

# Guide for U.S. Exchange Students Studying at the UFRGS Law School

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from the University of Texas School of Law, January –  
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## I Orientation and General Information

### Rio Grande do Sul<sup>1</sup>

Rio Grande do Sul is the largest, most populous, and most important state in the Southern Region of Brazil (composed of the states of Rio Grande do Sul, Paraná, and Santa Catarina). It is the eighth largest state in the Union territorially, and the fifth largest in population (behind São Paulo State, Rio de Janeiro State, Minas Gerais, and Bahia). It has the fourth-highest per-capita income at R\$8,341, behind the Federal District, São Paulo State, and Rio de Janeiro State. The state's geographical area is slightly smaller than that of Arizona.

Rio Grande do Sul is bordered by Uruguay on the south, Argentina on the west, Santa Catarina on the north, and the Atlantic Ocean on the east. The climate is subtropical. Seasonal temperature variations are roughly comparable to those in the U.S. South; in the winter it never gets much below zero and only snows in the sierra, and summer high temperatures regularly reach into the mid-nineties. If you're going to be in Rio Grande do Sul at any time from May to September, you'll need to bring sweaters and at least one good jacket, or buy them after arrival.

The ethnic makeup of the state is markedly different from that of most of the rest of Brazil and, for that matter, the rest of Latin America. In addition to the descendants of Portuguese and Italian immigrants, the descendants of many German immigrants also live in Rio Grande do Sul; blond-haired, blue-eyed people are ubiquitous. With a population of just over ten million, the state is more populous than Michigan and slightly less populous than Ohio. It has the lowest infant mortality rate in Brazil, and continuous investments in education and health have made Rio Grande do Sul the Brazilian state with the highest quality of life and level of human development. A resident of Rio Grande do Sul is called a *gaúcho*; originally used only to refer to the region's cowboys, the term has since been expanded to designate the state's population in general.

The state's economy is strong and varied. It is the country's largest producer of grains (soy, corn, wheat, and rice) and shoes, and it is also an important producer of tobacco, petrochemicals, wood and wood products, and automobiles.

Check out [www.turismo.rs.gov.br](http://www.turismo.rs.gov.br) for information about tourist attractions in Rio Grande do Sul.

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<sup>1</sup> *Almanaque Abril: Brasil 2003*, pp. 349, 404-405 (São Paulo: Editora Abril, S.A., 2003).

### Porto Alegre

Porto Alegre is the capital of Rio Grande do Sul and the seventh-largest city in Brazil, with a population of 1.4 million.<sup>2</sup> The entire metro area, consisting of twenty-two municipalities, encompasses about twice that many inhabitants, giving Porto Alegre the fourth-largest metro area in Brazil, behind São Paulo, Rio, and Belo Horizonte, but ahead of Recife, Salvador, Fortaleza, and Brasília.<sup>3</sup>

Porto Alegre is a relatively comfortable city with every modern amenity that can reasonably be expected, such as good public transportation, good sanitation, banks and ATMs, good hotels, excellent restaurants, and spacious shopping malls. Ninety-seven percent of *porto-alegrenses* are literate, ninety-nine percent of homes have access to treated water, and eighty-five percent of homes are connected to closed sewer systems.<sup>4</sup>

The following are Porto Alegre Turismo offices in the city:

Mercado do Bom Fim  
Loja 12, Parque Farroupilha  
Tel. (51)3388-7669

Salgado Filho International Airport  
Av. Severo Dullius, 90010 – São João  
Tel. (51)3358-2047

Mercado Público Central  
Largo Glênio Peres, s/nº – Centro

Centro Cultural Usina do Gasômetro  
Av. Pres. João Goulart, 551 – Centro

Praia de Belas Shopping  
Av. Praia de Belas, 1181

### The Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul

The Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul ([www.ufrgs.br/ufrgs](http://www.ufrgs.br/ufrgs)) is referred to in *gaúcho* parlance as the “UFRGS,” pronounced as if there were no “F” and with a hard “G”: [úr-gis]. It has four campuses spread out throughout Porto Alegre, the two most important of which being the downtown campus and the Campus do Vale, on the road to the satellite city of Viamão. If you take courses in languages or international relations, you will have to take a thirty-minute bus ride to get there. The law school is located on the downtown campus.

The history of the UFRGS started with the founding of the School of Pharmacy and Chemistry in 1895. In 1934, various schools were consolidated to create the University of Porto Alegre, which became the University of Rio Grande do Sul in 1947. In 1950, the university was federalized.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Noble, John et. al, *Lonely Planet Brazil*, 5th ed, p. 385 (Melbourne: Lonely Planet Publications, 2002).

<sup>3</sup> *Almanaque*, supra note 1, p. 165.

<sup>4</sup> *Almanaque*, supra note 1, p. 404.

<sup>5</sup> See [www.ufrgs.br/ufrgs](http://www.ufrgs.br/ufrgs).

The UFRGS is made up of approximately 27,000 students—22,000 undergraduates and 7,000 graduates—making it the largest university in the south of Brazil.<sup>6</sup> In Porto Alegre there are also located some ten other universities, the most noteworthy of which is the Pontifícia Universidade Católica (PUC/RS), prominently located on Av. Ipiranga.

The UFRGS School of Law (*Faculdade de Direito*)

#### The law school

The UFRGS law school was founded in 1900, the first of its kind in the Southern Region of Brazil. For the first ten years of its existence it was housed in a building of the state government; on July 15, 1910 Dean Manoel André da Rocha inaugurated the law school in the building that still houses it today.<sup>7</sup> Getúlio Vargas, president of Brazil from 1930-1945 and 1951-1954, and João Goulart, president from 1961-1964, rank among the law school's many illustrious alumni.

The law school has approximately 550 students in total. Admission is extremely selective: out of approximately four thousand applicants, the 140 students that score the highest on the *vestibular* (entrance exam) are admitted into the freshman class each year, divided evenly between evening and daytime *turnas* (sections).<sup>8</sup> The UFRGS law school is generally considered the best law school in the Southern Region of Brazil, one of the four or five best in the country, and the best for international law.

#### The law school faculty

*Faculdade* in Portuguese means "school." To say "faculty" in terms of the professorial staff, the appropriate term is *corpo docente*; "student body," incidentally, is *corpo discente*. The following are some of the faculty members you should know a little about in advance of arrival:

**Prof. Claudia Lima Marques.** S.J.D. from the University of Heidelberg (1996). LL.M. in International Conflict of Laws and Civil Law from the University of Tübingen. Specialist in European Community Law from the Europa-Institut, University of Saarbrücken. Professor of the Department of Public Law and Legal Philosophy. Leader of the CNPq "Mercosur and Consumer Law" research group and coordinator of the "Law and Post-Modernity" PPGD/UFRGS line of research. Specialist in consumer law, international conflict of laws, and integration law.

**Prof. Cezar Saldanha Souza.** S.J.D. in Constitutional Law from the University of São Paulo, Head of the Department of Public Law and Legal Philosophy. Leader of the CNPq research group "Supremacy of the State" and its respective PPGD/UFRGS line of research. Specialist in constitutional law, New Federalism, history, and legal philosophy.

**Prof. César Santolim.** Professor of Cyber Law and Civil Law at UFRGS. LL.M. in Civil Law from UFRGS. Pursuing S.J.D. in International Law from UFRGS (2000-03). Specialist in electronic trade, new technologies, cyber law, and consumer law.

**Prof. Tupinambá Pinto de Azevedo.** Professor of Environmental Law at the UFRGS Law School. LL.M. from UFRGS. Associate Justice of the Tribunal de Justiça of Rio Grande do Sul. Specialist in criminal law. CNPq researcher.

<sup>6</sup> See pamphlet: *UFRGS: Universidade viva*.

<sup>7</sup> See pamphlet: *UFRGS: O patrimônio histórico e de todos nós!*

<sup>8</sup> See pamphlet: *UFRGS em números*.

- **Prof. Rozângela Motiska Bertolo.** Substitute Professor in the Department of Public Law and Legal Philosophy at UFRGS, Professor of Environmental Law in the Escola Superior do Ministério Público of Rio Grande do Sul and in the Escola Superior de Advocacia Municipal. LL.M. from UFRGS. Pursuing S.J.D. at UFRGS (2000-03).

- **Prof. Pedro Henrique Poli de Figueiredo.** Professor of Administrative Law at the Pontifícia Universidade Católica (PUC/RS), in the Escola Superior do Ministério Público of Rio Grande do Sul, and in the Escola Superior de Advocacia Municipal. LL.M. from UFRGS. Pursuing LL.D. at UFRGS (2001-04). Rio Grande do Sul State Attorney.

## II. To Take Care of Before Arrival in Porto Alegre

### Language

You should definitely plan on spending a few weeks in Brazil before classes begin if your Portuguese still needs some work; while most of the UFRGS law school professors speak clearly in class, some of them are hard to understand, and the rooms in the law school don't have the best acoustics. I can't stress enough the importance of being reasonably fluent before you start classes, and knowledge of Spanish, while certainly helpful, **is not sufficient**. The pedagogical style in Brazilian law school is very lecture-intensive and almost completely non-Socratic; the information that will be most important for doing well on exams is uttered orally by the professor during class, and readings are only partially enlightening. Bringing a tape recorder to tape class lectures may be a good idea; borrowing the notes of a classmate in whose academic competence you trust is another partial solution.

One Portuguese **language school** that I can recommend for study before law classes begin in Porto Alegre is FirstStep Brazil ([www.firststepbrazil.com](http://www.firststepbrazil.com), [info@firststepbrazil.com](mailto:info@firststepbrazil.com)), which has locations in Rio de Janeiro (Ipanema) and Florianópolis; the contact person's name, as of August 2003, was Duffy. The Florianópolis location is a six-hour bus ride from Porto Alegre. For other language school options you can check out [www.studentuniverse.com](http://www.studentuniverse.com) and [www.GoAbroad.com](http://www.GoAbroad.com).

Additionally, the UFRGS Instituto de Letras offers Portuguese for Foreigners in the regular semester; you have the option of taking Portuguese class concurrently with law classes. If this option appeals to you, contact Professor Margarete Schlatter (3316-6708, [margasch@pro.via-rs.com.br](mailto:margasch@pro.via-rs.com.br)) after you arrive in Porto Alegre.

If you feel confident in your Portuguese-speaking abilities and want official certification of your level of proficiency, the Brazilian Ministry of Education offers a two-day test two times a year, in April and October, for the reception of the Certificado de Proficiência em Língua Portuguesa para Estrangeiros (**CELPE-Bras**). The CELPE-Bras is the Brazilian analogue to the TOEFL. It's the only Brazilian-issued certificate of Portuguese proficiency officially recognized by the Brazilian government, internationally it is accepted in companies and teaching institutions as proof of competence in the Portuguese language, and some Brazilian universities (but not UFRGS) require it for entry into graduate programs. More information is allegedly located on the Ministry of Education's website, [www.mec.gov.br](http://www.mec.gov.br), but the site is extremely hard to navigate. Your best option is to ask Margarete Schlatter about the exam after you arrive in Porto Alegre.

Getting health insurance that's good abroad

The following goes without saying: make sure your health insurance policy applies abroad before you leave the U.S. If it doesn't, change companies or policies to get one that is. Policies from the Dallas-based Mega Life and Health Insurance Company (P.O. Box 809025, Dallas, TX 75380-9025, tel. 800-767-0700), which supplies all student policies for the University of Texas at Austin, apply abroad.

You'll probably also want to buy the **International Student Identity Card (ISIC)** from Council Travel (800-2-COUNCIL) before leaving the U.S. You'll need it to be able to purchase student airfare from STA (more details below), and you can get some discounts on museums, etc. (although such discounts with the ISIC are few and far between in Latin America). It also includes one other important feature that you might not personally care about but that your parents will appreciate: **repatriation of remains insurance**. That way, if you're fatally hit by a stray bullet from the Morro do Pavão (one of the *favelas* that overlook Copacabana) while strolling along the beach in Rio, Council will pay to get your body sent back home, something which normally costs in the thousands of dollars. The ISIC is a little more than U.S.\$20.

Getting your letter of acceptance and your student visa

Out of reciprocity for the visa requirement that the U.S. imposes on all Brazilian visitors, Brazil, unlike its South American neighbors, requires visas of all Americans, even tourists.

Even though it's slightly more expensive and requires the sending of a considerable amount of documentation to the Brazilian consulate, you should get a **student visa** instead of a tourist visa. For one, tourist visas are only valid for ninety days and you would have to leave the country and reenter or obtain an extension in order to stay longer. Furthermore, a student visa gives you certain benefits that a tourist visa does not: (1) it's technically required by law since you are studying at a Brazilian institution; and (2) you will be classified as a resident of Brazil and issued a Brazilian ID (*carteira de identidade*), which can substitute for your passport in most circumstances. As a Brazilian resident you have the freedom to leave and enter the country at will and at no expense, and you have other privileges such as the ability to open a bank account.

You must enter Brazil the first time within **ninety days** of the issuance of your student visa, and from that initial date of entry the visa is valid for **one year**. The student visa for graduate and postgraduate students is called **VITEM IV** in Brazilian Immigration Department jargon.

### Getting your letter of acceptance from UFRGS

Relações Institucionais e Internacionais

Av. Paulo Gama 110—6º andar

CEP 90040-060

Porto Alegre, RS

Tel. (51) 3316-3902

Fax. (51) 3316-3973

E-mail: relinter@ufrgs.br

Director: Sílvia Rocha

Assistant: Rosemeri Antunes

The first required document you should work on getting is a **letter of acceptance** from UFRGS. The Departamento de Relações Institucionais e Internacionais (relinter@ufrgs.br; hereinafter Relações Internacionais), headed by Sílvia Rocha, issues the letter. The Brazilian Consulate requires for purposes of getting the student visa that the letter be “notarized,” which means that it must come on special paper that says “Serviço Público Federal” on the letterhead. The letter must be the **original**; the Consulate will not accept a fax or an e-mail attachment. Sílvia Rocha (relinter@ufrgs.br or silviamr@ufrgs.br) will express mail you the letter.

But before Relações Internacionais can issue the letter of acceptance, you must send them certain documents, which can be sent by fax ((55) (51) 3316-3973)); a list of those documents follows. **Keep these documents and take them to Brazil with you.** You will need them later in order to get officially registered as a visiting student. This is an important note of caution: the initial letter from Relações Internacionais does not register you in the UFRGS system.

1. A **letter**, written in Portuguese, from you to Sílvia Rocha expressing: (a) your intention to study at the UFRGS law school under a student exchange program; (b) the semester or semesters during which you will be studying at UFRGS<sup>9</sup>; (c) the approximate date on which you will be returning to the United States; (d) that the exchange will be through the FIPSE/CAPES program; and (e) a list of courses that you plan on taking.<sup>10</sup> This list of courses by no means binds you to registering for those particular courses when you arrive in Porto Alegre. Make sure you indicate to Sílvia where to send the letter and what kind of time constraints you’re under with the consulate. It’s best to have Sílvia send the letter to you, place it together with the other documentation you have to send to the consulate, and send it all in the same package.

2. A photocopy of the first pages of your **passport**.

3. A recent **official transcript** (*atestado de matrícula*) from your home institution along with a certified Portuguese translation.<sup>11</sup>

4. A **letter** from your home institution, along with a certified Portuguese translation of the same, declaring: (a) that you are officially enrolled as a full-time student; and (b) that you have completed at least forty percent of your degree program.

