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**COLLEGE of BASIC AND APPLIED SCIENCES  
PROCEEDINGS OF CONGREGATION  
JULY 22, 2016**

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## **ORDER OF PROCEEDINGS**

**Friday, July 22, 2016, 2.00 a.m.**

### **Procession**

The Congregation is asked to stand

National Anthem

### **Welcome/Declaration of Purpose:**

Professor Samuel Kofi Date-Bah, Chairman of Council

**Vice-Chancellor's Address:** Prof. Ernest Aryeetey, Vice-Chancellor

**Guest Speaker:** Mrs. Cecilia Afua Lodonu-Senoo

Conferment of Degrees: Presentation of graduands

- |         |       |         |          |
|---------|-------|---------|----------|
| • PhD   | • MSc | • MBChB | • BPharm |
| • MPhil | • MPH | • BDS   | BSc      |

**Valedictory Address:** Mr. Emmanuel Boadi Amofo

Chairman of Council dissolves Congregation

University Anthem

The Congregation is asked to remain seated until all officials and graduands have left the Hall.

**OPENING ADDRESS BY PROFESSOR SAMUEL KOFI DATE-BAH,  
CHAIRMAN OF COUNCIL OF THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA**

Hon. Minister for Education  
Members of the University Council,  
Vice-Chancellor,  
Guest Speaker,  
Members of the Advisory Board of the College of Basic and Applied Sciences,  
Members of Convocation,  
Staff and Students,  
Alumni,  
Graduands,  
Invited Guests,  
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

On behalf of His Excellency Mr. Kofi Annan, Chancellor of the University, I welcome you all warmly to this morning's ceremony. I also extend Mr. Annan's greetings and best wishes to all of you gathered here on this important occasion.

This ceremony is part of the first set of congregation ceremonies for the 2015-16 cohort of graduating students; the second set of ceremonies will be held in November. The 2015-16 cohort of students is the second to be graduated since the University of Ghana adopted the collegiate system of governance; the sessions have therefore been organised, college by College.

I take the opportunity to wish the graduands, who are being presented today, the very best on this very important occasion. We share in your joy on the successful completion of your programmes of study and we are very proud of you.

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, I am delighted to declare this morning's assembly, duly constituted for the award of degrees and diplomas of the University of Ghana to successful graduands.

It is customary for the Vice-Chancellor to give a report, at Congregation, on developments in the University over the last academic year. I invite the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Ernest Aryeetey, to present his report to congregation.

## **VICE-CHANCELLOR'S ADDRESS AT CONGREGATION BY PROFESSOR ERNEST ARYEETEEY**

Your Lordship Justice Samuel Date-Bah, Chairman of the University Council;  
Members of the University Council;  
Pro-Vice Chancellors  
Registrar;  
Provosts;  
Our distinguished Guest Speaker;  
Members of the College Advisory Boards;  
Your Excellencies, Members of the Diplomatic Corps;  
Members of Convocation;  
Niime, Naame, Nananom;  
Invited Guests;  
Parents and Guardians;  
Graduating Students;  
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen;

### **Welcome**

It is my pleasant duty to warmly welcome you to today's congregation ceremony. This is the first of two sets of graduating ceremonies for students who completed their studies in the 2015/2016 academic year. The second set of ceremonies will be in November 2016. A total of four ceremonies will be held over two days to award degrees and diplomas to a total of 3590 students graduating from our four Colleges. The graduating students are made up of 2142 diplomates and undergraduates and 1448 post graduates. The post graduates include 57 new PhDs, many of whom are staff of the University. I take this opportunity to congratulate students, faculty and other employees whose hard work and commitment have made this possible.

### **State of the University**

Chairman of Council, as I leave office as Vice-Chancellor at the end of July, I would like to use this occasion to give an overview of the state of the University of Ghana over the period of my stewardship. It has been six years since my induction into office as Vice-Chancellor, and in my induction speech, I spelt out a vision of what I felt needed to be done to make the University of Ghana a world-class university. Since then, I have worked with colleagues, students and stakeholders of

this University in order to make this vision a reality. I appreciate the very significant contribution that the University Council has made in this endeavour, providing advice and taking difficult decisions. The support received from other members of University Management is most appreciated. The Business and Executive Committee and the Academic Board have been extremely helpful as sounding boards for many initiatives.

