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PROCEEDINGS OF MATRICULATION SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2009

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ORDER OF PROCEEDINGS

- 9.00 a.m.–9.15 a.m. – Guests to be seated
- 9.30 a.m. – Academic Procession
- Introductory Remarks by Ag. Registrar:
Mr. F. K. Yeboah
- Vice-Chancellor’s Address:
Prof. C. N. B. Tagoe
- Cultural Performance:
Ghana Dance Ensemble
- Administration of the Matriculation Oath:
Ag. Registrar, Mr. F. K. Yeboah
- Expectations of University Life:
Mr. Gideon Nana Kofi Osei,
Legon Hall
- Signing of the Matricula
- University Anthem
- 10.45 a.m. – Recession

ADDRESS BY PROF. C. N. B. TAGOE, VICE-CHANCELLOR

SALUTATION

Pro-Vice-Chancellor,
Registrar,
Provosts,
Deans and Directors,
Heads of Departments,
Members of Convocation,
Heads of Halls and Senior Tutors, Freshmen/women,
Parents and Guardians,
Invited Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen

INTRODUCTION

A very good morning to you all! Once again we have gathered here to formally commence another academic year in the life of the University of Ghana and it is my pleasure and privilege to extend to you on behalf of the University of Ghana, a warm welcome to this morning's matriculation ceremony. Hearty congratulations go to our freshmen and women, who have successfully gained admission into various programmes available in this university.

For any university anywhere in the world, today's ceremony, an occasion where students officially matriculate, continues to be of special significance. In several respects, the ceremony marks a special milestone for this University. There is as expected, an injection of fresh faces and fresh blood, into the life of this University. Again at this ceremony all freshmen and women admitted for the 2009/2010 academic year will be formally initiated as Junior Members into the academically stimulating and socially challenging community of this premier university. They will pledge allegiance to the authority of this University through the Matriculation Oath, and in due course, sign a bond of good behavior and obedience to all those in whom authority has been vested in this University.

My dear matriculants, your presence here this morning is a clear indication

that you believe in the system of higher education that the University of Ghana has to offer and you are ready to launch out into the deep, for an exciting and exhilarating academic adventure at this University.

ADMISSIONS

Ladies and gentlemen, it may border on the obvious to say that admission to this University continues to be increasingly competitive. This year the University received over 24,000 applications to various programmes at the sub-degree, undergraduate and post graduate levels. Unfortunately, the University was once again faced with the painful decision of having to turn down the applications of many otherwise qualified applicants, due to the limitations of facilities and staff.

For 2009/2010 academic year, the University was able to offer admission to some 6,430 to various undergraduate programmes and at different levels on our Main campus and also at KorleBu. Out of this number a little over 4,900 have duly registered. Our School of Research and Graduate Studies admitted some 1,574 graduate applicants out of which 1,214 have also registered. Slightly over 4,000 applicants were admitted to our Accra City Campus and 1,434 of them have registered. For our Distance Education Programme, admission was offered to 3,750 and some 1,813 have enrolled. In all therefore, the University offered places to a total of 16,943 applicants at both the undergraduate and postgraduate levels, for the 2009/2010 academic year and 9,361 have so far enrolled.

The University continued with its policy of giving the opportunity of university education to applicants from Less Endowed Schools on concessionary basis. Some 142 applicants from these schools, as listed by the Ghana Education Service, were this year offered admission to programmes in the Humanities.

Foreign students

The University of Ghana continues to attach great importance to the cross-cultural experience that is made possible by the presence of foreign students on our campus. International students in any university add to the cultural enrichment of the social as well as the academic setting. It is also our firm belief that any University worth its salt should have a vibrant

multi-national population. The continued interest of International Students in Legon is a result of the global acceptance of the quality of our service delivery.

For this academic year some 600 foreign students of various nationalities were admitted into our programmes as regular and special admission students. Although in the main, these students come from the sub-region, there are some from other parts of the world notably Eastern Africa, Europe, the United States of America, Canada and Asia.

It is significant to note how fully our international students get immersed in the Ghanaian way of life, and in both academic and extra curricular activities. I am told that an international student is part of Legon's basketball team which left here yesterday for Cotonou for a tournament.

We would like to extend a special welcome to our foreign students and urge them to make optimum use of the services offered by our International Programmes Office which is located in the K. A. B. Jones Quartey Building.

New Programmes

While I commiserate with all those who did not quite obtain the courses you chose to read, largely due to our own staff and other resource constraints, it is my hope that you are gradually getting used to alternative courses offered you. Competition for admission to Ghana's premier university has been keener and keener over the years, and we have not been able to meet the demand for all the courses listed as the student's first choice. Where necessary, we have often offered alternative courses based on students' background preparations and academic experience. As our staff situation improves we shall attempt to meet a greater part of applicants' course demands.

I would like you to note, however, that the undergraduate degree as was recently discussed in the University's dialogue-seminar with industry is gradually becoming only a first step to getting a good job placement. The job market becomes easier and easier these days with a second degree.

And even for those aiming only at a first degree, the job market often demands a good degree from a recognized university; and in several cases,

lesser emphasis is put on the course you did. Greater emphasis is often on the quality of the degree obtained.

A report recently released by the Ghana Employers Association indicates that skills that are in the highest demand by employers are good communication skills, excellent skills in the use of ICT, as well as creativity on the part of job applicants. These are skills that cannot be obtained merely by the course you read, but how well you spend your time applying yourself to the several opportunities available in the University, both inside and outside the classroom.

My dear matriculants, you are entering the University of Ghana at a time when a lot of changes are taking place. Partly as a result of the visitation exercise here two years ago, rapid and profound changes are being made in areas such as governance and review of curricular, as well as the introduction of new programmes. The University has made a conscious effort revising course curricular, and mounting new courses to meet growing national needs. Over the past three years alone over 130 courses have been revised in the University, and several new ones mounted. There are now bachelors' degree courses in Adult Education and Sign Language as well as professional programmes in Pharmacy and Veterinary Medicine. New postgraduate courses include Masters in Petroleum Geoscience, which the Department of Geology developed in collaboration with the Ghana National Petroleum Company, Masters in Clinical Trials mounted by the School of Public Health and higher degrees in Biotechnology and Plant Breeding. The University has also introduced a Graduate-entry programme in the Medical School, whereby opportunities are given for science graduates still eager to study medicine after first degree to do so, and become doctors over a reduced duration.

These emerging trends are of course different from the University's collaboration with the industrial sector in various agreements including one signed between the Department of Nutrition and Food Science and the Cocoa Processing Company, and those involving the Chemistry Department, Faculty of Engineering Sciences and various beverage producing companies.

Pilot Project

Of current developments on campus, please note that now ongoing is a pilot project on the course-credit system which in its first year, covers the College of Agriculture and Consumer Sciences, the Faculty of Science, and the Business School. This Project, in which some of you here are participating from your faculties, is meant to facilitate student-lecturer interaction, and also the process of continuous assessment of students by lecturers. It has meant the reduction of class sizes, and a slight extension of the regular lecture/tutorial periods. It is our hope that the scope of the pilot will in the next year or so be enlarged to cover the Humanities.

ACCOMODATION

Ladies and Gentlemen, I am happy to report that as result of the 'Freshers First' policy introduced two years ago, all fresh students who require accommodation on the Legon Campus are accommodated. Additionally a substantial number of final year students are also housed.

The construction of the University of Ghana Hostels Complex, although a little delayed in terms of completion date, is far advanced and it is hoped that by next semester we can open it up some of the units to accommodate at least 3,000 more students. This semester has seen the addition of 480 more beds to the pool, with the completion of two of the annexes to Mensah Sarbah and Akuafu Halls.

The university continues to open its doors to private investors to assist in the provision of accommodation, and I am happy to announce that a new Hostel on campus built by the Ghana National Association of Teachers had started admitting students.

ICT

Ladies and gentlemen, the University has continued to expand its ICT facilities in response to trends in the ICT revolution. Following growing demand from within, the University has in the past few months almost doubled its bandwidth from 13Mbps to 25Mbps. This has greatly improved the speed of Internet access in the University. Further improvement and expansion of our network is currently being undertaken in separate projects by MTN and Tsinghua Unisplendour of China. This latter project is specifically meant to support the improvement and expansion of our



Members of Convocation group photograph after the ceremony.



Members of Convocation on procession to the Matriculation ground.



From left: Mr. F. K. Yeboah, College Registrar (CHS); Prof. Osam, Dean of Faculty of Arts; Prof. Kwesi Yankah, Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Prof. C. N. B. Tagoe, Vice-Chancellor.



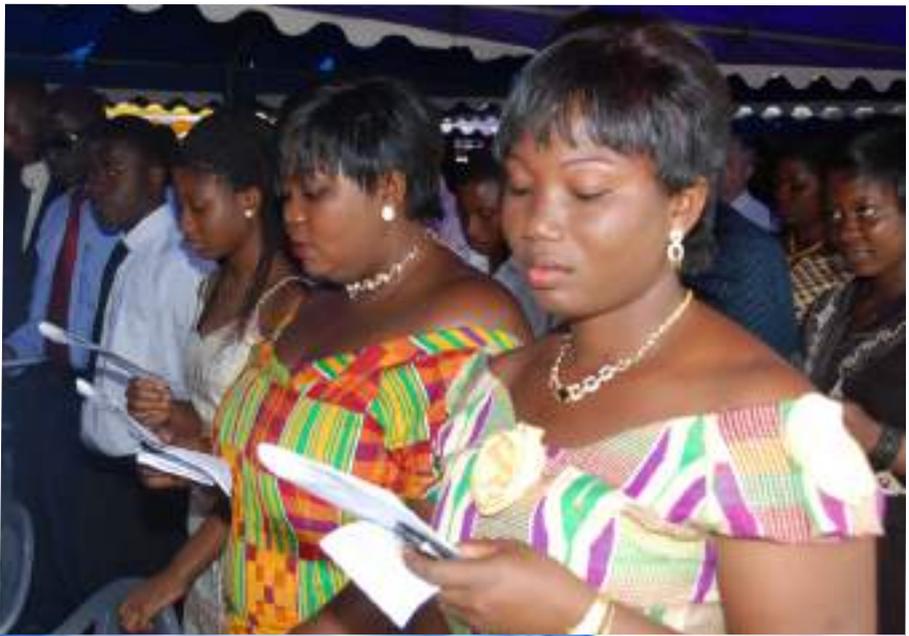
Members of Convocation on procession at the Ceremony.



The Vice-Chancellor, Prof. C. N. B. Tagoe delivering his Address.



Mr. F. K. Yeboah, College Registrar, administering the Matriculation Oath.



Matriculants taking the Matriculation Oath.



Section of the Matriculants at the ceremony.



Top: Mr. Gideon Nana Kofi Osei delivering an address on the Expectations of University Life.

Below: Mr. Gideon Nana Kofi Osei signing the Matricula as Mr. E. A. Amartey, Ag. Director, Academic Affairs looks on.

network resources in readiness for an ICT -driven Distance Education in the near future.

The University continues to utilize the ICT to facilitate application and registration processes; and I am glad that contrary to initial apprehensions, all of you including those from very remote areas submitted your applications, and did your academic registration entirely on line, and with little stress. You are also required to undergo training in the use of computers by taking part in the Computer Driving License Programmes offered by the ICT Directorate. This training is also available on-line.

It is expected that every registered student would have a University of Ghana e-mail address and I urge you all to avail yourselves of this facility. Let me at this juncture sound a word of warning to you all against the perversion of our ICT infrastructure for fraudulent ends, or what is now commonly called "sakawa", a menace that is fast gaining notoriety in the country. The University will not shield any student caught in such acts. Our ICT facilities are for academic work and I urge you use them to achieve academic excellence.

FINANCIAL AID TO STUDENTS

The University's Student Financial Aid Office, which is located in the Alumni Building, behind Ecobank Branch on Campus, assists brilliant but needy students in their academic pursuit. It offers financial assistance to qualified students who may otherwise not be able to meet required expenditure at Legon. Again being sensitive to the plight of some students, the University has made provision in exceptional circumstances, for students to pay their fees by installment, spread over a year. Otherwise the University regulations make it clear that all fees must be paid at registration. I am glad that in spite of agitations by a handful of students, the student body has largely complied with University regulations and accordingly paid their fees.

This year the University has 10 full scholarships (averaging about GH¢2,000 per year) for bright, needy students. Applications are open until Monday, September 14, 2009. These are sponsored by a U.S. charity, Educational Pathways International. Scholarships worth about GH¢700 per year, have been awarded to twenty-eight (including eleven freshers) by

Tertiary Education Scholarship Trust for Ghana based at Oxford University. The University also has on-campus job opportunities for students and those interested may contact the Financial Aid Office.

WORDS OF CAUTION

I deem it necessary to remind you that your primary objective here is to successfully go through your prescribed academic programme, and graduate with flying colours. This means everything you do whilst here, should be geared towards this purpose.

Life at this University can be very exciting both intellectually and socially but in the midst of it all, it is easy to lose focus and stray into unproductive ventures. I urge you to stay focused in your pursuit of academic laurels and complete your academic programme and graduate with good degrees.

A small percentage of University students have in the past years abused the climate of freedom prevailing at this university and exhibited gross indiscipline just days after taking the matriculation oath in the first year. In the final analysis, the University has had to apply sanctions in the form of dismissals or withholding of graduation certificates. This happens almost every year. Currently, matters pending before the Disciplinary Committee include one in which students (including a few who were then in their first year), went defaming individuals within the University, through scurrilous and unfounded allegations. I do hope that as fresh students, you will steer clear of such waywardness, and not allow yourselves to be influenced by colleagues who may have their own agenda and only seek to persuade you to go down the drain with them.

Let me also sound a word of caution on some deviant practices on campus, including the illegal sale of beds by students. The University will soon start investigating several allegations of the sale of beds by students, including freshers who were given priority consideration by the University, but have turned round to sell or sublet beds. Let me say that those caught to have indulged in this as well as so-called tenants will be summarily dismissed. It may amaze you to know that students who are prepared to part with as much as seven hundred to one thousand Ghana cedis, to illegally acquire

bed space, would in the same breath go on a demonstration against increase in fees by twenty-two cedis.

Let me also advise you against the flippant use of the press in matters that can be amicably resolved through dialogue with university authorities. There are indeed various institutional channels available to redress student complaints and concerns; and you are advised to exhaust all internal processes and procedures for grievance resolution at all times before resorting to other measures. Much as we are prepared to address the genuine concerns of students, the University Authorities will in no way tolerate indiscipline.

But be reminded also that in addition to your prescribed academic programmes, there are other activities from which you could reap great benefits, to enrich your life on campus. These are seminars and lectures, including the annual Aggrey-Fraser-Guggisberg Lectures, Inaugural Lectures by professors, and Inter-Faculty Lectures, performances at the Efua Suherland Drama Studio, Film shows and Sports.

While developing your intellectual capacities, do not forget to also develop your spiritual life by devoting some of your time to worship and serve God. Finally, make time to update yourself by diligently reading Notices, checking your U.G. e-mail, visiting the University of Ghana website and also listening to Radio Universe since important information will be communicated to you through these media.

On behalf of the Chancellor, the Council, Members of Convocation, and Staff of the University, I would like to once again welcome you this great institution and to wish you a refreshing stay here at Ghana's Premier University and, may the good Lord crown all your efforts with success.

Thank you.

"EXPECTATIONS OF UNIVERSITY OF LIFE"
BY. MR. GIDEON NANA KOFI OSEI

Mr. Vice-Chancellor, Pro-Vice Chancellor, Registrar, Provosts, Deans, Officers of the University, Nananom, Guest Speaker, Distinguished Guests, Fellow Students, Ladies and Gentlemen, I deem it a great honour to be called upon to address this august gathering of intellectuals of this noble institution on behalf of my fellow freshmen/women. Posterity will record today as another memorable day in history of the University of Ghana as it marks the Matriculation day for 2009/10 cohort of students.

A feeling of anxiety gripped me as I waited for the University of Ghana to release the admission list for the 2009/10 academic year. Considering how long I waited, my soul leapt for joy upon receiving my admission letter knowing I was among the chosen few to be given the opportunity to study in this University. I started putting things in place as I waited patiently for the reporting day for freshmen/women.

"Expectata dies aderat" meaning "the long awaited day has finally come", is what I said to myself upon stepping foot unto the University's premises. Having followed the activities of this institution with keen interest, I can say that we did not go through the stress our predecessors went through during their registration. The introduction of the computerized system made registration an easy task. On this note, I say "Ayekoo!" to the University authorities for putting in place an effective machinery which facilitated the registration process.

Mr. Vice-Chancellor, Ladies and Gentlemen, I must confess that upon gaining admission into the Premier University, my expectations were very high. I am positive that, the four weeks we have spent on campus have given us the necessary exposure we need to cope with University life. The serene environment prevalent on campus will go a long way to aid our academic work. According to the great Black human activist, Martin Luther King Jr., "If a man is called to be a street-sweeper he should sweep streets even as

Michelangelo painted or Beethoven composed music or Shakespeare wrote poetry. He should sweep streets so well that all the hosts of heaven and earth will pause to say, here lived a great street sweeper who did his job well". Drawing inspiration from Luther's statement, my colleagues and I promise to do our best to make our four years in this institution a fruitful one.

Strolling on campus, you will notice that there are well trimmed hedges and lawns at the University's main avenue and the forecourt of the Great Hall. I hope this can be extended to other parts of the campus. I also entreat my fellow freshmen to help keep a clean environment to make the campus a place worth living in. From the few weeks that we have spent here on campus, however, I believe my colleagues will bear evidence to the fact that the flow of water leaves a lot to be desired. Considerable amount of time is spent in fetching water which goes a long way to affect our academic work as that time could have been used in studying. I plead with the authorities to help solve the problem by providing us with water that flows ceaselessly.

Mr. Vice-Chancellor, Ladies and Gentlemen, accommodation is an area of the University's life which has been given due attention. Although there are hostels around the University's premises, most students find it difficult to afford them as they are expensive compared to the accommodation provided by the University authorities. However, I wish to appeal to all stakeholders of the education industry including the Ministry of Education, Non-governmental Organizations and the University authorities to expedite action on the completion of the extension of the Jubilee Hostel and other accommodation facilities. As much as the authorities are doing their best to provide accommodation for freshmen on campus, I suggest they put in place mechanisms which will see an amalgam of freshmen and continuing students in the various halls. This I believe will see the freshmen tap from the experiences of the continuing students.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the time interval between lectures is such that students find it difficult moving from one lecture hall to another. This

however leads to students attending subsequent lectures late. The five minutes change over is not enough for a student moving from the New N-Block, for instance, to the Central Cafeteria. I therefore suggest that the University provide smaller shuttle vans to ease the stress students go through when commuting between lecture halls. In our pursuance of quality education, I plead with the University authorities to provide us with spacious lecture halls. Although students in Level 100 are not faced with the problem of struggling for seats, our seniors battle it out leaving the weak to their fate. This leaves some students standing which I believe is not the right mood a student has to be in whiles at lecture. I am therefore pleading with the University authorities and other stakeholders of the education industry to come to our aid and create a conducive environment for us to learn in.

It is an undoubted fact that the University has a considerable number of libraries but considering the number of students in the University to the number of libraries, I plead with the authorities to make available other research facilities. Drawing inspiration from the motto of my hall: Legon Hall which says "Cui Multum Datum" which means "To whom much is given, much is expected", I urge my fellow freshmen/women to work tirelessly to make ourselves, the University and this country of ours proud. An American writer and editor, Shirley Lord once said "What really matters is what you do with what you have". Sticking to Lord's statement and considering the level of investment pumped into our education by the Government and other stakeholders of education, I once again urge my colleagues to let us make good use of materials at our disposal which I am sure will make our stay here on campus a successful one.

I believe the Matriculation Class of 2009 has a dream; to be among the nobles of this country. Carol Burnett, an American actress and writer's statement that "when you have a dream, you've got to grab it and never let go" is the basis on which we claim this dream. The realization of this dream requires hard work, focus and dedication which I believe we are all ready to give. I also want to plead with my fellow freshmen to adhere to the rules and regulations of this University as stated in the matriculation oath.

Mr. Vice-Chancellor, Pro-Vice Chancellor, Registrar, Provosts, Deans, Officers of the University, Nananom, Guest Speaker, Distinguished Guests, Fellow Students, Ladies and Gentlemen, I would like to express our profound gratitude to the University authorities for giving each and everyone of us here the opportunity to realize our dreams and as the motto of the University goes "Integri Procedamus" which translates "proceed with integrity" shall lead us all our days in the Premier University; the only University which has Ghana in its name.

Long live the Matriculation Class of 2009!

Long Live the University of Ghana!

Long Live Ghana!

And May God Bless Us All!

Thank you.

