Wingara Mura-Bunga Barrabugu Strategy
Culturally Competent Curriculum Review
End of year progress report
November 2014

Faculty/School: Agriculture and Environment
Liaison person: Peter Ampt
Date: 21/11/2014

The Faculty of Agriculture and Environment (FAE) is committed to integrating Indigenous knowledge, culture and science into current teaching and research programs. This will enrich the Faculty’s dedication to sustainable land management as there is much we need to learn from Australia’s First Nation Peoples in order to transform into responsible custodians of Country for the benefit of current and future generations of Australians.

1. Definition of cultural competence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Culture defines our sense of self, our sense of identity, our sense of community, and our sense of time and place. Therefore, cultural competence refers to both an understanding of ourselves and others, and the myriad philosophies, values, beliefs and contexts through which all knowledge is produced, shared and interpreted.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Awareness and inward reflection on the substrates of culture that have structured how we sense and think of the world, and open, outward exploration and integration of alternative ways of thinking and seeing, are central to cultural competency. The purpose of cultural competency is to build a regenerating, multidimensional world-view with the hope of fostering the capacity to imagine, create and collaborate across and within multi-cultural, trans-cultural and inter-cultural spaces. Our commitment to cultural competence reinforces the nation-wide challenge of actively addressing injustice, racism, exclusion, inequity and bias.</td>
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<td>The Faculty of Agriculture and Environment will develop and integrate cultural competence firstly, through a process of critical reflexivity, and secondly, through innovative learning, teaching, research and engagement. Initially, we will introduce these innovations from the standpoint of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. The program will be expanded to fully embrace the cultural diversity of the University, our region and the wider international community.</td>
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2. Summary of progress – 2013-2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Commenced</th>
<th>Completed</th>
<th>Anticipated completion</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Review/audit of existing curriculum</td>
<td>November 2013</td>
<td>June 2014</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Curriculum planning for renewal (proposed changes)</td>
<td>June 2014</td>
<td></td>
<td>June 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Implementation (of proposed changes)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2015</td>
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3. Aims

What are the main aim/s of your review/renewal? e.g. to review existing curriculum for effectiveness? to incorporate new perspectives?

- To review the existing curriculum to assess the current extent of, and future potential for, inclusion of Indigenous knowledge
- To develop a database of resources pertaining to the potential inclusion of new content as suggested in survey
- To determine other potential avenues (e.g. research projects, staff and students) for collaboration with Indigenous knowledge
- To aid in the renewal of the teaching curriculum by providing and sharing resources and discussing their inclusion
- To determine challenges, issues and constraints to inclusion of new material in the curriculum
- To demonstrate the Faculty’s commitment to integrating cultural competency as a core skill of staff and students

Has your Wingara Mura curriculum review been undertaken in conjunction with any other reviews? (Please specify below)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accreditation</th>
<th>Other curriculum reviews</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accrediting body/bodies: N/A</td>
<td>LEES proposal (see Attachment A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural competence requirements: N/A</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Are there any special or non self-explanatory issues related to these other curriculum reviews?

- LEES proposal (see Attachment A)
4. Data

What data sources have you drawn upon in your review/renewal process? e.g. staff/student surveys; focus groups; interviews; conversations with staff, etc? (Please attach any documentation you think will be helpful)

- Staff survey (see Attachment B)
- Staff interviews (see Attachment C)
- Results of audit (see Attachment D)
- Database developed based on results of audit (see Attachment E)

5. Results

5.1. Curriculum review/audit

If you are at this stage, what are the results of your review/audit? That is, what did you find out about the extent to which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and/or cultural competence development is already embedded in your curriculum? Please provide a brief summary below or in an attachment.

(See Attachment D)

5.2 Planning for curriculum renewal

What approach are you taking to embedding cultural competence/Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in the curriculum as part of your renewal? (See following table)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach</th>
<th>Details (e.g. Unit of Study codes for both standalone and dispersed; activities, etc.)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>* Standalone Unit of Study</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Elective</td>
<td>3XXX – Indigenous Land and Food Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Core</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Capstone</td>
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</table>
| * Dispersed across curriculum (i.e. no standalone Unit or in conjunction with standalone Unit) | AGEN1001 – Shaping our Landscapes  
LWSC2002 – Introductory Hydrology  
AGEN2001 – Plant Function  
ENSY3003 – Forest Ecosystem Science  
ENSY3002 – Fire in Australian Ecosystems  
AGRO3004 – Managing Agro-ecosystems  
AGRO4004 – Sustainable Farming Systems  
AGRO4005 – Livestock Production Systems  
AGEN4006 – Livestock Collection and Management  
AGEN4XXX – Agricultural and Environmental Extension |
See Attachment F – Proposed Unit of Study (UoS) outline
See Attachment G – Minutes of cross-faculty meeting discussing potential of proposed UoS

**Why have you taken this approach? (e.g. curriculum constraints; the approach has proven unsatisfactory in the past, etc.)**

- Curriculum constraints – science-based UoS which do not lend themselves to inclusion of Indigenous knowledge; UoS which are already at capacity (in terms of content) as they are an amalgamation of two previous UoS
- Lecturer constraints – lack of exposure to or knowledge of Indigenous issues or potential content
- Proposed UoS (AGEN 3XXX – Indigenous Food and Land Management) – To facilitate experiential learning and problem-based learning of Indigenous issues in relation to agriculture and the natural environment

**How you are aiming to ensure all students in your faculty/school graduate with core cultural competence skills? (any co-curricular activities can be included here)**

