Prof Chan's Speech at University of Warwick

Vice-Chancellor

Honoured guests, delighted parents and family members

Graduands, ladies and gentlemen

I am very honoured to be associated with the University of Warwick. Thank you for conferring on me the Honorary Doctor of Laws today. Warwick and Singapore were both established in the same year. The university received the Royal Charter of Incorporation in 1965. Singapore became independent in 1965. We are both 50 years old this year. Warwick has built a strong reputation as an academic institution. Singapore has emerged as a highly successful city state, and a global city. Many students from Singapore choose to study in the University of Warwick. Today we have some 298 students pursuing different courses.

I am not the first Singaporean to be awarded an honorary degree from this university but I'm probably the first Singapore woman to be so honoured.

It is a statement of how forward-thinking the University of Warwick is to have a political scientist, receive the honorary award at the graduation ceremony of the Department of Engineering and the Warwick Manufacturing Group. It speaks to your understanding that technology and manufacturing need to partner with the arts and social sciences.

Steve Jobs at the launch of iPad2 told his audience, "It is in Apple's DNA that technology alone is not enough – It is technology married with liberal arts, married with humanities that yields us the results that make our hearts sing." Many of you here would know that Steve Jobs dropped out of Reed College in his freshman year to audit classes in calligraphy. He said he learned about serif and sans-serif typefaces, about varying the amount of space between letter combinations, about what makes great typography great. And he said later

when he was designing the Mac it all came back to him. He reflected that if he never took the course, the Mac would never have had multiple typefaces or proportionally spaced fonts.

What set Jobs companies apart, from Pixar to NeXT to Apple was the insistence that computer scientists must work with artists and designers.

And Business Insider tells us that major corporations and tech giants are increasingly hiring anthropologists. Google hired an ethnographer to find out the meaning of mobile. Intel has an in-house cultural anthropologist, and Microsoft is said to be the largest employer of anthropologists in the world.

In my work today, in the Lee Kuan Yew Center for Innovative Cities, in the Singapore University of Technology and Design I work with engineers, architects, computer scientists, urban planners, and other social scientists. Our work is multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary. We are able to move from the university to the policy world and our proposals are innovative, implementable and people-oriented.

All this is to share with you so that as you go forward if you have not already come to this thought, that you should have among your friends and in your creative team those who have studied other disciplines and the arts and social sciences make very stimulating and enriching company.