

VICE-CHANCELLOR'S ADDRESS: NOVEMBER 2018 CONGREGATION CEREMONIES

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

WELCOME

It is a great privilege and pleasure to welcome you all once again to the University of Ghana campus for the November, 2018, Congregation ceremonies. Let me crave your indulgence to extend a special welcome to our Chancellor, Mrs. Mary Chinery-Hesse, who is presiding over Congregation for the very first time since assuming office as Chancellor of the University of Ghana on 1st August, 2018.

As you may already be aware, Mrs. Mary Chinery-Hesse took over from Mr. Kofi Annan, who sadly passed on barely two weeks after successfully ending his tenure as Chancellor.

While wishing our new Chancellor the very best in her new role, permit me to once again pay glowing tribute to the late Mr. Kofi Annan for his immense contributions to the growth and development of the University of Ghana, Ghana, Africa and indeed to humanity in general. May his gentle soul rest in peace.

Madam Chancellor, the November, 2018, Congregation ceremonies will witness the graduation of the second batch of students who completed their respective programmes of study in the University during the 2017/2018 academic year. The first batch graduated last July 2018, and a third batch, made up mainly of Distance

Education students, will graduate in April 2019. A total of **4,908** students will be graduating at various levels from the four Colleges of the University, in six (6) sessions over the next three (3) days. This is made up of: **31** PhDs; **1,774** Masters; **3,060** Undergraduates and **51** Diplomas. This will bring the total number of students who graduated from the University in the 2017/2018 academic year to **8,092**.

Let me use this opportunity to express my gratitude to faculty, administrators and other stakeholders for their support in keeping alive our role as custodians and making this day possible. I would also like to appreciate the time parents and invited guests have taken off their busy schedules to respond to our invitation to this ceremony.

Update on the State of the University

Admissions

Our student population is diverse in nature. I am happy to note that for the 2018/2019 academic year, out of the number admitted, **11,216** students have registered for programmes on all our campuses. This number is made up of **5,828** male students and **5,388** female students. These numbers include **306** international/visiting students of various nationalities across the world. The total number also reflects the overall admission ratio of 51:49 for males and females, suggesting a quantum leap from the ratio for male and female students of 60:40 some few years back. It is worthy of note, judging from the admission figures, that the University is on the verge of attaining the strategic objective of a 50:50 ratio in male and female enrollment.

The University has continued with concessionary admission policies of giving the opportunity for university education to applicants through:

- The Affirmative Action Policy for female applicants;
- The admission of applicants from Less Endowed Schools;
- The Admission of Student Athletes; and
- The Admission of Students with Special Needs.

New Programmes and Courses

1. A number of new courses and programmes have recently been approved by the University Academic Board. These include:

- the Executive Master of Science in Fisheries Administration and Management;
 - Doctor of Philosophy in Health Physics and Radiation; and
 - A functional Law course for undergraduate students.
2. The Academic Board has also approved revisions to some programmes, including:
- Doctor of Veterinary Medicine;
 - Bachelor of Science;
 - Master of Science, and Master of Philosophy programmes in Nursing and Midwifery.
- The new courses will be made available once they receive assent by the National Accreditation Board.
3. The West Africa Centre for Crop Improvement (WACCI) has received international accreditation for its postgraduate programmes from the Agency for Quality Assurance through Accreditation of Study programmes (AQAS), Germany, a noted body for accreditation of higher education institutions and programmes. This accreditation opens the doors for strategic collaborations with other institutions.

Governance

National Accreditation Board Cyclical Review

The University recently underwent a statutory cyclical review by the National Accreditation Board. The four-day review focused on governance, institutional development, internationalisation, growth, research and grants, community service, academic matters, future outlook, information resources and finance. Meetings were held with university management, faculty and staff, as well as with students. Management of the University is committed to implementing the recommendations from the review, which will enable us to improve on our efforts at providing high quality teaching, learning, and research experience for our students and employees.

Review of Collegiate System

Madam Chancellor, the University adopted the collegiate system of governance in the 2014/2015 academic year, mainly to promote efficiency, reduce bureaucracy and free senior management to have time for more important

administrative functions. Four years after the adoption of the system, a panel has been set up to review the collegiate system.

