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**SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
(GRADUATE PROGRAMMES)
PROCEEDINGS OF CONGREGATION
NOVEMBER 15, 2019
NOVEMBER 16, 2019**

CONTENTS

Order of Proceedings	2
Opening Address by Chancellor	4
Vice-Chancellor's Address	7
Address by Guest Speaker	30
Valedictory Speech	44
Closing Address by Chancellor	52

ORDER OF PROCEEDINGS

Friday, November 15, 2019 at 2:00 p.m.

Procession

- Members of Convocation
 - Council
- (The Congregation is asked to stand)*

National Anthem

Welcome/Declaration of Purpose: Prof. Yaw Twumasi,
Chairman of Council

Vice-Chancellor's Address: Prof. Ebenezer Oduro Owusu
Vice-Chancellor

Congregation Speaker: Mr. Bernardino Avle
General Manager Citi FM & Citi TV

Valedictory Address: Millicent Otopabea Awuku

Conferment of Degrees:

Presentation of graduands from the School of Graduate Studies

- PhD · MPhil · MSc · MAgric · MEng
- MPH · MA

Chairman of Council dissolves Congregation

University Anthem

Recession

(The Congregation is asked to remain seated until officials and graduates have left the Hall.)

ORDER OF PROCEEDINGS

Saturday, November 16, 2019 at 2:00 p.m.

Procession

- Members of Convocation
 - Council
- (The Congregation is asked to stand)*

National Anthem

Welcome/Declaration of Purpose: Prof. Yaw Twumasi,
Chairman of Council

Vice-Chancellor's Address: Prof. Ebenezer Oduro Owusu
Vice-Chancellor

Congregation Speaker: Hon. Elizabeth E. Knaup
Honorary Consul, Republic of Mauritius

Valedictory Address: Meek Esinam Djokoto

Conferment of Degrees:

Presentation of graduands from the School of Graduate Studies

- PhD
- LLM/MA (School of Law)
- MPhil
- EMBA
- MBA
- MPA
- MSc
- MA

Chairman of Council dissolves Congregation

University Anthem

Recession

(The Congregation is asked to remain seated until officials and graduates have left the Hall.)

**OPENING ADDRESS BY CHANCELLOR
(PRESENTED BY PROF. YAW TWUMASI,
CHAIRMAN OF COUNCIL)**

Members of the University Council
Vice-Chancellor
Pro-Vice-Chancellors
Registrar
Provosts, Deans and Directors
Guest Speaker
Chairman and Members of the School of Graduate Studies Board
Members of Convocation
Staff and Students
Alumni
Graduands
Invited Guests
Members of the Press Corps
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

Good afternoon,

I would like to welcome all of you gathered here on this important occasion.

During today's ceremony, graduate students from the School of Graduate Studies, who have satisfied the requirements for graduation, will be presented and graduated.

Ladies and gentlemen, the 2019 Congregation ceremonies are programmed to span three days, delivering seven sessions. It is evident that the number of students graduating from the University of Ghana is increasing each year. We deem it a good opportunity on these occasions to reflect on how well Management, faculty and staff are discharging their responsibility of providing the appropriate academic services and support, to ensure that students have a positive experience, and also satisfy the requirements for graduation and, indeed, are able to graduate on time.

I can assure you, distinguished ladies and gentlemen, that Management of the University remains committed to improving upon graduation rates and student satisfaction. University Management undertakes as well, to continue to do all in its power to provide students with a memorable experience.

This year has not been without some challenges, as it happens in any human institution. My personal concern has been that the name and reputation of the University would be preserved under any circumstances. It has therefore been worrisome on those occasions when especially press coverage of certain situations has carried the risk of tarnishing the image of the University in the media. One such occasion relates to the difficulties newly admitted students encountered in securing on-campus accommodation.

University Management recognizes that the current number of beds cannot cater for all our students, it is therefore engaging various private entities towards the provision of additional hostels in the near future.

We have in this regard taken note of the positive contribution of some alumni in resolution of this particular problem. I refer to the Old Vandals taking the initiative of providing the Commonwealth Annex facilities. As has happened with other prestigious Universities around the world, it is hoped that the Alumni of the University of Ghana would be more intimately involved, among other things, in the provision of facilities and mobilization of resources, especially through the Endowment Fund.

The University was also rocked by allegations of sexual harassment involving some members of faculty. I am satisfied with the measures put in place by Management of the University to interrogate the issue, while warning all against indulging in behaviours that contravene the University's Code of Ethics. University Management is fully committed to ensuring that the campus environment would be completely free from all forms of sexual harassment.

I repeat that the University of Ghana will not condone any form of sexual harassment, and mechanisms are currently being championed by the Vice-Chancellor, to ensure that there would be zero tolerance to such abuses.

Global statistics lend credence to the fact that such negative practices are common in universities around the world. Management is determined to set an example worthy of emulation by other similar institutions by putting in place robust policies towards this end.

I encourage all our students to take advantage of the structures put in place, and report such behaviours, if they occur. I give the assurance that no one will suffer any form of victimization as a result of reporting.

To our graduating students, I hope that on the occasion of your graduation, you will take stock of what you have achieved and make a conscious decision to let your experiences guide you in your future endeavours.

You have played your part, by putting in enormous amount of hard work, spending sleepless nights burning the midnight oil. Your presence here this morning is proof that your efforts have not been in vain.

I take the opportunity to wish you the graduands, who are being presented today, the very best on this very important occasion. We share in your joy on the successful completion of your programmes of study and we are very proud of you.

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, I am delighted to declare this afternoon's assembly, duly constituted for the award of degrees of the University of Ghana to successful graduands.

It is customary for the Vice-Chancellor to give a report at Congregation, on developments in the University over the last academic year. I now call on the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (ASA) Prof. Nana Aba Appiah Amfo to present the Vice-Chancellor's report.

**VICE-CHANCELLOR'S ADDRESS
(PRESENTED BY PROF. NANA ABA APPIAH AMFO,
PRO-VICE CHANCELLOR, ACADEMIC AND STUDENT
AFFAIRS)**

Chairman and Members of Council
Pro-Vice-Chancellor
Registrar
Provosts and Deans
Guest Speaker
Chairman and Members of School of Graduate Studies Board
Members of Convocation
Staff and Students
Alumni
Graduands
Invited Guests
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

Good afternoon!

