Welcome to the first edition of *Ponto de Encontro: Portuguese as a World Language!* This program provides an ample, flexible, communication-oriented framework for use in the beginning and intermediate Portuguese classroom. It takes a highly interactive approach towards presentation and practice of the language and it integrates cultural information and exchange at every stage of instruction. *Ponto de Encontro* is the first Portuguese language textbook that allows the instructor to choose to teach either Brazilian or European Portuguese, while at the same time offering language learners a rich variety of insights into cultural, social, and political realities of the entire Portuguese-speaking world, composed of more than 200 million speakers in eight countries on four continents. Grammatical structures are presented as a means to effective communication, while extensive culture-based sections create authentic and meaningful environments for skill-building and use in each area: listening, speaking, reading and writing.

**Highlights of the Program**

The two-track approach to integrating Brazilian and European Portuguese
A unique feature of *Ponto de Encontro* is its systematic integration of Brazilian and European Portuguese language variants. While it seeks to emphasize commonalities, it also highlights and preserves important differences in both vocabulary and grammar. Clear visual indicators allow instructors and students to follow their chosen variant throughout the text, most particularly in communicative activities where distinct models are supplied, whenever necessary, for Brazilian and European Portuguese learners.

*Língua* boxes are occasionally used to draw attention to important distinctions between the two variants, but the individual learner is not required to negotiate between them in communicative practice. Comprehensive lists of active vocabulary, included in each chapter, give both variants as needed, followed by (B) for the Brazilian word or expression and (P) for the European Portuguese equivalent (e.g. *trem* (B) / *comboio* (P)). Some spelling differences are reflected through the use of parentheses (e.g. *a(c)tivo*), but care has been taken to limit as much as possible the distracting effect of such devices; they are almost never used in models for speaking or writing practice. The instructor may choose to adopt the *Student Activities Manual* and the accompanying audio program in either Brazilian or European Portuguese. Reading and listening materials included in the main text feature language content in both Brazilian and European Portuguese, thus exposing learners to the wide spectrum of the Portuguese language as it is spoken and written throughout the world today. Overall, the program favors Brazilian Portuguese, which accounts for approximately 75% of culturally contextualized language content in the textbook.

The two-track BP/EP program presented in *Ponto de Encontro* is designed to offer instructors and Portuguese language program coordinators the greatest possible flexibility in planning their curriculum and classroom practice, while providing Portuguese language students with a clear
and focused course of instruction, supplemented by a variety of optional opportunities for exploring the linguistic and cultural variety of the Portuguese-speaking world. Even though *Ponto de Encontro* offers a comprehensive view of the two variants, teachers and students are able to choose to focus on either Brazilian or European Portuguese. Detailed explanation is offered below of strategies followed by the authors in presenting linguistic and cultural material in various components of the program, while extensive context-specific guidelines and suggestions for classroom practice are included in the *Instructor’s Resource Manual*.

**Focus on communication and culture**

Other distinctive features of *Ponto de Encontro* are its strong emphasis on meaningful, contextualized communication in the classroom and beyond, and its comprehensive cultural and thematic scope. The program follows national *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century* in integrating the “Five C’s”: communication, cultures, connections, comparisons, and communities. Students using *Ponto de Encontro* will learn to *communicate* effectively in both spoken and written Portuguese through a variety of guided and open-ended activities and assignments. They will acquire a comprehensive awareness of *cultural* diversity of the Portuguese-speaking world and an understanding of the relationship among practices, products, and perspectives of its different cultures. They will be able to forge *connections* between the study of Portuguese and their knowledge of other disciplines through readings and guided Internet research projects related to the theme of each chapter. They will acquire the ability to make meaningful, sophisticated *comparisons* between the language and the cultures they study and their own language and culture. Last but not least, *Ponto de Encontro* creates opportunities for students to participate in multilingual *communities* at home and around the world through information technology and emphasis on exploring locally existing resources.

**Integrated media program**

*Ponto de Encontro* offers a comprehensive and integrated audiovisual program featuring audio recordings, a video, and a companion website. Abundant and varied audio recordings accompany thematically contextualized listening comprehension activities in the main text and in the *Student Activities Manual*. The video program, which also builds on the thematic and cultural focus of successive chapters, is integrated with the course through the *Vídeo* boxes, which follow *Vamos viajar* segments in the textbook, and through comprehension and expansion activities in the video section of the *Student Activities Manual*. The *Companion Website* enlarges the scope of guided Internet research activities included in each chapter and offers additional opportunities for the exploration of electronic resources for language learning and cultural understanding.

