



**DRCLAS BRAZIL**  
**2007 – 2008 Service Model & Office Overview**



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Preparations to launch the Brazil Office of Harvard's David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies (DRCLAS) gathered force in April 2006. The past two years have been busy and extremely rewarding. While this document includes information on a number of important initiatives and highlights key lessons learned since we officially launched the office on June 26, 2006, it is not intended to be comprehensive. This overview complements the [\*Brazil Studies Program Report on Activities 2006/2007\*](#), which was produced in São Paulo in close collaboration with and under the guidance of [Kenneth Maxwell](#), Director of the Brazil Studies Program. Additional information on initiatives, events, and Brazil activities at Harvard and in Brazil that are not included in this report are available at: [www.drclas.harvard.edu/brazil](http://www.drclas.harvard.edu/brazil).

This document is divided into three sections that focus on (1) the integrated model used by the Brazil Studies Program in Cambridge and the Brazil Office in São Paulo to set priorities and serve Harvard faculty and students; (2) the presentation of select results from the Brazil Office's work in the area of public health; and (3) the information management systems that the Brazil Office has developed for Brazil operations and for the DRCLAS more broadly.

The first section presents the model that has emerged to help focus the Brazil Office and its resources and energies on areas that are of high interest and value to Harvard faculty and students. Inputs from the Faculty Advisory Committee help us set the topic of the annual Harvard-Brazil Symposium, an important initiative that brings together Harvard faculty, Lemann Fellows (students at the HSPH, HKS and HGSE), and distinguished professors and leaders in Brazil to foster collaborative action and impact.

The second section highlights results driven from the Harvard-Brazil Symposium, which focused on public health in 2007. It includes concrete examples of the 10 types of results outlined at the far right of the shaded graphic "Brazil Service Model." The bulk of material following the graphic of the model details results of the model's application in the context of the 2007 symposium.

During our first two years, the Brazil Office has dedicated significant energy on developing and refining information management systems. The third section of this document presents key new systems that we have developed to help maximize the impact and efficiency of the Brazil Office. These systems enable our small team to have a significant impact at the University and in Brazil.

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## I. BRAZIL SERVICE MODEL

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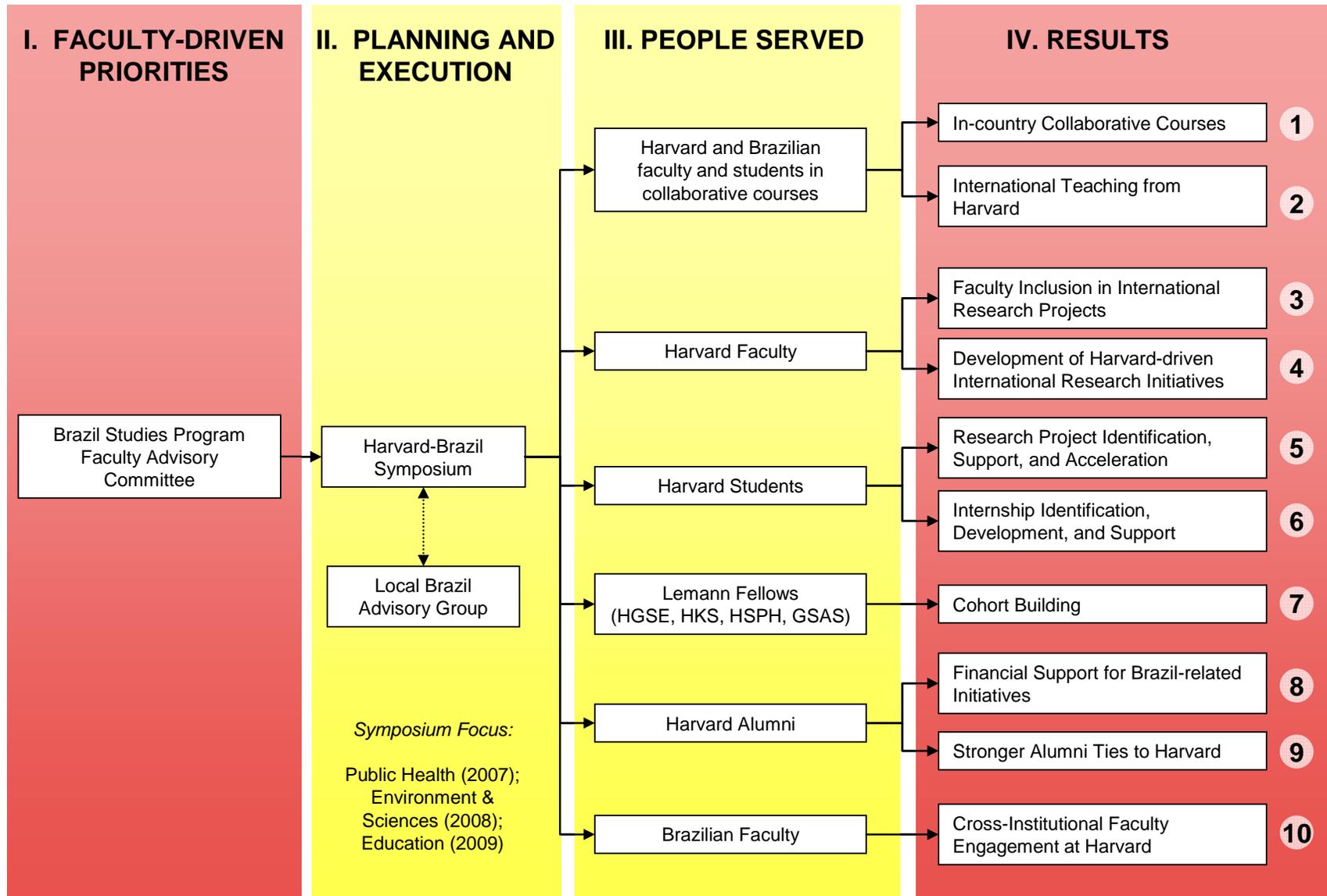
**I. Faculty-Driven Priorities:** As shown in the graphic on the following page, the Brazil Studies Program's [Faculty Advisory Committee](#) plays an early and important role in shaping priorities for the Brazil Office. Chaired by Kenneth Maxwell, the Committee includes 51 Harvard faculty and ex-officio members from across the University. At the inaugural meeting in October 2006, we identified a solid nucleus of Harvard faculty working in the area of public health in and related to Brazil. This faculty interest resulted in the [2007 Harvard-Brazil Symposium](#) focusing on public health (the 2008 Harvard-Brazil Symposium, which will take place in August 2008, will focus on Environment and the Sciences - also as a result of strong faculty interest).

