

Facilitating a whole of university approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Curriculum Development: Leadership Frameworks for Cultural Partnerships

Final report

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List of acronyms used

ACPR	Academic Course Performance Reports
AEL	Arts, Education and Law
ALTC	Australian Learning and Teaching Council
BoVCIA	Bachelor of Visual and Contemporary Indigenous Art
CATSIPRED	Centre for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Participation, Research and Development
CoP	Communities of Practice
CP	Credit Points
CSU	Charles Sturt University
DEEWR	Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
DOMS	Digital Object Management System
DVC	Deputy Vice-Chancellor
GIHE	Griffith Institute for Higher Education
GLS	Griffith Law School
GU	Griffith University
HoS	Head of School
IBS	Indigenous Board of Studies
ICC	Indigenous Cultural Competency
ICEPP	Indigenous Community Engagement Policy and Practice
IES	Indigenous Education Strategy
IHCAP	Indigenous Health Careers Access Program
IHU	Indigenous Health Unit
ILPT	Institutional Leadership Project Team
IRU	Indigenous Research Unit
ITAS	Indigenous Tertiary Assistance Scheme

JCU	James Cook University
OLT	Office for Learning and Teaching
PAG	Project Advisory Group
PVC	Pro-Vice Chancellor
QCA	Queensland College of Art
RATEP	Remote Area Teacher Education Program
SIAS	School of Indigenous Australian Studies
TAC	Tertiary Access Course
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
VC	Vice-Chancellor
WIL	Work Integrated Learning

Executive summary

This report captures key findings from the ALTC/OLT Leadership grant, *Facilitating a whole of university approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Curriculum Development: Leadership Frameworks for Cultural Partnerships*, and presents approaches developed at the three partner universities. The aim of the project was to advance three strategic priorities in higher education as identified in the Bradley Review of Australian Higher Education (Bradley et al, 2008): to progress the national reconciliation agenda; improve access, participation and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students; and develop cultural competence of students and staff. The project sought to achieve these aims by developing, implementing and evaluating a leadership framework for a culturally appropriate and sustainable whole-of-university approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander curriculum development based on 4 key principles:

1. Conceptualising the change process in terms of meaningful partnership between Indigenous and non-Indigenous academics;
2. Embracing reconciliation as necessary for authentic and sustainable change;
3. Working in cross-cultural partnership; and
4. Accepting and valuing Indigenous Worldviews.

Three universities – Griffith University, James Cook University and Charles Sturt University – partnered in this project of leadership capacity building and curriculum development. The university executive at all three institutions supported the project. This is significant, as active engagement of senior university leaders is critical to the success of long-term cultural change through curriculum development (Fasoli et al, 2008). Additionally, each institution has a reconciliation statement and associated action plans, paving the way for embedding Indigenous curriculum in a variety of ways.

One of the main project outcomes is the development of a model for a whole-of-University approach to the Indigenising of curriculum. The model has three distinct sub-models that can be perceived as stages of development:

1. The “**at least**” model which is the bare minimum and advocates the strategic placement of two courses within a given degree program that aim to shift the thinking of the student from inside Western frameworks to outside.
2. The “**best of what we have**” model, which networks Indigenous Studies courses across the University to create a Bachelor degree program in Indigenous Studies. This would provide a multidisciplinary approach to Indigenous Studies.
3. The “**towards a school**” model, expanding models 1 and 2 into a School of Indigenous Studies such as that established at Charles Sturt University in the Faculty of Education. Networking courses more broadly could enable access to courses from across Australia or First Peoples courses and studies internationally.

The key focus of the project at Griffith University, the lead institution, was on strategies to implement the above model by networking existing courses across the University to create an Indigenous Studies Major; a version of the “best of what we have” model. The scaffolding framework for this model had four main components: 1) historical perspective; 2) critical thinking; 3) critical Reflection; and 4) a capstone experience. Barriers to implementing and sustaining the model included: insufficient existing courses to create a flexible program for students, particularly in a multi-campus institution; and discontinuation of courses. It became clear that the lack of a strategy and leadership framework contributed to these barriers. Three key issues affecting implementation of the model were identified: sustainability, dealing with racism and, limitations associated with a school-based leadership model. A major outcome of the project has been the development of six recommendations to underpin sustainable Indigenising of the curriculum and five recommendations to minimise racism and establish foundational values and structures for embedding Indigenous curriculum (Chapter 3).

At Griffith University an Indigenous Studies major has been proposed covering topics, such as: Aboriginal culture; Aboriginal Political History; Reconstructing the Aboriginal Australian; Contemporary Aboriginal Issues; Rock Art in the 21st Century. The major will encompass a range of opportunities for students to study with some of Australia’s leading Indigenous Studies academics, as well as enjoy access to a range of student exchange programs, and practical experience through work-integrated-learning opportunities. Careers flagged for students in the major include: Indigenous Liaison, Indigenous organisations including Land Councils, Government roles, Health services, Journalism, Film and Documentary, Tourism and Leisure, Legal services, Education and training, Business and Sports organisations.

The report also outlines the progress made in the partner universities: Charles Sturt University (CSU) and James Cook University (JCU). It was evident that CSU has made considerable progress in implementing a whole of University approach to Indigenous Curriculum and Pedagogy, particularly in the establishment of the School of Indigenous Australian Studies. CSU success is due to having an Indigenous Education Strategy that has committed to implementing a whole of University approach to Indigenous curriculum by 2015. This strategy is supported by CSU’s leadership structure which comprises a relatively new position of Pro-Vice-Chancellor of Indigenous Education who is also the University’s foundation Chair of Indigenous Studies and Head of the CSU Dubbo campus, The School of Indigenous Australian Studies situated in the Faculty of Education; and an Indigenous Curriculum and Pedagogy Coordinator which was a position specifically created to support the curriculum. To aid in curriculum development, CSU has a Cultural Competence Pedagogical Framework that supports academics to develop course/programs in their discipline area. This is further supported by CSU’s Indigenous Board of Studies (IBS) that ensures that courses are compliant with the Framework through policy and governance structures within the University. CSU provide professional development for all CSU staff in a three stage approach to its Indigenous Cultural Competency Program (ICCP) and via the

CSU's Graduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education, which is compulsory for all probationary academics. CSU is also committed to having a whole-of-university approach to community engagement. These supportive leadership and policy structures have resulted in innovative programs and resources. This report specifically highlights the Wiradjuri Language and Heritage Program, cultural immersion activities for staff and students "Journey west to Menindee", and *Cassie's Story: Dyan Ngal* and *Cassie's Story 2: Mingaan Migay Yalblinya*, which are resources used for learning and teaching and cultural competency training.

Like GU, JCU are in the early stages of developing a whole-of-University approach to Indigenous curriculum; however, JCU has established many important initiatives. JCU has had a long standing School of Indigenous Australia Studies that implements undergraduate and postgraduate courses in Indigenous Studies, student support and research programs. In 2003, the Indigenous Health Unit was established in the Faculty of Medicine Health & Molecular Sciences. The Unit provides an enabling program and student support and has a focus on Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health issues and strategies across the health disciplines. Student support will be further enhanced by the establishment of the Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Centre that will coordinate scholarships and student support initiatives across the University.

In terms of curriculum development, the main drive for JCU has been a University endorsed Reconciliation statement that explicitly sets a strategy to integrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge, perspective and experience across the curriculum. JCU's Curriculum Refresh Project transformed curriculum to align with the University's strategy for *making a difference in the tropics*, which includes support for academic staff to embed Indigenous perspectives across the curriculum as a key goal. This goal has resulted in the following University initiatives: embedding a commitment to Indigenous Education in the School of Education, review and strengthen Humanities Tertiary Access Course (TAC), and Walking Forward Together: Design and Implementation of Reconciliation Principles with the Faculty of Law, Business and Creative Arts. JCU is also committed to staff professional development with cultural awareness programs led by the School of Indigenous Australian Studies and the development of a subject in the Graduate Certificate of Education(Academic Practice) entitled *Transforming Learning and Teaching for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Contexts* based on a cultural competency pedagogical framework that aims to train staff in transforming their course to include Indigenous content.

The partner universities met several times to explore similarities and differences and to learn from each other's experience. From this process, there were three recurring themes: Institutional change "What comes first", Leadership and Transformation. The report highlights key messages from each of these themes, which can be used as a guide for other institutions engaged in implementation of a university-wide Indigenised curriculum. The project website provides more detail on the above work in the three partner institutions.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Education is a cultural practice; hence any education system is created from a particular cultural worldview. The Australian education system has been created from a Western Worldview, which has been shaped by Australia's colonial history. During this history, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' education was driven by a complex combination of notions such as segregation, integration and assimilation. The participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in higher education has been a recent occurrence with the first major influx of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students occurring in the 1980s. The 1980s was characterised by the notions of social inclusion and equity, which informed the transformation of the curriculum within disciplines such as anthropology, social science, health and education. In addition, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Support units were established and, over time, took on academic roles with staff teaching and convening subjects in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies. These courses tended to service a range of disciplines where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies were established as an essential part of their profession.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies still sat on the fringe, with many academic staff (and students) not seeing it as core business, rather as an equity issue. This situation caused a fluctuation in the extent and quality of these courses. It is a key finding of this project that such instability is caused by lack of structure at all levels of the university to adequately support and resource teaching and learning for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander curriculum. Conversely, we will argue that stability and growth will rely on establishing a system-wide, whole of university approach, to curriculum development and implementation. This report will discuss different approaches to Indigenising curriculum in three partner universities and explore several cases to elicit pertinent issues that need to be addressed if we are to have a sustainable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander curriculum at Griffith University and in the Higher Education Sector in general.

