

Submission
No 89

INQUIRY INTO OVERCOMING INDIGENOUS DISADVANTAGE

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RC Mills Building, A26
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NSW 2006
AUSTRALIA

The Standing Committee on Social Issues
NSW Legislative Council

Dear Committee Members

Inquiry into Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage

Please find attached documents by way of submission to this enquiry. Included are:

- A short bio giving my credentials as an Aboriginal person from NSW with significant experience to contribute to this inquiry;
- A brief statement on approaches to Cultural Resilience;
- A draft course development proposal for a Bachelor of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Management (BACHM);
- A brief statement on Research, Government programs and Aboriginal people in NSW;
- A draft report of a project I have completed for the Cooperative Research Centre on Aboriginal Health (CRAH) *Aboriginal Spirituality and Social and Emotional Wellbeing*, and
- The report *Indigenous Wellbeing a Framework for governments' Aboriginal Cultural Heritage activities* (2006) completed for the NSW Department of Environment and Climate Change (DECC) and published on the website at <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/conservation/IndigenousWellbeingFramework.htm>

Please note that the report for CRAH is not yet published and is not to be copied or distributed in any way, including at this stage on your website. The CRAH has agreed that it be made available for members of your committee to read. When published I will forward the details to you.

Yours sincerely

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Cultural Resilience amongst Aboriginal people in NSW

The role of educational institutions

At the point of completing the report *Indigenous Wellbeing a Framework for governments' Aboriginal Cultural Heritage activities* (2006) it became apparent to me that the means whereby the wellbeing and cultural resilience of Aboriginal people can be improved is through tailoring specific courses in Aboriginal cultural heritage and natural resource management for the benefit of Aboriginal workers in this area and members of the Aboriginal community generally. For further rationale for this please see the conclusions and recommendations of the report.

Consequently, I developed a course proposal that Dr Gaynor Macdonald has indicated she would like to see happen at the University of Sydney. Professor Judy Atkinson at the Southern Cross University is also very keen to see this established. Neither university currently has the financial wherewithal to get such a program up and running. This involves a salary for approximately six months, since, once students are in the program such a course would attract EFTSU and Indigenous Support Program funding from the Commonwealth Government (DEEWR).

It is important to note that only one university need do so, there are good reasons for having such a program in only one location. Sydney would be a good location because of proximity to museums, art galleries, libraries, archives and Aboriginal organisation peak bodies. Discussions have been held with Jason Ardler and staff from the internal training function of NSW DECC and the viability of such a course has been explored with networks within the Aboriginal staff of NSW DECC and it is invariably met with enthusiasm and interest.

The report developed for CRCAH *Aboriginal Spirituality and Social and Emotional Wellbeing* I believe underlines further the need for this initiative in Aboriginal higher education. Again, please see the final section of this report for the rationale for this education program.

My apologies for not outlining the reasons in a more comprehensive form here but time is of the essence. Suffice to say that generally speaking there are two ways of supporting Indigenous development – the first is to (however unconsciously) seek to make Aboriginal people reach the goals of the general community, often by providing Aboriginal perspectives to existing courses and programs. This methodology is essentially assimilationist in nature and in part explains the failure of many educational and government programs to date. This is fully explained in the report for CRCAH as it has severe ramifications for the wellbeing of Aboriginal peoples.

The second is to assist Aboriginal people to achieve their own aims, in concert with their own 'personhood', which comes from an entirely different cultural base. This is perhaps the most difficult approach for others to get their heads around, it requires a belief in the viability and legitimacy of Aboriginal culture (against the negative views that have been promulgated) and it is the approach more likely to achieve long-term and lasting results.

Research, Government programs and Aboriginal people in NSW

The role of educational institutions in research

From my experience in policy and program development at both the Federal and State levels of government, as well as within universities, it is important that any future directions in government policy, including the evaluation, review and fine tuning of existing policies, need to be underpinned by research. The reason for this being that there are many 'taken-for-granted' assumptions and various opinions expressed about the nature of Aboriginal people and communities and the policies and programs that are required. These do not necessarily truly reflect the diversity and range of issues for the people themselves and they need to be tested by research (including research that directly involves the people).

