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Reverse Greening Australian Landscape Architecture Education: Charting an Indigenous Perspective on Country Respect and Design

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ABSTRACT

While many Australian landscape architecture programs can talk about their green ‘credentials’ and their ethical and design inquiry commitments to sustainability, this is a Western educational pedagogy and agenda. Since the Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit (http://www.un.org/documents/ga/conf151/aconf15126-1annex1.htm) many and the international policy shift towards sustainability theory and practice, few programs have shifted from nor sought to engage in alternate educational paradigms that offer a non-Western perspective. This paper considers current research that is reviewing the state and agendas of Australian landscape architecture programs, the obligations of their host Australian universities to reconciliation and offering respect to Australia’s Indigenous communities, the role of the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (AILA) (http://www.aila.org.au/) as an accreditation body but also an future education agenda-maker, and the initiatives several of these programs are making in addressing these challenges. In particular, the paper reviews the innovativeness of several programs in re-charting Australian student perspectives about non-Australian and non-Western environmental and cultural knowledge systems and paradigms, and where this may chart Australian landscape architectural education.

Key Words: Indigenous knowledge systems, Australian landscape architecture education.
1. INTRODUCTION

Recent events in Australian history, including recognition of native title by the high court in *Mabo v the State of Queensland [no. 2] (1992)* 175 CLR 1, have heightened recognition of the rights, interests, needs and aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Australia and internationally. Despite this, little has changed in Australian built environment professional (architecture, planning, landscape architecture) education to integrate a better understanding of the need for engagement with indigenous knowledge and cultural systems and relevant protocols, as distinct from cultural competency articulation. While aspirations of including a better understanding of indigenous Australia’s knowledge and cultural systems are embodied in the relevant agendas of the respective discipline professional institutes, little attempts has been made to realize this objective. This project seeks to re-dress this deficiency by providing Australian universities with tools to address practice realities and complexities through a nationally applicable cross-discipline educational module that will aid indigenous and non-indigenous cultural literacy in this context.

Historically, non-Indigenous scholar Debra Bird-Rose’s seminal study *Nourishing Terrains* (1996), for example, came about by the Australian Heritage Commission’s rather urgent and poignant inquiries into the assessment and quantification of cultural landscape values and their associated land and water attributes across the nation. Rose was specifically commissioned to “explore Indigenous views of landscape and their relationships with the land”. Knowing about ‘wilderness’ and how such a classification of land was to contribute to the ‘National Estate’ was the hot topic at the time and it finally opened up an informed cultural land planning and management conversation with Aboriginal Australia. Here ‘culture and landscape’ was to be inclusive of Aboriginal knowledge systems of sustaining environmental values and their associated obligations and cultural rights for being. It is fair to suggest that the Commission, at the time, were overawed by Rose’s documented findings where the transformative understandings of the Australian environment, landscape (wilderness or otherwise), and now ‘Country’ opened up a deeper discourse about Australian ‘space’ and what could be shared and learnt about Aboriginal relationships and associations with Australian cultural landscape systems.

Rose was most fortunate to reveal to the popular culture of Australia that in Aboriginal knowledge systems, everything is alive and everything is in relationships; past, present, and future are one, where both the physical and spiritual worlds of Country interact. The Dreaming is an ongoing celebration and reverence for past events: the creation of the land, the creation of law, and the creation of people. Stories are given to Aboriginal peoples from the Dreaming, everything comes into being through story, and the Dreaming is the ancestors. All things exist
eternally in the Dreaming; the Dreaming is alive. The individual is born to Country, not just in Country, but from Country, and his or her identity is inextricably and eternally linked to the Dreaming. Debra Bird Rose suggests, “In Aboriginal English, the word ‘Country’ is both a common noun and a proper noun. People talk about Country in the same way that they would talk about a person: they speak to Country, sing to Country, visit Country, worry about Country, grieve for Country and long for Country. People say that Country knows, hears, smells, takes notice, takes care, and feels sorry or happy. Country is a living entity with a yesterday, a today and tomorrow, with consciousness, action, and a will toward life. Because of this richness of meaning, Country is home and peace: nourishment for body, mind and spirit; and heart’s ease” (Rose 1986: 7).

As noted by Milroy and Revell (2013), Australian space is not emptiness, a void to be filled, or a neutral place for action. Rather, space is imagined—called into being—by individuals, families, and the cultures of which they are a part. Yet we experience a double spatial jeopardy in Australia, which is the oldest intact environment (120,000 years) in the world, and the oldest indigenous culture in the world (60,000+ years). These spatial qualities negate uniformity and featurelessness within Country. They also allow Country to speak for itself. Indigenous peoples humanize their environments because of their (nonmaterial) Country relations and their in-built abilities to sense the resources of Country itself.

