



Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Inclusive Curriculum Development & Implementation

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Indigenous Researchers' Network



Acknowledgements

I acknowledge the Traditional Custodians and pay my respects to
Elders past and present

I also acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the areas in which
I work and live

the contributions of Griffiths Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander
community

Indigenous Researchers' Network

Introduction

Heritage – Identity - Family



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Overview:

- The *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Inclusive Curriculum Development and Implementation Project* has been running since 2008. The project focuses on three areas:
- **“Curriculum**
To develop a culturally appropriate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander curriculum which is inclusive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies, knowledges and perspectives, and to support its sensitive implementation in degree programs
- **Learning and teaching strategies**
To design culturally sensitive learning and teaching strategies and to train, develop and support academic staff in their use
- **Research**
To establish culturally appropriate protocols and curriculum to encourage and support the conduct of research related to, or involving Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Island communities by staff and students (GU, *Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander: First peoples, Learning and Teaching*, 2009).”

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Timeline

- 2000 an Indigenous academic was appointed to 'Indigenise' the Law School's curriculum to develop and teach law courses relating specifically to Australian Indigenous peoples and to undertake the role of academic student support for Indigenous law students.
- May 2003 Teaching & Learning Excellence Committee recommends the establishment of a working party following receipt of the *Indigenous Australian Studies as an inclusive part of Griffith Learning* discussion paper.
- 21/6/2004 – 6/12/2000 The **Inclusive Practices in the Curriculum – Indigenous Australian Studies Working Party** holds 7 meetings.
- 2004 An Audit of the courses offered by Griffith in 2nd Semester to identify inclusive curriculum practices of Indigenous Australian studies was undertaken. 27% of the convenors responded and 6.18% were identified as containing Indigenous content.

Timeline

- 21/2/2005 – June 2005 The **Inclusive Practices in the Curriculum – Indigenous Australian Studies Working Party** met and prepared the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Knowledges at Griffith: Final Report* for consideration by the **Teaching & Learning Excellence Committee** 2006
- 2006 Phillip Falk received both a Carrick Citation for 'outstanding Contribution to Student Learning' for his holistic approach to embedding Indigenous knowledge in law studies curriculum and the 'Neville Bonner award for Teaching Excellence in Indigenous Education'. May 2007
- 2007 Griffith committed to the *University's Statement on Reconciliation*, "in the spirit of cooperation, partnership and mutual respect... for the betterment of all Australians..."

Timeline

- 2007 The Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) tasked the Educational Excellence Committee to consider the recommendations from the *The Pathways Model: Pathways to Indigenous inclusive teaching and learning practices- a Griffith Signature Experience funded project report* developed by Phillip Falk with a view to determining which if any of these could be meaningfully generalised to other academic elements in the University.
- 2007 The outcome was a recommendation to the Griffith Learning and Teaching Committee for a whole-of-University approach to Indigenous Learning and Teaching Practices contained in the document. *Pathways to Indigenous inclusive teaching and learning practices-Discussion paper* (September 2007).

Timeline

- March 2008 **Academic Committee** approve the recommendation resulting in the establishment of the current Advisory and Working Groups and the employment of the project officer until May 2010. December 2008
- December 2008 Dr Chris Matthews was appointed Co-ordinator of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research Network.

The position involves liaison with individuals, organisations and groups, both within the University and nationally on research and project work.

Part of the Co-ordinator's role is Griffith's response to the Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community research and development agenda, and facilitating the production and dissemination of scholarly publications.

Timeline

- January 2009 Griffith website - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander: First Peoples is launched.

Accessed at a click of a button in the home page
and subtitled Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander: First peoples



Timeline

- February 2009 Project on the agenda of the Education Faculty Planning Conference.
- Potential B Midwifery program to commence in 2010 is designed and developed to include project goals. March 2009
- March 2009 Project officer attended the 1st meeting and community focused forum of the QIECC at Toowoomba. It is the first of the 4 meetings QIECC will host this year
- May 2009 ongoing The sub committee Working Group holds regular meetings to inform the Working Party



Working Group

- The working group formed to brainstorm an Indigenous understanding of the issues involved in the curriculum project and reach a level of consensus about what is the core values or the “not negotiable” that need to be considered. It is an important component of the project as it allows for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who work with and within Griffith University to be comfortable with the intended curriculum change process. An unambiguous articulation of Griffith’s internal Indigenous perspectives regarding the project direction and eventual outcomes is a crucial dimension of the Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Curriculum Project and the University’s commitment and desire to do it well is evident in the resources devoted to that purpose.



Working Group

- The intention of the Working Group is to inform the Working Party on those aspects of the curriculum change process that require an Indigenous perspective. This document will function as a communication tool between the subcommittee and the Working Party. It will allow the curriculum project to meet its intended goals in such a way that cultural integrity is retained and progress is undertaken within a spirit of cultural humility that means cultural compromise on behalf of those Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples involved does not jeopardise the outcomes.

Working paper

- The purpose of this working paper is to articulate what “Indigenising the curriculum” at Griffith University could and should mean. The Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Curriculum Working Party sub-committee which is made up of the Indigenous members and known as the Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Working Group discussed the many questions and issues surrounding how best to balance the curriculum on offer to the University’s students. This document articulates the results of that dialogue back to the Working Party. The opinions and perspectives included in this working paper reflect those of the Griffith internal Indigenous community. They are premised on the protocols of identifying and maintaining cultural authority.

Current Situation

Curriculum Project

Final meeting for 2009 on 4th Dec

- Leadership grant
- B Mid launched
 - » Graduate attributes assessment
 - Curriculum Models developed
 - Cultural knowledge transfer protocols
 - Evaluation and monitoring

Environment

University context.

- Advisory committee
 - » Elders in residence
 - GUMURRII
 - Indigenous Research network
 - Reconciliation

Maintaining personal integrity



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Findings to date

- Needs to maintain cultural integrity.
- Process cannot be rushed
- Partnership needs to be equal and respectful
- Less is more
- Let us do what we do best and you do what you do best