For example, the outcomes of the Indigenous Knowledges (IK) focus group on wellbeing in Redfern are truly surprising for many people outside of that community. The focus group outcomes have grounded the knowledges of the participants in research outcomes and represent a platform from which policy can be developed that has a greater guarantee of success. At one point it was suggested by DECC staff that IK focus groups on wellbeing could be held with a range of communities in NSW – this could only be of benefit for the development of policies that target these communities – but this has not as yet happened.

Currently and notably, the Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research (CAEPR) at the Australian National University (ANU) is exemplary in providing such a research base for the Federal government.

In NSW issues to do with representation and decision-making, Indigenous governance and service delivery and outcome measurement could be addressed by such a research initiative, funded by the NSW government and based in an appropriate research function within a NSW university. Such an initiative could provide employment for say two Aboriginal researchers whose function would include liaison with the relevant NSW government departments as well as with organisations such as CAEPR and the Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS).

Such university-based researchers would also have the opportunity to apply for research funds through organisations such as the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) and the Australian Research Council (ARC) in order to develop a larger team of researchers to concentrate on particular projects in NSW. For example, the ARC funded project that I am currently engaged with, exploring *Internecine conflict and violence in NSW Aboriginal communities* has the capacity to contribute to the research base for the future policy development of the NSW government and will also heighten awareness within the communities involved.

Precedents for such research initiatives exist in many places, including at ANU in the ACT (mentioned above) in Western Australia at the Curtin University, in the Northern Territory at the Charles Darwin University, Queensland at the University of Queensland and also in Canada at the University of British Columbia, to name only those that I know of.

Vicki Grieves, ARC IRDS Fellow at the University of Sydney, exploring *Interneecine Conflict and Violence in NSW Aboriginal Communities* including the development of local ethnohistories, is a historian from Worimi in the midnorth coast of NSW. Vicki has almost three decades experience in managing Aboriginal policy and program developments within Universities (where she has also lectured in Aboriginal history), the Commonwealth public service and within Aboriginal community. She has most recently had the opportunity to review major Indigenous education initiatives of the Commonwealth government as a consultant.

Her research interests are the constructions of race, especially as they impact on mixed-race Indigenous families, colonial history and Indigenous knowledges methodologies in research. She has published in the 'history wars' debate <http://www.historycooperative.org/journals/lab/85/grieves.html> explored the ramifications of hybridity in Australia's history, including 'passing' http://asc.uq.edu.au/crossings/9_3/index.php?apply=grieves, co-edited the online AWABA historical database <http://www.newcastle.edu.au/centre/awaba/awaba/group/amrhd/awaba/index.html> and developed a groundbreaking report on Indigenous wellbeing and Aboriginal cultural heritage for the NSW government <http://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/npws.nsf/Content/Indigenous+wellbeing+framewor+k>.

Vicki's completed PhD thesis *Approaching Aboriginal History: Family, Wellbeing and Identity in Aboriginal Australia* presents a case for a new Australian historiography based on Indigenous knowledges approaches and explores mixed-race marriages in Worimi from this theoretical base. With Dr Fiona Probyn of the University of Sydney she is researching the impact of the experience of a mixed-race family on an individual's understanding of 'race', through interviews with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal family members, to be published as *Significant Others: Race and the Australian Family* in 2008. Vicki is a co-presenter with Paulette Whitton of the program *All my Rellos: Aboriginal people speak of their family histories* on Gadigal radio in Sydney. The interviews are being transcribed and edited in preparation for publication as a book.

Her recent publications include:

"The Battlefields: identity, authenticity and Aboriginal knowledges in Australia" in *Indigenous Peoples: Politics of Justice, Resources and Knowledge*, Prof Henry Minde (ed) University of Tromsø, Norway, distributed by University of Chicago Press, January, 2008.

"Whiteness: a visual critique – the art of Adam Hill" special edition *Approaching Whiteness of the Australian Humanities Review*, Fiona Probyn and Anne Brewster (Eds), August, 2007.

"Indigenous Wellbeing in Australian government policy and the 'Whole of government' approach to Indigenous affairs in Australia" *AlterNative: an international journal of Indigenous scholarship*, June, 2007.

"What is Indigenous wellbeing?" proceeding of the *Mauratanga Taketake Traditional Knowledge 2006, Indigenous Indicators of Wellbeing: Perspectives, Practices, Solutions*, November, 2007.

"Indigenous Australians: Well-served by current public policy?" in D. Callahan (ed), *Australia: who cares?* API Network, Curtin University, Perth, WA, 2007.

