Indigenisation, Interdisciplinarity and Cultural Competency: Working the Dialogic Space between Indigenous Studies and Other Disciplines at Curtin University\textsuperscript{1}.

Protocol

Before I begin, I acknowledge the Kaurna people and I thank Uncle Lewis O’Brien for his warm welcome to country.

I am Michelle Carey and I’m a Wadjula (non-Indigenous) academic employed with the Centre for Aboriginal studies (CAS) at Curtin University. Curtin’s Bentley campus is on Wadjuk Nyungar country.

I am currently working on Indigenising the curriculum at Curtin. In undertaking this important work, its important I acknowledge my contemporaries and peers, and their pioneering work in Indigenising curriculum and cultural competency. Two people I specifically acknowledge are CAS’s former Head of Centre, Pat Dudgeon, and my colleague, Darren Garvey.

I would also like to thank you all for the opportunity to come and share ideas with you. I appreciate this is conference is primarily focused on Indigenisation and psychology. Given my own work sits broadly under the umbrella of ‘cultural studies’, I am thankful for the opportunity to be with you.

Introduction

In today’s presentation, I provide an overview of the recommendation the Centre for Aboriginal Studies (CAS) is presenting to the University regarding the Indigenisation of curriculum. We are recommending Curtin University Indigenise its curriculum using a cultural competency model not dissimilar to the one being used in University of South Australia’s psychology program (Carey, 2008a).

In my discussion, I contextualise this recommendation within previous attempts to ‘Aboriginalise the curriculum’ in the mid 1990s. In so doing, I draw a on a critique of the process written by Kim Collard, Roz Walker and Pat Dudgeon in 1998.

Secondly, I discuss University of South Australia’s application of the cultural competency model in their psychology program, how it addresses issues raised by Collard, Walker and Dudgeon, and is concurrent with what we seek to achieve at Curtin. However, I also note that where University of South Australia’s process is concerned with the inclusion of Indigenous content in a particular discipline, CAS needs to forge an interdisciplinarity and intercultural dialogue across the university.

\textsuperscript{1} This is a revised version of the paper presented at the Psychology and Indigenous Australians: Teaching, Practice and Theory conference on the 14\textsuperscript{th} of July 2008. It includes content that was originally edited due to time constraints. Images originally used in the conclusion have been edited due to copyright.
Within this dialogue, our priority is to ensure the integrity of Indigenous studies, as a discrete discipline, is protected. Therefore, while we acknowledge the usefulness of cultural competency to this process, we also argue that cultural competency is subject to its own processes of Indigenisation.

In the final part of my discussion, I elaborate the concept of Indigenising cultural competency. This part of my presentation comes out of the early, tentative conversations we are having at CAS about the meaning of ‘competence’ in Indigenous contexts. In the first instance, it is identified that Indigenised cultural competency must be contextualised within Indigenous Terms of Reference (ITR) as CAS defines them, and emphasise the importance of ongoing and substantive relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.

Today, I offer a further theorisation of this viewpoint. What I seek to represent here is not so much a formal CAS position, but my interpretation and contribution to this discussion. In so doing, I reflect on Victor Hart and Keith Moore’s theorisation of Indigenising Australian studies at Queensland University of Technology using Homi Bhabha’s notion of the third, or hybrid space (Hart and Moore, 2005). My objective is to problematise this particular use of Bhabha’s work with an alternative conceptualisation of the third space as defined by Marcia Langton. My preference for Langton’s conceptualisation of the ‘third space’ (which I will call ‘domain’ or the sake of distinguishing between the two ideas. See Palmer and Groves, 2000: 22; Carey, 2008b: 215) for Indigenising curriculum comes out of a preference for anti-colonial, as distinct to post-colonial, theoretical paradigms and the need to place Indigenous standpoints at the centre of Indigenised curriculum. I argue this serves to protect the unique methodological, epistemological and pedagogical features of Indigenous studies, provides a new way to conceptualise the ‘transformative’ effects of Indigenous studies for students, and works to support an anti-colonial dialogue between Indigenous studies and other disciplines.

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2 At the Centre for Aboriginal Studies, Indigenous studies is defined as:
...a discipline in its own right – which embodies its own voices, visions, experiences and identity(ies), and which simultaneously incorporates and challenges western disciplines, but is distinct from these dominant paradigms and discourses (1998: 1).

