

Embedding Indigenous Cultural Competency in Criminal Justice Curriculum

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Acknowledgement of Country

I would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land the Gadigal people of the Eora nation and pay my respect to Elders past, present and future.



Disclaimer

- Presentation content contains sensitive material that some people may find distressing.*
- I would also like to acknowledge the diversity and strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in my presentation and clarify the terminology that I will be using.*
- All curriculum and presentation content has been endorsed through our community partnerships with the Bathurst Wiradyuri and Community Elders.*

Wiradyuri woman, Indigenous Academic



Charles Sturt University Centre for Law and Justice

The Centre for Law and Justice was established at Charles Sturt University (CSU) in 2016 to offer an internationally unique Bachelor of Laws (LLB) degree in addition to other criminology undergraduate and postgraduate programs.

CSU is one of the few universities across Australia to include Indigenous cultural competence as a Graduate Learning Outcome.



Universities Australia definition of Indigenous cultural competence

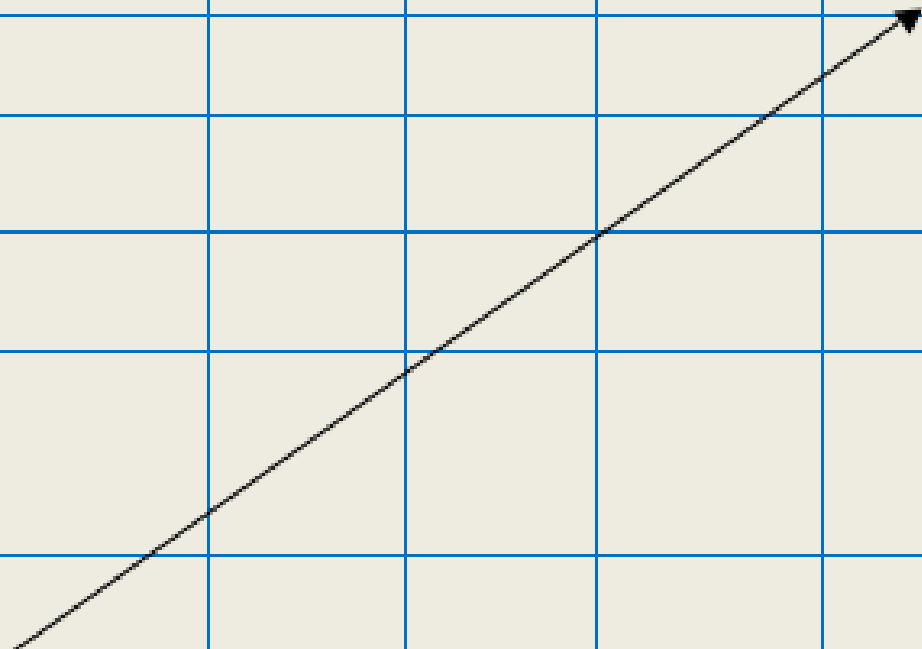
Cultural competence is the awareness, knowledge, understanding and sensitivity to other cultures combined with a proficiency to interact appropriately with people from those cultures.

Table 1 Indigenous Cultural Competence Graduate Learning Outcome, Charles Sturt University

Knowledge	Skill	Application
Understand specific cultural and historical patterns that have structured Indigenous lives in the past and the ways in which these patterns continue to be expressed in contemporary Australia	Critically examine personal power, privilege and profession within the broader context of the history, assumptions and characteristics that structure Australian society, and the way those factors shape historical and contemporary engagement with Indigenous communities and Indigenous people	Practise in ways that show a commitment to social justice and the processes of reconciliation through inclusive practices and citizenship

Pedagogical Matrix, developed by Ranzijn, McConnochie and Nolan (2006)

	Cultural incompetence	Cultural knowledge	Cultural awareness	Cultural sensitivity	Cultural competence	Cultural proficiency
Professionally specific skills						
Cross-cultural skills						
Critically examining the profession						
Reflexivity of values and attitudes						
Understanding Indigenous cultures, histories, & cont. issues						
Generic understanding of culture						



Links to Agency and Industry

- NSW Juvenile Justice**

- Aboriginal Strategic Plan 2018-2022

- NSW Department of Family and Community Services**

- Aboriginal Cultural Capability Framework 2017-2021

- NSW Police**

- Aboriginal Strategic Direction 2018-2023

Knowledge, Skills and Application

Relationship

FACS staff understand the importance of establishing positive working relationships with Aboriginal clients, their families, local Elders, community members and organisations.

Staff have identified ways of liaising with and sharing information with key local Aboriginal community members and organisations.

Practice

FACS leaders and staff understand that their beliefs and preconceptions have an impact on they way they engage with Aboriginal clients.

(NSW Department of Family and Community Services Aboriginal Cultural Capability Framework 2017-2021).

Matrix Framework to Map Course Content

Adopted by CSU through Associate Professor Wendy Nolan's connection with the University of South Australia.

The matrix provides a framework of five content areas for mapping content across an undergraduate program, by generating a matrix of content areas and year levels, and then mapping the content on to the matrix.

The five content areas are:

1. General background in Indigenous historical and contemporary social realities
2. Critically examining the nature of the profession
3. Professionally specific content
4. Working with Indigenous people
5. Exploring values and attitudes

1. General background in Indigenous historical and contemporary social realities

This includes the cultural, historical and contemporary frameworks which have shaped and continue to shape the lives of Indigenous Australians.

- The basis of Indigenous spirituality and belief systems.
- The sources and contemporary characteristics of families and family structures
- The relationships with land, the interconnectedness of land, family and spirituality, and the diversity of concepts of identity

1. General background in Indigenous historical and contemporary social realities

- ❑ Understanding the impact of historical processes such as colonisation and dispossession, institutionalisation, discrimination and the Stolen Generations on identity and mental health is crucial.
- ❑ The relationships between psychological functioning and broader contemporary contexts and social realities need to be examined and understood such intergenerational trauma, over representation of Indigenous children in out of home care, the early criminalisation of Indigenous children in out of home care and the over-representation of Indigenous people in the criminal justice system.

2. Critically examining the nature of the profession

- ❑ Involves providing students with the tools and opportunities to critically explore the major paradigms of their discipline and how these paradigms influence the impact on Indigenous people.
- ❑ Investigates the discipline as political and based on value-laden assumptions, hence the need to explore issues of power relations.

3. Professional specific content

Topics or issues relating to specific areas of the discipline include:

- Understanding cultural diversity in relation to loss, grief and trauma.
- Stereotyping and racism.
- Concepts of cultural safety.

4. Working with Indigenous people

- Examining culturally appropriate way of working.
- Including communicating positively with Indigenous peoples and communities and understanding the diversity of those communities in an Australian context.
- Developing skills in appropriate language, good listening skills, understanding of communication protocols appropriate to different cultural contexts.

5. Exploring values and attitudes

Encouraging students to examine their own values and assumptions in relation to:

- The historical events of colonisation
- The dispossession of land and languages
- The historical policies and imposed law that brought about the Stolen Generation

Effective interaction with Indigenous people cannot occur without an examination of the values that practitioners hold in relation to areas such as cultural diversity, race and power.

Authentic change

It is at the curriculum level where authentic change can be set in motion because these changes are underpinned by partnerships between Indigenous educators and academics, between Indigenous communities and universities (Gainsford and Evans 2017).

Thank you

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