

University of Turku Held its Doctoral Degree Ceremony on May 22, 2009

SIRKKU PELTONEN
Country Editor, Finland

Professor Jouni Uitto received the isignia (the hat, the sword and the diploma) of the Honorary Doctor at the yearly ceremony in Turku, Finland.

University of Turku held its doctoral degree ceremony in Turku Concert Hall on May 22, 2009, when 168 doctoral degrees were awarded. In addition, 17 Honorary Doctors were nominated. Professor Jouni Uitto from the Department of Dermatology, Thomas Jefferson University, Philadelphia, USA was one of the distinguished scientists to receive the signs of the Honorary Doctor: the hat, the sword and the diploma.

The doctoral sword stands for truth; it is a weapon of the mind to sharply defend what is true, right and good in the doctor's research. Prior to the formal degree ceremony, the swords are sharpened using an old grindstone.

This is a tradition founded in 1640 by the Swedish queen Christina.



Fig. 1. Professor Jouni Uitto received the signs of the Honorary Doctor: the hat, the sword and the diploma. (Photo: University of Turku)



Fig. 2. Professor Jouni Uitto sharpening his sword with the assistance of his wife Elaine Tan (*left*) and University students. (Photo: Veli-Matti Kähäri)