The distinguishing features of Aboriginal Studies as a discipline are:

- Indigenous Studies draws on traditional western disciplines and reconstructs power relations, shifting the knowable ‘object’ of study to an active ‘subject’ and participant in research, knowledge production and dissemination

- Respects, protects and maintains Indigenous protocols by ensuring Indigenous/Aboriginal Terms of Reference underpin research, teaching and all other knowledge production and dissemination

- Practitioners of Aboriginal/Indigenous studies acknowledge and affirm their roles as re/presenters of knowledge as distinct to presenters of knowledge. Their systems of accountability extend beyond obligations to the ‘discipline’ and into obligations to community (Collard et al, 1998: 1).

The status of Indigenous Studies as a discrete discipline is affirmed in Curtin University’s Indigenous Governance Policy and Principles for Implementation (2006a), Objective 4.5.
Background: the Aboriginal Curriculum Project (1995-1997)

The precursor to Curtin University's current Indigenisation project was 'the Aboriginal Curriculum Project' (ACP), which was established in 1995. The goal was to ensure that by 1997 all Curtin students accessed "some degree of Aboriginal Studies within their undergraduate...programs" (Collard et al., 1998: 7). An examination of this process is documented in Collard, Walker and Dudgeon's discussion paper, Aboriginalising the Curriculum — A Disciplined Approach? (1998).

Collard, Walker and Dudgeon identify two key areas for discussion. The first relates to the practical matter of implementing an 'Aboriginalised' curriculum and the second refers to the integrity of Aboriginal Studies as a discipline. Both of these issues are contextualised within a broader discussion on the historic role of the academy in colonising the production and dissemination of knowledge about Indigenous people, and the contested place of Aboriginal studies within the academy in a contemporary setting. Therefore, the authors argue the necessity of placing an 'Indigenous standpoint at the centre' (1998: 5) of Aboriginalised curriculum. They assert this is critical to decolonising Indigenous studies, and achieving a meaningful articulation of Curtin's stated commitment to reconciliation.

Within the ACP, there were three options for implementing Aboriginal Studies across the curriculum. Overwhelmingly schools chose the option that enabled them to minimise the inclusion of Indigenous content, confining it to occasional material written into their own pre-existing units (1998: 9). While schools defended this decision, saying the inclusion of Indigenous studies was a financial imposition and their syllabus was already too crowded, Collard et al maintained that one-off lectures compromised the integrity of the discipline. They also said one-off lectures did not convey the diversity of Indigenous peoples and knowledges, or the complexity of Indigenous lived experiences. This, they argued, made it difficult to get across why students needed to learn how to work in a way that observes Indigenous protocols. They also said, one-off lectures prevent ethical and sensitive engagement with students, potentially compounding their willingness to engage with Aboriginal people and issues later in life, and thus, mitigating the transformative effects of Aboriginal studies (Collard et al., 1998).

Ten Years On...

Ten years on, reinvigorated conversations about Indigenising the curriculum mean that CAS, and the University, face almost identical issues as before. In part, I believe this is because the legitimate place of Indigenous knowledges in the academy is not resolved. Arguably, the best articulation regarding the place of Indigenous studies exists in the recently released Reconciliation Action Plan. This plan envisions Curtin University as "a place where Indigenous and non-Indigenous people come together to

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learn their chosen discipline contextualised within Indigenous culture and history” (Curtin University, 2008: 2).

CAS argues cultural competency is an appropriate tool for Indigenising the curriculum and realising the vision articulated in its Reconciliation Action Plan. In CAS’s view, it is important that Indigenisation is not a ‘buzz word’, justifying the ad hoc inclusion of Indigenous content into curricula. By way of recommending a best practice model, we have pointed to the cultural competency model currently used in University of South Australia’s psychology program. It is argued this particular interpretation of cultural competency - building knowledge, fostering attitudinal change and developing skills - is an interpretation that is consistent with the general aims of Indigenous studies. Moreover, when broad content is supported by a combination of compulsory units, integrated content in other units and electives, it allows time to convey the complexity and diversity of Indigenous knowledge’s, provides pedagogical coherency for students and time to process emotionally challenging material. Finally, it is also argued that the inclusion of Indigenous studies value-adds to other disciplines because it diversifies the knowledges and skills with which students will leave university⁴.