It is my pleasure to welcome you all on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor to the fifth session of the November Congregation ceremonies for the 2018/2019 cohort.

This ceremony is dedicated to post graduate students of the University of Ghana. A total of 899 students are graduating this afternoon.

THE STATE OF THE UNIVERSITY

Academic Affairs of the University

Admissions

The University of Ghana enrolled a total of 18,212 (Eighteen Thousand, Two Hundred and Twelve) applicants, made up of 15,167 undergraduate and 3,045 graduate students into various programmes mounted at its campuses in the 2019/2020 academic year. The total

enrolment this year shows a 51:49 female to male ratio, which implies that 9,288 females enrolled compared with 8,924 males. By this feat, the University has already exceeded its target of achieving female to male enrolment ratio of 50:50 by the year 2020.

Accommodation

The University's capacity to undertake any further investments to augment the housing stock has largely been impeded by judgment debts and other financial obligations. The University has for some time now decoupled admission from accommodation. University admission is, therefore, not linked to the provision of beds hence students have had to compete for the few beds on a first-come basis.

Towards addressing the accommodation challenge, and in anticipation of the influx of the first cohort of graduates from the Free Senior High School Policy, Management is considering various approaches towards improving the situation. Currently, the University of Ghana's Land Lease Committee is in negotiation with a number of private bodies to expand housing options on campus. The Student Representative Council of the University has also initiated a process of embarking on a 2500-bed capacity hostel project.

Worthy of note is that on Wednesday, November 6, 2019, a sod-cutting ceremony was held for the construction of a state-of-the-art annex facility for Commonwealth Hall by the Old Vandals Association (OVA) and their partners, KPMM Civils Limited with a possible completion of the first phase (2500 beds) within one year. This project is expected to deliver fully-furnished 4660-bed facility, made up of 302 one-bed block, 552 two-bed block, 3806 four-bed block and 32 two-bedroom lecturers flats among others.

Affiliation of Six Colleges of Education to University of Ghana

Mr. Chairman, as you may be aware, the Government of Ghana has initiated policy reforms in teacher education to improve the quality of teaching and learning at basic schools. As part of the reforms, all 46 public Colleges of Education are being converted into University Colleges of Education of public universities that train teachers through

a special affiliation agreement for a transitional period of four years to deliver the new four-year B.Ed. curriculum. This agreement is expected to guarantee the institutional integration of Colleges into their affiliated Universities.

In consonance with the above, six public Colleges of Education have been assigned to the University of Ghana with effect from October 2019. The Colleges are Accra College of Education, Enchi College of Education, Evangelical Presbyterian College of Education at Amedzofe, Peki College of Education, Gbewaa College of Education at Pusiga, and Mount Mary College of Education at Somanya.

Strategic Directions

Mr. Chairman, strategic teams were set up in November 2016 to drive the transformational agenda of the University of Ghana.

The Independent Power Supply Team is spearheading the effort to re-condition the biogas plant at Hilla Limann Hall to generate gas for the four new Halls.

Through the instrumentality of the Team, the Chief Executive Officer of Virtual Security Africa (VSA)/Aventura has made a commitment to supply, install and commission a solar backed CCTV Surveillance System at the University of Ghana. The initiative forms part of the corporate social responsibility of the company and the personal capacity of the CEO as an alumnus of the University. The University is grateful to VSA for this noble gesture.

As part of the efforts of the team, the University recently gave approval for Bui Power Project to undertake geological and geotechnical surveys, and transmission right of way needed to conclude the feasibility studies for a proposed 2.5 Mw solar project.

The Green Team Project is also advancing on its mandate of increasing tree density, ensuring green coverage of campus grounds, developing paved walkways and improving waste management. The team has also earmarked a number of activities on the main campus this year.

The University of Ghana Plastic Recycling Project's (UGPRP) effort at institutionalizing source segregation of waste in the university community is commendable. So far, it is estimated that about 23 metric tons of plastic waste has been collected and transferred for recycling. The recycling project is spearheaded by students.

Fundraising Strategy to Modernize Laboratories and Research Facilities at the University of Ghana

Distinguished guests, a fundraising strategy to modernize laboratories and research facilities at the University of Ghana has been developed by the Laboratory Modernization Implementation Committee as part of the strategic initiatives. Establishing state-of-the-art laboratories and developing world-class facilities at University of Ghana will help bridge and better link theory and practice. A well-resourced university with modern facilities for research can help deliver and advance Ghana's national agenda of self-sustaining development, as well as meet the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and Africa's Agenda 2063.

It is expected that all stakeholders will join our four-year fund-raising campaign to mobilize the target of US\$ 500 million needed to modernize our laboratories when the initiative is rolled out later this year.

Research Grants

Mr. Chairman, the Office of Research, Innovation and Development (ORID), is spearheading the University's vision of becoming a world-class research-intensive institution. For the 2018-2019 academic year, the Office processed about 81 research grant agreements with a total grant value of over US\$ 42.5 million (Forty-Two Million and Five Hundred Thousand United States Dollars). This represents over 1,000% (one thousand percent) increase in grant revenue over the last three academic years.

African Centres of Excellence (ACE) Projects

Mr. Chairman, I am happy to report that during the year under review, the University of Ghana won funding to set up three Centres of Excellence under a funding arrangement by the Government of Ghana

and the World Bank. These Centres are part of the Africa centres of Excellence II. They are:

1. Africa Centre of Excellence for Agricultural Innovation and Entrepreneurship
2. West African Genetic Medicine Centre
3. West African Centre for Cell Biology of Infectious Pathogens and Non-Communicable Diseases (WACCBIP & NCDs)

The establishment of these centres will go a long way to dedicate funding for research and training of PhD students in Agriculture, Public Health and Medicine.

Allegations of Sexual Harassment

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, following the recent media reports of alleged sexual harassment cases involving some faculty of the University, Management has taken steps to enforce its Anti-Sexual Harassment regulations. Following the broadcast, Management set up a five-member Fact-finding Committee chaired by Her Ladyship Justice (Rtd) Vida Akoto-Bamfo to conduct an inquiry into the matter.

