

IMPACT

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For more information:

Dorothy Hirata, Distance Learning,
dohirata@ksbe.edu

Brandon Ledward, Research and Evaluation,
brledwar@ksbe.edu

Distance Learning website:
<http://ksdl.ksbe.edu>



KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS

'Ike Hawai'i Distance Learning Program:

Summary of Evaluation Findings 2008-2009

By Brandon Ledward and Dorothy Hirata

What

The 'Ike Hawai'i Distance Learning Program was evaluated by Pacific Resources for Education and Learning (PREL) in 2008-2009.¹ 'Ike Hawai'i offers participants a unique experience to connect with Hawaiian culture and gain critical 21st century skills² in a virtual learning community.

Key Program Facts:

- Open to high school students within the state of Hawai'i and continental U.S. via the Internet
- Comprised of five semester-long courses in Hawaiian culture, history, leaders and literature (Parts 1 and 2)
- Certificate available for students who complete four or more courses
- Served 216 students between fall 2006 and spring 2009

Why

The Evaluation Phase of Kamehameha School's Education Strategic Plan (ESP) began in 2008, requires accurate data on the impact of various programs in order to assess progress toward organizational goals and to determine opportunities for expansion, improvement or consolidation.

Findings

Overall, the evaluation affirms that the 'Ike Hawai'i program is functioning well and meeting its intended outcomes.

"We [PREL] concluded that 'Ike Hawai'i is well run and provides a viable opportunity to acquire basic computer skills, Hawaiian cultural knowledge, some competence for further learning, and an appreciation for the Hawaiian culture (and, for Hawaiians, pride)."

1. Participants are often one-timers yet satisfaction is very high
2. Students gain cultural knowledge and technology skills
3. Students strengthen their connection to Hawaiian culture
4. Families support and benefit from the program experience

Background

‘Ike Hawai‘i is one of three core online programs offered through Kamehameha Schools Distance Learning (KSDL). Through this program, high school students have the opportunity to pursue the knowledge of our kūpuna using the technology of today by enrolling in online, semester-long credit courses. Students develop 21st century skills and position themselves for success in today’s world.

Learner-focused, culturally relevant courses delivered by knowledgeable, caring staff help students strengthen their understanding and connection to Hawaiian culture. The program experience also contributes to the acquisition of 21st century skills, which include technological literacy, collaboration, and critical thinking.

Program participants

‘Ike Hawai‘i served 216 high school students between fall 2006 and spring 2009. Of that number, four students completed the requirements for a Distance Learning certificate.

KSDL collaborates with the Hawai‘i Department of Education (DOE) and charter schools to service Native Hawaiian learners. Current collaborations include: conventional public schools, Hawai‘i Virtual Learning Network (HVLN), Hakipu‘u Learning Center, Hālau Kū Māna Charter School, Hālau Lōkahi Charter School, Kawaikini New Century Public Charter School, Kua O Ka Lā New Century Public Charter School, Moloka‘i High School, Baldwin High School and Elite Element Academy.

Students usually come from the DOE and Continental U.S. with typical enrollment of 30-40 per semester. In recent semesters, collaboration students from Native Hawaiian Charter Schools and the DOE Comprehensive School Alienation Program (CSAP) has contributed to increased enrollment.

Of the students who successfully complete their mandatory orientation, about 80% pass their courses. In addition, prior analyses of program data show:

- Motivation and time management are always challenges for online high school learners
- Continental U.S. students usually have higher technology skills, and are usually homeschooled or attend private schools
- Students in local collaborator's are usually at-risk and only have computer access during school hours
- Support provided by parents, schools or individual teachers is significant for learners success

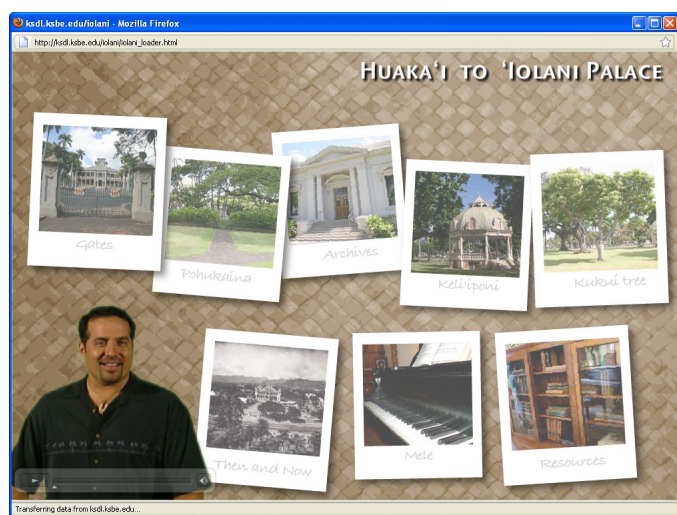
Evaluation design & methodology

Three broad goals were agreed upon by stakeholders for the ‘Ike Hawai‘i evaluation. These goals set the scope of work to be: 1) reviewing the program logic model and data reporting tools, 2) assessing outcomes for students who completed three or fewer courses, and 3) gauging outcomes for certificate holders.

