

Minutes of the Indigenous Education Advisory Committee held on Wednesday 13 February 2008.

There were present: The Chair of the Indigenous Education Advisory Committee Professor Derrick Armstrong, Acting Deputy Provost (Learning and Teaching) and Pro Vice-Chancellor presiding, Professor Bruce Sutton, Chair Academic Board, Ms Janet Mooney, Director, Koori Centre, Ms Sally Farrington, Head, Yooroang Garang, Dr Ann Cheryl Armstrong, Director, Professional Learning, Dr Christine Asmar, Senior Lecturer, Institute for Teaching and Learning, Dr Lilon Bandler, Indigenous Health Education, Faculty of Medicine, Dr Margaret Edmond, Director Student Services, Dr Manju Sharma, Sydney University Physics Education Research Group, Ms Kate Barnsley, Co-President of SUPRA, Ms Vicki Bradford, Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery, Ms Lynette Riley-Mundine, Academic Coordinator, Koori Centre Ms Carol Ible and Ms Sally Paynter were in attendance.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Mr John Evans, Mr David Guest and Mr Colin L James.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

Resolution 1/08

The Indigenous Education Advisory Committee adopted the amended minutes of the previous meeting held on 7 November 2007 as a true record.

3. Matters arising from Minutes (not dealt with elsewhere in the Agenda)

4. Report of the Chair

4.1 Prime Minister's Apology to the Stolen Generation

The Chair acknowledged the historic event that had taken place that morning when the University community had gathered at Eastern Avenue Auditorium to watch the Prime Minister's apology to the Stolen Generation live from Parliament House. Ms Mooney congratulated the University for organising the event and encouraging staff to come together to share the witnessing of the momentous event. Members praised the Student Union for organising an event at the Manning Bar to commemorate the Prime Minister's speech.

4.2 Indigenous student recruitment seminar

Members noted that at past Committee meetings it had been suggested that as several faculties and centres were developing and running programs aimed at recruiting Indigenous high school students that a seminar could be held where ideas could be shared with the aim of co-ordination these programs.

The Chair advised that he was supportive of the suggestion and proposed inviting key stakeholders to a Committee meeting to present their recruitment programs and to facilitate discussion about a common strategy for the University, including representatives from the Student Marketing and Recruitment office. It was noted that a suitable meeting date for the seminar would be arranged.

4.3 Faculty of Medicine \$10 million pledge

The Committee discussed the Faculty of Medicine's plan to establish a Centre for Indigenous Health with the \$10 million donation received early in 2008. The Chair advised that there would be a forum held later that afternoon to discuss plans for the initiative and what impact the of the Centre would be, beyond the Faculty of Medicine, to the University as a whole. Members noted that the Chair had met with the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, Professor Bruce Robinson, and had been advised that the development of the Centre would provide an opportunity for the University to raise the profile of Indigenous Education.

The Committee discussed the establishment of the Centre for Indigenous Health and the following key issues were raised during these discussions:

- The number of Indigenous students enrolling in the health faculties, particularly Medicine, had decreased and that issues relating to the Grant Application Management System (GAMS) should be examined as it may be discouraging Indigenous students from applying;
- Indigenous health care workers could be encouraged to gain postgraduate qualifications from the University;
- Non-Indigenous students needed to be taught about Indigenous health issues through extensive training and not simply ‘parachuting’ students in and out of rural Indigenous communities;
- The marketing and recruitment programs developed for the Centre for Indigenous Health could be run in parallel to those in place University-wide to ensure a consistent approach to the recruitment and retention of Indigenous students;
- Short course training for Indigenous health workers offered via distance education could be supplemented with some on-campus training with a view to updating skills and encouraging inter-professional learning and networking; and
- It was suggested that each short course completed by Indigenous health care workers could represent a number of credit points which could be ‘cashed in’ after three years and may count towards entry to a degree at the University. If such a program was successful in the health disciplines it could be rolled out to other faculties.

The Chair acknowledged that the Centre for Indigenous Health project would have an inter-disciplinary bent and that there were many questions surrounding how the new centre would relate to existing systems. Members agreed that it was important for the Indigenous Education Advisory Committee to remain informed about the development of the Centre and that this would be an issue that the Committee would be discussing regularly.

Resolution 2/08

The Indigenous Education Advisory Committee noted the report of the Chair

5. Update on the development of a new entity for Indigenous Support Services

SydneyPeople HR Relationship Group Co-ordinator, Ms Carol Ible, reported that Antoinette Holt had met recently with the administrative staff from the Koori Centre and that she was preparing a preliminary report for Professor Armstrong. It was noted that more information would be available at future meetings when more progress had been made. The Committee acknowledged that the change management process was an opportunity to engage in a wider review of the existing support structures for Indigenous Education across the whole Institution and that it was an ideal opportunity to examine the collective approach to Indigenous Education at the University of Sydney.

Resolution 3/08

The Indigenous Education Advisory Committee noted the update on the development of a new entity for Indigenous Support Services.

6. Membership of the Indigenous Education Advisory Committee

The Committee approved the appointment of Dr Christine Asmar to the IEAC and noted that Dr Asmar was a Senior Lecturer with the Institute for Teaching & Learning (ITL). Funded by a grant from the Australian Institute for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Studies she had been working for some years on a study of Indigenous Australian academics, in collaboration with Associate Professor Susan Page. Dr Asmar is currently planning another project, this time on ways of developing appropriate resources for Indigenous teachers. She has been active in introducing Indigenous content and issues into ITL programs.

Resolution 4/08

The Indigenous Education Advisory Committee appointed Dr Christine Asmar to membership of the Committee.

7. Any other business**7.1 Indigenous Support Allocation 2008**

Ms Mooney tabled a budget for the allocation of the Indigenous Support funding for 2008 to cover scholarships and events for the year which included undergraduate progress awards and support awards and postgraduate scholarships. Laptop computers and international student exchanges were also budgeted for. Ms Mooney advised that she was seeking permission to use any underspend from the money allocated to scholarships to support students in need.

The budget proposed an allocation of funding for an Indigenous Alumni Reunion Dinner that would provide an opportunity to bring together alumni and promote graduate program initiatives. It was agreed that the dinner was an initiative worth supporting and that Ms Farrington should contact the Alumni Office to finalise the proposal.

The Chair asked that Ms Mooney finalise the budget and bring it to the Committee's next meeting for discussion. He also advised that the Committee would need to formalise the processes for allocating the Indigenous Support Funding and to ensure this process was transparent and was communicated to faculties.

7.2 Focus Topic for next meeting

The Committee agreed that the Focus Topic for the April meeting would be Traineeship/Cadetships for Indigenous Students. Ms Leona Oliver would be asked to report on the topic at the Committee's next meeting.