

## “Hawaiian Place of Learning”: College Students’ Perceptions Over Time

Monica Stitt-Bergh, PhD, and Jenna Caparoso, MEd

1. The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM) has a responsibility to the indigenous people of Hawai'i, their language and culture
  - a. UHM's unique goal: be a *Hawaiian Place of Learning* (HPL) for all students
2. Values and concepts associated with UHM's vision of a HPL
  - Ahupua'a: land division with mountain ridges as natural boundaries in which land, sky, and ocean are ancestors and cared for, nurtured, and honored
  - Aloha: kindness, compassion, affection
  - Malama i ka 'āina & malama i ke kai: caring for the land and sea that sustain us
  - Kaiāulu: community
  - Kuleana: responsibility (to honor the indigenous people)
  - 'Ohana: family
3. Primary question: Did students' perception of UHM as a *Hawaiian Place of Learning* (HPL) change over time?
4. Method
  - a. 251 students in a longitudinal study, 2010-2016; six online surveys per year
5. **Definition of *Hawaiian Place of Learning* (HPL)**
  - a. Welcoming of diverse people: 94% agreement in 2011 → 93% agreement in 2014
  - b. Opportunities to experience Hawaiian values: 87% → 94%
  - c. Opportunities to study Hawaiian culture/language: 93% → 93%
  - d. Location on a tropical island in the Pacific: 90% → 87%
    - i. Decreased in 2014, particularly for Native/Part Hawaiian: 71% → 44%
  - e. Laid-back, relaxed atmosphere: 78% → 67%
    - i. Decreased in 2014, particularly for Hawai'i residents and Native/Part Hawaiian students: 92% → 44%
6. **Amount of learning about Native Hawaiian culture or issues**
  - a. Largest percentage of students reported learning “a lot” and “a moderate amount” during the first three semesters (26% in first semester, 41% second, and 31% third semester)
  - b. Learning occurred in and out of the officially-designated Hawaiian, Asian, Pacific Issues (HAP) course
  - c. 56% (140 students) reported learning about Native Hawaiian culture/issues in at least half of their semesters at UHM; 11% (28) left without learning about Native Hawaiian culture
  - d. Important learning took place in language courses, Hawaiian Studies, English, Linguistics, and Anthropology courses

## 7. Extent to which UHM is a HPL

- a. 58% perceived Mānoa as a HPL in 2012 (sophomore year) →  
60% in 2014 (senior year)
- b. Decreased over time for non-resident students, 87% → 70%; increased for Hawai'i residents, 50% → 57%
- c. Increased over time for Native/Part Hawaiian students, 63% → 88%

“There's only one central place distinguished as ‘Hawaiian Place of Learning’ on campus--down on Dole Street. On Upper Campus, doesn't feel very much Hawaiian place of learning because so many other more Western/Foreign classes take precedence. I wish they'd . . . expand Hawaiian Presence on Upper Campus.”—student

“I think the University tries to incorporate Hawaiian elements into its facilities/policies/ practices. UH also teaches Hawaiian and requires all students to take a course focused in Hawaiian studies or Pacific Islander studies in order to graduate.”—student

## 8. Importance of HPL

- a. 51% believed it's important for UHM to be a HPL in 2012 (sophomore year) →  
58% in 2014 (senior year)

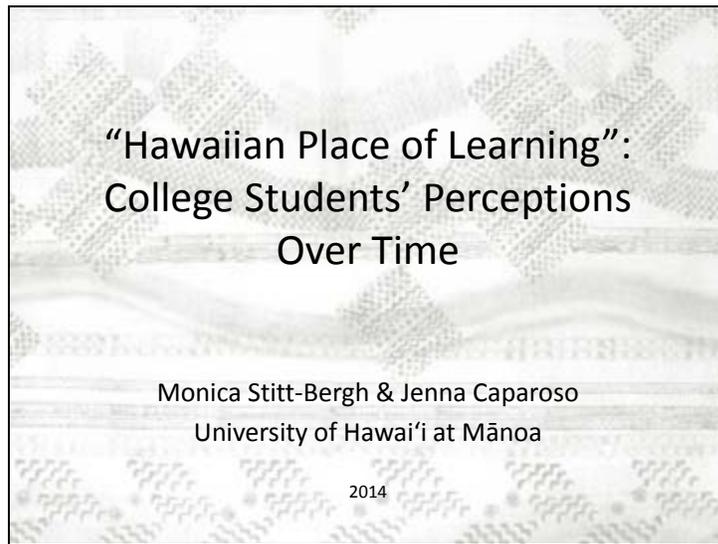
“Personally, I am not Hawaiian but I do appreciate the cultural knowledge I have gained since being here. I think it is important that people learn about Hawaiian culture because we are living in Hawaii.”—student

## 9. UHM has had some success in creating a *Hawaiian Place of Learning (HPL)*, but more is needed

- a. Students' descriptions of HPL matched UHM's vision in these areas:
  - Aloha (kindness, compassion, affection)
  - 'Ohana (family)
  - Kaiāulu (community)
  - Kuleana (responsibility to honor the indigenous people)
- b. 94% of students reported learning about Native Hawaiian culture and issues
- c. At the end of their fourth year, 29% believed UHM is a little HPL or not at all
- d. At the end of their fourth year, 34% stated that it is of little to no importance that UHM be a HPL
- e. Student suggestions
  - Use examples from Hawai'i as part of course content
  - Hawaiian cultural events on campus
  - Hawaiian chants
  - Hawaiian food on campus
  - Hawaiian architectural design
  - Native plants with signage
- f. Next step: Find a champion(s) to lead the infusion/integration of HPL across campus
- g. Longitudinal design
  - i. Strengths: explore hypotheses, rewarding to see development/change
  - ii. Challenges: data management, maintaining participant interest, attrition

“Learning about the Hawaiians won't help me with my future career or in my major, so I feel besides getting the foundation credit for it, it doesn't matter to me if UHM is a Hawaiian Place of Learning or not.”—student

*Mahalo for listening*



“Hawaiian Place of Learning”: College Students’ Perceptions Over Time

Monica Stitt-Bergh, Assessment Office, University of Hawai’i at Mānoa; Jenna Caparoso, Graduate Assistant, University of Hawai’i at Mānoa

