

Towards a fairer and more tika political science and politics: Are political science programs equipping students adequately for Aotearoa realities?

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Social and political change is occurring in Aotearoa New Zealand and *tikanga*, *mātauranga*, *te reo Māori* (the Māori language) and *Te Tiriti o Waitangi* (Treaty of Waitangi) are increasingly being recognised in diverse political and legal contexts. This article explores whether the political science discipline in Aotearoa New Zealand is keeping pace with these political changes, whether research and course content is adequately reflecting these new realities, and if students are appropriately equipped to participate. In particular, we examine the state of university politics programs and outline the form and quantity of Māori politics in the teaching and research of these programs. From the assessment of the current state of politics programs, we make some observations about what changes may be required to ensure politics programs, their students and academics are fully equipped to work in the unique political and legal landscape of Aotearoa New Zealand. From the collection of this data, we have found that approximately 1% of political science lecturers are Māori, 1% of content taught can be classified as Māori politics and approximately 1% of publications in the New Zealand Political Science journal can be classified as kaupapa Māori politics. This 1–1–1 crisis provides a bleak picture of the existing arrangements in politics programs in Aotearoa New Zealand and must change.

Keywords: political science, Māori politics, Indigenous politics, tika, kaupapa Māori, rangatiratanga, kāwanatanga, Māori education

Introduction

For many decades Indigenous scholars have highlighted the Western historical and cultural assumptions which underpin academic disciplines and universities. Some of these examinations have become calls to decolonise academic disciplines and universities (Elkington et al., 2020; Gudgeon, 2021; Mataamua, 2021; Moosavi, 2019; Ruru & Nikora, 2021; Tuck & Yang, 2012; Xavier et al., 2021). Some universities and academic disciplines have begun to respond by including Indigenous knowledge, or taking steps towards “decolonising”, “indigenising” or “reshaping” their institutions and practices (Battiste & Henderson, 2009; Gaudry & Lorenz, 2018; Kuokkanen, 2007). In this article we explore these decolonising moves in the context of Aotearoa New Zealand and in particular in the area of political science.

Social and political change is occurring in Aotearoa New Zealand and *tikanga* (Māori values), *mātauranga* (Māori knowledge), *te reo Māori* (the Māori language) and *Te Tiriti o Waitangi* (Treaty of

Waitangi) are increasingly being recognised in diverse political and legal contexts. These changes have implications for all government agencies, local government, those in the private sector and community groups who live in and seek to utilise any natural resources in Aotearoa. In addition, for *tangata tiriti* (Allies of Te Tiriti) there are opportunities and obligations. These changes are not occurring in isolation from universities and we suggest there are particular implications for academics in political science and for the teaching of politics students. As Māori scholars trained in the discipline of politics and working in the university sector, we both have a particular interest in examining and supporting positive change.

In this article we begin by reflecting on one aspect of the changes occurring, that being the amendments being proposed for the teaching of tikanga and *te ao Māori* (Māori world) in New Zealand university law faculties. In light of these changes in law faculties, we examine the state of university politics programs and outline the form and quantity of Māori politics in the teaching and research of these programs. From the assessment of the current state of politics programs, we make some observations about what changes may be required to ensure politics programs, their students and academics are fully equipped to work in the unique political and legal landscape of Aotearoa New Zealand. From the collection of this data, we have found that approximately 1% of political science lecturers are Māori, 1% of content taught can be classified as Māori politics and approximately 1% of publications in the New Zealand *Political Science* journal can be classified as *kaupapa* Māori (Māori based) politics. This 1-1-1 crisis provides a bleak picture of the existing arrangements in politics programs in Aotearoa New Zealand. We suggest that in order to counter these findings, that politics programs in Aotearoa New Zealand would do well to explore a more tika (correct) pathway towards indigenising university education. Tika in this context is drawn from tikanga, which literally refers to the 'correct' way to do something when grounded in Māori values.

Change is building

Tikanga Māori, mātauranga Māori, te reo Māori and Te Tiriti o Waitangi are increasingly being recognised in political contexts, in legislation, in policy and in the courts. The establishment of Te Arawhiti The Office for Māori Crown Relations in 2018 marks a growing shift in approach across all of government where the Crown and government agencies are paying greater attention to how the Crown can fulfil its obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi. The *Public Service Act 2020* now clarifies that the role of the public service includes "supporting the Crown in its relationships with Māori under the Treaty of Waitangi (Te Tiriti o Waitangi)" (*Public Service Act 2020*, Section 14).

