

## Languages, Linguistics & Literature 2017 College Awards Recipients

### 2017 Award for Excellence in Doctoral Dissertation Research



**Victoria Chen** is a PhD candidate in the Department of Linguistics. Her dissertation, titled “A reexamination of the Philippine-type voice system and its implications for Austronesian primary-level subgrouping,” investigates the comparative grammar of indigenous languages spoken in Taiwan, which provides new evidence for the classification of higher-order Austronesian languages. After her dissertation, Chen wants to document the morphosyntax of endangered languages, and explore how similarities and differences in the grammar of closely related languages contribute to their linguistic history and the theory of Universal Grammar. Besides linguistics, Chen likes coffee, music, and animals!



**Gavin Lamb** is a PhD candidate in the Department of Second Language Studies whose research interests examine multilingual practices at the nexus of language, society and the environment. Lamb’s dissertation research explores the linguistic and social practices that emerge in the intersecting contexts of wildlife conservation and nature-based tourism in Hawai’i around one charismatic “flagship species,” the Hawaiian green sea turtle. His research seeks to bridge sociocultural linguistics with emerging interdisciplinary research on human-environment relations in the social sciences and humanities. This research addresses the intertwined social and ecological challenges posed by the environmental crisis, from climate change to species extinction, and the diverse cultural responses to its consequences. His dissertation research is supported through the Russell J. & Dorothy S. Bilinski Fellowship.



**Michael Pak** is a PhD candidate in the English department. His dissertation, titled “Embracing the Absurdity of Failure: Reimagining Failure in Composition Studies,” urges educators to embrace a nuanced understanding of failure in their own pedagogical approaches. Pak’s research interests include popular culture, ethnic American literatures, and composition pedagogy. His work has been published in the anthology *Building a Community, Having a Home: A History of the Conference on College Composition and Communication Asian/Asian American Caucus*, as well as academic journals *Amerasia* and *Composition Forum*. He was privileged to serve as the assistant director of the Writing Center at UH Mānoa from 2014-16.