Mexican community and household, but also lived and was a part of American culture.

As I further investigated the different pockets in my larger research question, I realized the beauty of research is that one can try to understand and prepare a cohesive conclusion about something larger. I was shocked by the breadth of articles there were on ProQuest, one of my most commonly used research tools, about multiculturalism and linguistics. I was more challenged to find articles investigating the cultural activities that Americans used to respond to death and process grief. Through the process of finding reliable sources, I tried to diversify and find resources that were from honest organizations that analyzed linguistics and cultural norms. In addition to my research, my course was also a major part of reaching a final product. My professor Dr. Dziwirek utilized her class time to engage her students in the course content as well as dive into the implications and examples of linguistics in the real world.

Furthermore, I combined my knowledge from my class and the evidence from my research to synthesize my essay. The organization technique I used to organize my research pieces was to create a map of what my essay would flow like. From that point, I made sure I cited my sources correctly and quoted or paraphrased them correctly. When writing the contents of my essay and analyzing the pieces of evidence I emphasized lecture material and what I had learned in class to explain the findings.

Upon reflecting, I believe research and developing skills in research is highly important to academic excellence as well as problem-solving skills. I overcame challenges in finding reliable sources and evidence in certain subtopics. This experience was more than simply an essay. Writing this research essay was life-changing. It may seem like an exaggeration, but it is true. I learned to have confidence in my research, my ability to write a comprehensive and helpful essay, and to communicate with my UW library community and professor. As a conjugated part of this essay, I also presented my findings in class. I was beyond honored to shine a light on the Hispanic community and our culture. I was one of the only ones researching Hispanic culture and the Spanish language. It was not a surprise because much of the research was limited when it came to Hispanic and Mexican culture and emotional grieving. As well as helping me grow in confidence, this research project helped me understand how I process my emotions and how American and Hispanic cultures compare and contrast. It is one of my

proudest achievements to create a piece that focuses on the Hispanic community and revolves around a personal topic I identify with.

As a first-generation Chicana, I grew up in a Mexican household and adopted some American traits. My goal was to capture the complexity and differences between the two cultures because I have had to live my life with the two cultures. Through my career in dentistry, I strive to raise awareness of mental health and Hispanics in healthcare access. Grief and emotional expression are a major part of maintaining mental health. It has been one of my largest interests to investigate the ways we think and feel as humans, so it is full circle that I completed this course. I want to thank you for considering me for this honorable scholarship. Through my research experiences, I have highlighted my problem-solving skills, my hard work attitude, critical thinking, and interest in holistic health and interdisciplinary studies. As a future healthcare professional, I value the honors classes that I have the opportunity to attend and learn to think in multi-faceted ways. The most important and relevant research is the research that you can learn from and carry into your future actions. I am proud to say that this research did that for me. I look forward to serving my community with a deeper understanding of the ways we feel.