Crown agencies have developed a plethora of arrangements with Māori entities in recent years. StatsNZ has had a Mana Ōrite Relationship Agreement with the Iwi Chairs Forum since 2019 (StatsNZ, 2021). The Justice Sector Leadership Board and Ināia Tonu Nei have had a Mana Ōrite Relationship Agreement since 2020. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade has established Te Taumata with independent Māori experts to advise them. Te Arawhiti itself has produced engagement guidelines for all agencies, which includes encouragement for co-design of policy with Māori as Treaty partner (Te Arawhiti, n.d.). The Department of Conservation is leading the Te Mana o te Taiao – Biodiversity Strategy with Māori representatives (Bargh & Tapsell, 2021). In addition, local councils are embracing Māori wards, with over 35 now created across the country alongside Mana Whakahono ā Rohe: Iwi Partnership Agreements, which include Māori directly in council decision-making. Nearly every branch of government is considering how their work is viewed with a Tiriti or te ao Māori lens, from national security to health. These incremental changes signal shifts in the recognition and upholding of Māori rights in political and legal spheres of authority. Importantly, for political science being taught in

universities, these developments demonstrate an increasing need for graduates to have sufficient knowledge of Māori politics in order to engage with these ongoing changes.

Māori politics in practice

As the Crown and government agencies are increasingly recognising Māori rights and spheres of authority, Māori and the operation of Māori political institutions also continue to modify and transform as required by new circumstances. *Hapū* (sub-tribe) and *iwi* (tribe) organisations continue to work as they have for many centuries, looking after their people, the land and the environment as best they can. This maintenance of hapū and iwi *mana motuhake* and *rangatiratanga* (authority and self-determination) includes public expression, such as the roadside checkpoints during the COVID-19 pandemic (Fitzmaurice & Bargh, 2021), and *rāhui* (temporary restrictions, including restricted areas) over endangered resources such as forests (Bargh & Malcolm, 2022), shellfish beds (Ashworth, 2022; RadioNZ, 2021) and marine spaces (Williams, 2022). At the blockade protest around parliament in 2022, hapū and iwi of the Wellington area very publicly demonstrated their mana through the laying of Te Kahu o te Raukura, a cloak of peace (Te Wake, 2022). In addition, the coalitions and confederations at a national level, such as the Iwi Chairs Forum and the Kingitanga, continue to actively champion Māori rights.

The mechanisms of Māori politics tend to be grounded at a very localised level. Internally the focus often involves the revitalisation of te reo Māori and practices related to the functioning of *marae* (meeting place), upholding of *kaitiaki* (guardian/steward) obligations concerning the wellbeing of local natural resources, pursuing opportunities for economic development, and respecting and maintaining relationships with allied or related hapū and iwi through attendance at *tangihanga* (funeral) and *hui-a-iwi* (tribal meetings). These types of activities provide important examples of the everyday practice of Māori politics and the ways in which tikanga and Māori governing institutions operate to support sustainable practices for iwi and hapū.

For Māori polities interacting externally, there is regular engagement with local government on resource consenting issues or plan changes and with central government seeking to consult, engage or partner on policy development or amendments, including matters of tikanga. Again, these internal and external engagements undertaken by iwi and hapū demonstrate the diversity, breadth and active nature of Māori politics.

“Māori politics” can be defined as both the range of practices and institutions, underpinned by tikanga Māori, which operate primarily in what has been described by Charters et al. (2019) as the Māori “rangatiratanga” sphere of political authority, as well as the interaction with the Crown and what has been described as the “*kāwanatanga*” (Crown/government) sphere of political authority. The ongoing marginalisation of discussions of the significant range of Māori politics in academia suggests to us that it continues to be important to note, alongside a definition of Māori politics, that Māori politics and Māori political philosophies, institutions and leaders all existed prior to the arrival of non-Māori in Aotearoa. Joe Williams and Ani Mikaere, among others, have emphasised the way that tikanga Māori was the first source of law in Aotearoa, and with the addition of “Cook’s law” (laws from England, brought to Aotearoa by the English including Captain James Cook) a new form of “lex Aotearoa” has emerged (Mikaere, 2005; Williams, 2013). Similarly, Māori politics, based on tikanga Māori, was the first form of politics in Aotearoa and with colonial systems of politics a new form of politics in Aotearoa has emerged.