**My suggestion is that you start this process with Sílvia Rocha eight weeks before your planned arrival in Brazil. It will take about two weeks to get the hard copy of the letter of acceptance in your hands, which, granted that you have all the other required documentation already in order, leaves six weeks for the consulate to receive your packet of materials, issue your visa, and mail your passport back to you with the big stamp in it.**

<sup>9</sup> If you plan on arriving in Brazil before the beginning of the semester (e.g., you arrive in Brazil in January and do an internship in Brasilia until the semester begins in Porto Alegre in March), inform Sílvia; she will write the letter stating that you will be studying for the entire period, so that your visa will be valid from the date you arrive in Brazil. Otherwise, you would have to pay another heap of money to get a tourist visa for those initial weeks you’ll be in Brazil.

<sup>10</sup> See “Registering for Classes” below for the procedure for choosing courses.

<sup>11</sup> Approval of the translation by a Portuguese professor is sufficient certification of the translation.

### Getting your student visa from the Brazilian consulate

As stated, along with the letter of acceptance you'll need several other documents to complete the package to send to the consulate. Keep in mind that these requirements, especially the prices, are subject to change, and you should always consult the consulate's website to double-check before sending anything off. Additionally, a couple of these requirements I only found out about by calling the consulate on the phone, which means that the list on the website is incomplete and/or the exact requirements change from consulate to consulate.

1. **Original, notarized letter of acceptance from UFRGS.**

2. **A letter from your home institution attesting to your status as a regular student and its approval of your decision to study abroad. (This requirement does not appear on the list on the website.)**

3. **Passport with at least six months' validity and at least one fully blank page.**

4. **Two recent 2" X 2" passport-type photos, in color or black and white, front view, full face, light background (snapshots are not accepted).**

5. **Proof of residence within the consular jurisdiction for the past twelve months. You can only apply to the Brazilian consulate which has jurisdiction over your state of residence; see the list below to figure out what consular jurisdiction you live in. I fulfilled this requirement by sending in a notarized copy of my Texas driver's license. It's best to call the consulate to make sure this is OK.**

6. **Proof of financial ability to pay for your stay in Brazil. This can be a notarized letter from your bank, a copy of a recent bank statement, or similar documentation.**

7. **For a stay of longer than ninety days, two copies of a recent non-criminal record certificate issued by the Police Department of your place of residence. For me, this was a copy of my blank criminal record from the Texas State Police, complete with fingerprints.**

8. **A yellow fever vaccination certificate if you've traveled within the last ninety days to any of the following countries: Angola, Bolivia, Benin, Cameroon, Colombia, Ecuador, Gabon, Ghana, Gambia, Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria, Peru, Sierra Leone, Sudan or Zaire. Note that if you visit Brazil's neighbors Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, and/or Peru during your trip to South America and then return to Brazil, you're technically required to have a yellow fever certificate.<sup>12</sup>**

9. **A postal money order for \$170 (or \$160 if you hand-deliver the materials). The \$170 figure includes the following fees:**

<sup>12</sup> When I returned to Brazil from a trip to Peru, the immigration official checked my yellow fever certificate.

- Visa fee payment: \$40.
- Reciprocity fee: \$100. Blame the U.S. government for this one.
- Handling fee for applications sent by mail: \$10.
- Brazilian Federal Police processing fee: \$20. This requirement does not appear in the list on the website. You'll have to pay an additional \$30 or so when you get to Brazil and register your presence with the Federal Police; trying to claim to the Porto Alegre Federal Police that I had already paid \$20 of that fee proved futile for me.

The following is a list of Brazilian consular jurisdictions in the United States. Remember that you can only apply to the consulate in whose jurisdiction you reside.

**Brazilian Consulate General in New York**

1185 Avenue of the Americas (Sixth Avenue), 21<sup>st</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10036  
Phone: (917) 777-7777  
Fax: (212) 827-0225  
E-mail: [consulado@brazilny.org](mailto:consulado@brazilny.org)  
[www.brazilny.org](http://www.brazilny.org)

**Jurisdiction:** States of Connecticut, Delaware, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania and the Bermuda Islands.

**Brazilian Consulate General in Houston**

1233 West Loop South  
Park Tower North, Suite 1150  
Houston, TX 77027  
Phone: (713) 961-3063  
Fax: (713) 961-3070  
E-mail: [consbras@brazilhouston.org](mailto:consbras@brazilhouston.org)  
[www.brazilhouston.org](http://www.brazilhouston.org)

**Jurisdiction:** States of Arkansas, Colorado, Kansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas.

**Brazilian Consulate General in Boston**

The Stattler Building  
20 Park Plaza, suite 810  
Boston, MA 02116  
Phone: (617) 542-4000  
Fax: (617) 542-4318  
E-mail: [cgbos@ma.ultranet.com](mailto:cgbos@ma.ultranet.com)  
[www.consulatebrazil.org](http://www.consulatebrazil.org)

**Jurisdiction:** States of Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont.



Brazilian Consulate General in Chicago  
 401 North Michigan Avenue, Suite 3050  
 Chicago, IL 60611  
 Phone: (312) 464-0244  
 Fax: (312) 464-0299  
 E-mail: bras-cg@ix.netcom.com

**Jurisdiction:** States of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.

**Brazilian Consulate General in Los Angeles**

8484 Wilshire Blvd, suites 730-711  
 Beverly Hills, CA 90211  
 Phone: (323) 651-2664  
 Fax: (323) 651-1274  
 E-mail: consbrasla@earthlink.net

**Jurisdiction:** States of Arizona, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Utah, Wyoming, and in California, the counties of Imperial, Kern, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura.

**Brazilian Consulate General in Miami**

2601 S. Bayshore Drive, Suite 800  
 Miami, FL 33133  
 Phone: (305) 285-6200  
 Fax: (305) 285-6229  
 E-mail: consbras@brazilmiami.org  
 www.brazilmiami.org

**Jurisdiction:** States of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee. Puerto Rico, US Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Bahamas.

**Brazilian Consulate General in San Francisco**

300 Montgomery Street, suite 900  
 San Francisco, CA, 94104  
 Phone: (415) 981-8170  
 Fax: (415) 981-3628  
 E-mail: consular@brazilsf.org  
 www.brazilsf.org

**Jurisdiction:** States of Oregon, Washington, Alaska and in the state of California, the counties of Alameda, Alpine, Amador, Butte, Calaveras, Colusa, Contra Costa, Del Norte, El Dorado, Fresno, Glenn, Humboldt, Inyo, Kings, Lake, Lassen, Madera, Marin, Mariposa, Mendocino, Merced, Modoc, Mono, Monterey, Napa, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Sacramento, San Benedito, San Francisco, San Joaquin, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Solano, Sonoma, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tehama, Trinity, Tulare, Tuolumne, Yolo, and Yuba.

**Brazilian Embassy in Washington, D.C.**

3006 Massachusetts Avenue N.W.

Washington, D.C. 20008

Phone: (202) 745-2837

Fax: (202) 745-2827

[www.brasilemb.org](http://www.brasilemb.org)

**Jurisdiction:** District of Columbia, states of Kentucky, Maryland, Ohio, Virginia, and West Virginia.

Air Passage to Brazil

See “Air Travel to Brazil” under “Practical Matters for Living in Brazil and Porto Alegre” below.

III. To Take Care of Soon After Arrival in Porto Alegre

Registering with the Brazilian Federal Police

Within thirty days after arrival in Brazil, you have to go in person to the local office of the Polícia Federal and register your presence in the country. Do not fail to do this; they take it very seriously. If you are in Porto Alegre during that initial thirty-day period, Relações Internacionais will arrange for a car to take you and wait for you while you get registered. If you decide to go on your own, here are the address and phone of the Porto Alegre Polícia Federal; directions on what bus to take appear below.

Departamento de Polícia Federal

Superintendência Regional no Rio Grande do Sul

Delegacia de Polícia Marítima Aeroportuária e de Fronteiras

Grupo de Registro de Estrangeiro

Av. França, 96 esq. Paraná 92

CEP 9040-600 Porto Alegre/RS

Têls. (Registro de Estrangeiro): 3358-9070, 3358-9071

Têl. (general): 3359-9000

Contact person: Pérez

You'll have to take with you the following items:

1. Your passport and a photocopy of the picture page and every page with a stamp on it. The Federal Police needs a full blank page on which to place a page-sized stamp.

2. The entry card you filled out on the airplane on the way to Brazil that the immigration official stamped when he stamped your passport. If you've lost it, begging the Federal Police for mercy is not likely to help matters.

3. Two passport-sized photos.<sup>13</sup>
4. The documentation sent back to you by the consulate (a receipt of payment from the consulate, the original letter of acceptance, and the second copy of your criminal record).
5. Your address, complete with CEP (zip code), and telephone number for purposes of filling in the corresponding blanks on the forms.
6. Approximately R\$100 for the processing fee.
7. It's probably best to take with you all the documentation that you faxed to Relações Internacionais, just in case the Police want to see something from it.

You'll have to fill out a form or two, sign some things, and get your fingerprints (*impressões digitais*) taken. They will issue you an unlaminated provisional identification card (referred to as your "*protocolo*") with your picture and a 17-digit protocol number on it; this card is extremely important. It takes at least three months for them to make your permanent ID card (i.e., the non-provisional *carteira de identidade*), so depending on how long you're staying in Brazil, you might not ever lay eyes on it.<sup>14</sup> You'll have to start calling the Polícia Federal around three months after your initial visit to find out if the card is ready, and if it is you'll have to go there in person to pick it up. You must have one of these two IDs, the provisional *protocolo* or the permanent *carteira de identidade*, with you every time you enter or leave Brazil; if you lose it or forget it at home the fine is quite stiff. Note also that the *protocolo* expires after 120 days; if after 120 days your *carteira de identidade* is still not ready, and you plan on leaving and reentering Brazil, you must first go to the Polícia Federal to get an extension (*prorrogação*) on your *protocolo*. Luckily, the *protocolo* is made on the spot while you wait.

If you get really impatient about the fact that it is taking months and months for your *carteira de identidade* to arrive, and the Polícia Federal seems to be giving you the runaround every time you call them to ask the card's status, you can call the place in Brasília that actually makes the cards and ask them what's taking so long: (21) 311-0384 (note that phone numbers in some cities, such as Brasília, are only seven digits).

Also beware that the Federal Police may send you a letter subsequent to your initial visit summoning you to appear in person with certain documentation, most likely something they forgot to request a photocopy of the first time you went there. You'll also have to return there in person to pick up the permanent ID Relações Internacionais is not likely to arrange for a car to take you on these subsequent visits, so you'll have to go on your own. Bus 653 leaves from Praça Rui Barbosa downtown and about twenty minutes later passes down Av. Brasil one block away from the Federal Police; ask the driver to tell you where to get off. To get to Praça Rui Barbosa from the law school, walk up Av. João Pessoa and pass

<sup>13</sup> You can get passport photos made at several photo shops throughout Porto Alegre; there seems to be one on every block downtown. My suggestion is that you get several made and leave them in your wallet; you'll need them for various IDs you'll eventually have to get made.

<sup>14</sup> I was in Brazil for a total of seven months, and when I left my *carteira* still wasn't ready.

under the overpass (*viaduto*); curve around with the street, and the first intersection you come to is Av. Dr. Flores. Turn right on Dr. Flores, walk down the hill a few blocks (passing McDonald's, the Rua dos Andradas, and several other streets), and Praça Rui Barbosa is at the end.

#### Getting a CPF (social-security number)

The **Cadastro de Pessoa Física (CPF)** number in Brazil is the analogue to the social-security number in the U.S. You have to have one if you want to open a bank account in Brazil, get a Brazilian credit card, buy a plane ticket online, or receive any sort of payment from UFRGS (such as, for example, reimbursement for travel expenses for a law conference you worked at on behalf of Professor Claudia). I strongly suggest that you go ahead and get a CPF number soon after your arrival in Porto Alegre—it will make your life a whole lot easier.

The process is relatively easy, with the exception of the document that states your parents' names. Before going anywhere, you need to compile the following five items:

1. Your **passport**, and a photocopy of the whole thing.
2. Some sort of **proof of residence**. This can be an electricity bill with your name on it, a letter from your apartment manager, or a letter attesting to your residence in Brazil from Sílvia Rocha in *Relações Internacionais*.
3. An official document, in Portuguese, with **both your parents' full names**. This is the most difficult item to get. One thing you can do is translate your birth certificate while still in the U.S. and send the original and the translation to the Brazilian consulate to get the translation officially certified. A certification from a university professor would probably also suffice; just make sure there are plenty of official-looking stamps on the document. You could also take your birth certificate to a translator in Porto Alegre; the fee he'll charge is something like R\$15 per page.
4. The **letter of acceptance** that Sílvia Rocha sent to you, which you should have gotten back from the Consulate when they sent you your passport with the visa stamp in it. If you don't have it, just ask Sílvia to print you out another one. It's probably a good idea to take along a photocopy of this letter as well.
5. Cash in the amount of **R\$4.50**.

With these five items in hand, go to any teller at any Banco do Brasil and tell her that you want to deposit the R\$4.50 fee for getting a CPF. She'll look over your documents and, hopefully, deposit the R\$4.50 into the Receita Federal's (the Brazilian Internal Revenue Service) bank account. She'll then give you the documents back with a **receipt** of deposit.

You need to wait at least 24 hours for the deposit to process. Then take all those documents, complete with the bank receipt, to the **Receita Federal** at Avenida José Loureiro da Silva 445 in the Cidade Baixa *bairro*.. The attendant at the Receita Federal should give you your CPF number on the spot; an official document with your CPF on it will take another month or so to process, but luckily they'll

mail to you. If you have any questions about this process, you can call the Receita Federal at 3214-2000 or the Plantão Fiscal (the subdivision of the Receita Federal that deals with CPF issues) at 3216-0146.

#### Registering for classes (*matricula*)

For exchange students, registering for classes isn't the easiest thing in the world, and it requires a considerable amount of patience. Below I have tried to present a step-by-step procedure to follow.

#### Checking on what classes are offered and viewing their descriptions

Looking over the list of what classes are offered and seeing their descriptions is relatively easy, and it's something you can do over the internet before you arrive in Porto Alegre.

A linguistic note is in order at this point. In the Portuguese of Rio Grande do Sul (but not in the Portuguese of all parts of Brazil, such as Rio), to say "class" in the sense of a semester-long course such as "Comparative Law" or "Civil Law II", the word is *cadeira*, the same word as that used for "chair" (piece of furniture); another word for "class" in this sense is *disciplina*. *Curso* is "major"; when someone asks you what *curso* you're in, the answer would be *direito*, "law". *Aula* is the word for "class" in the general, everyday sense (e.g., *tenho aula hoje à noite*, "I have class tonight"). *Classe* means class in the sense of "category," as in *classe social* "social class."

Each year, the UFRGS law school admits the 140 students into its freshman class that score the highest on the *vestibular* entrance exam. Each of the five years has two *turmas*, a daytime *turma* and an evening *turma*. All basic, required classes such as Criminal Law or Civil Law are offered in both morning and evening schedules. Electives such as Comparative Law or Sports Law integrate students from both daytime and evening sections and may be offered at any time of the day or evening. As an exchange student, you have the freedom to take any class that you want in any year and in the daytime or evening; taking classes in several different years is a good way to get to know more people in the school and broaden your friend base.

To get a list of classes for a given semester, do the following:

1. Go to [www.direito.ufrgs.br](http://www.direito.ufrgs.br)
2. Click on "Horários e Vagas" under the heading "Informações Acadêmicas" in the left-hand column.
3. On the drop-down menu, click on "DIR—CIÊNCIAS JURÍDICAS E SOCIAIS DIURNO" for the daytime class schedule or "JUR—CIÊNCIAS JURÍDICAS E SOCIAIS NOTURNO" for the evening class schedule.