The remit of the panel is to:

- Review the current collegiate system of governance with the view to identifying the short comings in the governance structure and making recommendations for improvement;
- make new proposals to improve the governance structure to achieve the twin goals of effectiveness and efficiency; and
- develop a set of governance principles, policies, standards, and practices that optimally support the university's strategic priorities.

The panel, chaired by a former Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ghana, Professor Akilagpa Sawyerr, is working to present its recommendations soon.

Strategy Execution

The nine strategic teams that were constituted in November, 2016, to drive the transformational agenda of the University of Ghana have been working very hard and have already made some gains. I wish to briefly enumerate some of the achievements of the Strategic Teams so far:

a. The Independent Power Supply Team:

Madam Chancellor, in line with the transformational agenda of becoming a world-class research-intensive university, UG is vigorously putting in measures to create an environment where staff, students and visitors can undertake their activities safely at all times. During the period under review, Management continued its efforts at improving security and safety on campus by increasing the lightening system. Under the auspices of the Independent Power Supply Team, the refurbishment of streetlights along major streets of the University of Ghana has been completed by Prefos Ghana Limited in collaboration with the Electricity Company of Ghana (ECG). This project has enhanced security and safety on the main campus.

In an effort to ensure efficient use of energy, the Independent Power Supply Team, in collaboration with the Electricity Company of Ghana, has installed a net meter at the Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research, which provides data on the amount of energy produced by the solar plant, how much is used at the Institute and the excess energy made available to the rest of the University. I am delighted

to inform you that the data from **March to October 2018** indicates that a substantial amount of excess power has been pumped from the solar cell facility at Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research into the University system.

In addition, the University of Ghana Electricals Unit and the Building and Revenue Unit of the Electricity Company of Ghana have estimated a reduction of the University's energy bill by **13% every month**. This is based on a reconciliation of bills paid directly by residents and commercial tenants of the University.

As part of efforts to complete the University Stadium, the Team is exploring the possibility of roof top solar or solar car ports as the energy sources for the facility. The Ministries of Youth & Sports, and Energy have officially endorsed the main project, and we are hoping to finalize the inclusion of solar as part of the stadium roof.

I wish to take this opportunity to extend my sincere gratitude to the Ministers of Energy, Finance, Education, Youth and Sports, and the Managing Director of the Electricity Company of Ghana (ECG) for endorsing our initiative to migrate onto renewable energy. I would also like to acknowledge the technical support received from representatives from the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Energy, ECG, Energy Commission and members of the University's Independent Power Supply Team.

b. Green Team:

Madam Chancellor, a Green Team has been constituted as part of the strategic directions of the University, whose mandate is:

- to create an environment that is green and healthy to provide the needed congenial atmosphere for teaching and learning;
- to re-design our grounds to ensure that there are enough trees and green coverage; and
- to develop and complete a waste disposal system that will rely on separation of waste, to serve as a model for Ghana.

During the July Congregation, I announced that the Green Project Committee and the PDMSD are supporting two student groups, Recycle Up! Ghana and CIYZOE-Legon to implement the University of Ghana Plastic Recycling Project

(UGPRP). Today, I am very excited to say that, the University of Ghana Plastic Recycling Project commenced at the beginning of the 2018/2019 academic year.

The University of Ghana Plastic Recycling Project (UGPRP) aims at institutionalising the culture of source segregation of waste among members of the university community. Facilities for segregating plastic bottles and empty water sachets have been provided in the halls of residence for use by the students. Arrangements have also been made for regular collection of the material and transfer to recycling facilities off-campus. Some of these collected plastics are used for pavement blocks, stitched into bags and also for export.

Within nine weeks of implementation, 8 metric tons of water sachets and plastic bottles have been collected, thus saving the landfill. It is expected that the project will be up-scaled to the other sections of the main campus and the satellite campuses.

I take this opportunity to entreat our graduating students to embrace this culture, and replicate it wherever you find yourselves.

c. Institutional Advancement Team:

The Institutional Advancement Team successfully spearheaded the launch of the UG Endowment Fund in May, 2018, as part of activities to mark the 70th Anniversary of the founding of the University of Ghana.