I am happy to inform you that the Committee submitted its report to me on Tuesday, 12th November, 2019. Management will, therefore, study the report and ensure implementation of the recommendations using the appropriate adjudicatory processes stipulated under the Basic Laws of the University.

Meanwhile, the University has created an anonymous e-mail address and a WhatsApp platform to facilitate and create easy avenues through which sexual harassment cases may be reported. We particularly encourage people who may have fallen victim to such unfortunate incidents to take advantage and report them for redress.

In response to the ongoing discussions on how to tackle sexual harassment issues going forward, the Centre for Gender Studies and Advocacy (CEGENSA) has been tasked to lead in developing a training programme to educate members of the UG community on what constitutes harassment. It is envisaged that in the not too distant

future, every employee of the University of Ghana would be trained in understanding what constitutes sexual and gender harassment and how to respond to it, as a victim. Once the framework is developed, it is proposed that the training would be available both online and in other formats and will also be extended to students.

We are counting on CEGENSA to consult widely and come up with a training programme that is suitable for the University of Ghana, and which will deal decisively with the issues relating to sexual harassment.

Financial Aid to Students

Ladies and Gentlemen, the Students' Financial Aid Office has made it possible for less endowed but brilliant students to have equal access to quality education at the University of Ghana. I am glad to note that there has been an increase in donations from approximately GH¢1,000,000.00 (One Million Ghana Cedis) in the 2016/2017 academic year to approximately GH¢3,000,000.00 (Three Million Ghana Cedis) in 2017/18 academic year. This represents a 155% increase over the previous year.

During the period under review, a total of Six Hundred and Fourteen students (614) out of Nine Hundred and Twenty (920) applicants were awarded scholarships. This represents 66.7% of all scholarship applicants.

Sporting Activities

The University of Ghana Policy on Admission of Athlete Students (UG-PAAS), which was launched in the 2014/2015 academic year forms part of a broader UG sports strategy. So far, a total of Three Hundred and Fifty-Eight (358) student-athletes have been admitted through the policy; One Hundred and Ten (110) females and Two Hundred and Forty-Eight (248) males.

Already, the UG-PAAS Policy has yielded some significant results. I am pleased to report that Mr. Benjamin Azameti, a level 300 Marine & Fisheries Science student of the University of Ghana is the fastest human in Ghana and a current 4x100 African gold medalist. Worthy of

mention is Ms. Grace Obour, a level 100 Sports and Education student who is the 400 metres champion in Ghana, 6th best in Africa and 42nd ranked in the world. Similarly, the University's male basketball team has remained unbeaten in Ghana, West Africa and Africa since 2013.

Well Wishes to Graduands

To you, ladies and gentlemen of the graduating class, as we celebrate this milestone with you, I would like to conclude with the words of Winston Churchill: "Success is walking from failure to failure with no loss of enthusiasm".

I, therefore, pray that your commitment to obtaining knowledge would not end with your graduation but that you will continue to seek knowledge to enable you to make significant changes in your lives and in society as a whole.

As you move on to the next stage of your lives, remember to uphold the values of the University – Respect, Commitment, Integrity and Loyalty.

I wish you all the best in your individual endeavours. Once again, congratulations.



**Officials, Members of Convocation and Guest Speaker
in a group photograph (Friday, November 15, 2019)**



**Officials, Members of Convocation, Guest Speaker and
Valedictorian in a group photograph (Saturday, November 16, 2019)**



Prof. Yaw Twumasi, Chairman of Council delivering the Opening Address



Prof. Samuel Agyei-Mensah, Provost, College of Humanities, delivering the Vice-Chancellor's Address (Friday, November 15, 2019)



Prof. Nana Aba Appiah Amfo, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Academic & Student Affairs delivering the Vice-Chancellor's Address (Saturday, November 16, 2019)



Mrs. Mercy Haizel-Ashia, Registrar, delivering the Opening Remarks at the ceremony



**Prof. Kwaku Tano-Debrah, Dean, School of Graduate Studies
acknowledging International Students**



Mrs. Stella Dovlo, Adminrator, School of Graduate Studies



**Mr. Bernardino Avle, delivering the
Guest Speaker's Address (Friday, November 15, 2019)**



**Hon. Elizabeth E. Knaup, delivering the
Guest Speaker's Address (Saturday, November 16, 2019)**



**Millicent Otopabea Awuku, delivering the
Valedictory Speech (Friday, November 15, 2019)**



**Meek Esinam Djokoto, delivering the
Valedictory Speech (Saturday, November 16, 2019)**



**Graduands being congratulated by University Officials
at the ceremony**



Graduands at the Congregation ceremony



Parents, guardians and invited guests at the ceremony

**GUEST SPEAKER'S ADDRESS BY
MR. BERNARDINO AVLE
(FRIDAY, 15TH NOVEMBER , 2019)**

Chancellor
Chairman and Members of the University Council
Vice-Chancellor
Pro-Vice-Chancellors
Registrar
Provosts, Deans and Directors
Members of the School of Graduate Studies Board
Members of Convocation
Staff and Students
Alumni
Invited Guests
Members of the Press Corps
Graduands
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

I wish to thank the Chairman of Council, Vice-Chancellor, Provosts Deans and Heads of Department, and of course, students, for inviting me to be guest speaker for this very important occasion.

I left Legon in 2004 but during our graduation we were so many that I missed the chance to get a hand shake with the Chairman of Council and the Vice-Chancellor. The congregation was held outside and because the people were so many, I missed my chance. I'm praying that after today's speech, I will get the opportunity to shake the hands of not only of the VC but Chairman of Council as well. So please pray for me.

I've always been a Legon boy.
I was born at the Legon Hospital.
I attended University Primary School (UPS) in Legon.

I went to Secondary School at Presbyterian Boys' Secondary in Legon. I came to the University of Ghana in the year 2000 and as fate would have it; I was put in Legon Hall.

Over two-thirds of my life has been spent at Legon so in a sense, I am a thoroughbred 'Legonite'.

Whilst I was at UPS, the school used to hold our annual Speech and Prize-Giving Day in this very Hall. Those programmes were highly-priced events, highly anticipated. 12 prizes were given per class; 10 for the top ten students in the class by academic performance, 1 for good behaviour and another for good progress.