**Organization of the Text**

*Ponto de Encontro* consists of a preliminary chapter (*Primeiros Passos*) and fifteen regular chapters. Through a functional selection of language features supported by a variety of visual stimuli, the *Primeiros Passos* chapter allows instructors to conduct classes in Portuguese from the very first day. Each regular chapter maintains the following consistent structure:

**À primeira vista.**

This opening section of each chapter provides a richly contextualized, culture-based framework for learning and practicing new language. New material is presented within two or three thematic groupings, which make use of photos, illustrations, and authentic documents. Comprehensible input is provided through a wide variety of language samples (dialogs, brief narratives, captions, advertisements, etc.). Within each thematic grouping, activities provide opportunities to practice new vocabulary and in some cases preview grammar points that are formally presented later in
the chapter. Following the thematic presentations, the Para escutar listening activity recycles vocabulary in an authentic conversational framework, while helping students build listening comprehension skills. Throughout À primeira vista, vocabulary is presented in both the BP and EP variants and while contextualized language samples feature the culturally appropriate variant, in most cases this variant is Brazilian Portuguese.

**Estruturas**
The Estruturas sections consist of concise grammar explanations focused on usage, which are followed by immediate practice of each new structural item within a contextualized framework. The exercises and activities in this section develop students’ abilities to use linguistic structures for direct communicative purposes. Contextualized and personalized, the exercises focus students’ attention on a variety of useful tasks and provide practice for communicating effectively in pairs or small groups in a variety of real-life situations. These activities reinforce the vocabulary introduced in the À primeira vista section of the chapter, as well as vocabulary presented in previous chapters. Grammar explanations in Estruturas present both the Brazilian Portuguese and the European Portuguese usage, while student activities are uniform where possible and divided into two separate tracks where necessary. In their communicative practice, students are never required to acknowledge or negotiate the language variant they are not actively studying.

**Vamos viajar.** Interspersed throughout the Estruturas section, the Vamos viajar segments (two per chapter) integrate cultural understanding with structurally targeted language practice and consist of short, culturally relevant readings relating to the theme of each chapter, followed by corresponding activities. The readings expand the thematic scope of the chapter by allowing for a more elaborate exploration of cultural, social, and political realities of Portuguese-speaking countries. The activities emphasize comprehension and comparison of the environments and experiences of US students with those discussed in the reading, while retaining as much as possible the focus on the grammar introduced in the preceding Estruturas segment(s).

**Encontros**
Skills and topics are again interwoven at the end of each chapter into a series of skill-building and skill-chaining activities that bring together the chapter vocabulary, structures, and cultural content:

* **Para escutar** develops students’ ability to understand spoken Portuguese in a variety of authentic contexts: brief exchanges and longer conversations between two or more speakers, telephone messages, radio broadcasts, etc. Approximately 70% of the recordings are in Brazilian Portuguese and 30% in European Portuguese.

* **Para conversar** includes open-ended speaking activities based on naturally occurring discourse situations and authentic written texts. Students learn to express and discuss their own needs and interests. This section provides many opportunities for personalized expression beyond the more targeted and form-focused communicative activities included in À primeira vista, Estruturas, and Vamos viajar.

* **Para ler** teaches students how to become independent readers by introducing basic strategies for understanding the general meaning of a text as well as for extracting specific information. A comprehensive apparatus of activities before, during, and after reading guides students to develop their ability to read a variety of authentic texts in Portuguese, from simple documents such as advertisements to the extended discourse of brochures, newspaper and magazine articles, letters, literary texts, etc. While privileging Brazilian Portuguese, the Para ler section also exposes students to texts written in European Portuguese, with the aim of developing an
interpretive competence matching the variety of real-life Portuguese language sources students are likely to encounter outside of the classroom.

* Para escrever provides step-by-step activities in which students learn to compose messages and memos, postcards and letters, journals, simple expository paragraphs, and brief essays. Pre- and post-writing activities guide students through critical steps in the writing process, including brainstorming (to develop ideas for topics); defining one’s purpose, means of communication, tone, and reader; making an outline; revising; and conferencing and peer editing.

Horizontes.
This section focuses on exploring the geographic and cultural diversity of the Portuguese-speaking world through a combination of textual and visual elements. Topics are integrated into a geographically defined sequence in which students explore the Portuguese-speaking world step by step, beginning with cities and regions of Brazil, and continuing through Portugal, Angola, Cape Verde, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, São Tomé and Príncipe, East Timor, and Portuguese-language communities in the United States. Para responder segments test comprehension and invite students to explore the various aspects of the cultures studied. Additionally, students are encouraged to expand the scope of cultural information presented in the readings through navigation of the Internet: targeted Web-surfing assignments are given in the Para navegar sections that follow the essays. Following the principle of cultural contextualization, the essays of Horizontes are composed in the linguistic variant of the respective country (Brazilian Portuguese for Brazil and European Portuguese for Portugal, Lusophone Africa and East Timor).

