

VALEDICTORY ADDRESS BY MS. GOLDA ANAMBANE

Member of Council representing the Chancellor,
Members of the University Council,
Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ghana,
Pro-Vice-Chancellors,
Registrar,
Members of Advisory Board of the College of Humanities,
Provost of the College of the Humanities,
Members of Convocation,
Staff and Alumni of the University of Ghana,
Invited guests,
Fellow graduands,
Distinguished ladies and gentlemen,

Good afternoon to you all. I deem it a great honour and privilege to be asked to deliver a valedictory address on behalf of the July 2018 graduating class of my College. Glory be to God for the honour he has bestowed on us today. Undeniably, today is a happy day for us. It is a day on which our hard work, commitment, diligence, and respect for others is being recognised and honoured. Therefore, as graduands, we can draw on the popular phrase of Julius Caesar to say, “we came, we saw, we conquered.”

Beginning the journey for postgraduate degree, for most of us, was a mixed feeling; feeling of anxiety, excitement yet sadness, considering that some of us had to quit jobs for education. The dilemma was then whether to choose education; which is likely to give us a better future, or salary we were enjoying. Those who had to keep jobs, worried about how to combine schooling with work-life. We looked forward to living in a different environment, especially those of us who had obtained our first degrees from other universities. We had heard stories about how big the university of Ghana campus is and that as a new student, one could easily get lost on campus; we just could not wait to experience it. We also anticipated meeting new people and most importantly, gaining new knowledge. These expectations, I believe, have been met.

It is worth mentioning that some of us did not anticipate the level of commitment and diligence needed to pursue postgraduate studies. We encountered challenges which ranged from undertaking courses we were not so good at, to being bombarded with many different assignments and term papers. These were some of the unpleasant experiences from our perspective as students. Fellow graduands, would we ever forget the days of Kuhn-Tucker and Lagrangian formulae in Economics for Business? Not soon I guess; because these were tough but interesting times. I trust that graduands from other disciplines as well have several terms to recall. Aside the challenges relating to academics, some graduands had to combine studies with nurturing infants and picking up children from school everyday. The financial burden of pursuing postgraduate studies also, cannot be overlooked. But through it all, we are here today as graduands. We have not had only challenges but also have witnessed some pleasant moments. Mention can be made of fun times like GRASAG get-togethers, health walks, class parties, and attending wedding ceremonies of classmates.

Fellow graduands, today officially marks the end of our studentship at the University of Ghana at this level. We are bidding farewell to friends, lecturers and classmates, some of whom we may never meet again in this life. Let us take comfort in the words of Theodor Seuss that “don’t cry because it is over but smile because it happened”. It happened so that we can have the opportunity to impact the lives of others. Now is the time to be positive change makers in society as a demonstration that we have been trained by the nation’s premier university; hence equipped for every noble work.

As the valedictorian for this session, whose research focused on Entrepreneurship, my message to fellow graduands is that as we move into the world of *non-existent jobs*, let us join the call to support Entrepreneurship as it has been found to be the key to the economic progress of nations. David McClelland, a renowned American psychologist, in trying to explain the reason for the differences in developmental levels among countries in his book titled “The Achieving Society”, noted that countries with more entrepreneurs developed faster than countries with fewer entrepreneurs. On this note, Entrepreneurship needs to thrive in Ghana. To those amongst us who are entrepreneurs already, keep on with the good work. We would be glad to hear names of our classmates being mentioned as employers in Ghana and Beyond. To those of us who are yet to tread that path and those who may never, we can support entrepreneurship in our own small ways like patronising the businesses of our indigenous entrepreneurs, offering advice to up-and-coming entrepreneurs, tuning attention to researching into the field, and considering small and medium scale businesses as cases for studies.

Moving forward, there are many people who have contributed in various ways towards our successful graduation today. Due recognition must be given them. To all lecturers and administrators of the University of Ghana, we appreciate your support and guidance in various ways during the period of undertaking our respective studies. To University of Ghana, we cannot deny that the core values of integrity, commitment, respect and loyalty has an impact on our lives.

We have imbibed these values and they will reflect in us wherever we find ourselves. This address will not be complete without recognizing the efforts of people that have contributed towards our obtaining various degrees today; we appreciate all parents, guardians, siblings, spouses, and organizations that have supported us. We however use this opportunity to appeal to government, corporate organizations, donor agencies, educational institutions, and other stakeholders to increase scholarship opportunities available to students at the postgraduate level as it appears there are fewer opportunities, especially in humanities. And to everyone that honoured the invitation to witness our graduation, we are most grateful.

In conclusion, as graduands, we pledge that as we leave the graduation grounds, we will not forget the relevance of staying in touch with classmates and the university community for networking. Also, as we proceed with various endeavours of our lives, we will proceed with truth and integrity to build a better Nation. Jack Johnson, the first African American world heavyweight boxing champion once said “Don’t let your dreams be dreams”; hence, we would take steps to ensure our dreams come into reality.

Congratulations, Class of July 2018.

Long live University of Ghana, long live Mother Ghana.

Thank you.