The definition of politics is commonly paired within an understanding of the world as comprised of nation-states and, therefore, associated with the rule of people in a sovereign state. Clearly, Māori political realities prior to non-Māori arrival were not about a Western form of state sovereignty, but rather dealt with the relations within and between iwi and hapū and their own mana motuhake. Parallels can be drawn between Māori and Western political systems and it is possible to see commonalities. These two systems are, however, fundamentally different. Any parallels should not distort the fact that they are based on fundamentally different worldviews. Each worldview holds profoundly different assumptions about the role of humans in relation to the natural environment and in relation to each other. These differences should not be forgotten as they mean that co-existence of these two worldviews and ways of being in the world will be challenging, and neither one should presume superiority. States are not necessarily superior to non-state forms of social life, and democracy is not necessarily the highest form of collective organisation achieved to date (Hindess, n.d.). The system of states which dominates the world only emerged after the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia and, although it is portrayed by many scholars as a story of introducing civilisation, peace and security, it also has written into its construction the use of violence, or “terror”, against those who wish to organise themselves in other ways (Hindess, 2006).

Built into dominant stories about the state, government and politics are assumptions about the superiority of some systems and peoples and, concomitantly, the inferiority of others. Recall Hobbes’s assertion that where there is no state there is “no arts; no letters; no society” (as cited in Hindess, 2006, p. 253). These ideas are prominent within political science in Aotearoa and still form the basis for political theories that are commonly taught. Early European theorists such as Hobbes and Mill all championed a system of political organisation that measured itself against what they considered “uncivilised” and “unorganised” forms of Indigenous politics. As Mill (1836/1962) stated:

In savage life there is no commerce, no manufactures, no agriculture, or next to none: a country rich in the fruits of agriculture, commerce, and manufactures, we call civilised. In savage life there is little or no law, or administration of justice; no systematic employment of the collective strength of society, to protect individuals against injury from one another. (p. 52)

These political theorists, and others given similar prominence in the discipline, provided justifications for imperialism and helped to shape and reinforce the idea that non-state politics were inferior, which has continued to influence the perceived superiority of Westphalian-informed politics in Aotearoa. These types of political theories have failed to recognise the multiple forms and institutions of politics that occur in Aotearoa. Although there is a growing literature developing that seeks to de-centre Western politics as the dominant basis for political philosophy, the challenge in Aotearoa has been that Western thought imported through colonisation assumes that those particular forms of government and governing are superior to Māori political philosophies.

Tikanga Māori does not make these same assumptions about its superiority over other systems of governing. Tikanga Māori assumes there are kin-like relationships between people and the environment, based on the origin narratives. As a values-based system, tikanga Māori provides rules and guidance about how people should engage with one another and with the environment. This includes principles to guide governance relating to the use of land and natural resources as well as dispute resolution mechanisms. Māmari Stephens (2013, pp. 822–823) argues that Māori attitudes towards the exercise of public power are apparent across the Māori political spectrum and indicate that power ought to be exercised:

1. as a means of meeting collective obligation for civic ends
2. in a way that facilitates group participation and public input
3. with due process and regard for the standing of those involved.

Importantly, although *tikanga* is built on a Māori worldview its practice makes no assumptions about the inferiority of other political systems or, indeed, a need to overcome them. These differences between *tikanga* as a political philosophy and Western political philosophies are more nuanced than it is possible to explore in this article, however, key to this discussion is that Western political philosophies were imported to Aotearoa New Zealand as concepts and systems to colonise Māori and actively disregard and disempower the Māori political systems that already existed in Aotearoa (Jackson, 2013; Ngata, 2019).

Given the differences in fundamental assumptions about worldviews, how does the teaching and research of politics, the philosophies underpinning politics and, indeed, the practice of politics in Aotearoa navigate such matters?

Tikanga as/in the law

Law and politics are closely bound as coinciding sites of power and decision-making. *Tikanga* is the source for both Māori legal traditions as well as the source of Māori political philosophies. As such, it is important to take note of the ways that *tikanga* is being treated in the legal sphere, given its shared source with Māori political philosophies. In recent decades the Courts and legal profession in Aotearoa have discussed a number of precedent setting cases which clarified *tikanga* Māori as an important first source of law (*Ellis v. R*, 2019; *Takamore v. Clarke*, 2012). These cases have prompted some legal professionals to advocate for judges, lawyers and law students to have better understandings of *tikanga* Māori, Aotearoa's history and Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Jones, 2020; Ruru, 2018). In May 2021 the New Zealand Council of Legal Education (n.d.) resolved:

Te ao Māori concepts, particularly *tikanga* Māori, would be taught in each of the core law subjects within the Bachelor of Laws and Bachelor of Laws with Honours degree at a New Zealand university as established by the Professional Examinations in Law Regulations 2008.