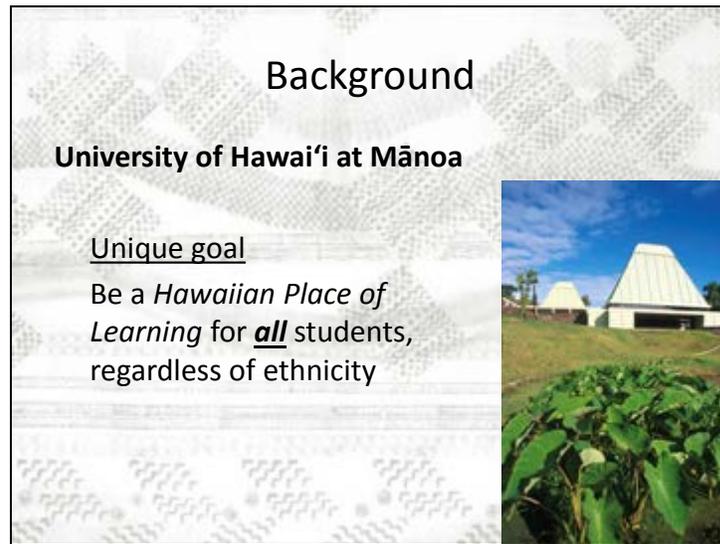
ABSTRACT

The University of Hawai’i at Mānoa’s strategic plan includes being a “Hawaiian Place of Learning.” In this presentation we describe our longitudinal study (2010-2014) that captured student perceptions related to Hawaiian Place of Learning (HPL). We present results such as students’ HPL definitions, HPL’s importance to them, extent to which they view the university as a HPL, and their self-reports of amount learned about Native Hawaiian culture and where that learning took place. In addition, we discuss the strengths and challenges of a longitudinal research design and next steps regarding use of results.

Presentation at the Hawai’i-Pacific Evaluation Association conference, September 5, 2014



The University of Hawai'i Board of Regents and all 10 campuses have stated their responsibility to the indigenous people of Hawai'i.



Within the context of minority and indigenous-serving institutions, the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa has a unique goal. The typical Historically Black College and Tribal College aim to correct for socio-economic inequalities and create a culturally safe space for the indigenous students.

On the other hand, Mānoa's goal is become a Hawaiian Place of Learning for **all** students, regardless of ethnicity. Mānoa has the perspective that the host-culture values and knowledge have something to teach the Mānoa community.

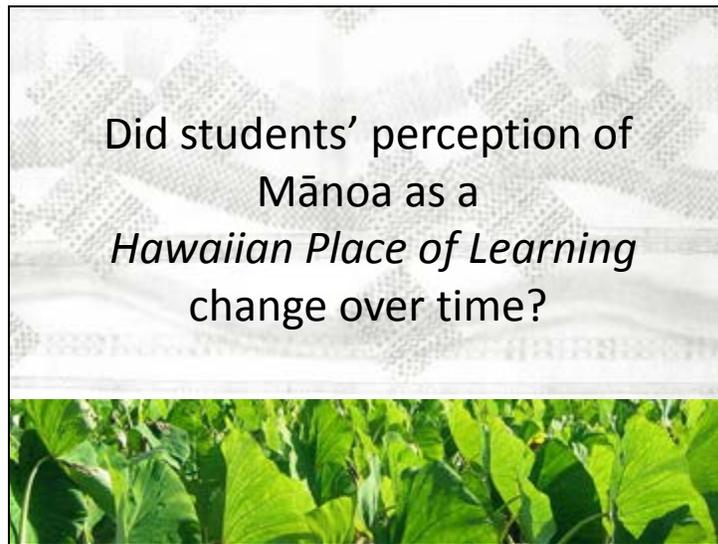
For Kanaka Maoli (Native Hawaiians), the goal includes knowing their genealogical stories and living into the values of kupuna in a 21<sup>st</sup> century context. For others in the Mānoa community, it includes learning/understanding so they can respect and appreciate all that feeds and nourishes them as they live on these islands. Depth of knowledge is the goal. The desired attitude is NOT the Kanaka Maoli attitude for all people; it's an attitude that embraces particular values of the host culture.

<i>Hawaiian Place of Learning (HPL)</i>	
<b>ahupua'a</b>	land division with mountain ridges as natural boundaries in which land, sky, & ocean are ancestors & cared for, nurtured, and honored
<b>aloha</b>	kindness, compassion, affection
<b>malama i ka 'āina &amp; malama i ke kai</b>	caring for the land and sea that sustain us
<b>kaiāulu</b>	community
<b>kuleana</b>	responsibility (to honor the indigenous people)
<b>'ohana</b>	family

Since 1999, Mānoa has positioned Hawaiian Place of Learning as a fundamental element of the campus vision and referenced these particular Hawaiian values and concepts in the strategic plan and other planning documents.

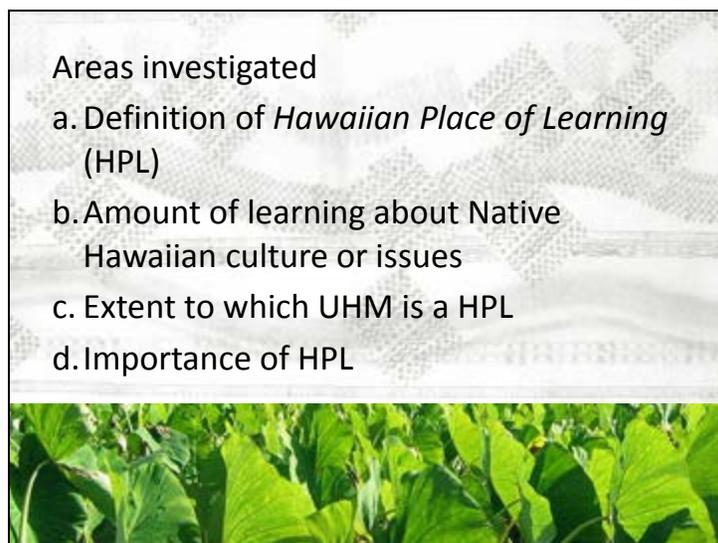
Mānoa began several initiatives including new undergraduate course requirements and the Hawai'inuiākea School of Hawaiian Knowledge. The new course requirements were part of the general education program and faculty teaching the new courses and those interested were offered faculty development opportunities.