4. Below the drop-down menu, click on the semester for which you wish to view the schedule. Each year has two semesters. 20031, for example, is the first semester of 2003 (March or April through July or August) and 20032 is the second semester of 2003 (September through December). You can consult any past semester (*PASSADO*) back to 19942, the present semester (*PRESENTE*), or the next semester. But keep in mind that the schedule for the next semester is not posted until a few weeks before the

beginning of that semester. In the meantime, a good way to get an idea of the classes that should be offered in any given semester is to check the corresponding semester from the year before.

5. Click on “Consultar”.
6. A grid should appear with seven columns. A sample appears below.

Código	Denominação da Disciplina	CH	Turma	Horário-Sala-Prédio	Vagas Ofer (*)	Vagas Ocup (**)
DIR0101	CRIMINOLOGIA I	2	A	6072-0005-11108	70	0
DIR0103	DIREITO PROCESSUAL PENAL I-A	4	A	2072-0001-11108	70	0
				3092-0001-11108		
DIR0106	DIREITO PENAL ESPECIAL -A	4	U	5114-0009-11108	15	0
DIR0107	DIREITO EXECUCOES PENAI-A	4	U	6134-0005-11108	70	0

To see a **description** of a class in which you're interested, do the following:

1. Return to [www.direito.ufrgs.br](http://www.direito.ufrgs.br).
2. Click “Dados Sobre Disciplinas” under “Informações Acadêmicas”.
3. Put in the code (*código*) of the class whose description you want to see. Using Criminology I as an example, put in DIR01001. Click “Consultar”.
4. A page with DIR01001 – CRIMINOLOGIA I in a drop-down window should appear. Click “Consultar” again and the following description should appear:

**Disciplina:** DIR01001 – CRIMINOLOGIA I  
**Carga Horária:** 2 horas/aula  
**Nome Completo:** CRIMINOLOGIA I

**Súmula:** História da Criminologia. Divisões da Criminologia. Conteúdos e limites do objeto da Criminologia e suas relações com as demais Ciências Criminais. Importância da Criminologia. Funções e Perspectivas da Criminologia. O crime como fato jurídico e como fato social. Divergências. As principais teorias sobre a criminalidade. As várias técnicas e métodos da Criminologia. A reincidência e a periculosidade. A consolidação da Criminologia como Ciência. As escolas criminológicas. A nova Criminologia. A sociedade criminogênica.

Pré-Requisitos:

Não há pré-requisitos

**Cursos Vinculados:** 158-00 - CIENCIAS JURIDICAS E SOCIAIS - NOTURNO  
260-00 - CIENCIAS JURIDICAS E SOCIAIS - DIURNO

As you can see, Criminology I meets two hours per week and has no prerequisites. But even if it did have prerequisites, as an exchange student you probably could take it anyway; on this issue for a particular class consult Professor Claudia.

The professor's name doesn't appear anywhere in the semester course list or in the course descriptions, and this is one of those things that are a little more difficult to get information about. Your best bet on this issue is to consult Professor Claudia or the UFRGS student that is assigned to help you.

Figuring out your class schedule and where each class meets

Official registration (*matrícula*) for exchange students doesn't take place until a couple of weeks after classes begin. You'll have to figure out a workable schedule and start going to classes before being officially registered.

Each semester the law school publishes an easier-to-read grid schedule with the hours and days broken out and each class listed in its day and time. The daytime and evening sections have their own grids, and each year has its own page. The schedule is only available in hard-copy form at the beginning of the semester; you can pick it up in the law school photocopy room ("o Xerox," accessible from outside the building right beside the snack bar or from a window just to the right after entering the UN Library).

Until you can get your hands on this schedule, however, you'll have to use the one from the website, the sample of which is printed above. For a full load, you need to take somewhere around eighteen credit hours (for more details on what is considered a full load, see next section). The third column indicates how many credit hours ("CH") each class is worth, either two, four, or six.

The first number in the fifth column indicates the day and time (*horário*) that the class meets. The first digit of the four-digit number is the day; 2 is *segunda-feira* (Monday), 3 is *terça-feira* (Tuesday), 4 is *quarta-feira* (Wednesday), 5 is *quinta-feira* (Thursday), 6 is *sexta-feira* (Friday), and 6 is *sábado* (Saturday). Add thirty minutes to the combined second and third digits to get the time. For example, if the second and third digits are 07, the class starts at 7:30am; if they are 14, the class starts at 2:30pm. The fourth digit indicates how many hours long the class is on that particular day. Thus, if the first number in the fifth column is 5072, the class meets on Thursday from 7:30 to 9:30am.

The second number in the fifth column indicates the room in which the class meets. Thus, if the second number in the fifth column is 0009, the class meets in room 9. The third number in the fifth column, the building in which the class meets, is always 11108, the code number for the law school building.

You probably don't have to worry about the information in the sixth and seventh columns, *vagas oferecidas* (seats offered) and *vagas ocupadas* (seats filled); even if the class is filled, as an exchange student you can likely get into it if you want it.

What is considered a “full load”

As mentioned above, a full load is somewhere between eighteen and twenty-two credit hours, composed of any combination of 2-hour and 4-hour classes. This number of hours of class per week sounds impossibly high by U.S. standards, but don’t worry: you never actually end up spending that many hours in class. Most classes, in practice, will end up starting after the official start time or ending before the official end time. A notable exception is any class taught by Prof. Cezar Saldanha, which will start on time and go the full two hours. To get a rough estimate of how many hours per week you’ll actually be sitting in class, divide the number of credit hours you’re officially taking by two and add an hour or so.

Suggestions on which classes and professors to take

The decision on what classes to take is largely a personal one, although Professor Claudia will have some suggestions for you that should be given considerable weight in your decisionmaking process.<sup>15</sup> You should try to pick the classes that fit best into your area of legal interest or that will help you understand the Brazilian legal system and its differences from the U.S. legal system in a more general way. The best way to think about classes is to divide them into two groups: classes on Brazilian law and classes that don’t focus exclusively on Brazilian law. Perhaps the best strategy is to take a few classes from both categories.

• *Classes on Brazilian law.* Try to avoid advanced classes focusing exclusively on Brazilian law; even if you understand every word of Portuguese uttered by the professor, you won’t be able to understand the material because you lack the prerequisites. A good rule of thumb regarding classes on Brazilian law that have various levels (e.g., *Direito Comercial I*, *Direito Comercial II*, etc.) is to take the low-level class with the second- or third-year students, instead of the high-level class with the fifth-year students. For example, instead of taking *Direito Penal Especial* with Professor Tupinambá Azevedo, which is a fifth-year class focusing on advanced aspects of Brazilian criminal law such as white-collar crime and money laundering, take *Direito Penal II* with the same professor; that way, you’ll still get good exposure to Brazilian criminal law and the opportunity to take a criminal law class with Tupinambá, but you’ll also be able to keep up with what’s going on. This rule of thumb does not apply to fourth- or fifth-year classes on Brazilian law that aren’t part of a sequence, such as *Direito Ecológico*; you should be able to understand these classes without excessive difficulty.

• *Classes not exclusively on Brazilian law.* Included in this category are classes such as *Direito Comparado*, *Direito das Relações Internacionais*, *Direito Internacional Público*, *Direito Internacional Privado*, *Política e Teoria do Estado* and *Direito dos Direitos Humanos*. Even as a non-Brazilian, you shouldn’t have any particular difficulty understanding these classes; you’re in the same boat as all the other students. If you haven’t already taken Comparative Law in the U.S., you should take it at UFRGS; it’s very helpful in understanding the differences between common-law and civil-law systems. “Private International Law” is the civil-law term for what we in the U.S. call “Conflict of Laws,” and it has two parts:

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<sup>15</sup> Keep in mind that everything you do has to be approved, in the first instance, by Professor Claudia; this essential rule applies with special vigor to your decision on what classes to take.



Direito Internacional Privado I and II. Unless you have taken Conflict of Laws in the U.S., make sure you take DIP I before taking (or concurrently with) DIP II.

But more important than the subjects of the classes you take are the professors that teach them. The quality of your learning experience at the UFRGS law school will depend mostly on the quality of your professors, so choose your classes with the professor as the central criterion. First and foremost, you must be able to understand the professor; even if he's the best professor at UFRGS, if you can't understand his Portuguese then you'll get nothing out of the class. During the first week of classes you should test the waters by attending as many classes as you can, to figure out which professors you can understand.

Otherwise, talk to UFRGS law students and Professor Claudia for suggestions on which professors are the best ones for you. I'll suggest a few here that are excellent professors and that speak clearly: Claudia Lima Marques, Cezar Saldanha Souza Jr, Véra Maria Jacob de Fradera, Tupinambá Azevedo, and Plínio Melgaré. Unfortunately, there were some reputedly very good professors – whose names I won't mention here – who either spoke too rapidly, too inaudibly, or too mumbly for me to be able to take their classes.

#### Getting officially registered

Despite your already having been accepted as an exchange student at UFRGS and received a letter verifying such acceptance, when you arrive in Porto Alegre your name is not yet present in the UFRGS system. The process of registering for classes is the same process that gets you officially *cadastrado* with the Centro de Processamento de Dados (CPD, tel. 3316-5333) as a visiting student at UFRGS, and only from the point at which you receive a registration number (*número de matrícula*) will you be able to enjoy certain privileges, described below.

Getting registered for classes is an unduly bureaucratic process reminiscent of the process you had to go through to get your student visa. Luckily, most of the materials you needed to get your letter of acceptance and your visa can be reused in getting registered. It is imperative that you bring the following materials with you to Brazil<sup>16</sup>:

1. Histórico Escolar Original. This is an original copy of your official transcript with an authenticated translation into Portuguese.

2. Atestado de Matrícula. This is a letter from your school's student affairs office to the UFRGS.

The following is a sample in English: "This is to certify that X is a full-time student at Pace University School of Law. He is currently enrolled in fifteen (15) credit hours for the Fall Semester, 2003, which extends from August 27 to December 19, 2003. I also certify that X matriculated in Pace University School of Law on August 29, 2001."

Also bring an authenticated translation of the letter into Portuguese which, if the sample above is followed verbatim, should read like the following: "Certifico que X é estudante

<sup>16</sup> These requirements are set forth in UFRGS Resolução Nº 33/2000.

em tempo integral na Faculdade de Direito da Pace University. Atualmente está matriculado para ganhar quinze (15) horas de crédito no semestre de outono de 2003, que começou no dia 27 de agosto e se estenderá até 19 de dezembro de 2003. Também certifico que X se matriculou na Faculdade de Direito da Pace University em 29 de agosto de 2001.”

3. Passaporte ou Certidão de Nascimento – cópia. **That is, a photocopy of your passport. Make sure the image of your face is clear.**

4. Conteúdo Programático ou Ementas de todas as disciplinas cursadas com aprovação. **Conteúdo programático and ementa are the two words used at UFRGS to refer to what we in the U.S. call “course description.” You must therefore bring a list with a description of every course you’ve taken up to this point in law school. Don’t worry about getting a Portuguese translation for this one.**

5. Grade Curricular ou Atestado informando ter cumprido um mínimo de 40% de seu curso na I.E.S. **This is an official letter from your home institution stating that you have completed at least forty percent of the coursework required for graduation, with authenticated translation into Portuguese.**

**You’ll also need two more items, obtainable only upon arrival in Porto Alegre:**

6. Taxa. **At the time of writing in August 2003, it cost R\$29.40 (around U.S.\$10) to get matriculated. You have to pick up a slip of paper from DECORDI (the Registrar’s Office) with the University’s bank account number on it, and go in person to the campus Banco do Brasil (near Lanches Antônio) to deposit the registration fee. You’ll need to include the bank receipt with these other documents.**

7. Proposta de estudos justificada pelo aluno, relacionando a(s) disciplina(s). **This is a letter from Professor Claudia listing the classes that you have decided to take and requesting that the appropriate agencies effect your matriculation, in words such as the following: “Requeiro a inscrição e matrícula oficial do aluno X nestas cadeiras, uma vez que necessita comprovar que está regularmente matriculado na UFRGS, na Faculdade de Direito e como aluno regular com carga horária oficial completa.”**

Departamento de Controle e Registro Acadêmico – DECORDI  
Av. Paulo Gama, 110 – Prédio 12106 Anexo I da Reitoria  
90046-900 – Porto Alegre - RS - Brasil

Once you have compiled these items, go in person to the Protocol Office (Entidade Protocolizadora) on the UFRGS main campus in the Reitoria Annex building, beside Lanches Antônio through a door between the UFRGS bookstore and DECORDI. There you need to *iniciar um processo* with them for matriculation, and pick up a card with your protocol number on it.

Then take that card next door to the Departamento de Controle e Registro Acadêmico (DECORDI, the Registrar’s Office) and hand them the seven items listed above. Then be patient; your

file has to bounce between DECORDI and God only knows how many other places (including the law school's approving entity, known as COMGRAD) before it at long last makes its way back to DECORDI, where it gets final approval. Once your file is finally approved, DECORDI prints out a signed and stamped **registration sheet** (*comprovante de matrícula*) listing your all-important **registration number** (*número de matrícula*) and all the courses in which you're enrolled. You have to keep checking back with DECORDI to find out if your file has been approved. The whole process from the time you turn in your materials until the time when you get your *número de matrícula* will probably take more than a month.

Note that until you receive your *número de matrícula* your name will not appear on the roster of any of your classes; you will have to write down your name every day when the professor passes around the attendance sheet, and explain to the professor that you're doing that because your registration is still being processed. Note also that you will not yet be able to get student bus fares, use the University Restaurant, or check out books from any campus library. The inability to enjoy any of these privileges until the process is complete makes being patient no easy task.

Luckily, you're not left to your own devices in this arduous process. Professor Claudia's assistant **Ades Sánchez y Vacas** will help you compile all the necessary materials, get the process started, and track your file as it makes its way through the various reviewing entities. Her office is on the first floor of the law school just to the left of Room 9; it says "COMEX" over the door. Her office telephone is 3316.4059

The benefits registration brings

As mentioned above, when you finally get registered you will have a registration number (*número de matrícula*) that is the key to getting the two student IDs you need in order to take advantage of the benefits of being a UFRGS student. Taking advantage of the following benefits requires one of these two IDs: (1) getting urban bus fare for half price on all days except Sundays; (2) checking out books from the library; and (3) getting super-cheap lunch at the UFRGS Restaurant.

Getting your two UFRGS student IDs

Once you are officially registered, DECORDI (the Registrar's Office) will give you a signed copy of your registration (*comprovante de matrícula*) along with a registration number (*número de matrícula*). When you (at long last) get this unique number you know your name is officially in the CPD (Centro de Processamento de Dados) database, and you can proceed to get your two IDs processed.

Diretório Central de Estudantes

Prédio da Casa de Estudantes

Av. João Pessoa 41

Tel. (51) 3316.4032

Schedule: Mon. – Fri., noon – 6pm

Requirements for EPTCID:

1. Registration sheet
2. Photo

## 3. R\$5

The first ID (*carteira* or *carteirinha estudantil*) is the UFRGS student ID and it's relatively easy to get. It's credit-card-sized and blue with a number and bar code; it's what you'll need to check out books, get cheap lunch, and identify yourself as an UFRGS student in general. The ID office is in **Anexo II da Reitoria**, the same building as the UFRGS Banco do Brasil. You enter through the door right across from Lanches Antônio and walk down the hall to the right; it's the second door on your right. Take with you the **registration sheet** that DECORDI gave you and show it to the attendant. He will pull up your record, take your picture, and produce your ID in about three minutes. This ID is **free**.

The second ID, called the *Carteira Escolar*, is produced by the City of Porto Alegre Office of Public Transport (Empresa Pública de Transportes e Circulação – EPTC) and is common to all students at all levels throughout the city. It allows you to buy half-price bus tokens. It is larger than a credit card and green. To get it, take the **registration sheet** that DECORDI gave you along with a **3cm X 5cm** photo to the **Diretório Central de Estudantes (DCE)** in the **Prédio da Casa de Estudantes**, the hideous red building just across Av. João Pessoa from the law school; you enter through the door just to the right of the **Restaurante Universitário (RU)** and go up the wooden stairs to the second floor. You'll have to pay **R\$5** for this one, and it takes about ten business days (*dias úteis*) to process.

