

Embedding Indigenous Knowledge with Sustainability
Through Higher Education Curriculum
Executive Summary

The University of Hawaii Maui College is in a unique position right now as an institution in higher education learning to provide quality education through a sustainability lens for student learners entering college. Teaching sustainability across various platforms at the college opens up new doors of learning from traditional educational teaching towards a sustainability learning experience instead.

My project mission is to provide key stakeholders that include the college Sustainability committee members, Indigenous experts within the college, local community interest groups, County and State education representatives, NGO's and students an opportunity to co-create a Sustainability focus curriculum that uses information from the past through an Indigenous perspective and addresses our present needs while planning for the future of education. In alignment with the college strategic direction towards a sustainable future for long-term value creation; a cross-functional team of experts and community participants will bring together needed information flows that will enable a sustainability focus curriculum to become a standard course offering for student learners at UH Maui College. To reach our goal of a Sustainability focus curriculum by Fall 2019, several objectives highlighting co-collaboration as the sustainability committee members agreed to: 1) Identify relevant key players, 2) Employ a sustainability expert to explain how a sustainability lens works, 3) Create professional development modules for the campus about sustainability and Indigenous knowledge systems for teachers before the fall session begins, and 4) Commit to meeting bi-monthly to move curriculum development further for Fall 2019 semester.

To achieve the objectives and reach the goal of Sustainability focus curriculum to be made available for Fall 2019 semester several action forward events needed to take place. It became apparent early on that the sustainability committee membership meetings was not a place where most participants would have liked to be attending. Primarily because the group was in constant disagreement with what sustainability is about. The lens process was very complicated, and no one was interested. To achieve success with my project I needed to help the committee to focus on creating shared values. The committee had to place aside their differences and commit to

Curriculum

being pro-active towards understanding how to trust one another, respect differences and release old misperceptions, and find commonly shared values. Sustainability, Indigenous Knowledge systems, and Science values had to be established and agreed upon to move forward towards succeeding in bringing together the necessary element that created a Sustainability focus curriculum. Bringing together common core value systems that embody sustainability allows the natural step towards co-creation, transparency, open communication, and positive outcomes for students but essentially building a foundation for working groups to produce a better way of teaching. Also, the sustainability committee in whole was too big, and by breaking down the committee into sub-committees, each member was allowed to sit in a sub-committee they favored most. Members were happier, more open to listening to different perspectives, and critically finding a balance as they seek to achieve educational positive outcomes. My project is not necessarily to create a sustainability curriculum, but instead to bring people together cohesively through shared values so that the sustainability committee could offer its first Sustainability focus curriculum by Fall 2019 at the University of Hawaii Maui.