

## Quantitative Evaluation

### Quantitative Evaluation Findings

Across the 2007-2008 school year, differences were examined between KHS ethnic studies students and a comparison group of similar students not taking ethnic studies. Relative to the comparison group, ethnic studies students increased their:

- involvement with groups different than their own;
- understanding of ethnic studies terms and concepts;
- commitment to their community's improvement;
- belief in having the capacity to relate to people from different backgrounds; and
- sense of power as individuals.

Counter-intuitively, relative to the comparison group, ethnic studies students increased their belief in men's role as final decision-makers (regarding gender roles).

In 2011, surveys were conducted to evaluate the course unit developed around the book, *The Tattoo*. When looking at just the KHS ethnic studies students before and after *The Tattoo* Unit:

- Students increased their awareness and understanding of different forms of violence.
- Students increased their acknowledgment that they do not need to fight in order to stand up for themselves, and that there are other alternatives.
- At pre-test, students who admitted to acting violently attributed the decision to another person. At post-test, students attributed the decision to the need to protect themselves, a family member, or a friend.
- After the unit, more students reported that being non-violent (1) is the right decision, (2) is the best way to avoid getting hurt or hurting others, and (3) will positively affect their future.
- Most enjoyed the unit as it was relatable, and allowed them to be more aware of themselves and others.

Further details can be found at:

- Rehuher, D., Momohara, C.-B., Sugimoto-Matsuda, J., & Hishinuma, E. S. (2010, November). *Ethnic Studies Course evaluation, 2007-2008: Technical report*. Honolulu, HI: Report to Kailua High School.
- Momohara, C.-B., Sugimoto-Matsuda, J., Hishinuma, E., & Chang, J. (2011, August). *Kailua High School Ethnic Studies Evaluation—"Tattoo Unit": Technical report*. Honolulu, HI: Report to Kailua High School.

## Implications & Limitations

### Implications

- Ethnic studies courses that incorporate culturally relevant and social justice approaches to education have the potential to promote academic performance, personal growth, and prejudice reduction.
- The KHS curriculum offers suggestions for other schools, but it is not a prescriptive program. School communities need to take cultural context and individual needs of their learners into consideration when developing ethnic studies curricula.

### Limitations

- The qualitative study focused on only one unit of the course, and was conducted by one of the KHS ethnic studies teachers rather than an external program evaluator.
- The quantitative study used self-reported data and a relatively small sample size, although statistically significant results were found despite the small sample size. The 2007-2008 comparison group may have involved some self-selection of when the students wanted to take ethnic studies, and thus, was not a truly randomized control group. The 2011 pre-post comparison did not involve a comparison group. The ethnic distribution of the KHS students may not be representative of most high schools in Hawai'i.

### Resources

- Educationweek. (2012, March 29). Amber Makaiau [Video file]. Retrieved from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OT41EN5k1w0>
- Jackson, T. (1984). *Philosophy for children; philosophy in the schools project*. A guide for teachers.
- Makaiau, A., & Glassco, K. K. (2008). *Kailua High School ethnic studies and philosophy student workbook*.
- Makaiau, A., & Glassco, K. K. (2008). *Kailua High School ethnic studies and philosophy teacher's guide*.
- Makaiau, A. S. (2010). *Adolescent identity exploration in a multicultural community context; An educator's approach to rethinking identity interventions*. Doctoral Dissertation, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa.

### For More Information

- Amber Makaiau, Ph.D.—[maniniz@yahoo.com](mailto:maniniz@yahoo.com)
- Kailua High School—(808) 266-7900; [kailuahs.k12.hi.us](http://kailuahs.k12.hi.us)  
Note: This brochure's content is that of KHS and not necessarily of the organizations that provided funding.

# Ethnic Studies at Kailua High School



***"I've had hard classes before, but this one takes a lot of thinking. If they [students] get it, then they will leave with an appreciation for other cultures. That's something that you can't take away from someone."***

***- Mark Silva, Kailua High School Class of 2007, in the school newspaper, "Surfrider"***



***The following agencies and individuals contributed to the Kailua High School Ethnic Studies course and evaluation:***

***The Asian/Pacific Islander Youth Violence Prevention Center, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa***

***Dr. Amber Strong Makaiau & Ms. Kehau Glassco***

***Principal Francine Honda & Kailua High School administration, faculty, staff, & students***

***Philosophy for Children Hawai'i, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa***

***Department of Ethnic Studies, California State University, Sacramento***

***The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention***

***The Cooke Foundation***

***Queen Lili'uokalani Children's Center***

# The History of Ethnic Studies

## What is Ethnic Studies?

The academic discipline of ethnic studies was established in the late 1960s, at the height of the American civil rights movement. The purpose was to learn about the history of *all* ethnic groups through the words of the people who lived through those histories, as well as engage students to promote social justice in their communities. Ethnic studies programs at the university level have expanded across the nation, but high school classes remain few and far between.