Getting half-price bus fare tokens

Empresa Pública de Transportes e Circulação

Posto 01 – Centro

Av. Alberto Bins 860

**Schedule:** Mon. – Fri., 9am – 5pm

Requirements for bus tokens:

1. Filled-out form with Banrisul code
2. EPTC ID

The day you pick up the green ID from the DCE, they will give you a perforated two-part form produced by the EPTC that you'll need in order to deposit the in-advance month's worth of bus fares into the EPTC's account at Banrisul Bank. Note that this is the only time that DCE will furnish this form; all subsequent times it must be picked up at the EPTC office.

You have the option of buying 50 or 75 bus tokens per month. Fifty tokens at the time of writing in August 2003 cost R\$36, or R\$0.72 per bus ride (i.e., half the normal fare). Fill out the EPTC form with the appropriate data (i.e., your name, ID number, and how many tokens you want) and take it, along with the necessary amount of **cash** and your **EPTC ID**, to any Banrisul branch; there's a conveniently located branch a few doors down from the DCE (across the street from the law school). Give the teller the two-part form, the cash, and your EPTC ID and she will give you one part of the form back, with a code printed on it proving you made the deposit.

You must then take this portion of the form to the EPTC office in order to pick up your tokens (*fichas*); the downtown office is the most convenient. To get to the downtown office from the law school, walk up Rua Sarmiento Leite a few blocks until you reach Av. Independência; cross Independência and walk down the steps to the right of Av. Conceição, the street that passes through the tunnel under

Independência. The first corner you'll come to is Conceição and Av. Alberto Bins. Turn right onto Alberto Bins, and the EPTC office is located about halfway down the block on the other side of the street. Show them your **EPTC ID** and give them the form with the **Banrisul** code on it, and they will give you a bag of tokens. Make sure they also give you a fresh two-part form; you'll need it when you go through the whole process all over again one month later.

A few words of caution: you must try to gauge beforehand how many tokens you think you'll need for the coming month (i.e., 50 or 75), because you're only entitled to one package per month. If you have extra tokens at the end of the month you can of course keep using them into the following month, but if you run out before the month is over, you'll have to pay regular fare until you're entitled to buy more tokens (i.e., the first day of any given month). Note also that all Porto Alegre buses, but only buses, accept EPTC tokens; *lotações* do not accept them (one more incentive to avoid *lotações* whenever possible; see "Public Transportation Within Porto Alegre," under "Practical Matters for Living in Brazil and Porto Alegre," below), and urban buses in other cities in Rio Grande do Sul and Brazil don't accept them. Additionally, even Porto Alegre urban buses do not accept tokens on Sundays and holidays; you'll have to pay full price on those days (except for the last Sunday of each month, when public transportation is free for everyone).

When you board the bus, hand the *cobrador* (i.e., the money-collecting guy) one token and your EPTC ID; he'll write your ID number down and hand your ID back to you.

Registering with the law library to be able to check out books

Checking out books is simple once you have your UFRGS student ID (the blue one). Just take your desired book up to the counter and hand the librarian your ID. Beware that the first time you try this, there may still be some necessary piece of information about you still not registered with DECORDI (e.g., your e-mail address). If there is, you won't be able to check the book out at that time; you'll have to go back to DECORDI and fix whatever's wrong before you can check anything out. See the "Law Library and UN Library" section under "Practical Matters for Living in Brazil and Porto Alegre," below, for more library details.

Getting cheap lunch at the University Restaurant

The University Restaurant (RU), which is open at lunchtime from Monday to Friday, is right across Av. João Pessoa from the law school in the Prédio da Casa de Estudantes. Lunch is incredibly cheap: at the time of writing in July 2003, it was R\$1.30, with R\$0.30 for a drink. While the restaurant is certainly nothing to write home about and bears some resemblance to a prison cafeteria (e.g., the trays are stainless steel with dangerously sharp edges and the two guys crammed on either side of you give you very little elbow room), the food is OK (and certainly no worse in quality than the hot lunch they serve at Lanches Ferreira (the snack bar at the law school) for a whopping R\$5.90): lettuce, rice, beans, some kind of meat, and jello. And did I mention how cheap it is?

To take advantage of this deal, simply show your UFRGS student ID (the blue one) to the cashier upon entering the RU.

IV. Practical Matters for Living in Brazil and Porto Alegre

Air travel from the U.S. to Brazil

General matters

Due to the volatility of airline pricing systems and the plethora of different websites and travel agencies selling tickets, the secret to finding a reasonably priced roundtrip ticket from the U.S. to Brazil is anyone's guess. The problem of costliness is compounded when the city of origin or the city of destination, or both, are not international hubs; Porto Alegre and Austin are the two most relevant examples. And the problem is compounded even further when your stay in Brazil exceeds a certain amount of time, such as ninety days; round-trip tickets for stays of longer than three months always seem to be considerably more expensive.

A safe bet and a good place to start your search is **STA Travel**, which bought out Council Travel not long ago to become the purported largest student travel agency in the world. STA has offices all over the U.S. and in several Brazilian cities, including the following relevant locations:

STA Affiliates in Porto Alegre

· Student Travel Bureau

*Rua Quintino Bocaiuva 267*

*Porto Alegre, RS 90440-051*

*Brazil*

*Tel: 55 51 3346 2774*

*Fax: 55 51 346 5444*

· Student Travel Bureau

*Rua Anita Garibaldi, 1515*

*Bela Vista*

*Porto Alegre, RS 90480-201*

*Brazil*

*Tel: 55 51 3328 0787*

*Fax: 55 51 3328 0787*

*caren@stbbelavista.com.br*

STA Affiliate in Rio De Janeiro

· Student Travel Bureau

*Rua Visconde de Pirajá 550*

*Sobreloja 201*

*Ipanema, Rio de Janeiro, RS 22410-002*

*Brazil*

*Tel: 55 21 512 8577*

*Fax: 55 21 511 4537*

STA Affiliate in São Paulo

· Student Travel Bureau

*Ave. Brigadeiro Faria Lima 1713*

**16th Floor**

São Paulo, SP 01452-915

**Brazil**

Tel: 55 11 3816 1500

Fax: 55 11 3816 6444

STA's website, at [www.statravel.com](http://www.statravel.com), is of limited usefulness; it's much more productive to call their 24-hour U.S. service line at 1-800-777-0112.

Porto Alegre's three-letter airport code is **POA**. Nevertheless, finding a student fare all the way to Porto Alegre will likely be impossible; student fares will probably only be available to Rio de Janeiro (Galeão—GIG) and São Paulo (Guarulhos—GRH), and the rest of the trip will be a regular fare. A round-trip flight from Rio or São Paulo to Porto Alegre is about U.S.\$200.

Airlines that fly between the U.S. and Brazil

**· Continental Airlines**

In the U.S.

[www.continental.com](http://www.continental.com)

U.S. toll-free: 1-800-231-0856

In Brazil

Brazil toll-free: 0800 55-4777

**· Delta Airlines**

In the U.S.

[www.delta.com](http://www.delta.com)

U.S. toll-free: 1-800-241-4141

In Brazil

Brazil toll-free: 0800 22-1121

**· United Airlines**

In the U.S.

[www.ual.com](http://www.ual.com)

U.S. toll-free: 1-800-426-5561

In Brazil

[www.united.com.br](http://www.united.com.br)

Brazil toll-free: 0800 16-2323

São Paulo

Av. Paulista 777, 8º andar

Cerqueira César

CEP 01311-100

São Paulo, SP  
Tel. (11) 3145-4200  
Fax (11) 287-6444

Rio de Janeiro  
Av. Atlântica 2600 1º Subsolo  
Copacabana - Hotel Marriott  
Rio de Janeiro, RJ  
Tel. (21) 2545-6575  
Fax (21) 2545-6580

· **American Airlines**  
In the U.S.  
[www.americanairlines.com](http://www.americanairlines.com)  
U.S. toll-free: 1-800-433-7300

In Brazil  
Brazil nationwide (not toll-free): 0300-789-7778

Porto Alegre  
Av. Alberto Bins, 514  
Porto Alegre, RS  
Hours: Mon-Fri 8:30 a.m.-6:00 p.m.; Sat 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

· **Varig Airlines**  
In the U.S.  
[www.varig.com](http://www.varig.com)  
U.S. toll-free: 1-800-468-2744

New York  
125 Park Avenue, Corner of 42nd Street  
Airline Satellite Terminal – Mezzanine  
New York, NY 10017  
Hours: Mon-Fri 9 a.m.-5 p.m.  
Tel. (212) 557-4872

Miami  
200 South Biscayne Boulevard, Suite 650A  
Miami, FL 33131  
Hours: Mon-Fri 9 a.m.-5 p.m.  
Tel. (305) 377-8995



**Los Angeles**

700 South Flower Street, Suite 1460  
 Los Angeles, CA 90017  
 Hours: Mon-Fri 9 a.m.-5 p.m.  
 Tel. (213) 688-1900

**In Brazil**

[www.varigbrasil.com](http://www.varigbrasil.com)  
 Brazil nationwide (not toll-free): 0300-788-7000

**Porto Alegre**

Rua dos Andradas 1107  
 Hours: Mon-Fri 9 a.m.-6 p.m.; Sat 9 a.m.-12 p.m.  
 Tel. 3332-8799.

**• TAM Airlines****In the U.S.**

[www.tam.com.br](http://www.tam.com.br)  
 U.S. toll-free: 1-888-2-FLY-TAM

**Atlanta**

6065 Roswell Rd. Suite 532  
 Tel. (404) 236-0776  
 Fax (404) 236-0138

**Miami – Airport**

Terminal E (next to British Airways)

**Orlando**

1650 Sand Lake Road Suite 209A  
 Tel. (407) 816-3555  
 Fax (407) 816-3502

**Washington D.C.**

1730 Rhode Island Ave NW, Suite 414  
 Tel. (202) 223-1751  
 Fax (202) 223-1753

**In Brazil**

[www.tam.com.br](http://www.tam.com.br)  
 Brazil nationwide (not toll-free): 0300-123-1000  
 Brazil nationwide (toll-free): 0800-562-211

Porto Alegre – Aeroporto  
 Pça. Cmte. Carlos Rulh, s/n  
 Porto Alegre, RS 90201-970  
 Tel. (51) 3358-2050  
 Fax (51) 3371-4479

Porto Alegre – Plaza São Rafael  
 Av. Alberto Bins, 514, Centro  
 Porto Alegre, RS 90030-140  
 Tel. (51) 3286-5834  
 Fax (51) 3286-6410

#### Brazil Air Pass

Both Varig and TAM offer the Brazil Air Pass, which gives you four or five flights inside Brazil to be used in a twenty-one-day period. Varig's Air Pass in August 2003 was U.S.\$530 for five flights, with an extra U.S.\$100 for each additional flight. Additional flights do not extend the period beyond twenty-one days, and you cannot buy less than five flights on Varig. TAM offers the same twenty-one-day deal for five flights, with the same \$100 price for extra flights, but it also allows you to four flights for \$430. One thing to keep in mind is that twenty-one days is not a lot of time in which to squeeze in five destinations; for that reason, you might want to opt for the TAM four-flight deal.

There are several restrictions: (1) the pass has to be bought in conjunction with an already-purchased international ticket on any airline; (2) it has to be bought from the U.S. before you leave; (3) you have to decide your destinations and the dates of all flights at the time of buying (you'll incur a fine if you change either date or destination subsequently); (4) you can't pick the tickets up after you get to Brazil, so buy them soon enough before departing the U.S. for them to arrive in the mail; (5) you're not allowed to visit the same city twice; and (6) there are some restrictions on numbers of layovers and layover cities (e.g., if you fly from Rio to Belém, then to Porto Alegre, and then up to Manaus, with the requisite zillion layovers in the middle, they'll likely count it as more than three flights). Since the rules are complex and subject to change, your best bet is to ask the airline agent a whole lot of questions before you buy the air pass.

#### Baggage weight limit issues

You need to be prepared to deal with the different baggage weight limits for international flights and domestic Brazilian flights if your travel plans include either of the following two scenarios: (1) you had to buy two separate tickets to get all the way to Porto Alegre, one from the U.S. to Rio or São Paulo and the other from Rio or São Paulo to Porto Alegre; or (2) you're making a stopover in Rio or São Paulo before proceeding on to Porto Alegre or, if returning to the States, before proceeding home from Porto Alegre.

International flights generally allow **two checked bags** with a maximum weight of **32 kilograms each**, plus one carry-on. Domestic Brazilian flights allow **two checked bags**, but with a maximum weight of **20 kilograms total**, that is, an average of only 10 kilograms each. Twenty kilos is only forty-four pounds, which for most people is not enough for a full semester's worth of clothing. Additionally, you'll likely acquire heavy things in Brazil, such as books, that you'll want to take back with you.

So if either of the above two scenarios applies to you, you may have to pay an **excess baggage penalty** (*excesso de bagagem*) for anything over twenty kilos, regardless of what airline you fly. If scenario #1 applies (i.e., a simple layover), the solution is to buy the domestic portion of the ticket from the partner of the international airline on which you are flying and inform the domestic airline agent at check-in that you're flying internationally. In August 2003, **Varig** and **United Airlines** were international partners, and **TAM** and **American Airlines** were international partners. If, for example, you arrive in Rio from the U.S. on American, you'll probably have to take your bags to the TAM counter and go through a separate check-in process. Show the TAM agent your American boarding pass indicating that you just arrived on an international flight, and he will, in all likelihood, allow you to check up to 64 kilos at no additional fee. If you're really lucky, American will check your bags all the way through to Porto Alegre from your U.S. departure city.

If scenario #2 above applies to you (i.e., a stopover), you may not be able to convince the domestic airline to let you check the full 64 kilos at no additional charge. Your best bet, as in scenario #1, is to buy both the international ticket and the domestic ticket from partner airlines.

If the domestic portion of your trip is on a non-partner airline (e.g., the international portion on American but the domestic portion on VASP), you will have to pay a rather stiff excess baggage fee, proportional to the number of kilos you are over the limit. And even some partner airlines, such as TAM and Taca (which flies from São Paulo to Peru and Central America), don't have this baggage agreement. Your best bet is to inquire with both pertinent airlines beforehand.

#### Domestic and international airports in Rio and São Paulo

Something else you have to watch out for if you buy the two legs separately is that Rio and São Paulo each have two airports. Rio's international and domestic airport is called Galeão (GIG); its domestic airport, closer to downtown, is called Santos Dumont (SDU). São Paulo's international and domestic airport is called Guarulhos (GRH) and is quite far from the center of the city; its domestic airport is called Congonhas (CGH).

If your flight arrives into Galeão or Guarulhos and leaves out of Santos Dumont or Congonhas, respectively, you're going to have to take a **cab** or **inter-airport bus** from one airport to the other. Unless you're really pressed for time, the inter-airport bus option is far preferable to taking a cab, especially in São Paulo, because it is a lot cheaper; the bus costs somewhere around U.S.\$5, and is air-conditioned, comfortable, and safe. In São Paulo it will take about an hour to get from Guarulhos to Congonhas or vice-versa, and in Rio it will take about a half an hour to get from Galeão to Santos Dumont or vice-versa. Make sure when buying your plane tickets to give yourself plenty of time between flights to be able to make this intra-urban journey.

