How teaching for the IUHPFL Program has helped shape my career, both in the classroom and administratively:

The Honors Program has definitely impacted my professional life. I was always passionate about teaching language classes. I enjoyed teaching a new language, new vocabulary words and culture. Teaching for the Honors Program really changed the way I see language classes. It taught me that what really makes the difference is the interest of the students, not just in the language, but in the context in which that language occurs. So, now I try to make students experience a little bit of culture in the classroom.

Instead of teaching them to read and provide formal instruction, I act as an international instructor, making them aware of the differences as well as interested in the target language and its culture. I have incorporated this important insight into the philosophy of teaching. A language has to be associated with its context, and that is what makes the difference in the classroom.

Coordinating a Program like the IUHPFL has helped me become more assertive and organized, and communicate more effectively with people in general. In this Program, one has to deal with many unexpected situations that require instructors to keep calm and find a win-win solution in a timely manner.

After some years working as a student coordinator for the Honors Program I tend to look at an adverse situation not as “problem,” but something that needs a solution. Working for the IUHPFL has also helped me gain the ability to mediate and negotiate. Having to arrive at a decision among four people from different backgrounds, and many times with differing opinions, is challenging. One has to learn to express an idea without offending other team members. One has to listen, understand and come to a mutual agreement about what is best for the group as a whole.

Giselle Martins Penna Firme Pedrosa  
Lecturer of Portuguese and Spanish  
S100 and S150 Course Supervisor  
Department of Spanish and Portuguese  
Indiana University, Bloomington  
Ballantine Hall 807