

**UG VALEDICTORIAN DENNIS SIAYOR SPEECH FOR THE JULY 2019  
CONGREGATION**

**THEME: DETERMINATION**

**TITLE: A FIGHT TO THE FINISH**

Chairman of the Council representing the Chancellor, Members of Council, Vice-Chancellor, Pro-Vice Chancellors, Registrar, Provost, Distinguished Guest Speaker, Chairman and Members of the advisory board of the College of Humanities, Members of Convocation, Staff, Alumni, Special invited guests, Parents and Guardians, Fellow graduands, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, it is truly an honour to stand before you as the Valedictorian for the Bachelor of Science in Administration Class of 2019.

Osagyefo Dr Kwame Nkrumah once said, “Those who judge us merely by the heights we have achieved would do well to remember the depths from which we started”. I believe this statement represents us very well because most of us started from the bottom and now we are here.

Four years ago, we stepped into a journey that would play a vital role in our lives. Although most of us may have anticipated life as university students, some of us were anxious, and others were frightened by the journey that lay ahead of us. We had heard stories about university life but did not have the faintest idea of what or what not to expect. We had questions but did not know who or where to find the answers. For some of us, the university journey was merely a continuation of education. For the others, this was a whole new beginning. A few of us gave up, a few fell off the wagon, but many of us are here today.

In our time here, we were privileged to gain practical knowledge and learn a lot of valuable lessons from lecturers, friends and many others through academic assignments, social activities and shared experiences – with some of the most important lessons learnt outside the lecture halls. These lessons and experiences have shaped us into what we are now. Today we step out refined and prepared to meet the challenges of this dynamic world, hoping to make an impact and make it a better place.

Oh Yes! As the famous Latin quote goes: ‘We Came, We Saw, and We Conquered.’

However, remember that as conquerors, we cannot climb the ladder of success without specific skills or knowledge in our chosen field or industry. If it were not so, Shatta Wale would have been the Speaker of Parliament, and probably a university Professor would have been a Dancehall Artiste. It is almost impossible to succeed in this competitive world without skills, and the skill of doing something is acquired by doing it. So, you must get your hands dirty. Have a purpose, vision and defy all odds, just like Patapaa, to pursue whatever you believe you are skilful at doing.

Each of us is born with a unique set of characteristics that differentiates us from others. Maybe some of us may not excel in academia but may probably be better off in Music, an Art or a craft. Whichever be the case, we have now learnt that it is our sole responsibility to identify that one thing that lights up our face, gives us an adrenaline rush and makes us feel a sense of purpose. The unfortunate thing, yet inspiring, about life after school is that there is no curriculum or order for doing things. You choose what to do at any point in time. For this reason, you must immerse yourself in your work and dedicate your life to mastering your skills. That, Ladies and Gentlemen, is the secret of success.

As we exit this noble institution, we have the conviction that there will be challenges, but challenges exist to teach us something. Embrace the struggle because there is ugliness in struggle yet beauty in success. Our last few weeks here were blurry ones. It happened so fast. The time passed quickly, with most of us drowning in long essays, past questions, emails and text messages as the night candle burnt out into the atmosphere. We withdrew from many social media platforms such as Facebook and faced our books fully. The outcome is what we are witnessing today. Here we are and stand holding the batons of victory from this marathon we so graciously run. No matter which speed or grade point we crossed this finish line with, we all crossed it earnestly.

However, this would not have been possible without the motivation and support of our parents and guardians. Shall we all appreciate them with a round of applauds? Without you, we would not be where we are today. In our highest moments, you jubilated with us, and in our lowest moments, you held our hands to keep us from falling or giving up. To our lecturers and administrators, you pushed us far beyond our capabilities to enable us to become the best and refined version of ourselves today. For that, we say a big Thank you to you. To each of us Class of 2019 sitting here today, we evolved from total strangers into one big family to support each other to this very day and hope to extend this bond outside of here. Also, we cannot forget the technology inventors of

our time – such as Larry Tesler, the man who invented Copy and Paste and Bernard Satia, the brain behind Mobile Money – who helped our social, economic and academic journeys by making life relatively more comfortable for us. **Ultimately, we also give thanks to the Almighty God for starting this journey with us and bringing it to a perfect end today, though we know He is not finished with us yet.**

Ladies and Gentlemen, I would like to end with a quote by the late American entrepreneur and the founder of Apple, Steve Jobs. In his words: “The people who are crazy enough to think they can change the world are the ones who do. Your time is limited, so do not waste it living someone else’s life. Do not be trapped by dogma – which is living with the results of other people’s thinking. Do not let the noise of other’s opinions drown out your own inner voice. And most importantly, have the courage to follow your heart and intuition.”

Congratulations, Class of 2019. Ayekoo.

Thank you.