DIPLOMA/BACHELOR OF ABORIGINAL CULTURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT: COURSE PROPOSAL

This is an initial proposal to open up discussion around possibilities for development and will be offered to a range of people for feedback and refinement. It is proposed that the Department of Anthropology at the University of Sydney and the NSW Department of Environment and Conservation (DECC) enter into a partnership to ensure the development of a Diploma of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Management (DACHM) and an associated Bachelor of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Management (BACHM).

The University of Sydney is well-placed to meet the needs of Aboriginal cultural heritage and natural resource management professionals, having existing programs and a range of appropriate teaching staff and student support services and networks that are able to adjust to meet the needs of these students.

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

There are increasing numbers of Aboriginal people working in the areas of cultural heritage and natural resource management and along with increasing interest and support for the associated Indigenous knowledges development across Australia. Natural resource management is importantly included in the domain of Aboriginal cultural heritage management as cultural heritage includes Aboriginal relationships with land and associated natural resources and environmental management (see diagram on p.4). NSW DECC is by far the largest employer of Aboriginal cultural heritage professionals while NSW Aboriginal Land Councils, museums, libraries, art galleries and a range of local and community based organisations employ significant numbers of Aboriginal people in important cultural heritage and natural resource management roles.

Aboriginal people who work in the context of cultural heritage and natural resource management are recognised by DECC as having sufficient skills and knowledge for holding positions within that department through virtue of their Aboriginality and relevant experience. On this basis, Aboriginal people are now employed in these positions under a professional award category without the usual degree requirement.

DECC currently encourages any staff who wish to achieve an appropriate tertiary qualification to do so. The focus of Aboriginal cultural heritage staff is mainly understanding how to record, manage and conserve the community values of heritage places, rather than the more professional, technical and disciplinary values that are often the focus of degree courses. However, where the relevant experience of existing or prospective Aboriginal staff includes graduate and

postgraduate qualifications, this is seen as a bonus. While the impetus is not necessarily to produce "heritage professionals" in the traditional sense such as archaeologists, anthropologists, historians, it is recognised that many Aboriginal people now working within the context of DECC programs, Local Aboriginal Land Councils (LALC's), Native Title, and within mainstream organisations concerned with heritage and at community level would benefit from an introduction to, and basic knowledge of relevant academic disciplines and their knowledge bases.

DECC's focus is moving toward broader community values and how recognition and inclusive management of these can contribute to improved wellbeing for Aboriginal communities. It is important to have Aboriginal people in a position to take an active role in such developments. Further, this course development and the associated development and promotion of Indigenous knowledges, would contribute to the body of knowledge within universities that in time would impact on the quality of material being delivered to non-Indigenous students concerning Aboriginal people and their cultural heritage.

It is important to make the scholarly work of archaeologists, anthropologists and historians accessible to Aboriginal people, including officers of DECC who are often in positions of leadership locally and regionally, and to develop ways of allowing the vigorous critiquing of this body of knowledge, incorporating that which is appropriate into existing knowledges. Such developments would also make more possible an important aspect of management of cultural heritage: the development of partnerships with scholars and organisations, for example, private industry, museums, universities, local councils, historical societies, libraries, schools, tourism initiatives, and various government departments. Such developments would make possible the recording and transmission of Indigenous knowledges and their take-up in other initiatives. It may also lead to the incorporation of more Aboriginal people into employed positions within these areas and into the DECC decision-making areas of local and regional organisations and government departments.

Thus greater knowledge of these disciplines would allow Aboriginal people to value-add to their work outcomes and to associated Aboriginal community development as well as the capacity to develop closer relationships with professionals and local and regional organisations in the field. Another outcome is that a proportion will find that they are motivated and, if well equipped with tertiary preparation skills, can continue with education programs in one of these disciplines. It is envisaged that this Diploma/Degree program has the potential to produce graduates who may wish to continue with an academic career as lecturers and researchers in Indigenous knowledges, or who may wish to pursue careers as Indigenous archaeologists, anthropologists or historians.

