

GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee of the Griffith University Council will be held at 3:00pm on Thursday, 27 October, 2011 in N35 (Multi-Faith Centre) **Nathan campus**.

MINUTES

PRESENT

Mr Graham Dillon (Chair)
Professor Marilyn McMeniman
Mr Harry van Issum
Ms McRose Elu
Professor Boni Robertson
Ms Anne Chapman
Ms Bronwyn Dillon
Mr Shane Barnes
Mr Thomas Sebasio
Mr John Graham
Mr Corie Duff
Ms Rosemary Marson (Secretary)

Ms Fiona Tinning (DEEWR) – invited for item 2.0

APOLOGIES

Dr Robert Anderson
Ms Gail Stephenson
Ms Jennifer Herd
Mr Bill Chapman

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

On behalf of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee, the Chair acknowledged the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee meets.

1.0 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The minutes of the 2/2011 meeting of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee (ATSIAC), having been circulated, were taken as read and confirmed.

SECTION A: RECOMMENDATIONS AND REPORTS TO ACADEMIC COMMITTEE AND ITS SUB-COMMITTEES

NIL

SECTION B: ACTION UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY

NIL

SECTION C: OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS AND REPORTS

NIL

SECTION D: MATTERS NOTED, CONSIDERED, OR REMAINING UNDER DISCUSSION

- 2.0 REVIEW OF HIGHER EDUCATION ACCESS AND OUTCOMES FOR ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLE
- 2.1 The Chair of the ATSIAC welcomed Ms Fiona Tinning, Acting Assistant Director, Indigenous Higher Education (DEEWR), to the meeting. Ms Tinning was invited to provide a brief update on the current Review of Higher Education Access and Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.
- 2.2 Ms Tinning thanked the Chair and members of the ATSIAC for inviting her to the meeting. Ms Tinning reminded members that the Review of Higher Education Access and Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is to provide advice and make recommendations to the Federal Government on:
- 2.2.1 achieving parity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, researchers, academic and non-academic staff;
 - 2.2.2 best practice and opportunities for change inside universities and other higher education providers (spanning both indigenous specific units and whole-of-university culture, policies, activities, and programs);
 - 2.2.3 the effectiveness of existing Australian Government programs that aim to encourage better outcomes for Indigenous Australians in higher education; and
 - 2.2.4 the recognition and equivalence of Indigenous knowledge in the higher education sector.
- 2.3 Ms Tinning advised the Advisory Committee that the Review will inform the development of a strategic framework to enable the Federal Government and the higher education sector to collectively address issues of improved higher education access and outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- 2.4 The ATSIAC was advised that the Review is currently in the consultation phase and that the Chair, Professor Larissa Behrendt and her team, have met with 37 universities during the last month, including Vice Chancellors, senior Indigenous academic staff, as well as staff and students. Professor Behrendt and her team will meet with the Griffith executive, Indigenous staff and students on 11 November at the Nathan campus. The final Report and recommendations are due to be presented to the Federal Government by end of March 2012.
- 2.5 Ms Tinning advised that key issues emerging from the consultations include:
- 2.5.1 in general, universities experience challenges in recruiting Indigenous students;
 - 2.5.2 poor academic attainment of Indigenous students in year 12, thus hindering access to higher education programs;
 - 2.5.3 poor retention rates among Indigenous students attending universities; and
 - 2.5.4 limited feedback on research areas and outputs from the Indigenous staff and context.
- 2.6 Members of the ATSIAC thanked Ms Tinning for her presentation and advised her that their main concern involved issues of parity in access to undergraduate and postgraduate degree programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The

Chair suggested that, as a minimum, a 3% threshold be set nationally for these areas for ATSI students and asked that this request be relayed to DEEWR. Members also agreed to raise this issue at the 11 November meeting with Professor Behrendt at the Gold Coast campus.