## Creation of a High School Ethnic Studies Course

In 2004, two social studies teachers at Kailua High School (KHS) designed and implemented a culturally relevant ethnic studies course. This was part of a collaboration with the Asian/Pacific Islander Youth Violence Prevention Center (APIYVPC) at the University of Hawai'i, Mānoa, which included the Department of Ethnic Studies at California State University, Sacramento.

The curriculum was introduced as an after-school pilot program in 2005, and then became part of the school's regular offering in 2006. Since then, the course evolved using feedback from the APIYVPC's research, teacher action research, collaboration with community organizations (e.g., Philosophy for Children Hawai'i), and student feedback. In 2007, KHS's Principal made ethnic studies a required elective course for graduation, establishing KHS as the first school in the U.S. to have such a requirement.

## Course Goals

The main goals for the program focus on:

- Understanding of: the history of ethnic groups in the U.S., violence indicators, and ethnic identity of oneself and others
- Skills including: thinking critically and philosophically about ethnic studies concepts, interpersonal communication, and personal reflection
- Increasing: empathy for others, connectedness, empowerment to make positive changes in the community, and personal responsibility for resolving issues of violence

# Kailua High School

## Kailua High School (KHS)

KHS is a public high school located on the Windward side of O'ahu, Hawai'i. It services the two communities of Kailua and Waimānalo. As of the 2010-2011 school year, KHS's demographics were:

- Fall enrollment—866 students, of which 53% received free or reduced-cost lunch.
- Major ethnic groups—54% Native Hawaiian, 11% White, 10% Filipino, 9% Japanese, 4% Samoan.

## The Ethnic Studies Curriculum

Six major units were developed, plus a civic action unit, which requires a community-service project:

1. Citizenship and Participation: an intellectually safe community of inquiry is created, and the concept of civic engagement is introduced.
2. Contextual Background: a glossary is created, containing 54 terms/events related to ethnic studies.
3. Self-Concept: students apply the glossary to conduct an inquiry into their own self-concept.
4. Violence in Our Community: students read *The Tattoo* (or an alternative book), thinking critically about the text through writing and philosophical discussions.
5. Struggles for Ideal Democracy: students study historical experiences of ethnic groups in the U.S.

## Process Evaluation

The following describes how the program has grown since its inception.

YEAR	DESCRIPTION	STUDENTS	TEACHERS
05-06	Pilot After School	11 Mixed Grade	2
06-07	Elective During School	55 Juniors & Seniors	2
07-08	Required Elective for Graduation	320 Freshmen	2 + 15 in-serviced
08-09			3 + 14 in-serviced
09-10			4
10-11			4
11-12			4

# Qualitative Evaluation

## Qualitative Evaluation Findings

From 2005 to 2007, a large-scale qualitative study that involved 89 Kailua High School ethnic studies students was conducted to investigate the impact of the curriculum (see Makaiau, 2010). The study focused on the third unit of the course, where students inquired into their own self-concept and shared their findings with their community of inquiry.

Results from the study showed that students not only appeared to grow academically from their participation in the course, but also personally and inter-personally. Academically, the students developed their abilities to construct philosophical questions, gather relevant information for an inquiry from a variety of sources, analyze data, construct a well-reasoned thesis, write, reflect, and participate in a philosophical community of inquiry. They also showed increased understanding of ethnic studies vocabulary and concepts.

Personally and interpersonally the students explored their identity for the first time, recognized that they could affect the identity construction process, were helped through the developmental transition period of adolescence, and overcame prejudices towards others.

As one student put it: "I have learned that racism lives off of the racist remarks we make towards others. I am still living and still learning. I have much ahead of me to learn and experience. I blossomed into something more, my growth increase every day...I am a girl that honors all of my family names, I am a proud leader, and I am Hawaiian (Female, Age 17, 2007)."

