Mr Chancellor,

The continuous pursuit of knowledge is the cornerstone of university life. The realisation that learning is a lifelong process is the hallmark of the true academic. Professor Ernest Kuh, one of the United States’ most distinguished engineers, whom we honour today, has for over 45 years devoted himself to seeking knowledge through research, and assisting others to do so through his teaching.

After initial study at Shanghai Jiao Tong University, Ernest Kuh graduated in Electrical Engineering at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. He took his master’s degree in Electrical Engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and his PhD in Electrical Engineering at Stanford University. He joined Bell Telephone Laboratories as a member of the technical staff in 1952, where he benefited from his association with Professor Charles DeSor, a former classmate at MIT, whom he describes as a giant amongst electrical engineering educators.

It was another former classmate, Professor Donald Pedersen, who was instrumental in persuading Ernest Kuh to enter academic life. In 1956, he joined the Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Sciences of the University of California at Berkeley, whose community he was to serve for 41 years.

Professor Kuh became renowned for his organizational skills and his effectiveness as a university administrator—skills which he modestly attributes to having learned from his predecessor as Department Chair, Professor Lotfi Zadeh. At the University of California at Berkeley, Ernest Kuh served as Chair of the Department from 1968 to 1972 and Dean of the College of Engineering from 1973 to 1980. During his deanship, the College continued to thrive despite increasing student enrollments and severe budgetary constraints. His recipe for success is summed up in his own words: “I am convinced that to make an academic department world-class, faculty members need to excel in teaching, research, and service to the university and the profession. My advice to young engineers is to be broad in one’s interests, to place emphasis on lifelong learning, and to get involved. With that, one can compete world-wide in the present technological society to face the challenges of the information revolution.”

His own outstanding contributions to research and teaching, as well as his fine administration capabilities, were recognised by the award of the American Association
tion for Engineering Education’s highest honour, the Lamme Award, in 1981.

Professor Kuh’s academic career has been crowned by numerous other fellowships and awards, including the University of Michigan Distinguished Alumnus Award in 1970; the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers Guillemin-Cauer Award in 1975; the Alexander von Humboldt Senior Scientist Award in 1978; the IEEE Education Medal in 1981; the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science Award in 1981 and 1988; the IEEE Centennial Medal in 1984; the IEEE Circuits and Systems Society Award in 1988; and the Most Distinguished Chinese Scholar Award of the Society of Hong Kong Scholars in 1990. In 1996, he, Donald Pedersen and a former student, Ronald Rohrer, were awarded the Japan Foundation’s prestigious C&C Prize for their contributions to computer-aided design in microelectronics.

Professor Kuh holds high honours in his profession, including Fellowships of the prestigious American Association for the Advancement of Science, the United States National Academy of Engineering and Academia Sinica, Taipei.

He has co-authored four major books—two of which were with Charles Desoer and one with Donald Pedersen—and authored or co-authored over 180 papers in the fields of circuits, electronics, networks, systems and computer-aided design.

He has held visiting professorships at universities in Denmark, Germany, Japan and the United Kingdom, and has honorary professorships at Nanjing, Peking, Shanghai Jiao Tong, Tianjin, and Tsinghua Universities, and the University of Electronics, Science and Technology in Chengdu. He has served on many academic advisory committees and boards, including those at MIT and Princeton. He has been a consultant to a number of industrial and governmental organisations, including IBM, General Motors, the National Science Foundation and the National Institute of Standards and Technology.

Professor Kuh was an advisor to our University from the earliest planning days, and has been a member of the Advisory Board for our School of Engineering as well as the Department of Electrical & Electronic Engineering since 1990. May I take this opportunity to express the University’s gratitude to Professor Kuh for his assistance to us in our start-up years.

Mr Chancellor,

I have the honour to present, on behalf of the University, Professor Ernest S. Kuh, William S. Floyd Jr Professor Emeritus of Engineering and Professor in the Graduate School of the University of California at Berkeley, Academician, for the degree of Doctor of Engineering honoris causa.