- 2.7 The Deputy Vice Chancellor and Provost reminded the ATSIAC that Griffith's extensive and nationally-recognised work-integrated program, including the Indigenous cadetship program, played a key role in the retention of students, particularly in second and third years. The ATSIAC was further advised that participation in these schemes has a direct impact on students' ability to secure relevant work as graduates, hence the impact on retention. Ms Tinning advised that the role of partnerships between the higher education sector and relevant industries and professions is a concern of the Working Party and has been discussed in various fora during the consultation process.
- 2.8 In broad terms, the ATSIAC asked Ms Tinning about revisions to the current funding model for resourcing Indigenous students in higher education and were advised that the Working Party is looking at current funding options that will be included in the Final Report and Recommendations.
- 2.9 The Chair thanked Ms Tinning for her detailed input and invited her to remain, as an observer, for the duration of the ATSIAC meeting.

3.0 GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

- 3.1 The Chair introduced this item and reminded the ATSIAC that the University is currently engaged with key stakeholders in developing a university-wide Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) 2012-2015. The Chair further reiterated that the RAP is to be a statement about Griffith's commitment to achieve goals for its Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities to work together harmoniously and to find common ground in their teaching and research endeavours and in their community engagements. Throughout 2011, the RAP Working Party (co-chaired by Mr Shane Barnes and Ms Joanna Peters) has overseen the preparations of the RAP. Griffith has also worked closely with Reconciliation Australia to ensure that appropriate steps have been taken in developing and registering the RAP, and that the University's formal statement of commitment has been successfully submitted to Reconciliation Australia (distributed to members as document 2011/0004015).
- 3.2 The Chair invited the Equity and Diversity Project Officer to speak to this item. The Equity and Diversity Project Officer advised members that he will be seeking input from members of the ATSIAC for transmission to the RAP Working Party and to Equity Committee.
- 3.3 The Equity and Diversity Project Officer reminded members of the ATSIAC that during 2011 wide consultation has taken place with Indigenous and non-Indigenous students and staff, the Council of Elders, and with members of Equity Committee to identify key themes for inclusion in the RAP. Since its establishment, the RAP Working Party has met three times and members have considered all of the feedback received from these consultations. One further meeting is scheduled before the close of the 2011 academic year.
- 3.4 The ATSIAC was advised that the format of the draft RAP uses the four key standard RAP headings (Respect, Relationships, Opportunities, and Reporting), which are recommended by Reconciliation Australia in preparing an institutional RAP (<http://www.reconciliation.org.au/home/reconciliation-action-plansand>). In addition, for the first three of these themes the Working Party has broadly grouped the actions listed in the RAP under the headings: Community and Culture; Learning and Teaching; and

Research, which the Working Party believes reflect the core areas of the Griffith's activities.

- 3.5 The Equity and Diversity Project Officer drew the ATSIAC's attention to the following documents:
- The draft Reconciliation Action Plan (distributed as document 2011/0004011).
 - Appendix 1 to the RAP, which comprises the analysis of staff and student submissions made via the survey, *RAP – Your Ideas* (members recalled that this was available in hard copy and on the First Peoples' website) and a summary of feedback received from the two focus groups for Indigenous staff and the three focus groups for Indigenous students (distributed as document 2011/0004012).
 - A draft Communication Strategy (distributed as document 2011/0004013), which was developed with a view to providing a strong and consistent communications strategy to support the implementation of the RAP, following the launch of the Plan in 2012.
- 3.6 Members of the ATSIAC were invited to provide feedback on the following points:
- 3.6.1 The draft content of the RAP:
- the themes/actions articulated in the RAP;
 - whether other themes should be included;
 - the draft text for the preamble statements (Uncle Graham, Chancellor's, and Vice Chancellor's statements);
 - the proposal to include in the layout of the RAP, a one page summary in a format that can be reproduced as a stand-alone document; and
 - the proposal to use student and staff graphic artwork in the final design of the RAP.
- 3.6.2 The timeline for the RAP:
- finalisation of the RAP (by December 2011);
 - finalisation of the Communications Strategy (by December 2011);
 - consultation around and commissioning design work for the document and promotional collateral for approval (by February 2012); and
 - approval of the RAP at first ordinary meeting of Council (2 April 2012).
- 3.7 Members of the ATSIAC endorsed the draft RAP, but requested additional time to consider the contents. The Chair suggested that the ATSIAC have a further week to forward their comments to the Equity and Diversity Project Officer. Members of the ATSIAC queried the December 2011 deadline and were advised that, as Griffith has entered into an agreement with *Reconciliation Australia* to complete and approve a Reconciliation Action Plan in a timely and appropriate fashion, the deadline cannot be delayed for much past the end of 2011. The Chair further advised that the December 2011 deadline also has the advantage of allowing an effective rollout of key aspects of the RAP from January 2012.
- 3.8 Members of ATSIAC noted that an important theme in the draft RAP is ensuring that *acknowledgment of country* is promoted through University publications and events. Although different versions may be in use, and/or developed in the longer term, it is important to have a succinct and consistent message that can be used in a wide range of contexts to reflect campus specific acknowledgements or the protocols for a variety of occasions. Members noted that this matter is also before the Council of Elders, and