The development of a Diploma level education program in Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Management (DACHM) would provide important knowledge and

skills development, an important locus for the interchange of ideas between Aboriginal people, an introduction to university level programs, including the development of academic literacy skills, and an opportunity for a greater level of involvement in the development of Indigenous knowledges within the academy. Thus the task of the education program would be to draw on existing experiences of Aboriginal community based people and deliver a comprehensive program, to make their combined experience and knowledge accessible to the broader Aboriginal community. This would lead to developments in the documenting of these knowledges and their publication, in an environment of co-operation and collaboration in the promotion of Indigenous knowledges.

It is envisaged that the first cohort of students through the program are senior and experienced Aboriginal members of DECC staff or people with equivalent credentials. This group of students have an important contribution to make in the evaluation of curriculum and teaching methodologies of the program and so contribute to ensuring its relevance to the work at hand: the maintenance, management and development of Aboriginal cultural heritage and Indigenous knowledges.

Indigenous knowledges development

Indigenous knowledges and the "publication" or transfer of these is now seen as an important academic interest in its own right.¹ While utilising the western disciplines of anthropology, archaeology and history, the recording and disseminating of Indigenous knowledges needs to be innovative and tailored to suit Indigenous ownership and direction in the application and development of epistemologies and pedagogies, without concentrating wholly on written academic discourse. Music, dance, art, Indigenous oratory and ceremony and intangible cultural heritage are important in this. In addition, it is crucial to have Indigenous people develop skills in new technologies such as documentary film, recording of oral testimony, web-based resource databases and digital collections pertaining to family, community and regional histories, material cultural heritage, cultural practice around family and kin (intangible cultural heritage), landscapes, marine environments and diverse ecological systems.

Collection and analysis of these knowledges has the potential to connect with projects concerned with the management of Indigenous cultural heritage, cultural maintenance, language retention and retrieval, rural-regional sustainability, tourism, appropriate technologies, Aboriginal histories of family, place and region, and family reunion.

Aboriginal cultural heritage and wellbeing

The centrality of cultural heritage to wellbeing is illustrated in a diagram developed to illustrate associations between health, other aspects of human

wellbeing and ecosystem services by the World health organisation (WHO). Diagram 1, below, clearly shows the interdependence between health, human wellbeing and supporting, provisioning, regulating and cultural, that is, non-material benefits, from ecosystem services.

This diagram indicates a holistic, interdependent basis for the provision of wellbeing through a relationship with the natural environment. The ability to be able to obtain food and other necessities, to have custodianship and support for ecosystems by providing services, regulating some aspects and practising and observing cultural heritage associations ensures a continuation of Indigenous wellbeing.

