**Citation – Associate Professor Ross Steele AM**

Tuesday, 19 April 2022, 2.30pm

Chancellor, it gives me great pleasure to present Associate Professor Ross Steele AM to you for admission to the title of Honorary Fellow for his distinguished career in the Sydney Arts scene and for his eminent history with the University of Sydney that spans over 60 years.

Ross commenced his journey with the University as a student, graduating with a Bachelor of Arts in 1960. As a talented alumnus with a keen aptitude for the French language, Ross has been a proud ambassador of the University’s purpose for education and tradition of academic excellence.

Over the course of his career, Ross has published more than thirty books on the topic of France and has held teaching positions at several prestigious institutions including the Paris-Sorbonne University, the University of New South Wales, Harvard University, and the University of Sydney. It was at the University of Sydney that he was appointed an Associate Professor of French.

Ross’s passion for linguistics and teaching methodology continues to touch the lives of students and scholars who attend the University today. During the 1960s and 1970s, he worked alongside a group of fellow Sydney graduates to reinvent the way French was taught at a tertiary level. The group included the late Judith Robinson-Valery and Ross Chambers, and they celebrated the ‘French Revolution’ as a period of pedagogical innovation that holds ongoing relevance to the modern curriculum of the University of Sydney’s nation-leading Department of French Studies.

During his time as a member of staff, Ross helped to establish and lead a variety of academic committees centred around the topic of applied linguistics. In 1976, Ross co-founded the Applied Linguistics Association of Australia and held the position of President until 1993. During this time, Ross was also Vice-President of the International Association of Applied Linguistics for six years followed by Co‑ordinator of Scientific Commissions for a further six years. In recognition of his immense contributions to the space, he was awarded the title of Honorary Associate Professor of the School of Languages of Cultures upon his retirement from the University of Sydney.

As the recipient of the 2008 Sydney Alumni Award for Community Achievement, Ross’s service to the University has also extended beyond the realms of academia. Over the years, he has offered his time and energy as a volunteer to a range of organisations, including at the University of Sydney Alumni Council and the Sydney University Arts Association, where he acted as honorary treasurer.

Ross has represented the University on an international scale by mediating discussions on mutual interests between France and Australia, which earned him multiple prestigious French honours. He also received the Centenary of Federation Medal from the Australian government in 2003 and was inducted as a Member of the Order of Australia in 2006.

Despite his decorated profile, Ross has continued to contribute to the University of Sydney as a humble friend. He was welcomed into the Challis Bequest Society in 2015 for his generous decision to establish postgraduate travel scholarships at the University through a gift in his Will.

In addition to this, Ross cemented himself as an ally of the University’s Advancement Portfolio and acted as a fierce advocate for the University during its Inspired campaign. Most notably, Ross played a central role in facilitating the ground-breaking donation made by Susan and Isaac Wakil to establish the Susan Wakil Health Building. As a dear friend of Susan and Isaac who understood their vision for the future of healthcare and education, Ross voluntarily connected the Wakils to the University. In doing so, he demonstrated an unwavering trust in the University’s capability to deliver the desired goals of its most gracious benefactors.

Recently, Ross represented the interests of the University through his involvement with the Chau Chak Wing Museum. Following its public opening in November 2020, Ross has selflessly offered his time, expertise, and pre-eminent status in the Sydney arts scene to foster links between the Museum and the wider community. His promotion of its collections and encouragement of staff have undoubtedly been factors in the Museum’s rapid success.

Chancellor, I present Associate Professor Ross Steele AM for admission to the title of Honorary Fellow and invite you to confer the title upon him that recognises his devotion to the University of Sydney and the way in which he represents its institutional purposes as a dedicated alumnus, member of staff, volunteer, philanthropist, and close friend.