Law faculties are positioning themselves for the change, and have embarked upon detailed planning with Māori studies departments and Māori scholars and legal practitioners to determine the best next steps. Waikato University's Law School, Te Piringa, was established in 1990 and has biculturalism as one of its founding goals (Ruru et al., 2020). Despite that earlier example, other law schools have not pursued the bicultural path. Professor Jacinta Ruru and Māori legal scholars have examined the options for incorporating *tikanga* and te ao Māori into law schools in their research project Inspiring National Indigenous Legal Education for Aotearoa New Zealand's Bachelor of Laws Degree. These scholars have called for a "legal profession that is trained to work in a bijural, bicultural and bilingual Aotearoa New Zealand legal system" (Ruru et al., 2020, p. 8).

A *bijural* legal system, for which Ruru et al. argue, is one with the "coexistence of two legal traditions within a single state" (Ruru et al., 2020, p. 37). They use the term "bijural" to describe "the equitable treatment of both Māori law and Aotearoa New Zealand's Western legal tradition, in recognition of

Durie's view that 'our law comes from two streams'" (Ruru et al., 2020, p. 38). There are several key tikanga concepts which would need to be taught and understood, but what they recommend moves far beyond "simply incorporating more Māori content" to actually exploring ways to restructure the LLB to "effectively recognise Māori law as a foundational component of Aotearoa New Zealand law" (Ruru et al., 2020, p. 38).

For understanding a *bicultural* legal system, Ruru et al. (2020) argue that a distinction needs to be made between "biculturalism underpinned by structural change" and the "lesser goals of cross-cultural competence or cultural sensitivity" (Ruru et al., 2020, p. 40). Structural change involves a transfer of resources and decision-making to Māori and a genuinely collaborative approach to the content and teaching of courses, including via Māori pedagogy and with Māori staff. Ruru et al. point to the importance of the change being Māori led. The leadership by Māori assists to re-balance an inequitable power and resourcing situation, including with non-Māori scholars. They argue:

Care will be required to progress this aspirational systemic change, especially in regard to ensuring mana whenua are supportive of these moves. The change should be Māori led and Māori designed, with substantial allied support from deans of law schools and the legal profession, including the judiciary, law practitioners, law academics and law students. (Ruru et al., 2020, p. 9)

The Inspiring National Indigenous Legal Education research team describes themselves as "purposively Māori led ... trained in Pākehā state law" and comprised of those who "prioritise and value kaupapa Māori research methodologies and Indigenous legal methods sitting alongside Western legal analysis" (Ruru et al., 2020, p. 13).

Bilingual education refers to the teaching of te reo Māori to ensure that staff and students have a working knowledge of the key concepts of Māori law. Taken together, these proposed changes argue for significant academic investment into recognising tikanga as law. These proposed changes of the treatment of tikanga in and as law in Aotearoa provide important reflections for political science, particularly given the shared grounding in tikanga.

The state of politics programs: Baselines

The inextricable connection between law and politics as studies of power and justice indicates that the changes in the teaching and research of law will have radical implications for the teaching and research of politics. For law faculties, acknowledging tikanga Māori as a source of law in its own right and understanding the way decisions are made using that source of law requires an examination of the cultural and societal context; this is the reason that te ao Māori and te reo must also be understood. In the context of the study of politics, it is similarly important to understand both the values and principles which underpin the formation and continuation of political communities, organisations and leadership structures, how and why decision-making is conducted in particular ways, and so on. Tikanga Māori, as a source of law and politics, is, therefore, also central to a definition of Māori politics. Māori politics is conducted in Māori "spaces" which have commonly been narrowly understood as "cultural" spaces by many scholars (Bargh, 2013). Annie Te One defines "kaupapa Māori politics" as "the first form of politics in Aotearoa", with "strong foundations derived from tikanga" and "a form of political theory and practices that is based on a Māori worldview" (Te One, 2021, pp. 103–104).

