He Kura Matanui/Indigenous Development

Be an agent of change

“Indigenous peoples … have much to contribute to society, and they bring to both national and international debates valuable advice about the great issues facing humanity in this new millennium.”

Ole Henrik Magga
Sami linguist and politician

He Kura Matanui/Indigenous Development will broaden your understanding of the world as you explore humanity’s cultural diversity. It will change your world-view as you learn about the cultural, social and economic development of indigenous peoples. You will explore the dynamic living cultures of indigenous peoples and learn how indigenous knowledge systems can generate change that is sustainable, transformative and of benefit to everyone.
What is Indigenous Development?

In many countries the importance of indigenous knowledge is severely undervalued. It is at risk of becoming extinct because of social, political, economic and environmental changes rapidly occurring on a global scale.

According to the World Indigenous Business Forum:

“Indigenous development is the organized effort by Indigenous Peoples to honor, enhance, and restore their well-being while retaining a distinctiveness that is consistent with their ancestral values, aspirations, ways of working, and priorities on behalf of all Future Generations. Their efforts also strive to share a holistic model of livelihood that respects the Creator, the Earth and promotes sustainability now and for the generations to come.”

Indigenous Development at Otago

He Kura Matanui/Indigenous Development is a multi-disciplinary programme that combines indigenous knowledge with a range of other subjects. It focuses on the contemporary cultural, social, and economic development of indigenous peoples in a local, national and international context, with a particular focus on Māori and Pacific Islands cultures.

The major comprises a core of papers about Māori, Pacific and other indigenous concepts, values, ideas and practices. 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.

He Kura Matanui/Indigenous Development 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 design and conduct research that will encourage open-minded solutions.

Areas of learning

A particular strength of this subject area is its cross-disciplinary nature, readily combining indigenous knowledge with a range of other disciplines. You are required to do core papers in Māori Studies and Pacific Islands Studies in combination with papers offered in participating departments that have a particular indigenous focus. Subjects include:

- Anthropology
- Archaeology
- Geography
- History
- Māori Studies
- Marketing
- Media, Film and Communication
- Pacific Islands Studies
- Physical Education
- Spanish
- Tourism

Because of the multi-disciplinary nature of this major you are able to tailor your own programme of study by choosing papers that suit your interests and career needs.

Why study Indigenous Development?

Whether you want to promote the interests of indigenous people locally or around the world doing a major in He Kura Matanui/Indigenous Development will help you achieve this.

In this programme of study you will learn the value of indigenous knowledge, how it can be preserved, transferred and adapted to suit the needs of modern indigenous communities.

These communities exist in a constantly changing environment. Being able to track the effect of these changes provides insights into how to formulate better, relevant and more inclusive policies and plans for the future development of these peoples.

Indigenous knowledge has its place in every aspect of society. No matter your interest He Kura Matanui/Indigenous Development complements many courses of study:

- environmental sustainability
- resource management
- agriculture
- policy development
- education
- language revitalisation
- primary health care and preventative medicine
- economic wellbeing and independence
- community development

He Kura Matanui/Indigenous Development encourages you to explore the connectivity between these disciplines to enable indigenous communities to determine their own future.

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

Career opportunities

Our students are equipped with an understanding of indigenous cultural philosophies that are relevant in a myriad of employment situations.

Graduates with a degree in He Kura Matanui/Indigenous Development have a broad interdisciplinary knowledge base, which can lead to careers in the fields of:

- Education
- Social Work
- Business
- Law
- Policy and Governance
- Health
- Community organisations

For questions about Indigenous Development:

otago.ac.nz/te-tumu

PROFILE

Stevie TeHau-Fergusson

Ngāti Kahungunu, Ngāi Tahu/Kai Tahu, Rongowhakaata

BA Indigenous Development, BCom Management

Stevie TeHau-Fergusson says going to university was ‘a journey that was always meant to happen’, but she came down to Otago because of her best friend. “I come from a small rural town in Central Hawkes Bay and none of my immediate or extended family finished high school, so it was a scary thing, for all of us, for me to come to university at the bottom of a completely different island.”

She’s loved it – her studies, the University and Dunedin. “I really enjoyed the papers in indigenous development as I learned about the struggles and challenges indigenous people were faced with; discovering more of the history we didn’t get at high school. Also, the papers worked really well with my commerce degree in management.”

At Te Tumu – School of Māori, Pacific and Indigenous Studies, “the staff are so welcoming, they are always there to support us. They are so passionate about what they do, they have lived and breathed what they are teaching and that makes it easier to connect with students.”

For the Humanities Practicum Internship paper, Stevie was an intern with KUMA – Te Kupeka Umaka Māori ki Araiteuru, the Southern Māori Business network. “I did research for KUMA, looking over their strategic plan, their constitution and some of their practices, to see if they were translating their values into practice.”

Several things have come from this internship – Stevie has gained a wider community network through KUMA, and she has been offered a job with them over the summer. She has also decided to go on to postgraduate study in the Master of Indigenous Studies programme.

“I wanted to break the stereotypical cycle… I could have worked in the shearing sheds or at the freezing works, but studying here has given me so much more confidence and independence. I am very thankful I came.”