The Project

This report captures key findings from the ALTC/OLT Leadership grant, *Facilitating a whole of university approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Curriculum Development: Leadership Frameworks for Cultural Partnerships*, and presents approaches developed at the three partner universities. The aim of the project was to advance three strategic priorities in higher education as identified in the Bradley Review of Australian Higher Education (Bradley et al, 2008): to progress the national reconciliation agenda; improve access, participation and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students; and develop cultural competence of students and staff. The project sought to achieve these aims by developing, implementing and evaluating a leadership framework for a culturally appropriate and sustainable whole-of-university approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander curriculum development based on 4 key principles:

1. Conceptualising the change process in terms of meaningful partnership; between Indigenous and non-Indigenous academics;
2. Embracing reconciliation as necessary for authentic and sustainable change;
3. Working in cross-cultural partnership;
4. Accepting and valuing Indigenous Worldviews.

Three universities – Griffith University, James Cook University and Charles Sturt University – partnered in this project of leadership capacity building and curriculum development. The project was supported by the university executive at all three institutions. This is significant, as active engagement of senior university leaders is critical to the success of long-term cultural change through curriculum development (Fasoli et al, 2008).

The Shape of Indigenous Curriculum at Griffith University

Prior to this project, Griffith University had been actively engaging in the development of an Indigenous curriculum. One of the major system-wide initiatives was a change to the course profile system so that academics could register their course as having Indigenous content. This was a positive step forward since it placed Indigenous Studies up-front as part of the curriculum. Griffith University recorded in 2011 that it offered 184 courses in Semester 1 and 229 courses in Semester 2 that included Indigenous content. These numbers are encouraging; however, this depended on the perception convenors about what constitutes Indigenous content.

To investigate this, we obtained a list of all courses that were identified as containing Indigenous content through the course profiling system from 2012 course offerings. We selected a subset of these courses (45 in total) and looked for any explicit statements about Indigenous content in the course profile: the course description, the course aims, the learning objectives, the learning activities, and the assessment items. The results showed that a large number of the courses had no obvious indication of including Indigenous content (36/45) and only a small number had Indigenous content in all 5 areas mentioned above (3/45). The remaining courses mentioned Indigenous content in one of the areas (learning activities) except for one course that mentioned Indigenous content in two areas (learning activities and assessment).

This analysis suggests a concerning pattern where the majority of the courses do not explicitly state that they include Indigenous content in their course profile. However, there is a trend where Indigenous content is *assumed* to be included in more generic terms like culture, society, social justice and diversity. In addition, it indicates that localised development of an Indigenised curriculum results in a fragmented curriculum that compromises the students' educational experience. Therefore, it is fundamentally important that we create a structured approach to Indigenous Studies across the University and embrace Indigenous Studies as an important aspect of our students' education.

Chapter 2: Towards a new Model

To create a structured approach to Indigenous Studies across the university, it is essential to have a coherent Indigenous leadership structure that is an integral part of the university leadership structure. This chapter will outline the current Indigenous leadership structure at Griffith University and look at how this aligns with the wider University leadership structure. We will then outline the project leadership structure and explore the conceptual journey of the project leadership teams to create a model for a whole-of-university approach to Indigenous curriculum. The chapter will also explore the development of an Indigenous Studies Major as the first iteration in the development of a university academic program.

Griffith's Indigenous leadership structure

Historically at Griffith University, the most senior position held by an Indigenous person was the head of [GUMURRII Student Support Unit](#). In the mid-1990s, a new program in Indigenous Contemporary Art was established, which created one of the first Indigenous academic positions external to the GUMURRII Centre. The convenor of the program occupied a key leadership position in the University. In 2005, the GUMURRII Centre underwent an internal review and consequently a restructure. This resulted in GUMURRII losing its academic role in learning and teaching. As part of the change process, Indigenous academics in GUMURRII were encouraged to apply for academic positions in the University, which resulted in an increase in the number of Indigenous academics in the various Schools across the University.

These changes to GUMURRII were also the catalyst for two new developments in the University. The first was the establishment of the Indigenous Community Engagement, Policy and Partnership (ICEPP), which is led by a Director who has a Professorial position in the University. The ICEPP also established Griffith University's [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Council of Elders](#), which aims to be the main connection between Griffith University and the local Indigenous communities. The second development was the establishment of the Indigenous Research Unit (IRU), which is currently led by an Indigenous Professor. In addition, Griffith University also has an Indigenous Elder on its governing Council. Note that there is no current leadership in teaching and learning.

It is also important to understand Griffith University's Indigenous leadership in relation to the University Executive. Similar to all universities in Australia, Griffith University's Executive consists of the Vice Chancellor (VC), Deputy Vice Chancellors/Academic Provost (DVC/AP) and Pro Vice Chancellors (PVC). In terms of reporting: the IRU reports to the Senior DVC (formally the DVC of Research); the GUMURRII Centre reports to the DVC of Engagement; ICEPP reports to the Logan Head of Campus; and the Convenor of the Indigenous Contemporary Arts reports to the Director of Queensland College of Art.

Project Leadership Structure

The project established two central committees. The first was the Institutional Leadership Project Team (ILPT), which consisted of Indigenous and non-Indigenous academics from all of the four main academic groups across the University. The ILPT was co-chaired by one Indigenous academic and one non-Indigenous academic who were the lead investigators on this project. The ILPT was responsible for the development and implementation of a whole-of-university approach to Indigenising curriculum at Griffith University. The ILPT engaged in many conversations and debates to eventually agree on a model for Indigenising the curriculum across the University. The next section will explicitly look at key turning points in the journey of the ILPT.

During the project, the Indigenous academics on the ILPT decided that they needed to have a separate working group to work through issues around Indigenising curriculum. The outcomes of these meetings were brought to the ILPT for further discussion and approval. Note that the ILPT agreed to the establishment of the Indigenous Working Group and the Indigenous Working Group did not make decisions without the ILPT. This dynamic existed based on two main principles 1) Indigenous academics should have cultural authority; and 2) that we achieve a cultural partnership between Indigenous and non-Indigenous academics. The second principle also acknowledges that non-Indigenous academics have an important role to play in the development and implementation of an Indigenised curriculum.

Lastly, the project developed the Project Advisory Group (PAG), which was co-chaired by the DVC (Academic) and an Elder from Griffith University's Council of Elders. The Indigenous members on the PAG were the Director of ICEPP, the Director of IRU and the Head of GUMURRII. The PAG also had Deans of Teaching and Learning from Health, Business and Arts, Education and Law (AEL) Groups and the Dean (Academic) from the Science Group, who were all non-Indigenous members. In addition, the co-chairs from the ILPT were also members of the PAG. The main purpose of the PAG was for the co-chairs to report on progress on the project and for the members to provide advice to the ILPT. This was an important forum to share information, improve on strategies and debate issues around Indigenising curriculum from the perspective of the PAG members.

The Development of a Model

What does it mean to Indigenise the curriculum?

Members of the ILPT expressed that they did not really understand what it means to Indigenise curriculum. Having a specific understanding, or perhaps definition, was fundamentally important if we were to consider doing this across the University. Members also recognised that a major hurdle was academics feeling as though they need to incorporate, yet again, another aspect into their courses. The question then became: How can we do this effectively given the perception of crowded curriculum?

In an attempt to better understand the notion of Indigenising curriculum, the ILPT committed to attending a series of in-house workshops. The process of the workshop was split into three sections: 1) all participants expressed anything that they understood about Indigenising curriculum; 2) the participants discussed curriculum development without considering Indigenous content; and 3) we considered how the content of section 1 related and fitted with the content in section 2. This process resulted in six main considerations:

1. A **Vision** has two main concepts
 - a. **Ontological pluralism**: there are multiple worldviews that shape people's beliefs, knowledge and actions; and
 - b. **Less may be better**: Indigenous perspectives are not required in every course; rather we must take a **strategic approach**.
2. **'Expert'** in this context is understood with following main points:
 - a. **Cultural Authority** of Indigenous people is critical particularly in relation to content and pedagogy;
 - b. **Building relationships** based on **reciprocity** between Indigenous communities and the university is vital to have a strong Indigenous voice and an enhanced student experience; and
 - c. **Everyone is an expert** recognises that non-Indigenous people also play an important role within an Indigenised curriculum by using their extensive discipline knowledge to explore relationships between their profession and Indigenous people.
3. **Staff** has the following two main points:
 - a. **Educate but do not impose on people**. Indigenous and non-Indigenous academics need to be willing participants in this education. A system imposed initiative would result in cursory or token explorations;
 - b. **Let people do what they do best** recognises that if academics teach their discipline well, it will also add value to the experience of an Indigenised curriculum.
4. **Students** has the following main points:
 - a. A key element of an Indigenised curriculum is to provide students with a new **critical lens** to challenge ideas within and outside their discipline.
 - b. Staff must **effectively manage students' expectations** about what they are expected to learn when enrolled in a course devoted to Indigenous Studies;
 - c. It was also important to recognise that an indigenised curriculum is for **all students**; and
 - d. **A positive but challenging student experience** is central to the success of an Indigenised curriculum.
5. **Content**:
 - a. Is about **breaking the silence** of the subjectivity of the dominant world view on all disciplines in the university;

- b. Needs to be **structured** across a given program to avoid students experiencing similar content and to ensure that students' understandings are developed towards educational goals.

6. University Structure:

- a. We must have a sustained implementation of an Indigenised curriculum with solid commitment from the university in terms of funding, policy alignment and procedures;
- b. The challenge for the University is to create an ongoing space and place for Indigenous voices to exist within the Institution.

In summary, an Indigenised curriculum is about understanding the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people; how this relationship dynamic was created, how it informs current practice, creates valued knowledge systems and, consequently creates organisational systems that house these knowledges and reinforce practices. From understanding this relational space, knowledges and practices can be evaluated and critiqued and potentially improved for the betterment of all Australians.