Importantly, Nourishing Terrains (1986) now indelible mantra: “If you are good to Country, then Country is good to you” eventually became revelatory to the planning and design academies and professional institutions of Australia, and elsewhere. This came at a critical time for Australian land use planners where the study of both ancient and contemporary biophysical and human ecological systems were overtly staring at one another, desperately seeking to understand the specificity of reciprocal environmental and social meanings and their associated ecological relationships, as explained above. Above all, 60,000 + years of Aboriginal caring for Country was beginning to make sense to Australian planners, and the professional inquiries and relationships Rose helped to set up were to change bi-cultural Australian planning practices forever. The cogent fact that Nourishing Terrains (1986) arrived in Australia only 17 years ago in the ‘Nations’ collective 60,000 year history should be extremely significant to Australia’s planning institutions, and might we say unconscionable to Australia, overall.

2. AUSTRALIAN BUILT ENVIRONMENT EDUCATION AND INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS

2.1 The State of Education in Australia
Built environment (architects, landscape architects and planners) professionals must be able to plan and design with regard to cultural issues relating to stakeholders from diverse backgrounds. While 30% of Australia’s Indigenous populations reside in cities, they are directly managing 70% of Australia’s land whether by native title, leasehold or freehold title. Increasingly architect, landscape architect and planning practitioners are required to design and plan projects in direct consultation with these Indigenous communities and their proponents about projects that have national significance. These projects range from inserting Indigenous layers into planning schemes, including Indigenous protocols and aspirations in policy statements; designing cultural centres, information centres and housing; drafting cultural tourism strategies and devising cross-cultural land management plans that necessitate having Indigenous representatives on design or planning teams. This entails working with Indigenous communities as stakeholders in community engagement, consultation, and planning processes.

Recent investigations as to Indigenous cultural competency articulation (Universities Australia 2011a, b) have found that the built environment expected professional practice competency needs have largely been neglected by Australian built environment tertiary schools. This can be attributed to a deference to Indigenous respect protocols and the invaluable environmental and cultural knowledge of these communities -- about the past, existing, and future curatorship of the Australian landscape -- to inform development, withstand change and adaptation that supports sustainable harvesting and cultural capital (Low Choy et al 2010, 2011a, 2011b; Wensing 2007, 2011; Wensing & Small 2012).

Effective stakeholder and community engagement involves not simply understanding “indigenous perspectives” and protocols (Trounson 2012a, 2012b), but being able to co-operatively work with and for such communities in strategy and project formulation, and in the creation as well as the incorporation of indigenous knowledge systems.

Within the built environment literature, there is a clear lack of discourse about the nexus between BE professionals and Indigenous protocols and knowledge systems. In contrast there is considerable rhetoric about desires but it has not generally been translated into tertiary-level execution other than in fragmented instances. Wensing (2011; with Small 2012) has expressed this as a major deficiency in the tuition and grounding of future planners. His thoughts reiterate conclusions and investigations by Gurran & Phipps (2003, 2004) who concluded that Indigenous knowledge systems and land management concepts were markedly lacking in planning education in Australia. Low Choy et al (2010, 2011a, 2011b) have reinforced both conclusions but have also demonstrated the unique and valuable insights that Indigenous knowledge systems and their stakeholders can offer to conventional planning practice.
Similar concerns have been expressed in relation to landscape architecture curricula by Jones (2002), Lawson & Erickson (2002), Low Choy et al. (2011a).


Sinatra & Murphy (1999) charted a now lapsed OutReach initiative that exposed landscape architecture students to various Australian Indigenous communities and their landscape planning, management, and shelter and health challenges, and Revell and Jones have continued this agenda in central WA and in south-eastern Australia respectively. Jones (2002) has pointed to an urgent need to reappraise and incorporate Indigenous environmental knowledge systems in mainstream landscape architecture education curricula. Revell has piloted an optional elective studies unit in 2012 entitled ‘Sharing Space’ coordinated in collaboration with UWA’s School of Indigenous Studies with mixed success.

In landscape architectural practitioner discourses recent attention has been given to Indigenous Cultural Management Planning studies championed by offices of UDLA and Ecoscape in Western Australia. Planning projects undertaken in Broome and Wadjemup (Rottnest Island) have achieved state and national AILA awards for both of these offices and their Indigenous partners.

In academic and practitioner architectural discourses the debates are about representation or symbolism and housing. On the former, public Indigenous architecture has been present in Australia since the late 20th century and has been used to highlight and inform the user about Australian Indigenous culture (Fantin 2003; Lochert 1997; Mallie & Ostwald 2009; Memmott 1997; Memmott & Reser 2000; Palmer 2007). In order to express a sense of understanding for the user, architects have employed symbolism -- often abstracted references from Indigenous culture -- to attach a greater level of significance to building. Examples include AIA peer award-winning projects such as the Bowali Visitor Information Centre (NT), Brambuk Cultural Centre (Vic) and Karijini Visitors Centre (WA). Realising these outcomes takes considerable patience and comprehension of Indigenous knowledge systems that are both community and ‘country’-specific and which successfully respond to the distinct Indigenous culture of the area and which communicate a message on the user. Sawyer (2011: 1, 26-27) has concluded that while “architecture has the ability to create a dialogue that will lead to improvements in understanding the culture, and thus a more harmonious relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians,” it cannot be achieved in cultural competency.
curricula strategies but only through BE specific immersive and engagement learning and consultation.