Note also that the Brazilian airline **GOL**, an analogue to Southwest or JetBlue in the U.S. which is usually the cheapest domestic option, does not fly to Guarulhos. If you fly GOL between São Paulo and Porto Alegre as part of an international trip, you will necessarily have to make the airport switch. Fortunately, there is no such issue in Rio: GOL flies to both Galeão and Santos Dumont.

#### Plane-bus combinations

Another option is to fly from the U.S. to Rio or São Paulo and take a bus from there; the bus companies will likely not care how much baggage you bring along. I do not recommend long-distance bus

trips within Brazil, however, simply because the monetary savings do not seem to justify the extra hours it takes to get there and the hassle of taking a cab or urban bus, with all your bags, from the airport to the long-distance bus station to make the connection. For example, the bus ride from Rio to Porto Alegre takes twenty-four hours and costs about US\$70. A one-way flight takes two hours (if there is no connection) and costs about US\$100. If you insist on taking a bus, São Paulo is about six hours closer to Porto Alegre than is Rio, thus making the ride a little bit shorter and cheaper.

#### Air travel within Brazil

##### General matters

It goes without saying that Brazil is a massive country, and air travel is thus often the only feasible way to get from one place to another. As mentioned in the previous section, the monetary savings on long-distance bus trips probably do not justify the many additional hours it takes to get there. A one-way bus trip between Porto Alegre and Rio is about U.S.\$70; a one-way flight is about U.S.\$100, and will save you twenty-two hours and a considerable quantity of sanity. In my opinion, unless you specifically want to look at the landscape and visit towns along the way, the only practicable places to go by bus from Porto Alegre are those in Santa Catarina (e.g., Florianópolis, at six hours away) and perhaps Uruguay (Montevideo is twelve hours by bus).

Brazilian airports are generally very nice and easy to navigate; as is the case with the one in Porto Alegre, airports often double as shopping malls, complete with movie theaters. Unlike in the U.S., in Brazil one-way tickets are usually right around half the price of round-trip tickets. Additionally, buying a domestic ticket several weeks in advance of travel is usually not that much cheaper than buying it a week before; prices tend to rise slightly, however, for tickets bought within a week of travel.

##### Choosing an airline

American Airlines Porto Alegre  
 Fernando Ferretti, Customer Service Agent  
 Hotel Plaza São Rafael  
 Av. Alberto Bins no. 514  
 Centro – Porto Alegre – RS  
 90030-140  
 Tel. 3211-2088  
 Fax. 3211-3204

American Airlines São Paulo  
 Tel. (11) 3214-4000 or  
 (11) 0300-7778

Brazil has four commercial airlines that offer nationwide service: **Varig**, **TAM**, **VASP**, and **GOL**. Varig and TAM are nicer and somewhat more expensive than VASP or GOL, and are roughly equivalent to each other in terms of ticket prices, safety, comfort, customer service, and available destinations. In fact, the two airlines merged in 2002 and are currently involved in a process of gradual assimilation into one another. Your flight experience on either Varig or TAM is likely to be pleasant. They also make good choices because they have U.S. partners (Varig is partners with United and TAM is partners with

American<sup>17</sup>), allowing you to apply domestic Brazilian air travel to your frequent flyer account with the corresponding U.S. partner. In addition, if your domestic flight is part of an international flight on the domestic airline's partner, you can generally check bags all the way through to your final destination, and international baggage restrictions – which are more generous than domestic restrictions – apply (see “Air Travel from the U.S. to Brazil”, above).

One additional plus that comes from flying TAM/American is that both airlines have agencies in Hotel Plaza São Rafael at Av. Alberto Bins 514, in downtown Porto Alegre close to the UFRGS main campus. **Fernando Ferretti**, the guy that runs the American office, speaks impeccable English and is extremely nice. He's an excellent source for information on air travel within Brazil and between Brazil and other countries, and can straighten out doubts about airline partners, baggage limits, layovers and stopovers, and frequent-flyer-mile transfers. To get to Hotel Plaza São Rafael from the law school, walk up Rua Sarmiento Leite to Av. Independência, cross Independência, turn left, and take a right at the first corner (Rua Coronel Vicente). At the next block (Av. Alberto Bins) take a left, and the hotel is on the right.

VASP seems to slipping toward bankruptcy and has a bad reputation for having old and poorly maintained airplanes. The one time I flew on VASP, the plane made strange noises that I had never before heard on an airplane. You should probably avoid VASP.

GOL ([www.voegol.com.br](http://www.voegol.com.br)) is Brazil's analogue to the U.S. airlines Southwest and JetBlue, and is a good option. It has an excellent safety record and is generally cheaper than Varig and TAM. It does, however, have several disadvantages when compared to Varig and TAM: (1) it has no U.S. partner and thus no option of transferring frequent flyer miles; (2) it does not fly to Guarulhos in São Paulo, but only to Congonhas; (3) while Varig and TAM serve full-fledged meals, GOL serves stale sandwiches and peanuts; (4) there's no first class; (5) due to the cheaper price, the flight is more likely to be jam-packed with people than a Varig or TAM flight would be; (6) for some inexplicable reason, there always seem to be more screaming babies on GOL than on the other airlines; (7) due to the cheaper price, customer service isn't as good as that of Varig or TAM, and GOL is less likely to make a policy adjustment in the interest of keeping the customer satisfied; (8) you can't buy GOL tickets online from the U.S.; and (9) GOL does not accept non-Brazilian credit cards on its website, in travel agencies, or at the airport. This last item means that you have to pay for your ticket in cash at a travel agent or at the airport.

### Payment options

If you buy a Varig or TAM ticket as part of an international flight, you can use your U.S. credit card on their respective websites ([www.varig.com](http://www.varig.com) and [www.tam.com](http://www.tam.com)). You won't be able to buy domestic tickets online, however, without a **Cadastro de Pessoa Física (CPF)** number, Brazil's analogue to the U.S. social-security number. See the section entitled “Getting a CPF” under “To Take Care Of Soon After Arrival in Porto Alegre,” above, for more details.

In the absence of a CPF, you'll have to go to the airport, any travel agent, or a TAM or Varig office in town and buy the ticket in person. You can still use the websites to check prices, and the prices quoted online will be the same prices they quote you at the travel agency (indeed, they usually buy the ticket through the same website that you would have bought it through if you had a CPF). On either TAM or Varig you can pay with your U.S. credit card; each travel agent has its own special code that it uses in lieu of a CPF.

<sup>17</sup> TAM is also partners with LanChile and Taca, which flies to Peru and Central America from São Paulo.

On GOL it's a little more complicated. As mentioned above, GOL in no circumstances will accept a non-Brazilian credit card: not on its website, not at a travel agency, and not even at the GOL counter at the airport. You have to take a big wad of cash with you to the travel agent or GOL counter to buy the ticket.

Bus travel within Brazil  
 Estação Rodoviária de Porto Alegre  
 Largo Vespasiano Júlio Veppo, s/nº  
 Centro  
 Tel. 3210-0101  
 www.rodoviaria-poa.com.br

The long-distance bus station (*estação rodoviária*) on Largo Vespasiano Júlio Veppo, open 24 hours, has one section for intermunicipal (i.e., between cities within Rio Grande do Sul) buses and another section for interstate and international buses. Buses are air-conditioned, comfortable, and sometimes have stewardesses and seats that turn into beds; the quality is about five million times better than that of Greyhound.

A bus to Montevideo costs around U.S.\$58 and takes 12 hours; to Buenos Aires U.S.\$64 and 20 hours; to Iguazu U.S.\$41 and 15 hours; to Rio de Janeiro U.S.\$63 and 24 hours. As I have repeatedly stated, however, distances are so great in Brazil that, unless the destination city is very close (i.e., in Rio Grande do Sul, Santa Catarina, and perhaps Uruguay), the small amount of money you save by busing it instead of flying rarely justifies the extra time and frustration.

The bus option is, however, ideal for intrastate trips and trips to the coast of Santa Catarina. A bus to Torres, Rio Grande's best beach, is U.S.\$10 and takes only three hours; a bus to Gramado, the quintessential touristy German town in the Serra Gaúcha, is U.S.\$8 and takes only two hours.

To get to the long-distance bus station from the law school, walk up Av. Sarmiento Leite, cross Av. Independência, walk down the steps, and continue walking for several blocks until just before the river. It's on the right side of the highway.

#### Public transportation within Porto Alegre

Porto Alegre reputedly has the cleanest and most efficient **urban bus system** in Brazil. There are somewhere around 300 bus routes that go from virtually anyplace in the city to any other place. Buses often have their own exclusive lanes (*comedores*), making bus traffic move faster than car traffic at certain hours of the day. The standard bus fare at the time of writing in August 2003 was R\$ 1.45, but you as a student can pay half-price if you buy the special tokens in advance. See "Getting Half-Price Bus Fare Tokens," under "Registering for Classes," above.

There is no single map of the 300 different routes, so figuring out what bus to take to get from where you are to a certain place can be a challenge. One solution is to dial the **bus information hotline** at 158, toll-free from any phone, and ask the attendant. Another solution is to go to [www.portoalegre.rs.gov.br](http://www.portoalegre.rs.gov.br); then click "Transportes e Circulação," then click "Serviços," then click "Itinerários/TAB-Horárias." The "T" series of buses is particularly good; it includes nine buses, T1-T9, that go pretty much everywhere. T7, for example, connects Shopping Iguatemi and Shopping Praia de Belas, passing by a lot of popular places

in between, including the UFRGS law school. At any tourist information bureau you can pick up the *Guia de Bolso*, which includes a map for each of the “T” bus routes.

Porto Alegre also has a series of red and white minibuses, called *lotações*, that supplement the urban bus system, generally running from downtown out to one of the *bairros*. They have names, such as “Chácara das Pedras” or “Auxiliadora,” and not numbers like normal buses; the name denominates the *bairro* that is the *lotação*’s final destination. They are supposedly more comfortable than buses, but their superior comfort is debatable. They can feel cramped inside, they’re hell in the summer if the AC is broken, and they can’t use the special bus lanes, so they often get stuck in car traffic. Due to the supposed extra comfort, *lotações* are considerably more expensive than regular buses; at the time of writing in August 2003, a ride cost R\$2.20. And you can’t use half-price student tokens on the *lotações*; you’ll always have to pay full price. Whenever possible, I opted for the bus over the *lotação*.

Porto Alegre has a small **metro** that is of limited usefulness. It may, however, be a viable option if you need to get from the airport to the bus station or vice-versa, and you don’t have a ton of luggage.

**Taxis** are the way to get around after midnight, if you’re in a hurry, or if you have a lot of stuff with you (such as groceries or luggage). They always have a meter. When the city raises standard taxi fares, it takes a couple of months to adjust all the meters in all the taxis; in the meantime the taxi drivers carry a table with them that tells them how much above what the meter reads that they should charge. Always demand to read the table yourself; taxi drivers are notoriously unscrupulous with foreigners and will always try to screw you over. And even when you pay the official price, taxis are not particularly cheap in Porto Alegre.

### Driving in Brazil

Your U.S. driver’s license is good in Brazil. You may, however, want to consider getting an International Driver’s License if you plan on doing a lot of driving in Brazil or making a long road trip, simply because local police officers won’t be familiar with the format of your state’s license. An alternative to an International Driver’s License in this particular scenario is to take extra cash along on your road trip, to use as a bribe for any highway patrol officer that pulls you over.

### Housing

Finding good and reasonably priced housing can be somewhat tricky. Most UFRGS students, like Brazilian college students in general, live with their parents or some other family member. Students that come from cities and towns in the interior of Rio Grande do Sul (i.e., somewhere other than the Porto Alegre metro area) generally have one of three housing situations: they live with a family member, their family owns an apartment in Porto Alegre in which the children live while in college, or they rent an apartment, generally with roommates. There exist possibilities of paying a family to let you live in their house or renting a room in an apartment or house where other UFRGS students already live (both of which are good if you want additional exposure to Portuguese), but these options generally have to be explored after arriving in Porto Alegre.

The third option is to rent your own apartment. Because, as stated, most students live with their families, the short-term apartment market in Porto Alegre is not very robust. The usual way to go about finding an apartment is by enlisting the assistance of an *imobiliária* (real estate agency), and two that are near the UFRGS main campus and deal with that area are **Certa Imóveis** ((51)3311-7800) and

**Guarida Imóveis** ((51)3330-2929). But beware: most real estate agents, including these two, won't bother with you if you plan on renting the place for less than a twelve-month period, and furnished apartments are exceedingly hard to find.

The best solution that I could come up with is the **Manhattan Studium Flat** apartment building (3311-1100), at Av. Osvaldo Aranha 390, an extremely convenient five-minute walk from the law school just off the northeast corner of the main UFRGS campus in the Bom Fim *bairro* (neighborhood). The apartments are almost all studio/efficiencies, although there are some with a wall between the bedroom and the rest of the apartment. They come in two sizes, large and small; in my opinion, the added space of the large apartment justifies the higher price. Every apartment is furnished with a bed with sheets, blankets and pillows; a closet; a bar or a table with chairs; a bathroom; a complete or semi-complete kitchen with at least a stove, refrigerator, dishes and cookware; air-conditioning; 70-channel cable TV; and a telephone. In addition, a maid comes every day to wash the dishes and clean the place.

You should ask to look at every available apartment before deciding which one you want, because the furnishings and their configuration vary greatly from apartment to apartment. Some apartments have any combination of the following added amenities: a balcony, a couch, a bar *and* a table, a full-sized oven/stove combination, a cordless phone, a microwave, and a TV that can be watched from bed or from the living room. The large apartments tend to have more of these things. I had a large apartment, Apartment 807, which had everything but a balcony (but it had a lot of windows to compensate), and it was quite comfortable. Furthermore, the building has a good in-house laundromat with reasonable prices. One downside is that you can only make local landline calls from your apartment; you have to go to the payphone out on the street in front of the buildings to call cell phones or long distance, even toll-free "0800" numbers.

The Manhattan consistently had apartments available for the seven months I was in contact with the management; I think the demand for that kind of housing is low among Brazilians and the price is admittedly somewhat lofty. The small apartments are officially R\$800/month, and the large apartments are officially R\$900/month, but you can almost surely get at least a R\$50 discount on either. Added to that are electricity and telephone, which should be around US\$20/month and US\$10/month respectively, depending of course on how much you use the phone and the air conditioning. Covered parking, should you need it, is an additional R\$5 per night. For me, the convenience of the Manhattan's location in the middle of the city close to UFRGS combined with the difficulty of finding other housing justified the price. The apartment manager's name is **Paula**; you can reach her at ((51)3311-1100 ext. 254).

One word of **warning**: Paula is either very lackadaisical about calculating the bills, or she's malicious and wants to screw you over; I tend to think the latter is true. Scrutinize every bill meticulously. Be careful, for example, that your electricity bill does not include someone else's electricity.

### Money and banking

#### Cash

The Brazilian currency is the *real* (plural *reais*). The exchange rate at the time of writing in August 2003 was right around R\$3 per dollar. Denominations of R\$1 come either in a green bill, a big silver coin with a gold border, or a nondescript silver coin that is easily mistaken for a R\$0.25 or R\$0.50 coin. Fractions of a *real* are called *centavos*. R\$50 is the largest bill commonly seen, and even though it's only worth about US\$17, many stores and services won't take it for lack of sufficient change in the drawer.



The most convenient way to obtain cash is by withdrawing it from your U.S. bank account via an ATM machine. Your ATM card must have a **Visa/Plus** or **MasterCard/Cirrus** logo on it. If you don't have a bank account with a Visa/Plus ATM card, it's probably a good idea to open one before coming to Brazil. It is absolutely essential that you **know the PIN** on your ATM card. You may also be asked for your **authorization code** or **security code** when purchasing certain goods or services (such as plane tickets) in Brazil; this code is the three-digit number at the end of a sequence of numbers printed in the signature field on the back of your card. It's much better to withdraw money using an ATM/debit card than it is to withdraw using a credit card. While your bank will charge you a dollar or two for each debit card/ATM transaction not made at one of its own branches, your credit card company will likely charge you a higher fee for what's called a "cash advance"; it's something like U.S.\$5, plus interest.