The Model

The ILPT¹ created three distinct models that can also be seen as stages of development towards a School of Indigenous Studies. It is important to note that the ILPT freely created these models without being restricted by perceived institutional barriers. However, once the ILPT had developed the models, advantages and disadvantages of each model were discussed. The following will outline these three models.

Model 1: The “at least” model

The *at least* model is the bare minimum an institution should do for a whole-of-university approach to Indigenising curriculum. The bare minimum would be to create a structured approach to Indigenous curriculum within all degree programs. To build this structure, there need to be two strategically placed core courses in a given degree program. The first core course is referred to as an *embedding course*, which will allow students to explore how Indigenous people are positioned within their profession. The second core course is referred to as the *shifting course*, which aims to shift the thinking of the student from inside Western frameworks to outside. The students would then develop skills in critically evaluating the cultural assumptions that are at the foundations of their disciplines and how their discipline is practiced. The model also has the following structural implications:

1. Given the complexity of content, the two core courses should be in second year and later;
2. Students will not receive any formal recognition that they have undertaken Indigenous Studies in their degree program; and

¹ From this section onwards, when we refer to the ILPT it also includes the rich dynamic between the Indigenous Working Group and the non-Indigenous members of the ILPT.

3. The model requires a partnership between Indigenous and non-Indigenous academics.

Model 2: Bachelor of Indigenous Studies: “Best of what we have” model

The second stage of the model is to create a Bachelor of Indigenous Studies using the *best of what we have*. The idea would be to network the various Indigenous Studies courses that exist across the university. The university would need to have a dedicated space to house and manage the program. This space would ideally be a stand-alone centre in the university with dedicated Indigenous academic positions with the explicit role of overseeing the teaching and learning in Indigenous Studies across the university. The centre would also work in partnership with Indigenous and non-Indigenous academics, like the ILPT, who are experts in their fields and engaged in teaching Indigenous Studies at the university. To implement this stage of the model there are concerns as follows:

- This model relies partly on the success of Model 1;
- The networking of the courses can create a mixed bag where the students educational experience is compromised;
- The model would be a new structure in the university, which would require significant time to develop including partnerships across the institution;
- Ownership of courses, and the potential loss of students to courses in other disciplines, was consider a major concern, and which has budgetary implications for schools;
- Students with a Bachelor of Indigenous Studies would have limited employment opportunities. However, double degree programs were identified as an option to overcome this concern; and
- The housing of the Bachelor degree could also be problematic e.g. if the Bachelor degree was housed in a particular discipline, it could lose the cross-discipline nature of the model.

The main advantage of this model is that students will experience a multi-disciplinary education, which is generally required when dealing with Indigenous issues.

Model 3: “Moving towards a School” Model

Model 2 has the potential to grow and the academic unit that housed the Bachelor degree could expand into a School of Indigenous Studies. Recognising the excellent work of Indigenous academics in other institutions, the idea of networked courses could include courses from across Australia. This could be achieved through on-line deliver or via student exchange programs. Note that this could also be expanded to Universities across the world

allowing students to experience the global Indigenous network and the commonalities across the world's First Peoples.

In summary, the above three models are the unbounded vision of the ILPT to Indigenise the curriculum using a whole-of-university approach. The vision is characterised by the following key elements:

- Indigenous Studies is part of the core business of the university;
- Each school needs to have at least two courses that are appropriately structured within their degree programs;
- The program must be developed and implemented in partnership with both Indigenous and non-Indigenous academics, who have different but essential roles in the teaching and learning of Indigenous Studies in relation to their discipline;
- Courses across the university will be networked to create a university-wide curriculum, which has the potential to grow within the system;
- Students can actively choose the courses from across the university giving a multidisciplinary perspective to Indigenous Studies.

Networking Courses: Indigenous Studies Major

As an attempt to implement the above model, current course offerings were examined with the aim of networking the course into a program that offered students a major in Indigenous Studies. To assist with the selection of courses and to have a structure around the program, the ILPT developed a framework that had four main components:

1. **Historical perspective:** gain knowledge of the historical and contemporary relationship between a given profession and Indigenous people.
2. **Critical Thinking:** students recognise and critically evaluate the cultural assumptions that underpin their profession and how these assumptions have impacted on Indigenous people.
3. **Critical Reflection:** enables students to see and explore their own cultural standpoint and how these standpoints manifest within their profession;
4. **A Capstone Experience:** brings all learning together in a project-based course where students either undertake a research project or a work placement in an Indigenous organisation.

The above components also function as scaffolding for students learning starting at 1 and moving through to 4. To obtain a major, students must complete 60 credit points (CP); therefore, there was a structural requirement that students must complete at least 10 CP from each level with the remainder 20 CP taken from 2 and above.

The process identified 7 courses in level 1, 5 courses in level 2 and 6 courses in level 3. All of these courses focused solely on Indigenous content and cut across the following disciplines: Social Science, Health, Education, Visual Arts, Criminology, Law and Environmental Science. Given that there were a small number of courses identified, the main concern was that there was not enough flexibility in the program. For example, it was difficult to cover Griffith University's five campuses and students were unlikely to travel between campuses to participate in the major. We also identified courses that had recently been discontinued, which could have been valuable contributions to the Indigenous Studies Major. It became clear that more development was required at the School level if such a program was to be achieved.

Another issue was where to house the Indigenous Studies major. During the project, there was the opportunity for it to become part of Griffith's Institute of Higher Education (GIHE) including the employment of a senior Indigenous academic to lead the teaching and learning agenda. At the time, GIHE housed other courses that students took as part of their degree program. In 2013, GIHE was restructured shifting its focus and resulting in these existing courses moving into the Schools. This was not considered an option for the Indigenous Studies major, as argued above since the program could lose its multidisciplinary nature.

Chapter 3: Learning from the experiences in Schools

The project instigated three case studies that explored three main issues for the successful development and implementation a whole-of-university approach to Indigenous Studies. These three main issues were: sustainability, dealing with racism, and trialling a school-based leadership model.

Sustainability

Griffith University has had innovative Indigenous specific programs that have been successful in recruiting, retaining and graduating Indigenous students. However, these programs have not been sustained, or had limited growth, in the system. This section will present findings of two cases studies: 1) the (unofficial) Indigenous Law Program in Griffith University's Law School (GLS), and 2) the Bachelor of Visual and Contemporary Indigenous Arts (BoVCIA) in Griffith's Queensland College of Art (QCA).

Indigenous Law Program

The Indigenous Law Program was a collaboration between GUMURRII Student Support Centre and Griffith University's Law School (GLS) that employed an Indigenous academic to 1) provide support to Indigenous students in the facility, and 2) design and teach Indigenous specific courses in GLS. The Indigenous Law program was praised by the 2006 external review of the GLS for its exceptional level of achievement and it was recommended that the GLS give the Indigenous Law Program formal recognition (Committee Reviewing the Griffith Law School, 2006). The Indigenous Law Program did not receive formal recognition and the program collapsed when the only full-time Indigenous lecturer in the Law School left. The events highlight a key question for exploring sustainability of indigenous programs: Why should a thriving program discontinue within the system? For this case study, previous reviews of GLS and key school and university documents were analysed. We also conducted semi-structured interviews with four former or current Indigenous and non-Indigenous GLS staff and two current GUMURRII staff and six former or current, Indigenous students. The following will outline the main findings from the case study.

The ***success of the Indigenous Law Program*** came from a combination of a qualified Indigenous academic teaching and developing curriculum as well as providing student support. This created a place in the Law School where students felt like they belonged and could relate with others who have been through a similar process. The students also praised the work of GUMURRII Student Support Unit, which demonstrates that there is a clear delineation between the support roles offered by a School and the support offered by GUMURRII SSU. It was about working in partnership.

The full-time ***Indigenous academic shaped the curriculum*** so that Indigenous students could see their world reflected in the curriculum, to engage in debate about the relationship between Indigenous people and the legal system plus potentially see how their professional

life can benefit their people and communities. The academic also devised a structured approach ('Indigenous Vertical Subject') to ensure the inclusion of Indigenous content across all years in the Law program.

Once the Indigenous Law Program collapsed, Indigenous students reported that they had very little Indigenous content in their degree program. When issues did arise, students reported that they had to **deal with racism** from non-Indigenous students and, in one case, a non-Indigenous academic who questioned the validity of having Indigenous content in the Law program.

There appear to be two related systemic issues that added to the demise of the Indigenous Law program i.e. **funding and workload of the Indigenous academic**. The case study highlighted the perception that additional external funding is required to employ Indigenous academics. When circumstances reinforcing this perception persist, it very frequently ensues that Indigenous people continue to be positioned on the periphery and not perceived as part of core business. It must be argued that universities should invest in successful programs such as the Indigenous Law Program as pillars of the national priority to Indigenise the curriculum.

Unsustainable funding models, increase workload for Indigenous academics since investment in the program did not match growth. Given that the Indigenous Law Program was never formally recognised, there appears to be an important **connection between lack of investment and lack of recognition**. Furthermore, it is clear from the interviews that **students valued having Indigenised studies** and suggested innovative ideas e.g. Indigenous advocacy course. Students wanted Indigenous content across the curriculum suggesting a first year core course, signalling the importance of Indigenous content, with strategically embedded content across the degree program. Students also valued having both Indigenous and non-Indigenous academics teaching Indigenous Studies. This case provided valuable intelligence for sustainable design of indigenised curriculum and highlights the need for innovative partnerships and workload models.