**II. Planning and Execution:** After establishing the public health focus for the inaugural year, the Brazil Office planned and executed the symposium, which is a key component of Jorge Paulo Lemann's gift that made the creation of a DRCLAS office in Brazil possible. In the process of planning the symposium, Harvard faculty engagement and the advice of the Brazil Office's local [Brazil Advisory Group](#) were of great value. Office staff engaged three faculty members in an informal steering committee that provided welcome advice in a new subject area for us. Guidance on past initiatives, ongoing interests and opportunities, pitfalls, and leading counterparts in Brazil were of great value in determining the targeted group of people invited to the symposium.

**III. People Served:** While participation in Harvard-Brazil Symposia is limited to a maximum of 35 people, (roughly half from Harvard and half from Brazil), the group is diverse and includes a mix of prominent Harvard faculty, students, and alumni as well as leading Brazilians who have the knowledge and desire to engage with Harvard faculty as collaborative peers. The topic of the symposium is looked at from multiple perspectives—with a mix of subject matter experts and public policy leaders in attendance. The success of the symposia is defined in terms of the relationships that they support and the results that they drive before and after the two days the group spends together. A successful stand-alone "event" would fall short of the Brazil Office's expectations and the resources dedicated to the symposia.

**IV. Results:** Through detailed planning and by connecting Harvard faculty, students, and alumni with carefully selected Brazilian counterparts, the Brazil Office has helped to forge and strengthen a range of collaborative relationships that have opened new opportunities for Harvard in Brazil and for Brazil at Harvard. The following section highlights 10 of these successes in the area of public health.

# BRAZIL SERVICE MODEL



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## II. SELECT RESULTS IN THE FIELD OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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### 1. In-country Collaborative Courses

#### Collaborative Harvard-Brazil Course on Infectious Diseases



**Description:** The Brazil Office took a leadership role in planning and executing the first collaborative public health course in Brazil as part of the Harvard School of Public Health (HSPH) WinterSession. Professors Mary E. Wilson and Felipe Fregni were course co-leaders from Harvard. Offered in collaboration with the Santa Casa de Misericórdia de São Paulo, this course took place in January 2008 and focused on several infectious diseases that are present in Brazil, such as schistosomiasis, leishmaniasis, malaria, dengue, Chagas disease and yellow fever. Students gained an overview of the diseases and emphasis was given to the relationship between health, disease and the socio-economic and community factors in the context of Brazil.

