

**UNIVERSITY OF GHANA**  
**ADDRESS BY THE VICE CHANCELLOR, PROFESSOR ERNEST ARYEETAY, AT**  
**CONGREGATION, NOVEMBER 3, 2012**

Your Excellency, President John Mahama, President of the Republic of Ghana;  
Your Lordship Justice Samuel Date-Bah, Chairman of the University Council;  
Honourable Minister of Education, Ambassador Lee Ocran;  
Honourable Ministers of State and Members of Parliament;  
Distinguished Guest Speaker, Mr. Kwamina Asomaning;  
Pro-Vice Chancellors;  
Registrar;  
Your Excellencies Members of the Diplomatic Corps;  
Colleague Vice Chancellors and Registrars;  
Members of the University Council and Members of Convocation;  
Niimeɪ, Naameɪ, Nananom;  
Graduating Students;  
Parents and Guardians;  
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen:

**Welcome**

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you all to this congregation ceremony for some of our students who completed their programmes in the 2011/2012 academic year. At today's ceremony, deserving students from the Faculties of Science, Engineering Sciences, Law, the College of Agriculture and Consumer Sciences, the University of Ghana Business School and the School of Graduate Studies, who have fulfilled the requirements for their programmes will be awarded the degrees and diplomas due them. Other Congregations will be held in March and April next year, before we proceed with graduating students within the same academic year that they complete their studies, with series of

congregation ceremonies in July and November. I would like to focus my address on various developments at the University since the last academic year and also touch briefly on higher education in general in Ghana.

### **Governance**

There have been a number of significant developments on the governance front that I would like to share with you.

#### ***Constitution and Appointment of University Structure Reform Committees:***

The University of Ghana has decided to decentralize its structure by adopting a collegiate model. The reform is intended to enhance efficiency and make university administration more effective. The decentralization is also intended to provide greater opportunity to students with respect to programme offerings as well as enhance inter-disciplinary research. With advice from consultants, management has appointed University Structure Reform Committees to oversee the development or reorganization of four colleges. The proposed colleges are as follows:

1. The College of Health Sciences, which is essentially an existing college, but which faces significant challenges both in its internal cohesiveness and in its relationship with the centre; which does not allow the full benefits of decentralization to emerge.
2. The College of Basic and Applied Sciences, which will be made up of the existing College of Agriculture and Consumer Sciences, and the Faculties of Science and Engineering Sciences.
3. The College of Humanities, which will include the Faculties of Arts, Law and Social Sciences as well as the University of Ghana Business School. The

proposed composition of the college is based on the natural connectedness of the disciplines as well as financial feasibility.

4. The College of Education will be a new college that will encompass the distance education programmes of the University as well as other programmes that the University might introduce.

Work towards the design of the new colleges is expected to be completed by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013, to be followed by the process of beginning the establishment of the colleges from the next academic year. The process will be designed to show that the unit cost of producing the outputs of the University will decrease over time.

### ***Senior Level Appointments***

There have been several senior level appointments since the beginning of the academic year, and I would like to mention these. Professor Kwadwo Koram has been appointed Director of the Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research while Professor Alex Nyarko becomes Acting Dean of the School of Pharmacy. Professor Alex Asiedu is the new Principal of Accra City Campus and Professor Macarious Yangyuoru has become the Director, Institute of Agricultural Research. Professor Samuel Codjoe is the new Director, Regional Institute for Population Studies and Mrs. Amma Kwaa has been made College Registrar, College of Health Sciences. Professor Chris Gordon has been confirmed as the Director, Institute for Environment and Sanitation Studies and Professor Henrietta Mensa-Bonsu is the new Director, Legon Centre for International Affairs and Diplomacy. Reverend Professor Patrick Ayeh-Kumi is the new Dean, School of Allied Health Sciences and Professor Richard Adanu has become Dean of the School of Public Health.

These ladies and gentlemen come into their positions with a wealth of experience in the management and administration of various aspects of the University, and I trust that as they seek to promote teaching, research and extension work within their specific areas of responsibility, staff and students alike will give them the needed cooperation.

## **Academic Affairs**

### ***Admissions***

Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, the admissions process for the 2012/2013 academic year ended in the second week of October. Once again, the University of Ghana made it possible for students completing their West African Senior School Certificate Examinations (WASSCE) in May/June to enter the University in the same year that they completed their examinations. In doing the admissions it was our policy to ensure that the University admitted only as many regular students as it could provide residential facilities for. Students were also admitted to the Accra City Campus programme and the Distance Education programme, both of which are non-residential.

