

Practical Lessons Paramount in CIS

The Centre of iTaukei Studies (CIS) at The University of Fiji is unique as it addresses the teaching of language and culture in depth than language and literature. It includes expressive and creative arts; traditional and cultural expressions; traditional ecological knowledge; indigenous health & healing therapies; oral history and oral tradition; cultural anthropology; genealogy and migration history and indigenous research.

CIS Director, Dr. Kuridrani stated that the programmes offered under CIS offer a wider and broader knowledge about iTaukei culture and traditions and also offers students get hands on experience from studies. This, she says, can be seen from the number of community outreach sessions engrossed into the curriculum.

“At CIS, we ensure that students are getting hands on experience during their studies. This simply means learning by doing. The crafts taught in the courses, the dances, the traditional ceremonies taught are not only practical but students actually go out into the communities and portray these crafts. The students have been hired many-a-time to perform traditional Yagona ceremonies and mekes. We have received positive feedback from these events,” she mentioned.

She further explained that during the coming summer school, students from the courses ITK 300 and ITK 307, will spend two weeks in a village where they will do research and learn directly from the elders of the Village.

As a way of giving back to the community, if students find prospective small business strategies, they will write proposals on behalf of the village to the Ministries.

By doing so, she added, students will learn about traditional mechanisms employed by the village and learn directly from the source.

The four programmes currently offered by CIS include Bachelor of Arts in iTaukei(ITK) and Management, Diploma in iTaukei Language and Culture, Diploma in Teaching iTaukei Language, Literature and Culture (Secondary) and Bachelor of Arts in iTaukei Language and Culture.