Sabbatical Report

Makalapua Alencastre, Associate Professor, I-4, Hawaiian Studies-Kahuawaiola Indigenous Teacher Education, Ka Haka ‘Ula o Keʻelikōlani College of Hawaiian Language

Date of sabbatical leave: January 1-June 30, 2014.

My primary sabbatical objectives and planned activities involved the completion of the final requirements of the Ed.D. in Professional Educational Practice at the University of Hawaiʻi at Mānoa. This included EDUC 720 (6 cr) in the spring and EDUC 730 (1 cr) Research presentation in the summer. The bulk of the semester was spent in data collection and analysis. I was able to fulfill course requirements and the Ed.D. conference presentation that was held on July 15-17, 2014 at UHMānoa. The final dissertation was submitted in Spring 2015 with my doctorate degree awarded in May 2015.

While I also anticipated enrolling in an Indigenous research course at Waikato University in Aotearoa/New Zealand, the costs of enrollment as an international student were prohibitive. I did travel to Aotearoa in April 2014 as a writing retreat and had the opportunity to visit Māori educational leaders and school programs.

My dissertation research had direct benefits to the college and particularly to the Kahuawaiola program. As a multi-methods study, the efficacy of the distinct practices of preparing teachers for P-12 Hawaiian language medium/immersion education was examined. The study’s findings have both validated successful practices and identified programming areas to continue to grow. As I was entrusted with the stakeholders’ experiences that provided the data for my study, I am cognizant of my responsibility to reciprocate in sharing the results of this study. Opportunities to give back to the community is intentional and ongoing by continuing the conversations in classes, meetings, and conference presentations. I am hopeful that both the approaches and findings of the study may be of value and interest to the emerging field of Indigenous teacher preparation and may be considered as a stepping stone for future research aimed at advocating for and improving Indigenous education.

A number of action pieces were specifically generated by this work:

1. Improved Kahuawaiola’s curriculum and assessments to create a stronger alignment between coursework and clinical practicum experiences. A working group consisting of mentor teachers and program faculty was convened to review and revise major program assessments.


3. Strengthened the Hawai’i Teacher Standards Board policy language regarding “the integration of Hawaiian language, history and culture in order to promote
and perpetuate traditional ways of knowing, learning and teaching” for all public school teachers.

4. Currently coordinating the expanded capacity of a new student teacher performance assessment with Educational Testing Service to: 1) allow student teachers to submit their assessments in the Hawaiian language; and 2) provide training for a cadre of Hawaiian educators to become assessment raters.

5. Conference presentations of research findings:
   d. 6th American Indian / Indigenous Teacher Education Conference, Indigenizing Education: Empowering Students, Empowering Communities, Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff, Arizona, July 2015

I am very appreciative of the opportunities afforded by a sabbatical leave. The support from the college provided the encouragement and allowed the time and space to dedicate to completing the research. The additional workload that my colleagues shouldered in my absence was especially critical and appreciated.