The University received 31,813 undergraduate applications and 4,480 postgraduate applications. A total of 17,819 applicants were offered admission, made up of 15,272 undergraduate and 2,547 graduate students. Out of this number 10,459 were male and 7,360 female. After registration had ended the total enrolment of new students stood at 11,171.

Included in this number are 456 international students of various nationalities, who were admitted into our programmes either as regular or special admission students.

As I pointed out in my speech at Matriculation a few weeks ago, this year's admission process was extremely competitive. We painfully had to turn down many otherwise qualified applicants with excellent grades, because of limited human resources and a lack of adequate facilities. There were as many as 1,049 science students who obtained aggregates 7-10 that we could not offer any programmes. This is indeed a very worrying situation, and as a University, we intend to work with other stakeholders to find solutions to the underlying causes.

As we look into ways of ensuring that otherwise qualified young people are not denied admission into universities and programmes of their choice, we must also be mindful of the fact that come next year, we will be faced with additional challenges, when two cohorts of students complete their WASSCE at the same time. As a University, we have started planning towards this, and will do all we can to admit as many of the applicants as possible within these two cohorts. We will also work to make the admissions process as smooth as possible.

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, these challenges compel me to use this occasion to comment on some issues relating to education in general and higher education in particular. I am personally concerned that discussions of possible education sector reforms and the relationship between education and national development are treated rather casually by a number of government officials and political parties alike. I am concerned that that the funding of different types and levels of educational institutions does not appear to be inspired by any clear strategy towards the long term transformation of the national economy and society. Again, I am concerned that discussions of how the school system could be restructured, including issues of access and curriculum, and how this could be related to the tertiary system appear to take place only in small groups without any reference to the broader set of stakeholders. The absence of

consensus inevitably means that changes are not sustainable. The fact that many of the graduates leaving these grounds today will not be finding jobs for a long time should oblige us, as a people, to think about education in a more structured way and much more strategically. Countries that have managed to change the structures of their institutions, societies and economies knew exactly what they wanted out of their educational system. We need to do the same, sooner rather than later.

### ***Distance Education Programme***

The Distance Education programme of this University, which began in November 2007 had its first graduation ceremony on 21<sup>st</sup> April 2012, with 574 students graduating with Bachelor's degrees in Administration and the Humanities.

The University continues to see an increasing number of students applying to undertake studies through this mode, and we are currently working towards putting in place systems for improving the structures and processes of the Distance Education programme.

Additionally, the University is committed to integrating ICT in teaching and learning to enhance faculty/unit effectiveness. Toward this end, an Implementation Committee was tasked to outline the e-learning policies needed to support teaching and learning in the University, utilizing facilities such as video conferencing and online communication, in combination with face to face contact, to promote a two way dialogue between lecturers and their students. The ultimate aim of this is to ensure that students are not tied to a particular

geographical space, so that they do not always need to come down to their centres for lectures and tutorials.

A pilot e-learning programme is to be run, involving a few units. Additionally, faculty members in various Departments are to be trained in e-learning, and programmes put in place for them to train others. Also, programmes are to be put in place to reorient members of faculty towards the university-wide adoption of e-learning in the near future.

### ***Revision of Undergraduate Classification System***

The Academic Board has recently approved a revised classification system for the University's undergraduate degree, which entails changes in the range of Final Grade Point Averages for various classes of degree. The revision is meant to address challenges encountered with the introduction of the new four year degree programme, and to better represent and classify the academic performance and standard of students. The revision affects students who started their undergraduate programmes from the 2010/2011 academic year to date.

### ***New Structure for PhD programmes***

The University of Ghana is gradually moving towards the goal of becoming a formidable research university and hopes the Government of Ghana will support it in this quest. A major strand of the approach is to expand and improve significantly PhD programmes in order to bring them in line with what is expected in good universities.

The restructured 4-year Doctor of Philosophy programme will be rolled out from January next year. Key aspects of the programme include compulsory course work, attachment to research projects for all candidates, the introduction

of comprehensive examinations to be taken by all PhD candidates and the formal defense of the candidate's research proposal. It is expected that with these modifications, PhD graduates will perform much better in research methodology, show better understanding of data collected, use more current and sophisticated analytical techniques and draw more credible conclusions from their work.