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In this evaluation, one of our questions was whether students' perceptions of Mānoa as a Hawaiian Place of Learning changed over time between their first and fourth year.

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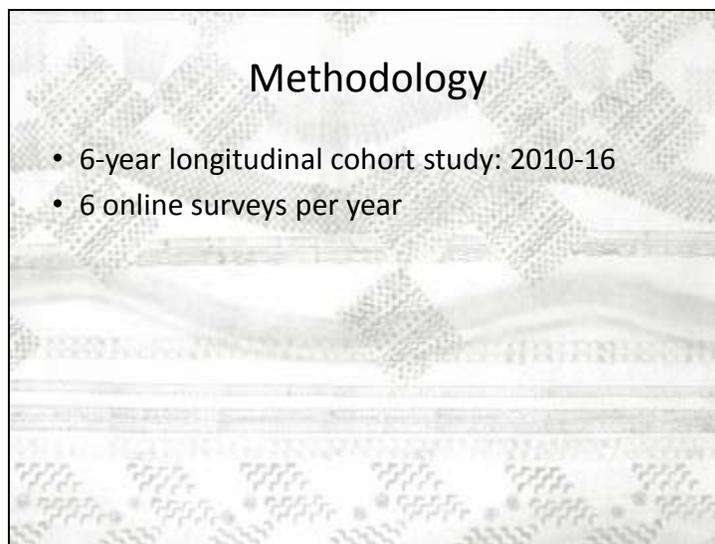


We investigated these four areas and looked at student perceptions of each of these at several points in time.

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We started a longitudinal cohort study in fall 2010, which will continue through spring 2016. The results we're presenting today are part of a larger project on undergraduate student learning. Today we're reporting on results from a subset of the online survey questions.

## Student Participants

- Convenience and random sampling
- Student sample
  - 251 first-time, first-year college students, fall 2010



We recruited 251 students (14% of the incoming class) using a combination of convenience and random sampling.

Overall, the cohort is representative of the incoming class of first-time, first-year students.

No difference from the incoming population in terms of high school GPA, admissions test scores, and age.

Regarding ethnicity, the cohort was similar to the population EXCEPT the cohort had a few more Asian students and fewer Caucasians.

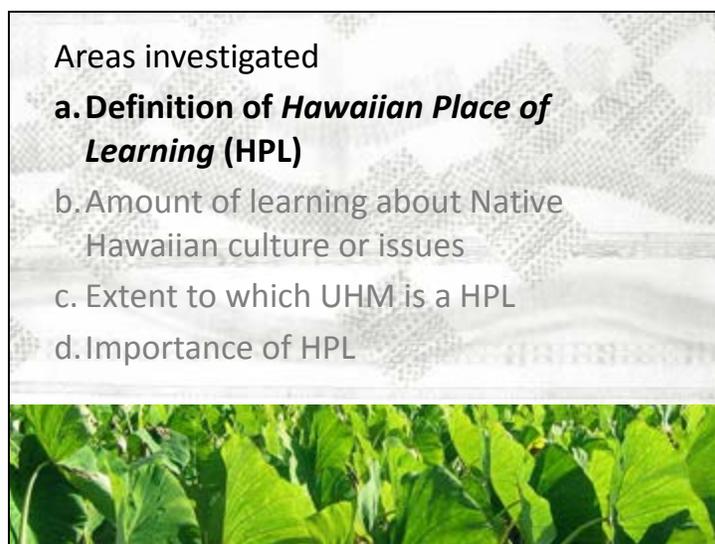
Also, the cohort had slightly more residents of Hawai'i and more females.

10% of the cohort was Hawaiian, which was not statistically different from the population, which had 12% Hawaiian.

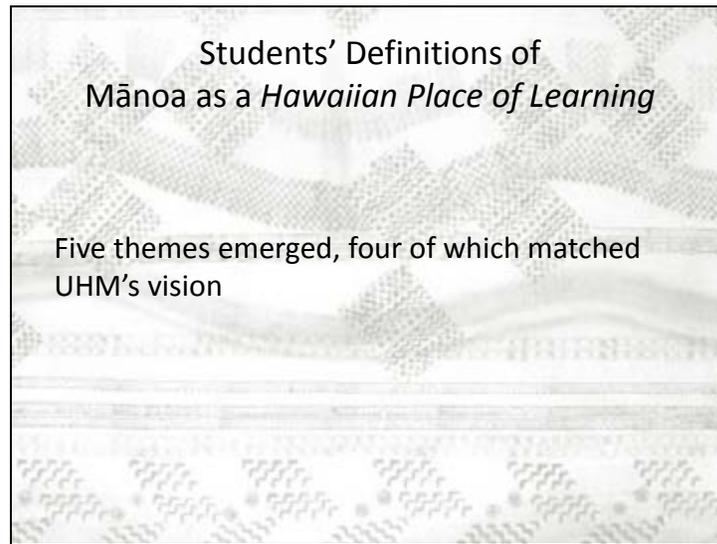
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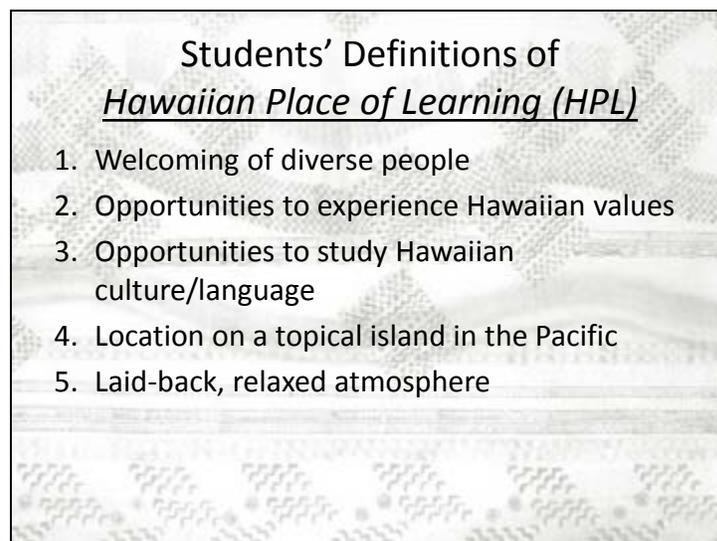