In my ten years from Nursery 1 to JSS 3, I received prizes here only twice. In Class 3, I was 8th in a class of 45 and in Class 4; I received the Good Progress prize for moving from 12th to 9th in the 3rd term.

There was no way I could win the Good Behaviour prize; it always went to the most quiet student in the class and keeping quiet was not one of my many talents.

Even though I was hardly ever among the prize winners, I'm grateful to God that the same thing that denied me of collecting prize; talking; has invited me back here and I'm not sitting down there but I up here.

The title of my speech is "The Four Eyes Legon Gave Me". When people see me they say, "He's a journalist who has four eyes; two given by God and two given by men". Legon gave me many things, but the four that I most cherish, I will share with you briefly.

²² "The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. ²³ But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. – Matthew 6:22-23

These four eyes are the frames of reference through which I see and process the world.

The first eye Legon gave me was the 'I' of Instruction. With its rigorous culture of research, excellent scholarship and academic pursuit, Legon imbibed in me the quest for knowledge and the hunger for excellence.

A wise man said, "in life, walking requires common sense, running takes principles, but it requires instructions to fly".

In flight school, the lecturers are called instructors. There is a reason for this. The stakes are so high for a pilot that there is no room for error or guesswork.

Legon set me up for a flight in life by giving me quality instructions for which I am eternally grateful and thankful to God.

The second eye that Legon gave me is the 'I' of influence. Before I came here, my concept of leadership was wobbled and limited. To me, leadership was occupying a position or winning an election.

In fact, in Level 300 in Legon Hall, I run for and became JCR Secretary. But I realised quickly that it took more than winning elections to be a leader, and it takes more than the margin of your votes to leave a legacy as a leader.

Many in Ghana have learnt to win elections, only to dash their expectations. Many have learnt to win business deals, but collapse companies and destroy families along the way.

Our finance culture rewards bonuses, no matter how they're earned. We have become people who reward winners but not leaders.

Sadly in politics, young people leave campuses; including this one, jump unto the bandwagon of politics, because it's the quickest way to earn a million dollars. The sad aspiration of many young people is to become political winners, not understanding what leadership is. But a society that prizes winning and position over influence and change-making has the wrong concept of leadership.

The second 'I' Legon gave me is best expressed through the words of John Maxwell. He says, "Leadership is influence; nothing more, nothing less". Legon taught me that true leadership comes at a cost; the price is self-discipline and self-sacrifice.

Legon taught me that the quickest way to gain leadership is not by running for political office, but by solving a problem. Legon taught me that the most difficult person to lead was myself and that self-leadership was the foundation for true leadership. Legon taught me that the ultimate test of a leader is not the properties I acquire after I leave office, but is the legacy and the change I leave.

Legon taught me that the most important ingredient in leadership is integrity, which happens to be my third 'I'. While we were here between 2000 and 2004, we loved Legon's Motto

“Integri Procedamus”, not because it reminded us of the importance of integrity, but to some, it meant the floodgates for pursuing an “Inte” had been opened for “Inte” a legon for campus-based boyfriend or girlfriend relationship, as against “Exte”. So during our matriculation, when they announced that “Integri Procedamus”, a friend of mine said it meant “Inte” must proceed.

But on a more serious note, “Integri Procedamus”, is a call to proceed with integrity. A related word is ‘Integer’, from which we get our mathematical number integer – a number, which is not a fraction; a whole number.

Legon taught me that if I’m to be a human being, and if I’m to be a number, I shouldn’t be a fractious fraction, but a wholesome integer.

Many today have lost the anchor of integrity and vastly depending on where they are and who they are talking to, in a nice setting like this on campus, they like water, boil at a 100°C; but when the stakes are high and the pressure is high, their fuse shortens and like water on Mt. Everest, their boiling point reduces to 71°C.

When things are cool on campus, when they are in a protected environment with large greenery, their pressure is 14 pounds per square inch. But take them out of Legon into the private sector, take them into politics, take them into the real world of business, into the hustle and bustle of media; their pressure drops to 4.84 pounds per square inch as it is on Mt. Everest.

Legon’s motto reminds us that whether we are on Everest or in Accra, 2 plus 2 must be 4, irrespective of where you are. The call of integrity means you must produce businessmen and women who buy the truth and sell it not. It’s a call to produce scientists whose “yes” means yes, and whose “no” means no. It’s a call to produce citizens who are either fully hot or fully cold, not lukewarm people who fear to speak truth to power and are trying to be in everyone’s good books.

Legon has taught me that as a citizen, I should be prepared to take a stand for what I believe, not trying to pander to popular opinion and culture.

As a media man, honesty and integrity can be pretty expensive, but Legon teaches me that even though I will make mistakes in my quest, I should never give up – I should give my best work when possible and be humble enough to say I'm sorry when I'm wrong.

The fourth and final eye Legon taught me is the 'I' of Image. In a social media era, everyone is concerned about image and appearance, over character and substance. The money made by social media Influencers has risen astronomically in the last few years, according to a BBC news report today.

The story quotes a research by Marketing Firm, IZEA Worldwide Inc. that the average price of a sponsored photo on Instagram has increased from \$134 in 2014 to \$1,642 in 2019, a 12-fold increase, reflecting the rapidly growing importance of influencers in marketing of products, services and ideas.

In a celebrity culture that rewards sometimes overexposed but underdeveloped influencers, Legon is calling us back to good old-fashioned values of honesty, hard work and organic growth.

Some start enterprises; schools, business or churches, by creating an image of success to become overnight sensations and market leaders.

But for your university that started some 71 years ago, you are part of a system that has gained respect, not by the size of your billboards or by the loudness of your adverts, but by depending on the first three I's.

You have built an image, shaped by a commitment to quality instruction, built on a track record of producing influential leaders and you strive to maintain integrity no matter the cost.

On this note, I wish to commend the Vice Chancellor for his honest and personal show of leadership in meeting students personally after the 'BBC Sex for Grades' scandal to answer questions openly.

This is how to maintain your integrity.

This is how you build an image; not through PR and adverts, but by being honest and facing the facts.

The words of your famous anthem sum up the spirit and power of this great institution:

Hail University of Ghana
The nation's hope and glory
The place that bears the star of peace
That bids us all to do our best
Let the great tower of learning
Inspire both young and old
May we proceed in unity to uphold the public cause.

