

Graduation Ceremony: 22nd December 2015

Occasional Address

Deputy-Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor, distinguished guests, fellow graduands, our families and friends, ladies and gentlemen.

I have a number of very pleasurable duties to perform in this speech, so let me begin, Deputy-Chancellor, by thanking you and your colleagues for the very great honour you have done me by awarding me this Honorary Doctorate. It has been an enormous pleasure and privilege to be associated with this wonderful young and vibrant University as an Adjunct Professor over the past fifteen years. It has been a particular joy to serve as the Chairman of the Advisory Boards of The Ehrenberg-Bass Institute which, under the inspiring leadership of Professor Byron Sharp and his colleagues has established itself as the leading centre for research in Marketing Science in the world. For me to now become even more a part of your community as one of its graduates is overwhelming. And this further honour, which I first heard about just a few moments ago, of establishing a post-doctoral fellowship in my name, is beyond words.

But I am not the only one graduating today, only the oldest! If I may presume to speak on behalf of you, my younger co-graduands, I am sure you would want me to thank the university and your teachers. I know it's a cliché, but it is nevertheless true that very many of you will look back on your time here as some of the best years of your life. But also you would want me to thank your families and friends who have stood alongside you during those years sharing the ups and downs, encouraging you and consoling you. They, too, get their rewards today in the pride they justifiably feel in your achievements

Now, I believe, I am expected to address a few words of wisdom to you, my fellow graduands as you move on into what we like to call the real world. If you are anything like I was at your age, your main emotion just now is largely relief that you have actually achieved what you came here to do. Some of you will be going on to further formal study, but I hope none of you think this is the end of your education. It is my strong belief that the purpose of a university education is to teach us how to learn. During my time as a university teacher I would often meet former students who were considering changing their job, and would ask when is the right time to make a move. Of course, there is no hard and fast rule, but I would always advise them to ask themselves this

question: 'Am I still learning new things?' If the answer is 'yes' then you may want to consider staying where you are, but if the answer is 'no' you should certainly think about moving on. One former student said that was more useful than anything she had learnt from me during her degree. I think she meant it as a compliment! Others have questioned whether this is fair to employers, but I think that most enlightened employers would agree. They would expect their graduate employees to be continuously adding to the sum total of knowledge in the business. If you can do that, I am sure that you will have a happy and successful career in whatever field of endeavour you choose to follow.

Over the years I have been visiting South Australia, I have seen tremendous changes in the University. One only has to take a short walk along North Terrace to see some of the physical changes that the University has undergone. Less easy to see are the changes in reputation and prestige that have occurred. In the last three years alone, the University of South Australia has moved up thirty places in the World Rankings of the new universities established in the last fifty years. Despite the fact that UNISA has been in existence for only 25 of those years, it is now thirty fifth in the rankings, with most of those ahead of it being of a much older vintage. And then, just a couple of weeks

ago, we learnt of the magnificent achievement of the University being ranked eighth by the Australian Research Council for Excellence in Research. It is truly amazing that such a young University should be challenging the elite and long established universities in such an important area as research. This is something of which you, Deputy-Chancellor and all of your colleagues can be very proud. I and my fellow graduands can also take great pride in our University and thank you and the entire staff for all that you have done for us.

Gerald Goodhardt