There are a number of academic studies which have used the lens of common Western political concepts to apply to Māori political concepts for interpretation and analysis. Smith, Napan et al. (2021) highlighted what they viewed as “democratic praxis” in te ao Māori, while Jane McRae (1984) explored *rūnanga* (tribal councils or committees) as democratic decision-making entities. Some Māori academics have taken a similar approach, reconceptualising Western political concepts in the context of Māori political thought. Krushil Watene (2020) has reconceptualised global justice philosophy with tikanga, Māmari Stephens (2013) talks about a “Māori demos” and Carwyn Jones (2014) describes “Māori constitutional traditions”.

The sparse nature of conversations on this matter within politics programs has prompted us to make a closer examination of teaching, research and leadership in this area. To begin creating a baseline, we approached the topic from two angles. The first was to examine politics programs within New Zealand universities to collate what is currently being taught in relation to tikanga Māori and Māori politics, the form and quantity of that teaching. Secondly, we examined the New Zealand *Political Science* journal as the cornerstone periodical for politics scholars in New Zealand and collated the form and quantity of research articles that could be considered as kaupapa Māori and Māori politics.

The place of Māori politics in New Zealand politics teaching and research: 1–1–1

We began by examining politics departments/schools within New Zealand universities to collate broadly the form and quantity of what is currently being taught in relation to tikanga Māori and Māori politics. The study of politics in New Zealand universities is commonly as part of an undergraduate, Bachelor of Arts degree. This examination used publicly available information on university websites and searched for keywords (such as Te Tiriti o Waitangi, tikanga, tino rangatiratanga) in course descriptions. We are not claiming to be producing a precise analysis here, covering all possible scenarios, simply a broad view of what can be observed of the teaching and research in this area to prompt and inform further conversations and future research. This study should be considered as a first exploration of New Zealand universities teaching of Māori politics, so the method used was based on an assumption that information freely available online would provide the core parts of available courses.

We began with a hypothesis, which was based on general conversations with students completing Māori politics courses and on existing knowledge of programs and scholars in universities. Our assumption was that very little was being taught, little weight given to tikanga Māori, mātauranga Māori or Māori political history, and that Māori graduates are not being well supported to engage with hapū, iwi and *mana whenua* (Tribal authority over land) politics. These assumptions are also supported by broader research that has linked university education to imperial ideas regarding what is considered as “valuable” research (Smith, 2012). While our hypothesis will need further research to build a qualitative picture, we found that approximately 1% of politics academics are Māori, 1% of content taught in politics programs is Māori politics, and 1% of articles published in the New Zealand *Political Science* journal can be classified as kaupapa Māori politics. The 1% representation, or 1–1–1, is disconcerting. While there is likely a margin of error in our 1% findings, even with some significant difference, this is cause for concern.

Who is teaching

We discovered through online searches and reviews of university staffing information that there are very few Māori academics in politics programs, approximately only 1% of the total. Only permanent academic staff were included in this data as examples of the number of secured positions that currently exist.

This figure reflects a broader issue of low numbers of Māori academic staff in universities, with Māori making up only 5% of New Zealand's university academic workforce (McAllister et al., 2019). This is despite Māori being 16.5% of the population (StatsNZ, 2019). As McAllister et al. (2019) have outlined, Māori underrepresentation in the academy cannot be attributed to a lack of available talent; rather, their research attributes the underrepresentation to the undervaluing of Māori content and Māori scholars.

In the context of law schools, Markham-Nicklin and Wharehoka (2021) articulate this situation in stronger terms quoting Moana Jackson: "Law school remains a tool of colonisation that continues to perpetuate the dominance of Pākehā law" (para 2). Jackson's claims are supported by other research demonstrating the, at times, hostile teaching environments within which Māori academics are expected to work. Smith, Funaki and Macdonald (2021) argue that colonisation in universities is reflective of oppressive "whiteness", stating:

The logics of settler-colonialism operate in conjunction with whiteness in Aotearoa universities. Whiteness can be conceptualised as a cultural and performative process that persistently orientates those in institutions towards white normativity via the marginalisation and omission of non-white worldviews and perspectives. (p. 1)

Another study by Mercier, Asmar and Page (2011) found that, while academic careers can be fulfilling for Māori, there is a greater emotional and physical cost, which can lead to lower retention rates.

An additional element to the undervalued nature of Māori methodologies and pedagogies within politics programs is the institutional consequence which primarily comes in the form of unrecognised work by Māori academics. As Morar (2021) argues, "mātauranga Māori requires the long-term fostering of relationships among Māori academics and communities. As a corollary, universities should recognise the enduring benefit of relationships between Māori academics and the communities whose needs are addressed by research" (pp 8-14).