Bachelor of Visual and Contemporary Indigenous Arts

The Bachelor of Visual and Contemporary Indigenous Arts (BoVCIA) is unique in being the only program of its kind in Australia and a program that was designed, in partnership, by Griffith University academics and Indigenous artists and educators across Queensland. Research associated with this project raises questions regarding the sustainability of BoVCIA and, more generally similar stand-alone programs. This case study will explore contributing factors and identify issues that need to be addressed if the program is to be sustained. The following are the main findings.

From this investigation, it is evident that the nature of the **relationship between the program and its direct line of management is crucial for the sustainability of the program**. This relationship needs to be developed with a shared understanding about the vision,

objects and strategies of the program. For a successful Indigenous program, the requirements of the program and the way it operates will differ from other university programs. This case highlights the importance of university management understanding, embracing and working with this difference as an integral part of the curriculum rather than a special case. Reciprocally, as part of this relationship, Indigenous programs need to demonstrate how they can become economically sustainable within the system. Again, a partnership model based on the principles outlined in Chapter 2 would maximise chances for the program to grow within the system.

We use this case study to illustrate the following strategies for creating a sustainable Indigenous Studies program:

Make BoVCIA a flagship program: BoVCIA is a unique program that was created by a partnership between Griffith University and Aboriginal people. The program has been a part of Griffith University for more than twenty years and could be more visible and recognised. One option is for the University to promote BoVCIA as a flagship program that profiles institutional and graduate success.

Artist in residence program: BoVCIA has graduated some very high profile Indigenous artists that could be part of a residency program. While such a program would primarily be aimed at improving the educational experience of BoVCIA students, it would, as an additional benefit, enhance the profile of the University as well as influence the education of all arts students at the University.

Stronger Connection with GUMURRII: Student support units provide unique opportunities to recruit more students, particularly when there is a strong partnership between such a central unit and discipline specific Indigenous Studies courses and programs.

Improving relationships: In this case, the quality of the relationship between BoVCIA and its direct line of management is crucial for the sustainability of the program. It is clear that the working environments of such programs need to be well managed in order to retain valuable and talented staff and ensure program integrity.

Sustainable workload: At the time of this case study, BoVCIA was staffed by two Senior Lecturers, who between them convened and taught 9 undergraduate courses, supervised Honours projects and oversaw the program. The longer-term sustainability of these programs and the careers of the participating academics is a function of staffing models that are intentionally aligned with desired outcomes.

Recommendations

There are striking similarities between the Indigenous Law Program and BoVCIA Case Study that made these and other similar programs unsustainable in university systems where there is no whole of institution approach. These interrelated factors include under-

investment, lack of recognition and unsustainable workloads for the academic staff. Hence we recommend the following:

Recommendation 3.1: Indigenous curriculum needs to be part of the core business of learning and teaching. We would contend that Indigenous education, for all students, has been positioned on the periphery of university business from the ideologies of equity and social inclusion. If we are to achieve a university-wide Indigenised curriculum, Indigenous education needs to be part of the core business. This institutional shift will promote to all staff in the university that Indigenous education is fundamentally important, staff will develop a better understanding of the importance of this education and the university should openly promote the Indigenous programs at the university through various media. This promotion should be central via a learning and teaching website, as well as promoting Group specific initiatives through the Group websites.

Recommendation 3.2: Indigenous curriculum is everyone's business: To help alleviate workload issues, Indigenous education needs to involve Indigenous and non-Indigenous academics. These roles will be different but equally important.

Recommendation 3.3: A Shared vision: A leadership structure should be established across the university to create a shared vision at the institutional and group/faculty level. The shared vision should also include aims, objectives and key performance indicators. The leadership structure should involve both Indigenous and non-Indigenous academics who are directly involved in Indigenous curriculum development and implementation as per recommendation 3.2. The leadership structure needs to be closely connected to the university's various learning and teaching committees.

Recommendation 3.4: Monitoring the workload of Indigenous academics: As demonstrated by the high workloads in both case studies and the perception that promotion increases workload, there needs to be careful monitoring of Indigenous academics' workloads and their career aspirations through the role of the academic supervisor. It should not be assumed that Indigenous academics will be involved in Indigenous education (and other Indigenous issues) as a default position at the university, nor the extent of their involvement be different from the expectation of any other academic position. Similarly, it should not be assumed that Indigenous academics would be involved in academic support of Indigenous students in their academic element. Additionally, community work should be recognised and valued since it can lead to research projects, important connections for curriculum development and implementation, improve the learning experience of all students and increase enrolment of Indigenous students.

Recommendation 3.5: Reviewing Indigenous curriculum: Faculty Deans of Teaching and Learning are ideally placed to embed and support a process of reviewing Indigenous curriculum within their educational groups. Such reviews should include the structure of Indigenous education in the group (i.e. embedded content and/or full courses), the impact and growth of courses and specific programs (i.e. number of students, number of Indigenous students, student surveys on teaching and course content), investment and benefits of specific Indigenous programs and the workload of Indigenous staff. These reviews need to include the Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff who are actively involved in Indigenous education and Indigenous specific programs.

Recommendation 3.6: Increase Indigenous academic employment: The two case studies above demonstrate that Indigenous academics are fundamentally important to the development and implementation of an Indigenised curriculum. Universities need to strategically invest in further Indigenous employment within the academic elements and in specific Indigenous programs. This type of investment could see a growth in programs, as monitored in recommendation 3.5, which could lead to the creation of further academic positions.

Dealing with Racism

All higher education institutions condemn racism; however there is no defined best practice when *dealing with racism*. Many academics that teach in Indigenous Studies would have experience with racism, which can compromise student experiences. Therefore, we considered it fundamentally important to investigate instances of racism at Griffith University and other universities from both the perspective of students and academics. The aim in our project was to understand instances of racism and explore strategies to prevent them occurring, by being proactive rather than reactive. The study interviewed both Indigenous and non-Indigenous academics across health and criminology, and the educational experiences of Indigenous students across a range of disciplines at Griffith University. The following recommendations were drawn out from this study.

Recommendation 4.1: Creating a structured approach to Indigenous curriculum: The case study highlighted the potential problems with having a sole course on Indigenous issues particularly when it services many different disciplines. This situation is also exacerbated when it is a core course that students “must-do” to get their degree program thereby building resentment among some students. We would contend that the problem is not simply about having core courses versus electives. The problem lies in how students’ expectations about their education are constructed and the role Indigenous Studies has in their professional education. This reports still advocates the development of a core course in Indigenous Studies but this should not be done as a “one-off” type of an approach. These core courses need to be part of a structured approach to the curriculum that scaffolds the student across the degree program instead of in one stand-alone course. This would ideally include a combination of meaningfully embedded content in courses as well as courses solely devoted to Indigenous content with at least one core course.

Recommendation 4.2: Valuing of Indigenous education: It is evident that Indigenous students value having Indigenous content in their degree programs to the extent that they will proactively Indigenise their courses by focusing assessment pieces on relevant Indigenous issues. However, within the institution the valuing of Indigenous education is not as obvious. To value Indigenous content, each group needs to create a structured approach to Indigenous education, as per recommendation 4.1, but advertise that this structure exists and the reasons for the importance of this type of education. In essence, it needs to become part of the core business of the university for all discipline areas. Having a well-structured

curriculum that meets educational goals for a profession will over time change the culture of the discipline and the expectations of non-Indigenous students.

Recommendation 4.3: Creating cultural safe learning environments: Indigenous students' education can be severely impacted, to the point of them leaving their studies, if they do not feel culturally safe in lectures and tutorials. Given the power imbalances in the classroom, Indigenous students' cultural safety is of paramount importance. However, this process should not be used to restrict debate and censor non-Indigenous students' views. We would argue that the key to creating a culturally safe learning environment is centred on respectful engagement and keeping curriculum (and hence debates) relevant to the discipline. This is not easily achieved and there should be opportunities for Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff to have professional development in this area. The professional development can be via a course; however, ideally these issues would be discussed at a larger teaching and learning forum of practitioners.

Recommendation 4.4: Establishing an Indigenous studies committee: Each academic group needs to establish its own Indigenous Studies committee that is responsible for creating a structured approach to the curriculum (Recommendation 4.1). The members of this committee would include Indigenous and non-Indigenous academics that are actively involved in Indigenous education. The committee would also have a monitoring role to assess students' experiences in individual courses as well as the complete Indigenous education program.

Recommendation 4.5: Creating a university wide teaching and learning community of practice in Indigenous Studies: From recommendation 4.4, the group Indigenous Studies committees can connect via a web based portal as well as at regular annual forums to present and debate current practice. This will allow a multi-disciplinary approach to Indigenous Studies, create innovative curriculum and pedagogy, improve connections with Indigenous communities and improve scholarship in this area (e.g. journal papers, applying for learning and teaching grants).

Trialling a School-based leadership model

A school-based leadership model was trialled in Griffith University's School of Environment, which sits within the Science Group. The School of Environment was considered important for several reasons: 1) the School had a history of teaching Indigenous Studies and engaging in internal learning and teaching grants in this area; 2) the School had two courses specifically focussed on Indigenous issues; and 3) having a sustained Indigenous Studies program in a Science School is a rarity across Australia.

The model of leadership that was trialled was a Community of Practice (CoP), which brings people together around a particular issue to engage in a process of collective learning (Wenger, 2006). This created a space where best practice is formulated, articulated and shared voluntarily. The disadvantage of a CoP is that it is usually independent of, and often

unsupported, by the institution and relies on “champions”, usually the CoP facilitator, to negotiate the institutional leadership domain (McDonald, Star and Margetts, 2012; McDonald and Palani, 2011).

The CoP in the School of Environment had the support of the Science Group leadership: the PVC, Dean (Teaching and Learning) and the Head of School (HoS). The CoP was established via a School-wide email that encouraged staff to join; willing participation was considered fundamentally important for a CoP. The number of staff that joined was small but significant with HoS, Dean of Research, an Emeritus Professor who was a pioneer of the School, 5 lecturers and a postgraduate student. The members also covered the following disciplines: Soil Science, Genetics, Biology, Environmental Planning and Social Science.