Course organization was greatly facilitated by interaction between the Brazil Office, Felipe Fregni, and multiple professors from Brazil who attended the 2007 Harvard-Brazil Symposium and who made the course possible. For biographies of all course leaders and participants, course objectives, course lectures, photos and videos, and news articles related to the course, please see the [course website developed by the Brazil Office](#).

#### **Numbers:**

- ❖ 15 HSPH students
- ❖ 16 Brazilian students from leading institutions throughout the country
- ❖ 2 Harvard professors
- ❖ 12 course lecturers
- ❖ 10 two-hour lectures
- ❖ 6 site visits in São Paulo, São Paulo
- ❖ 2 field site locations (Araçatuba, São Paulo and Jequitinhonha, Minas Gerais)

#### **Results:**

- ❖ 94% of students who participated in the course stated that they would recommend the course to other students (n=30)
- ❖ 4 HSPH students pursuing further experiences in Brazil (including a doctoral dissertation on Brazil's conditional cash transfer program and Masters research work in Brazil under HMS Assistant Professor, Arachu Castro)
- ❖ Two Harvard faculty members (Mary E. Wilson and John David) committed to help lead the a second collaborative public health course in January 2009

## 2. International Teaching from Harvard

### Clinical Trials Course – Harvard Medical School and Universidade de São Paulo

**Description:** On March 13, 2008, Harvard Medical School’s Scholars in Clinical Science Program (SCSP) launched a [course on clinical research](#) in partnership with the University of São Paulo (USP) Medical School in Brazil. The course includes a distance-learning component and an onsite component. It was developed and organized by Drs. Ajay Singh (Associate Professor of Medicine, Harvard Medical School), Felipe Fregni (Assistant Professor of Neurology, Harvard Medical School and a recipient of a Jorge Paulo Lemann Fellowship at the Harvard School of Public Health), Lauren Dewey-Platt (Executive Director, Scholars in Clinical Science Program, Harvard Medical School), Wu Tu Hsing (Director of the Acupuncture, Orthopedics and Trauma Institute of the USP), and Marta Imamura (Chair, ISPRM Education Committee at the USP).

While Harvard’s participation in course development and execution is being carried out entirely by Drs. Singh, Fregni, and Dewey-Platt in coordination with local collaborators, the Brazil Office played a central role as a catalyst in making this course a reality. Lauren Dewey-Platt, who met with Brazil Office Staff at HMS in February 2007, came to Brazil for the first time in May 2007 as part of the inaugural Harvard-Brazil Symposium. Subsequent to the symposium, the Brazil Office invited Dr. Ajay Singh to travel from Rio de Janeiro, where he was participating in a large international conference, to São Paulo for discussions about the possibility of creating the course.

#### **Numbers:**

- ❖ 24 course lectures (videoconference)
- ❖ 9 professors and lecturers from Harvard Medical School
- ❖ 4 professors and lecturers from Harvard School of Public Health
- ❖ 2 teaching assistants from Harvard Medical School
- ❖ 26 Brazilian professionals participating in course
- ❖ 5 Brazilian PhD students participating in course



*Felipe Fregni (far left) and Lauren Dewey-Platt, two of the co-organizers of the Clinical Trials Course involving Harvard Medical School’s Scholars in Clinical Science Program (SCSP) and the Universidade de São Paulo Medical School, at the 2007 Harvard-Brazil Symposium in Guarujá, São Paulo.*

### 3. Faculty Inclusion in International Research Projects

#### Participation of Arachu Castro (HMS) in International Collaborative Research

**Description:** In February 2008, Arachu Castro, Assistant Professor of Social Medicine in the Department of Social Medicine at Harvard Medical School, traveled to Brazil as part of her work with Dr. Naila Janilde Seabra Santos, Dr. Paulo Teixeira, and Dr. Luiza Matida, of the Centro de Referência e Treinamento DST/AIDS da Secretaria de Estado da Saúde de São Paulo, on the research project “Evaluation of Vertical Transmission of HIV in the State of São Paulo, Brazil.” Drs. Santos, Teixeira, Matida and Castro started the preparation of a grant in May 2007, immediately after the public health meeting organized by the Brazil Office of the DRCLAS. The initiative now involves eight countries in Latin America under the coordination of Dr. Castro. The local costs of the project are funded through a grant made by the National AIDS Program of the Ministry of Health of Brazil.

The project is an epidemiological study of pregnant women diagnosed with HIV and their offspring born in the state of São Paulo in 2005. In São Paulo, the prevalence of HIV among pregnant women is 0.5 percent. Despite public health policies aimed at providing full coverage of antiretroviral (ARV) treatment and to prevent mother-to-child transmission (MTCT) of HIV with ARV prophylaxis, at least 30 percent of pregnant women with HIV in São Paulo do not receive the adequate course of ARVs. The objective of the study is to evaluate the magnitude of MTCT in São Paulo, to identify failures in the prevention of MTCT, and to strengthen the integration of prenatal care with the care for HIV and syphilis.