Vocabulário
The vocabulary list includes all new, active vocabulary words and expressions presented in the chapter in clear, semantically-organized groups. All words included in the list are practiced and recycled throughout the chapter and in subsequent chapters in a variety of contexts. Written vocabulary practice appears in the À primeira vista sections and in the accompanying Student Activities Manual, and a recording of all active vocabulary is included in the audio program and on the Companion Website.

Other pedagogical elements.
Variously labeled text boxes appearing throughout the chapters, Mais um passo section at the end of chapters 1-7, and a supplementary Expansão gramatical at the end of the volume are additional pedagogical features of Ponto de Encontro.

* Situações boxes offer students guided, semi-guided, and open-ended role-plays related to the theme of the chapter and focused on specific patterns of oral exchange in Portuguese.

* Cultura boxes allow for additional contextualized integration of varied cultural information throughout the text.

* Para pesquisar boxes promote active acquisition of cultural knowledge at every stage of instruction by guiding students to research the Internet for information related to the chapter theme and apply it to the practice of vocabulary and grammar structures.

* Língua boxes highlight important features, socio-linguistic distinctions, and patterns in Portuguese, including in particular distinctions between Brazilian and European Portuguese.

* Video boxes connect cultural information presented in each chapter to authentic life experiences of Brazilian, Portuguese, and African speakers appearing in the companion video.
* **Mais um passo** sections in chapters 1-7 are designed to introduce in increments structural points needed for communication, thus facilitating their internalization by the students. At the same time, they allow individual instructors to increase or decrease the amount of grammar information presented in each chapter.

* **Expansão gramatical** at the end of the text includes structures considered optional for the introductory level by instructors emphasizing proficiency, as well as less crucial grammar points that are not commonly encountered in Brazilian Portuguese. Explanations and activities in this section use the same format as grammatical material throughout *Ponto de Encontro* in order to facilitate their incorporation into the core lessons of the program or their addition as another chapter in the book.

**PROGRAM COMPONENTS**

**Audio CDs to Accompany Text**
The audio program contains the recordings for the *Para escutar* listening activities, which are recorded in either Brazilian Portuguese or European Portuguese depending on the identity of the speaker(s). The CDs also include a recording of the end-of-chapter vocabulary in both Brazilian Portuguese and European Portuguese.

**Student Activities Manual (SAM): Brazilian version and European Portuguese version**
The organization of the Student Activities Manual (workbook, lab manual, and video manual) follows that of the main text, providing further practice of each chapter’s vocabulary and grammatical structures through sentence building and completion exercises, fill-ins, and art- and realia-cued activities. Reading and writing activities include strategies for improving reading and writing skills. The lab section of each chapter is to be used in conjunction with the SAM audio program recordings of varied listening comprehension selections. The recorded passages are followed by comprehension-check activities. The video manual includes activities that test students’ comprehension of the video materials and invite them to react to the experiences and opinions expressed by the speakers. A substantial appendix to both SAMs provides additional targeted practice for Spanish-speaking learners of Portuguese.

**Audio CDs to Accompany Student Activities Manual: Brazilian version and European Portuguese version**
The Student Activities Manual audio program contains listening segments to accompany the lab manual section of Student Activities Manual. The recordings are available in either Brazilian Portuguese or European Portuguese.

**Companion Video**
The *Ponto de Encontro* video features native speakers of Portuguese from various backgrounds engaging in semi-guided conversational exchanges relevant to each chapter’s thematic and lexical focus. Instructors and students are able to choose to either work with video recordings exclusively in their preferred language variant or to mix and match segments featuring Brazilian, Portuguese, and Lusophone African speakers. The video is available in VHS and DVD formats.
Instructor’s Resource Manual
The Instructor’s Resource Manual addresses theoretical and pedagogical concerns and provides detailed suggestions for classroom practice and various practical aids: course syllabi, suggestions for lesson plans and for integrating various components of the program, and a complete transcript for the in-text and SAM audio programs.

Testing Program: Brazilian version and European Portuguese version
The Testing Program consists of vocabulary quizzes for each À primeira vista and a test for each chapter. Each test is organized by skill and uses a variety of techniques and activity formats to complement the text.

Audio CDs to Accompany Testing Program: Brazilian version and European Portuguese version
This program contains recordings that accompany listening comprehension sections of chapter tests.

Companion Website
The Ponto de Encontro website (www.prenhall.com/ponto) offers instantly scored practice exercises for the vocabulary and structures presented in each chapter, along with guided opportunities to explore Portuguese-language websites. The complete audio program to accompany the text and the Student Activities Manual is available, as well as an interactive soccer game and flashcard module. Additional elements include Web links for finding Portuguese-speaking pen pals, resources for online help with vocabulary and grammar, and cultural, language, and professional web resources for Portuguese instructors.