Chairman of Council, ladies and gentlemen, I will touch on the seven areas identified in my vision statement, steps taken in pursuit of the vision, what has been achieved and what remains to be achieved. The areas are:

- Promoting Academic Excellence through Enhanced Teaching and Learning and Leadership Training
- Promoting Academic Excellence through Significantly Expanded and Relevant Research and Extension
- Overhaul of Governance Arrangements in Administration, Teaching, and Research
- Better Management of University Assets and Facilities
- Scale-up Efforts Towards Equal Opportunity in Gender Diversity
- Enhanced Fund-Raising Activities at Unit and Central Administration Levels
- Mainstream and Enforced Structures and Processes for Monitoring and Evaluation

## **PROMOTING ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE THROUGH ENHANCED TEACHING, LEARNING AND LEADERSHIP TRAINING**

The University has pushed steadily towards significant improvements in teaching and learning, with a major concentration on quality assurance and the provision of new equipment. These efforts have been rewarded with significant improvement in the performance of students and faculty.

### **UG Rankings Improve Significantly**

In the most recent Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings, The University of Ghana is ranked 7th in Africa, making us the highest ranked university in the West African sub-region. The rankings take into consideration teaching (the learning environment), research (volume, income and reputation), citations (research influence), industry income (knowledge transfer), and international outlook (staff, students and research). It is important to observe that

UG rankings have consistently improved across all the major ranking organizations, and I acknowledge the hard work of all who have contributed to our rise in the rankings.

### **Development of Guidelines for Promotion of Academic Senior Members**

The Basic Laws of the University required the University Appointments Board to develop guidelines for the promotion of all categories of staff. In line with the requirement, Management appointed a Committee of Experts to propose appropriate guidelines for consideration by the University Appointments Board, Academic Board and University Council. Council has approved the implementation of the guidelines for promotion of academic senior members, and Management is putting in place measures to ensure the implementation of the guidelines.

### **New Structure of PhD Programmes**

A new structure for PhD programmes in the university came into effect from the 2013/2014 academic year. The key additions to the programme are compulsory course work, a year of practical research training on a project, and a formal defense of research proposals. The idea is to give UG PhD programmes a clearer structure while making them internationally competitive. The number of PhD programmes has risen sharply and so has the number of PhD students.

### **Publication of Readers**

As part of the efforts to enhance the quality of teaching at the University of Ghana, and to aid accessibility to published historical material, management supported the development of “Readers” or collections of related essays on a discipline or sub-discipline. The exercise which was to mark the University of Ghana's 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, has so far resulted in 44 Readers being published, with another 12 in the pipeline. The project has been the most significant initiative at book publication in any African university so far. The books should provide very useful reading material for our students and other African students.

### **Procurement of Science Equipment**

In 2011, management developed a programme for the acquisition of modern equipment for the various units of the University undertaking scientific research. Under this programme, a GC Mass Spectrophotometer was acquired, and a nitrogen plant was installed at Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research for the use of scientists in the University. XRD equipment was installed at the Departments of Physics and Chemistry, and NMR equipment installed at the

Department of Chemistry. Additional equipment for general purpose use in the sciences was also procured. In 2015 a new programme for the acquisition of additional science equipment with a focus on Engineering and Health Sciences was initiated. The total outlay for the purchase of science equipment so far is estimated at \$7.5 million.

### **ICT Based Distance Education Project (Chinese Phase 2 Project)**

Ladies and Gentlemen, in April 2010, a contract was signed between the University of Ghana and Unisplendour Software Company for the implementation of an ICT Based Distance Education Project. All the deliverables of the project have been completed and equipment and facilities acquired as part of the project are currently in use.

As part of the project, an Integrated Digital Mobile Learning Platform has been deployed for Distance Education students, providing a convenient and secure environment for learning and real-time interaction between faculty of the School of Continuing and Distance Education and their students. Further to this initiative, the Sakai eLearning Software for Collaboration and Learning has also been deployed on UG servers for module creation by faculty and staff. This is currently being used by faculty as a major tool for providing eLearning to students on the Distance Education programme.

Also under the project, Regional Learning Centers have been refurbished and fitted with computer laboratories, video conference rooms, and smart classrooms. Additionally, under the project, machinery for a new printing press has been delivered for installation.

### **Improvements in ICT Infrastructure**

A fiber network has been deployed on the main Legon Campus as well as the City and Korle-bu campuses, to extend internet connectivity to academic buildings and student residential halls. A major Wi-Fi deployment has been completed on the main campus so that faculty and staff to give access to network resources anywhere on campus.

The Livestock and Poultry Research Centre (LIPREC) in Nungua, Soil and Irrigation Research Centre (SIREC) in Kpong, and the Forest and Horticultural Crops Research Centre (FOHCREC) in Kade, have all been connected by fiber to the main campus.

