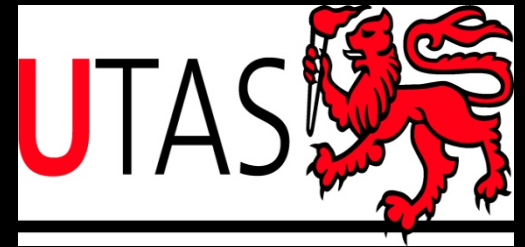


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Tasmanian Institute for Learning & Teaching



ALA: Exploring Possibilities – Changing Lives

**Including & valuing Indigenous perspectives in
learning**

Tuesday 13 June 2017



lutrawita
Tasmania

narnu-yuwa

I bring greetings from my ancestors
the yanyuwa and gunggalida
peoples. I bring their spirits with me

Focus today

- Consider impacts on learning:
 - past policies
 - work of IHEUs
 - evidence
 - culturally safe places
- A successful program – case study

Link between past & present

- 5 policy periods:
- Colonisation
- Protection & Segregation
- Assimilation
- Self - determination
- Reconciliation

Impact of past policies

- Stolen: land, children, wages
- Loss: family, language, culture
- Recovery: apology, restitution, return of land, ancestral remains, language revival

Consequences

- Inter generational trauma
- Poverty
- Poor education & health
- Low socio-economic status
- Dependence on welfare

Solution

- Close the Gap – affirmative action
- “Education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world”

Nelson Mandela

The UN Declaration

- Articles 3, 14.1 & 19
- Indigenous people have the right to control, protect and develop Indigenous cultures and knowledge; and the right to an education without discrimination.

Hon Minister Christopher Pyne,

2015

I am particularly committed to achieving a vastly accelerated rate of transition by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from school to higher education and the professions.

Providing pathways into positions of greater influence will drive real improvements for Indigenous communities and the nation as a whole.

Bradley Review 2008

Behrendt Review 2012

- whole of university approaches to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander higher education;
- increasing Indigenous academic workforce;
- increasing participation in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM).

Key elements

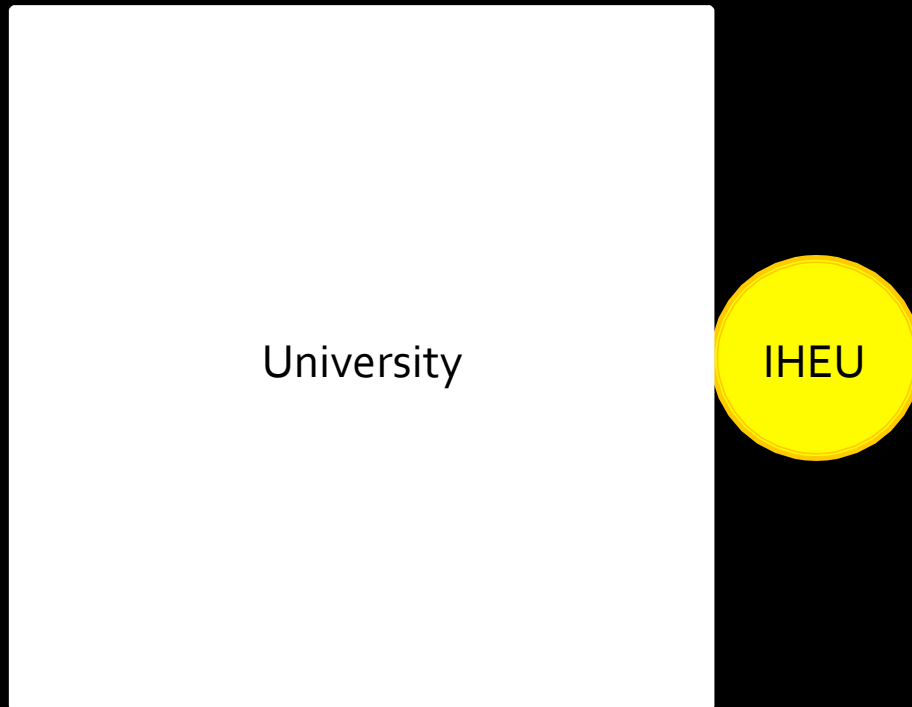
- Acknowledgement of culture;
- Clear governance and accountability arrangements;
- Policy leadership;
- Processes;
- Capability; and
- Connection with communities

Three priority areas

- Governance & cultural competency
- Student success & Attainment, and
- Staff Employment.