Arachu Castro’s return to Brazil to pursue this research following the 2007 Harvard-Brazil Symposium was supported through the First-step Funds. Professor Castro’s return to Brazil satisfied part of the commitment made by the Brazil Office at the 2007 symposium to support the travel of one public health-focused professor from Harvard to Brazil within one year of the conclusion of the 2007 Harvard-Brazil Symposium.

#### **Results:**

- ❖ Arachu Castro included in international study in her area of research
- ❖ Brazil is now more present in Professor Castro’s work on Latin America
- ❖ Since May 2007, the Brazil Office has made possible three trips for Arachu Castro to Brazil (one supported by the USP Medical School)



*Arachu Castro, Assistant Professor of Social Medicine at HMS, and Claudio Gálvez-Kováčic, Executive Director of Instituto SOIS, at the 2007 Harvard-Brazil Symposium. During the Summer of 2008, Dr. Gálvez-Kováčic and Instituto SOIS will host Eleonora Jiménez, an HSPH Masters student, for a summer research internship in Recife, Brazil.*

#### 4. Development of Harvard-driven International Research Initiatives

##### Neurological Research at Harvard and in Brazil

**Description:** Through actively supporting multiple trips from Harvard to Brazil, the Brazil Office has played a significant role in supporting the ongoing neurological research work of Dr. Felipe Fregni. Felipe, a member of the first class of Lemna Fellows (2006-2007) at the Harvard School of Public Health, is now an Assistant Professor in Neurology at Harvard Medical School. Dr. Fregni took advantage of the multiple opportunities for in-country research engagement generated by the Brazil Office to forward his research on neurology.

In November 2006, we invited Felipe, who completed his MD and PhD at the University of São Paulo, to return to Brazil to speak about his main area of research interests in neurology and international clinical trials at the Brazil Advisory Group meeting. The Brazil Office also helped organize and support his travel to Brazil in August 2007 to plan for the Collaborative Harvard-Brazil Course on Infectious Diseases and again in January 2008 for the execution of the course.

##### **Results:**

- ❖ Felipe Fregni has successfully leveraged the three opportunities provided by the Brazil Office to travel to Brazil to further his collaborative neurological research in the country



*While in Brazil to participate in the Brazil Advisory Group meeting in November 2006, Dr. Felipe Fregni met with Brazilian public health and medical school students at the Brazil Office. He discussed his experiences at the Harvard School of Public Health and in the Scholars for Clinical Science Program at Harvard Medical School and talked about his ongoing research in neurology and clinical trials.*

## 5. Research Project Identification, Support, and Acceleration

### Doctoral Dissertation Work in Brazil - Amie Shei

**Description:** Through Amie Shei's participation in the Collaborative Course on Infectious Diseases in January 2008 and the targeted support provided to her during and following the course, the Brazil Office has driven Amie's interest in pursuing longer term doctoral research work in and focused on Brazil. While she was in Brazil, we arranged and participated in a private meeting with municipal Secretary of Health in Jequitinhonha, Minas Gerais and his staff so that Amie could better understand and ask questions about Brazil's *Bolsa Família* program, a conditional cash transfer (CCT) program.

During the summer of 2008, Amie will conduct exploratory research on the impact of *Bolsa Família* in the Pau da Lima slum community in Salvador, Brazil. She will be working with researchers from Cornell University and the Oswaldo Cruz Foundation at the Brazilian Ministry of Health who have been working in this community for several years. Amie plans to examine what happens after children are no longer eligible for the *Bolsa Família* program. She will interview children who have recently "graduated" from the program to explore whether *Bolsa Família* has improved their opportunities in life, and she will interview their families to explore how they have adjusted to the income shock of no longer receiving payments. She will explore if a successful program may need to include supply-side tools, such as strengthening health and educational institutions and improving access to services.



