

Annual Report 1999-2000
Brazil Center
Institute of Latin American Studies
University of Texas at Austin

The Brazil Center open its 1999-2000 academic year by welcoming a group of nine Brazilian students from The University of Mines Gerais in Belo Horizonte. They were the first group of Brazilian students arriving under the exchange program between the University of Texas at Austin (UT) and the Federal University of Mines Gerais. In addition to the nine UFMG Brazilian undergraduates, the Center hosted three visiting scholars, two from the Fundação Getulio Vargas (FGV) and a third from the São Paulo State University at Campinas (UNICAMP). Luciano Bueno and Carlos Rosa, advanced graduate students from FGV, participated in the seminar on “Brazilian Public Policy” team taught by Lawrence Graham and Robert Wilson, under the policy program between FGV and UT. Leonia Chaves worked in the Benson Latin American Collection and the Humanities Research Center on her project related to the preservation of historic documents at São João del-Rei and Tiradentes, in Minas Gerais. As visiting scholars, Luciano Bueno, Carlos Rosa and Leonia Chaves also participated in the Brazil Speaker Series.

The Brazil Speaker Series continued to provide an on-going series of presentations by visiting scholars, faculty, and graduate students. These presentations are designed to bring together faculty and students from a variety of different backgrounds and disciplines in an informal setting on Fridays to discuss issues and topics related to Brazil. Leonia Chaves, UNICAMP, spoke on her research “Pesquisas e Preservação. Os Arquivos Históricos Paroquiais de São João del-Rei e Tiradentes (XVIII-XX)”. John Cuttino, an ILAS alumnus and LBJ doctoral student, presented “Follow the Money – Understanding the Brazilian Federal Budget”. Following the talk, he presided over a workshop designed to teach a practical skills to attendees wanting to incorporate budget analysis into their current research on Brazil. This workshop was a co-sponsored event by the Brazil Center with the Latin American Studies Students Association (ILASSA). In October, Marta Ferreira Farah arrived as a “sandwich” professor from FGV, under the Ford grant supporting cooperation between FGV and UT in public policy. She gave two lectures in the Brazilian Public Policy class and delivered here third lecture within the framework of the Speaker Series. This third and public lecture was titled “Social Policies and the Local Government in Brazil”. The last two lectures for the semester in the Speaker Series were given by Carlos Rosa and Luciano Bueno. as part of the Brazilian Public Policy class and Speaker Series. Rosa presented the results of his work on “The Budget Expenditure Managerial Information System (SIGEO) in São Paulo, Brazil.” and Bueno delivered a talk on “Gun Control Policy in Brazil”.

In October, the Brazil Center welcomed Ambassador Rubens Barbosa to The University of Texas at Austin. The newly appointed Brazilian Ambassador to the United States visited The University of Texas at Austin and The Brazil Center of The Institute of Latin American Studies for the first time to learn more about Brazilian Studies at UT and our program, and activities on Brazil. Since he had played a crucial role in endowing the Brazilian Studies Center at Oxford University, Rosental Calmon Alves worked with Lawrence Graham to show case the facilities, faculty and students devoted to Brazil and Brazilian Studies at UT. With a master's degree from the London School of Economics and Political Science, Ambassador Rubens Barbosa has held a variety of posts in government and foreign affairs. He assumed his position as Brazilian Ambassador to the United States in June 1999, after having served as Ambassador to the Court of St. James London, from January 1994 to June 1999. The Ambassador spoke at the ILAS Fellows breakfast with Latin American Faculty on "Brazil – U.S. Relations and South American Trade Integration". After visiting the Benson Collection and meeting with President Larry Faulkner, a luncheon was held in his honor with Brazilianist Faculty, President Larry Faulkner, Provost Sheldon Ekland-Olson and Liberal Arts Dean Richard Lariviere. In the afternoon, Ambassador Barbosa delivered a public lecture, titled "Brazil – U.S. Relations at the Turn of the Century." The event was very well attended by students, faculty, the local Brazilian community, and individuals from the Austin community at large.