that the Council's approval is also required in this instance. Uncle Thomas Sebasio responded to this item and asked the University's definition of First Peoples be clearly inclusive of Torres Strait Islander peoples. The DVC & Provost assured him and the ATSIAC that this is the case in current documentation, paper and digital, and would continue to be Griffith University policy.

Members agreed to endorse the following wording, from the First Peoples' website, for general use, subject to similar endorsement from the Council of Elders:

Griffith University acknowledges the people who are the Traditional Custodians of the Land. The University pays respect to the Elders, past and present, and extends that respect to other Indigenous Australians.

Resolution

- 3.9 The ATSIAC resolved to provide in principle support for the issues outlined in items 3.5 and 3.6 above, noting that members may wish to forward further advice to the Secretary, ATSIAC or the Equity and Diversity Project Officer. Once such advice has been received, by COB Friday 4 November, the RAP may be forwarded to Equity Committee for finalisation.

4.0 PROPOSED ACADEMIC CENTRE IN HEALTH

- 4.1 The Deputy Vice Chancellor and Provost spoke to this item and outlined the progress currently underway in establishing the proposed academic centre within the Health Group. The ATSIAC was advised that the proposed centre, tentatively titled the *Centre for Health and Well-being of Indigenous Women*, will be led by the Professor of Indigenous Community Engagement, Policy and Partnerships, Boni Robertson. The ATSIAC noted that the proposal had been developed in close consultation with the Head of Campus (Logan), Professor Lesley Chenoweth and that Griffith Health is highly supportive of the initiative.
- 4.2 The Professor of Indigenous Community Engagement, Policy, and Partnerships also spoke to this item and advised the ATSIAC that the Centre will build upon the existing connections between Griffith and the United Nations Women's Forum and will consolidate the ongoing work of the Indigenous Community Engagement Policy and Partnerships area. The ATSIAC was also advised that, although the focus will be on women's health and well-being, the proposed Centre will also focus on adopting a holistic approach to health and well-being in the Indigenous sector.
- 4.3 The ATSIAC thanked the DVC & Provost for taking carriage of the development and implementation of the proposed academic centre in health.

5.0 CULTURAL MAPPING PROPOSAL

- 5.1 The Deputy Vice Chancellor and Provost introduced this item and outlined the proposed plans to introduce a range of Indigenous cultural markers at the Nathan and Mt Gravatt campuses. The DVC & Provost advised that this project has been planned in two stages; the first stage will involve a series of detailed oral histories, to be completed in consultation with the Elders and traditional owners. The ATSIAC noted that considerable research will also be required to identify relevant historical records and landmarks, and that much of this will be undertaken with the cooperation of the Department of Environment and Resource Management (DERM). The ATSIAC noted that Dr Dale Kerwin and Dr Leah Burns (School of Environment) have been invited to participate in this project.

