Review of Indigenous Higher Education Consultancy: Professor Lester-Irabinna Rigney
10 May 2011

Expert Aboriginal Higher Education Consultant:
Dr. Lester-Irabinna Rigney; Dean and Professor of Indigenous Education
The University of Adelaide, Australia

Indigenous Higher Education Reform and Indigenous Knowledges

Preamble

I begin this report with a sense of urgency. The need for review of Australian Indigenous Higher Education is important given the current challenges and policy emphasis outlined in the COAG 'Closing the Gap' reform. An ill conceived or at worse a defective and ineffectual review of the sector will deepen the isolation and weaken the reform. A well functioning, equitable, diverse and inclusive university sector holds immense promise for improving societal injustice one that is inclusive of Indigenous knowledges. The epigraph with which I begin this report powerfully conveys the hope and the gravity attached to this reform through the university sector and the Indigenous and non-Indigenous community members it is intended to serve. This report is divided into six parts.

Areas Investigated:

- Literature Review;
- The development of Indigenous staff;
- Curriculum;
- Culture of universities;
- Ethics and research practices and;
- What specifically the Government should consider when reviewing higher education access and outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in relation to Indigenous Knowledge.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW
It is critical to any review of Indigenous Higher education or Indigenous knowledge that reference is made to a literature review to investigate past reform trends, its successes and weaknesses. Bin-Sallik's work traced Indigenous participation in higher education

1

from 1788 until the 1980s, but did not focus on issues of research involvement or the place of Indigenous knowledges. In my own work I argue there are few Aboriginal histories that investigate participation in universities research from 1980s to 2011 (Rigney 2007). To project future reform I trace the evolution of Indigenous education policy in Australia from the late 1980s to 2004 (Rigney, Rigney & Hughes and 1998; Rigney 1998, 1999; 2001; 2002 2003; 2006; 2007; Weir 2000; Bin-Sallik 1993, Bourke 1994; 1996; Gale 1996, 1998; Bourke, Rosie Farrow, and Adrian Tucker 1991; Worby & Rigney 2006).

1800s – 1950s University Colonial Contact and Segregation
- Indigenous cultural education in place since time immemorial;
- 1788 British colonists introduced servant education for 'natives';
- 1900 religious education established by missionaries to Christianise natives;
- 1880s–1930s Government Indigenous education policy emerged;
- 1930-1970 Assimilation and Absorption policy;
- 1966 First Aboriginal University Male Undergraduate Charles Kumajati Perkins;
- 1972 Aboriginal Tent Embassy;
- 1973 Aboriginal Task Force opened, South Australian Institute of Technology;
- 1975 Federal Race Discrimination Act.

Brief Fact
Up to 1950s Indigenous people excluded from universities
Up to 1980, no successful Indigenous PhD degree students.
In 2002 since 1995, '42 Indigenous PhD completed; 34 Masters (DEST 2002:28)

1960-1980 Indigenous Participation Rates
- Dunn and Tatz (1969); Roper (1969) confirm exclusion, low level of Indigenous participation all levels of education late 1960s;
- Watts and Gallacher, (1964) Government attention to combat inequality from mid 1960s - early 1970s;
- Beresford (2003) 1971 Census data 'while 1% of total Australian population never attended school, this contrasted almost 1/4 of Aboriginal population'. Only 3.5% Aboriginal people achieved senior secondary and post-secondary education, compared with 29.6% of total Australians;
- Sykes (1986:26) only one Aboriginal Master's degree before 1976. No other Aboriginal Masters/Ph.D. from 1969 to 1980';

- Bin-Sallik (1996:8), Dawkins (1987) in 1972, less than 100 Indigenous enrolled in higher education. 1982, less than 1000 Indigenous enrolled in higher education nationally;
- Indigenous increase enrolments to 3,000 in 1987, and to over 5000 in 1992;
- enrolments for 1995 exceeded 6,805 (DEST 2002:95, DEET 1989:12, Dawkins 1987:102, DEET 1994:33).

Table one indicates the number of Indigenous students undertaking higher research degrees between 1990 and 2001 has increased markedly (DEST 2002:28-29).

Table 1. Indigenous Students in Higher Education Degrees, 1990 to 2001

Level of course	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Students	9	5	23	33	47	64	68	72	92	101	96	113
Students in master's by research	11	15	42	43	47	48	55	76	80	81	81	102
Total	20	20	65	76	94	112	123	148	172	182	177	215

Source: DEST (2002), *Achieving Equitable and Appropriate Outcomes: Indigenous Australians in Higher Education*, DEST No. 6895. HERCO2A, DEST, Canberra, p.29.

Indigenous University Participation - Key Findings and Conclusions
- High concentration in Arts, Education and Law;
- Under-representation in Business, Engineering and the Sciences;
- More Indigenous females than males;
- Progressive but small presence in university policy and strategy for recording, maintenance, promotion and protection of Indigenous knowledges;
- Majority mature aged or older than their non-Indigenous counterparts;
- Less likely to have a previous qualification;
- More likely to be admitted to university through 'special entry' Indigenous access schemes;
- Abstudy crucial for financial support;
- Student actively use Indigenous centres.