To complete the first goal, PREL reviewed the program logic model, the Fall 2008 ‘Ike Hawai‘i Distance Learning Report, and the current dashboard measures for internal coherency as well as alignment with KS strategic goals. Key evaluation questions were: To what extent is the logic model coherent and valid? How well do reporting systems support the logic model and vice versa?

The second and third goals of the evaluation required unique data collection and analysis. Interview questions were created for previous ‘Ike Hawai‘i students with guidance from program staff. PREL conducted telephone interviews with all certificate holders (four students) and a sample of students who had taken 3 or fewer courses (13 students). Interviews ranged in duration from 15 minutes to one hour.³

Key evaluation questions for goals 2 and 3 were: What knowledge and skills did students gain from the program? How has the program affected students’ connection to Hawaiian culture? To what extent were family members involved in course activities? What skills and experiences from the program did students apply to future learning opportunities?

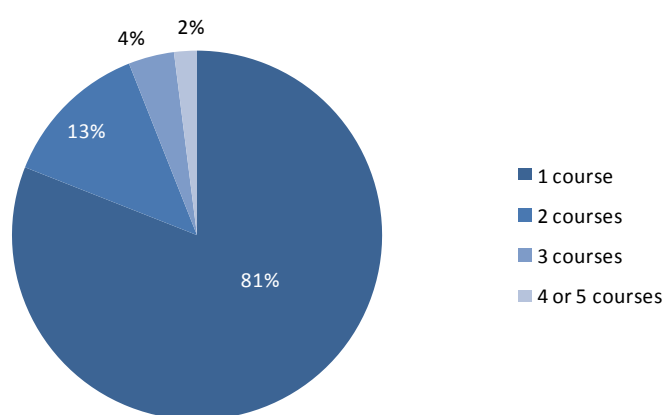


Findings

Participants are often one-timers yet satisfaction is very high

A review of existing program data revealed that a majority of participants in the 'Ike Hawai'i program took a single course (81%). The most common reasons students chose to enroll in 'Ike Hawai'i were: to fulfill school requirements, to learn about Hawaiian culture, and to have an online learning experience. Likely barriers preventing students from taking more courses are limits on transferable course credits and a lack of time owing to competing priorities. Figure 1 contains a breakdown of the students and the number of courses they completed.

Figure 1. Number of courses taken



Although only a few students have completed requirements for a Distance Learning certificate, program satisfaction is overwhelmingly positive. Regardless of the number of courses taken, interviewees unanimously agreed that they enjoyed and valued their 'Ike Hawai'i experience.

Typical responses are provided below to the question, "Did you enjoy the courses you took?"

"It was interesting and creative; you won't get this in regular school."

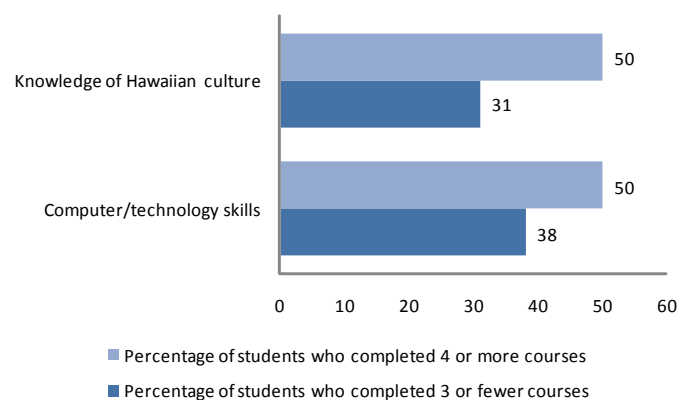
"I learned a lot and never got bored."

"I am really thankful for this program and the excellent staff and support. It made me feel like I was part of an 'ohana; it was a pleasant experience."

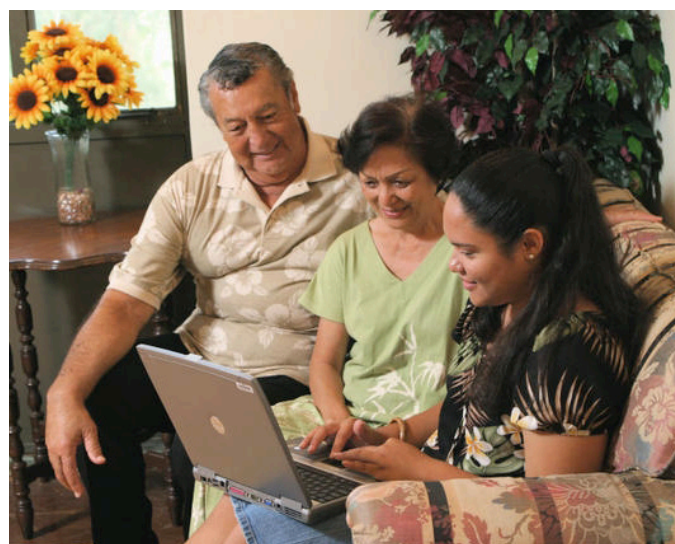
Students gain cultural knowledge and technology skills