I think you can join me in the chorus:
//: Arise, arise O Legon
Defend the cause of freedom
Proceed in truth and integrity to make our nation proud ://

Long live the School of Graduate Studies.
Long live College of Humanities.
Long Live University of Ghana.
Long Live Ghana.

I thank you very much for your attention.

**GUEST SPEAKER'S ADDRESS BY
HON. ELIZABETH E. KNAUP
(SATURDAY, 16TH NOVEMBER , 2019)**

Chairman of Council
Members of the University Council
Vice-Chancellor
Pro-Vice-Chancellors
Registrar
Provosts, Deans and Directors
Members of the Advisory Board of the College of Humanities
Members of Convocation
Staff and Students
Alumni
Invited Guests
Members of the Press Corps
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

I say congratulations to the graduating class of the year 2019 for whom I am here today.

Georges Duhamel once said: “We do not know the true value of our moments until they have undergone the test of memory”.

When asked if I would be a guest speaker at the 2019 Congregation, I was momentarily startled, quite scared, but immensely thrilled and I could not help it, but bask in the joy and excitement I presume all of you graduands must be feeling today.

You may all have different personal stories to tell, but I know that for some of you, the profound beginnings of your personal legends have been attained today. You may have come from backgrounds that when you set out, you were told it could not be done. You may have started from the bottom, but you are here now.

A wise man once said to me that potential is nothing, if it is not realised. You may have had a fine education, but what matters is what you do with it henceforth.

I sincerely wish that the import of this auspicious day is never lost upon any of you. As you go out into the “real world”, may you all never lose sense of who you really are, for it is pertinent to know thyself. Please strive to be open minded and tolerant to divergent opinions, but most importantly, conduct yourselves in a way and manner that you can always hold your heads up high and be able to call yourselves worthy alumni of the University of Ghana, Legon.

To my fellow ladies, I am told that this year’s graduating class has a considerably higher number of females than past graduating classes, and for that I doff off my hat of honour and say a big ‘Ayekoo’ to all of you.

As Dr. James E. K. Aggrey said: “if you educate a man, you educate an individual but if you educate a woman, you educate a nation”.

I trust that the knowledge, skills and tools you have acquired here, would enable you navigate this life and prepare future generations for what lies ahead.

I am happy to be here and whilst I bask and share in your excitement, I cannot help but reminisce about my own life and a part of my journey and how far I have come. This is the beginning of ‘real life’. Your life. not your parents, your mentors, your idols, but your own life, and yes, it will be hard, even for those from privileged backgrounds. But with hardwork, also comes success, satisfaction, joy and happiness.

Some of you may be shy, outspoken, slow, loud, quiet, smart, intelligent. Some may have a few or all of those peculiar traits. You come from varied backgrounds. Some are from privileged homes, others from very simple homes. Some had it easy, others did not, but you have all achieved the same - you are graduates of this premier institution. This is an achievement every one of you must be proud of. But, do not forget, with this degree, comes invisible responsibilities, ethics, codes of honour, behaviour...etc.

Looking back to when I started my journey of real life, there are three words that were and still are most important for everything I have done and still do; faith, perseverance & passion. They have been the bedrock and the foundation of my real life. Do not give up when you know you are doing the right thing.

I want to share with you, one very crucial experience I had early into my studies that made me who I am, what I feel and how I think till today.

I had no financial support from home. I received DM 497, monthly stipend from government. My room was DM 500, per month (the cheapest I could find), so you do the math.

I had to work part time whilst studying. I worked as a waitress at a popular café, had office jobs; filing documents, writing letters, printing, brewing coffee etc. Suddenly, everything went mute. It all stopped. Like a curse. Exams were coming up and I hadn't worked for about 3 weeks as I was busy preparing for my exams. My wallet was drying out like the Sahara desert, as were the contents of my fridge and pantry. It was a very cold winter. Lots of snow and temperatures were -20 degrees celsius. I had every newspaper the city had to offer, reading through the job vacancy section for students. I called all advertised student jobs but 'nada', 'niente', nothing. Absolutely no luck. In the meantime, I hadn't eaten for 6 days, in addition to that, I only had a day left for my phone to be disconnected for non-payment of the monthly bill. I was desperate! You can't imagine how much I prayed. I think I may have beaten the pope in praying but without success.

I had a Russian friend who tried encouraging me to take unethical jobs. I declined. I said I would die of hunger rather than succumb to losing my faith! Of course, I was absolutely in total despair. I was hungry, but my inner faith and strong will was stronger than anything. No food for 6 days. My luck was the running tap water, at least I had water to drink.

I remember on the 6th day, at around 16.45hrs I sat on my window sill and told myself "this is my last prayer", and I know He will hear me. I just knew it. I had this inner confidence. I even forgot for a moment how hungry I was. I made a call to this huge 'Industrial Group' that designed and manufactured glasses for most of the world's leading brands.

I dialled and after what felt like a lifetime, someone answered. I told her I was calling for the student job vacancy. She said, sure come tomorrow morning at 09:00am.

My heart skipped a million beats, I screamed and fell on the floor thanking God. Then reality dawned on me that I needed to take the train, but I had no means to buy a ticket. At 2:00am in the morning, I packed my little bag with some makeup, a suit & nice shoes, dressed like an eskimo and set off by foot. After 4hrs I arrived frozen. My feet and fingers were in terrible pain from the cold. I was shaking and shivering. The security guard looked at me and thought I was some homeless person. I asked him to please allow me enter and use the bathroom as I had an appointment with Ms. M at 9:00 a.m. Under normal circumstances, he would probably have sent me away, but I think he saw the desperation in my eyes and let me in. When I entered the washroom, it was like I had entered heaven. It was warm! I held my hands slowly under the luke warm running tap water to bring back the flow of blood into my practically frozen fingers. It was a little after 6:00 a.m. and the building officially opened at 7.30am.

In a nut shell, I regained myself, cleaned up, dressed and waited till 8.45am. I went to the reception and presented myself for the appointment with the Director of the Department for Duty Free Worldwide. I was led up to the waiting room and was cautioned that 'the Director was something else and that I should stay calm no matter what'. Honestly, I really did not need any such advice at that moment. On the other hand, it didn't really matter, nothing could have been worse than my last 7 hours. I had planned every word, every move, etc.. Then, A beautiful, strict, executive looking woman, opened the door and ushered me in. I sat down and it was the Director herself. The only woman on the board of the firm and the only female Director as well. She looked at me and I thought, to hell with my planned lies of telling her I wanted to try out something new and having experience etc.