- Prior 1966, no publication available giving an overview of Aboriginal Education (Dunn and Tatz 1969:2);
- 1980 *Brokensha Report* - The Aboriginal Task Force, South Australian Institute of Technology: An Evaluation of the program and strategies for the future;
- 1982 *Watts Report* - Aboriginal Futures: A Review of Research and Developments and Related Policies in the Education of Aborigines;
- 1985 *Jordon Report* - Support Systems for Aboriginal Students in Higher Education;
- 1985 *Miller Report* - Report of the Committee of Review of Aboriginal Employment and Training Program;
- 1989 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy (NATSIEP);
- 1990 A Fair Chance For All;
- 1991 Career Development in Aboriginal Higher Education (DEET);
- 1995 Review of the NATSIEP;
- 1997 Review of Institutional use of Commonwealth Higher Education Funding for Indigenous Australian Students;
- 1996-2002 National Strategy for Education of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples (MCEETYA);
- *2002 Higher Education at the Crossroads;*
- 2003 Our Universities: Backing Australia's Future;

The 1980 Brokensha report was the fifth review of the first Indigenous higher education Centre in Australia, the Aboriginal Task Force (ATF), within the then South Australian Institute of Technology (SAIT) established in 1973. The ATF developed the first Aboriginal Degree in Australia within the first School of Aboriginal and Islander Administration that drew upon Indigenous knowledges in philosophy, pedagogy and curriculum (Bin-Sallik 1996). Its recommendations included:

- Increased funds;
- Pre-tertiary remedial education within centre to recruit and maintain Indigenous students to university;
- Access and equal opportunity;
- Recognition and usage of Indigenous knowledges considered important to university access and retention of staff and students;
- Indigenous knowledges taught through Aboriginal Studies programs mainly to Aboriginal students;
- Aboriginal studies central to the growth and development of university Indigenous centres;

- Importance of student accommodation;
- Further financial grants - texts books, uniforms, boarding and personal allowance;
- Pre-tertiary training;
- Increase graduate employment opportunity;
- Aboriginal secondary grant scheme;
- Housing;
- Financial support to overcoming 'education disadvantage' defined as 'the impoverished economic conditions experienced by many, with associated conditions of stress, anxiety, ill-health and malnutrition and poor housing'.

The 1985 Jordan Report
This report reviewed Indigenous Higher Education Centres to improve their operation within universities to increase Indigenous participation. Justification for the need of Indigenous centres outlined in its recommendations includes:

- Indigenous culture, family background and lack of educational experiences are obstacles;
- Low self esteem and disorganisation within parental situation and their own personal lives;
- Advocacy for Aboriginal studies and Indigenous knowledges be taught in university to build the confidence and self-esteem of Indigenous students. Indigenous knowledges seen as central to the growth and development of university Indigenous centres. Educating non-Indigenous students and staff in awareness of Indigenous cultures and people down played;
- The role of the enclave program in meeting the personal and academic needs of Indigenous students is justified by framing and representing students as 'disadvantaged';
- Increases Indigenous support centres from 19 in 1984 to 58 in 1989';
- Flow-on effect in greater Indigenous Master, PhDs;
- The importance of Indigenous knowledges is inferred but not made explicit;
- Jordan (CTEC 1985:7-9) suggests a statistical correlation between the establishment of support systems for Indigenous Australians and their increased participation in higher education:' From a known 85 students enrolled before the establishment of these systems (enclave programs pre-1973) to 551 enrolled in award courses in 1984 – an increase of over 500 per cent' (Jordan CTEC 1985:7-9).

1980-2003 Policy and Reports Key Findings and Conclusions

- The importance of early childhood, primary and secondary school reform if Indigenous aspirations for higher education and employment were to be realised;
- Secondary/tertiary bridging courses pathway into university;
- Special University Access Entry Schemes required;
- Indigenous knowledges critical to access and retention of students and staff;
- Single unit Aboriginal Studies and Aboriginal perspectives across the curriculum are methods used teach Indigenous knowledges not only to Indigenous students but also non-Indigenous students;
- The lack of attention on post graduate cohort or studies during this period;
- Involvement of Aboriginal People in education and university decision making yet to be realised;
- Equality of access to education and university services not achieved;
- Equity of university participation overemphasised but under delivered;
- The goal of equitable and appropriate educational outcomes similar to non-Aboriginal but still not achieved during this period.

2. THE DEVELOPMENT OF INDIGENOUS STAFF

Indigenous peoples continue to remain underrepresented within the higher education workforce either at general or academic levels. There remains little longitudinal data or comprehensive independent data sets on Indigenous staffing inside universities and the role they play in the promotion of Indigenous knowledges. Although scientific evidence is limited, the present conditions faced by many Indigenous peoples working in universities still mirror the conclusions found by Bourke et al (1991:3) and the 1991 DEET report titled 'Career Development in Aboriginal Higher Education. These include a range of inequalities between institutions with respect to:

- Employment conditions;
- Workloads;
- Marginalisation of Indigenous knowledges;
- Limited professional development opportunities;
- Position titles;
- Isolation or marginalisation within an institution;
- Difficulty in recruiting, developing and retaining staff;
- High staff turnover.

These above factors are reinforced in the recent Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council's *'2010 consultation paper to inform the development of the Australian Government's research workforce strategy'* (2010).

Indigenous staff being 'Lost to Casualisation' - Employment conditions and High Casualisation

An increasing number of Indigenous university academic and general staff are being 'lost to casualisation' where they are non tenured and often part-time. The emergent bifurcated workforce in Australia's universities has been described as the 'tenured core and tenuous periphery' (Kimber 2003). The majority of Indigenous staff remain in the 'tenuous periphery' even with the presence of operating Indigenous employment schemes. Recent research suggests that since the mid 1980s the overwhelming majority of new academic staff appointed in the Australian university sector have been casual staff, and it is estimated that the majority of undergraduate teaching is now performed by casual staff (Percy et al. 2008).