The Endowment Fund is one of the University's strategies to deal with the challenge of diversifying sources of internally generated funds and to reduce the burden on students even as they make a fair contribution. There is, therefore, the need for a plan on funds mobilisation from many different sources. In the light of this, the University has dedicated the 70th anniversary as a fundraising effort towards the UG@70 Endowment Fund to support research and graduate studies, in line with our strategic objective of becoming a research intensive University.

Madam Chancellor, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, I am happy to report with appreciation that after the launch, the '93 Year Group of the University of Ghana Alumni has redeemed GHC50,000.00 out of their pledge of GHC100,000.00 to the UG@70 Endowment Fund. The University of Ghana Chapter of the University Teachers Association of Ghana (UTAG) has also donated C120,000, while the Ghana Association of University Administrators

(GAUA), University of Ghana Branch, has made a donation of GH¢50,000.00 to the Fund.

The University is grateful, and I take this opportunity to reach out to all stakeholders to contribute generously to the fund.

Research, Innovation and Development

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, the University of Ghana is committed to re-defining itself as a research-intensive institution and actively encourages faculty to engage in research activities. The University's investment in research is yielding fruitful results, and already the quantity and quality of research being carried out at the University of Ghana have improved tremendously. In addition, the University has won landmark research grants, which have been utilised to enhance its research profile. In view of this, the Office of Research, Innovation and Development (ORID) is taking the lead in ensuring that we meet our set goals.

In furtherance of this, the Office of Research, Innovation and Development has been restructured into six (6) teams, namely:

1. Pre- and Post-Award Services,
2. Intellectual Property & Technology Transfer,
3. Capacity Development,
4. Human and Animal Research Ethics Services,
5. Research Performance
6. Publications, Dissemination & Translation.

The purpose of the restructuring is to better organise and coordinate the delivery of research support services across the university.

UG Research Grants

The 11th Call for Research Proposals sponsored by the UG Research Fund was announced on 21st February, 2018. A total of seventy-five (75) proposals were submitted in the three grant categories, out of which sixty (60) proposals were found to be eligible. After the review process, fourteen (14) proposals were selected to receive funding. The Office of Research, Innovation and Development is awaiting final documentation from the successful applicants to confirm the awards.

UG Conference Grants

From January 2018 to date, two (2) Calls for Applications have been announced for UG Conference Grants, which yielded a total of 66 applications with 33 submitted in each Call. 31 applicants received awards in the sum of US\$44,622.00

Agreements

Since January 2018, the Office of Research, Innovation and Development has facilitated the review and negotiation of a total of 53 research agreements/contracts on behalf of the University with a total value of US\$10,651,648.

Intellectual Property Committee Protection

The Committee reviewed the following documents prepared by the consulting firm, ETCube International, for the University:

- University of Ghana Technology Transfer Office Management Model.
- Strategies to enhance visibility of University of Ghana's Technology Transfer Office to Academia and Industry.
- IP protection and commercialization strategies for University of Ghana.

These documents have been developed to further deepen and enhance the university's intellectual property processes and procedures.

ORID has received two invention disclosures, which will be processed for review by the IPC at its next meeting, and filed 1 (one) patent application for a *smokeless and sustainable cook stove*. A national patent application was filed for the cook stove and the inventor has already identified an industry partner who has committed to supporting the pilot test of the cook stove in 4 (four) palm oil mills.

Partnerships/Collaborations

Partnerships are critical in the delivery of relevant and comprehensive knowledge and skill sets to learners in higher educational institutions. Effective collaboration with external stakeholders from various fields of specialization provide unique platforms for sharing knowledge and skills that are mutually beneficial. In furtherance of this ideal, the University continues to forge new institutional partnerships to promote research and the exchange of students and faculty with several institutions in North America, Europe, Asia, Australia and Latin America. New partnership agreements are currently underway and expected to be signed soon.

Following the signing of an MOU between the University and Toyota Ghana Limited in April 2017, the parties have gone a step further to put together a project Partnership Agreement which is being finalized for signing soon. Under the partnership, Toyota will support the School of Engineering by building an ultra-modern training Centre to train students, provide equipment worth US\$2 million to the School over 10 years, provide a bus to convey students to the Centre as well as provide scholarship worth US\$10,000 per year to brilliant but needy students.