Curriculum Model

One of the main achievements of the CoP was the development of a curriculum model. This model was developed to align with the University-wide Indigenous Studies Major. The main idea was to develop one core course in first year, which gave students an in-depth understanding of the scientific process and knowledge construction with case studies focusing on the connection between Science and Indigenous people. From this core course, students could then elect to undertake the two existing courses in the School (Anthropological perspective and Development and Indigenous people), which were structured in second and third year. The final course was an “In-country experience” course, which was based on work integrated learning (WIL), where students were placed in an Indigenous organisation to work alongside Indigenous people. This course was considered a capstone course and also required strong reciprocity component if it was to be successful. For this course, students would need to be selected and monitored carefully to ensure a positive experience for both the student and the placement organisation.

Implementing the Model

During the project, the Science Group restructured the curriculum to create a group-wide Bachelor of Science program. The restructure was guided by the OLT Threshold Learning Outcomes and had the aim to reduce and streamline course offerings. In implementing the model, the reduction of courses was the first problem for the CoP given that we were interested in introducing a new core course in the degree program. The second hurdle was the Threshold Learning Outcomes were geared more towards learning “the doing” of Science rather than how Scientific knowledge is constructed and how Science relates to people. Lastly, the CoP was not officially part of the restructuring process and, consequently, faced difficulties in proposing ideas late in the restructuring process. However, in our favour was the clear idea around the above curriculum model, where there were synergies between this model and the new Group-wide curriculum model (e.g. WIL capstone courses) and the Group leadership supported the CoP.

After meetings with the Dean (Teaching and Learning), a way forward was negotiated. The Dean also became the champion for this in the restructuring process. The main outcome was the approval for a first year core course in the Group-wide Bachelor of Science program. All Bachelor of Science students are required to take this course. The course was created by revamping an existing course. Two members of the CoP and the course convenor met to negotiate the inclusion of Indigenous content in the course, the course now includes explicit case studies on the relationship between Science and Indigenous people (for example, removal of human remains, Aboriginal land management and bio-prospecting).

Chapter 4: Learning from University Partnership

During the project, several meetings were held with our partners, Charles Sturt University (CSU) and James Cook University (JCU), to discuss our individual approaches to including Indigenous perspectives across the universities' curricula. One of the main principles of the project was to investigate different models and explore commonalities, differences and lessons learnt. The following will outline the approaches of CSU and JCU, and then explore three main principles that emerged from our discussions.

Charles Sturt University (CSU)

Background

Charles Sturt University is committed to the process of reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. In 2008, the University ratified its Indigenous Education Strategy which formally recognises that reconciliation in practice is a shared responsibility requiring commitment to a whole-of-institution approach and active engagement with the Indigenous community. The University's strategic vision now includes acknowledging the culture and insight of Indigenous Australians and CSU's ethos is clearly described by the Wiradjuri phrase: 'yindyamarra winhanga-nha' ('the wisdom of respectfully knowing how to live well in a world worth living in').

<https://cms.csu.edu.au/division/vcoffice/office-of-the-vice-chancellor/strategy-structure/?a=124106>

In 2014, there were 967 Indigenous students enrolled at the University across a range of undergraduate and post-graduate programs, constituting 2.9% of the total CSU student population.

CSU approved a whole-of-university approach to Indigenous Education including Indigenous curriculum development, to be fully implemented by 2015 (which is now being revised to end of 2018), and created a dedicated Indigenous Curriculum Pedagogy Coordinator position to support the initiative. The University has a strong enrolment of Indigenous students, with an established Darrambal Skills Assessment Program <http://www.csu.edu.au/office-for-students/our-teams/inclusion> to increase enrolments and an Indigenous Support Service providing academic, personal and cultural support for its Indigenous students. The School of Indigenous Australian Studies (<http://www.csu.edu.au/faculty/educat/cfis/home>) is an academic school within CSU's [Faculty of Education](#), and is located in Dubbo (with staff on other campuses) situated within the western slopes and plains region of NSW.

Leadership Structure

In 2013 CSU appointed Mr Jamie Newman to the University Council. Mr Newman is a descendant of the Kalar tribe, of the Wiradjuri Nation, has over twenty years' experience

working with and for Aboriginal communities at all levels of the Government and Non-Government sector, and is a well-respected leader in the Aboriginal community. Mr Newman holds a Bachelor of Health Science, Community & Public Health degree from Charles Sturt University.

CSU appointed [Professor Jeannie Herbert](#) OAM as the University's first Pro-Vice-Chancellor of Indigenous Education. Professor Herbert is also the University's foundation Chair of Indigenous Studies and Head of the Dubbo Campus. Her position reports directly to the Deputy Vice Chancellor Academic. Professor Herbert has a significant voice in the University, in part through her involvement in key University committees and working parties, including Academic Senate, Course and Curriculum related committees, School of Indigenous Studies School Board, Graduate Certificate Wiradjuri Language and Culture, Equity and Diversity Committee, the Vice Chancellors Forum, Executive Leaders Forum, Senior Women's Forum as well as Professorial Forums; Faculty of Education Research Institute for Professional Practice, Learning and Education (RIPPLE), Head of Campus Committee, Indigenous Employment Strategy Advisory Committee (Chair) and Strategic planning: Indigenous Sub Plan Working Group (Chair); Central Campus Committee; HEPP Strategic Planning Group. Professor Herbert is also actively involved in research activities and community activities that are critical to educational decision making. For example:

Research

- *Collaborative Conversations* - Regional Collaboration Project consisting of a number of collaborative conversations, in various locations, designed to engage a diversity of CSU communities, students (potential and existing); staff, diversity of representation; families and communities who have an interest in the higher education programs delivered by CSU; and other organisations with a similar interest such as schools, local government bodies, Aboriginal organisations, health facilities, business and industry groups, etc
- *Cooperative Research Centre for Remote Economic Participation's Remote Education Systems project (2012-2014)* - Chair of Advisory Group for the

Community

- *Dubbo regional Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Committee* meetings
- *WLCHRP Steering Committee* - co-chaired by DVC (Academic) and Aunty Flo Grant – the Educational Representative of Wiradjuri Elders Council.
- *National Empowerment Project Steering Committee Meetings* and an *National Empowerment Project Steering Committee Roundtable* was conducted to consider presentations regarding initiatives that have been put in place to overcome high rates of Indigenous suicide in communities around the nation. Linked with the

National Empowerment Project Research Activities in number of communities around the country.

- *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Higher Education Advisory Council Indigenous Leaders Forum* in Canberra, February, 2014.
- *Courageous Conversations* about Race, CSU.

Since 2008, CSU has had various other senior Indigenous appointments emerging with a re structure of Indigenous Student services. Associate Professor Wendy Nolan, who retired in 2014, was Director and Head of School of The Centre for Indigenous Studies, the academic unit that service teaches into all the Faculties. In 2014 the University appointed Ms Angelina Moore-Tabeteau as Director of Inclusion and Indigenous Strategic Practice Leader, a position that provides senior leadership and direction for the University with respect to services that facilitate an inclusive approach to student engagement, and innovative and efficient services to support CSU's strategic plans and in particular the Indigenous Education Strategy. In 2015 Associate Professor Jay Philips was appointed as Head of the School of Indigenous Australian Studies. In 2013, CSU appointed 5 Indigenous fellows to the faculties and the Faculty of Business appointed an Indigenous Senior lecturer in 2014.

At CSU we have 56 Indigenous staff represents:

- 1.03% of academic staff at Level C or above (3/291)
- 1.82% of staff at level 8 and above (3/182)
- 1.83 % of academic staff (14/761)
- 2.64% of all staff (56/2122)

The Office of the Pro-Vice Chancellor, The School of Indigenous Australian Studies and Gulaay Indigenous Australian Resources and Curriculum team in the Learning Academy in the Division of Student Learning are all actively engaged with the local Aboriginal community and with Indigenous Nation groups across the geographical footprint of the University. The University has established strong community links and this year the Bathurst Wiradyuri & Aboriginal Community Elders with the Vice-Chancellor Professor Andy Vann, the Head of Campus, Professor Jo-Anne Reid, DSL's Gulaay Indigenous Curriculum and Resources Team, CSU's Future Moves team, the Sky Stories project and initiators within Big Ideas@CSU, Dr Michelle Evans, Dr Johanna Fawkes and Associate Professor Jane Mitchell *The Marra Marra Badhang* exhibition.

(In Wiradyuri *Marra Marra* means: make, create, do and *Badhang*: pronounced 'badung' – translates to a cloak or blanket). Wiradyuri people from the Bathurst area had been producing and using possum skin cloaks for hundreds, if not thousands of years. As well as being a significant means of keeping warm there was much importance around the making of the cloaks and their wearing. In 1827, Governor Lachlan Macquarie, after

inspecting the recently forged road across the Blue Mountains west of Sydney, wrote about meeting some members of the Wiradyuri at the Bathurst camp:

“They were all clothed with Mantles made of the skins of o’possums which were very neatly sewn together and the outside of the skins were carved in a remarkably neat manner. They appear to be very inoffensive and cleanly in their persons.”

