



MURANG'A UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

Matriculation Speech

By

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Vice Chancellor

**During the Occasion of
Welcoming First Year Students**

on

Friday, September 2, 2022

at

The University Students' Recreation Ground

SALUTATION

Deputy Vice Chancellors

Registrars

Deans and Directors

Chairmen/Heads of Department

Chairman and Secretary General of the Student Governing
Council (MUTSO)

Our NEW students

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good Morning:

INTRODUCTION

On behalf of the University Council, the Senate and all Staff, I warmly welcome you all to the 2022 Matriculation Ceremony for the new students of Murang'a University of Technology. This ceremony marks the official entry of freshmen (and women) to the University and it is a gathering to formally admit qualified students who have been fortunate enough to be offered admission at our institution. I congratulate you on this tremendous achievement.

Your choice to study at this University is a satisfying indication that you believe in the quality of teaching and

learning being offered here. I want to assure you that you made an excellent choice; and you are poised for a rewarding academic experience. The training environment available here is conducive for any student aspiring to realise significant academic accomplishments. We thank you for demonstrating confidence in us.

It is exciting to welcome you to our University, where we emphasise quality and academic excellence through the enforcement of our core values, which are: innovation and creativity, professionalism, integrity, teamwork, fairness and non-discrimination, and freedom of enquiry and expression.

You are joining a university that has set high standards, and which is on the path to becoming world-class, having been ranked, on the most part, among the top 10 (best) universities in the country in the recent past.

This ceremony ushers you, the freshmen (and women), into a new and unique life experience. It is an important step in your academic life, for which you have every reason to be proud of. I trust that you will work hard and smart in order to build on the successes of your academic pursuits and to achieve greater things in life.

UNIVERSITY VISION AND MISSION

For those who may not be aware, this University was awarded a charter to operate as a full-fledged university in October, 2016 through an Act of Parliament. Before then, it was a Constituent College of Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT). The University has since realised tremendous growth.

The high standards the University has set are clearly driven by our **vision** and **mission** statements. According to our vision, we endeavor to be **a Leading University in Technological Innovation, Research and Training**. Our mission, on the other hand, is **to advance Knowledge and Technological Transfer through**

Teaching, Training, Learning, Research and Innovation for Sustainable Development. By drawing from and being inspired by these key rallying statements, the University is determined to make a significant contribution in terms of preparing men and women with the requisite capacity to provide solutions to various social and economic challenges facing humanity.

ENROLLMENT

Today, at this ceremony, we are inducting close to 2,000 students, out of the over 2,600 expected to be admitted into six Schools/Faculties of the University, namely: the School of Engineering and Technology, the School of

Computing and Information Technology, the School of Education, Humanities and Social Sciences, the School of Hospitality and Tourism Management, the School of Business and Economics, and the School of Pure, Applied and Health Sciences. Some of you are also being inducted into the School of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences being established at Mariira Campus, about 40km from the Main Campus. I'm aware you have met the Deans and some of the staff and you have been introduced to the specific Schools you are joining.

With your enrollment, the total number of students at the University now stands at close to 9,000. This number is expected to grow to more than 10,000 in a year or two.

TRAINING AND REWARD FOR EXCELLENCE

Dear students, you are aware of the great demand for university education as clearly demonstrated by the tight competition for securing a place in universities. I therefore wish to urge you to do everything possible to ensure that you utilize the opportunity well.

As a University, we assure you of our determination to train you to the highest possible standard to meet emerging

challenges in the country and even beyond. In this regard, as a way of encouraging students, we recognize excellent performance at the University by rewarding top-performing students with scholarship awards. Specifically, the top-performing graduates would usually qualify not only for appointment as Graduate Assistants, but also for scholarships to pursue their postgraduate degrees. To this end, over the last 5 graduations we have held so far, we have hired close to 15 top graduands and provided scholarships to them. I therefore challenge you to concentrate on your studies in order to stand a chance of being selected for the few competitive opportunities. The ball, as they say, is in your court.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

Academic success is great, but it must be accompanied by discipline in order to adequately prepare you to face the so-called real world. We have seen many during our times who have excelled in academics but have miserably failed in life. Success in academics and real life will definitely require that you desist from certain excesses and unnecessary social indulgences. Some of the detrimental indulgences which deserve repeating, since I'm certain they have been brought forward already during your induction, include excessive alcohol consumption, drug and substance abuse, and casual sexual relationships that may lead to unwanted

pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases and ailments. Freshmen are particularly vulnerable to exposure because they find themselves with significantly higher freedoms compared to their time in High Schools. If these freedoms are not exercised with some degree of responsibility, they will more often than not lead to harm.