A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed between the University of Ghana and Ghana National Petroleum Corporation (GNPC) to establish a Research Chair in Petroleum Geoscience at the Department of Earth Science, College of Basic & Applied Sciences. The Chair seeks to strengthen Petroleum Geoscience research and education capacity in the University of Ghana to support the optimal exploration, delineation and development of Ghana's hydrocarbon resources. Under the agreement, GNPC will commit US\$1,000,000.00 (One Million US Dollars) to support the Chair.

The Mellon Foundation has agreed to fund two grant proposals in support of capacity building and faculty research in the Humanities, to the tune of 1.6 million US Dollars, while the German Federal Ministry for Education and Research (BMBF) has established a Merian Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Ghana, to provide a hub for residency for research and advocacy on issues on sustainable governance in Africa.

Physical Development

Ladies and gentlemen, you will all agree with me that quality infrastructural facilities are critical to the achievement of the vision and mission of the University of Ghana. There are many ongoing projects on all our campuses, which will provide additional lecture halls, residential facilities and office spaces for our staff and students when completed. The projects include:

- New classroom and office blocks for the School of Pharmacy,
- A multi-purpose block partly funded by GCB,
- The School of Arts building,
- The School of Performing Arts building
- A new block for Department of Earth Science,
- Asphaltic Overlay of selected roads on campus, and
- The UG Stadium.

We would like to express our gratitude to our local and foreign partners who have made contributions towards these projects. As a University, we will continue to prudently source for funds to complete these ongoing projects.

We also like to commend the Graduate Students' Association of Ghana (GRASAG-Legon) for sponsoring a number of projects on campus. These include four refurbished reading rooms and one television room at the VALCO Trust Hostel, as well as the refurbishment of an ultra-modern Research Commons at the Korle-Bu campus.

ICT

Madam Chancellor, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, the University has made significant progress in the provision of ICT services. A total of about 950 Wi-Fi Access points have been installed in all the campuses of the University including the Research Centres and the Regional Learning Centres of the School of Continuing and Distance Education.

The University of Ghana Computing Systems (UGCS), in collaboration with the University Archives, has completed digitisation of several records. For the period under review, more than 455 items have been added to the University of Ghana Institutional Repository.

Use of the SAKAI Learning Management System for the University's e-Learning programmes continues to improve, with an average concurrent usage of 350 and an increase in courses created to 5,611 as at the end of registration for second semester of 2017/2018 academic year.

Security monitoring of our ICT infrastructure and services is currently ongoing. Security awareness bulletins are published weekly, aimed at bringing awareness to the community on how to secure University and personal data.

Initiative to install State-of-the-art CCTV System on University of Ghana Campus

Ladies and gentlemen, many decades ago, university campuses in Ghana including the University of Ghana, were regarded as safe havens, secluded from the violence and criminal activities of the outside world. Over time however, some criminal activities have occurred on the campuses, and these once peaceful environments have suffered a number of security breaches. The increasing growth in student numbers and physical infrastructure over the decades has presented obvious security challenges.

Management is fully aware that security on campus cannot be adequately secured by relying solely on unarmed uniformed security personnel, and therefore, sees the need to consider alternative approaches to combating crime, and improving safety on campus. Initial assessments have been concluded, and a crime density map developed. On the basis of the crime density map the appropriate solution design has been formulated and costed. The design anticipates a future handshake with a nation-wide CCTV solution for National Security.

I am happy to report that plans are far advanced towards the deployment of state-of-the-art electronic surveillance system including Close-Circuit Television (CCTV) cameras at all locations on Campus. Already, the Public Procurement Authority (PPA) has granted UG the permission to engage Huawei Technologies (Ghana) S.A. Limited to provide CCTV solutions using single-source procurement method. The total cost of the project will be US\$4,169,586.41 (Four Million, One Hundred and Sixty-nine Thousand, Five Hundred and Eighty-six US dollars).

Due to funding constraints, implementation will be done in two phases with our immediate focus on the identified high crime areas, including the Balme Library area, student and staff residential areas, principal streets and the banking area. We will appreciate the support of our Alumni, stakeholders and partners and individuals in funding this laudable initiative.