Further, Morar (2021) argues that universities rely on the "relationships and standing of Māori staff within the community" and that, ironically, it is these very characteristics that are "significantly *under-recognised* when it comes to hiring and promotions, while simultaneously forming part of the excess labour *expected* by Māori academics as part of their service to the university in fulfilling its obligations to the increasing number of Māori students" (p. 14). There is extra unrecognised labour also in the work of representing mātauranga Māori in disciplines that chronically deny the value and legitimacy of this knowledge (Morar, 2021, p. 14). Māori academics "therefore remain underrepresented, undervalued and undermined within the academy" (Morar, 2021, p. 16).

The 1% representation of Māori academics suggests greater questioning is needed about politics programs, including why Māori academic staff are not regularly hired within them, and, subsequently, what knowledge is not being made available to students. Given the links made between the university as a colonised space and Māori academic staff hiring and retention, it is necessary that Māori academic underrepresentation in New Zealand university politics programs is understood through the wider

structural challenges that have created exclusionary environments. It should also be noted that we are not necessarily advocating for Māori scholars to be appointed in these programs; we are noting the absence and encouraging further conversation, as is being conducted in law faculties about where the best location for Māori scholars teaching with a Māori lens might be.

What is taught

A scan of all 258 politics courses taught in 2022 in politics programs across the country highlighted that approximately 1% of the total number could be defined as a “Māori politics” or “Māori politics-centred” course (having 2+ tags matched or 5+ tags matched). Approximately 5.81% of the total number of politics courses taught in New Zealand universities could be defined as having a minor Māori politics component (having 1-2 tags matched). Approximately 92.2% of the total number of politics courses taught in New Zealand universities could be defined as having no Māori politics content (having zero tags matched).

Table 1: Percentage of Māori politics courses and content in politics courses in politics programs at New Zealand universities

Māori politics or Māori politics-centred course (having 2+ tags matched or 5+ tags matched)	1%
Minor Māori politics component (having 1-2 tags matched)	approximately 5.81%
No Māori politics content (0 tags matched)	approximately 92.2%

While further research is required to clarify the nuance in these findings, the situation nonetheless is concerning. The severe lack of available content in current politics courses reinforces the perceived superiority of Western political notions to students, while relegating Māori politics to the periphery. How well equipped are students of political science in Aotearoa if they are not receiving information about crucial aspects of our political arrangements? In addition, if the Māori political world is barely recognised as existing, how well served are Māori communities by the knowledge generated in politics programs given the limited skills students have to contribute, or even engage?

There are many possible reasons for our findings of minimal Māori politics content, including potentially that publicly available course descriptions do not fully reflect course content. Further research is required of the nature of the content in those courses where Māori politics was included, as well as research into the quantity of Māori political content being taught outside of politics programs, such as in Māori studies programs.

The discovery that, nationally, only 1% of courses across politics programs are related to Māori politics may suggest that those creating course content do not view Māori politics as forming a valuable part of the way politics occurs in Aotearoa. Given the continued relationship between Māori and state politics, as well as the fact that Māori are the Indigenous peoples in Aotearoa New Zealand, any politics taught here must reflect on a Māori interpretation of political activity sourced in Aotearoa New Zealand.

What research is published

We examined the *Political Science* journal, the cornerstone periodical for politics scholars in New Zealand, to indicate what kinds of research are being published and by whom. While focusing on just one academic journal, rather than several journals and key textbooks, limits the conclusions we can draw, there is precedent for this method (Goodman et al., 2017; Ladner, 2017) and we also note that the *Political Science* journal is considered the preeminent journal for the discipline in New Zealand.

We began this exploration with two initial hopes. One was that the journal would confirm evidence of more kaupapa Māori or co-designed and partnership research with Māori. This was based on the government signalling, for many years, that it encourages researchers, Māori and non-Māori, to consider Māori communities and Māori aspirations when conducting their research. This encouragement was formalised in the Vision Mātauranga Capability Fund in 2010 and integrating the policy within Crown Research Institutes' Statement of Core Purpose in 2011. With Vision Mātauranga, the Crown has clarified its intentions that research funding will contribute to ensuring Māori and mātauranga Māori are involved, and that researchers will consider how their research might benefit Māori and support iwi-led research and generally be inclusive of Māori research aspirations (Ministry of Research, Science and Technology, 2007). In many ways, Vision Mātauranga reflects long-standing calls from Māori scholars that researchers cease previous forms of research which many Māori communities found extractive and that, in particular, non-Māori scholars should ensure that Māori are included in all aspects of research in Aotearoa New Zealand about topics of interest to Māori (Smith, 2012). That connects with the work of many Crown agencies in terms of co-designing policy and projects and, ultimately, decision-making with Māori as a Treaty partner. We hoped that, following at least a decade of these activities, some of this research and analysis involving co-design or strong mātauranga themes would have flowed through into academic politics journals, and the *Political Science* journal in particular. Our second hope was that the trend in the Indigenous studies discipline for scholars to acknowledge their positionality in relation to their research would be emerging in this context.