*Amie Shei, HSPH PhD candidate (center), learns how Brazil's Bolsa Família Program is administered in practice from the Municipal Secretary of Health in Jequitinhonha, Minas Gerais (left) and the staff member responsible for data entry (right) in a meeting arranged by the Brazil Office during the field component of the collaborative course on infectious diseases.*

### **Results:**

- ❖ Amie's doctoral dissertation work has shifted to Brazil and will now focus on an analysis of Brazil's "Bolsa Família" program
- ❖ Amie applied for and received a Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) grant following participation in the Collaborative Course on Infectious Diseases
- ❖ Amie actively pursued research follow-up with FIOCRUZ and with a professor at the UFMG (Federal University of Minas Gerais) through the Brazil Office
- ❖ Amie will participate in research work at FIOCRUZ Salvador (a leading institution which has a long history of collaboration with John David, Richard Pearson Strong Professor of Tropical Public Health, Emeritus, at HSPH)

## 6. Internship Identification, Development, and Support

### Public Health Internship for Nery Porras (Harvard College Student)

**Description:** Based on his interest in an internship related to medicine, the Brazil Office secured a summer internship (June to August 2007) for Nery Porras at the Barra Funda Primary Care Clinic. Our success sourcing the internship at the clinic, which is part of the Santa Casa de Misericórdia de São Paulo (Santa Casa), was driven by existing relationships with the Santa Casa that were strengthened through their presence at the inaugural Harvard-Brazil Symposium in May 2007.

As an intern at the Barra Funda Primary Care Clinic, a clinic run by the Santa Casa Medical School, Nery worked under the supervision of the multidisciplinary team of physicians, nurses, social workers, and community health workers who serve patients from the Barra Funda neighborhood in São Paulo and its surroundings. As part of the internship, he observed treatment given to patients in the different divisions of the clinic and also accompanied its prevention activities undertaken with families in the neighborhood. For his final project, Nery prepared a presentation on the role of nutrition in health and a personal reflection on the insights gained from his internship concerning the role of public health and primary care in Brazil and the United States including the impact of his experience for his own professional development as an aspiring physician.

#### **Results:**

- ❖ Nery learned how prevention programs in medicine are created and designed and how to tailor programs based on the behaviors and actions of a population
- ❖ Nery verified and refined his professional interests in studying medicine
- ❖ Over the course of the internship, the Brazil Office strengthened its relationship with the Barra Funda Primary Care Clinic, which facilitated our efforts to plan a field-site visit for the January 2008 Collaborative Course on Infectious Diseases



At right, [Danielle Bivanco de Lima](#), PhD candidate in the Department of Internal Medicine at the Universidade de São Paulo (USP) and member of the primary care team at the Barra Funda clinic. Danielle provided guidance and support for Nery Porras during his internship and helped lead the site visit to the clinic for the January 2008 Collaborative Course on Infectious Diseases.

At left, Nery Porras (College 2009).

#### *Feedback from HSPH Students who visited Barra Funda Clinic in January 2008 course:*

“It was sad but still hopeful to interact with the patients who have transformed what most consider garbage into operational homes. The patients were also so pleasing and friendly to welcome strangers into their house--- this concept is foreign in the U.S.”

“Unbelievable experience and one of my top-rated on this trip. Speaking with members of the community and seeing the phenomenal relationships between healthcare professionals at Barra Funda and the people. Thank you, thank you, thank you Barra Funda.”

## 7. Cohort Building

### Engagement of Lemann Fellows at HSPH, HKS, HGSE

**Description:** The Harvard-Brazil Symposium provides the Brazil Office with an excellent opportunity to foster the *esprit de corps* among Lemann Fellows from the Harvard School of Public Health (HSPH), the Harvard Kennedy School (HKS), and the Harvard Graduate School of Education (HGSE). Symposium preparations, execution, and follow-up increase our engagement with Lemann Fellows and their interaction with each other and with the Brazil Studies Program. In May 2007, all four Lemann Fellows from the HSPH, HKS, and HGSE participated in the symposium on public health in Guarujá, São Paulo.

As the number of Lemann Fellows and alumni network grow, opportunities for the Brazil Office in São Paulo and the Brazil Studies Program in Cambridge to help ensure interaction and engagement will grow – as will opportunities for us to call on their energy, knowledge, and goodwill to increase the impact and reach of the Brazil Office throughout the country.

#### **Results:**

- ❖ Interaction among 2006-2007 class of Lemann Fellows at 2007 Symposium
- ❖ Meetings with Lemann Fellows in Brazil Office about initiatives and opportunities at HKS, HGSE, and HSPH
- ❖ Updates and survey responses requested and received from 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 classes of Lemann Fellows
- ❖ Initial steps taken in creation of a cohort that will grow and strengthen over time
- ❖ Close engagement with/support of Felipe Fregni in developing multiple initiatives



*Lemann Fellows from Brazil, 2006-2007 class (from left to right): Felipe Fregni (HSPH), Ana Gabriela Pessoa (HGSE), Danyela Moron (HKS), Guilherme Ribeiro (HSPH).*