Other work done in the field of ICT infrastructure includes:

- An upgrade of the University of Ghana Data Centre and the deployment of a Private Cloud Infrastructure with data storage of 120Terrabytes and 240 MW standby power from two generators
- The increase of bandwidth from 2 STMs (300Mega) to 5 STMs (750Mbps)
- The establishment of a secondary Disaster Recovery (DR) Data Centre with backup storage of 120Terrabytes and a capability for real time data replication between primary and backup data centres.
- The deployment of a foundation infrastructure for a High Performance Computing Cluster to provide the needed computer resources to support research simulations and processing of complex algorithms.

A Computerized Integrated Hospital Information System was implemented on the back of a revamped, robust network infrastructure. Also, we have begun the move towards the use of tablets for Board and Committee business, to reduce the University's paper consumption and improve its carbon footprints credentials. Discussions are underway with a service provider to reach agreement for special discount pricing to support University-wide rollout of the initiative.

### **Major Physical/Infrastructure Developments**

A number of major physical development projects were either initiated or restarted during my tenure and are in different stages of completion. These include:

- Redesigning and naming of major intersections
- Completion of Crèche
- Construction of Small Animal Teaching Hospital
- Asphaltic overlay of selected roads and construction of pedestrian walkways
- Construction of offices and laboratories for School of Pharmacy
- Extension to Department of Earth Science
- Refurbishment of Cafeteria at the Korle- Bu campus
- Renovation of Staff Bungalows
- Construction of Ph.D Building
- Construction of Climate Change and Sustainable Development Building

- Construction of Graduate Block for Business School
- Construction of Banking Square
- Construction of major entrance gates with access control
- Extension to Nutrition and Food Science Department
- Restoration of University's main entrance
- Construction of Staff Canteen at Registry
- Renovation of Students' Hostels at Korle Bu campus
- Construction of Office Extension to PDMSD
- Construction of New Comfort Zone
- Construction of 8 New Units for Staff Village
- Extensions to UG Hospital
- Construction of new Auditorium for Economics Department by Bank of Ghana
- Completion of GCB Complex
- Completion of ISSER Conference Centre

### **Rehabilitation and Decongestion of Halls of Residence**

The process of decongesting halls of residence started in the 2011/2012 academic year, with major rehabilitation work done in the halls of residence. This included the refurbishment of Dining Halls and the acquisition of generators for halls of residence. Additionally, security in the halls of residence was stepped up, and students were issued with new ID Cards with security features to reduce the number of unauthorized persons entering student facilities for unlawful purposes.

Students testify that they are now more comfortable and feel more secure, and that their rooms and the halls of residence in general are now more conducive and enable them to enjoy the right frame of mind for academic work.

### **PROMOTING ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE THROUGH SIGNIFICANTLY EXPANDED AND RELEVANT RESEARCH AND EXTENSION**

Ladies and Gentlemen, the Office of Research, Innovation and Development (ORID) was established in 2010 to promote and manage research in the University and also help raise the profile of research, as part of the effort to transform UG into a world-class research-led institution. In 2011, the first substantive Pro-Vice Chancellor for Research, Innovation and Development was appointed to help in re-shaping and enhancing the research profile of the University.

Since the establishment of ORID, remarkable gains have been made in terms of research at the University, key among them being the enhancement of the UG Grants portfolio, which is funded entirely from Internally Generated Funds (IGF); policies that govern the conduct of research have been developed and approved; the establishment of a technology transfer office which is shaping the manner in which the University engages with industry, capacity building initiatives for faculty, staff and students, research uptake and dissemination of research to make research by UG faculty more visible to the public. Also, with the appointment of Research Development Officers, ORID is now able to capture more data on proposals being submitted from the various units of the University as well as provide grants management services to faculty members.

In making a case for transforming Legon into a Research University, the University has developed four centres of excellence with a focus on four distinct thematic areas:

- Malaria Research
- Enhancing Food Production and Food Processing
- Trans-Disciplinary Research into Climate Change Adaptation
- Development Policy and Poverty Monitoring and Evaluation

Working Groups for research in the four thematic areas have been set up and provide a multidisciplinary research platform to foster collaboration among researchers from various Colleges, Schools and Institutes of the University, as well as other institutions, so as to move forward the growth and development agenda of Ghana and the wider world. In the 2014/2015 academic year, each of the four Centres of Excellence was given one million Ghana cedis as seed money for its research/operations. Since then, a number of them have been able to mobilize additional funding for research work.

