

Editorial

The *AJIE* has an established tradition of publishing special Supplements to highlight papers on a particular topic. This special edition of the *AJIE* is an outcome of a 2-year curriculum renewal project funded by the Australian Learning and Teaching Council, which focused on teaching and learning practice in Australian Indigenous studies. The project involved collaboration between academics of Australian Indigenous studies in Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania and the Northern Territory. The articles in this special edition comprise descriptions of pedagogical innovations and discussions or reflections on the issues engaged in the course of the project by some of the key participants.

This ALTC project makes two valuable contributions. It has brought together relatively isolated academics from a range of universities to share and discuss their knowledge, experience and practice. This conversation is valuable for all involved in the project and for those they teach. The collaboration of these academics also provides an opportunity to circulate the outcomes of this project among the much larger audience of Australian Indigenous studies academics all over the country and beyond. The *AJIE* is pleased to be the vehicle for this wider contribution to the Indigenous studies scholarly community and to the Indigenous studies literature. It is particularly pleasing to add to the teaching and learning literature in Australian Indigenous studies, which is scattered, random, and periodic, but always in tension with the trends in wider educational and Indigenous work.

Australian Indigenous studies in higher education classrooms are in all senses of the word ‘unsettling’ places to teach and learn. There is arguably wide acceptance among academics that ‘unsettling’ non-Indigenous students’ prior understandings and attitudes is a necessary condition of student learning and that the often unsettling effects for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous teachers in Australian Indigenous studies classrooms are an inevitable byproduct of the teaching–learning process. However, this assertion rests on anecdotal evidence rather than a more substantive research basis and considers less how many students resist the aims of ‘transformative’ pedagogies in favour of hostile rebuttal, disengagement or withdrawal from Australian Indigenous studies courses in Australian universities. In Australian Indigenous studies, we can only surmise the general effectiveness of various pedagogical approaches by extrapolating from academics’ reflections and student feedback in individual courses.

This series of articles, then, is a welcome addition to an ongoing quest to develop more effective teaching and learning practices in Australian Indigenous studies. The focus of attention in the ALTC project was Problem-Based Learning (PBL) approaches and these articles represent the openness of the participants to consider their own practices as they explore, reflect, interrogate and innovate in the interests of transformative education.

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Editors