*Lemann Fellows from Brazil, 2007-2008 class (from left to right): Rosabelli Coelho (HKS), Heloisa Alvarez (HGSE), Danyela Moron (HKS), Fabio Tran (HKS), Teresa Pontual (HGSE), Carlos Sousa (HGSE) [not in photo].*

## 8. Financial Support for Brazil-related Initiatives

### Support for Brazilian “Researchers of the Future”

**Description:** An exciting outcome of the 2007 Harvard-Brazil Symposium was the creation of a “Researchers of the Future” initiative. This collaboration between Dr. Antonio Bianco, Associate Professor of Medicine at HMS and Director of Research of the Thyroid Section at the Brigham and Women’s Hospital, and the Santa Casa Medical School, through Dr. Luiz Arnaldo Szutan, provided an opportunity for five Santa Casa students to complete 60-day internships in research laboratories at Harvard Medical School in early 2008. Recipients were selected from a pool of more than 30 applicants. Prior to their departure, the Brazil Office held a reception and pre-orientation for the group.

This initiative was made possible thanks to the financial backing of Brazil’s Tide Setúbal Foundation, which helped cover the costs of round-trip airfare, housing, meals, and health insurance. The financial support of a Brazilian alumnus from Harvard for the symposium and for the Lemann Fellows served as an example and an inspiration to those who made the “Researchers of the Future” program possible.

### **Results:**

- ❖ Transformative experience for five Brazilian students at HMS labs
- ❖ Increased awareness of and interest in medical research among a broader group of Santa Casa students
- ❖ Participants in the program gained knowledge of and exposure to new laboratory tools and techniques



*Photo at left (from left to right): Luiz Arnaldo Szutan, Vice-Director of the Santa Casa Medical School, Antonio Bianco, Associate Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School, and Jason Dyett, Program Director, Brazil Office. Photo at right (from left to right): Ney Penteado de Castro Neto, Stefano Tincani, Marina Miyuki Maekawa, Henrique Gonçalves Ribeiro, and Fábio Gomes Pereira.*

## 9. Stronger Alumni Ties to Harvard

### Public Health Events Open to Harvard Alumni

**Description:** Given our continuous local presence, the Brazil Office is uniquely positioned to establish and maintain contact with the large Harvard alumni network throughout the country. As a result, we have put significant energy into developing the systems required to take advantage of this opportunity (see following “Management Systems” section). While our core mission is to support current Harvard faculty and student research and teaching, maintaining strong relationships with the Alumni network positions us to do so. Many alumni are interested in maintaining closer ties to Harvard and in actively helping students and faculty. The Brazil Office stays in close contact with the leaders of the four [Harvard Alumni Clubs in Brazil](#) and with the HBS Senior Researcher based in São Paulo and work together whenever there are converging interests and objectives.

In addition to contacts with individual HSPH and HMS graduates, the Brazil Office organized two open events related to public health to which all Harvard alumni in Brazil (over 1,000) were invited to attend.

*“I appreciate receiving information on the activities of Harvard’s Brazil Studies Program. I am proud to see that we maintain ties with this marvelous University that we had the privilege to attend.”*

Elane Frossard Barbosa (KSG, MCP ’74)



*At left: Invitation to January 10, 2008 reception that celebrated the first Harvard-Brazil collaborative course (part of the HSPH WinterSession).*



*At left: Photo of Dr. Harvey V. Fineberg, who gave the 2007 Lemann Lecture at the Universidade de São Paulo, “Crossing the Quality Chasm in Health Care.”*

## 10. Cross-Institutional Faculty Engagement at Harvard

### First-step Travel for Brazilian Faculty to Harvard

**Description:** To ensure that our priorities and support are aligned with and grounded in interests at Harvard, the Brazil Office evaluates in-country opportunities by asking who at the University will or would take the lead role as a project's or initiative's sponsor. This "Harvard-first" filter should – in no way – be interpreted as our disinterest in or a lack of concern for creating opportunities for Brazilian faculty and students in Cambridge and Boston. It is because of our commitment to maximizing opportunities for exceptional Brazilians at Harvard that we take this approach. The Brazil Office's design, obtention, and use of First-step Funds highlight our pragmatic focus on introducing the best of Brazil at Harvard.

In addition to providing funding for Harvard professors to travel to Brazil, First-step Funds may be awarded to Brazilian professors and researchers to visit Harvard for the first time as part of a nascent collaboration with Harvard faculty. Requests for funding must be submitted by a current Harvard faculty member. Funds are targeted at supporting trips of approximately one week in duration. Following are results for public health related travel from Brazil to Harvard.