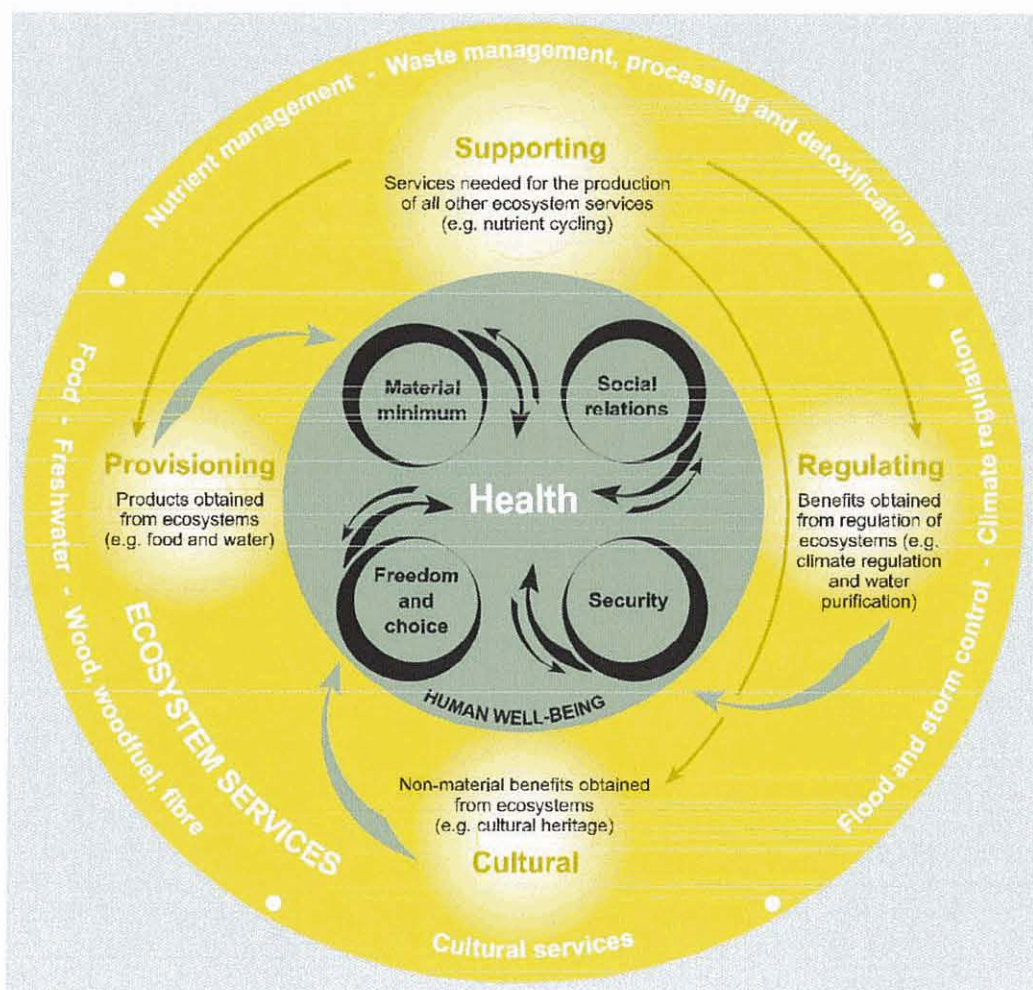


DIAGRAM 1: shows how non-material benefits including cultural heritage and cultural services are an important component of human wellbeing that also includes health.

Source: World Health Organisation (WHO) Ecosystems and human well-being: Health synthesis²

Wellbeing has been identified as an intangible social value, spoken of in relation to social, family, community, and environmental, economic, physical and psychological issues. It also has a variety of definitions and applications. NSW DECC for example, seeks to establish an approach to wellbeing that relates to its corporate goals, its responsibilities for Aboriginal cultural heritage, relevant government policy, and key academic disciplines. The DECC seeks a definition for Aboriginal wellbeing will make particular reference to the way it is defined and experienced by Aboriginal people and seeks to enhance Aboriginal wellbeing in its approach to the conservation of Aboriginal cultural heritage in NSW. To this end DECC is undertaking a major research project to develop indicators for wellbeing as a social value of Aboriginal cultural heritage that will then:

- inform the Department's approach to project design;
- inform the Department's heritage assessment processes of social values;
- demonstrate a relationship between health and cultural heritage activities; and
- enable the development of case studies that demonstrate how using the broad provisions of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (NSW) and Part 6 of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974* could achieve better Aboriginal heritage outcomes.³

A component of the initial phase of this project is the report *Indigenous Wellbeing: a framework for Governments' Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Activities*⁴ that defined Aboriginal wellbeing and explored the concept with a focus group of Aboriginal experts in their own wellbeing in Redfern. The findings indicate that:

Indigenous wellbeing (then) is firmly culturally based and exists through a continuation of cultural knowledges and practices.⁵

The UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)'s Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, Working Group on Indigenous Populations has defined Indigenous populations in the following way:

Indigenous communities, peoples and nations are those which, having a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing in those territories, or parts of them. They form at present non-dominant sectors of society and are determined to preserve, develop, and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories, and their ethnic identity, as the basis of their continued

*existence as peoples, in accordance with their own cultural patterns, social institutions, and legal systems.*¹

This internationally recognised definition referring as it does to historical continuity, the impetus to transmit to future generations knowledge of territories and identities, identifies material and non-material cultural heritage as a major preoccupation in Indigenous peoples' lives.⁶

The conclusion and recommendations the report *Indigenous Wellbeing: a framework for Governments' Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Activities* raises the importance of education programs in Aboriginal cultural heritage for the wellbeing of Aboriginal individuals and communities:

Since cultural heritage and wellbeing are so closely interlinked, innovations around cultural heritage in NSW Aboriginal communities are perhaps the key to many different developments for communities and individuals. Interest in cultural heritage can be translated into education programs for example. Education and training programs currently offer Aboriginal Studies as a way of learning about one's history and culture and this operates as a basic survey course, without the opportunity to explore local, regional and family histories, for example, and to develop the skills for further research. In this I am of course referring to adult education. The focus in Aboriginal education initiatives is currently around children. Results of the focus group show that Aboriginal people are most interested to learn from their elders. Education programs for Aboriginal adults are likely to produce real changes within the family, in terms of readiness and attitudes to the education process. The key to enabling the education of children is through educating the adults and changing attitudes to education in the home.