Not long after the first wave of colonisation, as Aboriginal people were dispossessed of their land, the making and wearing of cloaks became rarer. In addition, white missionaries and others were very efficient in the distribution of clothing and blankets to Aboriginal communities which, over a few generations, caused the tradition of possum skin cloak making to die out. Blankets and clothing were not as warm or as waterproof as the cloaks, and contributed to the spread of diseases such as the common cold in the Aboriginal population. In early November 2014, Banmirra Arts Inc, in partnership with Bathurst Regional Art Gallery as part of a Bathurst Regional Council Bathurst 200 partnership project with Bathurst Wiradyuri and Aboriginal Community Elders Group, visited Bathurst and taught some of the local Aboriginal community the seemingly lost art of possum skin cloak making. The Bathurst Wiradyuri and Aboriginal Community went on to produce a remarkable possum skin cloak. This cloak was given to the people of Bathurst by the Bathurst Wiradyuri and Aboriginal Community and it was presented to the office of Mayor during the Bathurst 200 celebrations in 2015. It is expected that the cloak will worn by the Mayor, and future mayors whenever attending cultural or community events concerning the Wiradyuri community as a mark of respect for Wiradyuri culture and people. *The Marra Marra Badhang Exhibition* respects this tradition and celebrates the University commitment to Wiradyuri people and the University ethos ‘yindyamarra winhanga-nha’.



Charles Sturt University mandated for a whole of University approach to both Indigenous community partnerships and the inclusion of Indigenous curriculum and pedagogy via its Indigenous Education Strategy (IES) in 2008. At the forefront of this strategy is a

commitment to providing students and staff with the foundation knowledge and skills to build their Cultural Competency in relation to Indigenous Australian peoples. Since this time, CSU has progressed its strategy which is monitored by the Indigenous Education Strategy Coordinating Group (IESG) which was chaired by the Special Advisor Indigenous Affairs and comprises Indigenous and non-Indigenous members of the University's Senior Executive. Charles Sturt University reviewed the progress of its Indigenous Education Strategy (IES) in 2012 and now monitors this progress via the Indigenous Education Strategy Coordinating Group which is chaired by the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic).

In 2009, CSU appointed to the Division of Learning and Teaching Services, an Indigenous Curriculum and Pedagogy Coordinator who, working closely with the Centre for Indigenous Studies, coordinates the initiative to include Indigenous curriculum and pedagogy across all of CSU's undergraduate courses by a new target of 2018. The University is currently invigorating a revision of processes and practice around course approval processes to ensure a strengthening of curriculum renewal through the Smart Learning process of which the inclusion of Indigenous Curriculum and Pedagogy and cultural competence is a vital part. This position held by Dr Barbara Hill now includes a lead in *Gulaay* Indigenous resources and curriculum Team as part of the Learning Academy in the Division of Student Learning.

At the National Level

In 2011, Associate Professor Wendy Nolan was successful in the tender for the consultancy to Universities Australia to research and write the National Best Practice Framework for Indigenous Cultural Competency in Australian Universities. The consultancy team, under the leadership of Associate Professor Wendy Nolan, consisted of CSU staff members from the Division of Learning and Teaching. Work to upgrade CSU's Indigenous Curriculum and Pedagogy Guidelines Website is now completed (<http://www.csu.edu.au/division/landt/indigenous-curriculum/home>) in light of the new recommendations from the National Best Practice Framework for Cultural Competency in Australian Universities.

In 2012 the National Best Practice Framework for Indigenous Cultural Competency in Australian Universities was finalised and ratified by IHEAC and all the Vice Chancellors in the country. The consultancy team, under the leadership of Associate Professor Wendy Nolan, consisted of CSU staff members from the Division of Learning and Teaching. The *National Best Practice Framework for Indigenous Cultural Competency in Australian Universities (2011-2013)* also involved four national day-long workshops co-facilitated by Associate Professor Wendy Nolan and Dr Barbara Hill, hosted by Universities Australia and attended by over 200 senior sector leaders from institutions all over the country. The website and corresponding documents can be found at: <https://www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au/uni-participation-quality/Indigenous-Higher-Education/Indigenous-Cultural-Compet>

This work was recognised in the 2014 OLT Citations for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning for Associate Professor Wendy Nolan and Dr Barbara Hill *for leading respectful professional partnerships to implement sustainable pedagogical frameworks for Indigenous Cultural Competency in Australian universities* and is extensively referred to and dove-tails into the Review of Higher Education Access and Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People which was released in mid-September 2012.

<http://www.innovation.gov.au/HigherEducation/IndigenousHigherEducation/ReviewOfIndigenousHigherEducation/Pages/default.aspx>, and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Curriculum Framework (2014).

Implementing a whole of University approach

The incorporation of Indigenous Curriculum and Pedagogy into onshore undergraduate programs offered by CSU has had far reaching success across the majority of faculty and discipline areas. Over the course of this project, Associate Professor Wendy Nolan (now retired) and Dr Barbara Hill have worked closely with course and subject development teams and Sub and Associate Deans (Learning and Teaching) within all faculties at CSU. The process has become more comprehensive as course teams, under the guidance of Course Directors and Sub and Associate-Deans (Learning and Teaching), drill down to the requirements and guidelines of the new annual Academic Course Performance Reports (ACPR) and the course development process around it which is Smart Learning. In the wider institutional context, the embedding of Indigenous curriculum and pedagogy commensurate with CSU's Cultural Competence Pedagogical framework involves many difficult conversations, many challenges and a wide skill set. The challenge is about ensuring all our graduates have the knowledge and skills to be able to work with Indigenous peoples and communities in culturally competent ways. This can only be done by sustained effort to make curriculum relevant and to have the course aspiration from the outset committed to improving the lives of Indigenous Australians.

The Indigenous Australian Cultural Competence Program

Since 2009 CSU has trained over 400 CSU staff (including Senior Executive Council) in Indigenous cultural competency. In 2015 CSU has rolled out its three stage Indigenous Cultural Competency Program. Stage 1 is the Individual Online Cultural Competency Program and compulsory for all CSU staff. This individual component of the journey to cultural competence has as its learning outcomes increased cultural awareness and cultural sensitivity. Stage 2 of the program is a team-based discussion with a newly designed triggers resource Cassie's Story 2: *Mingaan Migay Yalblinya* which can be used as a tool to engage staff in further discussion with staff across the University. Stage 3 encourages the creation by staff of a Community of Practice to share achievements and challenges and to build institutional capacity. This places Cultural Competence training on a sustainable footing within the institution. The first stage of this approach is

expected to be completed by the end of 2015. This training will be factored in to all senior staff and their KPI's as well as EDRS of all staff. Additionally there are tasks and assessment in the Graduate Certificate Learning and Teaching that focus on cultural competency and engages all probationer academics in reflection about their teaching practice in relation to social justice for Indigenous Australians.

The inclusion of Indigenous curricula revolves around the Indigenous Education Strategy (IES) which mandates the inclusion of Indigenous curriculum commensurate with a Cultural Competency Pedagogical Framework and articulates a process for curriculum implementation. This work includes, but is not limited to, advice on inclusive curriculum in subjects and courses (to this date we have enabled over 40 subjects through the Indigenous Board of Studies (IBS), the peak accrediting body for Indigenous content at CSU. We are currently working on a range of courses across Faculty with a number of courses fully compliant. We support the integration of Indigenous content into curriculum at course and subject level through this Cultural Competence Pedagogical Framework and a set of Indigenous Cultural Competence Graduate learning outcomes which are reflected in subject and course design under Smart Learning. The development of exemplars and resources to support this curriculum inclusion is also vital. We have developed unique resources that are attracting national and international attention. Primarily, this work entails a high level of collaboration with faculty colleagues at all levels and it involves working with many subject and course teams across the University.

Extending Indigenous Australian Cultural Competence through cultural immersion activities – Journey West to Menindee

Dr Barbara Hill leads Cultural Immersion experiences to Ngiyeempaa country in Menindee to sit with Ngiyeempaa Elder Aunty Beryl *Yungha dhu* Philp-Carmichael. <http://www.csu.edu.au/division/landt/indigenous-curriculum/getting-started#horizontalTab5>

To this date she has taken over 80 academic, executive and senior University staff, including our current Vice Chancellor and his predecessor, on this journey. The objective of this journey is to give staff the experience of being connected to Country, of learning about Indigenous culture from Indigenous people and of reflecting upon their professional practice in light of this. This immersion activity builds on the work and scholarship we have undertaken around cultural competence (Hill & Mills, 2012). The University's aim is not to force Indigenous community engagement and collaboration on staff but to build it into performance management descriptors so that those who do engage are encouraged and rewarded. The presence of the Vice Chancellor, Professor Ian Goulter, at the cultural immersion camp at Menindee in 2011 was an important reflection of CSU's commitment to Indigenous issues. This was reinforced by the visit of President and Vice Chancellor Professor Andrew Vann in 2012. In 2014 32 staff travelled

to Menindee and this year we expect similar numbers. In 2013 Professor Robert Davidson wrote of his Menindee experience:

One of the reasons I was invited to attend the weekend (in October 2013) was that the Bachelor of Medical Radiation Science is undergoing a revision to integrate Indigenous Australian content into the course, rather than having it as a stand-alone subject. It was felt that this would help students to understand that cultural competence was integral to their future practice, rather than an optional addition.

