



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 6, 2024

at

The University Graduation Grounds

- **Deputy Vice Chancellors,**
- **Registrars,**
- **Deans and Directors,**
- **Chairpersons/Heads of Department,**
- **Staff Members,**
- **Chairman and Secretary General of the Student Governing Council (MUTSO),**
- **Our NEW students,**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Good Afternoon:

On behalf of the University Council, Senate, and all staff, I am highly delighted to welcome you all to the 2024 Matriculation

Ceremony of Murang'a University of Technology (MUT). This ceremony marks the official entry of our new students into the University, and is a gathering to formally and publicly admit those of you who have been fortunate enough to be offered admission at this esteemed institution. I congratulate you all on this significant achievement. I want to assure you that you would not have made a better choice than this, given that, as you would agree with me, the learning environment available here is conducive for students to study.

Since you reported at the beginning of the week, you have had the opportunity to be introduced to the University officials in charge of various departments of the University from which you would require services. You have been taken through most of the

University processes. You have also met and been addressed by a number of our staff in the Divisions, Schools or Faculties, Departments, and Administrative Sections. It is my hope that you have found the orientation week beneficial. I further believe you have been adequately exposed to University Rules and Procedures. I encourage you to carefully read and understand these rules and procedures and abide by them because they will guide your stay at the University and help you to avoid difficulties and troubles.

ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY

Dear Students,

As a brief background, Murang'a University of Technology, formerly Murang'a University College (MRUC), was established in 2011 as a Constituent College of Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT). Murang'a University College was a successor to Murang'a College of Technology (MCT), established in 1975. MUT was chartered on October 7th, 2016; so we have been a full-fledged University for about eight (8) years.

The University currently offers postgraduate and undergraduate degrees, diplomas and certificates in Engineering, Information Technology, Computer Science, Pure and Applied Sciences, Business, Economics, Hospitality, Tourism Management, Education, Health Sciences, Humanities, Social Sciences, Agriculture, and Environmental Sciences. In addition, the

University offers the competency-based curriculum for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET).

I wish to proudly bring to your attention that our University has had a significant presence among universities and colleges in the country. Our ranking has generally ranged between the top 8-12 universities out of around 75 universities in the country—achieved within less than a decade as a full-fledged university. This is not a mean achievement, and reflects our commitment to excellence.

ENROLLMENT

Today is a culmination of the induction of 2,805 new undergraduate students into our seven Schools/Faculties, which include: the School of Engineering and Technology, the School of Computing and Information Technology, the School of Education, Humanities and Social Sciences (which has now been separated into the School of Education and School of Humanities and Social Sciences), the School of Hospitality and Tourism Management, the School of Business and Economics, the School of Pure, Applied and Health Sciences, and the School of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences. Further, 369 new TVET students have reported, making a total of 3,174 new students on campus today.

REQUISITE INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT

In order to effectively support the teaching and training in the various programs we have developed, we have focused on the requisite areas of academic and physical development. To guide in its physical development, the University relies on a comprehensive Master Plan, which provides long term plans for infrastructure development and optimizes land use over a long period of time. Once fully implemented, the plan will provide a conducive and innovative learning environment by directly and positively impacting on the learning experience for our students, and working conditions for the faculty, and other staff. The University will continue to improve its facilities to ensure we prepare young men and women with the requisite skills for themselves and for the country and beyond.

NEW FUNDING MODEL

Dear Students,

I wish to mention something little about the New Funding Model. As you are aware, and as you must have been informed yesterday from the teams from HELB and the University Fund, the higher education sector has been facing significant financial challenges due to the increasing number of students qualifying for and enrolling in various higher education programs. This growth has led to a substantial rise in budget requirements, which cannot be met by the current budgetary allocations, causing a financial strain on higher learning institutions. In response, the Ministry of Education (MoE) developed a new funding mechanism to address these issues and ensure continued

provision of quality higher education. On May 3, 2023, His Excellency the President of Kenya announced the introduction of a new funding model for higher education. This student-centered funding model (SCFM) represents a significant shift from the previous block funding approach, the so-called Differentiated Unit Cost (DUC), which primarily allocated funds directly to institutions, a block amount to be shared amongst the enrolled students.

This new model aims to support students based on their financial needs rather than allocating funds to institutions. As you have been obviously informed by HELB and UF officials, the students placed in Band 1 need most government support, and receive 70 per cent scholarships and 25 per cent loans, while those

considered most able and are placed in Band 5 receive 30 per cent scholarships and 30 percent loans; with upkeep money ranging between 60 and 40 thousand shillings. This amount of money for upkeep, if well-managed, is adequate and we don't expect any student "kuinama" in the University. Thus, from our point of view, even though there have been concerns associated with the accuracy of the banding, the new model is good for students and universities. The concerns have been said to be basically due to errors in arriving at accurate identification of levels of need, generally caused by feeding incorrect data into the model or formula. Fortunately, a window has been provided to appeal against placement in any band if one is unsatisfied.

This notwithstanding, I wish to remind all the students admitted at our University that they are guaranteed a place here as they await the results of either the processing of their applications or appeals to determine what to pay as their household contribution. I therefore ask you to inform all your colleagues who have not yet reported to immediately do so. Further, the Office of the Registrar, Academic, Research and Student Affairs has established a free cyber to handle all issues related to applications for scholarships/loans and appeals. Please take advantage of the service to be assisted to apply or appeal, if you haven't done so already.

