

**Occasional Address delivered by Professor Jarl B. Rosenholm  
Graduation ceremony March 30, 2009**

Chancellor, Doctor Ian Gould, Vice-chancellor and President, Professor Peter Høi, Laureate Professor John Ralston, members of Council, colleagues, celebrating families and in particular graduands.

When arranging a conferment ceremony the University manifests its traditional independency from the state. With this ritual the conferrer forwards the tradition to the students who upon graduation are accepted to the academic community. The claim of independence is merely aimed at education. Only academia should hold the right to establish the level of knowledge required for graduation and this right should be represented by University alone.

The most distinguished expression of appreciation the academic community can give is the honorary doctorate. I am exceedingly grateful to the University of South Australia when receiving the title “Doctor of the University”. It makes the nearly twenty year long collaboration with first the School of Chemical Technology and then the Ian Wark Research Institute not only scientifically rewarding and personally joyful, but also of highest importance for my academic career.

In 2005 I acted as conferrer for the Philosophical Faculties at Åbo Akademi University and passed on our academic traditions starting from 1640 to 106 doctors. One feels very humble, indeed when being authorized to take part in this almost 370 year long academic tradition. However, compared with the more than nine hundred old academic history of Europe the Finnish university tradition is quite young.

I have learned that the University of South Australia was officially opened in 1991, but it carries on the traditions of its successful predecessors. Further back Australia’s university system is founded on the British university traditions. Once again the academic society to which you are invited, place you in an historical context of which you should be proud of.

From its origin the university has been a society of scholars presided by seniors. The money provided to the teachers was collected by the students and given as gifts, because science can not be bought or sold. The state or the emperor was responsible for safeguarding the scholars when appearing

as representatives for academia from any type of political or other interference. Until the end of the sixteenth century the university was governed by scholars themselves, in the form of a Rector, who held a form of civic authority. After this, when the society had begun to pay the teachers and provide other resources, university gradually became a state institution. By this stage the position as Rector was held by a Professor.

Along your professional career you are expected to develop the knowledge received from the university. This makes the continued contact with university a life-long learning experience. As done by the scholars back in history, it is customary that you maintain the academic tradition by responding to the needs of the university with professional aid and when possible by generous donations to university foundations. In this way the university can flourish even when state funding is soaring. Then you truly share the well-being of your “Alma Mater”.

Another new requirement placed on university is a response to societal needs by making a measurable contribution to the competitiveness of your country. University of South Australia is particularly well suited to fulfill this “third role”, since the education provided is concentrated to specialized Schools and Research Institutes, all teaching practical skills. The graduands thus represent many cross-disciplinary fields of expertise. As Premier Mike Rann expressed it in his Occasional Address in 2006, University of South Australia has become not only the state’s largest university, but also a true “people’s university”, making Adelaide Australia’s undisputed “University City”.

The establishment of European Union has intensified the harmonization of the diverse structures of education. In 1999 twenty-nine European Ministers of higher education met in “Aula Magna” at University of Bologna, Italy to confirm the so-called “Declaration of Bologna”. The objective was to equalize the curriculum at all European Universities before 2010 so that the students can change University and country between graduation levels. The common credit system has promoted the use of English in Master programs and Doctoral studies. Despite the very rich number of different languages used in Europe the mobility of students between countries has increased dramatically! Since Australia has joined most education and research programs in European Union, you are welcome to utilize this opportunity to enlarge your field of competence, not only within Commonwealth but also in other exciting European linguistic and cultural environments.

In response to the internalization of university education Åbo Akademi University has in 2005 signed an agreement with University of South Australia in order to promote exchange of students. The agreement has been a great benefit for the Department of Physical Chemistry, the national Graduate School of Materials Research and the national Center of Excellence for Functional Materials which I am chairing. Both latter organizations aim at the same cross-disciplinary education and research as realized at University of South Australia. My channel for exchange has been Ian Wark Research Institute to which I have been appointed as Adjunct Research Professor since 1999. For this collaboration I am exceedingly grateful to Laureate Professor John Ralston.

*Ad vos me converto, viri dominaeque doctissimi, quos Universitas Australiae Meridionalis hodie Candidatos, Magistros Doctoresque creavit. Ex intimo pectore vobis gratulor, viri dominaeque illustrissimi, Candidati, Magistri Doctoresque nunc promoti. Vosque omnes, qui testes huius facti adfuitis, iubeo valere. Dixi.*

Translation from traditionally used Latin: I now turn over to you, educated men and female who today by University of South Australia have been declared Bachelors, Masters and Doctors and are hereby installed (created). I honor you congratulations from my heart, fare-well highly recognized Bachelors, Masters and Doctors. I order you all, who have witnessed this deed to be well! I have now spoken.