On the latter discourse, it is undeniable that the state of Indigenous housing in Australia is deplorable in comparison to non-Indigenous Australians housing conditions (Go-Sam 2008; Nganampa et al 1987; Pholeros 2003; Williams & Houston 1997). This is often the result of the ongoing failure of critical house hardware that, when not maintained, severely impacts everyday living practices but also demonstrates a clear lack of knowledge and comprehension of contextual challenges. The plethora of confusing national, state and local policies, government funding arrangements, medical research findings and bureaucratic machinations are also hindering a culturally relevant and appropriate response that recognises multiple issues and not that one generic answer fits all situations (Go-Sam 2008; Memmott 2003a, 2003b; Pholeros 2003; Scally 2003; Tonkinson 2007; Ward 2011). Stallard (2011: 2) has concluded that “there is no clear way to approach an Indigenous housing project” because the “cross-disciplinary needs of Aboriginal housing still leaves the architect in doubt of where to begin” so offering a clear or generic ‘answer’ or avenue as a curricula conclusion to students is the incorrect teaching avenue to pursue; reinforcing the conclusion that cultural competency curricula strategies are ideal but in the BE disciplines specific immersive and engagement learning and consultation needs to be entertained.

Both discourses cannot be appreciated in normal “cultural competency” appreciation curricula nor can they be realised in offering an “Indigenous perspective” as they are far more complex in place and design theory and practice, and such is a defined knowledge outcome that AIA professional accreditation policy expects a graduate to possess upon degree completion, as also PIA and AILA in their respective policies.

As noted in Universities Australia’s (2011a, b) investigations into Indigenous Cultural Competency, most universities have struggled with successfully devising and achieving a translation of Indigenous protocols into their curricula. Walliss & Grant (2000: 65) have also concluded that, given the nature of the BE disciplines and their professional practice activities, there is a “need for specific cultural awareness education” to service these disciplines and not just attempts to insert Indigenous perspectives into their curricula.

Bradley’s policy initiative at the University of South Australia (UniSA) (1997-2007), “has not achieved its goal of incorporation of Indigenous perspectives into all its undergraduate programs by 2010, it has achieved an incorporation rate of 61%” (UA 2011a: 9; http://www.unisa.edu.au/ducier/icup/default.asp). This initiative drew from the vision for Indigenous higher education articulated by the Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Committee (2007), the World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium (2007), the
Vision for 2020 of the Review of Australian Higher Education (2008) all of which were embodied into the Bradley *Review of Australian Higher Education* (2008) recommendations. Contextually, Bradley’s strategic educational aim at UniSA was to ensure that all its graduates demonstrate ‘an understanding of the cultural, historical and contemporary frameworks which have shaped the lives of Indigenous Australians’ ([http://www.unisa.edu.au/ducier/ICUP/coreknowledge.asp](http://www.unisa.edu.au/ducier/ICUP/coreknowledge.asp)) and are articulated in Bradley *et al*’s (2008: 5) belief that “education is at the core of any national agenda for social and economic change” and by the “deepening understanding of health and social issues, and by providing access to higher levels of learning to people from all backgrounds, it can enhance social inclusion and reduce social and economic disadvantage.”

Thus a social reformist aspiration, which has been continued in UA’s release of *Indigenous Cultural Competency* (2011a; 2011b) reports that has attracted mixed media criticism (Trounson 2012a: 5, 2012b: 5) and concerns about “social engineering” rather than enhancing “criticism as a pedagogical tool ... as a means of advancing knowledge” (Melleuish 2012: 10) which is the agenda of this project.

2.2 Rhetoric and Practice

Acknowledgement of traditional land owners

*Deakin University would like to acknowledge that the present site of the Melbourne Burwood Campus is located on the land of the Wurundjeri people, the Geelong Waurn Ponds Campus and Geelong Waterfront Campus are located on the land of the Wathaurong people, and the Warrnambool Campus is located on the land of the Gunditjmara people. They are connected to these lands, have walked these lands, and continue to care for them and nurture them for future generations* ([Deakin](http://www.deakin.edu.au/about/distinctive-features.php)).