Wiradjuri Language and Heritage Program

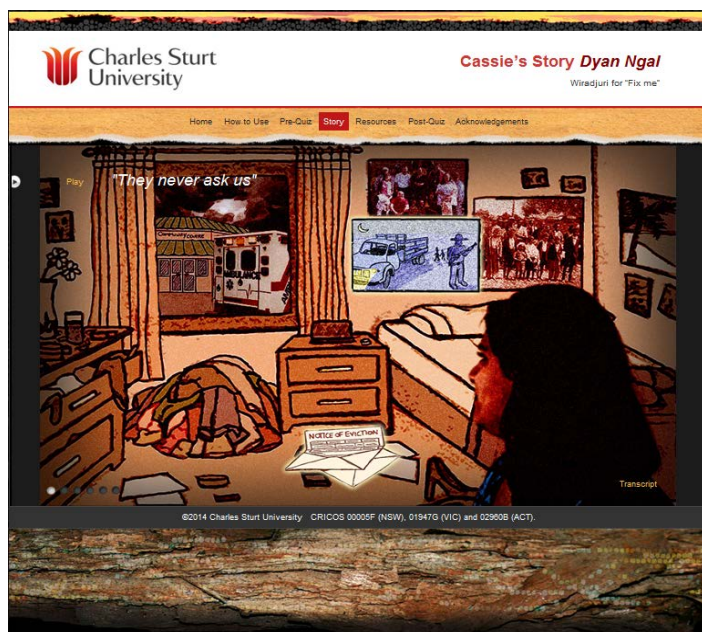
Central to the progress of the IES is the work being done with the Wiradjuri Council of Elders and the Wiradjuri Language and cultural heritage program, a multi layered project invigorating Wiradjuri language, culture, heritage and knowledge. The resources that have emerged from this project have become part of the University's learning and teaching resources by request of the Council of Elders. These and other resources like them are controlled by the Elders. Wiradjuri language and culture is now being taught at the tertiary level at CSU for the first time. CSU's Graduate Certificate in Wiradjuri Language, Culture and Heritage creates opportunities for students to participate actively in the process of reconciliation and nation building with community capacity in the Wiradjuri community. It provides students with skills to teach the Wiradjuri language in TAFE, non-TAFE providers, community settings and community organisations and to work effectively with the Wiradjuri community in culturally appropriate and sensitive ways. The course prepares students with well-developed cognitive, technical and communication skills to select and apply methods and technologies to analyse and evaluate information to complete a range of activities, generate and transmit solutions to complex problems and transmit knowledge and ideas to others. Graduates gain an awareness of the need to reverse the centuries of deficit in knowledge of the culture, heritage and history of the Wiradjuri nation often caused by colonisation, dislocation and dispossession. Graduates also develop skills in teaching and using the Wiradjuri language in community and educational settings, the capacity to work in the Indigenous community in ways that support and develop those communities, and the ability to analyse and think critically and constructively about the factors that promote or impede Indigenous nation rebuilding.

The course has a significant workplace and professional community placement component, which gives students the opportunity to work with the Wiradjuri community. Students are given the opportunity to work with a community mentor and members of the Wiradjuri community to identify, negotiate, plan and implement a project which seeks to build the capacity of the community in practical and contributory ways. Students undertake 50 hours of community placement where they participate in community activities and engage with the knowledge, history, language and culture of that community. Through these activities

students gain experiential insights that will allow them to contribute to the building of better lives and futures for members of that community. The course is open to all students.

Resources

Cassie's Story: *Dyan Ngal*



Cassie's Story: Dyan Ngal is a multi media resource that seeks to value-add to those initiatives already underway at CSU: specifically the embedding of Indigenous curriculum and pedagogy in all undergraduate on-shore courses by 2015. Together we created the vision for this powerful teaching resource which was developed from a case study about the Dubbo Community which was used in the Cultural competence training sessions that we have conducted since 2009.

The resource, framed by a pre and post quiz comprises a series of six static scenes depicting the story, and social world, of a seventeen year old Wiradjuri woman, Cassie, as she contemplates the eviction of her community from their estate, her family's and community's immediate anguish, their health problems, their histories of dispossessions, their tears and wailings which disturbed the spirits when their children were stolen. Through it all, it is the community's spiritual beliefs which sustain them — as does, amazingly, their enduring capacity for laughter. Cassie also presents the vagaries of her own future which, more than possibly, includes time in juvenile detention, "juvie", as she calls it. This looming possibility is set against the possibilities, the hope, of education. One student has described it as *a very powerful and confronting case study*. Hill et al. (2015) are in press with a journal article *Stories on the journey to Indigenous Australian cultural competency: an evaluation of the pedagogical efficacy of the digital resource, Cassie's Story: Dyan Ngal* as part of evaluating a shift from institutional narrative to a more evidence based approach.

CSU continues to support the Indigenous Education Strategy with resources such as *Cassie's Story; Dyan Ngal* and the Digital Object Management System (DOMs) Indigenous Education collection, and activities like the *Working with Racism in the Classroom* forum. Additionally a raft of projects has been funded by the Faculty of Education, with other faculty and divisional collaborations. These are used as resources to support learning and teaching in relation to Indigenous curriculum and pedagogy. Some examples of

these resources are: the Indigenous Concepts of Country project; Indigenous Community High Achievers and CSU; the Professional Experience Placement Scholarship scheme, the Filming of Elders and their stories, The Sky Stories Project and the Traditional Knowledge Network (TKN). CSU also continues to attract International scholars working in this area in a seminar series that is hosted through the Division of Student Learning with faculty staff.

James Cook University

A journey of engaging staff in learning and teaching that is respectful of Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders

Background

James Cook University (JCU) identifies in its core Values and Beliefs its Strategic Intent of being *“committed to working towards the achievement of genuine and sustainable reconciliation between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the wider community.”* The Reconciliation Statement adopted by the JCU Council details a range of strategies, including curriculum development, which is detailed below.

In 2014 JCU had over 600 Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled across a range of undergraduate and post-graduate programs.

Looking back

It is important to look back at the past to acknowledge achievements and successes, and to reflect on how far Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have come in the academic arena. In 1992, James Cook University first established the Centre for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Participation, Research and Development (CATSIPRED). The focus of the Centre was to increase access and participation for Indigenous people in higher education, through the design and implementation of tertiary access and tutoring programs. Subsequently, the Centre became the School of Indigenous Australian Studies (SIAS) established in January 1998 and offered an enabling program, undergraduate and postgraduate programs in Indigenous studies, student support and a research program. SIAS programs were specifically designed to provide knowledge and understanding of the diversity of Indigenous Australians, including their worldviews, cultural values and beliefs and their rich contribution which has been instrumental in shaping the development of the nation. The activities within SIAS can be found at <http://www.jcu.edu.au/sias/>, but most recently (2015) the University proposes a new Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Centre to coordinate scholarship and student support.

The **Indigenous Health Unit (IHU)** of the Faculty of Medicine Health & Molecular Sciences was established in the first half of 2003. The Unit provides an enabling program and student support and has a focus on Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health issues and strategies across the health disciplines.

James Cook University currently has a range of support services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, including a number of specific services and resources such as the Indigenous Student Support Officers. The Indigenous Student Support Officers provide the following services however availability varies depending on the study area:

- Navigation around university systems and procedures;
- Information on Indigenous Cadetships and scholarships;
- Referral to services including academic, ITAS, career, financial, counselling, health and accommodation.
- Moral support and encouragement to students;
- Facilitation of social gathering to meeting other Indigenous students across campus;
- Time management to assist students manage their study program and social life; as well as

JCU also has an active Indigenous Student Mentor program on the Cairns Campus and since 2014, also on the Townsville Campus. The Student Mentor Program matches new students with a student mentor in a similar course. There are Indigenous student mentors for most study areas. An Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Library Liaison Officer helps students finding print and online resources and developing information literacy and research skills. The position is based in Townsville and can assist Cairns and off-campus students.

The University provides a Tertiary Access Course for students who are not eligible for enrolment through the normal process and/or who have not studied for a period of time and need to gain the necessary academic skills. Subjects include general academic skills, computer literacy, critical literacy and Mathematics. The University also offers an Indigenous Health Careers Access Program (IHCAP) which is designed to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student success in pursuing a health career. This program is the only one of its kind in Australia and offers a free one-month orientation course that is held on JCU's Townsville campus in January of each year. In that month, students will complete the subject *English for Academic Purposes* as an intensive subject. The program then continues to provide students enrolled in a health degree with the practical skills and the knowledge to better cope with demands of university study. The program focuses on:

- Learning and study skills;
- Science based subjects;
- Support networks;
- Skills in coping with the demands of study, family and community; and budgeting and planning life around university study.

Since 2015 a Diploma of Higher Education is also offered to students who do not meet degree entry requirements with high levels of student support to ensure a positive transition to degree programs. Over 12 per cent of students in this program are Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

Engaging staff and developing Cultural Competence

Reconciliation Statement

In 2008, the Vice Chancellor endorsed the JCU reconciliation statement. This was a major initiative to support the engagement of all staff and community members in cross-cultural awareness.

The [Reconciliation Statement](#) is routinely introduced to academic staff as part of the learning and teaching induction activities organized by the Directorate of Learning, Teaching and Student Engagement. The University has recently commenced a strategy to engage more fully with the statement through the Reconciliation Action Plan.

Curriculum Refresh Project

In 2009, as part of the University's work to distinguish itself, JCU launched the project Australia's University for the Tropics Project. This project, focused on transforming curriculum offerings at both undergraduate and post-graduate level to align with the University's stated strategic intent: *making a difference in the tropics*. A key aspect of the project was the goal to support academic staff to embed Indigenous perspectives across the curriculum - aligned with the then University plan that stated a goal to develop:

Curriculum that integrates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge, perspectives and experience across the curriculum through consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff.

Several curriculum projects developed as part of this curriculum work, and these are detailed in the following summaries.

Education

Embedding a Commitment to Indigenous Education

The purpose of this project is to prepare, articulate and make visible the School of Education's commitment to improve educational outcomes for Indigenous students (both pre-service teachers and school students by ensuring that all graduates will have skills and knowledge for teaching in ways that will promote the tenets of the JCU Reconciliation Statement through the embedding of Indigenous perspectives across all subjects in its Bachelor of Education program.