### ***New Programmes***

We have recently reviewed and introduced several new programmes at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. These are:

- New elective courses in the Master of Science in Health Informatics programme at the School of Public Health;
- The introduction of a Master of Arts programme in Conference Interpreting to be run by the Departments of French and Modern Languages;
- The introduction of an M Phil programme in Nuclear Technology Applications in Petroleum and Mining Industries to be offered at the School of Nuclear and Allied Sciences;
- The review of the Master of Arts in Social Policy Studies programme and the introduction of a Master of Philosophy programme in Social Policy Studies;
- The revision of graduate programmes in the Department of Marine and Fisheries Sciences;
- The review and restructuring of graduate programmes in the Department of Biochemistry, Cell and Molecular Biology;
- The introduction of a combined major programme at the undergraduate level in Chemistry; and

- The introduction of a Bachelor of Science programme in Actuarial Science.

### ***Purchase of Equipment for Science Units***

Management has developed a programme for the acquisition of modern equipment for the various units of the University undertaking scientific research. Arrangements have been made to acquire a GC Mass Spectrophotometer to be housed at the Chemistry Department and available to all science graduate students. We are also in the process of setting up a nitrogen plant to be located at NMIMR for the use of all researchers at the University.

### **Research Capacity Building**

The University Council has recently approved a Research Policy for the University, which is intended to govern and facilitate research at the University, and has the following key principles:

- Assurance of academic freedom
- Promotion of high quality cutting edge research which advances knowledge
- Ensuring that research meets national development priorities
- Ethical research
- Protecting intellectual property
- Good practice in data/material management and
- Making research findings understandable and accessible

Faculty members of the University continue to win grants and awards for research. Last year, the University, as part of the TRECCAfrica consortium obtained some 2.3million Euros for graduate training and staff exchange. This year, the Office of Research Innovation and Development (ORID) and Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research coordinated the participation of the

University in two different consortia to submit proposals, both of which have been selected for funding. They are:

- ***“African Regional International Staff/Student Exchange: Food Security and Sustainable Human Wellbeing (ARISE)”***; with a focus on faculty development and post-graduate training, targeting 56 post-graduate positions with a budget of 2 million Euros; and

- ***“Enhancing community of practice in one health for infectious diseases through postgraduate training”***; which focuses on faculty development and post-graduate training, targeting 95 post-graduates including 36 faculty positions with a 2 million Euros budget.

In the 2011/2012 academic year, the University raised at least \$10 million for research activities at the University. Substantial parts of these grants went towards capacity building in research for the next generation of scientists, establishment of the research commons and support for post graduate research. Additionally, individual faculty members continue to attract grants for research in their areas of expertise across various disciplines. Under the 5<sup>th</sup> Call for Proposals for our own University Research Funds, we provided 17 different grants to various research teams and individuals amounting to a total of GHC566,044.30.

Eight Research Development Officers have been appointed to support the research agenda of the University by taking up the administration of research within faculties to free academics in order for them to concentrate on their research. Specifically, they are expected to facilitate grant applications at the level of faculties, institutes and centres, facilitate research, scout for grant opportunities, document on-going and completed research, and build and facilitate faculty research databases.

## **Staff Development**

I recently signed on behalf of the University, a grant agreement that will bring an additional **USD 2,350,000** as grant money from the Carnegie Corporation of New York to support the University of Ghana's ongoing efforts to invest in capacity enhancement for members of faculty, and enhance faculty research capacity. The project, *Building Capacity for Research and Post-Graduate Training Phase II*, seeks to consolidate the gains from the earlier 2-year project "UG-Carnegie Next Generation of Academics in Africa" (NGAA), and expand the activities to include initiatives that will benefit the wider University of Ghana academic faculty.

The goal of the 3-year UG-Carnegie NGAA Phase II project is for the *University to be able to attract and retain high caliber faculty to deliver high quality research outputs and post-graduate training, thereby enhancing post-graduate student recruitment and the profile of the University.*

The University of Ghana was one of the four universities in Africa that won the first batch of grants in 2010 under the Carnegie Corporation of New York's NGAA. We are pleased that UG is the only one of the four that currently has received approval of funds to move into the implementation of Phase II. It is worthy of note also that the grant provided for the Phase II of the project is USD 550,000 more than the Phase 1 grant, a clear indication of the donor's confidence in our ability to deliver.

Key achievements of Phase 1 of the project included support to 68 MPhil/PhD candidates and knowledge and skills enhancement training that benefitted 415 post-graduate students. Through the funding provided in the first phase, we were able to refurbish the Insect and Mammalian Museums and post-graduate

room and library of the Department of Animal Biology and Conservation Science, as well as post-graduate seminar and lecture rooms for the Departments of Mathematics, Statistics and Sociology. The project also provided 20 computers to the School of Graduate Studies and at least three computers and two printers, as well as additional post-graduate lecture room furniture and equipment to each of the eight participating Departments/Units.