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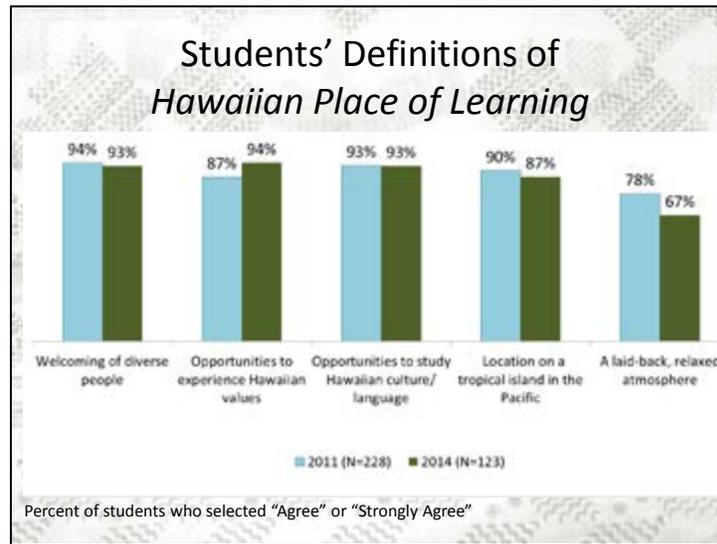


We asked an opened-ended question in which students described *Hawaiian Place of Learning* and five themes emerged, four of which matched UHM's vision.

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The first four correspond to UHM's vision while the 5<sup>th</sup>, "laid-back, relaxed atmosphere" is not part of the HPL vision.



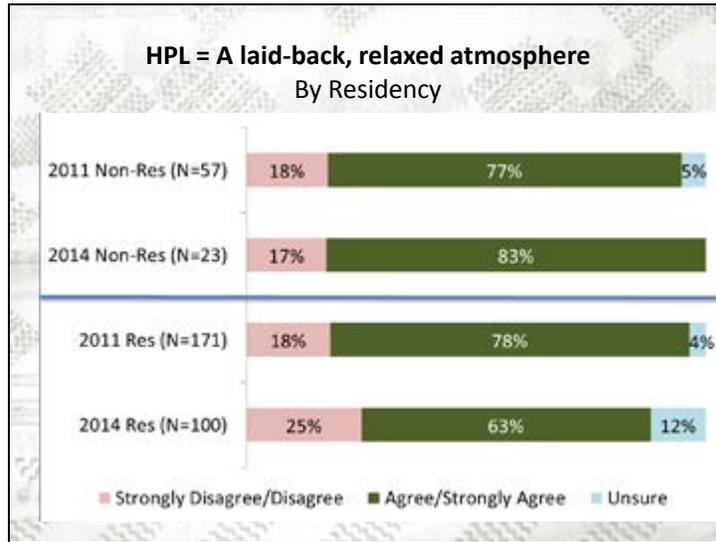
We used the five themes that emerged and created a closed-ended question for subsequent surveys.

This chart compares students' responses in 2011, when they were freshmen, to their responses in 2014, when they were seniors.

Overall, little change between 2011 and 2014.

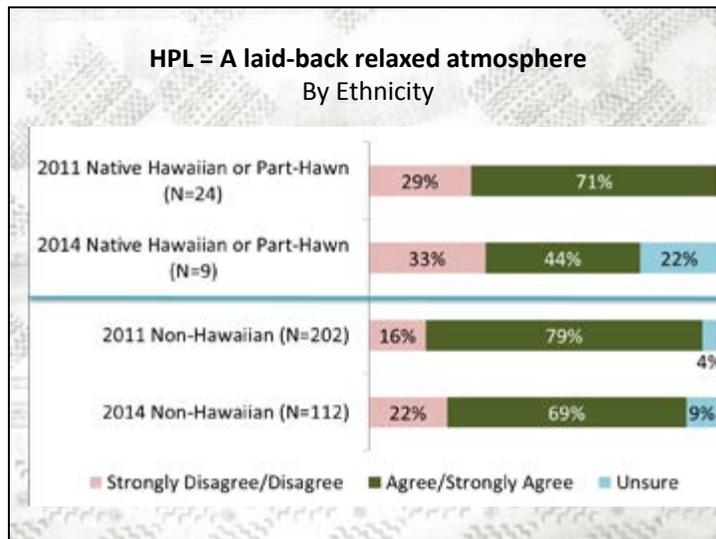
"Laid-back, relaxed atmosphere," however, decreased from 78% agreeing to 67% agreeing that it belongs in a definition of HPL.

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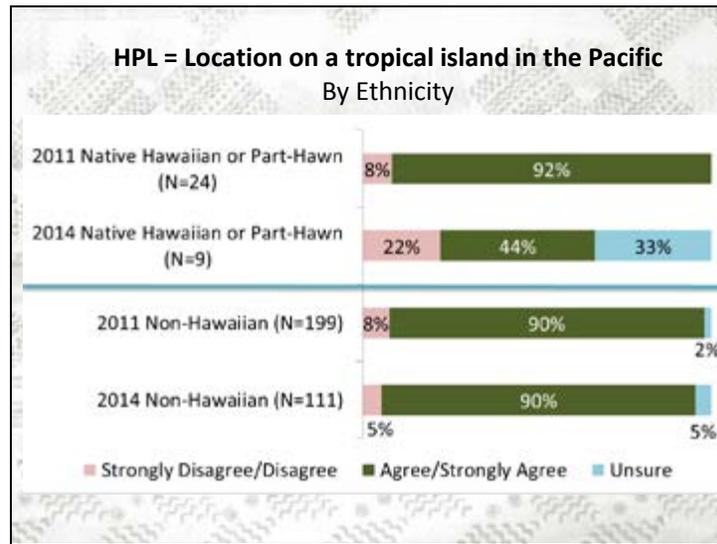


A closer look revealed differences between residents and non-residents of Hawai'i. On one hand, the percent of non-resident students who thought “laid-back, relaxed atmosphere” increased while for residents, the percent in agreement decreased.