Further, the introduction of Aboriginal adults to Aboriginal cultural heritage education programs, including Aboriginal language studies, is likely to produce a new wave of Aboriginal innovation and change just has have occurred within the arts, dance, photography and art, in the past. However, more than this, since cultural heritage is so closely interlinked with wellbeing, the outcomes of such programs are likely to have positive impacts on all areas of Aboriginal life and interaction with the broader community.⁷

The University of Sydney and the NSW DECC have the opportunity to meet the challenge of developing an appropriate higher education program to assist Aboriginal people in the maintenance, development, management and dissemination of Aboriginal cultural heritage and in so doing assist in the promotion of their wellbeing.

Existing training opportunities

[DECC has entered into partnership with NSW TAFE to offer programs?]

The Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council has developed an accredited Conservation and Land Management training program in conjunction with NSW TAFE. The proposed Diploma/Degree in Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Management would not be in competition with this program and may draw students from their graduates.

Existing higher education opportunities

Aboriginal staff from NSW DECC, including cadets, have been enrolling in various higher education degree programs. For example, the Bachelor of Science (Land and Resource Management) at the University of Wollongong⁸ (which requires a UAI of 75) fulltime over three years or a part-time equivalent or the Bachelor of Environmental Science and Management at the University of Newcastle⁹ (that requires previous knowledge of chemistry, biology, mathematics or equivalent) with mixed success. These programs are offered on a full-time basis with university-based delivery and are not specially designed to meet the educational needs of Aboriginal students who are mostly mature and with existing family and kin responsibilities, and are not easily accessible to potential students who are already employed full-time.

Charles Sturt University offers a range of environmental science courses as follows:

Associate Degree in Applied Science (Parks, Recreation and Heritage);

Bachelor of Applied Science (Parks, Recreation and Heritage);

Bachelor of Applied Science (Parks, Recreation and Heritage)/Bachelor of Applied Science (Ecotourism);

Bachelor of Applied Science (Parks, Recreation and Heritage)/Bachelor of Information Technology;

Bachelor of Ecological Agriculture;

Bachelor of Environmental Science (Catchment Management);

Bachelor of Environmental Science (Land and Water); and

Bachelor of Environmental Science (Management).

These degrees are three to four years full time on campus and six to eight years duration by distance education.¹⁰ These are courses that are not designed to fit the needs of Indigenous students though it is suggested that some have successfully graduated from them.

Similarly, the Southern Cross University¹¹ and the University of New England¹² offer Bachelor of Environmental Science degree programs.

The proposed DACHM could serve as an appropriate prerequisite to such degree programs, though the requirements for previous study in mathematics, biology and chemistry may be hard to incorporate.

The University of Canberra offers a Bachelor of Cultural Heritage Studies, taught within the School of Resource Environmental and Heritage Sciences (REHS) on a full-time basis. The program comprises a six unit major of Cultural Heritage Studies and a four unit minor in Museum Studies. This program was originally developed at the request of the National Museum and the objective of the program is to provide students with practical skills, aptitudes, ideas and scholarly knowledge to enter the heritage and museum industry or to progress to graduate studies in the field. Many of the units include fieldwork visits to sites, monuments, heritage places and cultural institutions. This course is no longer open to new enrolments.¹³

[Question: Does DECC have any data on the existing qualifications of Aboriginal staff and what their preferences may be for higher education courses?]

COURSE STRUCTURE

Why a Diploma?

Diploma level courses can act as an important introduction to the particular skills and knowledge requirements of an academic degree program. Such a course can also provide specialised skills and knowledge for vocational and career development. For example Aboriginal education workers and health workers in NSW have had the benefits of diploma level courses developed specially for their needs within the University of Sydney, currently offered through the Koori centre and Yooroang Garang respectively.

Why a Bachelor of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Management?

The development of this program is important for the career progression and professional status of Aboriginal cultural heritage professionals. It also promises to contribute to the development of Indigenous cultural heritage scholarship as indicated earlier. However, it would not need to be developed until the DACHM is well underway.

This course can be achieved by a number of models including giving some credit for work done within the DACHM and developing existing undergraduate courses to fit the needs of BACHM students.

