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**Irene Maria Ferreira Blayer** was born in Velas, São Jorge, Azores, and has been living in Canada since 1977.

She received her Bachelor's of Arts degree (First Class Honours) from Brock University in Romance Languages; her Master's degree from the University of Toronto in Ibero-American Literatures and Romance Linguistics, and she obtained her Ph.D. (Doctorate) in Romance Linguistics from the same university in 1992. Her doctoral dissertation was entitled 'Aspects of the Vocalic System of the Speech of the Azores Islands.' In 1993, she was an Affiliate at the Linguistic Institute hosted by the Department of Linguistics at Ohio State University where she studied with linguists from MIT, Cornell, and Northwestern universities.

Dr. Blayer has held teaching appointments with Queen's University (Kingston, Ontario), the University of Toronto, and in 1994 she joined the Faculty of Humanities at Brock University. In 1999 she was granted tenure and promoted to Associate Professor, and in 2005 she was promoted to the rank of Full Professor (Catedrática). Dr. Blayer is the first Portuguese-Canadian woman being granted full-professorship (Catedrática) at a Canadian university.

At Brock University, she was one of the co-founders of the International Studies program and served as Director (intermittently) from 2001-2004; she has also served as Program Director (five year period) and as Acting Chair in the MLLC Department. She is one of the original committee members of the interdisciplinary doctoral program in Humanities where she is also a faculty member.

Dr. Blayer has also played a key role in the implementation of Portuguese courses as part of the academic curriculum at Brock University, and in alignment with the institutional's international purposes, she has been committed to research/scholarship and teaching collaborations involving awareness of the Portuguese-speaking world and/or diasporas.

In 2001, Dr. Blayer was elected to the Senate of Brock University. Her role as a Senator has led her to represent the Faculty of Humanities in a number of senatorial committees including, Research, Appeals, Admissions, Student Affairs, Faculty of Education Advisory Committee (linked with the Ministry of Education); Governance (two terms), and the university's Research Ethics Board, among others.

Her primary areas of research interests include Romance linguistics studies within a diachronic (as well as synchronic) context; as well as oral/written narratives and its importance for concepts of identity and culture. In a broader context, current research includes the comparative study of diasporic narratives, and the analysis of the forms through which these narratives are constituted and unfolded, as such, by the act of telling and/or writing these narratives become a reconstructed memory which compare the inter-cultural complex and diachronic interplay of identity, language and culture that denotes the Luso (Azorean)-speaking diasporas. Dr. Blayer has given lectures as well as academic papers in literary/cultural and linguistic diversity at national and international academic colloquia and gatherings. She has written for refereed academic publications, has published several academic/refereed edited books and is the author of a number of academic refereed essays. She is a member of international academic associations, university committees, and is on the advisory board of international academic journals. She has been an assessor for external research grant applications with the Social Sciences Research Council of Canada, and a member/assessor with the Ontario Graduate Scholarship (Ministry of Education), as well as an evaluator of external candidacies on tenure and promotion for universities in Canada, and the United States.

Dr. Blayer has been honored with several achievement nominations and awards, as well as national and international research grants. In May 2008 she received the COPA academic excellence award by the Portuguese National Congress of Canada; in 2007 the Professional award by the Federation of Portuguese Canadian Business and Professionals of Canada; in 2009 she received the Autonomic Commendation of Professional Merit, by the Azorean Legislature, Autonomous Regional Government of the Azores.