In articulating the above acknowledgement Deakin University, like most Australian universities and government bureaucracies, expresses tacit recognition of the past nations and generations that occupied the Australian continent and associated archipelagos, prior to colonization by Europeans from the 16th century onwards. It is acknowledged that Aboriginal people have occupied and nurtured this continent for over 60,000 years prior to European settlement in 1788. In the course of some 220 years of Western advancement, over 120 Aboriginal nations and their languages have been dispossessed from the Australian landscape.

Jacobs & Mulvihill (1995) charted a plea to instill a multi-cultural literacy ethos in the learning and practice of planning and landscape architecture in Canada and Australia, where, similar Indigenous cultures offered new perspectives to better guide and inform Western professional practices. Core in their plea, and rotating around joint stewardship, was the need to enable “greater cultural and environmental literacy … [including] building integrated knowledge
systems, initiating sustainable and equitable management strategies, and [to encourage] adaptive institutions” to better inform and guide the future of these regions (Jacobs & Mulvihill 1995: 7). Despite this plea, little has occurred since in the built environment professions within the Australian tertiary education sector and this project seeks to contribute to re-dress this.


The same conclusion can be drawn about architecture and landscape architecture programs.

There is no statistical analysis of what is transpiring for the former and a preliminary statistical review of the latter reveals a fragmented and highly disproportionate response largely driven by 3 programs at the University of Canberra, the University of Western Australia and Deakin University.

Oberklaid (2008) expressed these findings as representing a major concern because planning courses were failing to:

- keep abreast of changes in the native title and land rights determinations and approaches to Australia despite the major impositions they have upon statutory and strategic planning practice;
- incorporate Indigenous peoples as integral stakeholders in any consultation process especially given the extensive ‘country’ acknowledgement statements articulated throughout Australia;
- adequately investigate property and land law, including Indigenous rights and interests as part of their translation of the Australian planning process;
- grapple with and translate the implications of native title rights and determinations into statutory and strategic planning processes and instruments for students and practitioners alike;
- address their moral obligations, and increasingly ethical obligations via PIA policy, to improve planners’ appropriation of Indigenous culture, rights and interests and the institutional frameworks thereto; and to,
- cultivate any research inquiry or discourse to assist the ‘re-tooling’ of planning education.

The same conclusions can be drawn of architecture and landscape architecture courses although there is a distinct lack of analytical research on this topic. Instead, as in the case of the
planning courses surveyed by Oberklaid (2008), most courses offered fragments of this knowledge, knowledge systems, protocols and cultural codes (Walliss & Grant 2000). This is of increasingly concern as being able to synthesis, distil, and craft environmental knowledge and patterns in design and text is so integral to the planning and landscape architecture disciplines. Thus, an initial stage of this project to comprehend and assess what is presently transpiring in all these programs to provide a comprehensive perspective.

3. BUILT ENVIRONMENT EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL ACCREDITATION IN AUSTRALIA

All three built environment professions – architecture, planning and landscape architecture – are subject to annual external peer assessments to ensure that the exit-point knowledge and skills of graduates satisfy and address their respective professional accreditation policies and criteria. The Australian Institute of Architects (AIA) (http://www.architecture.com.au/), the Planning Institute of Australia (PIA) (http://www.planning.org.au/) and the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (AILA) (http://www.aila.org.au/) all expect, via their respective Education Policies, that Indigenous knowledge and protocols are integrated within the curricula of the courses they accredit and have discretion to withdraw accreditation thereby threatening the economic survival of a course and its standing in a university. For a graduate, satisfactory completion of an accredited course meets the educational requirements for corporate membership of the respective Institute, and thereupon a secure pathway for registration to practice as an architect, planner or landscape architect.

Architectural education is underpinned by the AIA and its Education Policy. Despite this the AIA has no formal Indigenous Policy, let alone an Indigenous Housing Development Policy. In contrast, this profession is active in the provision of special housing and in the creation of new structures and habitats that express Indigenous meaning (eg cultural information centres and Keeping Places). While the AIA’s Tertiary Education of Architects Policy (2008a) does not mention Indigenous cultural literacy, and nor does the ALTC’s (2011) Standards Statement in Architecture, the AIA’s Standards for Programs in Architecture (2009) require “an understanding of the history and theory of Western, non-western, regional and indigenous architecture” and “an awareness of the broader cultural context in which architecture is practised” together with “an awareness of social and cultural dimensions of place” alluding to cultural literacy (AIA 2009: 3.3.1ii, 3.5.1i, 3.6.1i).
While AILA has no reference to Indigenous knowledge empowerment in its broad *Education Policy* (AILA 2011a) it does require a demonstration of “Indigenous people’s cultural and spiritual relationships to country, landscape, and place” in landscape architecture courses via its *University Accreditation Standards* (AILA 2011: C24a).

