

## Professor Eduardo Winter: A Life Dedicated to Science, Innovation, and Brazilian Graduate Education

The Coordination of the Interdisciplinary Area of CAPES (2026–2030) expresses, through this editorial, its sincere gratitude and pays its deepest tribute to Professor Eduardo Winter, our dear Edu, whose academic and professional trajectory is closely intertwined with important chapters in the recent history of Brazilian graduate education and, in particular, with the expansion and consolidation of the Interdisciplinary Area.

Professor Eduardo Winter earned a Bachelor's degree in Industrial Chemistry from the Pontifical Catholic University of Paraná (PUC-PR), a Master's degree in Chemistry from the University of Campinas (Unicamp), and a Ph.D. in Science from the same institution. He built a distinguished academic career grounded in scientific rigor, an unwavering commitment to knowledge, and dedication to the scientific and technological development of Brazil. His multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary background enabled him to move seamlessly across different fields of knowledge, a characteristic that defined both his professional career and his leadership in the evaluation of graduate education.

Throughout his career, he devoted himself primarily to research on Intellectual Property, Innovation, Technological Development, and Science, Technology, and Innovation Indicators, becoming a nationally recognized authority in these fields. His professional career was closely associated with the Brazilian National Institute of Industrial Property (INPI), where he had served as a civil servant since 2006. Initially assigned to the Patent Directorate, he later joined the Directorate of Technological Information and Cooperation, where he played a pivotal role in establishing and consolidating the Institute's teaching and research activities. Under his leadership, the Graduate Program in Intellectual Property and Innovation at INPI achieved national and international recognition, becoming one of Brazil's leading initiatives for the education of specialists in this field.

In addition to his work at INPI, Professor Winter served as a faculty member and researcher at Augusto Motta University Center (UNISUAM), contributing significantly to the education of master's and doctoral students, as well as researchers. In every academic environment in which he worked, he was distinguished by his kindness, collegiality, and remarkable ability to bridge different areas of knowledge, foster institutional partnerships, and promote scientific research committed to addressing the challenges of contemporary society.

His contribution to CAPES began in 2010, when he was appointed Deputy Coordinator for Professional Programs within the Interdisciplinary Area for that triennial evaluation period. Indeed, his extensive experience justified his appointment to this important position even though he had not previously served as a CAPES consultant. He fulfilled this role during the 2010–2012, 2013–2016, and 2018–2022 evaluation periods, closely accompanying the exponential growth of the Interdisciplinary Area and contributing directly to the consolidation of professional graduate programs within the Brazilian National Graduate Education System. In 2022, he was appointed Coordinator of the Interdisciplinary Area, a position he held until 2026. In recognition of his outstanding leadership and the respect he had earned within the academic community, he was reappointed for a second term (2026–2030).

At the same time, Professor Winter actively participated in the Technical-Scientific Council for Higher Education (CTC-ES) of CAPES, serving both as a full member and as an alternate representative. He also represented the College of Exact, Technological, and Multidisciplinary Sciences in numerous strategic discussions concerning the evaluation and future of Brazilian graduate education. His presence on committees, working groups, and national forums became synonymous with balance, technical excellence, and unwavering institutional commitment.



Over more than fifteen years devoted to the Interdisciplinary Area, Professor Winter developed an exceptional understanding of graduate programs across Brazil. He was deeply familiar with their strengths, challenges, and particular characteristics, following their development through seminars, institutional visits, midterm evaluation meetings, assessment processes, monitoring activities, and professional development initiatives promoted by CAPES.

He was an unwavering advocate of Professional Graduate Programs, recognizing them as strategic instruments for bringing scientific knowledge closer to the needs of society, public services, and the productive sector. Likewise, he firmly believed in the importance of expanding and decentralizing Brazilian graduate education, consistently advocating for greater opportunities for education and research in regions that have historically received fewer investments in science and technology.

His work was also distinguished by a steadfast commitment to promoting diversity and equity. He championed the recognition of Brazil's diverse regional realities and actively encouraged the meaningful participation of women, Black scholars, transgender individuals, Indigenous peoples, and other groups historically underrepresented in scientific research, evaluation processes, and academic leadership.

For Professor Winter, academic excellence was inseparable from diversity of perspectives and inclusion. He understood that a truly excellent scientific community can only flourish when individuals with diverse life experiences are recognized and provided with genuine opportunities to participate. This conviction was not merely institutional; it also reflected, with characteristic serenity and sensitivity, his own personal life experience.

As a gay man belonging to a generation for whom discretion was often a strategy for survival within academic and professional environments, Eduardo transformed his identity, his presence, his ethical principles, and his commitment to a more plural university into a quiet affirmation that scientific excellence and diversity have never been opposing values. For him, academic excellence was inseparable from diversity of perspectives, respect for differences, and inclusion. Likewise, he believed that meaningful change is only possible when problems are acknowledged and conditions and strategies for transformation are intentionally created.

Eduardo's life and work closely reflected the thought of Paulo Freire, who argued that teaching requires respect for the autonomy and dignity of learners, and that authentic education is built through encounter, dialogue, and shared hope. Freire reminds us that human beings are unfinished, continually becoming, and that it is precisely this incompleteness that calls us to humility and openness

to others. Eduardo seemed to embody this lesson throughout his life: he taught without imposing, mentored without intimidating, and led without creating distance, practicing, in his everyday academic leadership, the pedagogy of presence and care that Freire so profoundly advocated. When he made mistakes and we all do it was often because he struggled to recognize his own limits, a characteristic common among those who constantly strive to achieve the very best.

In recent years, he also became an important advocate for science communication. He firmly believed that science fulfills its mission only when its findings reach society. For this reason, he worked to incorporate public communication of science into the discussions of the Interdisciplinary Area and into the evaluation processes of graduate programs, thereby strengthening the social responsibility of Brazilian research.

His leadership was exercised without unnecessary formality. Always approachable, welcoming, and open to dialogue, he maintained close relationships with program coordinators, faculty members, students, reviewers, and technical staff. He possessed the rare ability to teach without imposing, to advise without constraining, and to lead without distancing himself from others. His extraordinary intelligence was matched by an equally extraordinary generosity.

Eduardo Winter's legacy lives on not only in the many reviewers and consultants who have served the Interdisciplinary Area over the years, but also in the more than 400 graduate programs that comprise the Area, in the policies he helped shape, the evaluation processes he improved, the institutions he strengthened, and, above all, in the countless individuals who had the privilege of learning from him.

His passing represents an irreparable loss for CAPES, INPI, the Brazilian scientific community, and for all those who shared part of their journey with him. Yet his work endures. It will continue to live through the graduate programs he helped consolidate, the researchers he mentored, the institutions he strengthened, and the values he championed throughout his life. It will also remain in the memory of those who, in encountering his integrity and profound respect for others, came to understand that there are many ways to expand spaces of belonging for LGBTQIA+ people in Brazilian science, including through the everyday example of competence, dignity, and generosity.

Eduardo left us far too soon, yet within a relatively short lifetime he built a legacy that many would not achieve over entire decades of professional dedication. In the face of this loss, we are also called to learn from grief itself: to transform the pain of absence into a living memory and a renewed commitment to the values he defended so

passionately. May our mourning therefore become not only an expression of longing, but also a call to action, to the continuation of his legacy, and to the construction of a Brazilian graduate education system that is ever more plural, diverse, and generous just as he always envisioned.

At this moment, the Coordination of the Interdisciplinary Area (2026–2030) expresses its deepest gratitude for a life devoted to building a graduate education system that is stronger, more diverse, more innovative, and more fully committed to the development of Brazil.

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