In short, we argue cultural competency is an effective tool for Indigenising the curriculum because it facilitates interdisciplinary and intercultural dialogue between Indigenous studies and other disciplines. However, we are also mindful that interdisciplinarity does not automatically produce outcomes conducive to the decolonisation of dominant knowledge systems, and we appreciate the difficulties in divesting intercultural dialogue of colonialist power relations.

Therefore, as I have already suggested, just as cultural competency is a productive tool for Indigenising the curriculum, it is equally subject to its own processes of Indigenisation. This argument is a logical progression on the Indigenisation of research methodologies and pedagogical practice in Indigenous studies (Tuhiriwi Smith, 2006: 143; Collard et al, 1998: 1). At CAS, it is argued that Indigenising cultural competency necessitates contextualising it within Indigenous Terms of Reference. It is argued that ITR not only provides a theoretical framework for identifying and analysing power relationships between Indigenous studies and other

⁴ Although it is beyond the scope of this discussion, it is important to acknowledge the importance of mutual and reciprocal intercultural learning to Indigenous people. As Curtin University’s Reconciliation Action Plan notes, “Indigenous and Western knowledge systems have much to learn from one another” (Curtin University, 2008: 2).

For a related discussion, refer to the article Indigenous Knowledge within a Global Knowledge System by the Maori scholar, Mason Durie. He writes:

While it is often valued because of its traditional qualities, the perception of indigenous knowledge and culture as applicable only to the distant past ignores the thrust for development that is part of the indigenous journey. Arising from the creative potential of indigenous knowledge is the prospect that it can be applied to modern times in parallel with other knowledge systems (2005: 304).

For Durie, the underlying principles for intercultural learning (or, “learning and research at the interface” 2005: 307) are mutual respect, shared benefits, human dignity and discovery (2005: 307). Durie argues “learning and research at the interface” enlarges students educational experiences, expands the dimensions and findings of research projects while ensuring cultural safety for Indigenous people, and builds capacity for Indigenous researchers and academics (2005: 308-310).
disciplines, but also, when it is applied to cultural competency is a useful tool for ameliorating the negative effects associated with these power relations.

To elaborate what I mean here, I will précis CAS’s definition of ITR.

Darlene Oxenham’s text, *Aboriginal Terms of Reference: A Course Study for the Indigenous Studies Program* (2000) theorises Indigenous Terms of Reference and their application at CAS. This text constitutes an important consideration of how Indigenous principles, values, beliefs and knowledges underpin pedagogical practice at CAS. Oxenham defines Indigenous/Aboriginal Terms of Reference as:

...a set of principles, core values and a process for applying a framework to determine an Indigenous viewpoint on an issue in an Indigenous context.

This encompasses the cultural knowledge, understanding and experiences that are associated with a commitment to Indigenous ways of thinking, working and reflecting, incorporating specific and implicit cultural values, beliefs and priorities from which Indigenous standards are derived, validated and practiced. These standards will and can vary according to the diverse range of cultural values, beliefs and priorities from within local settings or specific contexts (Oxenham, 2000: 4).

As Oxenham identifies, Aboriginal Terms of Reference are never completely constructed in isolation to non-Aboriginal domains. This figure illustrates this dynamic.

She goes on to argue there are several reasons for distinguishing between non-Indigenous and Indigenous domains. These include identifying power dynamics between the two domains and validating Indigenous resistance to the non-Indigenous domain. Further, Oxenham identifies the interstices between Aboriginal and non-

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5 Oxenham’s text is called *Aboriginal Terms of Reference: A Course Paper for the Indigenous Studies Program* (2000), however, staff and students at CAS have modified the nomenclature and variously refer to ‘Aboriginal Terms of Reference’ or ‘ATR’ and/or ‘Indigenous Terms of Reference’ or ‘ITR’. ITR is used in the context of this paper because it is generally understood to be a more inclusive term that ‘Aboriginal’]. For further discussion see Carey, 2008a, page 12.
Aboriginal domains as sites of negotiation between cultural differences, and identifying these negotiations as a means to mitigate imbedded power relations (2000: 15-17).

Those of us familiar with Marcia Langton’s 1993 text, *Heard it on the Radio, Saw it on the Television*, will recognise the similarities between Oxenham’s final point and Langton’s argument for anti-colonial representations of Aboriginality in film and television. For the purposes of this paper, I suggest the issues Langton addresses, and issues relating to representations of Indigeneity in the academy, are very similar. Therefore, it is worth recapping the three domains where Langton argues representations of Aboriginality are constructed.

