

Book Review

Milleret, Margo, and Mary Risner, editors. *A Handbook for Portuguese Instructors in the U.S.* Boa Vista, 2016.

In the last 50 years, Portuguese language teaching in the USA has grown in many ways and has established solid roots. But as a less commonly taught language, Portuguese programs face many challenges. Here is a handbook that adequately recognizes these challenges and provides a clear route to overcome them. A valuable reference to every Portuguese language teacher, this book can resourcefully guide new or experienced instructors in the development of a course or an academic program. The handbook presents the reality of Portuguese in higher education and offers a firm pathway for instructors as well as program directors.

The editors, Margo Milleret and Mary Risner, are internationally recognized for their expertise in Portuguese pedagogy, and administration of programs. Milleret has published widely on the growth of Portuguese in the USA. Risner has developed several online projects strengthening the relationship between language and culture. In 2006, she founded the peer-reviewed online publication *The Portuguese Language Journal*, and for several years Milleret was its editor. Their partnership in promoting the study of Portuguese in the USA made this book possible. And they invited well-known specialists in teaching and developing Portuguese language programs in their universities in the USA to contribute to their volume. Milleret and Risner share their knowledge in a dynamic way with excellent explanations and clear examples.

The handbook is divided into three parts. Part 1: “Entering the Profession” is particularly suited for those who are planning to start a career in Portuguese instruction. It is comprised of three chapters. In Chapter One, “How to Navigate the Job Market,” Robert Simon explains how to apply for a position in Portuguese: from organizing the material for a job application to negotiating a job offer. In Chapter Two, “It Takes a Village: Professional Development in Teaching for Faculty in Portuguese,” Celeste Mann and Robert Simon examine

the benefits of Professional Development: research, collaboration, presentations and networking are among them. They offer an important list of websites of professional associations and resources for language teaching. In Chapter Three, “Professional Learning Opportunities for Portuguese Language Educators,” Risner points out the advantages of professional learning networks. She comments on several of them, from professional associations to online informal networks that provide support, advice and feedback to those who deal with Portuguese language teaching.

Part 2: “Developing a Portuguese Program” is comprised of six chapters, which address the structure, needs, benefits, and challenges common to a Portuguese language program. In Chapter One, “Starting a Portuguese Program from Scratch,” Simon and Naomi Wood expose critical issues regarding the establishment and development of a Portuguese program and further examine the duties of its manager. The authors highlight the importance of a vision that will allow a program to grow and expand. In Chapter Two, “Marketing the Program/On-Campus Opportunities” the authors Bezerra, Rodrigues, Teixeira and Wood propose worthwhile ideas which can increase the visibility of a Portuguese program: from advertising classes to promoting events with the aid of language clubs, social media, and institutional collaboration. In Chapter Three, “Planning a Portuguese Course,” Blair Bateman offers a comprehensive pathway for a Portuguese language course. Based on the ACTFL proficiency guidelines, he highlights the importance of incorporating clear learning objectives to every sequence of a course. A table of the most commonly used textbooks in the US is also provided. The author gives a full example of a unit plan on the theme of *housing*. Megwen Loveless is the author of the two subsequent chapters. In Chapter Four, “Assessment: Creating Rubrics,” she emphasizes the benefits of a rubric in language evaluation. She offers a comprehensive table for rubrics for oral and written activities. In Chapter Five, “Creative Curricula: Crafting ‘Communities’ Inside and Outside the Classroom,” Loveless provides an array of community involvement projects: from conversational partners to service learning. The main goal of these projects is the achievement of cultural and linguistic proficiency through interactions with native speakers. Chapter Six, “Language Learning in a Digital World,” authored by Orlando Klem, aims to encourage instructors to use current technology applied to common communication in language learning. He describes several tools, such as

programs, applications, and websites that can be used as classroom resources for Portuguese learners to develop communicative and linguistic skills in the language.

Part 3: “Addressing the Needs of Specific Learners” comprises the last three chapters of the book, targeting two distinct groups: heritage speakers of Portuguese, and Spanish speakers. Chapter One, by Gláucia Silva and Ivian Boruchowski brings valuable information on the specificities of heritage learners and provides excellent suggestions that promote the development of their skills in the language. The authors also offer insights into how learners of Portuguese both as a heritage and as a foreign language can work together or separately in the classroom. In Chapter Two, “Teaching Portuguese to Spanish Speakers,” Blair Bateman focuses on the main differences between the languages and gives the reader important pedagogical pointers to help students benefit from their knowledge in Spanish. Chapter Three, “Brazilian Portuguese Pronunciation for Speakers of Spanish, Learners of Portuguese,” by Antônio Simões, aims to contrast pronunciation features between both languages. Tables and figures help instructors stimulate their students’ development of oral communicative skills.

This handbook fills the gap and the lack of material preparing instructors to teach Portuguese in the USA. It effectively equips the reader with the most recent pedagogical research for curricular or extra-curricular activities in Portuguese for all levels of instruction. It is definitely a must-read for all who deal with Portuguese language teaching and program building.

Spoken on every continent, Portuguese is a world language. This book reminds the reader of how important it is to teach this language in the USA and how prepared one must be. I am sure that instructors of any language and especially those in programs of Less Commonly Taught Languages would also benefit from and enjoy every chapter of this essential book.

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