Festival of Learning Showcase

Facilitator(s): Ms Carol Dowling, Associate Lecturer and Associate Professor Julie Hoffman, Dean of Teaching and Learning, Centre for Aboriginal Studies

Strategic theme: Rich, interactive learning experience

Subject Title: The Indigenous Advancement Strategy and its impact on Indigenous undergraduate students at Curtin University

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Brief Description:

On 1 July 2014, the Australian Government announced the introduction of the Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS) replacing more than 150 individual programs and activities operating in government to fund Aboriginal communities across Australia. Under the strategy there are now five flexible, broad based programs including one relating to education at all stages in an Aboriginal person’s life. The Strategy aims to improve the lives of Indigenous Australians including the focus to improve the participation of Aboriginal people in the “economic and social life of the nation”. The strategy speaks about the joint development of solutions for the long term with regional or local solutions and where appropriate will fund organisations that work closely with Indigenous communities to design and deliver projects.

This $8.5 billion Indigenous-specific funding strategy directly impacted upon the various Aboriginal studies centres within universities across Australia. These centres, including the Centre for Aboriginal Studies at Curtin, have now entered a tender process for funding for the Indigenous Support programs that have been fundamental in supporting the engagement of Indigenous students in university. The most vital of which is the Indigenous Tutorial Assistance Scheme (ITAS) which has provided help to Indigenous students for decades. While the rhetoric from the Australian Government speaks of increasing course completions by Indigenous students in university-level study, the Centre for Aboriginal Studies have now must wait til March 2015 to hear if ITAS will continue. This paper discusses the importance of ITAS and its tutors, the impact upon Indigenous undergraduate students and the current context of the Indigenous Advance Strategy to WA Aboriginal students and their communities.

Benefits: Increase of academic literacy to produce more Indigenous graduates

Time/Day: Thursday 19 March 2015, 10:30 – 11:00am

Duration: 30 mins

No. of Sessions: One

Venue: Building 211:223

Special Requirements: No special requirements needed