

Address by the President at Commencement Exercises on January 21, 2006

**The University Chaplain,
Chairman of the University Council,
President Emeritus,
Members of AU Community,
Honored Guests,
and Dear Graduates :**

On behalf of all present, it is my privilege to congratulate you at this graduation ceremony. This ceremony symbolizes your success and achievement in the academic world. We are all here to bear witness to your achievement. Today, there are family members, relatives, friends and well-wishers coming to you with flowers, and words of congratulation along the way. They are happy for you and watch you with admiration and pride. The procession into the hall symbolizes the academic journey you made. The walk across the stage to receive your degree represents the realization of your dreams. Your feeling is high with all this excitement because you have finally reached what you have aspired to achieve. With this body of knowledge, you are ready to face the world on your own.

On this occasion, permit me to recall and point out to you a few basic principles in life, which you should adhere to dearly. They are like foundation stones in life. Plato wrote, "Education makes good men and that good men act nobly." Therefore, education is meant to benefit both the individual and the society by preparing every one to become a good person and to behave virtuously.

How does AU impart values to you?

The University sees itself as contributing to change the culture and society by imparting an education aimed at developing values among its students. I want to highlight some of the efforts that are aimed at contributing to the realization of the goal. Every institution teaches its students values in some form. An institution is an instrument of change, the vehicle by which we fashion a better society. Concurrently, there must exist a linkage between values and policy in order for an institution to affect positive change. Higher education institutions are responsible for articulating values to society in general. Therefore, it is particularly important that such institutions communicate values that are clear and balanced, and can be applied in different and complex situations.

The values of AU are articulated in our Vision/Mission statement, codes of conduct, and academic integrity policies. The core values of AU can be clarified in relation to academic integrity and they can be communicated through orientation programs, as well as the publication and dissemination of key documents, such as the student handbook. I will present here four values that are basic to life. They overlap in some way but each is worth mentioning.

1. Discipline

Discipline can be defined as “the sense of personal responsibility of one’s behavior and the habit of choosing correctly what is right for us.” Student discipline is and always has been, an excellent opportunity for development efforts. It is a central part of the mission of AU education to shape the character of our students. The University still acts in loco parentis. Codes of conduct are the way we inform you of your behavioral standards, the methods by which the rules are enforced and adjudicated, and the institution’s response to violations. The basic goal and necessity of maintaining an environment conducive to learning, and student development, in some form has been a fairly consistent objective of student discipline throughout our existence. Administrators see it as a means of helping students develop insight and accept responsibility and understand the consequences for their behavior if they fail to pay attention to the values taught and disseminated.

A community of learning, at its best, is guided by standards of student conduct that define acceptable behavior and integrate the academic and nonacademic dimensions of campus life through a broad-based, unified approach to student discipline that demonstrates and reinforces the importance and integrity of institutional values. The approach must be unified through the collaborative efforts of faculty, administrative staff, and students as they seek to ascertain just what those institutional values are, and how they can best be articulated and enforced for the good of the institution, and for the growth of the individual student. You should consider student discipline to be a caring and supportive relationship.

Apart from formal codes of conduct, you also face in your daily campus life informal codes of conduct. Knowingly or unknowingly, it also gives rise to personal development and formation of character if you know how to make use of it.

2. Professional Ethics

Ethics may be defined as philosophical inquiry into the nature and grounds of morality. The term morality is here used as a general name for moral judgments, standards, and rules of conduct. The ultimate purpose of normative and analytic ethics is to enable us to arrive at a critical, reflective morality of our own. Everyone is brought up with some set of moral beliefs and every society has some moral code as part of its way of

life. But an individual may either blindly accept the moral code of his society, or he may come to reflect upon it and criticize it.

Moral growth occurs, then as you develop your capacity to reason about your moral beliefs. Instead of blindly adopting your society's moral code or being easily shocked by the moral systems of other cultures, you are able to think clearly, calmly, and coherently about any set of moral norms. You learn how to give good reasons for accepting and rejecting such norms, or else you learn the limit of moral reasoning, or why no such reasoning is possible. Whatever might be your conclusions, they are arrived at on the basis of your own reflection. You can then decide for yourself what standards of evaluation and rules of conduct to commit yourself to.

AU makes it mandatory for you to attend classes on "Professional Ethics." At the same time, exposure to reality is made available to you so that you can come to contact with real life situations. Unfortunately, some of you did not give it a serious attention. Instead, you consider it to be irrelevant to your future life. For those of you who are serious about it, you will find that it is very useful for your life. The benefit arises from your personal training and disposition.

3. Honesty and Integrity

Honesty and integrity can be recognized and affirmed to be a core institutional value. How can faculty foster student honesty. We believe that AU must use our academic-integrity systems to foster "honesty and integrity" and to discourage students from falling into the habit of cheating and deception. The challenge is significant, since multiple public incidents show startlingly high rates of cheating especially in graft and corruption in the country.