6.0 GUMURRII STUDENT SUPPORT UNIT

6.1 The Head, GUMURRII Student Support Unit reported on current issues of relevance to the Advisory Committee, including:

6.1.1 QTAC UPDATE

The Advisory Committee was advised that Griffith received 40% of the first preferences in the first round of QTAC applicants (Indigenous) for admission in 2012. Members noted that this is in spite of an overall decrease in applications to QTAC and indicates that Griffith continues to dominate that market as the preferred university provider for Indigenous applicants in Queensland. Members were also advised that the *Alternate and Direct Entry Program* is now underway with GUMURRII staff interviewing applicants. Members noted that the issue of applicants supplying *Confirmation of Aboriginality* continues to be challenging for some applicants.

6.1.2 PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES

The Advisory Committee was advised that during September, GUMURRII staff located at the Gold Coast campus conducted an interactive activity on campus with Indigenous students from Kingscliffe High School, which focussed on exposing students to life at university. Over thirty Indigenous students attended four lectures and tutorials, which included activities such as building models (School of Architecture), resuscitation and first aid with Griffith Ambulance, among others. The feedback from students was extremely positive and a second group is booked for a similar program in November.

6.1.3 GUMURRII has also been involved in a variety of outreach activities, including the following:

- Inaugural Murri Carnival (22-25 September);
- Former Origin Great Career Markets in Toowoomba and Brisbane;
- *Launch into Life* at Logan; and
- *School Outreach Programs* in northern NSW, Gold Coast, and southern and eastern Brisbane high schools.

6.2 The Chair thanked Ms Dillon for her comprehensive Report and congratulated the GUMURRII SSU for its ongoing work in supporting Indigenous students at Griffith.

7.0 MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY AND SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY, CANADA

7.1 The ATSIAC noted the Memorandum of Understanding (document distributed with the Agenda as 2011/0004016) between Griffith University and Simon Fraser University, British Columbia, Canada, which outlines the agreement to establish an Indigenous exchange program for the mutual exchange of students, staff, and Elders (including Elders-in-Residence) from the two universities.

7.2 Members of ATSIAC further noted that the agreement was signed on 22 September at the downtown campus of Simon Fraser University in Vancouver and that a delegation from Griffith had travelled to Vancouver to attend the signing of the agreement, which is to be for five years.

7.3 The ATSIAC was advised that students from GUMURRII who participate in the exchange will be entitled to undertake units of study at Simon Fraser University and will

receive credit towards their degree at Griffith. Similarly, students from Simon Fraser studying at Griffith will receive credit towards their degree from Vancouver.

