

WESTERN SYDNEY  
UNIVERSITY



SCHOOL OF LAW



# Indigenous Strategy

2020-2025

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

With respect for Aboriginal cultural protocol and out of recognition that its campuses occupy their traditional lands, Western Sydney University acknowledges the Darug, Eora, Dharawal (also referred to as Tharawal) and Wiradjuri peoples and thanks them for their support of its work in their lands (Greater Western Sydney and beyond).

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COVER IMAGE:  
CHRIS EDWARDS  
SWIMMY CREEK  
MIXED MEDIA ON LATVIAN LINEN  
100 CM X 145 CM  
2010  
WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY ART COLLECTION  
IMAGE REPRODUCED BY PERMISSION OF ARTIST



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## The School of Law's Indigenous Strategy focuses on seven key strategic objectives of Indigenous engagement which are drawn from the WSU Indigenous strategy.

- 1** Indigenous Students
- 2** Indigenous Employment
- 3** Indigenous Research
- 4** Learning and Teaching
- 5** Community Engagement
- 6** Indigenous Leadership
- 7** Cultural Viability and Knowledge.

This strategy should be read in conjunction with, Western Sydney University Indigenous Strategy 2020-2025.

The School of Law and its community acknowledge that it is located on Aboriginal land and that Western Sydney University is part of a community that is home to the largest Indigenous population in the country. The School of Law acknowledges that the School has a significant role to play in redressing injustice experienced by Indigenous peoples. The School recognizes the deep learning that has occurred on these lands for tens of thousands of years. It commits to ensuring that legal education at WSU is reflective of, and inclusive of Indigenous perspectives. It is committed to attracting, retaining and graduating more Indigenous students.

# STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE ONE

# INDIGENOUS STUDENTS

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The School of Law acknowledges, in order to achieve parity of participation of Indigenous students and to attract, retain and graduate more Indigenous students, we need to create a suite of unique approaches that empower the Indigenous community to access tertiary education in greater numbers and create better support for the community through education.

## STRATEGIC SCHOOL ACTIONS

- 01** Continue to build on the proportion of enrolled domestic students as the School is currently at 1.7% and will grow its proportion of Indigenous students to at least 3% by 2025. It will do this through developing alternative pathways to law using direct graduate entry and a Diploma of Law as ways to attract more student enrolments.
- 02** Establish new programs in conjunction with the Indigenous Engagement and marketing team to attract more Indigenous students to study Law. Arrange a separate orientation for Indigenous students to offer more guidance and support and provide some physical space that is dedicated for Indigenous students study or social needs within the School of Law at each of our campuses.
- 03** Involve School of Law Staff as guest speakers for the Pathways to Dreaming Program and Indigenous School Student Mentoring Program delivered to high school students in years 8 to 12.
- 04** Develop a new unit, Sports Law, as an elective to attract further enrolment to engage young Indigenous students who are motivated by sports related topics in addition to incorporating more Indigenous content set out in part 4 of this strategy with inclusive curriculum in Learning and Teaching.
- 05** Develop a series of resources for attracting and recruiting Indigenous students, including a film/video, to be placed on the Pathways to dreaming website. This will be in conjunction with the sports camp initiative being developed by the Pro Vice-Chancellor Indigenous.

## KEY SUCCESS MEASURES

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|--|---|--|
| <p><b>06</b> Continue to develop engagement activities with various community-partner and industry/stakeholder groups to market early entry opportunities for Indigenous students through these community networks.</p>  | <p><b>09</b> Provide ongoing support to Indigenous students to access cadetships and other training in legal professional sites in order to build their capacity to access work as lawyers on graduation.</p>                 | <p><b>2.5% of all enrolled domestic students in law are Indigenous by 2023.</b></p>  |
| <p><b>07</b> Offer scholarships from legal industry or other means of financial support for Indigenous students and use legal teachers professional bodies to promote these opportunities to students in schools.</p>  | <p><b>10</b> Provide a dedicated professional staff liaison for Indigenous students to ensure proper enrolment of students and assistance with any leave of absence or help with the administrative part of studying law.</p> | <p><b>3.0% of all enrolled domestic students in law are Indigenous by 2025.</b></p>  |
| <p><b>08</b> Establish an Indigenous Student Network within the School and provide engagement opportunities for that network with other Australian Indigenous Student Networks. Provide and ensure that Indigenous students are supported with choices, if they wish, to be enrolled in the same classes and gain priority placement into preferred classes with the support of Indigenous Student Mentor.</p> |   | <p><b>Increased scholarships available and utilized by Indigenous students.</b></p> <p><b>Regular contact between the Indigenous student body and the professional staff member of the School of Law (once per month).</b></p> <p><b>Regular (3-4 times per year) social events with the Dean and other governance holders with the Indigenous student body.</b></p> <p><b>Develop a suite of new Elective Units, such as Sports Law, to encourage enrolment of Indigenous students.</b></p> |

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE TWO

# INDIGENOUS EMPLOYMENT

The School of Law acknowledges that Indigenous staff members bring community connections, cultural knowledge and cultural insights that expand the mission of the university and help it better reflect its community.

