Scenarios:

1. You’re leading a group practice session for final presentations. One student finishes her presentation on traditional Hawaiian navigation and wayfinding and it’s time for the rest of the group to provide feedback. After some questions about her content, one student compliments her presentation, commenting that he learned so much and is so impressed with Hawaiian wayfinding practices. He goes on to say that he can’t understand why Hawaiians don’t want telescopes on Mauna Kea because the telescopes are so obviously an extension of these star-gazing traditions. They need to get out of the dark ages and advance their traditions into modern times. There are mixed reactions in the room, some nodding in agreement and others tensing up and looking displeased.

2. You are a TA in a class and during a small group discussion about immigration issues in the US and immigrants in Hawai‘i. One student respectfully disagrees with another, stating that “Hawai‘i is not a part of the United States.” The second student responds (respectfully) with “Hawaiians should be grateful that it was America that took over - otherwise it would have probably been Japan.” They both look to you as the Teaching Assistant to chime in.

3. You are a GA in an Anthropology class or lab. The class is visiting a Hawaiian sacred site (keep in mind that many, many places are considered sacred in Hawaiian thought) and when you arrive there, there is a student that does not feel comfortable entering the site without protocol or “asking permission” in a culturally Hawaiian way. How do you handle the situation once there on site AND how could you help to mitigate this prior to the trip?

4. You ask the students to share an experience relevant to the class topic. One student raises their hand and begins their story with, “One time my family and I were here visiting and we went to Kua...Kualo...Kualakashakalaka or something like that, beach on the North Shore and...” the student momentarily pauses the story to take in the chuckles their joke invoked in a few other students. The student then resumes their story.

   How can making fun of Hawaiian language in the classroom affect the learning environment for Hawaiian students? Do you think it’s important to address this situation? If so, what are ways you can think of to address this student’s comments and also support increasing basic literacy in Hawaiian language among all students?

5. The University has a policy to become a Hawaiian Place of Learning. How might you facilitate a discussion in your class or among colleagues about what this means? What are different things that should inform a Hawaiian Place of Learning? Have you thought about this as a framework for your curriculum and syllabus development?