In her paper to the 2011 annual conference of the Association of Industrial Relations Academics of Australia and New Zealand (AIRAANZ), Robyn May argued that this response is peculiarly Australian and whilst insecure employment exists in the university sector of many other countries it tends to be more of a fixed term, eg. UK, Canada, (Bryson and Barnes 2000; Rajagopal and Lin 1996) or non-tenured, often part-time nature, eg. USA (Gappa 2000), in contrast to the hourly rate nature of Australia's casual response. There is recent evidence of universities starting to respond to the problems identified as being associated with casual work. The motivations, however, appear directed toward risk management, and responding to unfavorable Australian University Quality Agency (AUQA) reports. Staff who are continually appointed to one year contract positions are inhibited in access to maternity, sick and recreation leave, lack of access to in-servicing, tenure, job security, study leave, superannuation and adequate career structures and prospects.

Replacing an Ageing Workforce

The Indigenous university workforce is small and ageing with impending retirements. These individuals in general have made contribution to practice and theorization of Indigenous knowledges in universities. Bradley (2008) highlights that the university sector appears to be aware of the challenges it faces in relation to replacing an ageing workforce, the recruitment and retention of high quality academic staff said to be 'the single biggest issue confronting the sector over the next decade'. This is also true for the replacement of an ageing Indigenous workforce. Questions speculation around the lack of suitable Indigenous candidates to take up academic labour shortages are generally used as excuses to justify university inaction to replace ageing Indigenous staff. Indeed the age structure of the Indigenous Australian academic workforce is older than most other professional groups and therefore the need for attention to workforce renewal is even more acute.

Uneven university commitment to Indigenous knowledges

There is an uneven commitment by universities in teaching of Indigenous knowledges.

7

Usually library resources to purchase Indigenous authored texts about the subject are limited to competitive faculty budgets. Refereed journals purchases for this subject are scare because of their small readership and lack of high academic ranking in the ERA process. Uneven commitment in teaching of Indigenous knowledge is evidenced where some university Indigenous knowledge units are compulsory to teacher training, nursing, primary health care and medicine. Others simply do not prioritizes Indigenous knowledges in their degrees. Although all topics and individual academic teaching is assessed by Student Evaluation of Teaching (SET) there are few SET questions by which one can assess and measure quantifiably the quality of teaching and learning of Indigenous knowledges. Little or no incentives are offered to improve the teaching and learning Indigenous knowledges. There is little emphasis on recruiting and preparing academics for institutional leadership in teaching, support, research, and management in Indigenous knowledges.

Under-representation of men – Lack of seniority for women
The Indigenous academic labour force is generally women with an under-representation of men. Although Indigenous women are the majority they are under-represented in senior positions than men which is of concern. Maternity and family care issues are central for women who currently retire earlier or leave the system than men. These issues also affect opportunities for women in academic promotion and tenure. Indigenous women can be seen as a potential solution to the future Indigenous staffing needs and promotion of Indigenous knowledges. Extra support should be provided to encourage Indigenous women to stay longer in their academic careers and achieve seniority. Retention will be a critical part of any strategy to deal with future workforce issues. Although the gender ratio and gendered senior academic holders are improving this is a much needed area of reform.

High Staff Turnover
The promotion of Indigenous knowledges is inhibited by high staff turnover particularly in Indigenous centres. High turnovers are similarly not conducive to Indigenous student stability, while lack of staff continuity limited the impact these staff had upon the institution and upon policy across the institution. These factors complicated the elevation of Indigenous staff and students to leadership positions in most areas, including research and Indigenous knowledges. Casualisation is a driver of staff turnover. Campbell (2001) describes five potential advantages that casual employment provides to employers. Casual employees can be much cheaper to employ than ongoing employees; it can be much easier to dismiss a casual; casual employees can be used to manage fluctuations in workload in a way that is not possible with permanently engaged staff; employing casuals can be administratively convenient; and finally, and possibly most critically, casual employees can allow management greater control.

Workload

Not only do Indigenous centres and their Indigenous academics carry a institution imposed 'burden' to Indigenise the entire university its curriculum, policy and practice that results in a division of labour rarely expected of other academics, they are also open to the vulnerability of semester to semester casual employment. Often in the casual academics feel that their insecure status meant they were less able to refuse work demands that they thought were unreasonable. Performing unpaid work, particularly for activities such as student consultation, and professional reading in order to maintain their own professional currency ranked high as unreasonable demands. On the flip side the work of full time permanent Indigenous academic staff in centres has intensified by having to hire and support casual staff who often are not as committed to the same high standards as ongoing staff. The impact of casualisation on ongoing Indigenous academic staff who are increasingly required to take responsibility for the hiring, management and compliance aspects of often large numbers of casual teaching staff, has not been well documented.