STUDENT CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

Dear Students,

You must be aware that, different from what was happening in High School, you will now enjoy a great degree of independence at the University. This calls for greater responsibility, therefore. There will be no duty master to check if you attended classes; there will be no matron to check if you cleaned yourself or you made your bed, and so on and so forth. You will now have responsibility for everything from eating right, keeping fit, getting enough sleep to getting to classes on time. It's important to remember that it's up to you to make good choices. Though there will be others around you to offer guidance, no one but you can keep you healthy and safe and successful. Over the next four or five years, depending on the degree course you are pursuing, you

will learn how to become self-sustaining. Your new situation at the University would definitely demand more discipline and sacrifices than ever before and it's only those who will make the right choices that are likely to succeed.

Therefore, as you progress through your academic journey at the University, it is essential to maintain a high level of discipline, because success in life requires more than academic excellence; it requires character, integrity, and responsibility. Whilst I am sure some of what you've heard and continue to hear from me has been said during your week of induction, they need emphasis. Of particular importance among these issues are the rules governing examinations. I must stress from the outset that it would be of great help to you to take a keen interest in these rules and

closely abide by them. I underline this because a number of students each year lose the opportunity to complete their studies here because of examination malpractices. In any case, I expect you to earn your degrees through hard work, and that's the only way our degrees will be respected out there in the job markets. Needless to repeat, I expect you to keenly follow these rules to ensure a comfortable and peaceful stay in the University.

I should emphasize, further, that students must shun all other forms of misconduct, including cyberbullying and antisocial behaviour. Vices such as excessive use of alcohol and experimentation with drugs and substances leading to addiction and ruin, and careless sexual indulgence that poses risks of sexually transmitted diseases and conditions like HIV and AIDS,

and unwanted pregnancies have become commonplace in many universities. If you find yourself indulging in such unnecessary excesses, your likelihood to succeed will be highly diminished.

A more recent problem has been irresponsible use of social media. While the importance of social media in communication cannot be overstated, it must be used positively. Never use social media to troll, droll, body shame or ridicule your colleagues in anyway. We have heard of people commit suicide for being mistreated through social media. I must also remind you that no student is permitted to publish anything concerning the University without the express permission of the relevant authorities. Violations of this rule will be punishable.

Dear Students,

When you arrived here you found the campus green, clean, and serene. This doesn't just happen; there have been deliberate and intentional efforts to keep it so. But I'm already disappointed to see the new students walking all over on grass yet there are plenty of paved walkways. I therefore ask you to keep the campus green and clean, the way you have found it. Use the walkways provided and dispose of trash responsibly. Additionally, you should never move lecture chairs from lecture rooms, because anybody found removing chairs from lecture rooms without prior permission will be violating the University's rules and regulations. This will attract disciplinary measures that range from suspension from the University, buying an equivalent seat, or both, and any other penalty the University may deem fit.

CONCLUSION

My dear matriculants, in conclusion, let me once again remind you to dedicate your time to the main purpose for which you are here—that is, attaining a degree or a diploma. In this University, we recognize top-performing students (those with 1st Class Honours) by hiring some of the top-most as Graduate Assistants for our academic staff development program, so that they would eventually replace the aging professors. A few of the very top 1st class degree holders will be qualified for scholarship awards to pursue their postgraduate degrees. I am, therefore, alerting you early so that you may work hard in order to join this small group of colleagues who will secure such opportunities in our University.

I, therefore, challenge you to strive and secure these great opportunities.

If you heed my messages and those that have been passed across to you throughout this induction week, you will have a great time of growth, development and learning at this University.

Should you experience difficulties, however, be assured that our academic and administrative staff are there to support you; they are there to help you realise your dreams and aspirations; they are there to make your university experience a positive and rewarding one. You can always call on anyone of our responsible staff such as the Dean of Students, Student Counselor, Registrar

responsible for student affairs and others to help you with a variety of personal challenges. You should not suffer in silence; seek help.

You should therefore remember that you won't be embarking on this journey alone. You will form close friendships and make many enduring relationships during the next four or five years. The bonds you will form as you help one another grow will fortify your friendships for many years to come. Remember to look out for one another. Use your cell phones to let a friend or a colleague know where you are. There is nothing more important than keeping one another safe. However, no matter how wonderful your friends are, you are still your own best asset, and it is up to you to take care of yourself.

Finally, I wish to express my deep appreciation to our Registrar in charge of Academic, Research and Student Affairs, Prof Richard Juma, under the supervision of the Deputy Vice Chancellor in his Division, and the rest of his team for managing the registration and orientation process; our 2024 orientation team together with the Deans, Directors, Heads of Department and all other staff who were on hand at all times to lend a hand; and our Student Governing Council (SGC) for all their work in ensuring that our new students settle-in and feel welcome at the University.

We all look forward to getting acquainted with each one of you, the new students, during your time at the University. Today, you

begin a new chapter of your life at the University and it is a great privilege for us to be part of it.

Thank You and God Bless.

Professor Dickson M. Nyariki

Vice Chancellor