HONORARY DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

Professor Amy Tsui

LAUREATION ADDRESS – 3 July 2015

LAUREATOR – Emeritus Professor Dai Hounsell

Mr. Vice-Chancellor, in the name and by the authority of the Senatus Academicus, I have the honour to present, for the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Education, Professor Amy Bik May Tsui.

Professor Tsui is a shining example of inspirational academic leadership. In 2009, following a far-reaching shift from a three- to a four-year degree structure in Hong Kong (and a corresponding shortening by one year of secondary schooling), higher education institutions like the University of Hong Kong faced a formidable double-challenge: not only to create from scratch an undergraduate foundation-year curriculum, but also to introduce it, in 2012, to an intake of new students that would be twice as large as in previous years.

At the University of Hong Kong (or HKU, as it is universally referred to by the local population), it was Professor Tsui who led the University's response. And characteristically, she chose to engage with the challenge not by the simple expedient of stretching out the established curriculum, but by embarking instead on a far-reaching rethink of what kind of curriculum would best provide the bedrock of a university education fit for a globalised 21st century.

The result, the Common Core Curriculum, combines the study of cross-disciplinary themes with more flexible and interactive forms of learning and assessment, as well as engagement with local and global communities. It has drawn considerable world-wide interest, not least in Edinburgh and other Scottish universities, where there have been initiatives to identify and foster the qualities needed by contemporary graduates in a fast-changing world.

Professor Tsui's talent for enacting as well as creating a compelling vision is equally evident in the founding, with the added impetus of a substantial benefaction, of the Gallant Ho Centre for Experiential Learning. Its role is to promote the spread, across the full span of the HKU curriculum, of opportunities for students to engage in the kinds of learning, off- as well as on-campus, that require them to tackle real-life issues and
problems by drawing on theoretical knowledge that they have acquired in the formal curriculum.

Over and above these exceptional accomplishments, Professor Tsui has an eminent record of scholarship in the field of language and education, having written over one hundred academic papers together with books published by Routledge, Penguin, and Oxford and Cambridge University Presses. She has also served with great distinction on the Quality Assurance Council of Hong Kong; a range of Government bodies including the Central Policy Unit, the Standing Committee on Language and Research and the Curriculum Development Council; the Board of Governors of the Geneva-based International Baccalaureate; and the International Advisory Board of the University of Helsinki. From 2007 to 2014 she was HKU's Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President for Teaching and Learning.

Mr. Vice-Chancellor, I now invite you to confer on Professor Amy Bik May Tsui the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Education.