

WEAVING NEW

PACIFIC FUTURES

Pacific pathways through academia

From its colonial foundations to its increasingly neoliberal frameworks, academia has given little space for Pacific scholarship to thrive internationally. Building an academic career for Pacific scholars is therefore fraught with inequities, cultural (un)safety and structural exclusion. Despite this, Pacific scholars continue to carve out pathways through the academy, with many journeys centred on acts of service and knowledge production that serve their communities.

In this **research seminar**, **Lefaoali'i Associate Professor Dion Enari (Unitec)** and **Seuta'afili Dr Patrick Thomsen (University of Auckland)** weave together personal narrative, cultural knowledge and academic life to reflect on how Pacific scholars navigate and transform academic spaces while holding firm to Pacific indigenous ways. Through storytelling, the presenters showcase how their journeys in academia - which span Australia, Samoa, Korea, Aotearoa New Zealand and the United States - have been shaped by lived experience and personal discovery.

"By sharing our pathways and research, we seek to inspire new generations of Pacific thinkers to embrace their full selves in scholarly spaces. We affirm Pacific ways of seeing and being as not only valid, but vital for shaping not only research and education, but also our people's futures."

WEDNESDAY 18 JUNE 10am - 11am

Western Sydney University,
Parramatta South campus
Building EA.1.31 (in-person only)

To register visit:

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**WESTERN SYDNEY
UNIVERSITY**



Humanities and
Communication Arts

SPEAKERS

Lefaoali'i Associate Professor Dion Enari



Lefaoali'i Associate Professor Dion Enari (*Lepa, Malaela, Vaiala, Safune, Nofoali'i, Vaiusu*) sits in Ngā Wai a Te Tūi (Māori and Indigenous Research Centre) and School of Healthcare and Social Practice, Unitec. He was born in Auckland, Aotearoa New Zealand and raised in Brisbane, Australia. He has a PhD from Bond University, and an MA in International Relations and BA from Griffith University. He is the first and only Pacific Associate Professor at Unitec. Lefaoali'i Enari is also the current Sunpix Ministry of Education 2024 Pacific Educator of the Year. His research explores Indigenous, Sport and Pacific issues and he is regularly featured in international and national media.

Seuta'afili Dr Patrick Thomsen



Seuta'afili Dr Patrick Thomsen (*Vaimoso, Vaigaga*) is currently a Senior Lecturer in Global Studies and a Senior Research Fellow in the Faculty of Medical Health Sciences at Waipapa Taumata Rau (The University of Auckland). He was born and raised in South Auckland, receiving his PhD from the University of Washington-Seattle, MA from Seoul National University and BA in Political Science from the University of Auckland. He was the first Samoan scholar to receive his PhD from the Center for Korea Studies and Jackson School of International Studies at the University of Washington, uniquely deploying Samoan ways of knowing and being in a Korean queer studies context. He is the Principal Investigator for the award-winning Manalagi Project, New Zealand's first Pacific Rainbow+ Health and Wellbeing Project funded by the Health Research Council of New Zealand. He is also the Queer and LGBT+ Studies Collection Editor and the Pacific Islander Studies Collection Co-editor for Lived Places Publishing.