Not all banks' ATM machines in Porto Alegre accept international ATM cards; in fact, few banks accept them, but the ones that do are sufficiently ubiquitous so that getting cash with an ATM card still remains the most viable option. The best bank for ATM transactions is **Bradesco**; it accepts both Visa/Plus and MasterCard/Cirrus in all of its ATMs, and always gives the going exchange rate. Your second choice should be **Banco do Brasil**; Banco do Brasil also gives a fair rate, but its ATMs that accept international cards are few and far between. Another bank that accepts international ATM cards is **Banco 24 Horas**. Additionally, at some locations of **Banco Santander** and **Banco Bilbao Viscaya** there are international ATMs through a link to the Banco 24 Horas network. **Citibank** also accepts them, but I don't recommend it because there aren't many Citibank branches around.

The following are the addresses and telephones of the only four Citibank locations in Porto Alegre:

- Rua 24 Outubro 355, tel. 3395-1406
- Av. Nilo Peçanha 2785, tel. 3328-2481
- Rua 7 de Setembro 722, tel. 3220-8500
- Praça M. Cardoso 176, tel. 3222-4488

A list of the ten Banco do Brasil locations that accept international cards follows:

- Azenha: Rua Br. Triunfo 666, tel. 3217-1922
- Bairro Anchieta: Av. Estados 1515, tel. 3373-1887
- Cristóvão Colombo
- Farrapos: Av. Farrapos 2505, tel. 3337-4099
- Moinhos de Vento
- Passo da Areia: Av. Assis Brasil 2487, tel. 3341-2466
- Praça da Alfândega
- PUC
- Shopping Praia de Belas
- UFRGS

The UFRGS Banco do Brasil is near the Reitoria and Lanches Antônio on the main campus (at the intersection of Avenidas Paulo Gama and Osvaldo Aranha), a convenient three-minute walk from the law school; but beware: it's not open on weekends. Also beware that the Banco do Brasil at the UFRGS Campus do Vale doesn't accept international ATM cards. Downtown is full of banks, and along

two blocks of Av. Osvaldo Aranha, near the intersection with Av. José Bonifácio (on the edge of Parque Redenção), you can also find most of these banks.

Another word of caution: ATMs are usually located in a special room adjacent to the bank that, while its hours of operation are much longer than those of the bank itself, usually closes around 9 or 10pm and may not be open on weekends.

While **traveler's checks** are an OK option and are generally accepted at any bank or exchange bureau (*casa de câmbio*), I advise against them for three reasons: the exchange rate is usually bad because it includes the institution's commission, you have to cash them during the institution's business hours, and you have to carry your passport with you when you go to cash them.

### Credit card

I recommend bringing a Visa credit card as a supplement to a Visa/Plus ATM card; Visa seems to be the most widely accepted (it truly is "everywhere you want to be"). MasterCard is less widely accepted, followed by American Express. Anything else, such as Discover, is not likely to be accepted.

Most chain stores and large national services, such as department stores (e.g., Lojas Americanas), stores in the mall (record stores, clothing stores, etc.), supermarkets, and airlines, accept Visa and perhaps MasterCard or American Express. But beware that some stores and services don't accept any foreign credit cards at all, and it's hard to predict which ones don't. Here are three important ones that won't take foreign credit cards: (1) any Brazilian airline (GOL, TAM, Varig, VASP, etc.) where the ticket is bought over the internet for emission within Brazil; (2) the airline GOL in any circumstance; and (3) the supermarket Zaffari. Beware also that if you buy clothing at a department store (such as C&A) with a credit card, and later decide you don't want the clothing and try to return it for a refund, the store, while permitting you to exchange the item for something else, will likely refuse to refund your money.

### Opening your own bank account in Brazil

Banco do Brasil in New York

### PUT CONTACT INFO HERE

If you decide to open your own account with a Brazilian bank, the best choice is probably **Banco do Brasil** because it has branches all over the country and seemingly on every corner in Porto Alegre. Having a Brazilian bank account would solve several problems: (1) you could get a debit card useable at the supermarket Zaffari and with the airline GOL; (2) you would save transaction fees for ATM withdrawals; and (3) you could use any Banco do Brasil ATM machine, and not just the few-and-far-between machines that accept international ATM cards. Banco do Brasil has a **branch in New York**, so you could probably open your account there before leaving the U.S.; that way, if you need more money, your parents or someone else in the U.S. could deposit dollars into your account from the New York branch.

One important word of warning: in order to open a bank account in Brazil, you'll first need a **Cadastro de Pessoa Física (CPF)** number, Brazil's analogue to the social-security number. Getting this number involves a process with the Receita Federal (Brazil's IRS equivalent), separate from any process you also have to go through with the UFRGS, the Consulate, or the Polícia Federal; **this is a good**

**number to have anyway**, even if you don't care about opening a bank account. See the section entitled "Getting a CPF" under "To Take Care Of Soon After Arrival in Porto Alegre," above, for more details.

#### Making deposits directly into someone else's bank account

Some services, especially those located in another city, don't take cash or credit card, but instead require you to deposit the payment into their account at a specified bank. For example, in order to purchase half-price bus tokens, you have to deposit the payment into the city transportation entity's account at Banrisul; they won't take money over the counter. The same applies for any fee payment to the Registrar's Office (DECORDI); its bank of choice is Banco do Brasil. The service will give you its account number, which is usually typed on a slip of paper that the bank subsequently uses as a receipt to print the date and amount of the deposit. You simply present this slip of paper to the bank teller with the specified amount of cash, and then take the receipt back to the service to prove to them that you made the deposit.

#### Telephone

Brazil's country code is 55. Porto Alegre's city code is 51. Phone numbers in Porto Alegre are composed of eight digits, always beginning with "3" if a landline and "9" if a cell number. Old advertisements may present phone numbers with only seven digits; if this is the case, add a "3" at the beginning. Note that some other Brazilian cities, such as Brasília, are still on the seven-digit system.

Here are some other important city codes:

- Porto Alegre: 51
- São Paulo: 11
- Rio de Janeiro: 21
- Florianópolis: 48
- Brasília: 61
- Salvador: 71
- Recife: 81

Payphones (*telefones públicos* or, more commonly, *orelhões*) in Brazil are omnipresent, but only about half of them are actually operational, the other half having been broken by vandals. You must buy a card (*cartão*), available at most stores, pharmacies, and newsstands, before you can use a payphone to call anything but a toll-free number (which always start with 0800); cards come in 20-unit, 40-unit, and 60-unit varieties. A 40-unit card in August 2003 cost around R\$5.

If you're dialing locally, to a cell or to a landline, just dial the eight digits. If you're dialing long-distance inside Brazil, you must dial the following sequence: 01 + [two-digit long-distance-provider code] + [two-digit city code] + [number, usually eight digits]. There are a plethora of **long-distance providers** in Brazil, and some offer better rates than others. The two best long distance carriers in terms of convenience are Embratel (21) and Intelig (23), because they can be used to dial any number anywhere in Brazil; the other carriers are regional. The country code of the United States is "1". If you're dialing the United States from a Brazilian payphone the sequence is the following: 011 + [two-digit long-distance-provider code] + 1 + [U.S. area code] + [U.S. seven-digit number].

You might get a three-minute call to the U.S. out of a 40-unit card. Calling cell phones within Brazil from a payphone is almost just as expensive as calling the U.S., giving you four or five minutes of talk

time. Long-distance calls to conventional phones within Brazil are not quite as expensive, and Brazilian local landline calls are actually quite reasonable.

Another option is to buy a cell phone and sign up for service. The problem with getting a cell phone, however, is that contracts usually have to be for a **minimum of one year**. If you can find some way to get around the one-year minimum, you might try **Telefônica Celular**, tel. (toll-free) 0800-51-1404, or **Claro Digital**, tel. (toll-free) 0800-51-1234.

#### Internet

The UN Library at the UFRGS law school has three terminals you can use for free, but the internet is kind of slow. An alternative if you bring a computer to Brazil with you (which I recommend) is to sign up for internet service at home. The leading dialup service is Terra ([www.terra.com.br](http://www.terra.com.br), tel. 3287-1000), and it costs about \$5 per month, chargeable to Visa or MasterCard. Note, however, that there is no fixed monthly rate for local calls placed from home; you're paying – albeit a very small amount, roughly R\$0.03 – for each minute you're connected.

#### Mail

**Mail in Brazil is somewhat slower than in the U.S., but not impossibly slow.** To ship things faster, use the SEDEX service, analogous to U.S. priority mail, available at any post office. There are two speeds for shipping things to the U.S., economic and priority. Shipping the economic way costs about R\$50 for five kilos, with R\$7 for each additional kilo, and takes about a month to reach a destination in the U.S.

There are post offices all over the place. The address of the central post office follows:

Agência Central de Correios  
 Rua Siqueira Campos, 1100 – Centro  
 Tel. 3220-8800  
 Open 9am-6pm Mon.-Fri., until noon on Saturdays  
[www.correios.com.br](http://www.correios.com.br)

#### Laundry

The Manhattan apartment building has its own **in-house laundry service** (tel. 3311-1100, ext. 207) on the “SF” (*salão de festas*) floor. The prices are very reasonable at somewhere around R\$3 per kilo, R\$2 to wash and iron a dress shirt.

A good **public laundromat** which also offers **dry cleaning** near the law school is Lavanderia Bola Azul (Av. Independência 350, Porto Alegre, 90035-070, tel. 3224-0330). To give you an idea of the prices, it costs R\$8.30 to dry clean a pair of pants. Bola Azul is located on Av. Independência between Barros Casal and Sarmiento Leite, roughly parallel to the location of the Manhattan (which is three blocks downhill on Av. Osvaldo Aranha).

#### Houses of worship

Catholic and Protestant churches are ubiquitous in Porto Alegre. The following are the addresses and telephones of the temples of a few of the less traditional religions:

- Associação Zen Budista de Porto Alegre

**Rua Ivo Corcel, 169**

Tel. 9986-7980

- Centro Hebraico Rio Grandense

Rua Fernando Machado, 1008 – Centro

Tel. 3225-1559

- Centro Israelita de Porto Alegre

Rua Henrique Dias, 73 – Bom Fim

Tel. 3311-1935

- Centro Cultural Islâmico (Mosque)

Rua Cel. Vicente, 382, sala 102

Tel. 3226-8458

- Sinagoga Cinat Hatzedek

Rua Bento Figueiredo, 55 – Rio Branco

## Recreation and leisure

### Restaurants

The following some particularly good restaurants in Porto Alegre:

- *Acabá!*, Av. Independência 827, between Rua Santo Antônio and Rua João Telles.

Light and tasty soup and salad buffet, open all night long. Tel. 3311-9485.

- *Arte Pizza*, Av. Casemiro de Abreu, 242, near intersection with Rua Miguel Tostes.

Voted the best Pizza in Porto Alegre by *Veja Magazine* a couple of years ago, with good reason. I recommend the pizza “*mafiosa*”. Tel. 3330-8583.

- *Atelier das Massas*, Rua Riachuelo, 1482. Italian restaurant with good pasta dishes. Tel.

3225-1125.

- *Bar Ocidente*, Av. Osvaldo Aranha, 960, intersection with Rua Gen. João Telles in the

Bom Fim *bairro*. At lunchtime Bar Ocidente is a vegetarian restaurant; on Sundays it serves Indian vegetarian food. Tel. 3312-1347.

- *Bauru do Tria Non*, Av. Protásio Alves, 966, on the turnoff that leads to Av. Nilópolis.

Traditional fast-food joint, more than thirty years old. Serves only one kind of food: scrumptious bauru sandwiches. Tel. 3333-4447. They deliver.

- *Café do Porto*, Rua Padre Chagas, 293, near Moinhos Shopping. Cool atmosphere and

really good submarine sandwiches, even if slightly expensive. A good place for coffee with friends. Give the cheesecake a try. Tel. 3346-8385.

- *Cavanhas*, Av. Lima e Silva, 274, in the Cidade Baixa. The *Xis-burger* (a Brazilian

delicacy: a cheeseburger with your choice of toppings, such as peas, corn, or chicken hearts) and chocolate pizza are excellent. Tel. 3226-0743.

- *Churrascaria Barranco*, Av. Protásio Alves, 1578, near intersection with Lucas de Oliveira.

Good and classic barbecued meat place. Tel. 3331-6172.

- *Lanches Ferreira*, in the law school building, accessible from the parking lot. Much like

Lanches Antônio, but with less selection, poorer quality, and less cordial service. But at least it's really convenient.

- *Lanches Antônio*, UFRGS main campus near the Reitoria. Vast variety of *salgados*, sandwiches, juices, hot lunches, and desserts. Good quality and cheap.
- *Manhattan*, Edel Trade Center second floor, Rua Sarmiento Leite just across João Pessoa from the law school. Good quality per-kilo buffet. Tel. 3227-4680.
- *Pagoda*, Av. Protásio Alves, 434, near the intersection with Av. Mariante. Inexpensive Chinese food, a la carte or buffet. Tel. 3333-2333.
- *Prato Verde*, Rua Santa Teresina 42, between José Bonifácio and Bonâncio Aires, Bom Fim *bairro*. Vegetarian food, as the name implies. Tel. 3333-6182.
- *Século*, Av. Osvaldo Aranha, right beside Manhattan apartment building. Tasty and cheap vegetarian Taiwanese food.
- *Sushi Express*, Av. Mostardeiro, 121, intersection with Rua Miguel Tostes. You'll end up paying U.S.\$10 before it's over with, but the fresh salmon sushi and other Japanese delicacies are well worth it. Tel. 3395-2525.
- *Tiro*, Rua José de Alencar, 520. Good selection of international cuisine. Tel. 3231-5133.
- *Z Café Bistrô*, Rua Padre Chagas, 314, between Rua Dinarte Ribeiro and Rua Luciana de Abreu. Try the *Beirute* sandwich and the *clericot*: white wine with chunks of fruit. Tel. 3346-6088.

#### Bars

The following are some particularly good bars in Porto Alegre:

- *Bar do Beto*, Av. Venâncio Aires, 876, in the *Cidade Baixa bairro* near Hospital de Pronto Socorro. A bar and restaurant close to UFRGS, frequented by UFRGS students. Tel. 3332-0063.
- *Cherry Blues Pub*, Rua Marquês do Herval, 52. First Irish pub in Porto Alegre. Lots of beer options. [www.cherryblues.com.br/site](http://www.cherryblues.com.br/site). Tel. 3023-5252.
- *Dado Pub*, Rua Fernando Gomes, 80, in the *Moinhos de Vento bairro*. Good selection of drinks, including “Dado Bier,” a local brew that some say is tasty. Tel. 3395-1468.
- *Lourival*, Rua 24 de Outubro, 1624, in the *Auxiliadora bairro*. Really good draught beer (*chopp*). Tel. 3337-3405.

#### Night clubs

The following are some particularly good night clubs in Porto Alegre:

- *Cabaret Vóltaire*, Av. Independência, 590. Alternative, sometimes GLS. Tel. 3325-1828.
- *Dado Bier*, Av. Túlio de Rose, 100, in Shopping Bourbon Country. Brews its own beer. Kind of expensive. Tel. 3378-3000.
- *Encovaçado Butikâm*, Av. Independência, 936. Tel. 3311-5090.
- *Liquid*, Rua João Têlles, 54, intersection with Av. Independência. Cool dance floor and good atmosphere. Tel. 3312-4432.
- *Pipe Pub*, Rua Tobias da Silva, 241, in the *Moinhos de Vento bairro*. Expensive, chic, crowded, pretty cool. Go dressed up and go early, unless you're on the guest list or you enjoy waiting in line. Tel. 3346-2033.