Course Aims

The course will allow Aboriginal graduates to:

- participate in the workforce as skilled and knowledgeable Aboriginal cultural heritage management professionals;
- understand the diverse nature of Aboriginal cultural heritage management and have a range of practical skills relating to the management of Aboriginal cultural heritage;
- understand major issues within Aboriginal cultural heritage management and the role of anthropology, archaeology and history;
- understand the nature of Indigenous knowledge development;
- demonstrate understanding of the academic process and techniques for researching and recording of knowledges in appropriate ways;
- achieve knowledge and skills required for entry into undergraduate Bachelor programs in appropriate disciplines and ACHM;
- apply appropriate Indigenous philosophy and ethics within the fields of cultural heritage management and/or sustainable tourism practice;
- understand and interpret Federal and State Government legislation relating to Aboriginal cultural heritage;
- manage Aboriginal cultural heritage or cultural tourism projects in diverse settings;
- develop projects in the field of Aboriginal cultural heritage management.

Course Advisory Committee

The course advisory committee would include key people from NSW DECC, including representatives of the Aboriginal staff for whom the proposed course is to be developed, NSWALC and the University of Sydney including the Koori Centre and Yooroang Garang, who can make a significant contribution to the development of a course that is meaningful and likely to produce appropriate outcomes.

The course advisory committee would include other members as deemed appropriate by the University of Sydney and DECC.

Course content

The course advisory committee would need to come to an agreement about course content through deliberations about what can be included for the necessary number of course hours to meet the requirement of a diploma level course.

The course could include core subjects that cover at least the following content areas, some of which may be offered within elective courses:

Aboriginal cultural heritage and Indigenous knowledges -

definitions and content; Aboriginal philosophy; Aboriginal spirituality; ethics and morality; identity and authenticity; Aboriginal languages (introduction to the National Indigenous Languages Framework); diversity of cultures and cultural change; the role of oratory, art, music and dance in culture; material heritage; intangible cultural heritage; intellectual property; relationship to the natural world; land management; sustainable ecosystem management; Indigenous academic development in Australia; developments in Aboriginal cultural heritage management within Australia, state by state and territory; Commonwealth government policy and developments; international comparisons; case studies.

Aboriginal History – introduction to the discipline; an introduction to political, social and economic history of Aboriginal Australia; the role of colonisation; the place of Aboriginal history in Australian history; biography and autobiography; current debates; history and native title; local and regional histories; family history; oral history techniques; case studies.

Academic Skills – research techniques; introduction to primary and secondary research; qualitative and quantitative data; note taking; essay writing; report writing; oral presentations; plagiarism; acknowledgement of sources of information; recording information on video and audio tape; information technology.

Anthropology – introduction to the discipline; the history of anthropology and Aboriginal people; native title and anthropology; international comparisons; case studies.

Archaeology - introduction to the discipline; material and non-material heritage; pre-contact and post-contact archaeology; the history of archaeology and Aboriginal people; legislation; international comparisons; recording of sites of significance; case studies.

Management Skills – communication skills for the workplace; strategic planning; human resource management; financial planning; submission writing; management of tenders; delegation; the role of government agencies in CHM; the role of museums, art galleries, libraries and history societies; policy and program development; information technology; managing interactions between visitors and heritage sites, including site management, interpretation and visitor management; interpretation and application of Commonwealth and State government policies; case studies.

Course delivery

Since the majority of students will be employed and living outside of Sydney it is important to offer this course through block mode with students spending several blocks of five days duration on campus or at an external location. This could be as much as four to five blocks per year (160 – 200hrs). Hours of face-to-face teaching could be reduced by the use of online access for students to

course materials, information and submission of assessment tasks.

Course delivery will be a balance between what is possible for students attendance at blocks of teaching and the demands of a diploma level course for adequate teaching of content, skills and knowledge. What cannot be managed in the blocks of teaching may be taken up with online teaching and provision of course materials, particularly in the case of teaching elective subjects.

Student intakes

Each cohort of students should be set at a number that ensures ease of communication between the group and lecturers, for example, no more than twenty-five students. Intakes of students need to be planned so as to ensure resources are sufficient for the delivery of the program – perhaps two intakes in the first year, with review after that to determine the number of intakes in the second year.

