

EMBEDDING AUTHENTIC FIRST NATIONS CONTENT WITHIN BIOMEDICAL SCIENCE CURRICULUM

Sarah Myer^a, Uncle Wayne Fossey^b, Raelene Ward^c, and Eliza J. Whiteside^a

Presenting Author: Sarah Myer (sarah.myer@usq.edu.au)

^aSchool of Health and Medical Sciences, University of Southern Queensland, Toowoomba QLD 4350, Australia

^bElder in Residence, University of Southern Queensland, Toowoomba QLD 4350, Australia

^cSchool of Nursing and Midwifery, University of Southern Queensland, Toowoomba QLD 4350, Australia

KEYWORDS: First Nations knowledge, bush medicine, bush food, Indigenous science

The importance of incorporating First Nations content into curriculum has been widely recognised with significant progress in developing curricula and graduate attributes in several disciplines (Australian Government Department of Health, 2021; Page, et al., 2019), however substantial work remains, particularly in the sciences.

A recent review of our Biochemistry of Nutrition curriculum identified an opportunity to incorporate authentic First Nations food and health content. Through collaboration with the University of Southern Queensland's Elder in Residence, a new module was developed. The module, built around a traditional yarning circle experience, shared First Nations knowledge of culture, nutrition, and medicine. This was supported by lectorials and other content, including the importance of Indigenous research governance.

As we also recognised the need to introduce First Nations content vertically across the curriculum, we further collaborated with a First Nations health expert to integrate and deliver topics such as historical policies, health perspectives, and cultural safety into our first-year foundational Biomedical Science course.

Student feedback on these enhancements has been positive and the yarning circle approach to learning attracted substantial media attention.

By forming collaborations with local First Nations leaders, we have developed authentic First Nations content that has strengthened student knowledge and graduate preparation for work in the health and research fields.

REFERENCES

Australian Government Department of Health. (2021). *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health curriculum framework*. Canberra.

Page, S., Trudgett, M., & Bodkin-Answers, G. (2019). Creating a degree-focused pedagogical framework to guide Indigenous graduate attribute curriculum development. *Higher Education*, 78, 1-15.

Proceedings of the Australian Conference on Science and Mathematics Education, The University of Western Australia, 28-30 September 2022, page 51, ISSN 2653-0481