At an international level, the American Society of Landscape Architects *et al* (2004: 35, 74) (ASLA) requires “knowledge of … social and cultural influences on design (e.g., indigenous and other cultures, historical and cultural landscapes) [sic.]” within the ambit of Natural and Cultural Systems knowledge in accredited North American landscape architecture programs, and an expectation that Indigenous peoples’/other cultures’ values and traditions are discussed in the analysis phase of design teaching.

PIA, in contrast, has been more active in this realm, approving an *Indigenous Development Policy* (2007) that reaffirms PIA’s commitment “to reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians”, and has established an Indigenous Planning Policy Working Party that framed several discussion papers about ‘country’ and Indigenous protocols (http://www.planning.org.au/policy/indigenous-planning-working-group#improving). This Working Party has concluded that fundamental changes are needed to the way Australian planning education addresses Indigenous perspectives and interests, and in particular that there is a need to alert planners to the “… perceptual limitations of their own discipline and the particular discourse of our own craft” (Wensing 2007: 2). Gurran (PIA 2008) has noted that the core curriculum in planning includes an expectation of “knowledge of … Indigenous Australian cultures, including relationships between their physical environment and associated social and economic systems” but that it has not been addressed.

The setting for this project draws partially out of contemporary Australian academic policy shifts, but more specifically from changes in BE professional practice activities and obligations in Australia. Thus, while the vision and goals of the IHEAC (2007), the World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium (2007), the Vision for 2020 of the *Review of Australian Higher Education* (2008) and the Bradley *Review of Australian Higher Education* (2008) are relevant they are secondary to the professional Institutes in their professional accreditation activities.

The need to address Indigenous knowledge systems in the provision of planning and landscape architecture tertiary programs was openly raised as a matter of debate at the recent World Planning Schools Congress (Perth July 2011; http://www.wpsc2011.com.au/) and at AILA’s National Congress (Brisbane August 2011 http://www.aila.org.au/conference/2011/index.htm). These debates centred not upon enabling “Indigenous perspectives” about culture and society, but on Indigenous protocols, knowledge
systems and engagement because these professions are increasingly participating with Indigenous communities and hence need graduates to possess skills and knowledge to successfully address these issues.

As Universities Australia has recently released the findings of its Indigenous Cultural Competency project (2011a, b), a distinction should be articulated here about the scope of this project as distinct from the UA proposal. The Universities Australia project is specific about its boundaries, explaining that:

*Indigenous cultural competency refers to the ability to understand and value Indigenous perspectives. It provides the basis upon which Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians may engage positively in a spirit of mutual respect and reconciliation*

and,

*Student and staff knowledge and understanding of Indigenous Australian cultures, histories and contemporary realities and awareness of Indigenous protocols, combined with the proficiency to engage and work effectively in Indigenous contexts congruent to the expectations of Indigenous Australian peoples* (Universities Australia 2011a: 3).

The goal of this proposal, in contrast to that of UA, is to provide Australian universities with the tools that go beyond embedding cultural competency and instead support the development of skills and knowledge that address the practice realities and complexities that architects, planners and landscape architects face and should be exposed to today.

**4. AILA AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE EDUCATION**

Before turning to Australia, two documents are pertinent. The first is the UNESCO Charter on Indigenous Peoples, to which Australia and most of Asia are signatories ([http://www.humanrights.gov.au/un-declaration-rights-indigenous-peoples](http://www.humanrights.gov.au/un-declaration-rights-indigenous-peoples)). The second is the International Federation of Landscape Architect’s (IFLA) Charter for Landscape Architecture Education (2005) and the IFLA/UNSECO Charter for Landscape Architecture Education (2012). In terms of the former Charter (2005), This Charter, serves “as a universal document, can help in the understanding that landscape architectural education constitutes both the socio-cultural, ecological and professional challenge of the contemporary world; and requires the guarantee of protection, development and urgent action. Combined with IFLA Europe’s Addenda, the Charter sets out principles, objectives, criteria and duration requirements for professional educational programmes in landscape architecture”
In September 2012 the World Council of IFLA adopted a revised Charter joint partnered with UNESCO that incorporated suggestions from each region and from UNESCO. The document was adopted unchanged. This will require discussion and incorporation into IFLA Europe guidelines.

Turning to the specifics of the Australian landscape architecture education accreditation regime, AILA possesses an adopted *Education Policy* (Am 2012), *Education Standards* (Am 2011) and *Education Procedures* (Am 2010). The *Policy* (2012) sets out the aspirations for landscape architecture education by AILA, and the *Procedures* (2010) articulates the desired scope and educative learning outcomes expected to be taught and obtained by students enabling their graduation.

