

Professor Andrew Watson

Citation for conferral of Doctor of Arts (honoris causa) Ceremony 10, Monday 5 May 2014, 11:00am

Chancellor, it gives me great pleasure to present to you Professor Andrew Watson.

Professor Watson, who is being admitted to an Honorary Degree of Doctor in Arts, is a person who has rendered distinguished service to the field of social sciences and to tertiary study in South Australia.

Andrew Watson is regarded as one of the great Australian social scientists of his generation. Key roles in the last 20 years include, for a decade from 1991, Professor of Asian Studies, University of Adelaide and then for 9 years until 2008 he was Representative for China of the Ford Foundation. He is now Emeritus Professor in the School of Social Sciences at the University of Adelaide.

Watson's research has focused on the economic and political development of contemporary China. He has worked with aspects of China's industrial organisation and management, and in recent years he has concentrated on rural development issues. This work is highly cited around the world.

Fluent in Chinese, he is also regarded as one of the outstanding speakers and teachers of the language in Australia. His teaching has encompassed China's economic and social history, Chinese politics, the Chinese economy and the Chinese language.

Andrew's work demonstrates his great capacity to work across disciplines and to combine their insights with his ability in the Chinese language. He has also been able to bring together researchers in teams from China and Australia to produce work of global quality. A key feature of his work is his ability to provide a rich analytical structure but also to tell a story that communicates to the reader and which synthesises a large body of material.

These capabilities have further added to the impact of Andrew's work on society. In Australia, he has been a member of the Board of the Australia China Council under the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. He has been President of the Chinese Studies Association of Australia, and was a member of the Australian Research Council, Asian Studies and Social Sciences Panels. He has acted as a consultant to industry and government on issues related to China.

In his role at the Ford Foundation in China he administered a large grant program in the fields of law and rights, environment and development, educational development, governance and public policy, civil society, international relations and sexuality and reproductive health. He worked actively on the role of NGOs in China. He guided the transition of the Foundation program from its original economics focus to a wider social portfolio.

I am very pleased and proud to present to you Chancellor, for admission to the honorary degree of Doctor of Arts (honoris causa) — Professor Andrew Watson.