



VICE CHANCELLOR'S SPEECH PRESENTED DURING THE ORIENTATION OF FRESHMEN ON 13TH SEPTEMBER, 2018

SAILING OR DRIFTING THROUGH SCHOOL

Salutation

Deputy Vice Chancellor, Academics and Students Affairs; Deputy Vice Chancellor, Administration, Finance and Development; Deputy Vice Chancellor, Planning, Partnerships, Research and Innovations; Deans of Faculties and Schools; Directors of Various Units; Chairmen of departments; Heads of departments and Coordinators of Units; Staff Students and you, our very special guests the Freshmen 2018.

Purpose

We have assembled here to celebrate an extraordinary event. That of inducting you into the world of academia. This is because you embody the future. You are the people that Kenya and indeed the rest of the world has hope. It is therefore a special day. Moreover, like Hemingway wrote in his favorite book: "Today is only one day in all the days that will ever be. But what will happen in all the other days that ever come can depend on what you do today". That is why speaking to a special group like you on a day like this is always a precious and singular honor for me.

Welcome

First, I wish to congratulate you on passing your KCSE 2017 examinations and for being among only 63,000 who qualified to join the Public Universities from 615,773 candidates. You excelled in your examinations and earned a coveted place at Kibabii University.

Secondly, I wish to welcome you to Kibabii University. A young but promising institution of higher learning. The only University where the Chancellor is the President of the Republic of Kenya. The University is founded on 6 values. It aspires to produce scholars who embody Excellence, Accountability and Transparency, Social responsibility, Innovation, and are of Integrity while utilizing their Academic freedom in performing their duties.



Introduction of faculty and staff

Let me at this point introduce our distinguished staff and faculty.

Academic distinction

The people in front of you are persons of high academic distinction and repute. In the last nine months alone, they have represented the University in international academic events in Sri Lanka, Italy, Germany, Norway, USA, China, South Africa, Austria, Nigeria, Rwanda and Uganda to name just a few.

The persons we have just introduced are the people who will walk with you through the path of intellectual growth at Kibabii University for the next four years.

However, this is predicated on your ability to cooperate and collaborate. So the question is: Are you at Kibabii to sail through the University or to drift along? Are you here to undergo meaningful change or to simply walk in through the main gate, hovering around then walk out through the back without leaving any impression?

Sailing or drifting

To ease your effort to answer the questions above, let me define the meaning of two key words in the questions.

Foremost is the word sailing which will be defined here as the act of beginning a voyage on a ship to sail out to sea to a scheduled and specific destination.

Drifting on the other hand is to move slowly especially because of outside force or pressure with no control over direction.

Simply stated, people sail for a purpose while drifting is aimless.

Guide to sailing

To sail one needs a ten-point guide. We will attempt to compare this with guidelines you need to go through your studies at Kibabii University presented as follows:

S.NO.	GUIDE TO SAIL AT SEA	GUIDE TO GO THROUGH UNIVERSITY
1.	Know destination	Know purpose and reason of being at Kibabii.
2.	Get the right boat	Choose the right programme.
3.	Ability and skill to sail	Right state of mind and skills to study.
4.	Knowledge of weather and navigation	Knowledge of academic requirements.
5.	Knowledge of rules of the sea	Knowledge of statutes, students/ examinations handbook and SOKU constitution.



6.	Mechanical skills to fix the boat	Skills to correct wrong doings.
7.	Stock stores, provisions, food	Budget for upkeep.
8.	Maintaining a healthy mind and body	Maintaining a healthy mind, body and spirit
9.	Avoid dangers on the horizon i.e storms, pirates. Choose calm , uncrowded waters	Avoid dangers, alcohol, unprotected sex, bad company.
10.	Know agencies to contact in case of emergency	Have your ICE. Persons to contact in case of emergency. Seek counselling, advisory, etc
11.	Wear the proper clothes	Wear what reflects your career.

Dispelling myths

A number of students who join universities rely on myths, which misled them. The following are just a few:

- University students are above the law.
- Reputable universities are those in big cities.
- University students are naturally intelligent.
- University students should live on the first lane of life.

Unfortunately, a few students who have come after you have embraced these myths. Instead of sailing, they resigned themselves to drifting. The consequences they met included inability to complete studies, pending examinations from as far back as First Year, suspension, expulsion, lost fees on betting and extravagance, pregnancy, loss of life, depression, HIV/AIDS, abortions, sexually transmitted diseases, alcoholism, drug addiction troubled marriages and so on.

The good news is that majority decided to sail. These have posted success stories. There are those in employment including the armed forces, others are pursuing further studies, while the risk takers are running businesses or pursuing political careers. Last Saturday, I was invited to a wedding by an alumni of Kibabii University currently a high school teacher. She was needy when she joined, but because she was focused, disciplined and hardworking, she found a philanthropist who paid her fees through the four years she was here.

Tips to sailing through Kibabii University

Therefore, I beseech you to sail. Do not drift. In the remaining part of my speech, let me share a few tips to help you sail.

You are young and growing. Nevertheless, you are old enough to know your identity and personality, Nurture that. Learn from the words of Ralph Waldo: To be yourself in a world that is constantly trying to make you something else is the greatest achievement. Do not be misguided and misled by the mob psychology. Do not move like a herd. Each one of you came here on their own volition and shall receive graduation certificate individually.



Utilize your time effectively and efficiently. Time is precious and limited. Do not waste it on unproductive matters. Every minute at Kibabii should count. Remember the time you have is the same as that by those who succeed. So if you don't succeed you have yourself to blame. Every day try to do something that will take you closer to a better life. Each one of you should schedule and prioritize events, games, meetings, community service, social activities and studies accordingly

You must work hard. If you do not strive, you will never achieve. We have many opportunities. Take advantage of them. To drive my point home let me share a true story with you; recently a frustrated and exasperated student stepped forward and asked the Vice Chancellor's driver to give him a lift because he had never travelled in a University vehicle. The driver alighted and holding him by his hand advised him to participate in activities such as choir, drama and games where opportunities to travel abound. So work hard at everything you do with all your passion, strength, soul and will.

One of the most critical lessons to learn is how to prove your innocence as persons of dignity and honour. To earn admiration from others you must avoid being puppets, errand boys and girls and dependents of others. Ensure you use social media positively. In addition, leave within your means. This will require that you avoid being lured to "sponsors" and "slay queens". This is the only way to avoid the dependency syndrome and the culture of begging which you all know eventually cultivates the inferiority complex.

The main objective of an institution of higher learning is to generate knowledge and nurture creative scholars. We expect you to engage in rigorous intellectual pursuit in order to sharpen your intellect for life while here and in the world after school. As you sail through, we look upon you to uphold humility, embrace diversity, tolerate divergent opinion, and engage in logical and balanced debate. India's first Prime Minister Jawaharwal Nehru affirmed this many decades ago when he said "A university stands for humanism, for tolerance, for reason and for the adventure of ideas". Find one person who can play role of your mentor. We have numerous opportunities for you to raise issues and seek solutions. Use these instead of resorting to violence and other crude practices.

More importantly do not underrate yourself. You have the requisite ability to drive development agenda. As young intellectuals, you have the potential to address the current challenges facing society including: corruption, diseases, poverty, tribalism, unemployment, environmental degradation, just to name a few.

Finally, may I remind you to take charge of your life while at Kibabii University. Avoid drifting. Take control of your boat and sail through. If you do that, there is no doubt that we will all congregate here the third Friday of November, 2022 for the conferment of degrees.

THANK YOU AND GOD BLESS US ALL.



Kibabii University ISO 9001:2008 Certified
Knowledge for development