I said, "Madam, I need this job or else I shall flunk my exams and die of hunger. Please hire me and I will do my best not to let you down. But I have to say, I have never done anything as per the expectations on the job requirements. You would need to teach me please".

This supposedly heartless, childless, power woman looked at me and said: 'Under normal circumstances, I would have walked you out, but, your honesty and sincerity tells me I should give you a chance. After the interview, she gave me a small cash advance payment, some tea and a sandwich - for me at that moment it was like eating fufu and lightsoup with prawns, lobster, fish, chicken, beef and goat meat all together.

Till date, nearly 30 years on, I have not been in such dire financial straits again.

What did I learn from this? First and foremost, faith & perseverance! Honesty, authenticity, integrity, love and most importantly, being yourself. Own yourself. Keep your ethics and principles. Be true to yourself, no matter what. Do not succumb to anything you know deep in your heart is not right. Do not allow anyone to talk you into something you are not comfortable with.

Some of you will become corporate and political leaders. Some will stay average, some will change professional directions, some may end up just being passive. But whatever you do, look deep within yourself and ask yourself, am I doing the right thing for myself and the people who look up to me? Those who sacrificed for me to come this far. You did not achieve today's certificate on your own. Many believed in you, some visible, others invisible. Even if you think you sat and studied alone, or you wrote the exams yourself. Keep in mind, someone sacrificed in one way or another for you to have the freedom of learning and writing.

Do not begin anything only because of the financial benefit. It won't go far. Remember my little story, I could have saved myself the hunger and painful walk by being unethical and earning well and fast, but would I have had this inner satisfaction, pride and peace? No, I wouldn't have. I am sure if I hadn't stayed true to myself, I wouldn't be where I am today.

I became Ms. M's favourite Personal Assistant, even though I only worked part time, she would wait for me to organise all her important duties, trips, write ups. You name it. I was more like a daughter than a secretary. She over paid me even though I made many mistakes at the beginning.

To my young ladies here (I see a lot of you, which makes me very very proud) note, it was a woman who lifted me. A woman who was known to be mean, hard, ruthless to all. This woman was one of the kindest I ever met. What I want to say is, Do not be prejudiced towards other fellow women. Do not just practice gender equality on paper and do not only make use of it when it benefits you. Do not compete with

one another; support and help. Bring one another up. Laws and ratios are fine, but it's the human mind, strength and love that makes the real difference. Ms. M could have seen me as a competitor. A young beautiful student; a future threat. No. she stood above such mediocre thinking/mindset. She was progressive and success driven. She saw the capacity in having a woman by her side who she could train to help her. She knew that together we are strong and divided, we are weak. That's why she was so successful and unbeatable.

In 1966, James Brown sang: "This is a man's world, this is a man's world but it wouldn't be nothing without a woman"

Throughout the world, there is a movement to bring more justice and equality between women and men.

Ladies and young men, we will and cannot reverse or undo what generations have believed in, and inbuilt in human society, but we can make a difference for us today and the future generations of tomorrow.

Ms. M was my angel sent from above in the form of a woman. Girls, be confident, be strong, believe in yourselves and you will have your angel.

Remember, the honour is in being the trailblazer who opens the path to others. The honour lies in being the builder who sinks the foundations and erects the pillars on which will rest the promises of tomorrow.

What I want, what I expect, what I hope, is that there are among you, those who will heed the call and respond to it - This, my young ladies and gentlemen, applies to you all.

After my initial studies, I went on to do Art Photography. Being creative was always my true passion. But I was brought up believing that being creative was only for the dreamers who would end nowhere. Against all odds, I pursued my passion in Art Photography and because I wanted it so badly, I worked hard and passionately. I became the trusted person in Art for leading European families. I was entrusted with artwork worth hundreds of millions of USD. I traded with galleries and art collectors who didn't want to be revealed. This was all based on Integrity. I loved my job and with this enthusiasm

and giving my total dedication, came financial freedom. I earned well. I had no clue there was so much money to be earned. I dived into this because I was passionate about it.

Throughout my 'real life', whenever I started something with absolute faith, perseverance and passion, it ended well. I owned it. I owned myself. I was myself and no one could distract my goal.

Yes, it will be hard and difficult. You will suffer blows and unfairness. You will meet failure in your career and possibly in your personal lives. But never give up, like I didn't. Get up on your feet and walk again. You will be tested in different phases of your professional and private lives. I was tested. One of the tests was the 6 days no food & 4hrs of freezing walk in the dark. My dear young ones. It was a hard one, but I did not give up! and for this I was rewarded.

My young graduates, you must always get up and try again. Believe in yourself as we believe in you and what you stand for; idealism, energy, optimism that anything and everything is possible when you set your mind on it. Persevere. Be passionate about what you do.

You are to build what tomorrow will be. This is not an abstract concept, this is a living practical reality and only you will decide what it will be.

You are the bearers of your own optimism. You might not be too conscious of this, but with this educational certificate, you embrace more than a profession. You will bring to our society order, structure and new ideas at a time when the powers of the world are tempted to turn their backs on the rule of law, ethics and principles of selflessness .

For the law students, you will be called upon to be the pillars of the law. Yours will be to anchor even more firmly in our society its roots to make it grow and prosper. You are the gate keepers for us all.

To all of you, find your niche and specialise in it. Be an expert in the subject or theme you are passionate about. Be skilled in a particular field. Become invaluable.

In this time of advanced social media, information and knowledge is available to all. The world today is filled with 'pseudo' graduates.

Netflix - on nearly everyone's phone or TV is filled with series/shows relating to many life topics. But experts are becoming rare. Be an expert, engage experts, create teams with experts.

Now, as you go out there, have the courage to shine. Let your light shine on the uncharted paths and courses that lay ahead and never hesitate to assist others to see their way out of darkness. Do not play small, shatter through that glass ceiling and remember, what you do in this life, echoes in eternity.

Stand out and make your loved ones proud.

