



Pacific Studies

BA

Bachelor of Arts major

Delve into the languages, cultures, histories and politics of the Pacific and its people.

Whether you're interested in increasing your understanding of contemporary Pacific issues, language, history or politics – Pacific Studies has something for you. Explore the cultures, identities and experiences of Pacific peoples both in the Pacific and in the diaspora, as well as their languages: Samoan and Tongan. Through this rich and varied discipline, you can develop your knowledge of dance and performance, health and wellbeing, innovation and sustainability, gender and globalisation, and Indigenous Pacific epistemologies.

Career possibilities

With critical thinking and problem-solving skills at the forefront of Pacific Studies, as well as diverse group settings that develop written and verbal communication skills, students are equipped for a broad range of careers. Find work in local and central governments, in the international arena, the public sector and NGOs or follow graduates into creative industries and the museum and heritage sector.

“My studies have opened so many doors for me, and the skills and knowledge that I have been able to acquire over the years of learning has allowed me to be a part of different boards and leadership roles. A lot of my career has revolved heavily around equitable outcomes for Maori and Pacific learners, and more importantly supporting our communities in understanding our education system.”



TEVITA FALEAFA

'Uiha, Ha'apai, Kolomotu'a, Hofoa

Senior Education Advisor, Ministry of Education

Graduate: Certificate of Academic Preparation*
Bachelor of Arts, majoring in Pacific Studies + Sociology
Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Pacific Studies



“We challenge students to change the way they think about how knowledges are created and what knowledges are valued and why. Pacific Studies centres Pacific peoples and offers critical engagement with both the Pacific region and Aotearoa as a Pacific nation, analysing these relationships in the past, present and future.”

MARCIA LEENEN-YOUNG
Senior Lecturer

*The Certificate of Academic Preparation is now known as Unibound.



Pacific Studies develops your knowledge and awareness of Pacific cultures, identities and experiences. You can explore Pacific histories, health and wellbeing, gender and globalisation, languages (Samoan and Tongan), Indigenous epistemologies, dance, performance, material culture and film.

STAGE 1 COURSE*

PACIFIC 105 – The Contemporary Pacific

Explores the ways in which Pacific peoples frame their contemporary world in the context of globalisation. It also examines factors which shape contemporary Pacific life and popular culture as well as some of the challenges emanating from how Pacific peoples construct and make sense of their own and others' historical, political, socio-cultural, economic and religious worlds.

STAGE 2 COURSE*

PACIFIC 213 – Pacific Wellbeing: Empowering Dimensions

Examines empowering notions of Pacific wellbeing for Pacific individuals, families and communities. Students explore definitions of Pacific wellbeing and the cultural concepts, models, practices and worldviews that have enhanced the overall positive wellbeing experiences of Pacific peoples across the Pacific region.

STAGE 3 COURSE*

PACIFIC 314 – Pacific History: New Zealand in the Pacific from 1900

Explores the historical relationship between New Zealand and the Pacific from 1900 onwards. Traces the central importance of New Zealand in the history of the Pacific from the rise of New Zealand's colonial empire, through the world wars, and towards the movement for decolonisation. Examines the continually evolving place of Aotearoa New Zealand as a nation in the Pacific Ocean.



Get excited about your course options:



- Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa / Pacific Worlds
- Pacific Music and Dance
- Samoan Language 1
- Tongan Language 1



Complementary majors include:

Pacific Studies
+
Anthropology
History
Politics and International Relations
Psychology
Sociology

**Course availability may be subject to change. For a full list of courses and up-to-date information visit our website. Published June 2025.*

“I love Pacific Studies because I feel seen and understood within the content. Representation is such an important aspect of academia, and it is amazing to have an entire school (Te Wānanga o Waipapa) dedicated to preserving and sharing Indigenous knowledge.

“By learning how to better understand myself, I can use that knowledge to create positive changes in the community.”

JOSEPH MEREDITH

Student: Bachelor of Arts, majoring in Pacific Studies + Sociology

