“As a first generation college student and financial aid/scholarship kid, I often felt lost and at odds with the culture of the Ivy League. My courses in Portuguese and Brazilian Studies were nothing if not accessible, for which I was and am endlessly grateful. I felt valued not only as a student, but as an individual, which nourished and motivated me. Cultivating my own multilingualism may be the single most valuable thing I did in my undergraduate years: practically, it broadened the array of jobs for which I am qualified—but perhaps more importantly, learning new languages trained my brain in the kind of mental acrobatics, flexibility, resiliency, and creativity that has proved absolutely invaluable in every aspect of my life.”

Chelsea has used the language and pedagogy skills she learned in Portuguese and Brazilian Studies, in her work as an educator, wilderness therapy mentor, community organizer/language justice worker, interpreter, and in the mental health field.

“After my first Portuguese lesson, I was hooked. I was constantly thinking about it. I got giddy every time I left class. I fell in love not just with the language but also the way that I felt while learning the language. My mind was expanding.... Today, Portuguese has become an integral part of my career and my identity in a way that I could have never anticipated.”

Sophie formed SOFI TUKKER with Tucker Halpern, ’14, in their final year at Brown. Their song "Drinkee," inspired by the poem "Relógio" by Brazilian poet Chacal, was nominated for a Grammy in 2017.

“By enrolling in Portuguese 600, I developed the linguistic tools to participate in a fully-funded summer teaching internship in Brazil through Learning Enterprises. Because of my Portuguese knowledge, I was hired the following summer to run the program in the capacity of vice-director. Spending time in Brazil exposed me to international job opportunities that I otherwise would never have known about. It also pushed me to confront the subjective nature of my views on family, dating, and the power of emotional honesty.”

Since graduating, Hannah has worked in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and Pontevedra, Galicia, using her knowledge of Portuguese to facilitate comprehension of a new language, Gallego.

**Department of Portuguese and Brazilian Studies: Alumni Stories**