



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

Building Cultural Diversity into our Curriculum

*Rationales, Priorities,
Approaches*

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Advancing Melbourne 2030

Our students will live and work in a global community, with all of the opportunities and challenges that entails. Our education will prepare them for this, providing opportunities for learning in regional and global contexts, and equipping them with the attributes needed for working cross-culturally on campus.



What are we educating for?

- Working environments and workforces are becoming more culturally diverse and unpredictable
- The world is simultaneously globalizing and fracturing: differences of perspective, interest and values are becoming wider
- Geopolitical competition, rising nationalism and contested knowledge claims create large differences
- Does our curriculum sufficiently prepare students to thrive in a complex, challenging world?
 - In a 2020 review, 8 UoM Faculties nominated internationalising their curriculum as a major priority
 - Curriculum internationalisation is a 'horizon 1' priority for *Advancing Melbourne* implementation



Why is a diversified curriculum important?

- *Pedagogical* benefits: meeting questioning minds during the ‘psychosocial moratorium’
 - Diverse and unfamiliar material forces students to look outside of comfortable repertoires of coping, relating and understanding
- *Student experience*: celebrating and utilising the diversity of our student community
 - Our students expect to be able to experience new and diverse communities while at university
- *Graduate* benefits: educating for growing diversity thanks to technology, outsourcing and professional migration
 - Enabling enable graduates to operate effectively when working with people with views, values and understandings different from their own



Approaches to curriculum diversity

- Building cultural diversity should encompass both what is taught and how it is taught
 - different materials and perspectives bring students into contact with heterodox concepts, attitudes and positions
 - encourages them to reflect critically on their own values, beliefs and attitudes as well as learning about others'
- Benefits both domestic and international students
 - domestic students are challenged to reflect on their knowledge and ways of knowing by heterodox perspectives
 - international students are relieved of some of the burden of difference, cultural translation and appropriate participation



Recognising disciplinary diversity

- Some colleagues may struggle to see how they can build culturally diverse material into their own curriculum
 - Many in the STEM disciplines argue that their content is inherently international
- Chi Baik and Sophie Arkoudis have developed a typology of different approaches to building cultural diversity
 1. *Curricula with international content*: material that offers different international perspectives
 2. *Curricula in which the content is broadened by internationally comparative approaches*
 3. *Curricula which incorporates interaction for learning between diverse groups of students*
 4. *Curricula that provide experiential learning opportunities either locally within the community, nationally, or internationally*



Support for building cultural diversity into the curriculum

- CSHE is developing a web library of examples and approaches to building cultural diversity
 - Drawing on UoM examples as well as globally to demonstrate how diversity can be built in most disciplines
 - Providing materials and support for those who want to build greater diversity in their curricula
- 2022 LTI grants will award up to \$20,000 to colleagues who want to build greater diversity into their curricula
- We have ambitious targets for increasing the proportion of subjects and programs with cultural diversity built in – to be reported on annually
- Our next challenge is to promote greater interaction among different cultural groups on campus