Other structures and policies put in place to enhance research include:

- i. Incentives for productive staff including paid visits to established research centres in the developed world, travel and accommodation funds to attend conferences and present papers etc.
- ii. Continuous capacity enhancement and mentoring programmes
- iii. Research environment and infrastructural enhancement
- iv. Creation of congenial environment for intellectual freedom
- v. Monitoring and evaluation of research practice

- vi. Work experience, community service and industrial involvement
- vii. Increase in proportion of graduate students

Applications for support for faculty research from internally generated funds are accepted in 3 grant categories with ceilings of GH¢7500 for seed grants, GH¢40,000 for Investigator-led grants, and GH¢120,000 for Large Multi-disciplinary grants.

From 2008 to date, a total of 182 grants have been awarded from Internally Generated Funds, with a total amount of GHS 5,098,254.00 all. Out of this number, 95 have been successfully completed.

External Research funding in the University in the 2014/2015 academic year came up to a total of GH¢52,524,883.11, and in the 2015/2016 academic year, we have so far recorded research funding of GH¢11,062,698.30.

ORID is involved in the administration of various capacity building initiatives, such as the Intra-ACP projects, TDR International Postgraduate Training Scheme (2015 – 2019), Cambridge-Africa Partnership for Research Excellence (CAPREx) and, Building Stronger Universities in Developing Countries (BSU) Initiative (Phase 1 & 2).

The University of Ghana was selected by the World Bank to receive a total of USD 16 million to enable it to establish the West Africa Centre for Cell Biology of Infectious Pathogens (WACCBIP) and also to Develop the West Africa Centre for Crop Improvement (WACCI) into an African Centre of Excellence for training plant breeders, seed scientists and seed technologists. WACCBIP will provide Masters, PhD and Post-doctoral level training, and conduct research focused on cell and molecular biology of common diseases such as malaria and tuberculosis while WACCI is to be developed as a sustainable Centre of Excellence to train more plant breeders who will develop superior climate-smart and resilient varieties of staple crops of the West African sub-region as a means of increasing productivity. The two projects are expected to be implemented over a three year period.

## **OVERHAUL OF GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS**

A significant recommendation of the Visitation Panel which reviewed the work of the University in 2006 and 2007 was for the university to reconsider its governance arrangements with a view to enhancing effectiveness and efficiency. Taking a cue from this, a number of initiatives have been undertaken.

### **The Collegiate System**

Following the acceptance of the report of the Governance Review Committee, which suggested that the University of Ghana should take a definite decision on whether to adopt the collegiate system, the Executive Committee in April 2011 appointed consultants to study in detail the collegiate system and other systems of university governance and advise on the model best suited to the needs of the University of Ghana. After extensive consultations, the University Council approved the adoption of a decentralized system of administration under four colleges, Health Sciences; Humanities, Education and Basic and Applied Sciences; starting from the 2014/2015 academic year. The Colleges are each headed by a Provost, with Departments grouped into Schools, each headed by a Dean.

The collegiate system is intended to decentralize the academic and management functions of the university, and to make the process of decision making shorter and more structured. The leadership of the various colleges have been given adequate leeway to facilitate decision making at the college-level, and to boost financial autonomy. In terms of administrative structures, many of the functions previously carried out at the centre are now being done at the College or School level. All of these are with the aim of ensuring less complexity in decision-making processes, and providing prompt and efficient service to all our stakeholders.

The four Colleges are each doing very well, and a thorough review of the system will be conducted at the end of three years.

## **BETTER MANAGEMENT OF UNIVERSITY ASSETS AND FACILITIES**

Ladies and gentlemen, the approach to enhancing the management of the University's assets and facilities has involved the reorganization of the Physical Development and Municipal Services Directorate to provide for additional qualified professionals to take responsibility for the management of the



Justice Prof. S. K. Date-Bah, Chairman of Council delivering his Welcome Address



Professor Ernest Aryeetey, Vice-Chancellor, addressing the gathering



**Professor John Ofosu-Anim, Dean, School of Agriculture, acknowledging international students of the College**



**Mrs. Mercy Haziell-Ashia, Registrar, delivering the Opening Remarks at the ceremony**



**Mrs. Angela Kyerematen-Jimoh delivering her Address**



**Mr. Michael Siaw Larbi, delivering the Valedictory Address**



**Graduands being congratulated by Officials and Dignitaries**



**Graduands seated at the Congregation ceremony**



Some parents, guardians and invited guests at the ceremony

University's assets and facilities. This has seen significant improvement in their management, with more timely interventions in the maintenance of facilities. The re-organisation of PDMSD is still on-going.

### **Master Plan, Africa Integras and Legon City Project**

Major initiatives undertaken in the last 6 years include the development of a master plan for the University, and the commencement of the Africa Integras and Legon City projects. The University of Ghana has struggled to hold on to lands that have been assigned to it for present and future use. The University's assets are threatened by rapid urbanization and the related rapidly growing demand for land in Accra. In the effort to ensure that the University derives as much benefit as possible from the land available to it, both for current and future purposes, the University is updating its master plan. This is intended to guide land use with a view to enhancing efficiency in the use of University of Ghana lands.

The Africa Integras project involves the construction of buildings for each of the 4 colleges, the Institute of Applied Science and Technology and residential facilities for students. When completed, the Africa Integras project would increase available floor space for academic work by 60% and effectively satisfy the University's space requirements for the next twenty years.

As part of the plans for Legon's future development, it is proposed to develop a modern mixed-use development on 100 acres of University land. in the Okponglo-Bawaleshie-Trinity Theological Seminary enclave to be known as "Legon City".

### **University of Ghana Medical Centre**

In June 2011, Cabinet gave approval for a loan facility from Israel for the design, construction, and installation of medical equipment for a 617-bed Teaching Hospital facility for the University of Ghana, at a total cost of USD217,000,000. Construction commenced in April 2013 and is expected to reach practical completion by the end of July 2016. As a turnkey project, the contractor is required to hand over a state-of-the-art hospital equipped for training of health professionals, research and service delivery at a quaternary level.

The project is being undertaken in 3 phases. In Phase 1, facilities for Surgery, Radiology, Internal Medicine, Pharmacy, Obstetrics & Gynaecology, Paediatrics, Anaesthesia, Medical Education, Accidents and Emergency Services, Laboratory Services, Mortuary, and Pain Management have been provided.

## **ENHANCE FUND-RAISING ACTIVITIES AT UNIT AND CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION LEVELS**

University Management worked closely with the Alumni Council to organize fund-raising events for projects initiated by the Council. Management also worked closely with the Students Financial Aid Office to raise funds for providing assistance to needy but brilliant students. The fund has grown steadily over the years, as has the number of individuals and corporate bodies contributing to the Academic Prizes Fund.

The University Council has approved the creation of an Office for Institutional Advancement for the University, and efforts have started for the recruitment of a Director and other staff for the unit.

## **MAINSTREAM AND ENFORCE STRUCTURES AND PROCESSES FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

### **University of Ghana Strategic Plan**

- The University has a new strategic plan for the period 2014 to 2024, which is to provide strategic direction to the University.

With a focus on nine strategic priorities:

- Research,
- Teaching & Learning ,
- Internal Stakeholders
- Gender & Diversity-
- Institutional Processes
- Financial Performance
- Asset Management
- Monitoring & Evaluation
- External Stakeholders;

and guided by the core values of Integrity, Commitment, Respect and Loyalty; the stage is set for the University of Ghana to take its rightful place as one of the best institutions of higher learning on the African continent, and to work toward becoming a world class- research intensive University.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I must say that I have had a very fulfilling tenure as Vice-Chancellor, and I leave it to you and to posterity to measure and assess my

performance.

To the Chancellor, the Chairman and members of the University Council, management, officers of the University, staff, successive student leaders and other stakeholders of this University, I owe a debt of gratitude to you for your support and commitment. As a University, we would not have been able to make the strides we have over the past six years without your commitment and support.

As Professor Ebenezer Oduro-Owusu takes office as Vice-Chancellor in a few days, I expect that you will all rally round him and offer the needed support to take the University of Ghana to the next level. Professor Oduro-Owusu, I wish you well as you take up the mantle.

### **Well Wishes to Graduands**

Now to our graduating students:

This is really your day, because you have worked hard, and you deserve every bit of the honour on this occasion. You are at the threshold of the next phase of your lives, which presents so many opportunities, yet so many challenges. Today's world offers young graduates so many potential positive outcomes, it also presents many pitfalls along the way. I urge you to take every situation as a learning opportunity; and exercise temperance in all your endeavours. Work hard, dream big, plan ahead and be ethical and honest in all your dealings, and you will be well on the way towards success. The future may not be given, but there are limitless opportunities out there. Go out, be innovative, and conquer the world.

I wish you all the very best.

Thank you all and God bless you.

**GUEST SPEAKER ADDRESS BY  
MRS. ANGELA KYEREMATEN-JIMOH**

The Chairman and Members of the University Council  
The Vice-Chancellor,  
Pro Vice-Chancellor  
Chairman and members of the College Advisory Board  
Guests  
Members of the Press,  
Proud Parents,  
Devoted Friends,  
Granduants

Congratulations to all of you- the lecturers, parents, siblings, faculty members and especially the graduating class of 2016

It's a great privilege to be here and indeed a great, great honor to be invited to deliver the keynote address on this great occasion. The university of Ghana has always been ahead of its times despite all the economic difficulties and setbacks in our environment. This university has produced heads of state, scholars, members of parliament, CEOs of multinational organizations, doctors, and this is just to name a few. In fact, it was ranked by the Times Higher Education World Rankings as the BEST UNIVERSITY IN GHANA AND THE 7<sup>TH</sup> in Africa in 2015. This is a highly commendable achievement and I take my hat off to the University of Ghana.

Today we are here to celebrate! To celebrate the hard work of you the graduates, the management team of this faculty, the administrators and all of you who have made today possible. Well done.

It is also a day to say thank you....to your parents who have nurtured you, to your lecturers who have taught you, to friends who have cheered you on, to loved ones who have dried your tears and last but not least to the Almighty God who has kept you safe and protected you throughout your studies on this campus.

A commencement speech, as it is known in other parts of the world, is meant to be a bridge between YOUTH and WISDOM. It is the beginning of a new era as you enter into the world of work. You will be delighted to know that henceforth the world expects more from you. You are the future leaders of this great nation.

For the ladies amongst you, the time has never been better to showcase your unique qualities to a world that is now increasingly appreciative of your abilities and skills. You have more and more role models to inspire you to soar to higher heights. These women have created the conducive environment for you to thrive. You have giants on whose shoulders you can stand and see even further, so take advantage of this and thrive, be successful, lean in, speak up and let your voices be heard.

My humble appeal to all of you is to strive to be relevant as you enter into this fast changing, competitive world. Dare to dream, be bold and relentlessly re-invent yourself. Be relevant not only in your immediate environment but to Ghana, to West Africa, to Africa and to the world in its entirety. You have in you what it takes to be the best of whatever you choose to become. Technology has made sure of that so take advantage of this.

The world today has become increasingly competitive. Technology has played a key role in advancing the world we currently live in. The abundance of data, 2.5million gigabytes of data being produced on a daily basis with 1 trillion devices connected has affected how decisions are made, value is created and how value is delivered. Disruptive technology such as Cloud, Analytics, Mobile, and Social has changed the world we live in. We have now moved into a cognitive era where computers can now Understand, Reason and Learn. And this is the beginning of many more things to come.

So the question is how do you become relevant in this very competitive world? How do you ensure that when others sit you stand, when others stand you stand out, when others stand out you become outstanding and when others become outstanding you become the standard? Ladies and gentlemen permit me to share with you some the lessons I have learnt.

You have to constantly and relentlessly keep reinventing yourself and you can only do this by continuously educating yourself, learning new things, being curious about the world you live you. Your studies will not end today as you graduate; the working world is a different kind of study field. The day you stop learning is the day you cease to become relevant. You should also learn to adapt to this changing world. You should be ready to step out of your comfort zone and take up new challenges. Let me share with you a bit of my story, my first degree was in Marketing and French and I ended up as a banker. Later on in my life when the opportunity presented itself I stepped out of my comfort zone and ended up in the

world of technology, 5 years on I have become the first female in the history of IBM to run a country in Africa.

This has however not been without some setbacks and challenges. In your quest to become relevant, in stepping out of your comfort zone you will face a lot of challenges. There will be that first job that won't work out, you may lose loved ones, you will apply for jobs and you could be turned down, the list goes on. The easy days will be easy; it will be the challenging days ahead of you, the ones that hit you in your very core that will determine what you are made of. You may not have control over how, where and when adversities come your way but how you respond is entirely in your control. How quickly you recover from adversity, pick up the pieces and move on show what stuff you are made of.

Today I would like to talk about what happens next, about some of the ways you can quickly overcome adversity no matter what form it takes and how hard it hits you. I am pleased to tell you there is data to learn from. Psychologist Martin Seligman found there are 3Ps that are critical to how you deal with setbacks and bounce back from hardship.

The 1<sup>st</sup> P is Personalization- the nagging feeling that you are at fault and that you are the biggest contributor to that setback. You spend so much time analysing what you could have done differently to avoid this setback, you blame yourself for this setback and you end up living the best part of your life wallowing in self-pity when in fact 90% of the time these setbacks may have been out of your control. Studies show that getting past personalisation can help you become a much stronger person. Students who failed an exam the first time but knew they could do better quickly adjusted their ways and ensured they excelled in future exams, athletes who underperformed but believed they were capable of doing better pulled themselves together quickly and went on to win medals and became relevant to the world. Not taking failures personal will allow you to recover quickly and even thrive!

The 2<sup>nd</sup> P is Pervasiveness- the false belief that one setback will affect all facets of your life. Do you see setbacks as global or specific? An example is when setbacks happen in your personal life, emphasise on your professional life which might still be rewarding and vice versa. When setbacks do happen look for the other positive aspects of your life, friends and family who are there to support us. Count your blessings in the face of setbacks. Learn to be grateful at all times and always look at the glass as being half full and not half empty. Only then will you build on your resilience and strive to thrive and be relevant.

The 3rd P is Permanence- the false belief that this setback will be permanent and that you will never get over it. When setbacks do happen know that nothing in this world is permanent. You will smile again, you will laugh again and you will love again.

Ladies and Gentlemen- these are the 3Ps that most researchers on dealing with setbacks will tell you about. However at this point I would also like to introduce you to the 4<sup>th</sup> P, my very own 4<sup>th</sup> P which I have learnt in my journey or my quest to become relevant.

I call the 4<sup>th</sup> P, PRAYER- this is accessing your spirituality. Prayers can sustain us in times of uncertainty and difficulty. When we feel like we don't have the physical, mental, or emotional strength to pull through, our faith in something more, whatever that may be gives us the energy we need to keep going.

Spirituality reminds us that we are a gift, and have gifts to offer the world. Our job right now is to discover these gifts and to remove the setbacks so we can give them to others in the future. Focusing on our spirituality and prayers allow us to see beyond setbacks and find a purpose for it.

Ladies and Gentlemen, if someone had shared this with me when I was your age, I would have been better prepared on my quest to become relevant when I left university. These 4Ps are common emotional reactions to all the setbacks that we may encounter in our private and professional lives. I have learnt that when setbacks do happen and life pulls you under, you can swim to the top and breathe again. I have learnt that building resilience by applying the 4Ps will help you better navigate your way when setbacks do happen. So future leaders of this great nation, go out and be relevant, relentlessly reinvent yourself, build resilience in yourselves and in your organizations. Know that when setbacks do happen you have more than what it takes to ride the storm. One of my favourite sayings these days is "with Christ in the Vessel, I smile at the storm." So go on and keep smiling at the storm. You have the whole world in front of you and I can't wait to see what you do with it. Lift each other up, help each other become relevant. Remember your families are counting on you, Ghana is counting on you!

Congratulations once again..

Long live the University of Ghana....

God bless Ghana

God bless Class of 2016

God bless us all.

## **VALEDICTORY SPEECH DELIVERED BY MR. JOSEPH OKAI**

Chairman of the University Council,  
Vice-Chancellor,  
Honourable Ministers of State and Members of Parliament,  
Pro Vice-Chancellors,  
Registrar,  
Provosts, Deans, Directors, Heads of Department, Senior Members and Other Staff,  
Special Invited Guests  
Parents and Guardians,  
Fellow Graduates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is an honour to stand before you as the valedictorian of the Graduating class of 2016 of the College of Basic and Applied Sciences. To begin with, Congratulations! fellow graduates. Every graduate here deserves high praise and recognition. Today we flip the page and mark the commencement of another chapter of our success story.

As I look out into the crowd before me, I sense a wave of emotions from everyone present; for family and friends, the sense of pride you have in your graduate's accomplishments is unmeasurable; for faculty, another class you have successfully educated and mentored throughout our time; for this great university, the leadership and the creation of yet a suitable aura for the accomplishment of success, we see all around us today. Yet nothing, nothing can match our mood at this moment.

We are most grateful to the Almighty God for everything He has done throughout the years and most importantly that our souls were not snatched by the cold hands of death. Thank you parents for being our coaches and providing for our needs through this arduous journey; thank you family for your support, thank you friends for being our teammates and partners along this journey; and thank you beloved lecturers and administrators for being our mentors.

Walt Disney once said “All our dreams can come true if we have the courage to pursue them”. Our dreams began when we gained admission into the University of Ghana some years ago. We pictured ourselves becoming the dream scientists, engineers, and teachers. We entered the confines of this great university longing to fulfil our dreams. My fellow graduates, it seems we arrived only yesterday and now

it's already time to leave. How did it all go so fast? It appears the years passed by like minutes and months like seconds. Just yesterday we were freshmen searching for our lecture rooms, forming serpentine queues to go through registration processes and the freshmen student medical examinations and listening attentively to the scary tales of our beloved lecturers that were retold continuously. The memories of the days still kept intact when the plague of *dumsor* engulfed our halls of residence and students' politics continued to have its impact on our lives.

We have all had our own unique experiences in this university; a combination of good and bad times, times of laughter and joy and of course, times of last minute studying for that examination we forgot was taking place the next day. I am sure we all remember the hectic days when we spent long hours after class trying to figure out how to complete our engineering drawing assignments and the shock on our faces when dozens of people were sacked from the school of engineering in the second (2) year. I also remember the tedious programming and presentations that we went through in Numerical methods and also listening to the tales of Jesus being a scientist and an extra-terrestrial being whilst trying to understand Laplace transforms in differential equations.

In Materials Science discipline we had the opportunity to learn about polymers, ceramics and composite materials and I remember the time we started studying the structures of poly (hydroxybutyrate – co- hydroxyhexanoate) and also watching videos of Material Analysis techniques only to find out that they could not be performed in the laboratory. I am sure my colleagues in the other Schools of the College went through similar experiences.

Today we take the final step in our university experience having survived all those examinations, lectures and research papers we thought we would never complete. Our hard work, long hours of studying and knowledge has finally paid off. We stand here today on the precipice of the future. It's not a distant reality anymore. It begins here. It begins today. It is time to take the knowledge we have acquired to the pursuit of our future endeavours. For some, that may be the continuation of their education, to others it is the start of their chosen profession. Some may also end up back here teaching. Whichever the case, I wish you all the happiness and fortune this life may bring.

Graduates it is time to throw up our hats, say farewell to University of Ghana and embrace our future aspirations. It is time to shape our lives to be the best that we can possibly be and to become role models for future generations. As Apostle Paul

said “I press toward the mark of a high calling” (Philippians 3:14). Let us therefore be tenacious about our future aspirations.

I would like to sign off with these words of wisdom that fill me with hope, courage, and happiness whenever I read them:

*"Work like you don't need the money*

*Love like you've never been hurt*

*And dance like no one's watching.*

*Happiness is a journey not a destination" (Unknown Author).*

Once again congratulations to the class of 2016, let's go forth into this world and do what we love and love what we do. Long live University of Ghana! Long Live Ghana! God bless us all

**THANK YOU!**

## **CLOSING REMARKS BY PROFESSOR SAMUEL KOFI DATE-BAH, CHAIRMAN OF COUNCIL OF THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA**

Hon. Minister for Education  
Members of the University Council,  
Vice-Chancellor,  
Guest Speaker,  
Members of the Advisory Board of the College of Basic and Applied Sciences  
Members of Convocation,  
Staff and Students,  
Alumni,  
Fresh Graduates,  
Invited Guests,  
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

As we end this ceremony, I would like to salute all who have worked hard to ensure a successful event, especially all those who played various roles in the planning and organisation of this event. Over the past seven years that I have been Chairman of Council, we have seen innovations that have gone a long way to improve the students' experience. This is commendable.

Our new graduates have also worked hard over the periods that they have been students at this University and they deserve all the laurels that they have acquired. You, our new graduates, have been part of the changes that have taken place at the University of Ghana over the past few years; we look forward to receiving some of you back soon, as faculty or as administrators, to support the university's drive to become a research-intensive University.

I congratulate you on your achievements and urge you all to be worthy ambassadors of your *alma mater*. I wish you success in your future endeavours.

Our thanks also go to all teachers, the management team and the managers of the various units, who have worked together to ensure that your stay in the University has been fruitful. The University appreciates the effort that everyone has put into this enterprise.

We are also happy that so many parents, guardians, family members and friends of the graduates were able to join in this celebration.

To our Guest Speaker for today, invited guests, alumni and friends of the University, we appreciate your presence and participation in the ceremony. I wish you all a safe journey back.

As we all know, this is the final congregation ceremony to be attended by Professor Ernest Aryeetey, as Vice-Chancellor. On behalf of the University Council, I take this opportunity to thank Professor Aryeetey for successfully steering the University for the past six years. I know that it has not been an easy task, and I am sure all gathered here today join me to salute you for performing so well and leading the University to achieve so much. We wish you well in your future endeavours, and trust that you will continue to champion the cause of the University.

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, it is now my privilege and duty to declare today's congregation officially dissolved.

Thank you.

