

PRINCIPAL'S SPEECH TO THE FIRST YEAR STUDENTS – WEDNESDAY 22ND MAY, 2013

VENUE: E001 LECTURE THEATRE

Good morning Ladies and Gentlemen. I want to start off by welcoming the Freshers to the University of Nairobi and to the College of Architecture and Engineering. I want to start by congratulating you all for making the grade to join our prestigious College.

I want to assure you that you are in the right place. This Lecture Hall is the traditional orientation ground for the College. I was oriented in this same hall as a fresher more than 30 years ago. Others who have also been oriented here is Former Vice-Chancellor of University of Nairobi, Prof. Gichaga, who is currently the Chancellor in JKUAT, Former Deputy Prime Minister, Hon. Musalia Mudavadi, Prof. C.M. Kiamba former Vice-Chancellor of this University and former Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Higher Education and Engineer S. Kamau, Cabinet Secretary in the Ministry of Works and Transport among others.

I will first explain the structure of this University. The University is headed by the Chancellor; the current Chancellor is Dr. Joseph Wanjui. Below the Chancellor there is the Vice-Chancellor (VC) who is the Administrative head of the University. Professor George Magoha is the Vice-Chancellor and as you have seen in your orientation week programme, he will address you tomorrow afternoon. There are four Deputy Vice-Chancellors; DVC Academic Affairs, DVC Administration and Finance, DVC Student Affairs and DVC Research, Production and Extension.

There are six Colleges in the University; College of Architecture and Engineering, College of Humanities and Social Sciences is also at the Main Campus with other Campuses in Lower Kabete, Parklands, Kisumu and Mombasa. College of Health Sciences is located at Kenyatta National Hospital while as the College of Biological and Physical Sciences is located at Chiromo. College of Agriculture and Veterinary Sciences is located at Upper Kabete and College of Education and External Studies is at Kikuyu with regional centres in Mombasa, Kisumu, Kakamega, Nakuru and Nyeri. The Colleges are headed by a Principal.

The College has three Schools and one Institute. I want to start introducing the Deans and Directors present here today. The acting Dean in the School of Engineering is Prof. S.K Mwea. The Dean School of The Built Environment is Prof. Tom Anyamba. The Director, School of The Arts and Design is Dr. Walter Onyango. The Director Institute of Nuclear Science and Technology is Mr. David Maina. The Deans will in turn introduce the Chairmen of Departments and other Academic Members of Staff present. Thereafter, the other College administrators and Heads of Sections will also introduce themselves accordingly.

The School of Engineering is located where we are, with several departmental building around the premises. It has five departments; Department of Civil and Construction Engineering, Department of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering, Department of Environmental and Biosystems Engineering, Department of Electrical and Information Engineering, and Department of Geospatial and Space Technology.

The School of The Built Environment and The School of Arts and Design are both located in the ADD Building off State House road, opposite the YMCA. The departments in the School of The Built Environment are Department of Architecture and Building Science, Department of Urban and Regional Planning, and Department of Real Estate and Construction Management. My office and that of the College Registrar are located on the 2nd Floor of the Main Administration Block.

Moving on to academics, I want to encourage you to work very hard and get focused from the onset. Where you have come from you have been used to achieving grades of 80% and above. I want to inform you that the University examination pass-mark is 40%. This might sound very low and achievable that you might relax, but let me tell you that some may experience difficulties to attain this pass mark. Past records to student performance in the College in examinations are available. Failure to achieve this pass mark could lead to discontinuation of studies from the University. I therefore urge you once again to take your studies seriously and work hard. Let me not dwell on this as you will be given more information this afternoon in your respective School addresses by the Deans and Directors and also from your respective departments.

I want to believe that some of you have come to Nairobi for the very first time and that some of you have left your parents' homes and you will be living on your own for the very first time. In the University, unlike the high schools, we do not have morning assemblies and you will have to organize yourselves. I want to urge you to take care of yourselves, take responsibility for your actions as there are many temptations in your students' life. Avoid drugs and practice abstinence as you are still very young and I don't expect you to be in any relationships.

There are many religious institutions you can go to worship. There are also many good organizations that you can join and positive extracurricular activities you can engage in such as swimming, athletics, ball games and others. The College has a games tutor who will guide you accordingly.

For those who fall into social problems, the College has an Assistant Dean of Students, Mrs. Margaret Mumera who will give you the necessary guidance and counseling. Her Office is located in the Dean's Office, School of Engineering.

The University is well aware that the accommodation in the University is limited. For those seeking accommodation in hostels outside the University should seek guidance from University Halls Officers to secure safe accommodation.

You are reminded that students should always pay their fees on time to avoid interruption of their studies.

Finally, I want to wish you all the best as you start preparing for your professional careers.

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