In terms of Indigenous knowledge systems and their culture(s), AILA embeds this aspiration in the History & Theory criteria that states:

C-24a: History & Theory

- *The history, theory and cultural context of landscape architecture;*
- *Natural and cultural landscapes and their conservation and management;*
- *The social, cultural and economic aspects of landscape values;*
- *Indigenous people’s cultural and spiritual relationships to country, landscape, and place.*

No other reference is made to this topic in the *Policy* (2012), *Procedures* (2010) and *Standards* (2011). There is also a lack of an internal AILA National Accreditation Committee cross-comparative knowledge and statistics to comprehend what is transpiring in the 8 coursework degrees (BLArch or MLArch) that are AILA accredited in Australia, and the 6 accredited coursework pathway degrees. These courses are inventoried in Table 1. In addition, the University of Canberra (UC) hosts an unaccredited coursework BLArch and the University of Technology Sydney (UTS) has lodged (2013) an accreditation application for a BLArch equivalent degree. For the purposes of this research the latter two have been included in the discussions in the below Tables because specific information about their existing/proposed academic structures is available enabling a timely 2014 perspective.

In terms of AILA’s policies, there is evidence of their engagement and commitment to the topic. But, there is no reference to the topic in any of its policies, no Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) as encouraged by Reconciliation Australia (www.reconciliation.org.au/), and only an education criteria discussed below.
The only other document pertinent is the Australian Landscape Charter (http://www.aila.org.au/charter/; 2013) that expresses its professional aspirations and legitimacy to practice and engender landscape architecture advancement in Australia. The Charter (2013) is unique in its definition of “Australians”, and its incorporation of ‘Values’ and ‘Respect’ as its practice ethos. Quoted below, each of the three sentences demonstrate a breadth of thought and respect but not the specificity of a cultural acknowledgement.

Australians: this refers to all Australians including the original Indigenous inhabitants, their descendants, those that have settled here in colonial and post-colonial times as well as current and future migrants.”

Value Our Landscape
The quality of the landscape underpins the viability of life on earth. Regardless of scale, every landscape embodies a range of complex, multidimensional and interdependent values—and these values must be comprehensively articulated before they can be accurately assessed. Design and management strategies must acknowledge the interrelated (physical, socio-cultural and economic) knowledge systems and processes involved in landscape decision-making, and the critical importance of collaborative approaches to sustainable landscape outcomes. Detailed, inclusive and creative landscape assessment is the primary tool for sustainable landscape management.”

Design With Respect
All values of landscape deserve respect, and should be given equal consideration when design/intervention is proposed. Intervene with respect for existing context - work with nature and culture to implement design solutions that are measurably responsive to existing environmental, socio-cultural and economic conditions, and which demonstrate respect for local, regional and global context. http://www.aila.org.au/charter/

The threads of respect, self-determination, cultural engagement are ably articulated in the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) that has a solid policy platform (http://www.aiatsis.gov.au/research/ethics/REC_home.html) for ethically informed consultation, engagement and co-partnership with Australian Indigenous communities. Their Guidelines for Ethical Research in Australian Indigenous Studies (2012) addresses “rights, respect and recognition; negotiation, consultation, agreement and mutual understanding; participation, collaboration and partnership; benefits, outcomes and giving back; managing research: use, storage and access; and reporting and compliance” (AIATSIS 2012: 5; www.aiatsis.gov.au/research/docs/ethics.pdf)

Table 1 summarises the AILA accredited and accredited pathway courses together with the UC and UTS scenarios. There are currently eight Australian universities with accredited programs in landscape architecture. These are listed below. AILA has not recognised/accredited any other programs within these universities or within any other universities.
Table 2 provides the authors’ appraisal of the accredited courses in terms of their Indigenous knowledge system engagement having regard to internal questions, reviews of www structures, local accreditation panel discussions, and e-survey data obtained, but for the purpose of this research the course have been de-identified and re-ordered from Table 1. Parallel e-survey investigations corroborate these assessments.

Table 1 Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (AILA) Accredited Pathways and Courses in Australia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>University</th>
<th>UG Accredited Pathway Program</th>
<th>UG AILA Accredited Degree nomenclature + semesters</th>
<th>PG AILA Accredited Degree nomenclature + semesters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACT</td>
<td>University of Canberra</td>
<td>Bachelor of ’esig (Landscape Architecture) semesters</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW</td>
<td>University of New South Wales</td>
<td>Bachelor of Landscape Architecture semesters</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW</td>
<td>University Technology Sydney</td>
<td>Bachelor of ’esig (Landscape Architecture) semesters</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qld</td>
<td>University of Queensland</td>
<td>Bachelor of ’esig (Landscape Architecture) semesters</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>University of Adelaide</td>
<td>Bachelor of Architectural ’esig semesters</td>
<td>asters of Landscape Architecture 4 semesters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tas</td>
<td>University of Tasmania</td>
<td>Bachelor of Environmental ’esig (Landscape) semesters</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vic</td>
<td>RMIT University</td>
<td>Bachelor of ’esig (Landscape) semesters</td>
<td>asters of Landscape Architecture 4 semesters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vic</td>
<td>University of Melbourne</td>
<td>Bachelor of Environments (Landscape) semesters</td>
<td>asters of Landscape Architecture 3 year (300pt) asters for students with degrees other than landscape architecture and to become professionally prepared for a career in landscape architecture, 2 year (200pt) asters for students who have completed a three year undergraduate degree in landscape architecture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WA</td>
<td>University of Western Australia</td>
<td>Bachelor of esig (with Landscape ajor) semesters</td>
<td>asters of Landscape Architecture 4 semesters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ote this degree is presently not accredited by AILA but is operating as a degree program.