Review and strengthen Humanities Tertiary Access Course (TAC) as a pathway to JCU degree courses for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students

The Tertiary Access Course was originally established to provide Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students with a pathway into tertiary education, by equipping those without traditional Overall Position (OP) entry scores with the knowledge, skills and confidence to

enter JCU degree courses. The course was redesigned to be undertaken in 6 months intensive study, and the 4 component subjects have been reviewed. Goals were to:

- explore ways to boost enrolment in TAC by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander – school leavers and mature-aged entrants;
- establish stronger relationships with schools to help build TAC as an alternative pathway into JCU for more Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students;
- survey current students about times, modes and locations of TAC teaching and learning;
- review assessment practices in all subjects, including exploring the possibility of ungraded/competency based assessment;
- link TAC with the university's wider participation and pathways strategies;
- explore the destinations of TAC graduates and track their pathways; and
- explore successful similar alternative access programs in other Universities.

Walking Forward Together: Design and Implementation of Reconciliation Principles with the Faculty of Law, Business and Creative Arts

Based upon the principles of justice, recognition and healing espoused by the Reconciliation Statement, this project seeks to design a sustainable response to the Reconciliation Statement in the context of teaching and research practice within the Faculty of Law, Business and Creative Arts. It seeks to do so by engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and explicitly engaging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students in integrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and experience across the curriculum of the Faculty's courses.

The work on supporting curriculum initiatives has been substantially recognised through a range of national teaching awards including:

- a national citation for the work of staff in the School of Indigenous Australia Studies, including Sharon Moore and Lynette Ireland: 'For embedding Indigenous Perspectives into the Curriculum at JCU through Courageous conversations within the Cultural Interface';
- a national program award for the RATEP Teacher Education program in 2012; and
- a program award in 2009 for post-graduate supervision (Australian Learning and Teaching Council Award for Programs that enhance Learning for SIAS post graduate program (Felecia Watkin-Lui, Yvonne Cadet-James & Sue McGinty).

Staff professional development

Over many years, the School of Indigenous Australian Studies has led the University in supporting staff engaged in inclusive and supportive practices. In particular, the School coordinates the presentation of a staff workshop: *An Introduction to Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Cultural Awareness*

This day-long workshop has the following objectives:

- Insight into participant's own beliefs and examination of these same aspects from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspective;
- Outline significant historical events and theories and their impact on contemporary Australian society;
- Overview of factors which affect contemporary Indigenous Australians;
- Insight into Indigenous ways of working and success in achieving self-determination; and
- Opportunity to explore significant points addressed in the program and discuss strengths in achieving.

The workshop covers the following content

- Introduction to the Program
- Defining world view & culture
- Culture shock
- Historical events
- Kinship systems
- Health & Wellbeing
- Communication

While this workshop is not compulsory for academic staff, some units in the University require staff to participate.

The School also offers Indigenous Research Protocol Workshops to strengthen the research capacity of staff and students to conduct meaningful and ethical research in the field of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research. In 2014 the School commenced the delivery of Community Research Workshops to strengthen the capacity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and communities to set and control their own research agendas and work in partnership with research institutions.

Development of subject in Graduate Certificate of Education (Academic Practice)

In 2012, a further initiative to support staff engagement was developed – the development of a new subject in the Graduate Certificate of Education (Academic Practice). The subject, developed by working collaboratively between the School of Indigenous Australian Studies, Teaching and Learning Development and interested members of staff from around the University.

The subject supports the recommendations of *the Universities Australia Guiding Principle for Teaching and Learning that all graduates of Australian universities should be culturally competent*, and specifically engage in the requirements to:

1. Embed Indigenous knowledges and perspectives in all university curricula to provide students with the knowledge, skills and understandings which form the foundations of Indigenous cultural competency;
2. Train teaching staff in Indigenous pedagogy for teaching Indigenous Studies and students effectively, including developing appropriate content and learning resources, teaching strategies and assessment methods; and
3. Incorporate Indigenous Australian knowledges and perspectives into programs according to a culturally competent pedagogical framework.

The subject title is: *Transforming Learning and Teaching for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander contexts* and the learning outcomes read as follows:

- critically analyse own identity in relation to the teaching and learning contexts of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students;
- critically explore stereotypes about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and how these can be perpetuated and countered in higher education and their profession;
- emphasise Indigenous knowledges as a strength to inform the development of inclusive curricula and teaching and learning practice in specific disciplines;
- identify and apply evidence from international perspectives and from relevant Australian policy and reports, to build inclusive curricula, teaching and learning practice and cultural competence; and
- critically examine the strengths and challenges of working in the cultural interface and develop strategies to achieve positive outcomes.

The subject will commence following the restructure of 2015 and establishment of a designated position to support curriculum development activities.

Reconciliation Action Plan

Under the leadership of the Senior DVC, Professor Chris Cocklin, JCU has developed [a Reconciliation Action Plan](#). This plan was developed by a working group during 2014 and includes a staff and student guide to activities that support reconciliation.

As part of this work, a guide to [cultural protocols](#) was developed. Cultural protocols are the standards of behaviour that we use to show respect to each other. The portal has links to informative and practical information to support staff and student to work and engage with both Australian Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander peoples while at JCU in a way that is culturally respectful.

Outdoor Learning Space

In 2012, JCU moved to develop more appropriate learning environments. Through the DEEWR Indigenous Support Program, JCU has allocated funding to construct an Outdoor Learning Centre (classroom). The project was conceived to be an alternative to traditional pedagogical space, by providing a learning environment almost without boundaries to the external environment. It is to accommodate a single class unit in a mostly active and discursive pedagogical style with low technological input and minimal services (open air – relying on natural ventilation and lighting). The project is to be complimentary to the teaching suite of spaces provided in the Specialist Teaching & Student Services Precinct.

The project is seen as the University's best opportunity to enhance the cultural and intellectual understanding between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australia and provide an environment that best supports the Indigenous student. Details of the centre are found at the following [link](#).

A project to promote understanding of the local plants and traditional uses is also under way including an augmented reality walking trail. This project is scheduled to be completed in 2015.

Challenges that remain include

- Organisational structure changes that remain in flux
- Support structures for Indigenous students within faculties that are not coordinated across the Institution
- Leadership stability and commitment across the organisation

Bringing it together

From the experiences above, it is clear that GU and JCU are in the early stages of a university-wide approach to Indigenous curriculum when compared to CSU. GU and JCU have isolated developments in Indigenous curriculum that are very important but not well connected at a university level. CSU has an established leadership and policy structure that

has resulted in a range of staff devoted to the Indigenising of curriculum across the university. This commitment has also result in a well-developed relationship with the Aboriginal communities in CSU's geographical location that has directly benefited staff and students. From recognising these key differences, the conversation at the university partners' meetings had three recurring themes: Leadership, Transformation and Institutional Changes: *What must come first?* From our combined experience, we consider that these three themes must be addressed in any institution that is Indigenising curriculum using a whole-of-institution approach.

Institutional Change: What must come first?

The university partners consider it important to articulate what an institution must do if they decide to develop and implement a whole-of-university approach to Indigenous curriculum. These are as follows:

1. It is fundamentally important that university needs recognise that an Indigenous curriculum is an essential part of the university curriculum and not just an equity issue that has special allowances in the system.
2. Indigenising curriculum needs to be understood as a national imperative i.e. it is in the best interests of the nation to have positive and respectful relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.
3. Universities must make it clear that having Indigenous content is important for all professions, not just in terms of service delivery professions such as health and education, but for all disciplines.
4. A communication strategy must be developed that clearly articulates the university's commitment to Indigenous curriculum, to all students and staff. This message needs to be at the university level as well as at the group and school levels.
5. Universities need to develop a five-year strategic plan that details and works towards the inclusion of Indigenous content across the curriculum.

Leadership

It is essential that universities develop appropriate leadership structures to implement a strategic plan to include Indigenous content across the curriculum. The following are the key messages from the Project:

1. Indigenous leadership must be embraced as central to the development and implementation of an Indigenous curriculum. This leadership needs to be at the university, group and school levels.
2. Joint ownership and responsibilities between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people are essential to sustain an Indigenous curriculum.
3. Leadership is distributed and networked at all levels of the institution.

4. All leaders need to engage with and foster sustained professional learning activities for example, participating in a range of cultural competency/immersion experiences both formal and informal.
5. There is a need to grow leadership within the institution, which can be done with professional learning activities and/or human resource processes.
6. Align university process to ensure visible commitment to Indigenous curriculum particularly in recruitment, induction, performance management, promotion, workload and course/program budgets.

Transformations

The notion of transformations was mainly discussed in relation to institutional transformation (as discussed above) as well as the transformational nature of an Indigenous curriculum for staff and students who, for the first time, are experiencing an Indigenous Worldview. The following are the key messages from the discussion:

1. Establish a curriculum vision for Indigenous perspectives across the curriculum.
2. Design whole course structures, which allow students to focus on Indigenous perspectives within the discipline and throughout a course of study.
3. Explicitly assess and provide feedback to students on their understanding of Indigenous perspectives throughout the curriculum.
4. Collaborate and partner with Indigenous community members internally and externally to foster and privilege Indigenous perspectives.
5. Develop and teach strategies to combat racism and counter deficit discourses. This will create safe and supportive learning environments for all staff and students.
6. Ensure deeply reflective practice in the design of curriculum.
7. Curriculum reform requires
 - a. recognition and understanding that addressing racism is a key challenge in the change process;
 - b. sustained and deep commitment across whole institution;
 - c. recognition of privileged knowledges, status of other knowledges and a prioritisation of Indigenous knowledges.

These key messages can be viewed as a guide for institutions who are considering developing and implementing a university-wide approach to Indigenous curriculum.

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Appendix A

Certification by Deputy Vice-Chancellor (or equivalent)

I certify that all parts of the final report for this OLT grant provide an accurate representation of the implementation, impact and findings of the project, and that the report is of publishable quality.

Name:  Date: 13 August 2015

Professor Adam Shoemaker
Academic Provost
Griffith University