Financial Reforms and Savings

Madam Chancellor, Management has resolved to build strong institutional systems and structures, which will stand the test of time, and lead UG into a prosperous future. I am pleased to inform you that following the restructuring of the Internal Audit Directorate and enforcement of fiscal disciplines in accordance with the financial reforms being implemented, the University has recorded savings of approximately **GHC 2,122,000 (Two Million, One Hundred and Twenty-Two Thousand Ghana Cedis)** during the 1st Semester of the 2018/19 academic year. We propose that the savings made will be channeled into special monumental projects for the university, and labelled as such.

Madam Chancellor, let me use this opportunity to congratulate all colleagues who have carried the message of prudent use of financial resources so far, and have contributed in no small way to ensure that the university runs efficiently by cutting down costs and adhering strictly to the value-for-money culture.

It is our intention to intensify the reforms and secure a buy-in by requesting Heads of Units to submit periodic reports on what they are doing to achieve savings and

how much they have saved. This, we believe, will make them own the savings culture.

In a bid to institutionalize and strengthen the structures to sustain the financial reforms, and enhance visibility, a number of policies, and initiatives have been developed recently, namely:

- i. Internal Audit Charter.
- ii. Constitution of the Audit Committee.
- iii. UG Branding strategies: Branding Manual, Marketing Communications Policy, and Customer Service Policy.
- iv. Risk Management Policy.
- v. Restructuring of the Internal Audit Directorate.
- vi. Restructuring of Finance Directorate. The report of the Audit committee is out, and will be placed before Council soon.
- vii. Restructuring of the Procurement Unit to a Logistics Directorate. Already, two sensitization seminars have been held as part of the implementation processes.
- viii. Adoption of International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS).
- ix. Crisis Communication Team.

I wish to take this opportunity to appeal to all employees, 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 research-intensive University. As is natural with human societies, there are bound to be agents who will surely resist the wind of changes currently taking place. I appeal to such agents to come on board with transformed hearts and minds, in the interest of the future of this great institution, which is undoubtedly, a huge national asset and heritage.

Financial Aid to Students

Ladies and gentlemen, the Students Financial Aid Office (SFAO) has the mission of minimizing the financial barriers that would prevent brilliant but needy students from having access to studying at the University of Ghana. Donations to support needy students grew from approximately **One Million, One Hundred Thousand Ghana Cedis (GHC1,100,000.00)** in 2016/2017 to approximately **Three Million Ghana Cedis (GHC3,000,000.00)** in the 2017/2018 academic year, representing about 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%.

Management expresses its profound gratitude to all donors for their regular support towards the reduction of the financial constraints of our needy students and we encourage other individuals and corporate bodies to come on board to support us in this venture.

Sporting Activities

The **University of Ghana Sports Fund (UG SPORT FUND)** is an initiative to motivate and support talented but needy student athletes of the University of Ghana, and to attract potential talents for admission into the University. It is the first and the only sport fund in any public university in Ghana. The fund has so far enabled the Sports Directorate to sponsor **4 female** students and **16 male** students.

The UG policy for admission of athlete students with the acronym **UG-PAAS** which we introduced a few years ago, has yielded significant positive results. I am pleased to note that the University of Ghana team excelled at the just ended West Africa University Games held at the University of Port Harcourt, Nigeria, and returned to Ghana with a record number of medals in various events. UG placed 3rd with thirty-eight (38) medals, setting a new record unparalleled by any Ghanaian University in any international competition.

Well Wishes to Graduands

And now to the graduating class who are the reason we are here today. This is a moment that comes with a strong sense of achievement. Today, the University is officially dispatching you into the wide world as its able ambassadors.

As ambassadors of this great University, be guided by, and exhibit the core values of the University: Loyalty, Respect, Integrity and Commitment. Besides these values, I urge you, and by extension, the youth of this nation, to also aspire to be disciplined, honest and modest in all your endeavours.

Seek excellence, believe in yourself, work hard, plan ahead, and be ethical in all your dealings; these virtues will lead you on the path to success.

Remember that in life, there are no short-cuts. Therefore, eschew greed, quick fixes and craving for money, which are the roots of many evils in our society today.

I wish you the very best in the next phase of your lives and your journeys ahead. Please “proceed with integrity” as you do so.

Once again, congratulations on your achievements!

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, I thank you for your attention.

Professor Ebenezer Oduro Owusu
November 15-17, 2018