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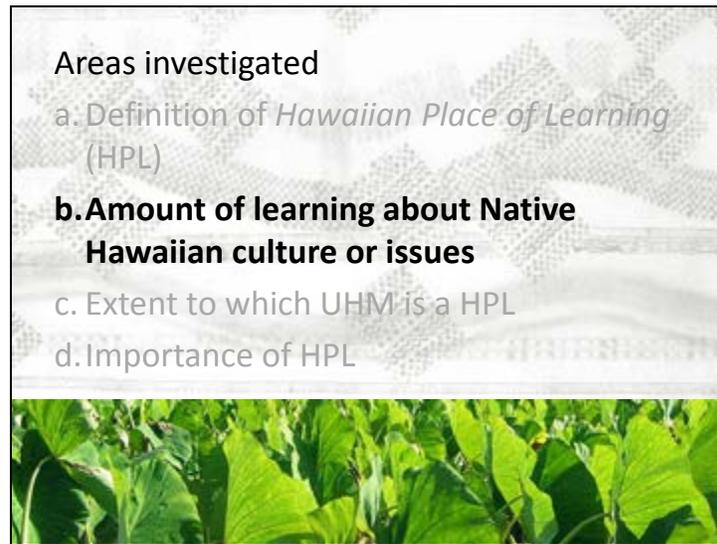


And, there were differences by ethnicity. This chart shows two groups: Native and Part-Hawaiian and all non-Hawaiians. The change in the level of agreement/disagreement and “unsure” was dramatic for Native Hawaiians.

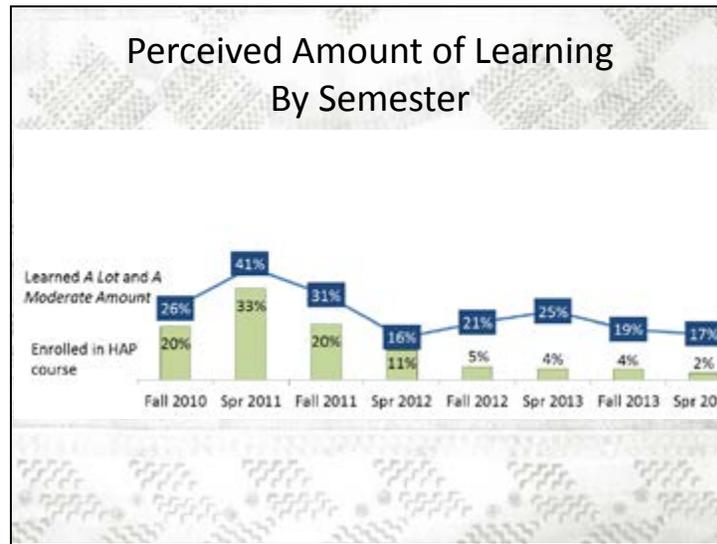


In regards to location on an island in the Pacific, between 2011 and 2014, there was little overall change, 90% agreed or strongly agreed in 2011 and 87% in 2014. Only a 3% difference.

However, there was a noticeable change in Native Hawaiian students' perception. When they were seniors, a greater proportion disagreed that location, in and of itself, should be included in a definition of HPL. And 33% were unsure.



At the end of each semester we asked students how much they learned about Native Hawaiian culture or issues and where important learning took place.



As I mentioned in the introduction, Mānoa created new course requirements for students and offered faculty development workshops so faculty from all disciplines could offer these courses. One required course is called, “HAP” – Hawaiian, Asian, and Pacific Issues. These courses must include Native Hawaiian culture or issues as a significant part of the course content and the course must present that content from the Native Hawaiian viewpoint—Native Hawaiian voices. These courses also compare/contrast either Asian or Pacific Island cultures and viewpoint with the Native Hawaiian world view.

Students also take two global and multicultural courses that include a section on Hawai‘i.

Most students take these courses during their freshmen and sophomore years.

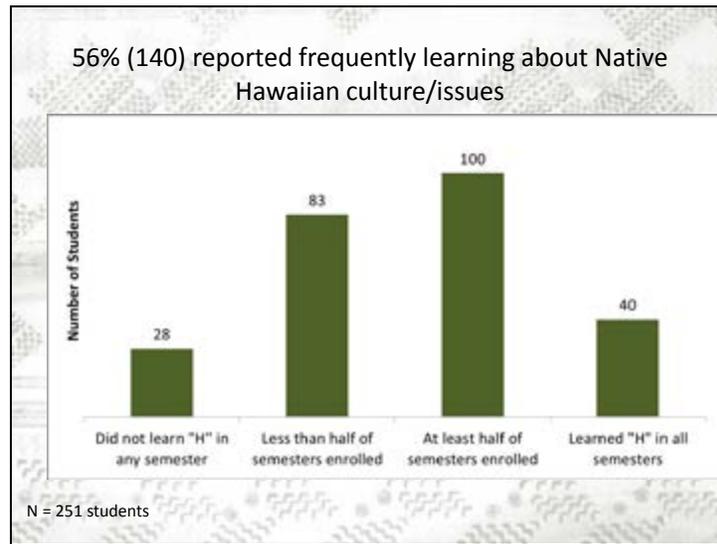
Each semester, we asked students in the online survey how much they learned about Native Hawaiian culture/issues.

The blue line shows the percent of students who reported learning “a lot” or “a moderate amount” by semester.

The green bars show the percent of students who were enrolled in an officially designated HAP course that semester.

As we expected, the more students enrolled in a HAP course, the more who perceived learning. However, we were very happy to see that even when enrollment in the HAP course declined, students were still reporting learning. This suggests that courses across the curriculum were including Native Hawaiian culture/issues in their course content.

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We also took a look whether any student exited Mānoa without learning anything about Native Hawaiian culture or issues.

This chart shows that 28 students—11%—in the longitudinal study reported no learning about “H” in any of the end-of-semester surveys they completed.

On the other hand, 40 students reported learning about “H” in every semester.

Overall, 56% (140 students) learned about “H” in at least half of their semesters at Mānoa.