The interviews conducted by PREL support data previously collected by program staff, which demonstrate that 'Ike Hawai'i students consistently increased their knowledge of Hawaiian culture and language as well as acquired greater proficiency in computer/technology skills. These were the top two learning areas cited in interviews with both certificate and non-certificate holders. Such a consistent impact in student learning across the number of courses taken suggests the program is finely tuned (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Top program learning areas



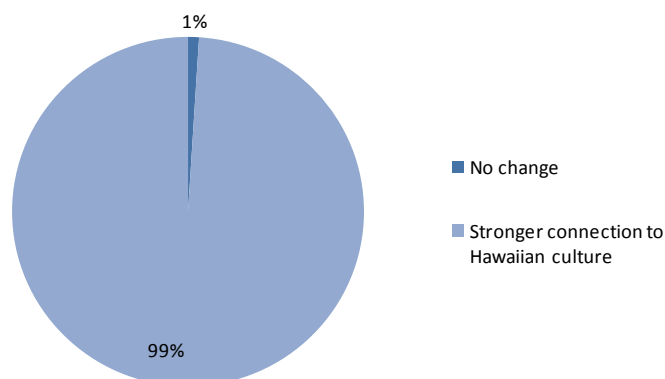
According to the 'Ike Hawai'i logic model, students who persist in the program should be able to apply the skills learned in courses to other areas of their lives. Interviews with certificate holders revealed this assumption to be correct. Students mentioned how the program "helped with school" and that "confidence," "computer skills," and experience of doing collaborative projects were significant takeaways.



Students strengthen their connection to Hawaiian culture

Most, but not all, 'Ike Hawai'i students are Hawaiian (85%). However, Hawaiian and non-Hawaiian students overwhelmingly felt a stronger connection to Hawaiian culture as a result of the program. Interviewees spoke of how they “shared” their knowledge of Hawaiian culture with others as well as their desire to “learn more.” As one student explained, “[Before] I didn't really care about being Hawaiian but now I feel more pride. And it helps to know more.”

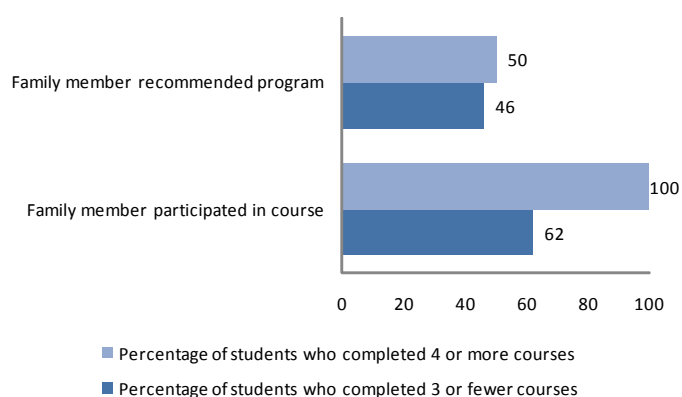
Figure 3. Relationship to Hawaiian culture



Families support and benefit from the program experience

Program staff believe that family involvement is an important component in student learning and 'Ike Hawai'i provides opportunities for family members to participate in course activities. About half of the students interviewed enrolled in the program because of encouragement from a relative. Likewise, family involvement is relatively high regardless of the number of courses taken. As one student reported, “[My] mom was blown away by it. She took me to all the hō'ike and everything. She was really impressed.”

Figure 4. Family support and involvement



Recommendations & next steps

Data collected and analyzed by a third-party, professional evaluator (PREL) indicate the 'Ike Hawai'i Distance Learning program is having a positive impact on participants in line with stated goals. As with any evaluation, PREL offered a handful of recommendations to further improve and refine the program. These suggestions are noted below followed by a brief explanation of how staff are responding to them.

Revisit the logic model—it was noted that the organization of the logic model could be improved with temporal sequencing and explicit justification for long term outcomes. KSDL and R&E are re-examining the logic model after development of a Simple Outcome Map.

Triangulate data points—currently, the majority of data collected by the program comes via self-report. DL is working with R&E to integrate additional sources of data such as observation tools and pre/post tests to augment self reported impact.

Streamline reporting—Although the semester reports describing 'Ike Hawai'i are essential, it was suggested that the data be reduced and prioritized in the report. DL is currently reviewing the data included in semester, quarterly, and annual reports to ensure alignment and consistency.

Mahalo from the KSDL staff.



Endnotes

1 This summary brief is based on the full report submitted by PREL titled, “Evaluation of the 'Ike Hawai'i Distance Learning Program at Kamehameha Schools” (October 15, 2009).

2 The Partnership for 21st Century Skills argues that to be successful in today's world, students need to be creative and critical thinkers, and proficient in technologies that enhance collaboration and communication (see <http://www.21stcenturyskills.org/>).

3 Since the number of certificate holders was small, all were interviewed. A sampling of non-certificate holders allowed PREL to collect qualitative data that could be compared with the surveys issued by the program staff. Additional participants were not necessary because the interviews did not uncover a wide range of responses.