Key Findings and Conclusions

- Although we have seen a increase of Indigenous employment into greater management roles (Dean, DVC, Director) since 1991, Indigenous employment in universities still remain largely within Indigenous centres;
- Employment of Indigenous university staff is highly casualised that range from short fixed term contract, Part time-instructor, ITAS Coordinator. A major defining characteristic of casual workers is the absence of a career path;
- Extra support should be provided to encourage women to stay longer in their academic careers and achieve academic seniority;
- Incentives needed to increase Indigenous male academic workforce;
- An increasing number of Indigenous university academic and general staff are being 'lost to casualisation';
- Increase incentives to Indigenise curricula, course content, SET, pedagogy, methodologies, methods;
- Very few of the Indigenous university workforce reside in the 'tenured core but remain on the casualised tenuous periphery. The factors that have brought about this labour market mismatch deserve much closer attention, and a more nuanced approach.
- Government targets 40% of 25-34-year-olds with a degree by 2025, require a fresh approach to the employment of Indigenous teaching staff in Australian universities;
- The need to review Indigenous employment strategies and their effectiveness;

©Professor Rigney Consultant Recommendations – May 19th, 2011

- Greater AUQA compliance to overcoming Indigenous non-tenured, casualised appointments;
- More research needed for a new approach in the following areas of Indigenous staffing:
  - Indigenous Job satisfaction surveys;
  - Salary scales;
  - Employment preferences;
  - Cause and effect of casualisation;
  - Cause and effect of high staff turnover;
  - Training and development;
  - Career development opportunities;
  - Employment conditions;
  - Motivations;
  - Goals and aspirations.

3. CURRICULUM

The quality and standards of teaching and learning of Indigenous knowledges in Australian universities are uneven, poorly resourced and suffer lack of policy support in universities. Indigenous perspectives and knowledges can be implemented in three alternative ways:

- As Aboriginal Studies subject (as semester, term or year long courses);
- Aboriginal Studies units and topics which are part of another subject (a term or less), eg Aboriginal literature and language in English; Aboriginal land rights; Aboriginal visual arts;
- Aboriginal Perspectives integrated, as appropriate, into units of work taught in a wide range of learning areas throughout all years of university, eg Aboriginal knowledge of astronomy in science; Aboriginal people and mining and/or the law in Society and Environment; Aboriginal perspectives in maths.

Indigenous Studies is not the same as Indigenous perspectives
Single Aboriginal Studies units were a product of history and a legacy inherited from Aboriginal Education policy in the late 1980s. A more recent teaching pedagogy is Indigenous perspectives across the entire curriculum for example as evidenced in the new national curriculum. University Indigenous knowledge curriculum is uneven across institutions and falls into three categories:

- Category 1: Invisible, marginalised, limited, non-existent;
- Category 2: Indigenous studies as single, separate and discrete unit of work focusing on Indigenous peoples (usually a major or minor sequence). Usually employs an Aboriginal Studies teacher;

- Category 3: Indigenous perspectives are embedded in relevant degrees and topics for example science, environment studies, law, education, medicine, psychology, art etc. Usually taught by Non-Indigenous disciplinary expert with no specific employment of an Aboriginal Studies teacher.

Each of these categories has strengths and weaknesses. Today, Australian schools and universities are in an *'Indigenous perspectives across the curriculum'* historical moment.

'Built in- not Bolted on'
If universities are to mirror and reflect the diversity of the Australian population then its staff, teaching curriculum, research and administration needs to be inclusive of diverse knowledges and viewpoints. These need to be monitored though government compliance mechanisms. Indigenous knowledges need to be 'built in not bolted on' to university curriculum. Usually Indigenous knowledges are found isolated to the humanities, and social sciences. The upshot of this isolation creates a contemporary paradox where Indigenous students and postgraduate scholars who gained access to university via inclusive equity strategies still face inequity through sitting in lecture theatres where the invisibility or distortion of Indigenous realities, identities and world views continue.

Weaknesses of teaching Indigenous perspectives in university
- Universities and academics must have a reason to teach Indigenous perspectives and recognize quality teaching in this area. There are no criteria metrics or definition of an Indigenous education quality and standards framework in universities;
- TESQA does not monitor Indigenous education quality and standards in universities;
- Left generally to the Indigenous centres and its staff;
- Burdening of Indigenous staff to teach Indigenous perspectives. There is a division of labour usually worn by less senior Indigenous staff;
- Teaching Indigenous perspectives across university degrees including education, medicine, law, arts, linguistics is resource intensive;
- The lack of university policy is often a stumbling block for implementation of Indigenous knowledges in degrees where students require such knowledges.

What is needed?
- Develop a definition, criteria and metrics for an Indigenous education quality and standards framework in universities;
- TESQA monitor Indigenous education quality and standards framework in universities;

- High quality teaching - Exceptional universities pay special attention to the quality, depth, and effectiveness of the instruction they provide. They relentlessly pursue excellence in teaching and learning. They select research-based academic approaches that work for their students, altering and adapting to changing needs and circumstances. Teachers align their curriculum to standards and regularly monitor student progress. The best teachers do not shut their doors to colleagues. They communicate and collaborate. This does not mean that teachers conform to a uniform style; it does mean that they exchange ideas on pedagogy and create professional learning communities;
- All university department staff in degrees that involve Indigenous services should be obliged to undertake cultural awareness training;
- To provide university academics and teachers with a wide range of resources, to enable them to improve the academic performance of Indigenous students;
- Provide resources that will assist academics and teachers to implement Indigenous perspectives and Studies;
- University Indigenous knowledge accountability, university policy and leadership begins with a DVC/Academic and should filter through the entire university system;
- Reform in student assessment and evaluation of university topics is required to improve accountability of this system that ensures that students are challenged and outcomes achieved;
- Greater academic professional development in diversity and inclusive teaching is critical and ongoing especially in degrees that require Indigenous insights. Good universities promote learning and professional growth as a priority. Partnership between Aboriginal and the university community has led to agreements among institutions to address these issues in teacher preparation programs, to share best practices across schools of education, and to incorporate them into ongoing professional development programs;
- Increase Indigenous community engagement. Successful universities have alumni, community members as active, engaged partners.