- *Ocidente*, Av. Osvaldo Aranha, 960, intersection with Rua João Telles. By day, vegetarian restaurant; by night, cool night club for gays, lesbians, and sympathizers. Tel. 3312-1347.
- *Opinião*, Rua José do Patrocínio, 834, in the Cidade Baixa bairro. A classic. Bob Dylan played here once. Tel. 3211-2838.
- *Touch*, Rua Túlio de Rose, 200. Tel. 3024-3929.

#### Fitness centers

If you're in the need for some physical exercise, a good fitness center is Hiper Academia at Av. Protásio Alves 1327, tels. 3388-6644 and 3388-6633, between Avenidas Vicente da Fontoura and Lucas de Oliveira. It has a large weight room and a separate room with bicycles and treadmills; all equipment is well maintained. The gym also offers a considerable array of classes, including power biking, body pump, boxing, step, and samba and *pagode*. Its schedule is relatively accessible compared to most other gyms in Porto Alegre: Mon.-Fri. 6am-12 midnight, Sat. 9am-9pm, closed Sundays. Membership comes in three-month packages for around U.S.\$60 total. Shorter contracts are also available for a proportionally higher price. To get there from the UFRGS main campus, wait at the Instituto de Educação bus stop on Av. Osvaldo Aranha across the street from the Manhattan apartment building, and catch any bus heading away from downtown that crosses Av. Vicente da Fontoura

#### Dance classes

One prominent dance studio you might check out if you want to brush up on your samba, *pagode*, or *forró* is Studio Paulo Pinheiro (Av. Barão de Amazonas 1050; tels. 3336-7182, 3315-0203; [www.planeta.terra.com.br/arte/studiopaulopinheiro/studiodedanca.htm](http://www.planeta.terra.com.br/arte/studiopaulopinheiro/studiodedanca.htm)). There is also a flamenco studio two doors down from the Manhattan apartment building on Av. Osvaldo Aranha.

#### Electricity issues

Standard voltage in Brazil is 220V. In the U.S. it's only 110V, so if you plug a hair dryer or iron brought from the U.S. directly into the outlet (*tomada*), you might burn it out. Laptop computers, battery chargers, and other electronic devices with their own voltage transformer (in computers it's in the cord) usually reduce anything ranging from 110V to 220V down to the appropriate voltage (e.g., 16V for computers) automatically. For hair dryers and irons, however, you might want to consider buying a voltage reducer before leaving the U.S., available at electronic stores such as Circuit City and Best Buy.

Note also that Brazil uses two different types of prongs: European-style round parallel prongs, and U.S.-style flat parallel prongs, almost never with the third round ground prong. If the voltage-reduction kit that you buy before leaving the U.S. doesn't include a prong converter, you can buy one once you get to Brazil for around U.S.\$1.

#### Medical Matters

Hospital Municipal de Pronto Socorro (HPS)  
Av. Osvaldo Aranha s/nº

Bom Fim

Tels. 192, 3330-9998, 3316-9888

There's a complex of hospitals adjacent to the main campus of the UFRGS, the campus where the law school is located. The main hospital for **emergencies** and other medical matters, however, is on the other side of Parque Redenção, also near the law school: Hospital Municipal de Pronto Socorro (HPS).

If you plan on doing any traveling through South America beyond southern Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, and Chile, I strongly suggest that you get **vaccinated for yellow fever** and place the World Health Organization yellow-fever certificate (which happens to be yellow itself) with your passport. It's not so much that there's a big risk of catching yellow fever, but that Brazilian immigration requires that you be vaccinated if, prior to entry, you visited any of several northern Brazilian states or northern South American countries.

### Bookstores

Porto Alegre has a vast array of bookstores. Unlike with U.S. college towns, where there is at least one large bookstore which sells all assigned books for all classes in all disciplines, no such bookstore exists in Porto Alegre. Thus, you'll have to find the books you need at regular bookstores throughout town. The best new books bookstores are located in the better shopping malls, such as Bourbon Country and Praia de Belas. Bookstores that specialize in used books are called *becos*, and you can find lots of them by just strolling through the streets downtown. The following is a list of a few bookstores you'll definitely want to check out:

- **Bookstand in Lanches Ferreira.** There's a bookstand in the back of the law school snack bar that sells a small selection of legal books, some of which you may need for class, such as books by Professor Cezar Saldanha and René David's comparative law book.

- **Livraria Cultura,** Bourbon Country Shopping, Av. Túlio de Rose 80, Porto Alegre, 913140-110, [livros@livrariacultura.com.br](mailto:livros@livrariacultura.com.br); [www.livrariacultura.com.br](http://www.livrariacultura.com.br). This is a massive bookstore in the Bourbon Country mall, near Iguatemi off Av. Nilo Peçanha, with tons of books (none of them used) and a great selection of CDs. The dictionary/grammar book section is particularly good. Unfortunately, however, the legal books section leaves something to be desired. Tel. 3028-4033.

- **Livraria Érico Veríssimo,** Rua Jerônimo Coelho 377, Porto Alegre, 90110-241. Sells new, used, and rare books. Downtown, close to the law school, right across the street from Hotel Embaixador. Tels. 3225-4624 and 3212-8022.

- **Livraria Saraiva,** Praia de Belas Shopping, Av. Praia de Belas 1181, loja 5. Saraiva could be considered the main rival to Livraria Cultura. It's located in Praia de Belas, on the other end of the T7 bus route from Iguatemi, close to the Rio Guaíba and not far from downtown. This is a huge bookstore with an excellent music and dictionaries section, and the legal collection here is much more extensive than that of Livraria Cultura. Additionally, in either Saraiva or Cultura, if they don't have it, they can order it for you. Tel. 3231-6868.

- **Sapier's.** New and used books. Rua Coronel Vicente 527, tel. 3211-4966.

- **UFRGS Livraria.** The UFRGS bookstore is in Anexo I of the Reitoria, right beside Lanches Antônio. Although it has a small selection of books and probably none of the books you'll need



for class, it's a nice place to check out and the place to go to buy UFRGS memorabilia (hats, coffee mugs, backpacks, etc.).

#### V. The Academic Environment at the UFRGS Law School

##### Classes and exams

##### Preparing for classes

As mentioned in an above section, study habits at the UFRGS Law School (and, for that matter, at Brazilian law schools in general), parallel undergraduate study habits in the U.S. much more closely than they parallel U.S. law-school study habits. Law school in Brazil is, after all, an undergraduate degree program.

Thus, law students in Brazil go to class to learn, and not (in most cases) to clarify what they've already learned in the readings or to think about new and anomalous applications of what was in the reading. There will often be some sort of reading accompanying each day's lecture, in the form of an article the professor wrote in a law review, or a chapter from a general book on, say, Conflict of Laws; these readings, however, are usually not totally on-point and are thus only partially enlightening. There is never a casebook or an accompanying textbook *per se*; the closest thing to a text I had was a series of small books written by Professor Cezar Saldanha that pretty closely corresponded with what he taught in class.

Furthermore, you usually don't know what to read until the day that subject is discussed, so any reading that you do takes place *after* the class discussion. One obvious implication is that you're not likely to know enough about the subject on the day it's discussed in class to ask informed questions or make informed comments. Indeed, classes in Brazilian law school, again like U.S. undergraduate, are lecture-intensive and almost completely non-Socratic; students have the habit of making very few comments and asking very few questions. Nevertheless, most professors do not frown upon student questions and comments. I, with my U.S. law-school Socratic conditioning, couldn't help but ask at least one "hut what if such and such were to happen?" question per day.

The sad truth is that most students probably don't read anything at all until two days before the test. As you must have done on innumerable occasions in undergrad, use your judgment when determining whether you really need to do a certain reading to understand the subject matter or do well on the test. Sometimes the readings are superfluous, and test questions almost never expect you to draw completely on a particular reading.

Therefore, preparing for classes is, as a general rule, quite easy: just show up, with pen, notebook, and a copy of the Constitution. Take the Constitution with you everywhere; it will invariably be cited by the professor every day in every class, regardless of the class's subject matter. Moreover, you probably don't have to rush to make it to class on time; they almost always start fifteen to thirty minutes late. And almost nobody uses a laptop to take notes. If you feel you need your laptop, buy a long extension cord, because outlets are few and far between and the nearest one may be on the other side of the room.

##### Preparing for exams

Exams (*provas*) are the most common form of evaluating students. Theoretically, two-hour classes will have one test at the end of the semester, and four-hour classes will have two. In addition to this regular test (or these two regular tests, in the case of a four-hour class), all professors give students who did poorly the first time around the chance to do a *prova de recuperação* to improve their grade. The regular test is usually administered two or three weeks before the beginning of the semester, and classes resume and continue for the next couple of weeks until the semester ends; consequently, the *prova de recuperação* usually covers more material, an incentive to do well on the first test and get it over with.

Exams come in two formats: essay (*prova dissertativa*) and multiple-choice (*prova de questões objetivas*); essay exams are the most common, but in a four-hour class the professor (e.g., Professor Cezar Saldanha) might give one exam of each format. Essay questions vary greatly from professor to professor and subject to subject, but a strong understanding of what was discussed in class and an ability to re-articulate it in the exam is probably the key to success in most essay exams. Few will expect you to apply what was discussed in class to new and anomalous situations, as is the norm with U.S. law exams. Additionally, whether there will be a time constraint also depends on the professor (i.e., how much time he or she gives to finish the exam and how many questions he or she includes). In general, I felt little or no time pressure in my exams. Exams could last anywhere from an hour to three-and-a-half hours (as with Professor Cezar Saldanha).

There is no curve. Your grade is, however, posted publicly for the whole world to see. A C is needed to pass, which is a 7 on a scale of 1 to 10. A C in Brazilian law school is considered a very low grade. A B is an 8 and an A is 9 or above.

#### Preparing a *monografia*

A *monografia* is a research paper, with a minimum of perhaps fifteen pages, on a topic related to the subject of the class. You thoroughly explain an area of the law based on the writings of jurists, with some of your own observations occasionally thrown in. It is not a thesis. The professor neither expects nor wants you to advance a totally new argument.

Few professors actually assign a *monografia* as the sole form of evaluating students in a normal class; *monografias* are typically required for more monumental endeavors (e.g., you have to write one if you want to graduate with honors). Nonetheless, in the class *Relações Internacionais* everyone had to write a *monografia*, upon which their grade was based almost entirely. Topics were given by the professor (who in this case was Professor Claudia) to complement the themes discussed in class, and included such subjects as the International Court of Justice, the Protection of Cultural Heritage in International Law, the WTO and Processes of Economic Integration, the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, the International Regime of Trademarks and Patents, and the International Criminal Court.

#### Other ways of evaluating students

There are, of course, other ways of evaluating students in addition to or in lieu of tests and research papers. Perhaps the most common of these is the in-class presentation, accompanied by a short (e.g., five-page) paper to be turned in to the professor. In such cases, the professor will often let you choose among several available ways to be evaluated.

### Extracurricular activities

#### Internship possibilities

You have the opportunity to do a variety of internships while studying at the UFRGS law school. Professor Claudia and the other professors have connections with law firms and governmental agencies throughout Brazil, giving you the chance to go virtually anywhere and do virtually anything. It's just a matter of asking around to find out what's out there.

One already-established internship for UFRGS law students that you can surely do is with the Centro de Apoio Operacional do Meio Ambiente at the Rio Grande do Sul Ministério Público downtown (about a ten-minute walk from the law school). The extremely competent director of the Support Center is Dr. Sílvia Capelli. You basically research environmental laws and doctrine and make suggestions to environmental prosecutors throughout the state that have specific issues they need help resolving. Talk to Professor Claudia if you are interested in this internship.

If you arrive in Brazil at least a few weeks before classes start, or stay after classes are over, and want to do an internship in Brasília, there are several options. Professor Claudia can arrange for you an internship in the Consumer Law section of the Ministry of Justice (CADE), under the supervision of Dr. Roberto Pfeiffer. You can probably also work, as I did, in the Special Secretariat for Human Rights, located in the Ministry of Justice building. Contact Herbert Barros, the Secretariat's sub-director in charge of interns, at [herbert.barros@mj.gov.br](mailto:herbert.barros@mj.gov.br); explain your status as an UFRGS law student, and mention that I (Jay Bischoff) gave you his e-mail. Getting exposure to Brasília and the federal government was an extremely enriching experience for me.

Whatever internship you do is highly unlikely to be remunerated and will not count for UFRGS law school credit. They are simply for self-edification.

#### Grupos de pesquisa

As an exchange student, you will automatically and involuntarily be a member of the CNPq "Mercosur and Consumer Law" research group, coordinated by Professor Claudia. Widely regarded as the best research group in the school, it is also the most challenging. You will probably be called upon to do at least one research project for Professor Claudia during your time at the UFRGS law school, and quality expectations are high. But the payoff is also substantial: Claudia's research-group students always rank among those that get the best internships, participate in international competitions, and study abroad. Being in Claudia's research group is also a good way to guarantee that you'll have the opportunity to talk to her at least once a week (it meets every Tuesday afternoon). Being in Professor Claudia's research group was for me an honor and a privilege; I was extremely lucky to have such an opportunity to work closely with one of Brazil's leading international jurists.

Other professors have their own research groups, the themes of which correspond to the particular professor's area of interest. Professor Cezar Saldanha leads the "Supremacy of the State" research group, and Professor Tupinambá leads a criminal law research group. If you want to be in any other research group, in addition to Professor Claudia's, just ask the particular professor that leads it for permission. I can't imagine that he would refuse you admission. In general, professors are very receptive to exchange student participation in law-school activities.

SAJU (Serviço de Assessoria Jurídica Universitária) is the main extension service of the UFRGS law school. It was founded in 1950 by law students seeking to guarantee free access to justice for the poor; in this sense it is most analogous to a clinic in U.S. law schools. SAJU's work is divided into several groups: family law, probate law, juvenile law, consumer law, and criminal law. Orientation is provided by professors and pro bono attorneys, and most of the legal duties (the writing of petitions, preparation of cases, etc.) are performed by UFRGS law students. To participate in any of the SAJU groups, send an e-mail to Verónica at [saju@direito.ufrgs.br](mailto:saju@direito.ufrgs.br), or mention your interest to Professor Claudia.

### UFRGSMUN

UFRGSMUN is the UFRGS Model United Nations, a student-organized event which takes place during three days every October and attracts law students from (theoretically) all over Brazil and the rest of the world. UFRGSMUN in 2003, for example, included students from Bhutan. Since the whole event takes place in English, if you're around in October or in the few months preceding the event, you'll likely be called upon to provide linguistic assistance. Whatever additional assistance you provide is up to you.

### Law Conferences

Occasionally you'll have the opportunity to attend and possibly work at any of various law conferences throughout Brazil. One weekend each May the law school of the PUC/RS sponsors a conference in Gramado, a town in the Serra Gaúcha about two hours from Porto Alegre, which is famous for the partying that goes on the Friday and Saturday nights; the legal panels are also very good. There is also an annual international environmental law conference in São Paulo each June, organized by Professor Antônio Hermann Benjamin and the Lawyers for a Green Planet Institute. I worked at the conference on behalf of Professor Claudia's research group and the UFRGS law school in June 2003; the University paid for a portion of my travel expenses. This event is also a good way to get to know Professor Benjamin, one of Brazil's leading environmental jurists.