Ayekoo Class of 2019.

Thank you.

**VALEDICTORY SPEECH DELIVERED
BY MILLICENT OTOPABEA AWUKU
(FRIDAY, 15TH NOVEMBER , 2019)**

Chancellor
Members of the University Council
Vice Chancellor
Pro-Vice-Chancellors
Registrar
Chair and Members of the School of Graduate Studies Board
Provosts, Deans and Directors
Members of Convocation
Staff and Students
Alumni
Parents and Guardians
Invited Guests
Members of the Press Corps
Fellow Graduands
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

Today marks a significant milestone in our lives as graduands, and I am as excited as I am humbled to be part of this graduating class. My deepest thanks goes to the Almighty God for bringing us this far. “This is the Lord’s doing and it is marvellous in our eyes” (Psalm 118: 23).

There is a lot more to be thankful for. At the University of Ghana, I believe we have received the best of training that is available in Ghana. On behalf of this graduating class and on my behalf, I wish to thank the administration, faculty and staff of the University, for their efforts in maintaining the standards of academic excellence and scholarship.

Albert Einstein said “Try not to become a man of success but rather try to become a man of value”.

I am personally grateful to the United Nations University – World

Institute for Development Economics Research (UNU-WIDER) for providing funding for the PhD in Development Economics. Without funding for the programme, achieving my dream for higher education would have been impossible. I wish to take this opportunity to humbly appeal to the University and stakeholders of tertiary education in Ghana, to continue to explore avenues of support for PhD education, especially for young females.

Special thanks also goes to our parents, families, friends and loved ones, who encouraged and supported us in diverse ways along this journey. We would not have been here today without you.

Fellow graduands, as we soberly reflect on the journey to this point in our lives and what lies ahead, permit me to share a few thoughts on some critical life-long lessons that enrolling in a graduate programme and successfully completing has offered.

First, a number of us at the beginning of our graduate programmes either did not have a viable topic or at various stages were told that completing our study may be impossible. Sometimes, we were tempted to agree. Yet, by being patient with ourselves and persevering, we picked up the pieces and forged on. As we move on to the next phase of our lives, let us remember that our degrees will not absolve us from facing people and even situations in life that will wish to dictate to us what can or cannot be done. We should continue to be patient with ourselves and persevere.

Secondly, I believe all of us have had our fair share of life's frustrations. But I am sure you can attest to the fact that the frustrations that were associated with pursuing a graduate degree, most especially, a PhD, were on a whole new level. The sources of these frustrations were diverse. Yet, I believe we are better people today because of what we have been through. Our degrees will not insulate us from life's frustrations. Let us soberly reflect on the best virtues and values that helped us pull through these frustrations and build on them as we move on to the next phase of our respective lives.

Thirdly, do you remember how you felt when you were told that what you considered as your best-written chapter should be scrapped? When the statistical tests yielded insignificant results? When the results were inconsistent with the literature or threatened to invalidate the motivation for your entire thesis? These are but a few of the sources of despair and discouragement we experienced during our study. The journey ahead will still have some of such moments or even worse. As we learnt from our supervisors and senior faculty members, giving ourselves time to mature in our field will help us learn to respond better to these challenges. There can be no short-cuts.

I believe we can recount the number of times we found it difficult to tell whether a comment passed about our work or presentation was a critique or criticism. It did not matter whether it was a classmate, lecturer, supervisor or examiner, so far as you were at the receiving end, determining whether a comment was a critique or criticism was always difficult. But we learnt to accept them all, it was easier for some than it was for others. The point is that let us remember it was in embracing them, that we were able to progress to what is being witnessed today. Let us not allow our degrees to make us averse to either criticism or critique. Let us continue to embrace both, taking the best to continually improve upon ourselves.

Lastly, graduate studies are fundamentally independent work, yet all of us can attest to the value of collaborations and consultations in the build-up to completing our programmes. These consultations and collaborations have included our course mates, supervisors, other faculty members, persons from other departments or institutions, and even respondents of our research works. In our world today, consultations and collaborations have become the primary means of obtaining the best results, and as we move on to the next phase of our diverse journeys, we should not lose sight of the value embedded in them.

Fellow graduands, we are here today, as the totality of these ‘highs’ and “lows” that have marked our journey. We should be grateful to all who purposefully or inadvertently contributed to this moulding process. Let us allow ourselves to continue to grow. The pursuit of the degree may be over, but the learning continues.

Our country faces a myriad of challenges, and embedded in these challenges are great opportunities for change and transformation. As part of the advantaged, we have been equipped with the knowledge and skills (tools) to analyse issues (data) and draw inferences to contribute significantly to finding solutions to the challenges.

“Let us proceed in truth and integrity to make our nation proud”.

Integri Procedamus!

Congratulations and may the Lord bless and keep us all!

**VALEDICTORY SPEECH DELIVERED
BY MEEK ESINAM DJOKOTO
(SATURDAY, 16TH NOVEMBER , 2019)**

Chancellor
Members of the University Council
Vice-Chancellor
Pro-Vice-Chancellors
Registrar
Chair and Members of the College Advisory Boards
Provosts, Deans and Directors
Members of Convocation
Staff and Students
Alumni
Parents and Guardians
Invited Guests
Members of the Press Corps
Fellow Graduands
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is with much appreciation and honour that I present this speech on behalf of my graduating colleagues. “To God be the glory, great things He has done”. Today reminds me of a line from Henry Longfellow’s poem, ‘The Ladder of St. Augustine’: “The heights great men reached and kept were not attained by sudden flight, but they while their companions slept, were toiling upward in the night”. This is our story as a cohort.

Our journey began at different times and seasons. After careful consideration, we chose no other institution than the premier university in the nation: University of Ghana. For some of us, it was a continuation of the quality education we had gained from this noble campus, for others, this was their very first time of experiencing the excellent education for which the University of Ghana is well known.

We embarked on our academic journey with a lot of expectations and zeal. Our diverse backgrounds, ideologies and preferences were no impediment to the common goals we shared. We willingly submitted ourselves under the huge umbrella of our academic expectations and

took the bull by the horn to improve and upgrade ourselves. What was our aim? For some, it will be a criteria for our next promotion, for others it was for career progression and yet for another subset, it was a stepping stone for getting into academia, while for a few others, it probably could be the “we too we were here some” syndrome. But in all these our utmost inspiration was to better ourselves and gain invaluable knowledge to improve our work. Our stories are different but our motivation is congruent.

