

**VICE-CHANCELLOR'S ADDRESS:**  
**APRIL 2019 CONGREGATION CEREMONY**  
**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION**

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

Good morning!

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you all to the first congregation ceremony in 2019, which is actually the last ceremony for students who completed their programmes as part of the 2017/2018 cohort. Congregation ceremonies will be held in July and November this year for the 2018/2019 cohort of students.

Today's ceremony is dedicated to the College of Education, and degrees will be conferred on graduate students, as well as undergraduate and diploma students who pursued their programmes through the Distance Education mode.

A total of 844 students are graduating today, made up of **6** at the Masters level; **727** Undergraduates and **111** Diplomates.

This brings the total number of graduating students in the 2017/2018 cohort to **8,936**.

Congratulations to you all on your achievements!

## **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 was made up 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, meaning that the University is on course to attain its strategic objective of a 50:50 ratio for male and female student enrollment.

#### *Mature Admissions*

Following the re-introduction of mature admissions for the Distance Education programme in the 2017/2018 academic year, an access course and examinations for mature applicants in Mathematics, English and Logic has been successfully held, with qualified applicants admitted to study for Bachelor of Arts degree programmes. The re-introduction of mature admissions led to a steady increase in Distance Education enrolment figures for the 2017/2018 and 2018/2019 academic years. The access course for 2019/2020 admissions is currently ongoing, and the numbers of applicants registered so far gives an indication that enrolment rates in our Regional Learning Centres will increase. Thus, escalating the College's aim to bring quality education to the doorstep of all, regardless of location.

## **Governance**

### **Review of Collegiate System**

Madam Chancellor, the collegiate system of the University of Ghana which was established in 2014, has run for over four years and is currently being reviewed. A panel chaired by Professor Akilagpa Sawyerr, a former Vice-Chancellor of the University, has been tasked to collate and review recommendations towards improving upon the system.

### **Strategic Teams**

Madam Chancellor, ladies and gentlemen, nine strategic teams were formed in November 2016, and tasked to drive the transformational agenda of the University of Ghana. I am glad to note that all the teams have worked hard and made significant strides towards achieving their mandates.

- **The Independent Power Supply Team** has explored the possibility of using solar energy to run the University of Ghana Stadium. In furtherance of this, the University is currently in discussion with the Ministry of Youth & Sports for the inclusion of solar panels as part of the stadium roof.

The Team recently met with representatives of International Solar Alliance (ISA) and the Ministry of Energy as part of H.E. the President of the Republic of Ghana's initiative to undertake a review of the solar rooftop program and provide a framework for its scaling up. The University is grateful to the President and all other agencies that are driving this initiative.

The Team is also liaising with the Millennium Development Authority (MiDa) under its Energy Compact 2 to undertake a retrofitting of existing appliances in selected areas of the University to improve energy efficiency.

The University has also changed all incandescent lamps to Light- Emitting Diode (LEDs) Lamps to help conserve electricity. The street lights on campus have also been fixed to enhance security and safety of students, staff and all individuals on campus.

- Madam Chancellor, Ladies and Gentlemen, **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. Through this initiative, the UG Plastic Recycling Project which started at the beginning of the 2018/2019 academic year, has been able to collect over 14 metric tons of water sachets, plastic bottles and other plastic items for recycling.

I wish to use this opportunity to commend the University community for supporting this initiative.

- Through the efforts of the **Institutional Advancement Team**, two global chapters of University of Ghana have been revived. These are the UG Alumni Association North America (UGAANA) and UG Alumni Association, UK.

The two associations are actively working to mobilize alumni to give back to the University.

The UG@70 Endowment Fund continues to receive donations from individuals and groups, and I take this opportunity to encourage our guests and members of the graduating class to also commit to support the University in any way they can.

An Alumni Homecoming event has been scheduled for August this year to climax the activities of the 70th anniversary of the University.

The strategic teams have made significant progress towards creating an enabling environment for students, faculty and stakeholders. I therefore wish to express my heartfelt appreciation to the chairpersons and team members of the nine strategic teams for all the work done so far to move the University of Ghana towards becoming a “Go to University” that would attract potential researchers and students from around the world.

### **Research, Innovation and Development**

The University of Ghana remains committed to its vision of becoming a world class research-intensive institution and already landmark research grants have been won, which have been used to enhance its research profile.

ORID recorded 51 grant agreements from January to December 2017 and 73 grant agreements from January to December 2018. The values of the grants were approximately **US\$11,400,000.00 (Eleven Million, Four Hundred Thousand US Dollars)** for 2017 and **US\$17,300,000.00 (Seventeen Million, Three Hundred Thousand US Dollars)** for 2018. There is a clear indication that the university’s grant portfolios have been increasing steadily and appreciably for the past 3 years.

Madam Chancellor, the University’s investment in research is yielding extraordinary results and there has been exceptional improvement in the quantity and quality of research being carried out by the university.

#### ***Research in the College of Education***

The College of Education Research Board awarded a total of GH¢200,000 Cedis as research grants to faculty who were successful in the first call for Research Grant applications. This scheme is modelled after the University of Ghana Research Fund (UGRF), and there are three categories of applicants and meant to stimulate faculty interest in grantsmanship:

- **Seed Grant:** which is open to all Senior Members in active service.
- **Departmental Collaborative Research Grant:** which is open to Senior Members who have served at least one year in the College. In addition, there must be at least three members in the Research team.
- **Early-Stage Researcher Grant:** which is open to researchers in the College who have served the University for five years.