4. CULTURE OF UNIVERSITIES

Reform and restructuring the culture of universities is important to facilitate recruitment and retention of Indigenous staff and students and the implementation of inclusive curriculum. Without this it makes problematic identifying, recruiting and nurturing talented Indigenous undergraduates for the workforce and Indigenous higher research degree promotion and support. With the exception of Indigenous employment

schemes, few formal and informal organisational structures are offered for the development of a pool of academically trained Indigenous undergraduate leaders from which universities can draw to advance Indigenous employment into leadership roles and senior positions within the university sector.

Graduate Attributes
Most universities have identified a set of generic graduate attributes listed below. For example Flinders University's Bachelor degree programs aim to produce graduates who:

- are knowledgeable;
- can apply their knowledge;
- communicate effectively;
- can work independently;
- are collaborative;
- value ethical behavior;
- connect across boundaries.

Graduate Qualities are embedded into programs across the faculties. All universities should be required via government funding agreements and compacts to include and embed an attribute 'understanding of First Australian cultures and issues' across its graduate attributes. This would then promote investment for inclusive curriculum across the entire range of university disciplines.

Work-Integrated Learning (WIL)
Work-related, experiential learning forms a significant part of many academic programs at Australian universities and is highly valued by students and employers. Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) is the term normally used to describe directed or supported educational activities that integrate theoretical learning with its application in the workplace. Degrees with high Indigenous service provision elements including: law, medicine, social work, linguistics, nursing and school teaching should require WIL student work-integrated learning placements that are intentional, organised, recognised and accredited by the University. These can provide powerful learning experiences for students and staff. The benefits of a university initiated exploration of WIL becoming as an explicit feature of all undergraduate programs will compliment COAG Closing Gap targets. The aim would be to ensure that all students develop a truly integrated approach to learning through a combination of academic, cultural and work-related activities. A practicum audit of Indigenous Work-Integrated Learning programs should be conducted annually by governments that require all institutions to report on and be accountable to. It is essential that the universities adequately prepare students to ensure Work Integrated Learning opportunities are maximised in Indigenous settings. The Australian Learning and Teaching Council should be resourced to promote implementation.

University Policy
Usually the only university Indigenous policy and or education strategy in an institution is that of the Indigenous student support centre. The recruitment and retention of Indigenous students and the teaching of Indigenous knowledges is everybody's business across a university.

5. ETHICS AND RESEARCH PRACTICES

The growth and promotion of Indigenous knowledges is tied to the growth of Indigenous researchers. There is no quick fix to the problem of creating a pool of well qualified Aboriginal researchers and that quality research requires high skills that cannot be acquired through Indigenous bridging programs. The development of Indigenous researchers cannot be fast tracked until the undergraduate cohort progressed through the system. Despite an increase of incentives over the past decade being offered to current undergraduate students to promote higher degree enrolment using scholarships or bursaries, still more are needed. Undergraduate research assistantships, financial assistance and special support schemes upon graduation are required to foster research growth and competence. A major shift in government policy is required to recognised the under-representation of Indigenous peoples as higher degree students, lecturers and academically qualified Indigenous researchers in specific closing the gap areas of education, law, medicine, nursing and social work. It should also be acknowledged there remains a general lack of Indigenous peoples in positions of management across the entire university.

What we know about Indigenous postgraduate cohorts
- Coursework graduate courses significant growth area;
- Are generally honours, graduate diplomas or certificate level;
- Mostly women;
- More mature than undergraduate peers;
- Have worked previously or are in work at the time of enrollment;
- Prefer course work to pure research.

What we don't know
- lack of robust information about coursework students and provision;
- the amount and quality of academic, careers, teaching and individual support offered to postgraduate cohorts;
- the integration of rural and remote learners, and their interactions with institutions and urban Indigenous and non-Indigenous students;
- quality and conditions of study;
- students' patterns of campus use;

- the wide range of differences across the fields of study;
- information on increasing number of Indigenous external students;
- the levels of postgraduate employment;
- financial and quality risks associated particularly concerning rural and remote Indigenous postgraduate provision;
- Little is known about Indigenous postgraduate habits, course preferences, motivations, financial needs, coursework postgraduate education.

As such, securing timely and relevant insights into postgraduate coursework education is of enormous importance. A nationwide survey of Indigenous postgraduate student engagement is required.

The Role of Indigenous Centre
Historically many First Wave University Indigenous centres were staffed by academically unqualified and inexperienced staff. Therefore offering advice to students with postgraduate and/or research aspirations was problematic. Some centres have changed dramatically and others have not. Some Directors of Indigenous centres at present do not possess a higher research degree and there are others who have honorary PHDs and or professorships without engaging in hard research. Although Indigenous postgraduate participation is increasing most centres are little prepared or under-resourced to build this capacity. Only as recently as 1991 a DEET report clearly highlighted a research culture deficiency in the majority of Indigenous enclaves throughout the Australian higher education sector at that time (DEET 1991:30). Of the 'Aboriginal Staff surveyed only 10% had postgraduate qualifications (no PhDs), 60% had a diploma or less as their highest qualification, and 27% had no qualification at all' (DEET 1991:30). Although the situation has change slightly we still have a long way to go. Other barriers include:

- Competitiveness of NHMRC and ARC grants;
- Limited numbers of Indigenous supervisors and assessors;
- Limited early-career Indigenous research forums;
- Low numbers of ERA recognised academic journals with Aboriginal editorial boards;
- Lack of opportunities for university employment;
- The need to build the postgraduate research qualification for Indigenous staff in Aboriginal enclaves;
- Indigenous centres syphoning vital Indigenous support funds to support teaching and research.

