

Department of Political Science

Commencement Dinner 2013: Brief Report

For this year's commencement, in addition to the traditional group photo session at the University Cultural Centre, the Department hosted an informal dinner for graduates and their parents. The event was organized by a committee chaired by Prof Hussin Mutalib, who is also the departmental alumni representative.

The event took place shortly after the commencement ceremony at UCC. The venue was the patio beside the U-Town Education Resource Centre, beneath one of U-Town's magnificent heritage trees. We arranged for buses to transport our guests from UCC to U-Town starting from 6 pm. To entertain early arrivals, as well as to set a casual mood of the occasion, we invited guests to pose for playful shots at our *Instant Photo Booth*, with fanciful props provided by the vendor. Those who did were given sets of photos as a memento.

Our Head, Prof Terry Nardin, provided a brief welcome address, followed immediately by a catered halal buffet dinner. After dinner, Prof Hussin invited any graduate who wished to do so to say a few informal words, and many accepted his invitation. Besides expressing their gratitude to the Department for organizing the event, the speakers spoke warmly of their fellow students, their lecturers and tutors, and their experiences as Political Science majors at NUS. A few family members also shared their appreciation.

We estimate that about 140 people attended the dinner. Considering that this was the Department's first effort of this kind in recent memory, the event went well. It was warmly received even though, or perhaps because, it was a simple and modest one. It was, however, carefully planned and executed. For example, we brightened the venue by using inexpensive Japanese lanterns from Ikea. Our office staff and student helpers, many of whom were also on duty at UCC, performed outstandingly well throughout the day and evening. We conducted a debriefing to identify problems to fix before next year's event, which we expect to be on a slightly larger scale.



Welcoming our graduands to the commencement dinner!



Prof Nardin gave a welcome address to the graduates and their guests.



Graduates shared their thoughts on graduating and the fond memories they had of their undergraduate days.

