



Māori Studies

Looking to the past for your future

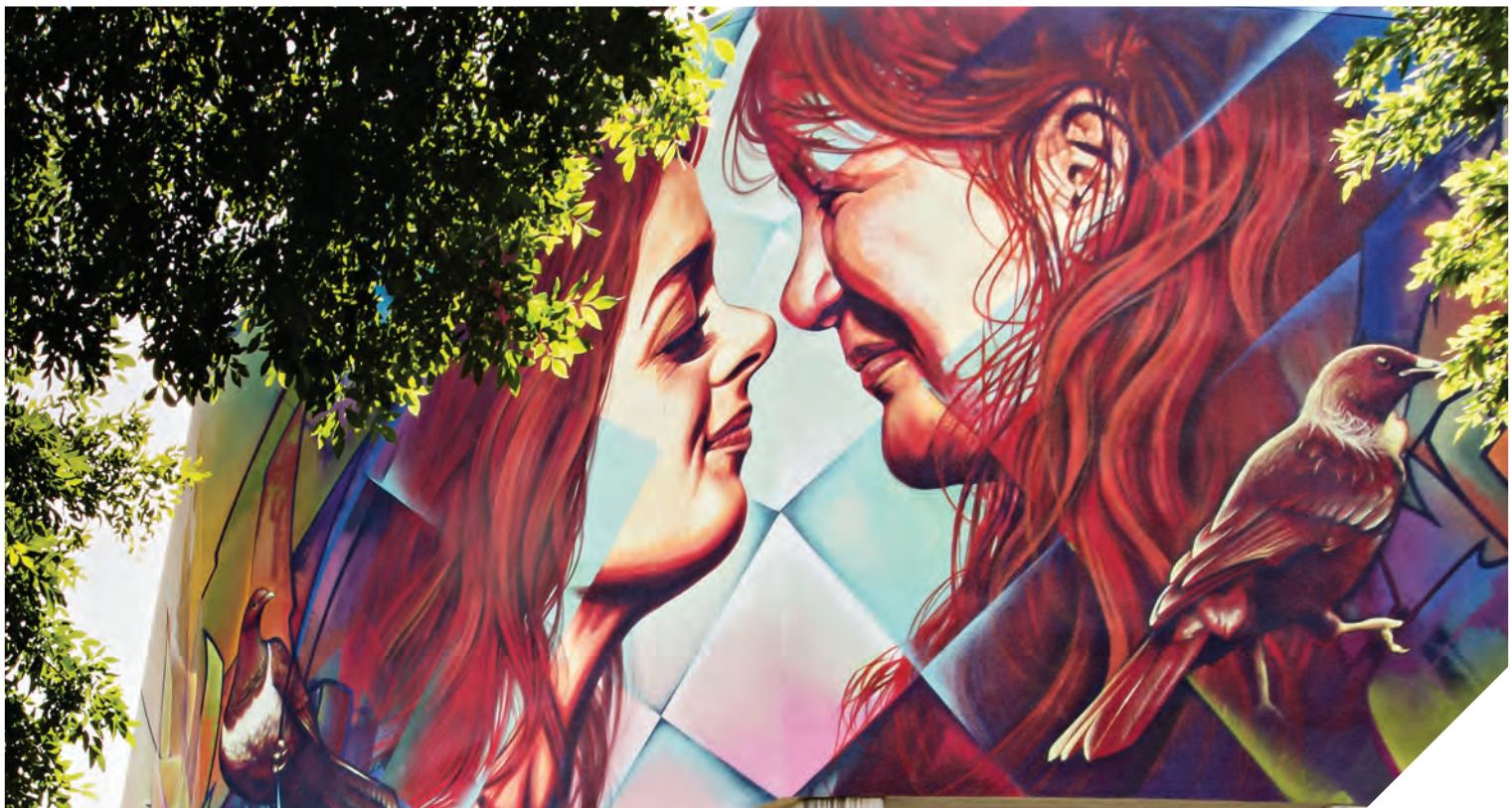
"What can we aspire to if we are not rooted to the land, if there is no language and literary tradition to speak for our souls...Let us put back those things that were psychologically bruised in earlier generations."

Te Kapunga Dewes, 1975

Māori Studies is an entry point for students wishing to engage with knowledge about the Māori world. It is a broad programme dedicated to the study of te reo Māori (Māori language), tikanga Māori (Māori customary lore) and aspects of te ao Māori (the Māori world).

Māori society is not static. Engaging in these three areas together enables you to enter this world and provides you with the foundations to analyse how this body of knowledge can be applied in today's ever-changing world.

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What is Māori Studies?

Māori Studies is not simply another subject, or area of research activity, within the larger university. It is a space in which indigenous systems of thought and knowledge are researched and practised on their own terms and transmitted to new generations of scholars.

Māori Studies is not just an academic subject but a way of life. A major in Māori Studies provides you with a depth of understanding of traditional and contemporary issues of importance to Māori and all people of New Zealand.

