



Speech

By

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VICE-CHANCELLOR**

**Matriculation Ceremony,
Friday 11th September, 2015**

+ Deputy Vice-Chancellors;

+ Registrars;

+ Deans of Schools;

+ Members of Senate;

+ Members of Academic Staff;

+ Matriculants;

+ Ladies and Gentlemen.

Good Morning.

On behalf the entire University community and on my own behalf, I extend a very warm welcome to all our first year students to Kenyatta University. I am happy that today, **13,647** first year students have so far registered into Kenyatta University. This is a significant growth from September 2014 enrolment of **over 11,000** new students at the Main Campus and Satellite Campuses. May I take this opportunity to congratulate you all for excelling in your K.C.S.E examinations and meeting the criteria for joining this great University. We are glad that you are joining the Kenyatta University family. We hope the remaining students will be able to finalize their registration in the coming week and settle down for studies in good time.

During this intake, a pioneer group has joined the recently launched School of Creative Arts, Film and Media Studies. Through the new school hosted at Ruiru Campus, the students shall undertake programmes such as diploma in digital animation, diploma in communication and media studies, bachelor of communication and media studies and master of communication and media studies.

By joining Kenyatta University, you are committing yourself to an institution that provides a rich and varied learning experience characterized by an atmosphere of intellectual excitement, an intensive research culture, a place to inculcate and develop innovations, an environment for global engagement, and a vibrant and exciting social context. We have put in place robust empowering programmes for students that present diverse opportunities for nurturing talents and empowering students for life.

From the start, you should be proud that you are joining a University with an enviable history.

A) About Matriculation Ceremonies

I am sure that a good number of you do not understand what matriculation ceremonies are. Matriculation ceremonies such as this are very important traditions among universities the world over. It is during such occasions that new students are formally admitted to the University. During this ceremony, as a new student, you solemnly declare on oath, your loyalty to the University, to abide by the rules and regulations, and to appreciate and cherish its objectives and goals. The oath enjoins you to be of good behaviour and obedient to the authority of this University and to adhere to all the practices of the institution.

This important ceremony calls for both celebration and sober reflection. This is because out of the many candidates that sought admission, you have been among the privileged few to get such an admired and crucial opportunity. You are thus fortunate in getting to this stage of your academic life and as such I urge you to make the best use of this valuable opportunity.

Like in any other University in the world, there are rules and regulations that must be obeyed in Kenyatta University, which have not been designed with a punitive intent rather with an objective of ensuring that you are well guided to make the best use of your time on campus. I believe that during the orientation period which started on Tuesday this week you were informed of these rules and regulations and each of you was given a copy of the Students' Information Handbook. Adherence to the rules and regulations outlined in the handbook as well as other rules existing in the University will enable you to pursue your studies in peace and comfort.

I wish to point out that as first year students; you are joining Kenyatta University at a very remarkable time. The University has lately developed in aspects that set it apart as centre of excellence for higher education. Allow me to outline a few remarkable things. **First**, the University has a well stocked post-modern library that has a rich collection of resources both in hard and soft formats. This I believe will be the heart of your studies as it will be a source of reference and research in your academic work. The library will no doubt satisfy your intellectual curiosity in any field that you would like to explore. **Secondly**, the University is equipped with a modern and vibrant ICT

system that offers services to students and staff. The ICT system makes the management of university operations not only easier but also faster and efficient. You can easily access online books or easily work on your assignments at any of the computer laboratories in the University. **Thirdly**, as the labour market continues to be more competitive, the University recently launched the Student Work Induction Programme (SWIP) which is a great addition to the University's curricula as it enriches the skills and experiences of students enabling you to connect theoretical knowledge to the actual experiences in real work environments. These experiences adequately prepare you for the world of work. Additionally, the University has seen the need to equip its graduates with skills beyond their registered degree programs in order to broaden their competitive edge. Towards this end, the University offers its students the opportunity to take major and minor courses in addition to specific degree courses. This means, for example that a **Bachelor of Education (Science)** student specializing in **Mathematics and Chemistry** as teaching subjects can still take units in another area such as **Computer Science**, or **Music** which becomes a minor.

Fourth, the University has an Intra Africa Students' exchange programme which offers Kenyatta University students the opportunity to spend a semester in another university in Africa. This will not only enrich the academic profile of participants in the programme but also give them an international social-cultural exposure. You can find more information about this unique programme in the brochures given to you and also by visiting the Kenyatta University website: www.ku.ac.ke. Please make an effort of visiting the University website regularly to be updated on important University initiatives.

B) Important Services on Offer

I would now like to focus on important services that the University will offer you. You need to take advantage of these because they will help you to settle well in the University. They include;

- ✚ **Directorate of Students Affairs** – the office is dedicated to the welfare of students and is always ready and willing to offer assistance as well as advice when needed.
- ✚ **Counselling Services** – the University has this provision to help you handle emotional and psychological problems whenever you encounter them.

