

**VICE-CHANCELLOR'S ADDRESS
JULY 6, 2019, CONGREGATION CEREMONY
SCHOOL OF LAW - COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES**

Madam Chancellor,
Chairman and Members of Council,
Pro-Vice Chancellors,
Registrar,
Provosts and Deans,
Guest Speaker,
Chairman and Members of Advisory Board of the College of Humanities,
Members of Convocation,
Staff and Students,
Alumni,
Graduands,
Invited Guests,
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning!

I deem it a great pleasure to welcome you all to the second congregation ceremony in 2019, which is actually the first ceremony for students who completed the Bachelor of Laws programme as part of the 2018/2019 cohort. Congregation ceremonies will be held on 19th July and November this year for the 2018/2019 other cohort of students.

Today's ceremony is dedicated to the School of Law, and degrees will be conferred on undergraduate students who pursued their programmes through the regular mode.

A total of 111 students are graduating today. This figure comprises 69 females and 41 males, respectively; 50 entering through the West Africa Senior School Certificate Examinations and 61 entering as Post-First Degree applicants.

The State of the University

Academic Affairs of the University

Admissions

The University of Ghana registered a total of 11,216 (Eleven Thousand, Two Hundred and Sixteen) students into various programmes mounted at its campuses in the 2018/2019 academic year. This number consisted of 5,828 (Five Thousand Eight Hundred and Twenty-eight) male students and 5,388 (Five Thousand Three Hundred and Eighty-eight) female students, including 306 (Three Hundred and six) International/Visiting Students.

The total number reflects an overall admission ratio of 51:49 for males and females, implying that the University is steadily attaining its strategic objective of a 50:50 ratio for male and female student enrolment.

Affiliation of Six Colleges of Education to University of Ghana

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 reform, 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. The six affiliated Colleges were introduced during the

launch of the new four-year B.Ed. curriculum on the 17th of May 2019 at the Department of Economics Conference facility at University of Ghana.

Strategic Teams

Madam Chancellor, Ladies and Gentlemen, 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. At the inception stage, the gas would be measured regularly to ascertain its viability for cooking.

Through the instrumentality 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. In this regard, management has provided the Grounds and Environmental Health Unit with 3 mowers, 15 brush cutters, 2 blowers, 3 high capacity tricycles, 1 small tricycle and 4 chainsaws to enhance its service delivery. The University of Ghana Plastic Recycling Project's (UGPRP) effort at institutionalising source segregation of waste in the university community is progressing steadily. So far, it is estimated that about 23 metric tons of plastic waste has been collected and transferred for recycling.

The Institutional Advancement Team is facilitating the hosting of the UG @ 70 Alumni Homecoming Weekend from Friday, 9th to Sunday, 11th August 2019 at the University's Main Campus. The Alumni Homecoming is a

thanksgiving event to climax the activities of the 70th Anniversary and is aimed at attracting the University's distinguished alumni, both from home and abroad to the main campus. Proceeds from the event are expected to augment the UG @ 70 Endowment Fund. In furtherance of the event, there will be an official Media Launch on the 10th of July 2019.

Meanwhile, the UG@70 Endowment Fund continues to receive donations from individuals and groups. I am happy to inform you that the President of the Republic of Ghana, His Excellency Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo has redeemed his pledge of GH¢5 million (Five Million Ghana Cedis) that he made during the launch of the endowment in May 7, 2018. I take this opportunity to express our profound gratitude to His Excellency the President for this noble gesture, and encourage our guests and members of the graduating class to also commit to support the University in this direction. I will also like to encourage members of the graduating class and alumni present to participate in the Homecoming event.

I wish to express my sincere appreciation to the chairpersons and members of the nine strategic teams for the good work done so far to move the University of Ghana towards becoming a "Go to University".

Research Grants

Madam Chancellor, Ladies and Gentlemen, the University of Ghana remains committed to its vision of becoming a world class research-intensive institution. It is heart-warming to note that landmark research grants have already been won, and these have helped to improve the University's research profile.

The Office of Research, Innovation and Development (ORID) has processed 73 research grant agreements from the beginning of the 2018-2019 academic year to date with a total grant value of approximately US\$ 35.2 m (Thirty-five Million and Two Hundred United States Dollars) representing over 100%

increase in the number of grants processed by ORID during the same period in the 2017-2018 academic year. This figure excludes the Partnership for skills in Applied Sciences, Engineering and Technology (PASET) grants won by the University.

University Finances

Fiscal Discipline and Financial Reforms

Madam Chancellor, management of the University, with the support of the University Council, has resolved to build institutional systems and structures which will stand the test of time and usher the University into a prosperous future.

University Management and Council have therefore rolled out an initiative to ensure fiscal discipline and prudent financial management. This initiative seeks to free fiscal space and make funds available to undertake critical developmental projects, in line with Strategic Objective Six of the University's Strategic Plan, which seeks to enhance the mobilization and management of resources in the University.

Madam Chancellor, Ladies and Gentlemen, I am glad to report that since the introduction of these reforms, the University has made a lot of savings. The statement of financial performance of the University for 2018-2019 academic year shows that out of a budgeted expenditure for Other Operating Expenses in the sum of approximately GH¢213 million (Two Hundred and Thirteen Million), the actual expenditure was approximately GH¢131 million (One Hundred and Thirty-one Million) indicating a saving of about 38%.

In a related development, Management has set up an operational committee called *Internal Revenue Committee* to help maximize the generation of internally generated funds, thereby reducing the risk associated with rent receivables.

I wish to appeal to all staff, students and stakeholders of the University to embrace and support the implementation of these reforms to ensure that, together, we make judicious use of our financial and other resources to promote efficiency.

University of Ghana Heritage Museum

As part of efforts to preserve the legacy and heritage of the University of Ghana, Management has set up a University of Ghana Museum Fund-Raising Committee to raise funds to establish a state-of-the-art University of Ghana Museum (UG Museum). The UG Museum is expected to store, conserve and exhibit objects of historical, scientific, artistic or cultural interest and significance as well as collections of high-profile personalities of the University.

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.

The Lebanese Community in Ghana Scholarship

During the 2018/2019 academic year, the Lebanese Community in Ghana and Lebanese Businessmen awarded scholarships to 13 (Thirteen) brilliant students in the School of Law. The awards, which totalled GH¢26,000.00 (Twenty-six

Thousand Ghana Cedis), were disbursed with the support of the Students Financial Aid Office.

I am grateful to the Lebanese Community in Ghana for continuing to support our brilliant law students, thereby contributing to teaching and learning.

27TH All African Human Rights Moot Court Competition

Ladies and Gentlemen, The African Human Rights Moot Court Competition is an annual event organized by the Centre for Human Rights at University of Pretoria, South Africa. This prestigious event brings together law students, academics and judges from more than half of Africa's 120 law faculties to argue a hypothetical human rights case in a mock court room.

I am glad to note that the University of Ghana School of Law has an enviable record in the All African Human Rights Moot Competitions. At the maiden edition of the competition in 1994, the School won The Best Individual Team as well as the Best Oralist awards. During the 27th All African Human Rights Moot Court Competition in August 2018, the School won the Best Team and the Best Oralist award at the preliminary rounds and emerged as runners-up in the final; together with a team from University of Nairobi (Kenya) and Universidade Eduardo Mondlane (Mozambique).

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 does 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.

Professor Ebenezer Oduro Owusu
July 6, 2019