The first site relates to Indigenous self-representations. Although these representations are never completely closed to outside intervention, they are internal and private to Indigenous people and communities (1993: 33-34). The second site relates to those representations of Aboriginality that are entirely products of the ‘colonial imagination’. These representations are ideologically driven, and are best characterised by there reliance on myth and stereotype and the absence of Aboriginal input and intervention (1993: 35). Thirdly, there are other models of representation; those that are born out of intersubjective and intercultural dialogue between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people (1993: 35). Langton argues that in these instances of exchange:

...the individuals involved will test imagined models of the other, repeatedly adjusting the models as the responses are processed, to find some satisfactory way of comprehending the other. It is in these dialogues...that working models of ‘Aboriginality’ are constructed as ways of seeing Aboriginal people, but both the Aboriginal subject and the non-Aboriginal subject are participating (1993: 35).

A number of points arise from Langton’s thesis that are worth exploring in relation to ‘Indigenised’ cultural competency. It is acknowledged that there is a burgeoning, informal, Indigenous critique of the notion of ‘competence’, claiming formal education alone cannot make someone ‘culturally competent’. From a CAS perspective, there is a feeling that the key to ‘competence’ is understanding the cultural importance of relationship building for Indigenous people\(^6\). That is, competence necessitates a profound awareness of the ongoing and dynamic nature of intersubjective and intercultural interactions between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. As both Oxenham and Langton suggest, it is in these interactions, cultural difference is explored, power relations negotiated, and relationships established. I therefore argue that formal education, grounded in the principles of Indigenised Cultural Competence, prepares students to engage in the process of meaningful

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\(^6\) For a related discussion see Kavanagh, Absolom, Beil and Schliesmann, *Connecting and Becoming Culturally Competent: A Lakota Example* (1999). Here, the authors explore the experiences of nurses doing fieldwork in a Lakota reservation in Dakota, America. They argue the key to cultural competence is the experience of connecting with Lakota people, and engaging in meaningful dialogic relationships with them. The importance of human connectedness to cultural competence is inextricably connected to Lakota peoples’ worldview, which emphasises the interconnectedness of all things. Therefore, those who resist, or who are unable to form meaningful dialogic connections are regarded as “the exemplar of failure in his or her disconnection” (Kavanagh *et al*, 1999: online) and are culturally incompetent.
relationship building with Indigenous people. Moreover, the dynamic of intersubjective and intercultural relationships is consistent with Langton’s theorisation of anti-colonial practice, and is therefore consistent with the broader anti-colonial impetus driving the Indigenisation of curriculum.

The ‘Third Space’ meets the Third Domain

To further illustrate what I mean, I would like to contrast this position with another articulated in a paper by Victor Hart and Keith Moore exploring the integration of Indigenous content into two Australian studies units at Queensland University of Technology.

In this paper, Hart and Moore explain their teaching philosophy as “inspired by Homi Bhabha’s notion of ‘hybridity and the ‘third space’” and describe how they encouraged their students “to rethink long established understandings about culture and identity so that they could arrive at more inclusive alternatives. They write:

As Bhabha (1994) had contended, hybrid understandings occur through the interaction of the coloniser and the colonised, with this hybridity or in between space – the cutting edge of negotiation. In encouraging their students to enter the third space, the lecturers [Hart and Moore] were aware that this required them to consider alternate views and disruptions to common sense understandings of Australian ... culture and history and Australian Aboriginality. For those who discarded the dual culture template, the results were rewarding (2005: 4).

I appreciate that for Hart and Moore, Bhabha’s third space opens up a discursive site that is productive for themselves and their students. However, I am apprehensive about Bhabha’s particular conceptualisation of the third space and its application to Indigenised curriculum. While I agree Bhabha is concerned with the relationship between the coloniser and the colonised, he is primarily interested in this relationship as it is informed by the return of the post-colonial subject to the metropolis, and how this experience of migrancy impacts on the ‘metropolis’ – the locus of colonial power. This classic post-colonial paradigm maintains the centred position of power relationships as they are informed by colonialist ideologies, whilst asking what marginalised voices, speaking from the periphery, have to say that will impact the legitimacy of that power. As Bhabha writes:

That ideological tension, visible in the history of the West as a despotic power, at the very moment of the birth of democracy and modernity, has not been adequately written in a contradictory and contrapuntal discourse of tradition. Unable to resolve that contradiction perhaps, the history of the West as a despotic power, a colonial power, has not been adequately written side by side with its claims to democracy and solidarity. The material legacy of this repressed history is inscribed in the return of post-colonial peoples to the metropolis. Their very presence there changes the politics of the metropolis, its cultural ideologies and its intellectual traditions, because they – as a people who have been recipients of a colonial cultural experience -- displace some of the great metropolitan narratives of progress and law and order, and question the authority and authenticity of those narratives (1990: 218).
It is well documented that many Australian Indigenous academics (and others) reject the post-colonial paradigm. There are many reasons for this, including the important distinction between Australia’s experience as a settler-nation, and those other post-colonial nations where the coloniser ‘went home’ (see Trees, 1998: 110; Curthoys, 2000: 32; Moreton-Robinson, 2003: 30; Tuhuwai-Smith, 2006: 98). Indeed, Moreton-Robinson extends this analysis, arguing Bhabha’s notion of hybridity falsely conflates the Indigenous experience of dispossession with the experience of migrancy, and in so doing, positions the marginalised Indigenous voice alongside the marginalised migrant voice, further marginalising it as one voice within a “menagerie” of Others (Moreton-Robinson, 2003: 30-33).

I think Moreton-Robinson’s analysis has particular relevance for the Indigenisation of curriculum because it informs the way we might think though the place of Indigenous knowledges within the academy. In the context of Bhabha’s third space, Indigenous knowledges are always challenging dominant knowledges, but never fully legitimated as actual knowledges in their own right.

By way of extrapolating this point, it is worth reflecting on the way Indigenous lecturers are said to provide the emotional content, or make the “passionate contribution” (Hart and Moore, 2005) to lecture content and students’ learning experience.

On one hand, I agree the experience of these lectures enables students to make important human connections in a social, cultural and political milieu where the colonial legacy of segregation prevails. I also agree there are critical links between emotional content and enabling the affective or attitudinal change sought for students within Indigenous studies and which is consistent with a cultural competency framework. Moreover, I acknowledge that it is often the case that emotional content is imparted through personal storytelling, in which case the teaching and learning experience is consistent with Indigenous pedagogical practice and Terms of Reference. On the other hand though, there is also the concern that when particular expressions of Indigenous knowledges and life experiences are juxtaposed against dominant pedagogical models and labelled ‘emotional’ or ‘passionate’, there is a redeployment, or reactivation, of traditional binary relationships between ‘rational’/’emotional’, ‘history’/’tradition’, and ‘knowledge’ and ‘perspective’. Therefore, there is a redeployment, or reactivation, of the hierarchies these binaries uphold. As the Mohawk scholar Patricia Monture-Angus argues:

The idea that Aboriginal people only have one perspective not only reinforces white ideas of Aboriginal inferiority but limits the opportunity of Aboriginal people to develop full and complete lives based on our dreams and visions, systems of knowledge, values and beliefs. Whites can appreciate that Aboriginal people have politics (albeit perhaps not fully) but do not recognise that we equally have theologies, epistemologies, knowledge systems, pedagogy and history. These are all collapsed into mere “perspectives”, thus making actual the white fallacy of Aboriginal inferiority (c.f. Nicholl, 2000: 383).

Moreton Robinson also speaks the notion of Indigenous perspective in University contexts. She argues:
The assumption is that any knowledge about Indigenous people is an Indigenous perspective, and Indigenous studies is usually taught as perspectives grafted onto and within frameworks of the major disciplinary inquiry (2004: 142).

In this context, Indigenous people are rendered “native informants” (Moreton-Robinson, 2004: 142) to a normative and empiricist pedagogical regime, and, in corollary, the normative status of empiricist pedagogical paradigms is maintained.

Therefore, I want to offer an alternative conceptualisation of the third space. To do this, I return to Marcia Langton’s notion of the third domain and make a distinction between this and Bhabha’s third, or hybrid, space. Where Bhabha’s third space occurs within the locus of the metropolis, I conceive Langton’s third domain as privileging Indigenous standpoints. This constitutes a radical decentring of privileged or dominant worldviews. For the purposes of Indigenising the curriculum, I suggest this privileges Indigenous Terms of Reference, as distinct to positioning them as subsidiary, and Other, to dominant pedagogical models.