- ✚ **Career Development Centre** – this is where you will find career advice and assistance on job and practicum placements. Every year the Centre for Career Development and Placement organizes a Career Week where you will be privileged to meet career men and women from various economic sectors.
- ✚ **Disability Services** – this is where support services for persons with disabilities are provided. The directorate of disability services here at Kenyatta University provides these support services.
- ✚ **Mentoring Programme** – this is one of the unique services provided by Kenyatta University where more experienced individuals help and guide others. We also have a student-to-student nurturing and mentorship version which is in recognition of the fact that students interact more among themselves and that they have the potential to influence each other positively. Since last year, we have been offering all students a unique training opportunity called ‘Growing Leaders Programme’. This is offered to students in their final sessions of their studies to equip them with leadership skills in readiness to meet industry needs.
- ✚ **Chandaria Business Innovation and Incubation Centre** – this is a special initiative to students whose innovative ideas are incubated to be possibly commercialized. The initiative was started in order to change the mindset of Kenyatta University graduates from being job seekers to job creators. Any of you with innovative ideas should not hesitate to contact the Centre and fill the necessary application forms. You may not know if the idea you have will be the next big thing that will change this country and your life. You will also find more information about the initiative in the brochure.

E) ADVICE

i) Prioritize Academic Excellence

Spend your time wisely and always recognize your studies as your number one priority. Academic excellence in the university requires hard work, dedication, and sacrifice. You all need to remember that you have just entered that phase of your life when you are free from daily parental control and guidance. Thus; what you make of your stay at the university would depend to a great extent on the choices you make. Ensure that you make important and well informed choices.

ii) Attend lectures regularly

The University places a very high premium on your education and as such it is exposing you to an exceptional pool of lecturers and professors, tap tirelessly from their knowledge by attending lectures. Ensure that you also complete your assignments on time and actively participate in classroom activities. Take the continuous tests seriously as well as the take away assignments, they all contribute to your overall mark and if well done, the main end of semester exam will be less strenuous and the urge to participate in examination malpractices will not exist. The University has stringent rules regarding examinations, the breach of which is responded to with dire consequences. It is therefore important that you take your studies seriously to avoid an urge to participate in examination malpractices.

iii) Write a Personal Strategic Plan

A strategic plan is a tool that serves the purpose of helping one plan and focus energy, resources, and time to a specific objective. As you begin your study period here, you will soon find out that during a particular period, you may have several competing demands on your limited time. When you plan your activities well ahead of time, you should have a clear sense of direction or vision; you have the opportunity to analyze various alternative courses of action. I encourage you to draft personal strategic plans; your success will depend on them.

iv) Participate in Extra-Curricular Activities

Kenyatta University has a rich history of excellence in sports and performing arts. You will find over ten professional clubs and more than 100 associations and non-professional clubs. To strike a balance in all the aspects of life, it is important that you take time out to engage in these important activities. Such activities impart positively on your emotional, intellectual, social, and inter-personal development. Some of the most valuable lessons you will learn at the University will occur outside the classroom. Social skills are vital in today's dynamic environment by working together with other individuals; you acquire negotiating, communicating, conflict management, and leadership skills. Involvement in activities also helps students mature socially by providing a setting for student interaction, relationship formation, and discussion. Ensure that you learn more about these clubs and associations through the Dean of Students office.

v) Discipline

You have joined Kenyatta University as an adult and an individual not a group. You must therefore weigh the consequences of your individual and collective actions. Always remember that whatever you do individually or collectively will impact on your future life. Therefore, you should never sacrifice your individuality for the collective. Always think seriously about the consequences to you as an individual of any collective decisions.

Seek to be on the right side of the law and shun all forms of vices that are luring the youth into drugs, alcohol, prostitution among others. These will ruin your academic life and your treasured dreams. Be an individual of unquestionable character, only then will you be successful. In whatever you do and wherever you are, you should always bear in mind that you represent Kenyatta University as from today. Therefore, be a person of integrity. Integrity is a value, like persistence, courage and industriousness. Even more than that, it is the value that guarantees all the other values.

vi) Maintain a Positive Attitude

A positive attitude leads to happiness and success and can change your whole life. If you look at the bright side of life, your whole life becomes filled with light. You must be optimists and believe that you are accountable for good things and that good thing will generally come your way. It is certainly a state of mind that is well worth developing and strengthening.

Finally, the future depends on the actions you embark on today. The University will empower you and enable you to effectively contribute to the country's growth and development. You must live above reproach and be shining examples of the good moral training that the university is inculcating in you. You are a worthy investment to your family, community and country.

With these few remarks, May I once again congratulate you on your matriculation and warmly welcome you to Kenyatta University. We wish you well and pray for your success in this University.

Thank you.