

Citation for Professor Kevin O'Brien

Chancellor, I am pleased to present Professor Kevin Patrick O'Brien to you for the title of 'Professor Emeritus'.

In a career spanning four decades, Professor O'Brien has provided educational leadership in the service of students within this State, across Australia, and internationally.

Professor O'Brien retired in February this year as Pro Vice Chancellor and Vice President of the Division of Business and Enterprise within the University of South Australia. He has worked for the University and its predecessor institutions since the late 1960s.

Born in Kapunda, South Australia, Professor O'Brien attended Pinkerton Plains Primary School and Saint Ignatius. After leaving school he joined the Reserve Bank of Australia where he worked for 9 years, including a period in Sydney in the research department. He completed a Bachelor of Economics (Hons) at the University of Adelaide in 1969 and later studied in Scotland, completing a Master of Science (Economics) at the University of Stirling in 1977.

Professor O'Brien joined the South Australian Institute of Technology as a Lecturer in Economics in 1969 and held Senior Lecturer positions before becoming Head of the School of Accountancy in 1987.

Following the establishment of the University in 1991, Professor O'Brien became the inaugural Dean of the Faculty of Business and Management. In 1996 he acted as Deputy Vice Chancellor and in 1998, was appointed Pro Vice Chancellor of the Division of Business and Enterprise.

His other roles have included:

- Chair and Board member of ITEK, the University's commercialisation company
- Chair of the GTA Board, a wholly owned subsidiary of ITEK, and
- Chair of the University's Academic Board.

Since its establishment, the University has lived in turbulent times which have included quite savage cuts to University budgets enacted by the Commonwealth in recent years. Surviving and thriving in this environment has required a vision which encompasses new directions, involving committed staff who are willing to innovate and entrepreneurial activities couched in a strong risk management framework.

Professor O'Brien's record as a Dean and Pro Vice Chancellor illustrates his leadership in these exciting times, building a stronger and more cohesive Division of Business and Enterprise while never losing sight of the broader goals of the University.

As a senior manager, Professor O'Brien's contribution has been critical to the success of both the Division and the University in the past decade. He has sympathetically and intelligently sought and appointed academic leaders in the Division, encouraged innovation in research and academic programs and pioneered the delivery of transnational education.

He has networked untiringly and successfully with South Australian business leaders, and represented the Division and the University internationally with panache and authority.

During his time with the University, Professor O'Brien has also engaged in a number of significant research and consulting activities:

- supervising several Doctor of Business Administration candidates,
- refereeing contributions for Australian Economic Papers and Accounting Forum
- serving on the Editorial Board of the PanPacific Management Review, and
- publishing widely – including authoring and co-authoring two textbooks.

Professor O'Brien's contribution to teaching and research, to the business profession and to the University of South Australia and its antecedent institutions has been outstanding. He is trusted and respected by his colleagues nationally and has contributed to critical reviews, course accreditation panels and promotions committees in a number of universities. By any measure he has come a long way from Pinkerton Plains Primary.

Chancellor, it gives me great pleasure to present to you Kevin Patrick O'Brien for the title of "Professor Emeritus".