A final research objective highlights UH Hilo's commitment to better understanding their Pacific Islander student population; providing evidenced-based supports; and adding to the national conversation about Pacific Islander students in higher education.

What is the AANAPISI Grant?
The AANAPISI Grant is a 5 year federally funded award based on Hilo’s large numbers of Asian American and Pacific Islander and low income students. The grant is specifically aimed at facilitating the success of Pacific Islander students by providing opportunities to engage in “high impact” activities to support retention and graduation. The UHH grant includes two major priorities:

1) Develop and implement a comprehensive, culturally informed student support program designed to strengthen student learning, engagement, and success, with the goal of improving the persistence and graduation rates of Pacific Islanders.

2) Conduct and disseminate research into best practices for facilitating the success of Pacific Islanders in higher education, with the goal of making a substantial contribution to higher education resources. Within the two priorities are three objectives related to program implementation:

- Increase the percentage of PI students who persist from their first year to their second year at UHH by 2% each year.
- Increase the percentage of PI students who persist in and graduate from college by 10% and 5%, respectively, by the end of the project.
- Deepen the level of engagement of PIs in their studies and with the institution by 10% as measured by the NSSE by the end of the project.

A final research objective highlights UH Hilo’s commitment to better understanding their Pacific Islander student population; providing evidenced-based supports; and adding to the national conversation about Pacific Islander students in higher education.

AANAPISI Research Agenda

1. Add to the knowledge base on the diversity of experiences in higher education among Pacific Islander students, a sub-population that has historically been unrecognized in educational research.

2. Describe cultural and lifestyle characteristics of Pacific Islanders that impact the post-secondary educational transition process of youth who go on to higher education.

3. Support policy makers and leaders in making decisions that will enable Pacific Islander students to thrive in a post-secondary context.

Overarching Research Objective
Make a substantial contribution to higher education resources by conducting and disseminating research and best practices for facilitating the success of PIs in higher education, as measured by the publication and dissemination of research reports.

AANAPISI Staff
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URL: http://hilo.hawaii.edu/pisc

Initial Research Inquiry
What data exists at UH Hilo?
What are the baseline characteristics of Pacific Islander students at UH Hilo?
Who are our Pacific Islander students in the population enrolled at UHH?

Using Data to Make Decisions
Student demographics
Student test scores
Academic self-efficacy
Cultural identity/congruity
Student engagement
Pre-College experiences
Select Research Questions

• What are the ways that the cultural influences/ backgrounds (assets/ challenges) of PI students both align and conflict with the cultural norms of the institution?

• What role do social supports; academic self-efficacy; future aspirations play in PI students persisting and graduating?

• How can cultural values be incorporated into higher education policies, practices and pedagogy to promote academic success for PI students?

• What are the ways that PI students at UHH are engaged/active in their higher education experience?

• To what extent does UHH provide an environment that supports PI students in persisting and graduating? (Perceived comfort/feelings of inclusion in the university setting)

Preliminary Findings

UH Hilo Pacific Islander Student Demographics (N=214)

- Class Standing
- Ethnicity

UH Hilo Pacific Islander Research Participant Student Demographics (N=118)

- Primary Language Spoken by Student

Pacific Islander students enrolled at UH Hilo during the Fall of 2012 were asked to take an online survey within a four week period in September-October 2012. We obtained demographic information along with specific research interest questions.
A particular finding pictured below illustrates the main reasons why current students chose to attend UHH.

**What School Supports are Students Accessing?**

PIES = Pacific Internship for Exploring Science (1st year students)

PALS = Peer Assistance and Linkages and Support (1st generation and low income students)

SSSP = Student Support Services Program

**Pre-College Academic Experience**

A section in the online survey asked students to rate their agreement with specific statements related to their previous experiences in either high school or community college. A rating of 1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Agree; and 4 = Strongly Agree.
I received adequate academic preparation for UH Hilo while in high school/community college

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My high school/community college teachers...</th>
<th>Mean Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>encouraged me to apply to a 4 year college</td>
<td>3.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>encouraged me to take college preparatory classes</td>
<td>3.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>encouraged me to be a lifelong learner</td>
<td>3.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tested me mostly on information that required me to recall or memorize facts</td>
<td>2.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>delivered instruction primarily through class lectures</td>
<td>3.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>helped me individually with my class work</td>
<td>3.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relied on reading materials as the only source of information for class</td>
<td>2.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>recognized my academic strengths and talents</td>
<td>3.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>held high academic expectations for me</td>
<td>3.30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>