The grant awarded for Phase II of the project is expected to support at least 20 more University of Ghana faculty members to complete their PhD research; fund the thesis research costs of at least 25 high performing MPhil students targeted for academic careers; support at least 20 senior faculty in focal disciplines to participate in special courses and key conferences to enhance their research skills; support the publication of the University of Ghana reader series; support the development of new post-graduate programmes in Biomedical and Material Science Engineering, African Thinkers (Institute of African Studies) and Sustainable Development (Institute of Environment and Sanitation Sciences); and the establishment of a University of Ghana Writing Centre at the Department of English. Phase II will also provide laboratory equipment to the School of Veterinary Medicine, the Computer Engineering and Biomedical Engineering Departments and continue to support various workshops to enhance faculty and post-graduate students' research output.

I would like to thank Professor Yaa Ntiamoah-Baidu for effective leadership in putting the UG proposal together.

The University of Ghana Faculty Development Scheme continues to offer a broad range of support to eligible staff for staff development purposes and in support of the push to equip all lecturers with PhD or other terminal degrees.

There are currently 93 persons on study leave with pay from the university working towards terminal degrees.

### **Public-Private Partnerships in the Development of Capital Projects**

Towards the modernization and improved efficiency in service delivery at the University of Ghana, we are in the process of finding investment partners to undertake a number of projects and business ventures aimed primarily at providing improved services for its community and at generating significant income for the University.

In line with the above, business entities that were interested in partnering with the University of Ghana in any of the specified areas were invited to submit expressions of interest in such a venture. The specific areas are:

- Development of a sports stadium
- Construction and management of asphalted toll-roads and car parks
- Development of a public transport system
- Development of a shopping arcade
- Development of staff housing
- Development of a modern private hospital
- Development of an ultra-modern medical diagnostic centre
- Rehabilitation and management of student hall catering services

76 companies and individuals expressed interest in partnering with the University to develop these projects. Ernst and Young, a consulting firm, has been engaged to advise the University on the best way to partner with the private enterprises in respect of the projects to be undertaken. Bidders have been requested to submit additional information to enable the selection process to start.

## **Physical Developments**

There have been a number of physical developments on the University's campuses, and I would like to highlight the most significant ones:

### *University of Ghana Master Plan:*

The University of Ghana is currently with a consulting firm to develop a master plan to guide all future physical developments for the next 20-50 years.

### *Close Circuit Television for Examination Halls:*

Close Circuit Television cameras have been installed in most examination centres; with work on remaining examination centres expected to be completed soon. This has contributed to a significant reduction in the number of examination malpractice cases.

### *University of Ghana Teaching Hospital:*

Approval has been granted for the construction of a teaching hospital at the new site for the College of Health Sciences, on the eastern part of the campus. I am glad to announce that Government has signed an agreement with the contractors and we expect work to begin in two weeks. Works to be done in this phase include a central building, a Maternity & Pediatrics block, the Hospital Administration block, an in-patient block, a surgical in-patient block, a medical training centre, a maintenance and logistics block and a heliport. Future developments will include the construction of a Cancer Centre and a Rehabilitation Building.

### *Asphaltic Resealing of selected roads:*

Most of the roads in the University were constructed several years ago, and sections of these roads have deteriorated due to a lack of sustained maintenance over a considerable period of time. The huge traffic diversions through the

campus over the past few years have also contributed to the poor state of roads. To provide better roads and ensure their maintenance, the University plans to asphalt and toll selected roads on campus. These are:

- Teacher's Fund to the Link Gate on the Achimota Road
- South Legon entrance and exit gates around the Noguchi roundabout
- Evandy Hostel to Presbyterian Boys' Senior High School (PRESEC) junction
- University Hospital road to Trinity junction
- Jubilee Link road

On-going capital development projects include the following, which are funded by the University and its units: University of Ghana Business School Complex, University of Ghana Crèche, the rehabilitation of roads at the Institute of Continuing and Distance Education Centre at Tsito, and a multi-purpose facility for the School of Performing Arts. Additionally GETFund is supporting the Faculty of Arts Building. The recently commissioned ISSER Conference Facility was funded entirely from ISSER's internally generated funds.

Upcoming Capital Development Projects include a new College of Humanities building to be sited behind the Department of Geography and Resource Development, to provide accommodation for all the School Deans of the new College, the Departments of Computer Science, Social Work, Political Science, Information Studies, Psychology, and the Centre for Social Policy Studies.