### The age difference

As in most countries in the world, law in Brazil is an undergraduate major, and the course at UFRGS takes five years to complete. The typical student enters law school at age eighteen and graduates at age twenty-three, ready to go out into the world as a full-fledged lawyer (that is, once he passes the Brazilian bar exam). The UFRGS law school has two separate groups (*turmas*) of students, the morning *turma* and the nighttime *turma*. The morning *turma* follows the traditional age paradigm more closely: virtually all students are in their late teens or early twenties and do not work or only work part-time. The nighttime *turma*, on the other hand, has a larger proportion of nontraditional students: older students that have full-time jobs during the day and moonlight as law students; these students can be anywhere from eighteen to seventy years old. Even in the nighttime *turma*, however, the vast majority of students will be younger than you.

The implications of the age dynamic are obvious. You're likely to have a more ample perspective than most of your classmates: you'll have written more papers, you'll have taken more tests, you'll have had more jobs and internships, and you'll probably be more mature. And even if you hang out mainly with fifth-year undergraduates, older students from the nighttime *turma*, and UFRGS LL.M. students, you'll still have to associate with nineteen-year-olds in class, in extracurricular activities, and at parties and other recreational events. This is just something to keep in mind.

#### UFRGS Code of Conduct

There is currently no official code of conduct in force at the UFRGS, although word has it that one is currently being debated. There is, however, a rule against alcohol on campus; at Lanches Antônio and Lanches Ferreira (the snack bar in the law school) you won't be able to buy a beer. The rule against alcohol is overlooked when there is some sort of on-campus banquet or other organized event.

#### Law Library and UN Library

The law library is located on the first floor of the law school building, in the middle of the rear hallway. The very helpful head librarian is **Naila Touguinha Lomando**. There are a couple of computer terminals which you can use to search for books. You'll need your UFRGS student ID (the blue one) to check out books (see "Getting Your Two Student IDs" under "Registering for Classes," above, to find out how and where to get this ID). If you simply want to photocopy an article out of a law journal, you can leave some form of ID at the front desk while you go downstairs to Gutí Copy to do so. Overdue books R\$1 per day. When you enter the library, you'll have to leave your book bag behind the front desk.

The **UN Reserve Library** is located in the basement, down the steps beside the entrance to the regular law library. It has a small collection of mainly UN-produced books and documents, which you'll also need your UFRGS student ID to check out. There are three computer terminals, with internet access, that you can use for free. You can also print things out for R\$0.20 per page. Professor Claudia's research group meets every Tuesday in a seminar room accessible from inside the UN Library.

#### The "Xérox"

Gutí Copy is the official name of the place everybody refers to as "o Xérox"; it is located outside the law school beside Lanches Ferreira. You can also access it through a Dutch door just inside the entrance to the UN Library in the law school basement. Copies are a steal at R\$0.10, and spiral bindings are just R\$2.90 (compare that to the whopping U.S.\$5.95 you normally pay at Kinko's). Most classes also have a *pasta*, a special folder kept behind the desk at Gutí Copy with readings and other documents that the professor will assign at some point in the semester.

#### Recommended Books

The following are just a few of the books I recommend that you buy before leaving for Brazil or, as the case may be, soon after arrival.

- *5 em 1: Constituição Federal, Códigos Civil, Penal, de Processo Civil, de Processo Penal e Legislação Complementar Fundamental* (2003). São Paulo: Editora Manole Ltda. It's probably a good idea to have all these codes, and this is the only book I found that consolidates them all. It's available at Livraria Cultura.

- *Constituição da República Federativa do Brasil* (1988). The current Brazilian Constitution is an absolute essential; it will be cited by the professor at least once per day in 90% of your classes. Luckily, it's also very easy to find; there's usually a copy of it printed at the front of any code (such as the Civil or Penal Code) or published compilation of legislation.

- David, René (1998). *Os Grandes Sistemas de Direito Contemporâneo*. São Paulo: Martins Fontes. This classic, which may be a requirement if you take Comparative Law, explains and compares the world's major systems of law in a clear and complete manner. If your knowledge of the civil law tradition is less than complete, it's probably a good idea to read the section on the Romano-Germanic family of law before classes begin. Its only downfall is that it has not been well updated since René David died quite some time ago; for example, in the section on U.S. law, it lists the minimum amount in controversy for removal to federal court as still being at U.S.\$10,000. It is available at the bookstand in Lanches Ferreira (the snack bar in the law school) and probably at either Livraria Cultura in Bourbon Country Shopping or Livraria Savriana in Praia de Belas Shopping.

- Marzano, Fábio (2002). *Dicionário Espanhol-Português de Falsas Semelhanças*. Rio de Janeiro: Editora Campus. The Spanish-speaking learner of Portuguese already knows that there are tons of words that are similar between the two languages that seem like they should have the same meaning, but they don't. For example, *humo* "smoke" in Spanish is *fumaça* in Portuguese, while *fumo* as a noun in Portuguese means "tobacco". This is the most complete dictionary of false cognates and other specious lexical similarities between Portuguese and Spanish I have yet been able to find. It's a good tool for the Spanish-speaking learner of Portuguese who is seeking to purify his Portuguese. It's available at Livraria Cultura in Bourbon Country Shopping.

- Mello, Maria Chaves de (1998). *Dicionário Jurídico Português- Inglês/ Inglês-Português, 7ª ed.* Rio de Janeiro: Elfós. The best Portuguese-English legal dictionary that I have been able to find, it is available at larger bookstores in Porto Alegre, such as Livraria Cultura and Livraria Savriana.

- Noble, John et. al (2002). *Lonely Planet Brazil, 5th ed.* Melbourne: Lonely Planet Publications. If you bring only one thing to Brazil, bring your passport. If you bring only two things, bring your passport and the exchange-student guide that you're holding in your hands right now. If you bring only three things, bring your passport, this guide, and the latest edition of Lonely Planet Brazil. It's available at bookstores everywhere in the U.S. If you for some reason don't buy it before leaving the U.S., you can also find it at Livraria Cultura in Bourbon Country Shopping in Porto Alegre.

- Oliveira, Édison de (2001). *Todo o mundo tem dúvida, inclusive você*. Porto Alegre: Editora Sagra Luzzatto. This fun and easy-to-read book explains, in highly understandable terms, many of those tricky things about Portuguese that you and even most native speakers have a hard time dealing with (e.g., where to put clitic pronouns in different situations—*te estarei dizendo, estarei te dizendo, estarei dizendo-te, or estar-te-ei dizendo?*). It's available at Livraria Cultura or Livraria Savriana.

- Perini, Mário A. (2002). *Modern Portuguese: A Reference Grammar*. New Haven: Yale U.P. A 621-page hardcover grammar book written for the native English speaker seeking to improve or perfect his Brazilian Portuguese. This book is very complete, easy to read, and loaded with enlightening examples; it also does a wonderful job of explaining the differences between spoken and written Brazilian Portuguese. It's a good companion when writing legal papers in Portuguese, and is worth bringing to Brazil with you despite the added weight in your luggage. It costs about \$60 and is available on [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com). And since it's the book of choice of the UT Portuguese Department for advanced phonetics and

grammar classes, if you're in Austin you can also find it at the main branch of the Co-op among the books for the Portuguese classes. It's well worth the somewhat lofty price.

Whitlam, John et. al., eds. (2001). *Collins Dicionário Prático Inglês-Português Português-Ingles*. Glasgow and New York, HarperCollins Publishers. The medium-sized hardback is durable and quite complete while still manageable enough in size and weight to carry back and forth to school. It is available in bookstores in Porto Alegre and throughout Brazil and the U.S.

### Legal Glossary

The following is a short list of legal terms that commonly appear in Portuguese legal writings, and their approximate equivalents in English. For a complete list, purchase the Mello Portuguese-English legal dictionary at a local bookstore in Porto Alegre (see "Recommended Books," under "The Academic Environment at the UFRGS Law School," above, for more details).

acórdão	judgment
adiar	to delay
alçada	competence, jurisdiction
auto	legal proceeding
auto-executável	self-executing
cláusula penal	liquidated-damages clause
competência	jurisdiction (as in competence to try a case; see "jurisdição")
condenação	conviction (jur.)
daqui para diante	hereinafter
denúncia	accusation, complaint; indictment
denunciar	to complain of to the authorities, to press charges against; to indict
depoimento	statement, testimony
depor	to give a deposition
desarrazoado	unreasonable
dispositivo	provision (as in a provision in a code or a treaty)
efeito dissuasivo	deterrent effect
encarregado de	charged with (e.g., investigating complaints of slave labor; etc.)
foragidos	fugitives
inquérito	report (as in a "police report" = "inquérito policial")
jurado	juror
júri	jury
jurisprudência	case law
jurar	to swear
jurisdição	jurisdiction (as in geographical reach of a court; see "competência")
juros	interest (on a loan, etc.)
liminar (f)	preliminary verdict
locação	lease
OAB	Ordem dos Advogados do Brasil (Brazil's analogue to the ABA)
os meios de que dispõe	all means at its disposal

minuta	draft, rough draft
minutar	to draft
países da <i>common law</i>	common-law countries
países da família	romano-germânica civil-law countries
parecer consultivo	advisory opinion
pessoa jurídica	corporation
prescrever	to lapse
projeto de lei	bill (jur.)
processar	to sue
providências	measures
reivindicação	claim
reivindicar	to claim
relatório	report (but see “inquérito”)
ressarcimento	compensation
sensato	reasonable (as in “reasonable person”)
testemunha ocular	eyewitness
tribunal	court, tribunal (note: “corte” is not commonly used in this sense, except with international or foreign courts such as the <i>Corte Internacional de Justiça</i> or the <i>Suprema Corte dos EUA</i> )
vara	jurisdiction (geographical reach of a court)
vedação	ban, prohibition
vedar	to ban
vide	see (command form used in written cross-references; semantically equivalent to “veja”)

#### IV. Things to Do Before Leaving Porto Alegre

Getting an Official Transcript from UFRGS of the Classes you Took

Getting the document which explains the UFRGS grading system

UFRGS, like most U.S. institutions, uses a letter-based grading system. There are five possible grades (*conceitos*):<sup>18</sup>

- A Ótimo/Excellent
- B Bom/Good
- C Regular/Average
- D Insatisfatório/Failing
- E or FF Falta de frequência/Insufficient attendance

Registrar's Office:

Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul – Pró Reitoria de Ensino

Departamento de Controle e Registro Acadêmico – DECORDI

Av. Paulo Gama, 1110 – Prédio 12106 – Anexo I da Reitoria

<sup>18</sup> The grading system is set forth in Article 135 of the Regimento da Universidade (a booklet).



## 90046-900 – Porto Alegre – RS – Brasil

It's a good idea to get an official **letter** from UFRGS **explaining the grading system** before returning to the United States with your UFRGS transcript to request a credit transfer. Go in person to the Registrar's Office (DECORDI), located in Rectory Annex I on the main campus (next to Lanches Antônio) and fill out the form "Solicitação de Documentos," requesting an "Atestado de sistema de avaliação." You will need your *número de matrícula*, or at least your student ID so they can look up your student number. The letter costs R\$2.10. They will give you a slip of paper which you then take to the nearby Banco do Brasil in order to deposit the R\$2.10 directly into the UFRGS bank account; for some reason, they won't take the money directly. You then return to DECORDI with the bank deposit receipt.

Note that the letter takes **two days** to process. You'll have to go back to DECORDI in person to pick up the letter, which will be in Portuguese, printed on official watermarked paper. An official translation into English can supposedly be requested at the Biblioteca Central.

## Getting your official transcript

Unless you plan on hanging around Porto Alegre for a few weeks after the semester is over, you'll probably have to have Sílvia Rocha in Relações Internacionais ([relinter@ufrgs.br](mailto:relinter@ufrgs.br)) mail you your transcript. She does this all the time. Just make sure you remind her before you leave town, and send her a reminder e-mail a couple of weeks after you leave Porto Alegre. She'll send you as many copies as you need.

## Important telephones and websites

## Emergency numbers

- Brigada Militar: **tel. 190.**
- Corpo de Bombeiros: **tel. 193.**
- Hospital de Pronto Socorro: **tels. 192, 3330-9998, 3316-9888**
- Polícia Civil: **tels. 194, (51) 3217-2411.**
- Polícia Federal, Delegação de Estrangeiros: **tel. (51) 3358-9070.**

## Transportation

- Aeroporto Internacional Salgado Filho: **tel. (51) 3358-2000.**
- Bus and *lotação* route hotline: **tel. 158, [www.portoalegre.rs.gov.br](http://www.portoalegre.rs.gov.br).**
- Estação Rodoviária: **tel. (51) 3210-0101, [www.rodoviaria-poa.com.br](http://www.rodoviaria-poa.com.br).**

## UFRGS contacts

- Relações Institucionais e Internacionais: **tel. (51) 3316-3902, fax (51) 3316-3973,**  
**e-mail [relinter@ufrgs.br](mailto:relinter@ufrgs.br).**
- UFRGS general: **[www.ufrgs.br/ufrgs](http://www.ufrgs.br/ufrgs).**
- UFRGS law school: **[www.direito.ufrgs.br](http://www.direito.ufrgs.br).**

## Airlines

- **American Airlines:** Porto Alegre tel. (51) 3211-2088, U.S. toll-free 1-800-433-7300, Brazil nationwide (not toll-free) 0300-789-7778, [www.americanairlines.com](http://www.americanairlines.com).

- **Continental Airlines:** U.S. toll-free 1-800-231-0856, Brazil toll-free 0800-55-4777, [www.continental.com](http://www.continental.com).
- **Delta Airlines:** U.S. toll-free 1-800-241-4141, Brazil toll-free 0800-22-1121, [www.delta.com](http://www.delta.com).
- **GOL Airlines:** [www.voegol.com.br](http://www.voegol.com.br).
- **TAM Airlines:** Porto Alegre tel. (51) 3286-5834, U.S. toll-free 1-888-2-FLY-TAM, Brazil nationwide (not toll-free) 0300-123-1000, Brazil nationwide (toll-free) 0800-562-211, [www.tam.com.br](http://www.tam.com.br), [www.tam.com.br](http://www.tam.com.br).
- **United Airlines:** U.S. toll-free 1-800-426-5561, Brazil toll-free 0800-16-2323, [www.ual.com](http://www.ual.com), [www.united.com.br](http://www.united.com.br).
- **Varig Airlines:** Porto Alegre tel. (51) 3332-8799, U.S. toll-free 1-800-468-2744, Brazil nationwide (not toll-free) 0300-788-7000, [www.varig.com](http://www.varig.com), [www.varigbrasil.com](http://www.varigbrasil.com).

#### Consulates and embassies

- Brazilian Consulate General in Houston: tel. (713) 961-3063, fax (713) 961-3070, e-mail [consbras@brazilhouston.org](mailto:consbras@brazilhouston.org), [www.brazilhouston.org](http://www.brazilhouston.org).
- Brazilian Consulate General in New York: tel. (917) 777-7777, fax (212) 827-0225, e-mail [consulado@brazilny.org](mailto:consulado@brazilny.org), [www.brazilny.org](http://www.brazilny.org).
- U.S. Embassy, Brasília: [www.embaixada-americana.org.br](http://www.embaixada-americana.org.br), tel. (61) 321-7272.
- U.S. Consulate, Rio de Janeiro: [www.consulado-americano-rio.org.br/rio5.htm](http://www.consulado-americano-rio.org.br/rio5.htm), tel. (21) 2292-7177.
- U.S. Consulate, São Paulo (serving Rio Grande do Sul): [www.consuladoamericanosp.org.br](http://www.consuladoamericanosp.org.br), tel. (11) 3081-6511

#### Other

- Turismo: tel. (51) 3388-7669, [www.turismo.rs.gov.br](http://www.turismo.rs.gov.br).
- Telephone information hotline: tel. 102.
- Agência Central de Correios: tel. 3220-8800, [www.correios.com.br](http://www.correios.com.br).