### *Conferences in the College*

The Department of Physical Education and Sport Studies successfully hosted the **3<sup>rd</sup> International Conference on Physical Activity and Sports for Health and Development in Africa (IC-PASHDA)** in September 2018. The goal of PASHDA is to promote physical activity, sports and health for growth and development in Africa through healthy active living. The conference brought together professionals, scholars and practitioners from various fields across the globe to share knowledge, research findings, experiences and lessons from their professional experiences.

The School of Information and Communication Studies (SICS), in collaboration with the International Communication Association (ICA) hosted the 2018 Africa Regional ICA conference on the theme *African Digital Cultures: Emerging research, practices and innovations* in November last year. The conference brought together scholars from within and outside the continent to share their research and perspectives on the cultures forming around conceptualizations, production and consumption of the digital space in Africa.

The School of Continuing and Distance Education organized the 70<sup>th</sup> Annual New Year School and Conference on the theme; “**Building Strong Institutions for Democratic Consolidation in Ghana**” in January this year. The theme for the conference focused on five targets of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16: **Peace, justice and strong institutions, which are to:**

- Promote rule of law at the national level and ensuring equal access to justice for all;
- Reduce all forms of violence and related death rates;
- Reduce corruption and bribery in all its forms;
- Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels; and
- Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.

### **University of Ghana Heritage Museum**

I am happy to inform you that Management has constituted a team to raise funds towards the establishment of a University Museum where objects of historical, scientific, artistic or cultural interest could be stored to preserve the legacy and the heritage of the University of Ghana. In line with this, the University is in the process of signing a Memorandum of Understanding with Dr. Kalam Smriti International, India, which has expertise in science and space museums. Among others, the MoU seeks to develop a Health, Science and Space Museum and use space science and technologies in advancing health and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Department of Archaeology and Heritage Studies is playing a major role in the pursuit of building the museum.

### **Physical Development in the University**

Madam Chancellor, creating an enabling environment requires quality infrastructure, therefore the University has initiated many projects on the various campuses.

These projects include:

- Construction of School of Biomedical and Allied Health Sciences Building.
- The refurbishment of the convocation group of buildings, including painting of the tower,
- Asphaltting of car parks in academic areas and halls of residence,
- Painting and refurbishment of several academic facilities,

- Landscape works on the Main Boulevard and academic quadrangle,
- The refurbishment of the N'Block group of buildings,
- The construction of a Dental School Building at Korle-Bu.
- Commencement of major arterial walkways to make them disability-friendly.
- Proposal for the construction of world class Astro turf for hockey.
- Completion of phase one of the revised stadium works.
- Completion of the Legon Credit Union Building.
- Completion of 4 number residential units at Staff Village.
- Completion of phase one of Merian Centre.
- Complete rehabilitation of campus street lights.
- Agreement with Total Ghana for the relocation of Legon Fuel dump.
- Commencement of park for Legon buses opposite PDMSD.
- Completion of phase one offices for School of Performing Arts.
- Refurbishment of old School of Law Library.
- Completion of offices for Office of Research, Innovation and Development, behind School of Law.
- Refurbishment of Akuafo Hall Kitchen.
- An Advanced Research Laboratory at Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research, was recently completed and commissioned by His Excellency, the President of the Republic.

I appreciate the efforts of members of Staff of the Physical Development and Municipal Service Directorate (PDMSD) who work around the clock to successfully complete these and other projects.

## **University Finances**

### ***Fiscal Discipline and Financial Reforms***

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

University Management and Council have therefore embarked on an initiative to enforce fiscal discipline and prudent financial management. This ongoing initiative aims at freeing fiscal space and making 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 pleased to report that since the introduction of these reforms, the University has saved close to **11 million Ghana Cedis (GH¢11,000,000.00)**.

The savings derived from this exercise are being used for various projects in the University.

The reforms have led to a transformed image of the financial practices of the University and enhanced trust of our stakeholders. I wish therefore to appeal to all staff, students and other internal and external stakeholders of the University to embrace the implementation of these reforms to ensure that, together, we make judicious use of our financial and other resources to promote efficiency as we march towards becoming a world-class University.

### **Financial Aid to Students**

Ladies and Gentlemen, the 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.

There has been an increase in donations from approximately **GHC1,100,000.00 (One Million, One Hundred Thousand Ghana Cedis)** in the 2016/2017 academic year to approximately **GHC3,000,000.00 (Three Million Ghana Cedis)** in the 2017/2018 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 **614** scholarship awardees comprised **424** males representing **69.1%** and **190** females representing **30.9%**.

Distinguished Guest, allow me to commend donors who have supported students to pursue their dreams and aspirations at the University of Ghana, and urge individuals and corporate bodies to come on board and support the University as it provides opportunities for these students.

## **Well wishes to Graduands**

To you, ladies and gentlemen of the graduating class, as we celebrate this milestone with you, I will like to conclude with the words of Winston Churchill: *Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts.*

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

I urge you all to be worthy ambassadors of the University of Ghana, and 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 journeys.

Once again, congratulations to you all and may you have success in your future endeavours.

**Prof. Ebenezer Oduro Owusu**  
**April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2019**