8.0 NATIONAL INDIGENOUS HIGHER EDUCATION WORKFORCE STRATEGY

- 8.1 The ATSIAC recalled that at the August meeting (2/2011), the representative from the Queensland Indigenous Education Consultative Committee (QIECC) tabled a copy of the National Indigenous Higher Education Workforce Strategy (May 2011) and drew ATSIAC's attention to the recommendation that every higher education institution should have a dedicated Indigenous Employment Officer. At the 2/2011 meeting, the ATSIAC was advised that Griffith's previous HR Indigenous Employment Officer position is now titled the Equity and Diversity Project Officer. Regarding their concern about this shift of title, the ATSIAC noted that, as far as members could recall, the Advisory Committee had not been consulted over this change of title. The ATSIAC agreed to write to the DVC & Provost to express their concerns about the change of title for the Indigenous Employment Officer.
- 8.2 The ATSIAC now sought assurance from the University that the current Equity and Diversity Project Officer position continues to be responsible for a range of functions relevant to Indigenous employment, including increasing and supporting internal and external Indigenous employment and development at Griffith as well as other Australian universities. To this purpose, the ATSIAC tabled a letter outlining these concerns. The ATSIAC noted that this matter has been referred to a meeting of the Council of Elders for their consideration and advice.
- 8.3 The Chair reiterated the concern of Griffith's Council of Elders and members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community at Griffith that, as detailed in the National Indigenous Higher Education Workforce Strategy (May 2011), every higher education institution should have a dedicated Indigenous Employment Officer. The Chair invited comments from all members of the ATSIAC on this matter.
- 8.4 The DVC & Provost was invited to speak to this item and reminded members of the ATSIAC that since 1996 Griffith has actively implemented an Indigenous Employment Strategy, and has maintained a strategy continuously to this day. It is the one of very few universities to do so. The ATSIAC was advised that many universities do not have a current strategy, and others have never had one.
- 8.5 The DVC & Provost further reminded members that since 1999 Griffith University has had a University-funded continuing position for Indigenous employment.
- 8.6 Members of the ATSIAC were advised that between 1996 – 2010 the title of the role coordinating the Indigenous Employment Strategy was "Indigenous Employment Coordinator". In practice, the role was not limited solely to recruitment and development of Indigenous staff, with incumbents undertaking a number of HR related programs and projects during their time in the role. This broader experience allowed many previous Indigenous incumbents to go on to more senior positions within the University, including the role of Group HR Manager.
- 8.7 Members of the ATSIAC noted the briefing of the DVC & Provost on this matter and advised that they were seeking a reversion to the former title of Indigenous Employment Officer. The DVC & Provost agreed to take this matter up with the University executive.

9.0 WORLD INDIGENOUS NATIONS HIGHER EDUCATION CONSORTIUM (WINHEC)

- 9.1 The Professor of Indigenous Community Engagement, Policy and Partnership (ICEPP) provided a brief verbal report on a range of initiatives that she and team in ICEPP are involved in, including:
- 9.1.1 Ongoing work on the QLD Indigenous Justice Statement, which has been forwarded to the Council of Elders for comment.
 - 9.1.2 Engaging with the Redlands City Council to complete the Koala Conservation project as part of the Council and Indigeoscape initiative.
 - 9.1.3 Community Education Alliance has been set up to address the issue of repeat suspensions by Indigenous school students in the Redlands area. The Alliance involves ICEPP, Education Queensland, Department of Child Safety and Justice and the Courts.
 - 9.1.4 A MOU has been negotiated with Virgin Airlines to develop a strategic alliance with Griffith aimed at fostering employment opportunities of Indigenous students and developing collaborative initiatives around Indigenous community engagement, social justice and reconciliation.
 - 9.1.5 WINHEC – Professor Robertson reported that she had been nominated as the Chair of WINHEC but declined to concentrate on issues of importance nationally and internationally that she was involved in but she did accept the nomination to be re-elected as Co-Chair of WINHEC with the international portfolios of Academic Programs and Research at the recent International Meeting in Peru. Professor Robertson reported that the proposal submitted by the GU Council of Elders to the International WINHEC Executive Committee was endorsed with the Global Indigenous Elders Alliance now being a formal alliance within WINHEC. It was also reported that the proposal to develop an international Indigenous research alliance was endorsed and fully supported by the WINHEC Executives Committee with the provision that it be expanded to focus on Indigenous research issues generically. There was full support from the 2000 WINHEC members for the alliance to be located in Hawaii and that it is to be titled the *International Indigenous Research Alliance*.
 - 9.1.6 Professor Robertson reported that she had been nominated to deliver the Key Note Address on behalf of the Indigenous higher education in Australia at the World Indigenous Peoples Conference: Education which was held also in Peru. The international conference is held every four years with a gathering of 2000 to 5000 attendees which made the selection of the Key Note Address for Australia an honour. The paper presented by Professor Robertson was also selected by the WIPCE international Committee to Open the Conference which again was a real honour as it was televised to over 1500 sites across the world. The focus of the paper was on the promulgation of Indigenous knowledge through the Elders.
 - 9.1.7 Ongoing research in SIDS project; Women's Legal Service; Women and Wellness with Deakin University and the University of Western Sydney and negotiations are still underway with Beyond Blue at the national level to discuss issues of mutual interest to the well being of Indigenous women and children.