6. WHAT SPECIFICALLY GOVERNMENT SHOULD CONSIDER WHEN REVIEWING HIGHER EDUCATION ACCESS AND OUTCOMES FOR ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLE IN RELATION TO INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE.

Recommendations

1. *Access and equity in the provision of university education remains the major priorities for action.*
2. *Seek reform with intention of achieving broad equity in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation and retention rates and educational outcomes by the year 2020.*
3. *An increase of 50% in Indigenous university enrolments by 2016.*
4. *Increasing improvement in Indigenous participation across all degrees by 2016 (shifting from the traditional areas of humanities and education to biological and health sciences).*
5. *An increase in Indigenous graduation rates proportionate to that of the total student population by 2016.*
6. *Government Funded 'One Stop Shop' web site for Indigenous prospective and current Indigenous Students -* Currently each university displays their own unique services and degree offerings for Indigenous students. Yet philanthropic bursaries, scholarships, private and local housing rentals, student loans, translation and interpretation services; food co-ops etc are all located on numerous hard to locate sites. A one stop shop web site for Indigenous university staff and students as I imagine it is an excellent resource funded by government to access and disseminate Indigenous knowledges A one stop shop for easy access to student mentors, jobs, internships, cadetships, Indigenous PhD supervisors, virtual conferences, study tip guides, useful student web links, student chat rooms, digital library, international Indigenous student and staff links, access to the world's best libraries and research benchmarking institutions. Digital portals and forums could also be open for Indigenous rural urban and remote school student access to provide an opportunity for all staff involved in WIL activities to discuss common issues, share experiences and expertise, and feed into proposals, surveys and activities across the university sector.
7. *New Technologies* – Universities are responding to the global revolution which is transforming the way knowledge is stored, accessed, disseminated, analysed and presented. Due to budget constraints of Indigenous centres they have been slow to develop comprehensive Indigenous knowledge teaching and learning technologies and risk being left behind. Centres' that are funded on DEEWR Indigenous student support funding have little resources to fund what could be argued as a university wide financial obligation and responsibility. Benefits will enable universities to become rapidly responsive to changing information systems and capture the benefits of technology for staff and students.

8. Development of appropriate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander courses and curricula.
9. Improve the quality of teaching Indigenous Knowledges in schools.
10. Improve the representation of Aboriginal students in the full range of tertiary fields of study.
11. Linking 'Closing the Gap' Campaign to University Compact agreements.
12. *Bradley Review* – Increase by 20% students from low SES by 2020. It is assumed and implied that the target and recruitment of low SES numbers will contain a large cohort of Indigenous students. Is this a safe assumption to make? Little targets exist about the numbers of Indigenous students numbers required from within SES cohorts. Bradley is without a strategy for growing an Indigenous postgraduate cohort from undergraduate SES intakes.
13. *Cutler Review* - Indigenous research lacks coordination and basic infrastructure including opportunities to develop national and global leadership. The Cutler review was a missed opportunity to compliment closing the gap targets and be a key driver for developing training, employment and increasing Indigenous research capacity. Indeed, the Cutler Review Panel received few submissions proposing areas whereby the government and universities can take a leadership role in innovation that is inclusive of Indigenous graduates and researchers. The immediate innovative priorities for the government all impact on Indigenous communities. These include: *Broadband applications*: *Agricultural and food security; Climate change mitigation and adaptation*; *Population health*; *and Tropical solutions*. Indigenous higher education and building Indigenous research capacity should be built in not bolted onto the country's national innovation priorities. These should be reviewed and the need to develop Indigenous research capacity be made central focus of innovation policy and activities and the National Innovation Council be charged with ongoing evaluation of the alignment of Indigenous matters in the public innovation policy with National Research and innovation priorities.
14. *Knight Review* – Many Indigenous Australians academics have benefited from scholarships to Harvard, Yale, Stanford, Cambridge, Oxford, University of Auckland, Fort Hare South Africa, and University of South Pacific. Indigenous peoples from other colonized and settler societies seek to study in Australia from Canada, USA, New Zealand, Africa, and Asia. Following the Knight review of student Visa the Government should increase scholarship funding specifically for overseas colonized Indigenous students and assist Australian universities to form deeper and closer partnerships with overseas universities, and use diplomatic channels to rebalance overseas perceptions of Australia and the quality of its universities.
15. *Deregulated University System* – Australia already has a partial deregulated system. International students pay different prices to go to different Australian

universities. If Australia proceeds to a full or partial deregulated university system domestically this has serious budgetary and policy implications. I raise several questions here:

    a. How much more should universities be able to charge Indigenous students?

    b. How much more should Indigenous students have to pay?

    c. Is there a risk with price deregulation that it produces a two tiered university system where students from financially better off families attend high quality, most expensive university institutions - and another system for poorer families attending cheaper, low quality universities?

    d. How are low SES and vulnerable Indigenous students represented in a deregulated system? Usually by dedicated places in wealthy universities as is the case in the US within Ivy League universities.

    e. If the Ivy League model of deregulated is to be adopted in Australia with its version of Indigenous participation via dedicated places then how many, where and for how long? What effect will this have on Indigenous participation and outcome and the gains made over the last three decades?

    f. How will a Bradley target to increase by 20% students from low SES by 2020 be achieved in a deregulated university system?