Between its establishment in 1948 and December 2021, *Political Science* produced a total of 1,653 articles. A systematic search of the journal's articles was conducted, looking for both kaupapa Māori articles and articles about Māori political topics. We defined kaupapa Māori articles broadly as by Māori authors, using a form of kaupapa Māori methodology and methods, including Māori centred or supporting Māori self-determination, and using Māori methods such as *wānanga* (workshops) or *kanohi ki te kanohi* (face to face).

For kaupapa Māori methodology and methods, 16 search terms were used, including "Māori", "Māori centred", "kaupapa Māori" and "community based". For the Māori politics content, 21 search terms were used, including "Treaty of Waitangi", "self-determination", "Māori representation", "Māori politics", "post-settlement" and "iwi".

The first search of kaupapa Māori methodology and methods returned approximately 1% (0.78 per cent), or 13 articles, which could be classed as kaupapa Māori articles, that is, by Māori authors, using a form of kaupapa Māori methodology and about Māori topics. This 1% finding is a further layer to the underrepresentation of Māori political representation within the New Zealand politics discipline.

The second search returned 47 articles about Māori politics by non-Māori. Combining the 13 by Māori and the 47 by non-Māori, a total of 60 articles out of 1,653 (3.69 per cent) were either about Māori or mentioned Māori political matters.

We noted that of those articles by non-Māori scholars, very few acknowledged their positionality in relation to the research and Māori communities. We found this to be concerning given that there has been significant research regarding the harm done by non-Māori academics misrepresenting or benefiting from Māori knowledge (Smith, 2012).

These results from the journal are qualified; however, they still raise a number of questions about what is being researched and receiving recognition in New Zealand political science. There have been significant changes in New Zealand's political landscape, including, but not limited to, the work of Māori and Indigenous peoples domestically and internationally for constitutional change; Māori political activism; the presence of Māori electorate MPs; Māori politicians holding leading portfolios such as Deputy Prime Minister, Foreign Affairs and Māori Affairs; the Treaty Settlements process; the creation of Māori wards at local government level; the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 2007; and the Vision Mātauranga policy. We expected these significant changes would be reflected in the *Political Science* journal. To see such an absence of even these most general political matters is cause for reflection. How well is the journal covering matters of political importance within New Zealand? While there are a significant number of Māori political publications outside of the *Political Science* journal, and indeed many that are not necessarily defined solely as "politics", or as "Aotearoa New Zealand's only disciplinary political science journal" (New Zealand Political Studies Association, n.d.), the *Political Science* journal offers a unique site of disciplinary knowledge and location for hosting a wide range of Māori political content, which is why this journal was selected for analysis.

The second concern is that Māori students and academics may not see the politics discipline as one which is culturally safe if it does not recognise Māori political matters of importance despite Te Tiriti and a relationship between Māori and non-Māori being central to the entire country and the political authority by which non-Māori are able to be here (Mutu, 2010).

Similar findings are being seen in political science internationally. Tulia Falleti (2020) found in a US study that over the past three decades there have been similarly low publications of Indigenous politics in top US political science journals. Falleti (2020) argues, "For too long, political science has been systematically ignoring Indigenous peoples, their organization, and their collective demands" (p. 5).

A study by Kiera Ladner (2017) on the occurrence of Indigenous politics in the *Canadian Journal of Political Science* found, too, a severe underrepresentation of Indigenous politics, and has linked the lack of published work to the pervasiveness of early European political theorists who championed European political supremacy.

Nicole Goodman, Karen Bird and Chelsea Gabel (2017) also analysed the *Canadian Journal of Political Science* looking for evidence of "partnership-based" research work between Indigenous communities and non-Indigenous academics. They found that articles on partnership-based work were absent in that journal. They also found that many Canadian political scientists were "deeply resistant to research collaborations with outside actors" (Goodman et al., 2017, p. 201) on the grounds that that form of research was not sufficiently scientifically robust and impinged on individual academic freedom in research. Goodman et al. (2017) contest these claims and highlight the "broader opportunities for knowledge-sharing and reciprocal feedback among stakeholders and greater potential for social transformation" (p. 208) from partnership research and approaches.