We therefore strongly advise that, if you have never attempted alcohol consumption or smoking, don't try because it will most likely lead to addiction and eventual devastation. However, if you find yourself in this undesirable and unfortunate situation and you need help, the University has units that address issues related to

alcoholism, drug and substance abuse and HIV/AIDS control. Do not hesitate to use them; they are available for you.

We live in a civilized society and civility must be reflected in all that we do. I therefore urge all of you to uphold respect in the way you deal with your fellow students, staff and the community around us. Always endeavor to project a positive image of the University wherever you are. I would like you to constantly remember that you individually and collectively represent the culture of this University.

Since the beginning of this week, when your orientation started, university rules and regulations have been highlighted to you by various responsible staff and student leaders. Please internalize these rules and regulations, as they will be your guide, while you navigate life as a student in the University. Some of the most critical of these rules and regulations, worth re-emphasizing, are related to examinations. Examination regulations address how students should conduct themselves during examinations. We would like you to note that the University does not tolerate exam cheating, whatsoever. You must help us ensure your certificates are respected by potential employers. A certificate should not be a mere piece of paper

to show that you attended a university; it must confirm that you attained a skill. Certificates must be legitimately earned. We have to warn you, therefore, that in the unfortunate event that you are involved in cheating, and you are discovered, be ready to face dire consequences.

You all notice that we have provided paved walkways for students, and we continue to provide even more of them. The purpose is to help students avoid walking on grass in order to keep the University grounds green and clean, which provides a good ambience for learning. I expect our new students to emulate their predecessors by maintaining

the same conducive environment by avoiding to litter or create foot paths on grass.

CHANGING TRENDS IN UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

Dear students, the outbreak of COVID-19 in 2020 presented a set of challenges and led to changing trends in university teaching and learning throughout the World. The most critical of this is managing academic activities safely. While the spread of the disease seems to have subsided, as part of the measures to curb the spread of the virus, the University Management decided that teaching and learning be delivered through blended teaching and learning. In

other words, the in-person instructional method used in the past is no longer being applied in many situations.

I wish to inform you, therefore, that blended teaching and learning shall continue to be undertaken so that some lectures will be conducted online or virtually, as others are carried out in-person. Online lectures will particularly involve huge classes, where social distancing would not be possible. As you have discovered already, it is not a complicated exercise to conduct certain activities online; I am informed that during this orientation period you have been inducted into how to attend classes online and how to register using the student portal.

INFRASTRUCTURE

In spite of all the challenges experienced by all other institutions of higher learning, the University has initiated a number of infrastructural developments to support learning. These include two hostel buildings—which will accommodate up to 1,000 students once both are completed—to add to the existing hostel which accommodates over 300 students. We, however, take note of the shortage of accommodation, leaving many of you at the mercy of private hostel owners, some far-flung from the Main campus. We understand your specific needs, and we

will continue to encourage private developers to put up affordable hostels adjacent to the campus.

Another infrastructure recently completed is the multipurpose Science Complex, which comprises science laboratories, offices, lecture and seminar rooms, and offices for senior management members, and the state-of-the-art equipment. We have also continued with many other physical constructions. Further, we have purchased ample bandwidth from KENET, which is an internet provider, to facilitate easy configuration of wireless network throughout the University. And I've seen as I've walked around how well the WIFI is being utilized, as the students are cluttered all over the Campus with eyes glued on their handsets.

CONCLUSION

My dear matriculants, I conclude by congratulating you once again on securing a place at this University. As the Vice-Chancellor, it is my singular duty, alongside other academic and administrative staff, to make your experience here as exciting as possible. Your admission here is hopefully the beginning of a fundamental academic journey; and, to the extent possible, we shall make every necessary effort to get you to your desired destination. Take note, however, that your time here is limited to four to five years if studying for a degree certificate or less time if studying for a diploma; don't waste it. I emphasize that

you take cognisance of the fact that you are here primarily for studies; anything else is secondary.

I look forward to celebrate with you again during your graduation in a few years to come.

I finally take this opportunity to thank all the staff and student leaders who prepared to induct you through talks, demonstrations and presentations since you reported at the University. These staff will walk the journey with you while at the University. Be sure that we all feel honoured and privileged to be part of your journey.

Thank you.

Professor Dickson M. Nyariki

Vice Chancellor