AU commits itself to the pursuit of Truth and knowledge. The process of truth-seeking is grounded in certain core values, starting with a commitment to honesty and integrity in academic work. Any graduate wants to work in communities where competition is fair, integrity is respected and cheating is punished, with reduce opportunities to engage in academic dishonesty and where prevention is a critical line of defense against academic dishonesty.

Students graduating from AU will pursue professional careers in which people's lives and the welfare of the environment are in their trust. Therefore, it is critical that you develop and honor principles of honesty and integrity that you will carry into your future endeavors. Honesty is one of those intangible qualities which has become so compromised in our society nowadays. If you look back and try to review your past life on campus, you must have seen examples of academic dishonesty in different forms on campus. Some students were involved in cheating by bringing or using crib sheets, looking at other students' answer papers. Inappropriate collaboration might occur during the examinations or while preparing for term paper. On a higher level, some engaged in plagiarism.

To be deemed “honest” is to be “held in honor.” The honest person is one who deals fairly and uprightly in speech and act as a person who may be trusted. As part of academic community, honesty in academic work engenders trust and ensures credibility and authority. The honesty must be genuine, real and having no pretences. You must continue to be honest with yourself, with the people around you, your life partner. But above all you have to be honest with God who is all knowing.

4. Self-Directed Lifelong Learning

Lifelong learning is best understood as a process of individual learning and development across the life-span, from cradle to grave and it refers not only to education in formal settings, but also to “life-wide” learning in informal settings, at home, at work and in the wider community. The emphasis on **learning** is significant. The individual is at the heart of a lifelong learning system, and it depends to a large degree on the capacity and motivation of individuals to take care of their own learning. Lifelong learning can be as much about the small things of everyday life as about the grand objects of conventional discourse, or to changing constellations of problems and contexts.

The world is becoming a “global village” which implies a multi-cultural village, where people are confronted with others who have a different knowledge of the world. Democracy can only function according to its principles if people have equal possibilities to inform themselves, solve problems, make well-considered choices and generally take part in the social construction of reality. In order to realize this promise, you must become self-directed lifelong learners. Learning must be extended far beyond educational participation. The development of such skills includes the development of these three interacting aspects: learning to learn, knowledge base and motivation. You must gradually acquire competence to regulate all components in learning. At the same time, you must stimulate the knowledge-building process necessary to gain domain expertise, foster motivation to enlarge tolerance of uncertainty.

The new non-formal learning is a part of an extended project of personal development or self-realization. In whatever state of life you may be, you must learn how to learn so that you can cope with the changes of time, you can participate in the globalization, and you will be able to share your life with others.

Dear Graduates, You must have experienced some tension between your own values and the corpus of common institutional values in which you are asked to share. Unless there is at least a minimum sharing of the communality of values, campus life is hardly a viable one. Social values are shared, they are agreed upon by a plurality of people and do not depend upon the judgment of any particular individual. People connect these values with the preservation of the common welfare and the satisfaction of social needs. You might have acquired certain values as part of your life. Each one can reflect on it and see how far each one can achieve. If you do not get enough, it is

Compendium of Program, Field of Study and Degree Awarded

better late than never. Assumption University as an educational institution has done its part to instill in you certain values. Now, it is you who have to continue the journey.

As a learning person and in a learning society, you must continue to develop yourself to the fullest. It is your daily awareness to engage in acquiring these values that you can attain a higher level of perfection.

Dear Graduates, You have to recognize that none of you, made it to this day alone. Apart from the faculty members, you also have others, like parents, friends, who provided support to you in one way or other to make your education possible. You should acknowledge their contribution to your academic success and remain grateful to them.

I want you to appreciate just how carefully your beloved University has prepared you to enjoy this moment, the moment of your Commencement. Your time at the University was always oriented towards the horizon of this graduation day. It marks the boundary that separates your student life and your professional life, a life in which you want to follow your dreams. At the University you have learned much, you have developed expertise in at least one field of study, you have proven your ability to survive the tidal wave. And you have nurtured qualities of mind and heart that transcend any particular body of knowledge or academic discipline.

This is a new mission that you should strive after your graduation, to be able to achieve personal growth to help others in society. Go forth from this University to the real world with confidence. Commit yourself to making yourself a better person and a better world. We will support you in every way we can.

May I once again and on behalf of all present here today, congratulate each and everyone of you on your success. Continue to be “the salt of the earth” and “the light of the world.” Live your life worthy of being AU graduate. We wish you God’s blessing and the best in your life always!

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| Doctor of Philosophy Program, Ph.D.* | Graduate School of Psychology | Counseling Psychology |
| Doctor of Management Program, D.M.* | Graduate School of Business | Organization Development |

Bancha Saenghiran, f.s.g., Ph.D.
President
January 21, 2006

| PROGRAMS / DEGREE | RESPONSIBLE UNIT | MAJORS |
|---|---|---|
| Master of Business Administration Program, M.B.A. (Business Administration) | Graduate School of Business | Business Administration |
| Master of Science Program, M.S. (Computer Information Systems) | Graduate School of Computer Information Systems | Computer Information Systems |
| Master of Science Program, M.A. (Computer and Engineering Management) | Graduate School of Computer and Engineering Management | Computer and Engineering Management |