The ‘leadership challenge’ in Indigenous higher education

Professor Steve Larkin, Chair
Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council
Third IHEAC Members

L-to-R: Professor Aileen Moreton-Robinson (Deputy Chair), Dr Irene Watson, Professor Ian Anderson, Associate Professor Sue Green, Professor Paul Chandler, Ms Geraldine Atkinson, Professor Steve Larkin (Chair, Professor Ngiare Brown; Absent: Mr Russell Taylor, Mr Asmi Wood;
Indigenous Participation in Higher Education, 2001-2010 (% of all domestic students)

- Participation Rate
- Parity Rate

- 2001: 1.46 pp
- 2010: 1.82 pp
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing levels

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<th>Proportion of Indigenous people in the Australian working age population</th>
<th>Higher education staff who identify as Indigenous</th>
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<td>2.2%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
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<td>Academic 324</td>
<td>Non-Academic 587</td>
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<td>Total 911</td>
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Key areas for non-Indigenous leadership

- Knowledge production
- Teaching and learning
- Active confrontation of discrimination
NTEU staff survey findings

68 percent of staff were treated less respectfully by their colleagues in the workplace as a result of perceptions of culture and/or cultural obligations.

71 percent experienced direct racial discrimination and racist attitudes in the workplace.

55 percent reported racial discrimination and racist attitudes at the hands of their colleagues.

24 percent believe they had been subjected to lateral violence.
UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

- Endorsed by the Australian Government in April 2009
- Articulates the importance of resetting the relationship between Indigenous peoples, the broader community and government.
- Provides guidance on how to create an Australia where the rights and cultural differences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are valued, protected and seen as a positive part of Australian culture and society.
- Three significant articles for IHEAC: Articles 14, 15 and 21
Article 14: Education rights

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning.

2. Indigenous individuals, particularly children, have the right to all levels and forms of education of the State without discrimination.

3. States shall, in conjunction with indigenous peoples, take effective measures, in order for indigenous individuals, particularly children, including those living outside their communities, to have access, when possible, to an education in their own culture and provided in their own language.
Article 15: Cultural rights

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to the dignity and diversity of their cultures, traditions, histories and aspirations which shall be appropriately reflected in education and public information.

2. States shall take effective measures, in consultation and cooperation with the indigenous peoples concerned, to combat prejudice and eliminate discrimination and to promote tolerance, understanding and good relations among indigenous peoples and all other segments of society.
Article 21: Right to development

1. Indigenous peoples have the right, without discrimination, to the improvement of their economic and social conditions, including, inter alia, in the areas of education, employment, vocational training and retraining, housing, sanitation, health and social security.

2. States shall take effective measures and, where appropriate, special measures to ensure continuing improvement of their economic and social conditions. Particular attention shall be paid to the rights and special needs of indigenous elders, women, youth, children and persons with disabilities.
Indigenous Cultural Competency in Australian Universities project

• Joint IHEAC-Universities Australia project, 2009-2012

• Funded pilot projects to embed cultural competency in curriculum design and delivery in four universities.

• Development and publication of a National Best Practice Framework for Cultural Competency and Guiding Principles for the sector.

• Universities Australia are currently hosting workshops in selected capital cities to promote the Framework and Guiding Principles. For more information, go to www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au.
National Indigenous Higher Education Workforce Strategy (NIHEWS)

- Developed by Second and Third IHEAC Councils and launched in June 2011.

- Contains four core policy objectives:
  1. To enhance employment pathways for existing Indigenous employees;
  2. To increase new employment opportunities for Indigenous people;
  3. To develop a working environment appropriate to the needs of Indigenous people; and
  4. To improve universities’ community engagement and outreach with the Indigenous community.
Review of Higher Education Access and Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People
Questions?

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