

# ECU Reconciliation Round Table Discussion

14 February 2011 – Kurongkurl Katitjin

## Summary of Key Outcomes

Edith Cowan University (ECU) hosted a broad consultation on Reconciliation and the prospect of a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) on Monday, 14 February 2011.

The consultation provided a unique opportunity to engage with the broader ECU community, and consider what we can all do to address Indigenous Australian disadvantage.

Approximately 140 people attended, with staff, students and community members all represented. It was particularly valuable to have Indigenous community members participating in the discussions, which provided valuable insights and suggestions regarding actions that ECU might consider in progressing the reconciliation agenda.

The outcomes of the consultation will help inform development of ECU's Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), due to be launched at the end of May 2011.

RAPs operate in a framework that can make a difference: **respecting** the special contribution of Indigenous Australians to Australia; good **relationships**; and working together to ensure Indigenous Australians have the same life **opportunities** as other people.

The most common key issues and themes, identified as part of forum discussions, have been summarised below and arranged according to these three broad RAP themes.

## **RESPECT**

### **Indigenous Culture – Acknowledged, shared and celebrated**

- Build Relationship across ECU and the broader ECU Community with Kurongkurl Katitjin and utilise the expertise more effectively – access point for Indigenous advice and resources.
- Build usage of Acknowledgements of Country and Welcomes and Flag flying – flag poles outside Kurongkurl Katitjin
- Include acknowledgement of Indigenous owners on ECU naming buildings, walkways, gardens plants and use signage, plaques, campus maps, letterheads, stationery, emails etc.
- Celebrate Indigenous Culture – through art display, curriculum and events – celebrate achievements
- Utilise the Indigenous Calendar
- Visual maps of Aboriginal Peoples/Languages in Australia (AIATSIS will have)

### **Indigenous Understanding and Awareness promoted – staff and students**

- Cultural Awareness/Competence Training promoted – expand and consider making compulsory – include as part of Orientation for students and Induction for staff
- Promote Cultural Security – embed in employment contracts
- Indigenous Elders – more engaged – involved and listened to – use as Cultural Ambassadors
- More social events – bring people together
- WAAPA Aboriginal Theatre – capitalise on more...
- Protocols to assist staff in interacting appropriately (linked to cultural competence/awareness)
- Indigenous writing, oral histories and pictures – competitions

### **Curriculum Initiatives to produce students who are culturally competent**

- Compulsory units in cultural competence for all students
- Ensure strong connection with Curriculum Framework (ECF2012)
- Encourage learning of Indigenous Australian History
- Develop more Indigenous Study Programs ( Graduate and Undergraduate)
- Ensure Indigenous material readily available in library
- Embed Aboriginal values in Curriculum – include as Graduate Attribute
- More Indigenous content in Curriculum
- Explore Aboriginal methods of teaching and learning

## **RELATIONSHIPS**

### **Build Relationships with the broader ECU Community**

- Connect with Community agencies and associations – link programs to organisations for work experience and employment
- Improve linkages with Schools and TAFE and Industry – improve aspirations of Indigenous school students
- Report to the community on the RAP and its progress
- Invite Elders on to Campus and have speakers and visiting scholar lunches – VC to host Indigenous luncheons with Elders and local people
- Don't just study Indigenous Australians – work with them to improve their situation
- Share more with Community – functions, film nights,
- ECU should have a louder Community voice – social and political issues – especially areas of speciality for ECU: Education, Health and Law
- More Indigenous Elders/Adjunct Professors
- Maintain a strong and active Indigenous Consultative Committee
- Network with other institutions to enhance the quality and coverage of ECU's Indigenous teaching, learning, research and research translation

### **Build Relationships within ECU**

- Improve connections with Kurungkurl Katitjin and rest of ECU – better communicate what we are doing
- Increase knowledge of Indigenous History and Culture across our staff and students with celebrations, social events, use existing opportunities e.g. IWD and Sue Gordon as key note speaker
- Raise awareness and report across ECU on RAP and progress
- Make ECU a safe and welcoming place for staff and students
- Need a stronger Indigenous presence at Joondalup

### **Students**

- Build an Indigenous Alumni Branch
- Create opportunities for students to be engaged in Indigenous Culture – through Curriculum , Cross Cultural Training, Orientation and social events
- Build relationship with students bodies including Guild
- Increase enrolments of Indigenous students through flexible pathways, entry and study options
- Mentor Indigenous students

## **OPPORTUNITIES**

### **Student Recruitment**

- Flexible entry, improved pathways, admissions procedures and flexible modes of delivery. Dedicated staff to work with schools
- Be prepared to go out to the Community to recruit and also to teach – not just expect them to come to us
- More enabling initiatives – including re-invigorate IUOC
- Scholarships

### **Student Support**

- 'Wrap around' support – including **mentoring and specialist academic support**
- Inclusion in services related activities such as SES, Army Reserve
- Support Indigenous PHDs – increased support for post graduate students
- Targeted academic support for students
- Need more Indigenous students in mainstream courses – supported
- Indigenous Alumni

### **Research**

- Continue to promote and support Indigenous Research including Centre for Indigenous Australian Knowledge (CIAK) circulate outcomes
- Provide research scholarships.
- Conduct more community based surveys
- Prioritise Research to focus on Indigenous issues
- Ensure that research activity is informed by full cultural and Ethical awareness
- Empower Indigenous Community to engage in, own and drive research out in the community.
- Develop clear and agreed protocols around Indigenous Research

### **Capacity Building**

- Encourage greater connection and participation at Institution, Faculty, School and Individual level with Indigenous Community
- Focus on ECU areas of strength Health, Education, Social Justice – focus on literacy, family connections, value and resources
- Employment – look for opportunities – within study programs and within ECU

## **Staff /Employment**

- Increase mainstream employment of Indigenous Staff at ECU – need more Indigenous Australian staff in faculties
- Include Indigenous KPIs in performance management
- Targeted employment strategy required
- Mentoring support for staff
- Study support

## **Improve Indigenous Representation on Decision Making Bodies**

- ECU Council and Committees – Staff & Student Associations