* A new program, subject to an AILA accreditation application (2013), proposing to commence in 2014.
Table 2 Indigenous Knowledge Systems Taught and Experienced in Australian Landscape Architecture Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bachelor of Landscape Architecture / Master of Landscape Architecture or equivalent degree awarding institution</th>
<th>Awards a Bachelor of Landscape Architecture</th>
<th>Awards a Master of Landscape Architecture</th>
<th>University-level Welcome to Country</th>
<th>University-level Reconciliation Action Plans</th>
<th>Course - mandatory design studio on the content</th>
<th>Course - mandatory unit on the content</th>
<th>Course - optional/ elective on the content</th>
<th>Course – Level of Engagement with the content</th>
<th>Course – HDR supervision occurring in the content</th>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>C</td>
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<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
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<td>D</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>No</td>
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<td>E</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>High</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Low</td>
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<tr>
<td>H</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Table 3 sets out information about the existence of a RAP and associated documents for each Australian university that hosts an AILA accredited course, and Table 4 summarises the Indigenous curriculum policies and or actions occurring in these universities. Both tables offer an insight as to the upper level policy agendas of the respective universities and offer an interesting contrast when compared (Tables 2, 3 and 4) to the policy agendas of the AILA accredited courses hosted by these universities. A key conclusion is that while the strategic plans of universities are and have been seeking to respond to the challenges faced by this topic, the lower level of course engagement has not responded nor kept pace with these policies. In addition, remembering that the current AILA Education Policy (2012), Standards (2011) and Procedures (2011) were adopted by AILA, inserting criteria C-24a: History & Theory (as quoted above), this upper level policy expectation has equally not filtered down to the course operations.

An interpretive facet that has already arisen from the research associated with this project is perceptions of terminology. The word ‘Indigenous’ has been applied consciously by the research team throughout. But the immediate default of academics and practitioners, interviewed and work-shopped, to the word is that it implies Australian ‘Aboriginal and Torres Straits Islander’ communities only. In contrast, the authors are exceedingly conscious that,
while Australian Indigenous content is pertinent and more often visually pre-eminent in thinking because of designs and logos, there are large cohorts of Chinese, Indian, Malaysia, Indonesia, Sri Lankan, Vietnamese, Thai and Korean students enrolled in these courses – varying between 2-25% depending upon the university – and that each nationality hosts an Indigenous culture if not multiple communities across their national boundaries. For example, it has not been the first Malaysian student we have taught that had not heard of the Orang Asli. The concern by the authors is that the scope of this term is delimited by the default perception in Australia that Indigenous = Aboriginal and that that is what should be the educative content.

Thus, a core policy aspirational desire of cross-cultural appreciation in landscape architecture practice, expressed in the *IFLA Charter* (2005), the *IFLA/UNESCO Charter* (2012), the *AILA Charter* (2013) and the *AILA Education Policy* (2012), is being misinterpreted and overlooked. Workshop discussions with representatives of the three professional institutes (AIA, AILA and PIA) together again highlighted this presumption also. Yet, when presented with the scenario that low—medium numbers of international students exist in these courses and that statistically about @25-35% of Australian landscape architecture graduates are increasingly working in Asia, the ponder was “we had not thought about this before.”

This raises a major educative perceptive flaw by both providers (the universities) and independent educative professional quality assurance regulators (the institutes).

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**Table 3. Summary of Australian Universities hosting Landscape Architecture Programs and Their Reconciliation Plans**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UNIVERSITY</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>Reconciliation Action Plan / Statement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University of NSW</td>
<td>NSW, Sydney</td>
<td>Reconciliation Statement - difficult to find: <a href="http://www.hr.unsw.edu.au/equity/UNSW_Reconciliation_Statement.pdf">http://www.hr.unsw.edu.au/equity/UNSW_Reconciliation_Statement.pdf</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queensland University of Technology</td>
<td>QLD, Brisbane</td>
<td>2001 Reconciliation Statement adopted as University policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Tasmania</td>
<td>TAS, Hobart</td>
<td>nothing on-line</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RMIT University</td>
<td>VIC, Melbourne</td>
<td><a href="http://mams.rmit.edu.au/gw80fcb236wz.pdf">Reconciliation Statement</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Melbourne</td>
<td>VIC, Melbourne</td>
<td>University of Melbourne Reconciliation Action Plan 2011-2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deakin University</td>
<td>VIC, Geelong</td>
<td>nothing on-line</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The University of Western Australia</td>
<td>WA, Perth</td>
<td>nothing on-line</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note this degree is presently not accredited by AILA but is operating as a degree program. **s** A new program, subject to an AILA accreditation application (2013), proposing to commence in 2014.
University of Canberra
ACT, Canberra
YES
Indigenous Education Statement 2008, RAP: Each Faculty and Business Support Unit to review their policies and ensure the inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues where relevant in particular in research, ethics, academic and teaching, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student support, marketing and recruitment, community engagement and community relations.