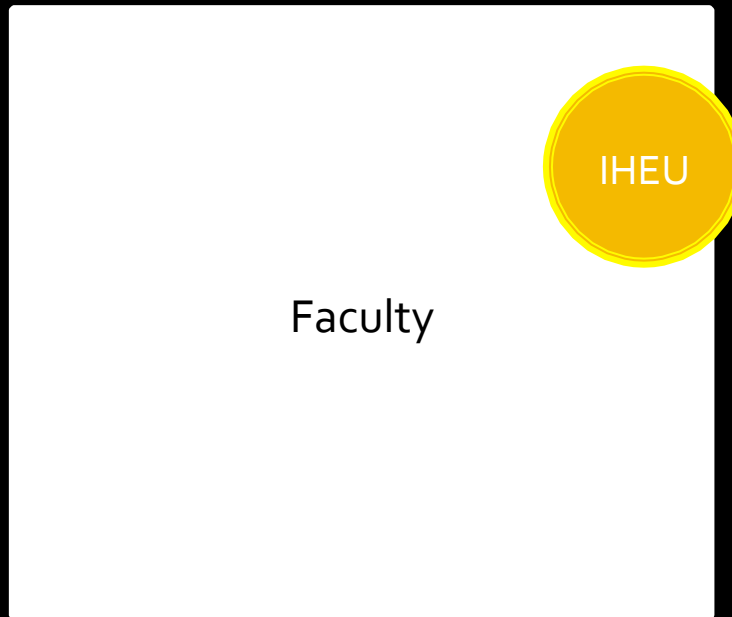
Stage 1 – 1980s

Aboriginal units were the fringe-dwellers



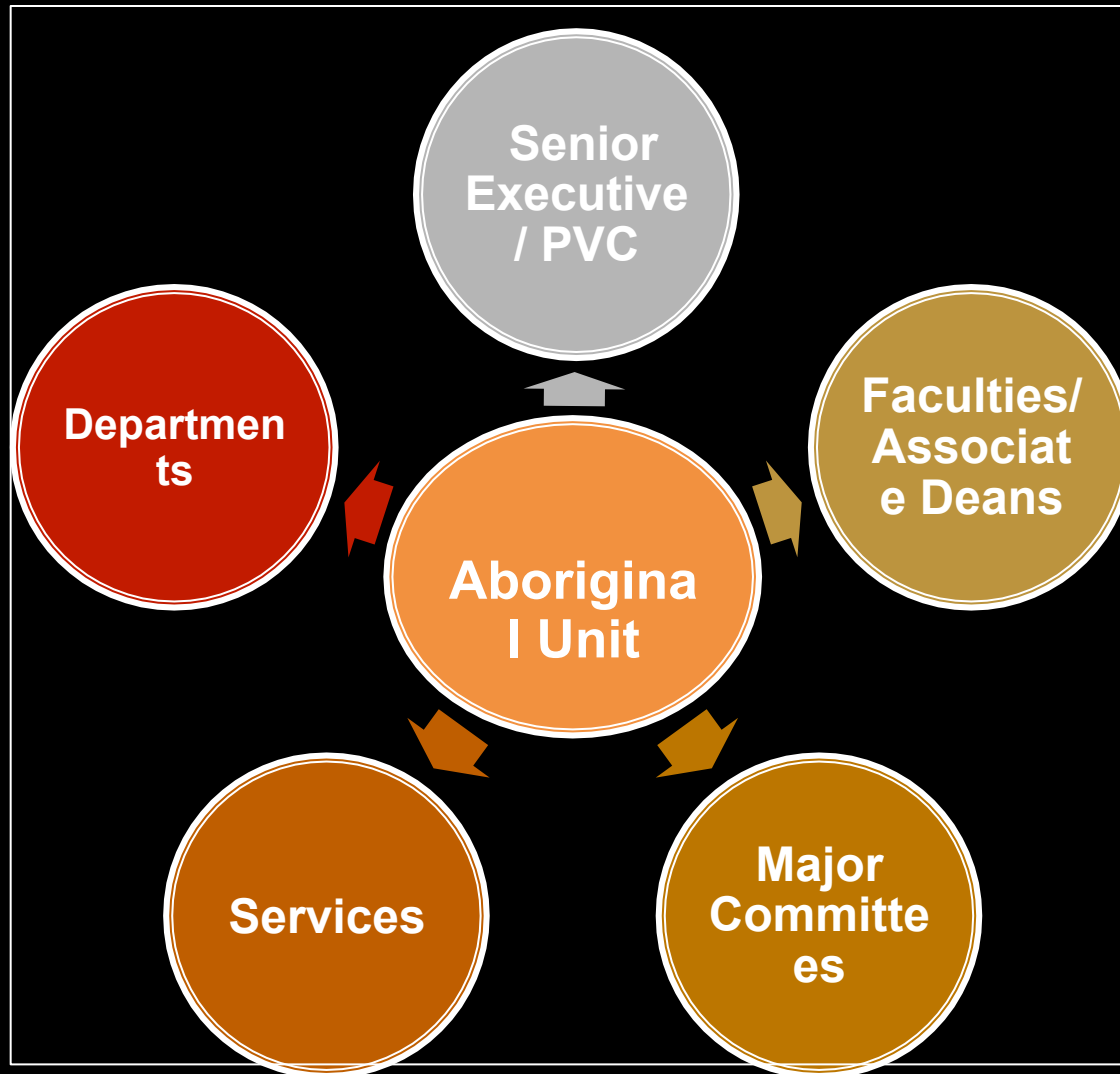
Stage 2 – 1990s

Aboriginal units move to faculties and schools



Stage 3 – current situation

Greater influence across university



Evidence points

- *To the pivotal role of cultural identity in shaping wellbeing for Indigenous Australians and other indigenous peoples around the world.*
- *Stronger cultural identity appears to promote greater participation and achievement in education and training (Dockery 2013)*

A culturally safe place

- Provide a safe place for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.
- Employ dedicated staff

Case Study: 1 IHE Unit & 1 Program

- Riawunna Centre @ UTAS &
- Murina Pathway program

Riawunna spaces

Hobart



Launceston



Burnie



- Offer a quiet place to study.
- There are computer labs with low cost printing, lockers to leave books, kitchen to prepare lunch and have a cuppa.
- Friendly staff to provide encouragement and arrange tutorial support.
- A safe place within UTAS for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Program based on

- 'cultural respect – recognition and respect of the inherent rights and traditions of Indigenous Australians which incorporates a holistic approach involving partnership, capacity building and accountability' (Andersen 2009).

Where is my place?

Human knowledge

*



Symbols are important for creating a sense of place



Teaching for success

- Building resilience in students
- A successful program

(Andersen et al, 2016)

The use of stories & art

- Learning never takes place in an emotional vacuum.
- Using stories as an aid to understanding concepts.

Creating new stories

- Changing the image from student to teacher
- Create new images of self
- Using student's own stories
- Caring for others, mentors, next generation

Practice

- Strengths based
 - Variety of material, found objects, on country
- Self expression
 - Writing for purpose, catalogue, artist statement, working together on exhibitions