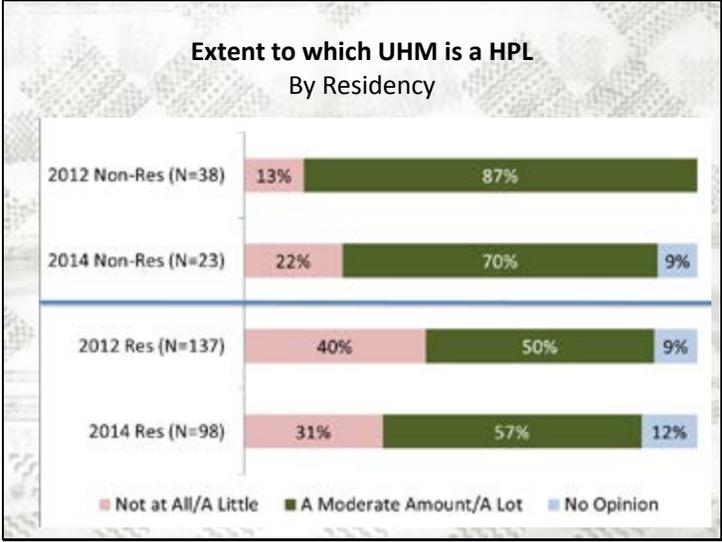
[Note: includes all students in the cohort study, including those who dropped out of Mānoa.]



We asked students where important learning about “H” took place and these were the top 5 areas.

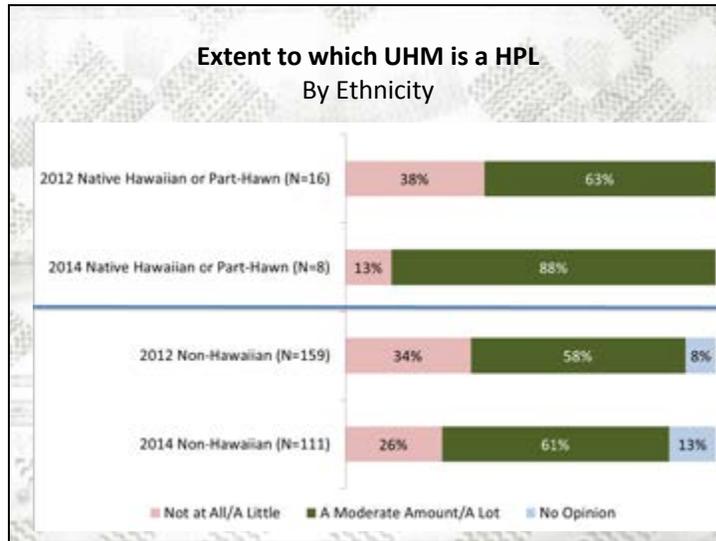
The first two are not surprising. We were very happy to see English, Linguistics, and Anthropology listed as places where H content was being addressed.





When we disaggregated the data by residency, we found that a smaller percent of non-residents selected “a moderate amount” or “a lot” when they were seniors and 9% had no opinion. Residents were different: a larger percentage selected “a moderate amount” or “a lot” when they were seniors.

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When we disaggregated by ethnicity, we saw a very large jump in the percent of Native Hawaiians who responded that Mānoa was moderately HPL or a lot. The non-Hawaiian group did not vary much across the years.

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*UHM is a Hawaiian Place of Learning...*

“I think the University tries to incorporate Hawaiian elements into its facilities/policies/practices. UH also teaches Hawaiian and requires all students to take a course focused in Hawaiian studies or Pacific Islander studies in order to graduate.”

We asked students to explain their rationale and here are two typical responses. Those who agreed highlighted efforts Mānoa has made.

UHM is NOT a *Hawaiian Place of Learning*...

“There's only one central place distinguished as "Hawaiian Place of Learning" on campus--down on Dole Street. On Upper Campus, doesn't feel very much Hawaiian place of learning because so many other more Western/Foreign classes take precedence. I wish they'd . . . expand Hawaiian Presence on Upper Campus.”

Students who felt UHM was not a *Hawaiian Place of Learning* typically described *Hawaiian Place of Learning* as limited to certain aspects and not infused in the campus or curriculum.

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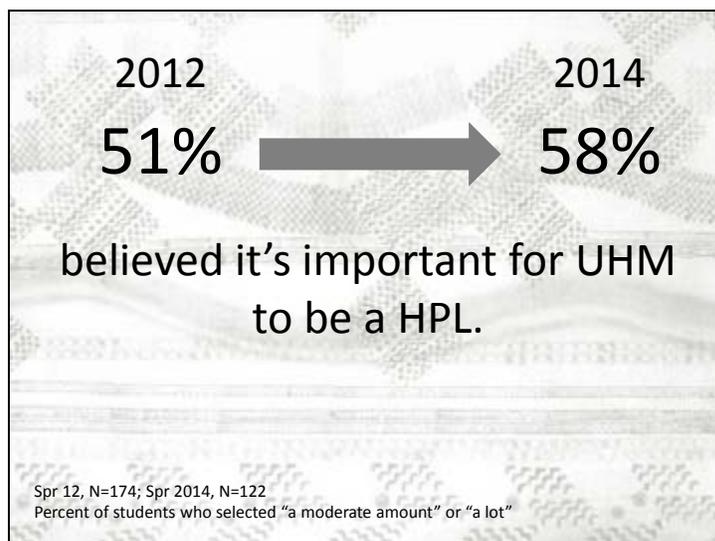
Areas investigated

- a. Definition of *Hawaiian Place of Learning* (HPL)
- b. Amount of learning about Native Hawaiian culture or issues
- c. Extent to which UHM is a HPL
- d. Importance of HPL**



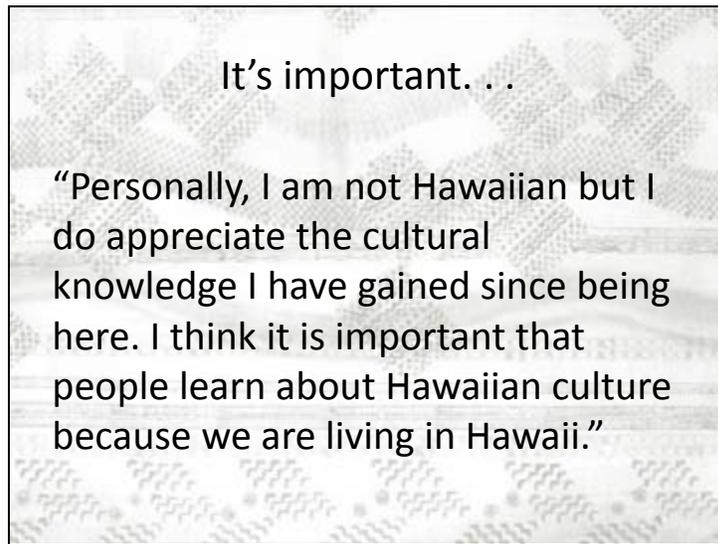
We also asked students whether they believed it's important for UHM to be a Hawaiian Place of Learning in 2012 and 2014.