#### **Results:**

- ❖ Lecture by Dr. Artur Kalichman at HMS, "The Brazilian AIDS Program: Political Principles and Public Health Practices" (faculty sponsor, Arachu Castro, HMS)
- ❖ One week visit of Dr. Maria Amélia Veras to meet faculty, deliver lecture on HIV/AIDS, and discuss experience as co-leader of collaborative course on infectious diseases (faculty sponsor, Mary E. Wilson, HSPH)



*Professors Mary E. Wilson (center) and Maria Amélia Veras (right) in Brazilian TV interview on yellow fever outbreak in Brazil in January 2008. During Maria Amélia's subsequent trip to Harvard in March 2008, she met with the following Harvard faculty and staff:*

Individual meetings for Professor Maria Amélia Veras arranged by the Brazil Office at Harvard included:

Faculty: Antonio Bianco, Associate Professor (HMS); Arachu Castro, Assistant Professor (HMS); Barry Bloom, Dean (HSPH); David Bloom, Chair, Department of Population and International Health (HSPH); Harvey Fineberg, Professor Emeritus (HSPH), President, Institute of Medicine; Mary Wilson, Associate Professor (HSPH); Merilee Grindle, Professor (HKS), Director (DRCLAS); Pieter Cohen, Instructor (HMS); Richard Marlink, Professor of the Practice (HSPH); Roger Shapiro, Assistant Professor (HMS); Sofia Gruskin, Associate Professor (HSPH)

Professional Staff: Scott Buquor, Associate Director for Program Management, Harvard Initiative for Global Health (HIGH); Carmen Mejia, Global Infectious Disease Administrative Program Officer (HIGH); Vincent James, Director of Admissions (HSPH)

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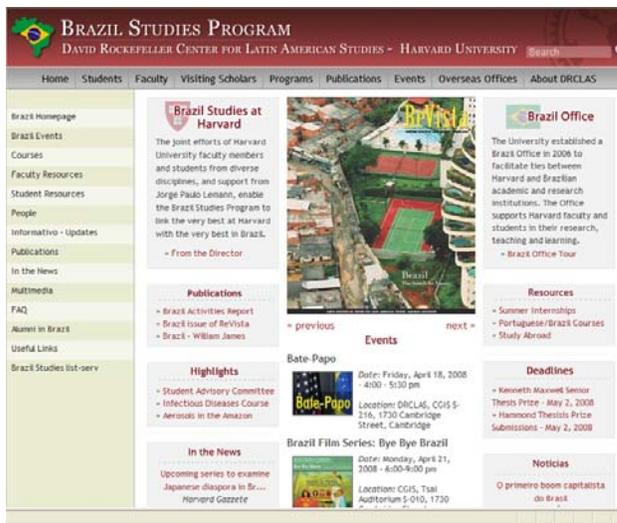
### III. INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

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During its first two years of operations, the Brazil Office has dedicated significant time and energy to developing, implementing, and refining information management systems. We are now benefitting from this up-front investment. The two core systems created and managed by the office, are: (1) the new [DRCLAS website](#) and (2) the Brazil Studies Program database. The technical development of these systems is the result of the skill and dedication of two Brazilian interns, Bruno Yoshimura and Allan Kajimoto - who recently graduated college, received venture capital funding to launch a new technology company in Brazil, and concluded his successful internship with us.

#### Website

Given our in-house technical and web project management skills and the importance we place on web-based communication, the Brazil Office assumed responsibility for revamping the DRCLAS website. We identified priority improvements and helped clarify the different roles and types of engagement required to improve content management processes and back-end systems. After reviewing a pre-existing contract with an outsourced web development company in the U.S., the Brazil Office determined that the outsourced relationship would be very costly. Furthermore, the scope of the project proposed by the outsourced provider was limited, did not address the underlying challenges of improving the website and would have made the DRCLAS dependent on them for ongoing updates. As a result, the Brazil Office negotiated the cancellation of the existing contract.



*At left: [Brazil Studies Program homepage](#) on the DRCLAS website. To maintain up-to-date information without relying on the ongoing support of technical staff, the Brazil Office designed dynamic systems that can be easily maintained by those responsible for content.*

As shown on the following page, the DRCLAS website evolution was divided into three phases. While there have been significant improvements to visual appearance and consistency of presentation, the challenging work was related to the migration from an

outdated version of a proprietary content management system (WebGUI) to a newer, more flexible open-source system (Drupal). This migration was needed to transfer the website from a five-year old computer server managed by the DRCLAS (which had lost its in-house technician) to a more stable infrastructure that could be hosted at the Harvard-MIT data center. The migration also required the transition of every existing page of the DRCLAS website and an overhaul to the old website navigation structure. The website migration was successfully completed at the beginning of the fall 2007/2008 semester.

