

Valedictory speech by Ama

Amponsah-Tawiah

Representative of the Chairman of the university council, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Provost of the College of Education, Deans, Guest Speaker, Faculty members, fellow graduated students, ladies and gentlemen.

Being called upon to deliver the valedictory speech on a special occasion such as this is an honour, indeed; thank you for this privilege.

Congratulations, Class of 2017! We finally made it! Hurray! Our distinct achievement is embodied in the quote of Thomas Carlyle which states: ‘Permanence, perseverance and persistence, in spite of all obstacles, discouragement and impossibilities; it is this, that all things distinguishes the strong soul from the weak one.’

On that grey Monday morning, precisely the 4th of April 2016, those of us on the Master of Arts programme in Educational Leadership and Management had very little hope of finishing this race. The day started off well with an insightful orientation followed by a treat to an array of delicacies....the *banku* and tilapia was great and just when I looked forward to a dessert of trifle, all freshers, over 160 of us, were speedily summoned to begin lectures. What a day it was; one lecturer followed the other and in no time, our bags were stuffed with comprehensive course outlines

of all sorts. This experience was daunting. But throwing in the towel at this stage was certainly not an option, for we were a group determined to see this day come true. We worked tirelessly; meeting deadlines, completing assignments promptly, engaging in thought provoking discussions, taking numerous assessments, critiquing scholarly works, presenting before the ‘jury’ and toiling at midnight just to have our special topics well done.

That notwithstanding, we also made time to harness friendship; we shared joyous moments, supported one another and even mourned together. Phrases like ‘**Consider our ages**’ and ‘**In Ohio**’, I believe will linger on forever.....

I am certain that our colleagues from other programmes have similar stories to tell. But could this day have been a reality without the formidable faculty and staff who have supported us on our journey? Definitely not! To the entire team, I say *Ayeekoo!* Our dean’s calm demeanour and soft spoken nature were always enough to allay our fears and address any challenges we faced. To the administrator of the School of Education and Leadership and her group, and indeed to faculty and administrators throughout the College, I say we are all truly grateful. You did such a good job. The academic instructors were of a high calibre, undoubtedly knowledgeable in their various areas of expertise....Woe

betide you if you quoted wrongly, for they had eagle eyes. We are thankful because you taught us well.

Today, your arduous commitment to our success has paid off and having been refined in our thinking in our various fields, we are ready to contribute, unreservedly, to the development of the country.

To all the other graduating students from the College of Education, notably our colleagues who have just graduated with PhD, MPhil and MA degrees, I believe your story is not different from ours. You worked to the best of your ability and fulfilled all relevant requirements. Well done!

As we bid one another farewell, let us with one accord, influence the world as change makers and as we proceed shortly, let's also keep the motto of this university burning in our hearts: '*Integri Procedamus*': indeed, let us proceed with integrity!.

Class of 2017, Congratulations once again.

Thank you!!