

*Indigenous Cultural Competence:  
Whose competence? Whose culture?*

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- Refer to major Australian approaches
- Discuss concepts
- Propose different approach
- Leave a range of questions

# Universities Australia Project

## Indigenous Cultural Competency in Australian Universities Project

The objective of the project is to provide Australian universities with the tools to embed cultural competency at the institutional level so that they are encouraging and supportive environments for Indigenous students and staff, and so that they produce well-rounded graduates with the skills necessary for providing genuinely competent services to the Australian Indigenous community.

# Bradley Review

- Higher Education providers should ensure that the institutional culture, the cultural competence of staff and the nature of the curriculum recognises and supports the participation of Indigenous students.



**Australian Government**  
**National Health and Medical Research Council**

## **CULTURAL COMPETENCY IN HEALTH:** A guide for policy, partnerships and participation



# Cultural Competence

## Cross et al, 1989

- a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency, or amongst professionals and enables that system, agency, or those professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations (Cross et al, 1989)

## Ewen

- Much of the rationale for, curriculum development and delivery of, and accreditation of cultural competence efforts has been based on training (health professional) students to provide effective services to the Other.

# Cultural Competence

- ‘a philosophical framework and practical ideas for improving service delivery *to children of color* who are severely emotionally disturbed’

# Cultural Safety

## Ramsden 2002

- The dream of Cultural Safety was about helping the people in nursing education, teachers and students, to become aware of their social conditioning and how it has affected them and therefore their practice. It was also critical to alert them to the health and disease issues for the indigenous people of the New Zealand islands. (Ramsden 2002)

## Ewen

- requires the power and privilege of the professional to turn the gaze away from the Other, and critically self examine 'their social conditioning and how it has affected them and therefore their practice' regardless of what cultural context one comes from, and also requires self-examination of one's own role within the professional context.



# Cultural Competence and Safety

It is the perspective of 'the Other' which most markedly differentiates between the two terms.

# What about – Cultural Literacy?

- Health Literacy = ‘the ability to understand health information and to use that information to make good decisions about your health and medical care’,

# Cultural Literacy

- Ability to recognise the need to obtain, process, understand and be responsive to cultural factors (within a biopsychosocial model of medicine). (Ewen – forthcoming)

# Cultural Literacy

- Skills training for cultural literacy are already evident in many medical education curricula, but are usually called something else, such as communication skills, or part of *Doctor, Patient and Society* type subjects, and not always applied nor assessed in an Indigenous context.

# Bradley Review

[A]s the academy has contact with and addresses the forms of Indigenous knowledge, underlying assumptions in some discipline areas may themselves be challenged.