

Title: Navigating our way through the research needs of Hawaiian Studies scholars

Presenters: Kawena Komeiji, Keahiahi Long, Kapena Shim

Abstract:

Traditionally, academic libraries and their practices have organized knowledge in ways that mirror a non-indigenous, western-biased perspective of the world. For indigenous researchers, navigating this organizational library structure to find information will have its challenges, successes and limitations. How can academic librarians better support indigenous researchers? What kinds of research challenges do indigenous researchers face when looking for information? What kinds of new structures, processes, and services do academic libraries need to move towards to better support indigenous studies? How can academic librarians and indigenous studies faculty work more collaboratively together to create a stronger library that supports indigenous studies and culturally appropriate ways to preserve and make accessible traditional knowledge?

In response to these questions, 11 research teams of academic librarians from 12 institutions are conducting a collaborative qualitative study on how to support the research needs of Indigenous Studies scholars at their home institutions. The studies are in collaboration with Ithaka S+R, a not-for-profit organization. The University of Hawai'i team, consisting of five Native Hawaiian librarians, interviewed Hawaiian Studies faculty from almost each of the University's ten campuses to better understand how UH academic libraries can better support the research and teaching research needs of the Hawaiian Studies field and its faculty and students. The faculty interviewed represent a diverse range of teaching and research faculty from community colleges to research-intensive campuses. Members of the research team will present the project's design and findings, share challenges/successes of the study, and opportunities for the future based on the data collected.