A Central Administration Annex is to be constructed next to the School of Graduate Studies to provide accommodation for the Office of Research Innovation and Development, the Academic Affairs Directorate, Student Financial Aid Office, Office of the Legal Counsel and additional offices for the Central Administration.

The Millennium Development Authority (MIDA) has recently handed over to the University 6 out of 10 bungalows constructed for their consultants at Little Legon. The camp site and the buildings on it will revert to the University at the end of the defects liability period. The materials laboratory set up by the authority will be transferred to the Faculty of Engineering Sciences.

### **65<sup>TH</sup> Anniversary Celebrations**

The University of Ghana will be celebrating its 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary next year, which will be a good opportunity to tell the story of the University of Ghana to the world, educate the public about what is being done and raise funds to support various projects.

A Planning Committee for the celebrations, chaired by Professor Yaa Ntiamoah-Baidu has been inaugurated, and units of the University are being encouraged to plan and help make the celebrations a success. Planned activities include an international conference, a special congregation and several book launches arising from the preparation of Readers by most units of the University to mark the occasion.

### **Special Mention**

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, I have mentioned several initiatives and changes taking place at Legon. It is important for us to appreciate the role that various individuals are playing to make these happen. Without the dedication and commitment of the people who work here, these initiatives would not have occurred. Senior management has decided that at each congregation we will identify a number of people for special mention for distinguishing themselves in terms of effectiveness and commitment to the University. There will also be

appropriate cash awards to show the appreciation of Management. For this congregation we have settled on the following as deserving of special mention:

**Most effective and resourceful Dean:** Professor Arthur C. Sackeyfio. This is for his instrumentality and drive in guiding the new School of Pharmacy to produce its first cohort of graduates. Their good performance is ample testimony of how his efforts have yielded results, of which we are all proud.

**Most effective and resourceful Head of Department:** Dr. Daniel Etonam Kofi Baku. This is for his leadership, determination and zeal to lift the History Department on to a higher pedestal. While many Heads of Department would complain about the lack of resources, especially human, he has taken the extra step to aggressively look for international visiting scholars to help with teaching and research at his Department. This has enhanced significantly the availability of lecturers and therefore courses at the History Department.

**Most effective professional/administrator:** Mr. Patrick Kuti: This is for the dedication and sacrifice he continued to exhibit throughout the year, but more especially during the recent admissions exercise. While his wife was on admission at the labour ward, he worked very late into the night on several days to ensure that admitted students could access their admission letters.

**Most effective technician:** Mr. Richard Ato Fosu Nkrumah. This is for dedication to duty and a willingness to go the extra mile as Principal Works Superintendent to ensure that the University's water supply system is kept running. He works day and night seven days a week, and responds to every call made out to him without complaining, and always with a smile.

**Most effective junior staff:** Mr. Emmanuel Kojo Ackah. As Tradesman Grade II, he is responsible for turning on the valves very early each morning to ensure a uniform flow of water throughout the University's systems. He has shown commitment beyond the call of duty on several occasions.

### **Graduands/Performance**

Mr. Chairman, 2,573 students are graduating today at various levels. At the Bachelor's level, a total of 264 students representing 17.9 percent of the graduating class, obtained First Class Honours, 375 or 25.4 percent Second Class Upper, 665 or 45.1 percent Second Class Lower and 157 or 10.6 percent, Third Class.

17.1 percent of Certificate and Diploma students obtained distinctions, with the remaining obtaining passes.

The 919 post-graduate graduands include 22 Doctor of Philosophy candidates.

### **Well wishes to Graduands**

Ladies and gentlemen, I am sure that you will join me to congratulate members of our graduating class. I am sure most of you have braved numerous challenges on the long road to completion of your programmes; some of you might even have contemplated giving up. You did not give up, and today you reap the benefits of your hard work and sacrifice.

As you close the door of this phase of your life, and enter into the next one, I can only advise that wherever you might find yourself you will need to be dedicated, work hard and deal honestly with all you come into contact with. I urge you to put all you have learnt here into practice, particularly independent

thought, decision making and value judgment. I trust that the physical, mental and social training you have received during your time as a student of the University of Ghana have equipped you to meet any challenges you might face head on. I wish you well.

I also salute parents, guardians and other loved ones who have encouraged and sustained the graduands this far. I trust that you will continue to do so, and give them the support they need to continue to excel.

Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, I thank you for your attention.

Ernest Aryeetey  
November 3, 2012