It is anticipated that there will be a high demand for places in this program, in line with the high level of interest in Aboriginal cultural heritage amongst Aboriginal people across the state, and the country

Assessment tasks

Importantly, assessment tasks will be designed to allow students in the program to work on issues that are relevant to the work that they are currently undertaking in the course of their employment.

Student academic support

Individual students enrolled in the program are likely to be eligible for assistance under the Indigenous Tutorial Assistance Scheme (ITAS) under the present guidelines and tutors can be recruited locally to the student.¹⁴

COURSE DEVELOPMENT PERSONNEL AND BUDGET

This course development requires the employment of a course development coordinator full-time for a period of six to eight months before the first cohort of students enter the program. The course coordinator will be required to manage negotiations with Commonwealth Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST), the development of curriculum, development of course materials, recruitment of students and course promotion, establishment of online delivery, accommodation for teaching, recruitment of ITAS tutors and associated tasks at the direction of the Course Advisory Committee. This person will require some administrative assistance.

This position requires the an appointment at senior lecturer level¹⁵ \$72,222 – 83,277 plus salary oncosts per year; that is, \$48,148 – 55,518 plus salary oncosts for eight months.

It is anticipated that the costs of coordination and teaching staff will be met by DEST once the students are enrolled in the course. Judgements about additional staff requirements will need to be made as the course develops.

The costs of student travel and accommodation may be met by DEST through Away from base (AFB) provisions.

Thus this course development requires an initial financial commitment from stakeholders, that is, "seed money" to make this program possible.

TIME FRAME FOR COURSE DEVELOPMENT

The timeline for this development is dependent on the necessary University processes for the approval of the course and its delivery. It could begin in second semester 2009 for delivery in first semester 2010 and the possible timeframe is currently being explored.

¹ See for example Smith, L. T. (1999). DECColonising methodologies: research and Indigenous people. Dunedin: University of Otago Press; Nakata, M. (2002). Indigenous Knowledge and the Cultural Interface: Underlying issues at the intersection of knowledge and information systems. IFLA Journal, Vol. 28, No. 5/6, 281-291; Anderson, I. (2003). Black bit, white bit. In M Grossman (ed.), Blacklines: contemporary critical writing by Indigenous Australians. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press; Agrawal, A. (1995a). Dismantling the divide between Indigenous and Western knowledge. Development and Change, 26(3), 413-439; Nakata, M (2004) The Wentworth Lecture – Indigenous Australian Studies and Higher Education at www.aare.edu.au/conf2005/keynote.htm

² World Health Organisation, 2005 at <http://www.who.int/globalchange/ecosystems/ecosystems05/en/>

³ *E/CN.4/Sub.2/1983/21/Add.8, para. 369/*

⁴ The report *Indigenous Wellbeing: a framework for Governments' Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Activities* was prepared by Vicki Grieves of Minimbah Consultants and Education providers for NSW DECC and is published on the DECC website at <http://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/npws.nsf/Content/Indigenous+wellbeing+framework>

⁵ *ibid* p 14

⁶ *ibid* p 9

⁷ *ibid* p 60

⁸ See <http://coursefinder.uow.edu.au/coursefinder/CourseLevelDetail.aspx>

⁹ See

http://www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/scienceit/programs_and_courses/ugrd/11587.html

¹⁰ See <http://www.csu.edu.au/cgi->

[pub/course/getcourse?nationality=Australia&top=Either+On+Campus+or+Distance&two=Undergraduate&three=Environmental+studies%2C+environmental+management&submit.x=44&submit.y=13&submit=Submit](http://www.csu.edu.au/cgi-pub/course/getcourse?nationality=Australia&top=Either+On+Campus+or+Distance&two=Undergraduate&three=Environmental+studies%2C+environmental+management&submit.x=44&submit.y=13&submit=Submit)

¹¹ See <http://www.scu.edu.au/schools/esm/>

¹² See

<http://www.une.edu.au/courses/courses/bykeyword?keyword=natural+resource+management>

¹³ See <http://www.canberra.edu.au/schools/rehs/study/cultural-heritage>

¹⁴ See

http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/indigenous_education/publications_resources/profiles/indigenous_tutorial_assistance_scheme_itas.htm

¹⁵ For current University of Sydney remuneration for academic staff see

http://www.usyd.edu.au/su/personnel/rem/acad11_03.htm