Moreover, while I don’t want to idealise the dialogic relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, its my own experience, and the experience of others I have known and taught, that in the dialogic relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, non-Indigenous peoples are inexorably drawn closer to the first domain; the domain where Indigenous peoples have the most control over different modes of individual and community self-representation. It is in this process that non-Indigenous people have those representations of Indigeneity that are created in the second domain (the domain of the colonial imagination) fundamentally challenged. Further, given these pejorative constructions of Aboriginality are intimately associated with constructions of ‘self’, I also argue that when they are destabilised, notions of ‘self’ based on superiority are also destabilised and often times, upon deep reflection and personal introspection, reinvented within the locus of the first domain. I argue this is the ‘transformative’ experience of Indigenous studies (see Carey, 2008b). It is this fundamental paradigm shift that marks the difference between the post-colonial dynamic of Bhabha’s third space, and the anti-colonial dynamic of Langton’s third domain.

Finally, in extension of intersubjective and intercultural dialogue, Langton’s dynamic of the third domain supports anti-colonial intercultural and interdisciplinary dialogue between Indigenous studies and other disciplines. This anti-colonial dialogue is distinct to post-colonial accommodations of cultural difference, which run the gauntlet of coopting, and appropriating, Indigenous difference in an effort to validate its own claims to tolerance and diversity. Rather, anti-colonial dialogue privileges the integrity of Indigenous studies and identifies a basis for its equitable inclusion across the academy.

Conclusion
As I conclude, I'd like to take my argument out of the abstract and ground it in the place of Indigenous studies at CAS. In so doing, I will show you two images of the front foyer area of CAS and share with you the story of this space. These images are of the front foyer area of CAS. The building itself is designed to reflect the relationship between Indigenous people and the earth. The foyer area is called Midgegoroo Meeting Place. CAS describes the significance this space as follows:

The main lobby at the centre is dedicated to the memory of the Nyungar elder, Midgegoroo. Together with his son Yagan and other Aboriginal warriors, he fought and died resisting the invasion of Nyungar territory by British colonists, and was executed by firing squad at Perth, WA in 1833.

Midgegoroo’s struggle symbolises the fierce spirit of resistance to oppression. Throughout the ages this spirit has motivated people to fight for their rights. The fight for freedom and equality embodied in the life and death of Aboriginal resistance leaders like Midgegoroo and Yagan epitomises the struggles of all oppressed cultures across time and inspires us to work towards a vision of a world where people are free and equal on their own terms (Curtin University, online).

The mosaic was designed by the artist Joan Martin. It depicts the coming together in celebration of different tribal groups from many parts of the country. The eight smaller circles represent the camps of the different tribes around the central meeting place. The elongated figures represent all the spirits and ancestors accompanying the tribes on their journey to CAS.

The gunada, or goanna, [represented in the middle flag in the image on the right] is significant to the dreamtime. It embodies strength, wisdom and endurance. It lies in a circle both the cycles and continuity of life as well and unity and equality (Curtin University, online).

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags, represented alongside the Gunada flag, represent Indigenous Sovereignty.
The symbolism of this space can be read in contradistinction to “the academy” and the role it has played in the colonisation of Indigenous people and knowledges. In this space, Indigenous cultures, knowledges, histories, experiences of colonisation, and desires for “unity and equality” are privileged.

Equally, in this space, Indigenous Terms of Reference inform all pedagogical practice. This learning space challenges normative, empiricist educational experiences, and compels those who engage with it to challenge their own normative assumptions about what constitutes culture, history, and ways of knowing and being in the world. Not only does this confront what people think they know about Aboriginal people and culture, it very often confronts their very sense of “self”. That is, those who engage with this learning space learn to negotiate the dynamics of the third domain and understand the importance of forming substantive and meaningful relationships with the first domain (Indigenous people and communities).

However, it is equally true that this learning space resides within the grounds of a University campus and this learning experience takes place in the context of University education. It is important to ensure that this experience is not marginalised and reduced to a mere accommodation of diversity. In an anti-colonial paradigm, Indigenous studies is legitimised as an equal partner in intercultural and interdisciplinary dialogue and there is a genuine appreciation and understanding of the benefits of Indigenous Studies to other disciplines. Cultural competency is a productive tool for facilitating this dialogue, and negotiating the interspaces between Indigenous studies and other disciplines. This dynamic is represented in the following diagram.
Bibliography


Curtin University. (n.d.). *A Place of Our Own.*


