

## **Higher Education and the Indigenous Language and Culture: Samoanisation of the National University of Samoa**

[https://doi.org/10.33318/jpacs.2021.41\(1\)-3](https://doi.org/10.33318/jpacs.2021.41(1)-3)

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### **Abstract**

Established in 1984, the National University of Samoa has undergone multiple phases of change to adapt to the needs and demands of the Samoan community. As the only national university in Samoa, one of the main functions bestowed upon the University is the preservation and sustainment of the Samoan language and culture through its teaching and research functions. Higher education being a non-Samoan concept, meant that the University had to undergo unique customisations and alterations in order to feature the Samoan language and culture in its general operations. This responsibility and expectation placed on the University saw the rise of three champions, who have led the Samoanisation of higher education in Samoa, despite the challenges of their respective times. In achieving the University's intent for cultural adaptation, the late Dr. Fanaafi Le Tagaloa set the precedent in the University's formative years, followed by Dr. Asofou So'o and Dr. Malama Meleisea, who are both proud advocates for the integration of the Samoan language and culture in higher education. This paper covers the historical context of the Samoanisation of higher education in Samoa while also forecasting its prospective future.

**Keywords:** Culture; Higher Education; Indigenous; Language; Samoanisation

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