

Casa Luso-Brasileira
(Portuguese-Brazilian House)

Program Directors:

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Overview of the Program

In the Casa Luso-Brasileira (Portuguese-Brazilian House) program, the objective is to learn about the different cultures of Portuguese-speaking nations around the world. The term *Luso* refers to anything related to the Portuguese language and to the culture and of Portuguese-speaking (lusophone) nations. Brazil has the greatest number of native Portuguese speakers. Today, Portuguese is spoken in seven countries (Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Sao Tome, Timor East, Portugal, Guine- Bissau and Mozambique) It is also spoken in Goa, a state in southwestern India. The goal of this program is not only to motivate participants to learn the language—but to promote awareness of the different cultures of the Portuguese-speaking nations, as well. We will have weekly meetings where we will speak only Portuguese in order to strengthen our communication skills. In addition to these conversation sessions, there will be a study session for students enrolled in the Portuguese course at UVM. This session will be used for students to help each other with class work and homework and will concentrate on topics that are particularly challenging (*All participating students are highly encouraged to take the Portuguese course offered at UVM*). Learning the culture involves not only knowing the language but should also include the foods, music, and pop culture; in the Casa Luso-Brasileira, all participants will be exposed to the different foods, music and ways of life of the various Portuguese-speaking nations. It is very important to know about more than just your own culture: as the world becomes more and more globalized, possessing knowledge of a different language and culture is highly beneficial.

Learning Objective 1:

Each member will be able to speak at least basic phrases of Portuguese and acquire basic understanding of the language. (Year)

Action Steps:

- a) **Every week participants must attend the *Bate-Papo*, an informal Portuguese conversation group.** *Bate-Papo* means conversation; the goal of this meeting is to get the students used to talking in Portuguese on a consistent basis. It is open to the entire UVM community; even those outside of the program are welcome to attend if they are interested in the Portuguese language. (ongoing)
- b) **There will be weekly study sessions for those who need help with the coursework.** (ongoing) (We may need an empty classroom in L/L to study every week.)
- c) **For additional practice of Portuguese, the members will need to listen to as much Portuguese as possible.** (ongoing) (As a supplemental practice to learn Portuguese, the Rosetta stone language Program would be a valuable learning tool, especially for those experiencing more difficulties; cost: \$225.)
- d) **Portuguese children's books will be available for Participants in the program.** (Children's books are simple and easy to follow stories that help develop reading comprehension and improve one's vocabulary, especially at initial stages of learning a language.) (periodically)
- e) **Before every weekly Bate-Papo, one student from the program will present a brief news article about a different Portuguese speaking country. If a news article cannot be found, the student will alternatively present something interesting about that particular country. The student that presents and the country that is being presented cannot go two weeks in a row, in order to make sure topics pertaining to all the different Portuguese-speaking nations are covered periodically. (This current event/cultural presentation will act as a conversation starter.)**

Learning Objective 2:

Members of the program will expand their knowledge on the culture of Portuguese-speaking nations through cooking and sharing traditional dishes while listening to traditional and popular music from various Portuguese speaking countries, in order to identify the similarities and the differences between these types of food and traditional American dishes. In each monthly gathering, we will research and prepare recipes from one different Portuguese-speaking country and focus on the traditional meals and music from that particular country. (Year)

Action Steps:

- a) Each month everyone in the program will take part in cooking traditional foods where everyone helps to prepare a traditional meal from a different Portuguese speaking nation, with informal conversation. (monthly)

- b) There will also be music and television (Portuguese-language TV channels are available through Dish Network and Brazilian channels through DirecTV) in order to provide exposure to various types of music from each country, so students can get a sense of the traditional and popular culture of the various Portuguese-speaking nations. (monthly)

- c) In addition to these informal monthly get-togethers, in order to get a first-hand experience of Portuguese culture, there is the future possibility of organizing a field trip to the “Brazilian Day Festival”, a major event held yearly in New York City, along with some minor trips to Brazilian festivals in Vermont and Massachusetts. (September)

Community Service:

Working with Burlington Co-housing coordinator, Janet Hicks, once a semester we will participate in the North End- Free dinner Program (ONE) in Burlington to provide a traditional

Portuguese or Brazilian dinner for everyone in the Burlington area. The event will also include a small presentation focusing on cultural aspects of the Portuguese-speaking nations.

Planning Timeline:

Things to look forward to are the weekly Bate-Papo starting after the first week of class. There will be monthly Movie and dinner night, where we will all collectively help in making a dinner and watch a movie from different Portuguese-speaking nations. In November we will be doing the North End Free Dinner in Burlington. In future plans we hope to take trips to Boston and New York for various Portuguese and Brazilian Carnivals and Parades.

Program Advisor:

The Advisor for the program will be Debora Teixeira. She is the ideal advisor for the Portuguese program because she is the Portuguese Professor at UVM. Originally from Brazil, professor Teixeira has been teaching Portuguese at UVM for two years. She is actively involved in the community and is very excited about taking part in the development of this program. She can be reached by email: debora.teixeira@uvm.edu and telephone: 656-0987.

Program Suites:

We request 2 suites for the program. Each suite will be 50/50 male to female ratio, with 6 members per suite.

Plans for Interactions with other L/L Programs

The Portuguese house would like to collaborate with the Caribbean House. While Portuguese-speaking countries Caribbean countries are very diverse, they also share many similarities in culture. It would be desirable to cooperate with that program and prepare a meal for the L/L community. African influences are present in most Portuguese-speaking countries and also in the Caribbean. There are five African nations whose official language is Portuguese; moreover, African influences are strong throughout the Caribbean as well as in many parts of Brazil, particularly in the state of Bahia.

Program member Recruitment:

In order spread the word about the Portuguese House in L/L, I we would start off presenting our idea to the Portuguese class and in our column at L/L to sense how different people are open to the idea. If the program is accepted, we will promote it on a larger scale, making information available to L/L and also talking about it to incoming freshmen and students taking Portuguese, as well as returning students on campus. Additionally, we will promote it in the Davis center, where a large population of UVM students goes through every day.

Closing Remarks:

To keep the members of the program engaged and excited, we will plan as many group activities as possible. It is important that every member feels included in these activities and that they can contribute to them, no matter what level of expertise they may have on the language. We will all interact during the Bate-Papo and the monthly Food and Music nights. The best part of living in the Living and Learning Complex is the suite set-up. Everybody lives closely together and therefore can develop relationships with the people you live with. Participant interaction is highlighted by a common interest (in this particular case, an interest in Portuguese language and in the culture of Portuguese-speaking countries). The casual conversations, the activities and things that the suite does on a day-to day business in addition to the program activities is what forms relationships on a personal level. The interactions between the suites will form relationships between members in the program through activities and the living quarters.