Internationally, the similar findings regarding the low rate of Indigenous political publications suggests that university-based research and periodicals are suffering from similar challenges stemming from the dominance of a colonially informed Western-centric discipline (Ferguson, 2016).

Possible future changes

The alarming 1–1–1 underrepresentation of Māori politics across the range of indicators in this study suggests that significant change is needed across the board. While more research needs to be undertaken regarding how to improve the current state of affairs, there are already some roadmaps and ideas about how changes could occur.

In Canada, for example, the notion of “reconciliation” has gained greater attention following the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (2015) which investigated the Indian Residential Schools system and heard from those impacted. The commission created calls to action directed at both federal and provincial governments. Call to Action 28 (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015) is directed specifically at university law faculties and states:

We call upon law schools in Canada to require all law students to take a course in Aboriginal people and the law, which includes the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal–Crown relations. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission calls on universities “to introduce Indigenous content and engage with Indigenous pedagogies, epistemologies, values and worldviews in their academic curriculum and programs” (McGill University, 2017, section 3). This national move by the commission demonstrates a wider pressure being applied to universities to recognise the link between academia and outside practice. National pressure such as this, provides an example of how Māori politics could gain greater representation within politics programs.

Internationally, Indigenous scholars have called for the decolonisation or indigenising of universities given their complicity in imperialism. In her book *Reshaping the University*, Rauna Kuokkanen (2007) argues, “to a large extent, the academy remains founded on epistemological practices and traditions that are selective and exclusionary and that are reflective of and reinscribed by the Enlightenment, colonialism, modernity, and, in particular, liberalism” (p. 1). Kuokkanen (2007) argues that throughout universities there is an “epistemic ignorance”, which refers to academic practices and discourses that “enable the ongoing exclusion of other than dominant Western epistemic and intellectual traditions” (p. 6). This global challenge to decolonise and indigenise universities is occurring concurrently with pressure being applied in the legal world to recognise *tikanga* in Aotearoa.

Within universities, there are clear and concrete changes that could be made to improve the presence of Māori politics in politics teaching and research. Greater efforts must be put into hiring full-time Māori academics, as well as creating Māori academic pathways. Greater support for Māori academic publication and research, including support for non-Māori academics to better understand their positionality, would also impact what research finds its way to publication. Finally, in the context of both teaching and research, academics must be supported and accountable for greater interrogation of the pervasiveness and invisibility of white supremacy in academia, and how it impacts what is being taught through politics programs and published in New Zealand’s flagship politics journal.

Conclusion

The state of political science, largely taught as a monocultural field, is not a fair or true depiction of the political landscape in Aotearoa. Māori, iwi, hapū and *whānau* (family) continue to practice Māori politics as informed by tikanga, Māori methodologies and pedagogies. Moreover, as a field of study regarding power, governance and justice, and one that is studied and taught here in Aotearoa—whatever one's specialisation—in the context of mana motuhake and tino rangatiratanga, political science has a particular obligation to represent Māori politics.

Politics programs throughout the country are yet to address the political realities of Aotearoa, as illustrated by the 1% representation of Māori academics and political content. The challenges are largely structural in nature, and the data collected for this article concerning the form and quantity of Māori politics in New Zealand's universities illustrates the long-term effects of colonially enforced political thinking. The need to decolonise and indigenise the discipline is clear.

Fortunately, work in other disciplinary fields is already underway and may be used to inform future growth and changes. Achievements in other fields also are a reminder that, as has been for law, political science will also likely need further research into how best to decolonise the discipline. This focus, along with so many others related to Māori politics, warrants a place of significance in political science in Aotearoa if it is to fulfil its obligations to Te Tiriti, its discipline and its students.

Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge Kody Ward and Jackson Lacy for the research assistance in collecting the data for this article. Their time was funded by a Victoria University of Wellington Research Excellence Award.

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Please cite this article as:

Te One, A., & Bargh, M. (2023). Towards a fairer and more *tika* political science and politics: Are political science programs equipping students adequately for Aotearoa realities? *The Australian Journal of Indigenous Education*, 52(2). DOI 10.55146/ajie.v52i2.649



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