The Brazil Office remains responsible for website technology development and system administrator-level issues for the whole of the DRCLAS as well as for the execution of all content updates related to the Brazil Studies Program. Thankfully, the amount of time required to maintain the website has fallen dramatically. We also monitor website usage and review information on a monthly basis.

**Results:**

- ❖ Improved external communications for DRCLAS
- ❖ Cost savings of tens of thousands of dollars or more
- ❖ Migration to professionally managed infrastructure (HMDC) and elimination of risk of website failure from aging system and departure of administrator
- ❖ Replacement of outdated, proprietary content management software
- ❖ Transfer of content from previous website to new website
- ❖ Introduction of new capabilities (e.g. events management, rotating highlights, audio content, slide show, and video)
- ❖ Continuous improvements developed and tested in Brazil Office to facilitate roll-out across DRCLAS

### 1. DRCLAS Website Homepage prior to Brazil Office Management

- ❖ 3+ screens of scrolling
- ❖ Lack of automated systems
- ❖ Battle for screen real estate
- ❖ End-users unable to post content
- ❖ Sea of text
- ❖ Unprofessional looking



(keep scrolling...)

### 2. DRCLAS Homepage under Brazil Office Management, interim solution

- ❖ Minimal scrolling
- ❖ Lack of automated systems
- ❖ Controlled use of space
- ❖ End-users unable to post content
- ❖ Moderate text, manual links
- ❖ Professional looking



### 3. Current [DRCLAS Homepage](#)

- ❖ Minimal scrolling
- ❖ Automated systems
- ❖ Controlled use of space
- ❖ Distributed content management
- ❖ Extensive use of links in automated system
- ❖ Professional looking



## Database

One of the first initiatives of the Brazil Office, which began before the [office's physical construction](#) and continues more than a year and a half after the hammering stopped, is the development of a database. This project initially focused on consolidating contact data from a number of sources, including:

- ❖ All contacts from legacy DRCLAS database with addresses in Brazil
- ❖ All contacts from the four Harvard Alumni Clubs in Brazil
- ❖ Relevant contacts from individual staff members' electronic and print files
- ❖ Names/addresses of past DRCLAS grant recipients, visiting scholars, etc.
- ❖ Presidents and Deans from Brazil's most prominent universities
- ❖ Brazil contacts from the Harvard Alumni Association

During our first months, we compiled information, eliminated duplicates, and improved data quality. Data gathering, entry, normalization and maintenance are, of course, mind-numbing tasks. And gathering data from across Harvard University on people in a foreign country is not for the faint of heart! Thankfully, the most painful and intense work has been behind us for many months.

## Results:

- ❖ In-house creation of well structured, web-based database using open-source software
- ❖ Usage: it is rare for a member of the Brazil Office team to not have the database open
- ❖ Improved collaboration with Brazil Studies Program in Cambridge
- ❖ Ability to track/search for students and faculty currently in Brazil (risk management)
- ❖ Ability to track print mailings and electronic information distributions
- ❖ Ability to track attendance at key events
- ❖ Ability to track study abroad and internship participants and host organizations
- ❖ Ability to restrict mass e-mail distributions from being sent to select e-mail addresses

## Database overview:

- ❖ 5,608 total contacts
- ❖ 1,117 alumni
- ❖ 1,261 recipients of E-newsletter

## Database contacts by region:

- ❖ 64% in Brazil
- ❖ 34% in U.S.
- ❖ 3% international

## Alumni in database by School:

- ❖ 54% HBS
- ❖ 21% FAS
- ❖ 9% HLS
- ❖ 16% Others

## Electronic Newsletter

The Brazil database has positioned us to efficiently reach students, faculty, alumni, and others with an interest in knowing about and participating in the Brazil Studies Program's activities at Harvard and in Brazil. We began distributing our new electronic newsletter (*Informativo*) in February 2008. It reaches over 1,000 people and is fully integrated into our database, which allows us to quickly add and remove recipients. We are also able to track which communications have been received by any given person. The creation of the electronic newsletter complements our website strategy by allowing us to provide information through push (e.g. electronic newsletter) and pull (e.g. website) technologies.

### Results:

- ❖ Launched E-newsletter in February 2008
- ❖ Positive feedback from recipients (mostly Harvard alumni in Brazil)
- ❖ System integrated with database, enabling real-time additions/deletions and targeting of specific groups (e.g. HGSE alumni, contacts interested in "Medicine & Public Health," etc.)