In October, Lawrence Graham participated in two meetings related to Brazil. The first was the Fourth Brazil-US Dialogue in Education, sponsored by the US Department of Education and the Brazilian Ministry of Education; this meeting focused on higher education in the two countries and was held in Charleston SC. This was followed by a meeting convoked by the Brazilian Embassy in Washington, DC, bringing together for the first time at the Embassy a cross-section of Brazilianists in US universities, to discuss the status of Brazilian Studies in the US, the challenges as well as ways to further develop interest in Brazil through closer cooperation with the Brazilian government. At the latter meeting, it was agreed that the Embassy would sponsor a guide to U.S. research on Brazil, an electronic magazine, and a book of the status of Brazilian Studies in the US.

The fall semester ended with the preparation of a comprehensive report on the status of Brazilian Studies at UT, at the request of the Brazilian government. This report served as the first step in negotiations with the Brazilian government for establishing a Rio Branco chair at the University of Texas. It provides a detailed description of the departments, colleges and professors researching and working on Brazil and focuses on the teaching programs, collaborative research projects, faculty and student exchanges, and resources available at UT. While the Brazilian Studies Report served as the basis for negotiating a series of agreements between UT, the Instituto Rio Branco in the Foreign Ministry, and CAPES (The Fund for the Training and Improvement of Higher Education Personnel), it has been useful also as a document for prospective students and individuals interested in the status of Brazilian Studies at UT.

Spring semester 2000 was full of exciting events including new visitors and the fourth annual UT-Austin Brazil Week. Ongoing activities included an expanded set of activities tied to Brazil Week which spilled over into a second week, celebrating the 500th anniversary of Brazil's discovery; the Brazil Center Speaker Series, and support for the study of Portuguese language, culture and study abroad, through its summer study program at the Federal University of Minas Gerais. The program in Brazil provides students with the option of continuing to study in regular university classes for the second semester of the Brazilian calendar, which coincides with UT's fall semester. The Brazil Center's Ford Foundation grant for the study of Brazilian public policy was extended through December 2000 to permit sending a fourth group of students to Brazil for research. And, the Lampadia Foundation renewed its support of the Center's Brazilian writer in residence program in cooperation with the Ministry of Culture.

Leading off the spring semester were a series of Portuguese language workshops. The Brazil Center and ILAS supported three free Saturday Portuguese workshops to promote the study of the Portuguese language in the Austin community and at the University. Each workshop taught a different level of Portuguese and had a different focus. The workshops were taught by Professor João Lourenço of the Spanish and Portuguese Department. The first class focused on Spanish speakers on a native or near-native level learning Portuguese. The second class was designed for those who speak little Portuguese and wanted to advance their knowledge of the language. The second class focused on sentence structure and basic grammar through the use of videos. The last workshop was designed for scholars who have had some knowledge of Portuguese and Spanish and needed to improve their Portuguese for research or speaking purposes. The class had a linguistic focus with a mixture of phonetics, grammar, and vocabulary. Due to the publicity through the UT Office of Public Affairs we had a great response from the community and had to turn people away due to the limited space in each class.

In February we welcomed a Brazilian delegation to UT. The delegation included Ambassador André Amado, Director of the Rio Branco Institute; Prof. Abilio Afonso Baeta Neves, President of CAPES; Prof. Tuiskon Dick, Director of International Exchanges at CAPES, and Dr. Vilmar Faria, special advisor to the President of Brazil. CAPES is a public foundation attached to the Ministry of Education which supports the Ministry of Education in the formulation of policies for graduate education. The Foundation also evaluates and supervises graduate programs at Brazilian Universities as well as supports national scientific and technological development. During the two days of meetings, the delegation and UT officials signed a memorandum of understanding and a series of agreements between CAPES and the University of Texas at Austin, establishing a Rio Branco chair at the University of Texas and funding a broad range of programs for the training of advanced students and researchers from Brazil at UT.