- Existing Faculty field trips – inclusion and consideration of Indigenous issues
- Faculty-wide subject AGEN 1001 (Shaping our Landscapes) – inclusion of cultural competence in learning outcomes to be implemented
- Proposed UoS (AGEN 3XXX – Indigenous Food and Land Management) inclusion of a pre-field trip module to orientate students and develop cultural competency
- New UoS (AGEN 4XXX – Agricultural and Environmental Extension) to include sections on developing cultural competency and effectively working with different communities in different socio-cultural contexts
- Future consideration for embedding cultural competency outcomes in existing UoS

**Have you included experiential learning in the revised curriculum (or in the co-curriculum)? If not, is there potential for this to be included?**

- The proposed UoS (AGEN 3XXX – Indigenous Food and Land Management) will be based on an experiential learning experience.
- Potential to include experiential learning on faculty field trips (e.g. to the Pilbara)
- Strong potential to include experiential learning in AFNR4001 (Professional Development)
- Potential to include experiential learning in AGRO4005 (Livestock Production Systems) and AGEN4006 (Livestock Collection and Management): There is great potential to incorporate issues with managing conservation and livestock production on lands managed by Aboriginal communities. Currently developing the potential to have students use land managed by Aboriginal communities to do research projects/practicals.
- Potential to include experiential learning in ENSY3002 (Fire in Australian Ecosystems): There is scope to bring in an expert who could give an account of Indigenous fire and land management. This has already been done in 2013.
Do you have any stand-out exemplars (for example, units of study, modules, assignments, etc.) of culturally competent curriculum (developed prior to the Wingara Mura strategy or as part of the strategy) you would like to showcase and share with others at the University of Sydney?

**AGEN1001 – Shaping our Landscapes**

- **Current:** Lecture on pre-European management to discuss what the land looked like before Europeans. Discuss activities which altered the Australian landscape, for example, debates regarding aboriginal systems and their development, sustainability of resources, kinship relationships and consequent access to resources, routes, songlines and knowledge. Management of food resources or Aboriginal farming, for example, wetlands and yam daisies. Use of fire to both open country up and for hunting. Aboriginal use of tree scarring and carving is also included. There is scope to expand on these topics (e.g. First Footprints documentary is currently recommended watching – could make it compulsory; problem-based learning assignment already includes aspects of native food production – could be extended).
- **Expansion:** I would like to include one or two guest lecturers with knowledge of Indigenous land management and could include a tutorial.
- **Revised content:** Inclusion of new content about aboriginal farming, the great estate, relationship between aboriginal artworks, landscapes and conservation, meaning in storytelling, dingo management, scarred and carved trees (see Attachment H – AGEN 1001 Student feedback re: Indigenous content)

**ENSY3003 – Forest Ecosystem Science**

- **Current:** Lectures on Indigenous Forest Management and custodianship. Utilises web-based resources.
- **Expansion:** I would like a guest lecturer to talk on the principles of land management specifically pertaining to the management of forests both prior to and post-European settlement. This would mould with the ecological and biogeographical information provided in the subject(s).

**ENSY3002 – Fire in Australian Ecosystems**

- **Current:** A lecture that compares and contrasts Aboriginal and European use of fire and the range of debates. A ten minute video of an Aboriginal Elder about hierarchy of fire-lighting and land management using fire. Some Indigenous information on responses from flora due to smoke are also included.
- **Expansion:** There is scope to bring in an expert (e.g. Park Ranger) who could give an account of indigenous fire and land management.

**AFNR3001 – Agro-ecosystems in Developing Countries**

- **Current:** This unit provides students with a direct contact with the agricultural reality of a developing country through a fieldtrip (2014 – Laos). Active learning in the field through contacts with farmers, public servants, cooperatives, private firms and NGOs should then motivate a critical reflection on the constraints to agricultural development in these environments.
6. Next steps and support

What are your next steps?

- Continue follow-up with lecturers willing/keen to include Indigenous content – assess progress year to year, help maintain motivation and increase repertoire
- Continue to aid lecturers in accessing Indigenous resources and sourcing guest lecturers
- To review Faculty field trips to determine potential for inclusion of Indigenous knowledge
- To collaborate with other faculties to further develop our curriculum
- To continue developing the proposed UoS 3XXX (Indigenous Food and Land Management) to start in 2016 (in progress – Valerie Densmore)
- To enhance the process of embedding cultural competency into learning outcomes for students
- To increase staff participation in the Cultural Competency workshops

Are there any challenges you envisage as you move into the next stage?

- Accessing appropriate materials and consultants/advisors to help expand potential for inclusion of Indigenous material
- Limited scope for inclusion of content in science-based courses
- Developing the cross-faculty UoS
- For more see Section 2.6 Attachment D

What support, if any, do you need to move to the next stage of the review/ renewal/ implementation?

- We are in need of periodical discussions with an Indigenous consultant for feedback on our approach. Also, we need these discussions to identify and generate connections with Indigenous communities.
- Accessing guest lecturers/having a permanent lecturer with expertise – increasing interactions between faculty staff and students and Indigenous communities/rangers.
- Cultural competency – inclusion of a module on Food, Land and Water management.
- A university-wide Wingara Mura conference for exposure to other faculties and their approach to Wingara Mura to generate ideas for content inclusion via discussion. Seminars presented by lecturers from other universities teaching similar courses and from people working on Country would also be useful additions to the conference.

7. Documentation

1. Attachment A – LEES Proposal
2. Attachment B – Survey
3. Attachment C – Interview pro-forma
4. Attachment D – Results of Audit
5. Attachment E - Database developed based on results of audit
6. Attachment F – Proposed UoS outline
7. Attachment G – Minutes of cross-faculty meeting discussing potential of proposed UoS
8. Attachment H – AGEN 1001 Student feedback re: Indigenous content

Report prepared by Rebecca Cross, Tina Bell and Peter Ampt