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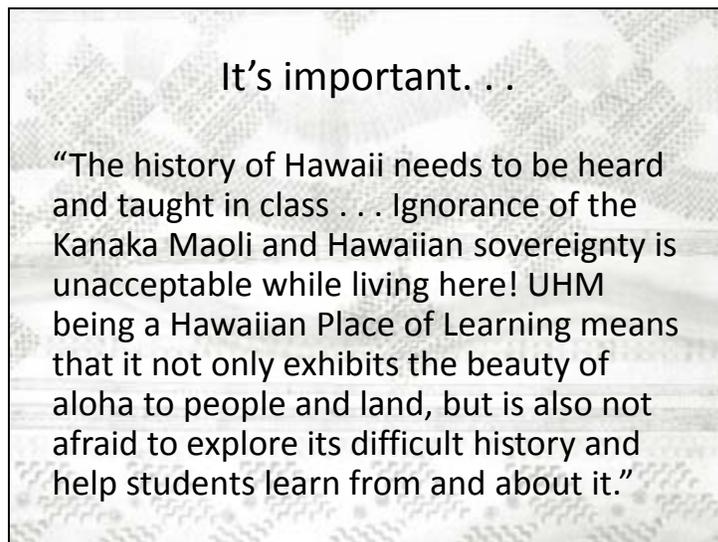
When they were sophomores in 2012, 51% believed it was important for UHM to be a *Hawaiian Place of Learning*. When they were seniors in 2014, we saw an increase, but still just over half saw it as important.

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We asked students to explain their rationale.

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It's not (so) important. . .

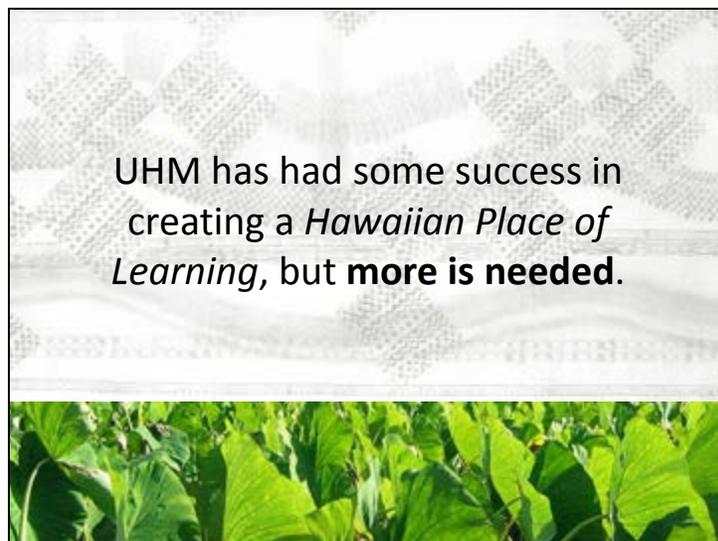
“Learning about the Hawaiians won't help me with my future career or in my major, so I feel besides getting the foundation credit for it, it doesn't matter to me if UHM is a Hawaiian Place of Learning or not.”

The typical reason students felt it was not important was that they perceived a *Hawaiian Place of Learning* as not connected to their major or personal interests.

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Given these results, it appears that UHM has had some success in creating a *Hawaiian Place of Learning* for all students, but more is needed.

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**Mānoa Successes**

- Students' descriptions of HPL matched UHM's vision in these areas:
  - Aloha (kindness, compassion, affection)
  - 'Ohana (family)
  - Kaiāulu (community)
  - Kuleana (responsibility to honor the indigenous people)

I'll point out a couple areas of success.

First, students' descriptions of HPL matched UHM's vision in these areas: aloha, 'ohana, kaiāulu, and kuleana.

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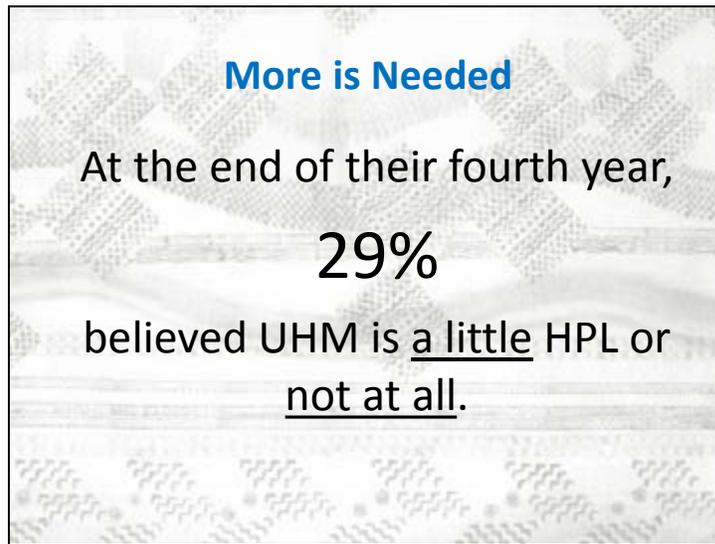
**Mānoa Successes**