16. *University Alumni* – The university sector has amassed a considerable Indigenous alumni cohort yet university alumni are poorly utilized by the sector unless it produces corporate benefits. The potential usage of Indigenous alumni for training, mentoring and recruitment in schools is extremely under utilized by governments, universities and Aboriginal communities themselves. This area requires analysis and more examination.

17. *AUQA & TEQSA* - DEVELOPING A UNIVERSITY INDIGENOUS EDUCATION QUALITY & STANDARDS FRAMEWORK -

The Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA) will be replaced in 2011 by a new national regulatory and quality agency for higher education the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA). TEQSA will be established this year as an independent body with powers to regulate university and non-university higher education providers, monitor quality and set standards. Universities Australia, NIHEN and IHEAC must set a new minimum standard of quality for teaching Indigenous education. In collaboration with NIHEN and IHEAC, TEQSA should monitor the quality of Indigenous Higher Education standards and performance, protect and assure the quality of Indigenous education and streamline current regulatory arrangements.

a. A minimum standard of quality in Indigenous higher education framework established;

b. The minimum standard of quality in Indigenous higher education to be listed among the 5 TESQA standard domains;

c. All TESQA 'Functions of Standards Panels' to be inclusive of an Indigenous representative for overall balance of the Standards Framework ensuring consistency and coherence among the 5 domains;

d. TESQA advise on Provider Registration Standards and Provider Category Standards in relation to Indigenous education quality and standards Framework;

e. TESQA monitor the effectiveness of the Standards Framework;

f. TESQA consult with NIHEN, IHEAC and stakeholders to ensure the Standards are meeting the needs of students, employers, Aboriginal communities and others;

g. All metrics on My University website to be inclusive of Indigenous education quality and standards Framework;

h. Criteria Metrics for an Indigenous education quality and standards framework could include on My University website:
   i. Indigenous staff and student number as % ratios against other university staff and student populations;
   ii. Results of student satisfaction surveys in quality teaching of Indigenous knowledges;
   iii. Measures of graduate skills in Indigenous knowledge;
   iv. Indigenous graduate outcomes;
   v. Indigenous access to student services;
   vi. Quality of teaching and learning outcomes.

18. *National Broadband Network* – The government roll out of the NBN has considerable implications for Indigenous students and staff in schools and universities and can overcome in future the tyranny of distance in closing the gap. The National Broadband Network needs to ensure strategies and targets for Indigenous infrastructure, training, education and employment of Indigenous school and university graduates. This includes applications in open democracy, database and privacy standards for health, information, tools to facilitate educational use of broadband and standards, and national collections of information and knowledge.

19. *The role of Philanthropy* – Universities in the United States and Canada have far greater philanthropic partnerships with Native, Inuit, First Nations and Aboriginal higher education. The role of philanthropy in Indigenous higher education sector is underestimated and down played. The Australian university system is off the pace in this regard and this area requires further investigation in the review.

20. *Reduce Social Determinants of Higher Education* – Scientific research has demonstrated overwhelmingly that poorer people have less financial and other forms of control over their lives that inhibits university participation. Poor education and literacy are linked to poor health status, and affect the capacity of people to use universities. Potential university students feel a greater burden of

unhealthy stress where prolonged exposure to psychological demands where possibilities to control the situation are perceived to be limited and the chances of reward are small. Even if a student does make it into a university the chronic stress associated with simply managing takes its toll. Poorer incomes, heart disease, mental health, violence against women and other forms of community dysfunction reduce the accessibility of a higher education. Reform in this area must ensure Indigenous People are key actors in their own development, rather than passive recipients of commodities and services and therefore must be engaged rather than have reform done to them. Participation is both a means and a goal; and strategies should be empowering, not disempowering, and encourage active engagement of all stakeholders.

21. Fees & HECS – Are university fees a key determinant in whether an Indigenous individual attends or completes a university degree? What is the effect of fees on development of Indigenous talent, skills and capabilities? Will the rise in HECS debt repayment impose a deterrent?

    a. The high cost of fees need to be factored in for analysis by the review of Indigenous higher education and remedies including full government subsidy of fee sought to achieve targets of increase to 20% students from low SES by 2020;

    b. Is HECS or Fees a greater deterrent than one or the other? University and Indigenous centre evidence suggest university fees and HECS are a lower deterrent than the cost of living. It is estimated that the high cost of living is a key factor in university attendance;

    c. Scientific evidence from medical, legal and educational sources arrive at similar conclusions that the high cost of living needs to be addressed if Indigenous university attendance.

22. *Indigenous Higher Education in 20 years* – Will it look the same with minor modification or will it be significantly expanded? For me it will look very different. Below I list a possible future that the current review needs to consider the implications for Indigenous peoples wanting access university.

    a. More Australian universities than the current 38;

    b. More international university competitors in Australia

    c. (Carnegie Mellon etc);

    d. Greater deregulated university sector;

    e. More different modes of learning (ICT);

    f. Greater differentiation amongst 38 universities in mission, operation and educational goals;

    g. More diversification in the sector for both universities and how Indigenous education is offered - some universities will focus on student support other postgraduate and research growth;

    h. Cost of living to rise above 70% even more than it has.

Bibliography

Bradley, D. (2008). Review of Australian Higher Education. Canberra.

Buckskin, P, Hughes, P, Price, K, Rigney, L-I, Sarra, C, Adams, I, Hayward, C. (2010), Review of Australian Directions in Indigenous Education, 2005–2008 for the, Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA). MCEECDYA Reference Group on Indigenous Education, Department of Education and Training, Government of Western Australia.

