

EMBEDDING INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVES AT USQ

“The LTSU would like to acknowledge the Giabal and Jarowair of Toowoomba; the Ugarapul of Springfield, and; the Butchulla of Fraser Coast: traditional owners of the lands where each USQ campus is located”.

The purpose of embedding Indigenous perspectives in USQ curricula materials is to:

- develop and foster cross cultural awareness and sensitivity
- deconstruct stereotypes through critical analysis and thinking skills
- offer due recognition to Indigenous Australian history and experiences
- raise awareness of the history, experiences and cultural diversity of Indigenous peoples in Australia and globally; and
- align with USQ’s goals of equity and multiculturalism.

What does it mean to embed Indigenous perspectives?

Embedding knowledge of Indigenous perspectives may mean:

- teaching Indigenous students in culturally appropriate ways
- ‘both ways’ education in which non-Indigenous students study Indigenous knowledge and, through a meeting of these knowledge systems, facilitate their professional practice in Indigenous communities [See ANU living knowledge website below]
- weaving reference to Indigenous perspectives throughout a course or a program. For example, provide students with statistical tables of Indigenous health or education outcomes, then provide them with questions that interrogate the statistical data
- ensuring that discipline-specific Indigenous perspectives are included in the curriculum. For example, surveyors will need an understanding of Indigenous land rights
- developing Indigenous-specific courses or programs.

How to embed Indigenous perspectives

- Incorporate Indigenous perspectives in learning objectives and assessments.
- Plan across a range of learning objectives to engage students with cognitive (knowledge), affective (feelings) and behavioural (practice) learning outcomes associated with Indigenous perspectives.
- Incorporate Indigenous content and evidence from research into Indigenous issues in course materials.
- Engage students with the Indigenous dimensions of discipline-specific studies.
- Develop international awareness of Indigenous issues through web-based learning activities.
- Develop critical thinking exercises to enhance awareness of multiple perspectives on Indigenous issues.
- Avoid imposing personal beliefs and feelings. Rather, adopt a process of ‘values clarification’. [Simply search for ‘values clarification’ on-line or begin with the UNESCO education website below].
- Establish working relationships with the USQ Centre for Australian Indigenous Knowledge: Kumbari/Ngurpai and Buallum Jarl-Bah.

Comments from USQ academic staff who have included Indigenous perspectives in their courses

*“We look at images of Indigenous people in works by white Australian writers and contrast them with representations of Indigenous people in *Home and Bush Mechanics*. One objective is to reconsider the ways in which our stories enfranchise and disenfranchise different forms of identity and the values that underpin them.”*

“The anthropological perspective considers the interaction of customary law and the legal system from the point of view of the construction of race, gender, class and cultural identity.”

*“We are concerned with students obtaining different cultural perspectives in order not to draw conclusions about those cultures but rather to understand their own culture from a broader perspective. A course such as *Law in Context* would not be complete without considering the first inhabitants of this nation and understanding the impact our legal system has had on their culture. It is essential that students at a tertiary level receive a broad view of the world and are able to address the many diverse perspectives and understandings we can all have.”*

V2/Nov07

Resources

EDNA (2008), Indigenous resources webpage (The Indigenous Australians theme page contains information about Indigenous history, culture, reconciliation and also has links to relevant study guides:

http://www.edna.edu.au/edna/go/schooled/school_theme_pages/pid/1822

Joint Management Committee Aboriginal Healing and Wellness, (2001), *Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Strategy*: <http://www.ahwsontario.ca/policies/pdf/IndigenousKnowledgePolicy.pdf>

Brascoupe, S. & M. Howard (2001) *A Community Guide to Protecting Indigenous Knowledges*: http://www.aincinac.gc.ca/pr/ra/ind/gui_e.pdf

Christies, M, (no date) *Computer Data Bases and Aboriginal Knowledge*
<http://www.cdu.edu.au/centres/ik/pdf/CompDatAbKnow.pdf>

Commonwealth of Australia (2004) *Working with Indigenous Knowledge in a Natural Resource Environment*

<http://www.environment.gov.au/indigenous/publications/nrm-sea-forum.html>

Indigenous Knowledge Management of North Australia (no date), *Making collective memory with computers*: <http://www.cdu.edu.au/centres/ik/index.html>

Gillies, J. (2004) University of Victoria webpage, *Is Aboriginal Knowledge Science?*
<http://communications.uvic.ca/edge/aboriginal-science.html>

University of Saskatchewan, (no date), webpage, *Guidelines for Representing Aboriginal Knowledge in Cross-Cultural Science & Technology Units*

http://www.usask.ca/education/ccstu/guiding_documents/guidelines_for_representing_kn.html

University of South Australia Carrick project (2007) Integrating Australian Indigenous content and pedagogies into psychology education: <http://www.unisanet.unisa.edu.au/learn/unaipon-psyia/?PATH=/Resources/tcc/Integrating+Australian+Indigenous+content+and+pedagogies+into+psychology+education/&default=Welcome.htm>

UNESCO Education website:

http://www.unesco.org/education/tlsf/TLSF/theme_d/mod20/uncom20t03s01.htm

USQ Learning and Teaching Website, *Utilising Aboriginal Knowledge in Western Plant Conservation*: http://www.landcareonline.com/case_study.asp?cID=6.

