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## USM TO FOCUS ON BALANCED EDUCATION



USM, PENANG, 24 October 2016 – Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) would focus on nurturing balanced graduates who have acquired knowledge and are well-developed in character, and able to integrate the Sciences and the Arts in a holistic manner.

The USM Vice-Chancellor, Professor Datuk Dr. Asma Ismail said that, in facing the current challenges, the entire USM community needs to remember the basis and fundamentals of its establishment, in being different from other universities with its 'School' system and emphasizing on transdisciplinary studies as a form of enriching the students' knowledge based on values such as morals, ethics, integrity, and professionalism.



She was addressing the 275 graduands in the First Session of the 54<sup>th</sup> USM Convocation Ceremony presided by the USM Chancellor, HRH Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin Ibni Al-Marhum Tuanku Syed Putra Jamalullail.

Also in attendance was the Raja Perempuan Perlis, HRH Tuanku Tengku Fauziah binti Al-Marhum Tengku Abdul Rashid.

"I am aware of the rapid advancement in technology, and how it affects our daily lives, especially in areas of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) which have had a major impact on the development of the economy, industry, politics and other aspects of life."



"Recently I had the opportunity to witness a theatrical dance performance presented by a multiracial group of students from the fields of the arts and sciences, which best reflects the DNA of USM in emphasizing the concept of cooperation among the different disciplines, all working together towards excelling in a project with the spirit of 1 Malaysia regardless of ethnicity.

"In fact it showed the reality of having the presence of arts in the sciences and the sciences in the arts, with the integration of both to ensure that the Apex University graduands are unique and in a class of its own, holistic and balanced in terms of character and knowledge," said Asma.



She further explained that, USM continues to view the harmonious integration between the arts and the sciences as a strength. The University would continue to focus on the Sciences, Medicine and Health, Technology and Computer Science and also the many fields of Engineering, while putting equal emphasis on the development of the soul and humanity in the fields of the Arts, Literature, Music, Social Sciences, Management and Communication.

“This is to ensure that USM would continue to churn out graduates who can think critically and able to solve problems, who would excel in the aspects of “Hi-Tech” as well as in the “Hi-Touch” areas of spiritual development. We need to pursue the agenda of ensuring that in the Sciences, there will be the Arts, Literature and the cultures, and vice versa,” she said.

“We are not just talking about the development of knowledge in STEM – Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics but on STEAM, with an ‘A’ there to represent the non-Science component, which is “Arts”. This is why the university needs to be relevant, referred and respected with students who are learned, exemplary in developing a civil society, of good character and refined.”

“We would proceed with this agenda by aligning our focus and planning with the Malaysian Education Development Plan – Higher Education (PPPM-PT) in its implementation,” stressed Asma further.

Also present at the ceremony were the USM Pro-Chancellors, Tan Sri Datuk Mustafa Mansur and Tan Sri Dr. M. Jegathesan; Chairman of the USM Board of Governors, Tan Sri Dr. Zulkefli A. Hassan; former USM Vice-Chancellor who is currently the President of USM Alumni Association, Tan Sri Dzulkefli Abdul Razak and his predecessor, former USM Vice-Chancellor, Professor Dato’ Dr. Ishak Tambi Kechik.

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