University of NSW
NSW, Sydney
unclear
Indigenous Education Statement 2010 DEWER report: ITEM 2.6:

University of Technology, Sydney
NSW, Sydney
YES
Indigenous Education Strategy 2011-2014 Section 3 sets out a number of across-University curriculum related initiatives:

Queensland University of Technology
QLD, Brisbane
YES
QUT’s overall approach could be to (a) Incorporate Indigenous perspectives in each course where such knowledge/skills are a professional competency; - focuses on health, education, law
http://www.reconciliation.qut.edu.au/implementation/teachingandl.jsp

The University of Adelaide
SA, Adelaide
YES
Reconciliation Statement: 3. contributing to the process of reconciliation by educating the Australian community about the cultures, languages, history and contemporary experiences of Australia’s Indigenous peoples. Dean, Indigenous Education: lead Indigenisation of the University's programs.

University of Tasmania
TAS, Hobart
NO
nothing on-line

RMIT University
VIC, Melbourne
YES
Reconciliation Statement: ’providing specific education and training for and about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.’
The Ngarara Willim Centre of RMIT University contributes to a number of professional development training workshops for staff including Understanding Indigenous Perspectives, Teaching Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students, Understanding Names and Different Cultures, and Supporting Student Transition, particularly for staff who teach Indigenous students.

University of Melbourne
VIC, Melbourne
YES
One of the University of Melbourne’s five graduate attributes makes specific reference to respecting Indigenous knowledge, cultures and values. ’All our graduates, regardless of how directly they are connected into this agenda and regardless of their personal and cultural histories, can make a contribution to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander development through their leadership, service and productivity. To that end our graduates will need to have a respectful understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories.’ - Reconciliation Action Plan

Deakin University
VIC, Geelong
unclear
Indigenous Education Statement 2011 DEWER report section 6:

The University of Western Australia
WA, Perth
YES
The University of Western Australia has developed mandatory Indigenous curriculum in key professional courses including education, social work, medicine, nursing and health. The University of Western Australia offers additional professional development workshops focussed on increasing awareness and cultural competence such as Courageous Conversations About Race (CCAR) and Indigenous Dialogues. As a part of its expanded Indigenous curriculum development initiatives from 2012 the University will establish a system of induction and training to assist staff in teaching Indigenous students, developing Indigenous-focused curriculum materials and researching Indigenous communities.

Note this degree is presently not accredited by AILA but is operating as a degree program.

s A new program, subject to an AILA accreditation application (2013), proposing to commence in 2014.

This topic, as it pertains to architecture, landscape architecture and planning programs in Australia, is part of a larger research project being undertaken by the authors (papers years). While in its formative policy and statistical analysis stage, it is very evident that all 3 professional...
institutes and their respective professionally accredited courses are positioned in the same vacuum albeit with micro-differences in education procedures/standards/policies criteria.

6. FRONTIERS AND CHALLENGES

In drawing a conclusion from the above, and especially as it relates to AILA professional accredited courses, a number of points are evident.

AILA, at the upper policy level and at the educational policy level, lacks a robust approach to responding to this challenge;
AILA accredited courses have little responded and appear to be ill-equipped in responding to this challenge, and lack guidance and tools at the university-internal-level and at the AILA-level to inform and assist and renovate their course operations;
There is a perceptive issue extant about what is ‘Indigenous’ pertinent to AILA accredited programs, but also a lack of informational and protocol tools, cultural competency guidance and strategies, clarity about teaching execution but also the nature of teaching (including studies, tutorials, seminars, lectures, immersive events) that are appropriate and that can be integrated within the already cramped course packages.

So, next time you meet a recent landscape architecture graduate from an Australian, New Zealand, United States, Canadian or United Kingdom program, ask them “did they have any education about Indigenous cultures and their knowledge relevance to landscape architecture?”
The answer will invariable be ‘no’ except perhaps in Canada and New Zealand where Inuit and Québec cultural issues and M ori and Pacific Islander issues are often integrated in studies. This response runs counter to the signatory obligations under the UNSECO Indigenous Peoples Charter, but also under IFLA’s education policies.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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