### STRATEGIC SCHOOL ACTIONS

- 01** Continue to build the proportion of Indigenous staff within the school.
- 02** Access Western Sydney University initiatives such as Indigenous Visiting Fellows and Visting Lectureships.
- 03** Offer professional development opportunities for Indigenous staff through mentorship and support.

### KEY SUCCESS MEASURES

Increase employment population of Indigenous people in the School to 3% by 2025.

Create a Level B/C by 2021 and another academic appointment by 2025.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE THREE

# INDIGENOUS RESEARCH

The School of Law acknowledges that partnering with Indigenous people in research that is inclusive and reflects their priorities is vital to the development and empowerment of those communities.

### STRATEGIC ACTIONS

- 01** Continue to develop partnerships and relationships within staff engaging in Indigenous scholarship across other schools and institutes.
- 02** Offer welcoming spaces for other scholars at the university to engage informally and formally with us and one of those methods could be research seminars.
- 03** Continue to collaborate with scholars working on Indigenous research.
- 04** Host a bi-annual Research Colloquium showcasing the work of Indigenous scholars.

### KEY SUCCESS MEASURES

At least one PhD Indigenous student by 2023.

At least two externals, as either lead or in partnership, research grants applied for within the school by 2025.

At least 8 co-authored journal articles on Indigenous related issues, between schools by 2025.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE FOUR

# INDIGENOUS LEARNING AND TEACHING

The School of Law will embrace authentic partnerships in Indigenous education by developing strategies and implementing procedures in the following areas.

### KEY SUCCESS MEASURES

Curriculum review and incorporation of a more inclusive curriculum involving student partners by 2021.

Offer all students the opportunity to engage with, and learn from, Indigenous knowledges.

Training conducted of School staff by Mid 2021.

### STRATEGIC SCHOOL ACTIONS

- 01** Develop Cultural Competence of Staff and Students. The School of Law is committed to the development of cultural competence in staff and students. Cultural competence is about the ability of teachers, administrators and practitioners to understand and to incorporate Indigenous content and voice in the design and delivery of services to Indigenous people.
- 02** Implement staff training and development focusing on cultural awareness and competence in terms of curriculum, teaching strategies and effective cross-cultural communication recognizing that any training will be properly remunerated.
- 03** Provide opportunities for non-Indigenous students and staff to learn more about issues affecting Indigenous Peoples.
- 04** Invite Indigenous people with whom academics work collaboratively to share their joint projects with School of Law students and staff.
- 05** Introduce an Inclusive Curriculum. The School of Law promotes the explicit teaching of Indigenous Studies and the inclusion of Indigenous perspectives to create an enhanced learning environment for Indigenous students and to ensure all students deepen their understanding of, and respect for, Indigenous Peoples.
- 06** Involvement of Indigenous People in decision-making by utilizing the existing internal relationships within the university such as Badanami Centre for Indigenous Education.
- 07** Consult with Indigenous peoples, in course development processes ensuring that any drawing on Indigenous knowledge and experience to further enrich and develop the curriculum is properly remunerated.



## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE FIVE

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The School of Law wishes to position itself as a place that works with and for the Indigenous Australian community.

### STRATEGIC SCHOOL ACTIONS

- 01** Continue to engage with community partners that provide access and exposure to law students in relation to issues faced by Indigenous clients.
- 02** Continue to engage students building law Apps for Access to Justice in law clinics representing the needs of Indigenous clients.
- 03** Continue to engage in inquiry through our WSU Justice Clinic with and understand the challenges of Indigenous students during covid.
- 04** Focus on projects which will benefit the Indigenous community through clinical courses.

### KEY SUCCESS MEASURES

Increased engagement with Indigenous community partners, at least 4 new partners by 2025.

Increased Indigenous community engagement activities expanded and normalized as business as usual. At least one engagement each semester by 2025.

Establishing an Indigenous alumni network .

Using Indigenous voices in our promotional and marketing material.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE SIX

# INDIGENOUS LEADERSHIP

The School of Law acknowledges that in order to grow the university's current future leaders it is imperative that we develop a suite of opportunities to advance the careers of Indigenous Australians.

### STRATEGIC SCHOOL ACTIONS

- 01** Involve Indigenous students in governance and policy development.
- 02** Employ Indigenous academics and staff within the School, ensuring support and sustainability of staff.
- 03** Include Indigenous speakers in events on leadership within the School.

### KEY SUCCESS MEASURES

Track events and engagement and measure increased activity in these areas.

Employment of Indigenous staff, specifically one academic by 2021, and another by 2025.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE SEVEN

# CULTURAL VIABILITY AND KNOWLEDGE

The School acknowledges that it should continue to build cultural viability and knowledge across Western Sydney University.

### STRATEGIC SCHOOL ACTIONS

- 01** Continue with plans for formal naming ceremony of our SOL conference room.
- 02** Allow students to use the SOL conference room depicting Indigenous artwork.
- 03** Increase representation of country or history on campus.
- 04** Continue to acknowledge country at all formal School meetings.
- 05** Ensure that academics acknowledge the country on which they are working at the beginning of each unit each semester.

### KEY SUCCESS MEASURES

Country is acknowledged in School Meetings.

All academics begin their units with an acknowledgement of country.

Formal naming ceremony is held.

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