- Journal Writing (Boud, 2001)

Gallery Opening & Exhibition



What can we do?

Include and value Indigenous perspectives

- **Content: case studies, voices**
- **Indigenous Education is Everybody's business:**
 - **Uni, schools, TAFE**
 - **Business & Industry**
 - **Professions have a role to play to make a difference**
- **Graduates are our future leaders of change**

Kate Jones MP and Chair of the Education Council

“everyone involved in the education of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people needs to place them at the centre of their work, in order to improve the education and life outcomes of Australia’s First Nations peoples.”

Recommendations

- Contextualise learning experiences – current practices are not culturally neutral
- Strengthen identity
- Involvement in decision making
- Role models, successful students, inclusion of voices & images
- No staff = no students
- Work with students, centres & community, respond to needs = tailor programs

What needs to happen?

- Change what happens between teacher and student
- Every student to be treated as an individual - case managed
- Use story and imagery
- Create safe healing place and address knowledge gaps

Resources

- 3Rs of Teaching:
Respect, Relationships, Reconciliation
<http://rrr.edu.au/>
- **12 Standards of Education**
https://www.usask.ca/education/ccstu/guiding_documents/12_standards_of_ed.html
- **Principles for education providers &**
- **Strategies for cultural affirmation**

Ingredients for success

- Indigenous education = core business

4 key elements:

- Dedicated staff
- Student comfort
- Indigenous space
- Review & respond

Conclusion

- Focusing on access and equity will not lead to social justice for Indigenous Australians within Universities, as they are places of white habitus where race capital ensures reproduction of white privilege.
- Our role – to lead change – so lives can be changed.



kina palirra, thank you

References

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