10.0 STRATEGIC ISSUES - STUDENT FORUM

- 10.1 The student representative, Mr Corie Duff, spoke to this item. The ATSIAC was asked to note that regular emails between the student representative and Indigenous students at Griffith have been set up as a means of maintaining communication between the ATSIAC and the Indigenous student cohort. The ATSIAC was also advised that a group of Indigenous students competed in the recent YMCA Youth Parliament, where they successfully presented a bill on Indigenous education and culture.
- 10.2 Mr Duff also advised that he has been selected as one of the Indigenous Cadets for a placement with the Federal Treasury for 2012. The ATSIAC congratulated him on this achievement and wished him well during his time in Canberra and for the remainder of his studies.

11.0 GRIFFITH INDIGENOUS STUDENT ASSOCIATION

- 11.1 The President of the Griffith Indigenous Student Association (GISA) provided a brief report on the recent activities and initiatives at GISA, including
- Sorry Day Walk from Mt Gravatt campus to Nathan campus;
 - GISA assisted GUMURRII in fundraising to support sending a Griffith team to Melbourne for the National Tertiary Education Games for Indigenous students – overall we came 4th from 16 teams nationwide; we came 2nd in Touch Football and 3rd in Basketball;
 - We have also been holding Meat Tray raffles at the Nathan Unibar on Friday afternoons, which is very popular.

12.0 CHAIR'S REPORT

- 12.1 The Chair, Uncle Graham reported on a range of outreach activities that he has been involved in at the Gold Coast campus and in this region more generally. Uncle Graham reported on the tours of the Gold Coast campus that he undertakes for Griffith's international students studying at that campus; his Welcome to Country at the Gold Coast Convention Centre and his involvement with a range of high schools in the Gold Coast area, in which he involves Dr Louise Alldridge, Senior Lecturer in Medical Education at Griffith in his talks to high school students about life at university and the possibilities for their future engagement with higher education. Uncle Graham advised that the involvement of a young person (in conjunction with one of the Griffith Elders) had positive benefits in terms of bringing a youthful approach to the presentations within the context of the Indigenous cultural traditions, as represented by the Elder/s. Uncle Graham concluded by praising the effective partnership that has developed between the Council of Elders and Griffith University.

13.0 IHEAC AWARDS FOR INDIGENOUS ELDERS AND LEADERS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

- 13.1 The ATSIAC congratulated Aunty Rosmund Graham, who is one of five recipients of the Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council (IHEAC) Awards for Indigenous Elders and Leaders in Higher Education for 2011. The ATSIAC noted that this award recognises Aunty Rosmund's significant contributions to Indigenous higher education in Australia and her lifelong contribution to the sector.
- 13.2 The ATSIAC agreed that, as a senior Elder, Aunty Rosmund has worked tirelessly over many decades to improve the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in higher education for over 50 years. Aunty Rosmund is a founding member of Griffith's newly established Council of Elders.

13.3 The ATSIAC thanked the DVC & Provost for nominating Aunty Rosmund for this award.

14.0 MEMBERSHIP

14.1 Under the provisions of the Constitution, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee members welcomed the following new Committee members:

Ms Anne Chapman and Mr Bill Chapman have been appointed by the University Council (August meeting), as the two Aboriginal representatives to the ATSIAC; their term concludes on 3 May 2013.

15.0 NEXT MEETING

Members noted the 2012 schedule of meetings. Meetings are held on **Thursdays from 1.30pm – 3.30pm.**

Meeting Date	Campus	Venue Allocated
22 March	NA	N54_2.01
9 August		
31 May	LG	L07_4.08
25 October	NA	N54_2.01
	LG	L07_4.08

Confirmed: (Chair)

Date: