

INNOVATIONS FOR DOCTORAL TRAINING: UNIVERSITY OF GHANA SETS THE PACE

COMMISSIONING OF THE UG DOCTORAL BUILDING

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Address by Prof. Yaa Ntiamao-Baidu.

(PhD Coordinator and Director of UG-Carnegie Projects)

The Doctoral Building we are commissioning today is a dream come true, so before I give you the background, as I have been asked to do, I would like to acknowledge two people who nurtured this dream and helped me to realise the dream.

The first is Professor Kwame Gyekye, retired Professor of Philosophy, who in 2008, spent a lot of time and effort persuading and encouraging me to take up the position of the Dean of the then School of Research and Graduate Studies. This position exposed me to the many challenges faced by graduate students at UG.

The second person is Professor Ernest Aryeetey, immediate past Vice Chancellor of the University of Ghana, who appointed me as UG PhD Coordinator to help roll out the new four year PhD structure that UG introduced in 2013. With this appointment, Professor Aryeetey gave me the opportunity and, more importantly, the space to live out my dream.

The University of Ghana has embarked on an ambitious journey to become a research-intensive University. UG recognises that graduate students are essential to the realisation of this ambition and so UG is putting in place a number of initiatives to position itself as the place to go to for high quality graduate training experience. Key among these was the establishment of the UG-Pan African Doctoral Academy (UG-PADA), which focuses on specific skill gaps and opportunities for improving the knowledge and scholarship of

doctoral candidates. The PADA is supported by the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

The Doctoral Building is another important milestone on the journey. We consulted PhD students and asked them to tell us what they considered their greatest need in their studies beyond financial assistance. "Space", they told us; most of the students are part -time students working in town, they are unable to make full use of facilities on campus, because when they come to the campus, they have nowhere to sit, read, study and interact with other PhD students.

The building will house the UG-Pan African Doctoral Academy and also provide space for PhD students: reading rooms, seminar rooms, lecture halls, a room for computer resources, a kitchenette, all to be fully equipped and all dedicated solely for PhD students. To the best of my knowledge, UG is the only university in Ghana, and perhaps Africa, that has a complete building dedicated to doctoral students. We invite Ghanaian students and students from other West African countries who want to pursue PhD training, to come to the University of Ghana to experience a totally conducive learning environment.

Finally, let me express my thanks to the many people who worked with me and encouraged me to keep pressing on despite the many frustrations: Prof. Kweku Osam and all members of the PhD Technical Committee, Mr. Richard Boapea, the Finance Director and Mr. Collins Amofah, Project Accountant, for their support and for tolerating all the pressure I put on them, the staff of PDMSD, specifically Messrs Kofinti, Edmund Senyah, Kingsley Akoi Adjei and Kwame Ofori. And last but not the least, Alhadji Bawa of Bawahuud Construction Company, the contractor who went out of his way to ensure timely completion of this building.