

# VICE CHANCELLOR'S ADDRESS TO NEW STUDENTS

16TH JULY 2007

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## 1. **Welcome the new students.**

- I am pleased to welcome you to Strathmore and to express our joy at your having chosen to study at this inspiring University. I assure you that you made one of the best decisions in your life.
- You have gone through a rigorous selection process to come here. We are convinced that you deserve to be here and that you possess the necessary human qualities to benefit fully from the education that we provide in Strathmore.
- We are talking here of such human qualities as sincerity and honesty, perseverance and tenacity, hard work and a spirit of service, self control and temperance, loyalty and responsibility.
- Whatever the duration of your course, the time of you will spend in the University will be important for each one of you in specific and personal ways. But overall each one of you should experience growth in intellectual knowledge, in personality, in cultural enrichment, in building personal friendships, in career planning during this period.
- It will be a time to participate in the Strathmore educational experience. Take full advantage of this period so that by the time you get your respective degrees, diplomas or certificates you will be better persons than when you came in. That is to say, you will be fit for life!

- The Academic Schools and the Mentoring Services Office have a duty to ensure that the various study curriculums you are enrolled in, are able to impart to you sufficient transferable skills and attributes that would characterize the “*Strathmore graduate*”. By the time of graduation, you should have:
  - Demonstrated scholarship appropriate to your level of award in your chosen study areas.
  - Demonstrated the ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing.
  - Acquired appropriate IT and information handling skills.
  - Acquired the skills and aptitudes necessary for lifelong effective learning.
  - Acquired the skills to manage effectively your career and gain appropriate employment.
  - Developed personally in ways which will enrich your life and facilitate a full contribution to society in the future.
  - Through the context of the personalized Student Mentoring System, reflected on your academic and personal development and planned for the future.

## **2. The type of education the University gives**

- Integral education: that aims to educate the whole person—mind, will, heart. You are human persons. Clearly different from other living beings created by God.
- Freedom and responsibility: We respect the freedom of the individual person provided this freedom is accompanied with responsibility. A person who does not want to take responsibility for his or her actions does not deserve to be free.
- Interdisciplinary education: ethics, languages, humanities, business, information technology, core subject.

- Entrepreneurial education: academic skills, entrepreneurial skills, professional skills, industrial internship, innovation (research projects).
- Human/personal development: leadership skills, career management skills, community service (community attachment) etc.
- Skills certificate programme: designed to develop your competence and confidence in a range of essential graduate-level skills, such as CISCO, CPA, ACCA, etc. Other skills courses include communication skills, making effective presentations, teamwork, personal finance, IT skills, etc.

### 3. **Personal discipline and study**

- In order to benefit fully from the education Strathmore offers you have to see yourself as a major participant in the whole process of learning and teaching.
- You have to study hard: attendance at class, cooperating with your lecturers in their efforts to expose you to new knowledge in your areas of study. Be explorers – use the library and available e-learning resources, participate actively in the learning activities in the schools.
- The University is going to place more emphasis on e-learning to facilitate self study and student participation in the learning and teaching process. This will enable you to acquire life long effective learning.

- You have to be very sincere and honest in your dealing with your academic work, lecturers, fellow students, mentors, people in administration and even visitors to the University.
- Familiarise yourselves with all the relevant university rules and regulations and make a firm resolution to uphold and live by these regulations. This will enable you to enjoy a stress free life here in the university.

#### 4. **Mentoring Service**

- Every full time student is going to be assigned a member of staff as a mentor. This person will serve as your advisor in many matters, which affect your life as student in the university.
- Mentoring aims at the development of the student's personality in all its dimensions. It is an interpersonal relation between you, the student, and the lecturer (mentor). You will encounter the support of the mentor for personal development, towards your integration into university life and orientation for future career. Mentoring will help you discover a fuller sense of your studies, future profession and solution of possible difficulties and to increase your academic efficiency.
- The University lays a lot of importance on this service. Feedback from the students who went before you indicates that those who made themselves available fully to this service have benefited greatly.
- The University expects you to take full advantage of this service. By being available to meet your mentors regularly, by

being sincere in your conversations with them, and indeed by seeking and even demanding their attention.

- It is through mentoring that you will begin to find out how to take full advantage of what Strathmore offers you in terms of human formation.

## **5. Professional Associations and Sports**

- These provide you with opportunities to acquire leadership and the personal skills, which you cannot get in a formal class or lesson.
- Enrol in at least one club and take active part. Many of the student professional societies are very successful: SIFE, SMS, IT Society, etc
- Be promoters of Strathmore by participating in Sports
- The University lays a lot of importance on sports and we offer incentives to those who excel in sports: such as full or partial scholarships or partial fee rebates.
- It is gratifying to note that Strathmore is the East African Club champions in hockey and that our Rugby team has just qualified to enter the premier league, among other glorious successes of our sports teams. Join and share in the ongoing celebration!

## **6. Christian identity and religious freedom**

- The University has a Christian identity.

- All activities and the people who study and work here are guided by the principles of Christian teaching, more specifically, the teachings of the Catholic Church.
- However there is no discrimination on the basis of religion or political beliefs; there is great respect for the religious and political beliefs of others. This respect must be observed at all times and in all places in the University.
- A key principle is respect for the dignity of fellow students, lecturers and other workers in the University.
- All of us are expected to show sincerity, honesty, social and moral refinement in our personal conduct and in our dealings with others.
- You have to give good example while you are inside the University and when you are outside the university. People will come into contact with Strathmore through you. Strathmore will be as good as its students are. The goodness of a tree is judged by its fruits. You are our fruits.
- Whatever your religious beliefs, strive to lead good and upright lives befitting of children of God. In this University God is not left outside the gate as you enter, but is a welcome guest who is loved and treated with honour and affection.
- By joining this university you have at the same time accepted a very important role. That of being the bearer of the good odour Strathmore exudes.

## 7. **Engaging your parent/guardians**

Finally, I would like to stress how important it is for the University to work closely with your parents or guardians.

- You and your parents can help us in our effort to continually improve the education we provide so that it is always relevant and responsive to the job market and to the needs of the wider society.
- You and your parents can work with the university to deal with the emerging manipulative cultures that are targeted at the young people in our schools and universities. You have to be wary of the cultural engineering trends that are aimed at eroding your self mastery and personal freedom. The culture of reckless pursuit of pleasure has lead to drug abuse, increased sexual crimes and sexually transmitted infections. These problems need the joint effort of yourselves, the University and your parents to circumvent.
- Therefore I urge you to introduce your parents to us, encourage them to visit the university, to meet your mentors, and other officers of the university.

May I now end by taking this opportunity to wish you a very fruitful and fulfilling sojourn at the University characterised with discovery and innovation.

Thank You