Bryson, C., and Barnes, N. (2000). "The casualisation of employment in higher education in the United Kingdom." Academic Work and Life, 1, 187-241.

Campbell, I. (2001). "Casual employees and the training deficit: Exploring employer contributions and choices." International Journal of Employment Studies, 9(1), 61-101.

Gappa, J. (2000). "The New Faculty Majority: Somewhat Satisfied but Not Eligible for Tenure." New Directions for Institutional Research, 2000(105), 77-86.

Kimber, M. (2003). "The tenured 'core' and the tenuous 'periphery': The casualisation of academic work in Universities." Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management, 25(1), 41-50.

Knapp, M.S.; Shields, P.M.; & Turnbull, B.J. Academic Challenge for the Children of Poverty. Summary report for the U.S. Department of Education. Menlo Park: SRI International (1992).

Percy, A., Scoufis, M., Parry, S., Goody, A., Hicks, M., Macdonald, I., Martinez, K., Szorenyi-Reischl, N., Ryan, Y., Wills, S., and Sheridan, L. (2008). The RED Report. ALTC, Sydney.

Rajagopal, I., and Lin, Z. (1996). "Hidden Careerists in Canadian Universities." Higher Education, 32(3), 247-266.

Rigney, Daryle & Rigney, Lester-Irabinna & Hughes, Paul. (1998), Report of Aboriginal students and the South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE) for the Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia (SSABSA), Yunggorendi, First Nations Centre for Higher Education and Research, The Flinders University of South Australia, Australia. ISBN: 0 7308 3126 4.

Rigney, Lester-Irabinna. (2007), Indigenist Research Epistemologies. PhD Thesis Flinders University.

Rigney, Lester-Irabinna. (2002), 'Indigenous Education and treaty: Building Indigenous management capacity', in Balayi: Culture, Law and Colonialism, Vol 4, pp. 73-82

Rigney, Lester-Irabinna. (2001), 'A First perspective of Indigenous Australian participation in science: Framing Indigenous research towards Indigenous Australian Intellectual sovereignty', in Kaurna Higher Education Journal, issue 7, August, pp. 1-13.

Rigney, Lester-Irabinna. (1999), 'Internationalisation of an Indigenous Anti-Colonial Cultural Critique of Research Methodologies. A Guide to Indigenist Research Methodology and its principles' reprinted in WICAZO SA review: Journal of Native American Studies, Fall, vol. 14, Number 2, (1999), pp. 109-122.

Rigney, Lester-Irabinna. (2006), Indigenist Research and Aboriginal Australia. In Goduka, Nomalungelo, I & Kunnie, Julian, Indigenous People's Wisdoms and Power: Affirming our knowledges through narrative. London: Ashgate Publishing, pp. 32-50.

Rigney, Lester-Irabinna. (2003), 'Indigenous Education, Languages and Treaty: The redefinition of a new relationship with Australia', in Treaty: Lets get it right, eds. ATSIC & AIATSIS, AIASTSIS, Canberra, ACT. pp. 72-88, ISBN 0 85575 4338.

Ma Rhea, Zane and Rigney, Lester-Irabinna. (2002), 'Research with respect: Supervising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students', in Assisting Research Students From Non-Traditional Background, eds. J. Sillitoe, G. Crosling, J. Webb & S. Vance, HERDSA, Victoria, pp 8-19. ISBN 0-7326-2223-9.

Worby, Gus, & Rigney, Lester-Irabinna (2006), Sharing Spaces: Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Responses to Story, Country and Rights. API Network, Australian Research Institute, Curtin University of Technology. Western Australia. ISBN 1 920845 20 8.

Suggested Further Reading:

Henry, Ken 2007. Creating the Right Incentives for Indigenous Development Address to the Cape York Institute Conference Strong Foundations – Rebuilding Social Norms in Indigenous Communities, Cairns 26 June 2007.

Westbury, Neil & Mike Dillon 2007. Beyond Humbug: Transforming government engagement with Indigenous Australia, Seaview Press SA

Growing them strong, together report released in October 2010 by the Northern Territory Government 2005, the Creating Safe Environments for Children National Framework

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, 2009, 2008 Social Justice Report, Australian Human Rights Commission, Sydney. —2009, 2009 Social Justice Report, Australian Human Rights Commission, Sydney.

Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA). (2009). Australian Universities Quality Agency Audit Manual V6.0, Melbourne: Australian Universities Quality Agency.

Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) (2011). Australasian Survey of Student Engagement. Accessed 1 January 2011 from: http://ausse.acer.edu.au.

Baird, B. (2010). Stronger, Simpler, Smarter ESOS, Review of the Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000, Canberra: Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.

Coates, H. (2006). Student Engagement in Campusbase and Online Education: University connections. London: Taylor and Francis.

Coates, H. (2008). Attracting, Engaging and Retaining: New Conversations About Learning, Australasian Student Engagement Report, Camberwell: Australian Council for Educational Research.

Coates, H. (2010). Development of the Australasian Survey of Student Engagement (AUSSE). Higher Education, 60(10), 1-17.

Ewell, P.T. & Jones, D.P. (1996). Indicators of "Good Practice" in Undergraduate Education: A handbook for development and implementation. Colorado: National Centre for Higher Education Management Systems.

Kuh, G.D. (2008). High-impact educational practices: What they are, who has access to them, and why they matter. Washington: Association of American Colleges and Universities.