We provide an intellectual space for students of all levels and abilities – from those who already have an in-depth knowledge of te ao Māori to those who are just beginning their journey in this world. We provide learning situations that are stimulating for all, and encourage a tuakana-teina (mentoring) system in all our classrooms.

Māori Studies at Otago

Māori Studies combines well with other papers from a wide range of subjects, including Anthropology, Sociology, Music, Social Work, Geography, Management, History, Physical Education and the Sciences. We help you to interpret these different disciplines from a Māori point of view.

The major comprises papers from within Māori Studies, of which te reo Māori is a core component, plus an additional 10 papers. You can also choose from a broad range of papers on Māori, Pacific and other Indigenous societies, from a range of departments to suit your areas of interest.

Māori Studies can be studied as a major or a minor subject within the 3-year Bachelor of Arts degree. Further study in this area is also available at a postgraduate level (Honours, Postgraduate Diploma, Masters, PhD).

Throughout your degree you will be challenged to analyse and critique the world in which we live and to design and conduct research that will encourage open-minded solutions.

Areas of learning

A particular strength of this subject area is its multi-disciplinary nature. Māori language is a compulsory part of the degree but you have the freedom to choose the cultural papers that contribute to the degree. Subjects we specialise in include:

History | Education | Māori performing arts | Ngā Tahu | Environmental studies | Treaty of Waitangi | Community engagement | Pacific Islands Studies | Indigenous Development

You are able to tailor your own programme of study by choosing papers that suit your interests and career needs.

Why study Māori Studies?

Māori Studies will provide you with an enhanced knowledge and understanding of the Māori language, Māori customary lore and the Māori world. This knowledge and understanding may be integrated with other studies or professional areas such as business, education, health, law, management, the media, public administration and social work.

Government ministries, businesses, social agencies and educational institutions in New Zealand recognise the need for employees with such knowledge and skills. Excellent employment prospects await graduates with knowledge of issues affecting Māori and other peoples in New Zealand.

The Māori Studies programme will equip students with a wide range of skills giving graduates:

- a high level of fluency in the Māori language
- an understanding of contemporary Māori issues combined with an understanding of, for example, history, cultural expression and environmental concerns
- an awareness of ethical issues in relation to Māori in the context of past and present practices, and society and culture
- skills in intercultural communication
- research skills
- analytical thinking
- communication skills

- team work
- independent judgement
- an ability to relate to people from a wide range of backgrounds

Māori Studies encourages you to explore the connectivity between different disciplines so as to enable indigenous communities to determine their own future.

Graduates develop a multi-disciplinary, culturally inflected understanding of contemporary Māori concepts and issues, including the use of cooperation rather than competition, listening as well as communicating with others, and respecting differences.

Career opportunities

Graduates with a degree in Māori Studies have a broad inter-disciplinary knowledge base, which can lead to careers in the fields of:

- Government Ministries
- Policy and Governance
- Teaching
- Arts Advisors, Museum Curators
- Business
- Law
- Public Health
- Community organisations

Māori Studies graduates are needed to help find ways to address the needs and interests of the Māori community and to help to promote and implement the goals of the Treaty of Waitangi.

Having more than one major in your degree, or a major plus a minor, will make you more marketable and attractive to prospective employers. A major in Māori Studies will be your point of difference in your chosen career.

Background required

No knowledge of the Māori language or culture is required for entry to Māori Studies. Students may be placed in more advanced Māori language papers appropriate to their level of knowledge. There is also a University-approved process where prior non-credentialed learning is recognised for credit for some papers.

PROFILE

Kelly Nafatali

Ngāti Kuri, Ngāpuhi, Samoan

BA Māori Studies and Communication Studies

For Kelly Nafatali, taking Māori Studies was a big step out of her comfort zone. "I didn't know a lot about my Māori side; growing up in Dunedin there were not many opportunities to immerse myself in Māori studies."

"Taking Māori Studies has been a journey in self-discovery – who I am and where I come from. I have been inspired to do more with iwi and have been learning about different tikanga and kaupapa, and how you can implement them in today's society."

"A big thing at Otago, especially Te Tumu – School of Māori, Pacific and Indigenous Studies is whanaungatanga, belonging. Te Tumu encourages the tuakana-teina, elder sibling-younger sibling relationship when it comes to learning te reo. As beginner language learners, our tuākana supported us, and now we support our tēina. Also, the staff make a huge difference to the way in which we look at ourselves as students of the language and culture. They are always there to support us, all year round."

Kelly initially chose some Communication Studies papers because she felt that they would be useful to her when she heads overseas. She has now discovered that Communication Studies works very well with Māori Studies. "Now I am able to look at things from an indigenous point of view. In social media and the media itself there is a specific way of viewing Māori, which is very narrow. We're orators and we tell stories in many different ways, such as through performance. I want to share a deeper awareness of what our culture is really about."

"If you were to translate from Māori to English, even the simplest sentences sound almost Shakespearean, or sometimes a bit like Master Yoda! Learning Māori Studies is definitely one of the coolest things I've done. It has given me the knowledge and confidence to apply what I have learned outside the university setting, to society."



For questions about
Māori Studies
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