Three priority areas were agreed upon. First, the signatories agreed to implement an institutional agreement between CAPES and the University of Texas at Austin, through the specification of cooperative programs in the social sciences, earth sciences, environmental sciences, engineering and technology, biological sciences and communications. Secondly provisions were made for establishing a Rio Branco Visiting Chair in Brazilian Studies at The University of Texas at Austin, beginning January 2001. The last agreement was designed to enhance and expand the exchange of engineering students at the undergraduate level between universities in Brazil and UT-Austin.

April 3rd marked the beginning of a two week commemoration of the 500 years of Brazil's discovery, centered around a student and faculty initiative to bring Brazilian Senator Marina Silva to campus. Senator Silva, who represents the Amazon state of Acre, has garnered national and international acclaim as a champion of environmental and social causes, sustainable development, biodiversity protection and indigenous rights. ILASSA, the Institute's Student Association, played a key role in making this visit possible and joined hands with various groups on campus and the Brazil Center in planning and scheduling her program. The events surrounding Sen. Silva's visit were the keynote speech that opened the commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the discovery of Brazil, an environmental panel discussion, "The Future of the Amazon – Diversity or Destruction," and a brown-bag discussion of Senator Marina Silva's personal experience with the Brazilian public policy process. All three of the events were well attended by students from all over campus; included as well were faculty and members of the Austin community. In addition to Silva's visit, faculty members from various departments also held discussions and gave lectures on Brazilian topics ranging from communications to history. Rosental Alves and Pedro Jacobi discussed "Media, Politics and Response by Brazilian Society in the '90s;" Suzanne Schadl, from the History Department, gave a brown-bag talk on "Medical Images of Women in a Literary Genealogy of the Brazilian Republic," and our visiting scholar for the spring semester, Eliane Moura Silva, lectured on "Religious Imaginary and Spiritist Literature in Brazil."

Following the commemoration, we welcomed our writer in residence, Moacyr Scliar. Moacyr began his literary career in 1968 with the publication of the story collection, *The Carnival of the Animals*. Since then he has published 50 books, novels, short stories and essays. His work reflects the history of the Jews of Brazil, as well as his social vision resulting from his experiences as a public health physician. During his two week residency he gave two lectures and participated in various classes. His first lecture was given in Portuguese at the Department of Spanish and Portuguese and titled "Realidade Ficção: A Historia do Brasil na Visão dos Escritores." The second lecture, "The Ship of Hope: The Contribution of the Immigrants to Brazilian History," was given in English at ILAS. His two week stay was co-sponsored by the Brazil Center and the Department of Spanish and Portuguese.

The Brazil Speaker Series continued, as it does every semester, to provide for a continuing forum on Brazil. Besides activities involving the commemoration and Moacyr Scliar, other speakers made presentations within this format. Our first speaker for the spring semester was Prof. Samuel Cohn. He is a professor of Sociology at Texas A & M University and an industrial sociologist. The title of his talk was “Undoing Disarticulation: Survival of Small Firms in Brazil”. Pedro Jacobi, visiting Tinker Professor in Latin American Studies from the University of São Paulo, presented a lecture on “The Reform of Social Policies in Brazil: Challenges and Constraints.” In addition to this lecture, he also organized a roundtable discussion on “Institutions, Access and Accountability: Innovations in Brazilian Subnational Government.” The roundtable discussion brought together professors from different disciplines as well as graduate students to discuss topics related to public accountability. Our last speaker was a Ph.D. candidate in the Spanish and Portuguese Department, Glauco Ortolano. He introduced his recently published novel *Domingo Vera Cruz – Memórias de um Antropófago Lisboense no Brasil*.

Over the last five years the Institute of Latin American Studies has served as the home of a strong Brazilian studies program. During 1999-2000 the Brazil Center expanded its activities during both fall and spring semesters to reach across the campus as a whole more effectively than ever before. This was made possible through the numerous activities of Professor Jacobi. Not only did he offer new courses, “Introduction to Brazil” at the undergraduate level and “Social Policy in Brazil” as a graduate seminar, but he spent countless hours lecturing as a guest speaker in class and meeting individually with many interested faculty and students. In this context of continuing and expanding existing academic and cultural events, the Brazil Center welcomes a new year with new events, through supporting and consolidating programs and activities on Brazil.