



December 13, 2018

Professor Judea Pearl
Cognitive Systems Lab, 4532 Boelter Hall
Computer Science Department
University Of California, Los Angeles, 404 Westwood Plaza, Los Angeles, CA 90095
USA
Email: judea@cs.ucla.edu

Dear Professor Pearl,

It is an honor and pleasure to inform you that the Senate of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, at its meeting on November 21st, 2018, resolved to confer upon you the degree of *Doctor Philosophiae Honoris Causa* of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

In making its decision, the Senate wishes to acknowledge your work over the years in providing principled and effective methods for probabilistic reasoning in intelligent systems. Prior to your work, the dominant approaches to machine intelligence either used deterministic, logic-based, rules or were based on a very crude approximation to probabilistic reasoning. In your work, you not only made a clear and convincing argument for the need to endow robots with the ability to reason with uncertainty, but you also showed the dangers of using non-probabilistic formalisms. In particular, you pointed out two major shortcomings of the connectionist approach: the lack of ability to model “explaining away” and the danger of “self-reinforcing rumors”. The formalism which you introduced, Bayesian Networks, laid the foundation for what is now called “modern Artificial Intelligence” and the methods which you pioneered within that formalism have since been used in a wide range of additional disciplines. You have followed up this groundbreaking work with a brilliant formalism that aims to rigorously define the distinction between causation and correlation, a question that has vexed philosophers and scientists for many years. Finally, as a university located in Jerusalem, the Senate wishes to signal its support and appreciation for the message of tolerance and respect which you and your wife Ruth have promoted via your work with the Daniel Pearl Foundation.

The Honorary Degree Ceremony will take place at the annual Convocation on Monday, June 17th, 2019, at the Rothberg Amphitheater on the Mount Scopus campus, Jerusalem. The Division for Advancement and External Relations will be in contact with you regarding the ceremony.

Please accept our most sincere congratulations on this well-deserved honor. We look forward to welcoming you in Jerusalem.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Asher Cohen
President

Professor Barak Medina
Rector