Our admission into University of Ghana, was not easy. Among the hundreds of thousands who applied, we were among the few who got this opportunity. Colleagues in the regular stream literally put ‘their lives on hold’ as they woke up each morning and came for lectures; the weekend cohort had to forfeit all weddings, funerals, out-doorings, family outings and just to be at lectures. For colleagues in the sandwich modules, “sometimes the sandwich was too large to bite” – having to attend lectures from 7am to 7pm was a herculean task not to mention the years of toil for our PhD graduates.

Our journey was not without challenges but they were not unsurmountable. The challenges ranged from being a student- parent to student -worker, finding funds for fees, staying late to get group assignments done, meeting deadlines for assignments, finding suitable study mates and not forgetting selection of the right topic for thesis. To cope better with the rigorous academic demands, we put ourselves into study groups, remembering the adage “two heads are better than one” and “in unity is strength”. We found the strength to keep each other going during difficult times. We have formed a lasting network of friends. We never viewed our challenges as a disadvantage. I am glad we believed in ourselves, took on the challenge and conquered, by the grace of God.

Looking back, we reminisce many interesting moments – dozing in class, jokes we shared to keep the class lively, group assignments, cocktails and get-togethers all culminated in making our stay fantastic.

Our lecturers were always on hand to offer us the needed support. They made lectures lively. They gave us assignments to keep us on our toes, they made us do presentations to boost our confidence. They guided and directed us, sharing knowledge and personal experiences liberally with us. We learnt from them and they became our mentors.

They gave us good value and content for our money. To our illustrious lecturers, we say “Ayekoo!” Thank you for a job well done!

As we are gathered here today, to be rewarded for our hard work, we pat ourselves on the back and congratulate each other. There is one question I would like us to reflect on though; Are we going to be added to the statistics of post graduate degree holders or we will let the world see the change? Will the knowledge we gained remain on the shelf or will we use it to better our dear nation? One of our colleagues often shared in class a story about Ghanaian delegates who attended a conference with representatives from another West African nation. They recounted their President’s admonishment to them: “When you go, sit very close to the Ghanaians because they are endowed with lots of knowledge and brilliant ideas”. As we graduate today, let us use our experiences and knowledge gained to make a difference. Maybe the promotion we expect may not come now; or the new job we envision may take a while to materialize. Let us not renege but make use of the skills acquired to brighten any small corner we find ourselves in. It will surely pay off one day. It is just a matter of time.

It is often said that there is disconnect between academia and industry but today I stand here to attest that this is not entirely so. For example my course MSc. Clinical Leadership and Management has a rich content which has given us the appropriate leadership and management skills. As I sat through the lectures, I knew this can change the story in my department and by extension the story of the country’s healthcare system if we have no limitations. We have challenges but they can be overcome if people with the knowledge and right attitudes are given the opportunity. I can testify that all the other courses are designed to meet a need and fill a capacity gap in our society. We are the agents of change that is so much desired and critical in our nation today. We will rise above the limitations. I strongly believe there is nothing we cannot do if given the chance.

We are gathered here today not by our own strength but we have come this far just by the grace of God. The journey began with one step; there were setbacks but that was what propelled us for this great comeback. This story is not complete without acknowledging the contributions of all members of the various faculties. Thank you for this opportunity. I also applaud those who saw to it that our classrooms and washrooms

were always clean and our security assured. This created a very conducive learning environment that was very desirable.

Our parents who have been our rock will be proud of us. We thank God for the extended family support system we have as a country. They were all at hand to help us as we combined work, family and schooling. To our dear spouses and children, thank you for understanding when we were not very present and encouraging us to go labour on.

Each graduating class has a unique story and that of my classmates, popularly dubbed 'clamites', is exceptional. Being the first batch is just awesome.

This ceremony would not have been possible without the efforts of all present here. You have contributed in no small way to make today's programme a success. Ayekoo to you all.

Every beginning has an end, every end has a new beginning. As we embark on this new phase of life, let us make the best of it and balance work and life.

Congratulations Class of 2019. You have done a yeoman's job. God bless Ghana, God bless University of Ghana, and God bless us all. Thank you.

**CLOSING ADDRESS BY CHANCELLOR
(PRESENTED BY PROF. YAW TWUMASI,
CHAIRMAN OF COUNCIL)**

Members of Council

Vice-Chancellor

Pro Vice-Chancellors

Registrar

Chairman and Members of the School of Graduate Studies Board

Members of Convocation

Distinguished Guest Speaker

New Graduates

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

As we end this ceremony, I would like to salute all who have worked hard to ensure a successful ceremony. I especially recognize all the teachers, management teams and staff of the various units, who have worked together to ensure that the time that our graduates spent in the University has been fruitful.

The University appreciates the effort that has been put into this enterprise by all stakeholders.

New graduates, you have all worked hard during the time that you have been students at this University; you deserve the laurels that you have acquired.

Never forget that you are special, having graduated from the premier university in Ghana. As you step out today into the world with your certificates in your hands, always be conscious of the fact that successful graduates who excel in the school of life are the University's best asset. The more you shine in the world of work, the more you will bring glory to Legon.

I am recruiting you to be part of the brigade, dedicated in your attainments in whatever station you find yourselves, to uplift the image of your alma mater, in order to improve how we are ranked globally in the academic world. I urge you to maintain your links with the University and to be active members of the University of Ghana Alumni Association.

You have graduated with knowledge and skills which are essential for the development of Ghana, the continent of Africa and indeed the world at large. You have been given so much, and it is just fair that you also give back to the society which has nurtured you. I wish you every success in your future endeavours. Hearty congratulations.

We are happy that so many family members and friends of the graduates were able to join in this celebration. I have no doubt that the graduates appreciate the sacrifices and prayers of parents, guardians, spouses and friends.

Let us recognize their contribution with a clap offering.

I thank our guest speaker as well as our invited guests, alumni and friends of the University for your presence and participation in the ceremony. I wish you all safe travel back to your homes.

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, it is now my duty to declare today's congregation officially dissolved.

Thank you all for coming and God bless us all.