**94%**

**learned about Native Hawaiian culture and issues.**

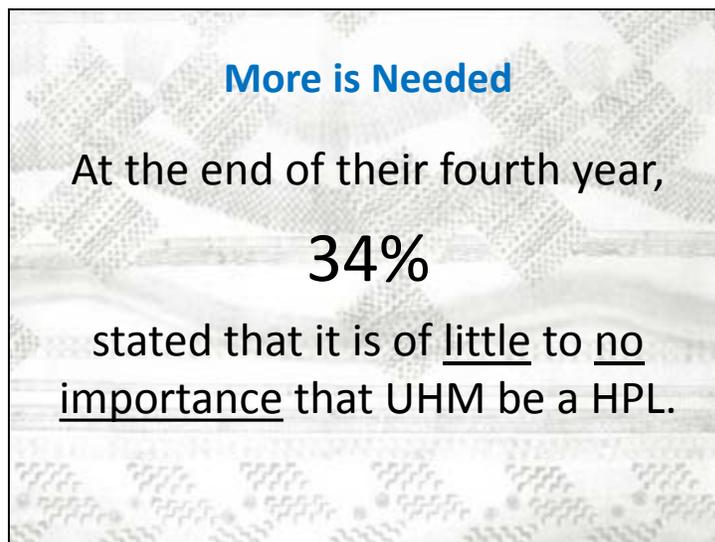
When we look at four years' worth of results, 94% of the students reported learning about Native Hawaiian culture/issues in at least one semester.

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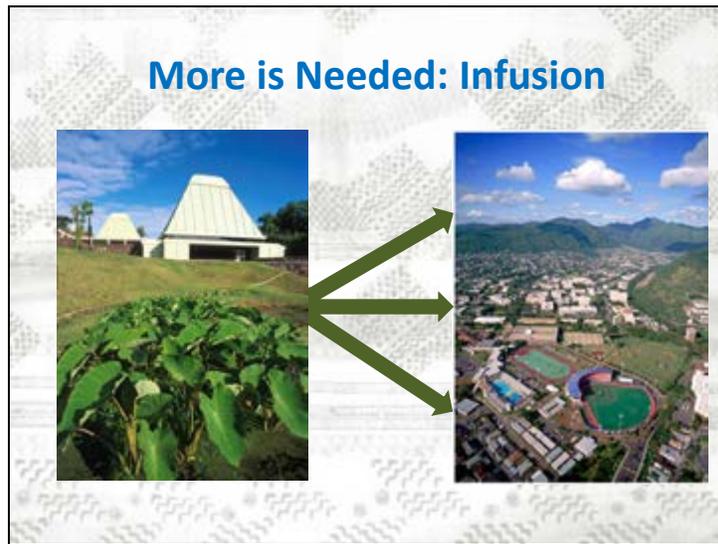
Despite these successes, more is needed because at the end of their fourth year, 29% believed UHM is only “a little” *Hawaiian Place of Learning* or not at all.

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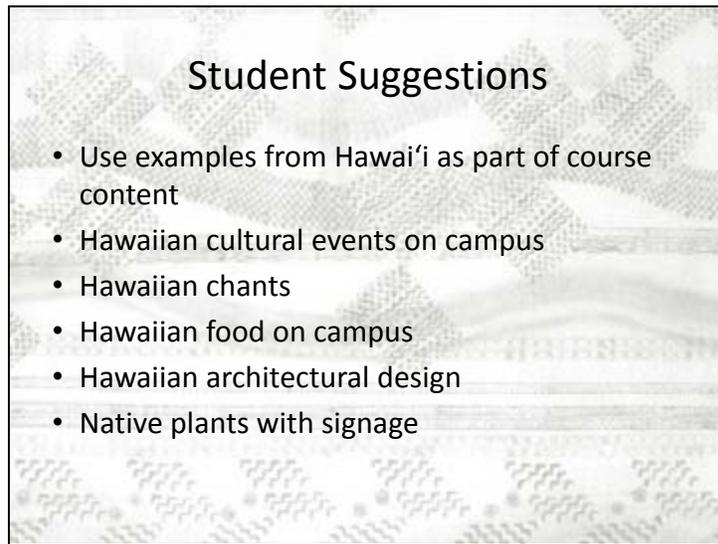
34% stated that it is of little to no importance to them that UHM be a Hawaiian Place of Learning.

[This is a decrease from 41% in 2012, but 34% is still quite high.]



A theme that emerged from the results is summed up by one student who said, “I think the Hawaiian perspective should be a little more prevalent in our curriculum and campus life.”

Students saw *Hawaiian Place of Learning* in the Kamakakūokalani Center for Hawaiian Studies building, pictured left, and in certain courses, but they thought to be a HPL, Hawaiian knowledge and values should be more integrated into courses across campus and in campus life.



Students had suggestions for Mānoa:

- Use examples from Hawai'i as part of course content – students gave examples from their English, Sociology, Anthropology classes which included units on ethnicity in HI, Hawaiian sovereignty, Hawaiian ways of thinking, etc.
- Hawaiian cultural events on campus
- Hawaiian chants
- Hawaiian food on campus – for example, students in the dorms said that at a *Hawaiian Place of Learning* the cafeteria would not serve so many tater tots.
- Hawaiian architectural design
- Native plants with signage



The next step for us is to find a champion or group of champions to lead the infusion and integration of HPL into more aspects of the student experience. That's what I'll be working on this semester.

Use of results takes effort and we need help to ensure Mānoa's vision of being a *Hawaiian Place of Learning* for **all** students, regardless of ethnicity, is achieved.

Longitudinal Design	
<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explore hypotheses<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Use open-ended questions to generate closed-ended options</li></ul></li><li>• Rewarding for the researchers</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Data management</li><li>• Maintaining participant interest<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Attrition</li></ul></li></ul>

I'll close with comments on the longitudinal design. There are known strengths and weaknesses in longitudinal studies. I'll highlight the ones that are most important to us in this study.

First, it's wonderful to be able to explore hypotheses. For example, we can ask an open-ended question in one survey and then use those results to craft a closed-ended question in the next survey.

It's rewarding for us as researchers to see the development and changes across time.

On the down side, data management is an ongoing task.

We have to actively maintain participant interest. One way we do that is by telling them the results and what we've done with those results.

**Mahalo!**

<b>Monica Stitt-Bergh, PhD</b>	<b>Jenna Caparoso, MEd</b>
Associate Specialist Assessment Office University of Hawai'i at Mānoa bergh@hawaii.edu	PhD Candidate, Educational Administration Graduate Assistant, Assessment Office University of Hawai'i at Mānoa caparoso@hawaii.edu



Mahalo nui!