In 2002 the Hispanic Seminary of Medieval Studies published the Diccionario de la prosa castellana del rey Alfonso X, the culmination of a lexicographical project started in 1935 by Antonio García Solalinde and a group of graduate students at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. The history of this dictionary illustrates the evolving trends in lexicography in the last 75 years. In this presentation I will discuss the origins and evolution of the project, from the initial Tentative Dictionary of Medieval Spanish to the Dictionary of the Old Spanish project. I will examine the crucial role that computers played, the problems that had to be resolved along the way, and the new tools and standards that had to be developed.

Francisco Gago-Jover is Professor of Spanish at the College of the Holy Cross. He received his Ph.D. in Hispano Romance Linguistics and Philology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1997 with a dissertation on Medieval Spanish military lexicography. He is the author of two dictionaries, an edition of the Spanish version of the Art of Dying Well, numerous articles on lexicography, and several paleographical transcriptions of medieval Spanish texts. He has taught doctorate courses in different universities in the United States (University of Massachusetts-Amherst and Boston University) and Spain (Universidad de León, Universidad de Valladolid, and Universitat de les Illes Balears). He is the Director of Digital Projects at the Hispanic Seminary of Medieval Studies and is in charge of the Digital Library of the Old Spanish Texts and the Old Spanish Textual Archive.