

Editor's Note
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The need for building, growing and maintaining Portuguese programs has been a concern for faculty since programs were established in the 1940s. A quick review of the bibliographies in the articles for this special volume, will document the efforts made over the years by many colleagues to share the wisdom and encourage perseverance. In some ways it appears that this history only confirms how Portuguese instructors continue to reinvent the wheel as they invest precious time and resources to establish and maintain their programs. On the other hand, Portuguese teaching has benefitted from the research on applied linguistics and second language acquisition and the technological developments of the last thirty years, albeit at a slower pace. New professional organizations, such as BRASA and APSA, have given colleagues opportunities to come together to share research and ideas.

There have been developments in textbook publication, in the implementation of the ACTFL – OPI and the SOPI, in the writing and distribution of the Standards for Teaching in the 21st Century, and in innovation in the use of technology and media. At the same time, enrollments in Portuguese classes have been showing improvements since the late 1990s. The 2006 report from the *ADFL Bulletin* notes that overall enrollments in Foreign Languages increased by 12.9% between 2002- 2006. In contrast, Portuguese enrollments grew by 22.4%, from 2002-06, a number that followed the earlier figure of 21% from the years of 1998-2002. The students enrolling in Portuguese classes represent a more diversified body with a wide range of language backgrounds and reasons for choosing to study the language, culture, and literature of Portuguese-speaking nations.

The changes outlined above are reflected in the focus of the articles selected for this special volume. There was an overwhelming response to the call for papers and a preference for the practical, “how to” article. While it is true that the hard work of funding and defending Portuguese classes still occupies the attention of many Portuguese instructors, there is also a lot of creativity being applied to curriculum development and monitoring, technology use, and multi-dimensional approaches for growing communities of Portuguese speakers. The articles included in this special volume give evidence that Portuguese faculty are participating in the invigorating environment of foreign language teaching and research with practical and exciting projects that serve both as examples and inspirations for others. As we move into the

second decade of the 21st Century, I feel buoyed by the energies of Portuguese colleagues who continue to build, grow, and maintain their programs. Their resourcefulness and generosity can be appreciated in the articles published here.