

**Vice-Chancellor's matriculation speech for first years held on  
9<sup>th</sup> January 2015 at SEKU main campus**

- The Deputy Vice Chancellors
- Registrars
- Deans/ Directors
- Chairman of departments
- Students
- Ladies and Gentlemen

Good Morning.

On behalf of the University Council, Senate, Management Board, staff and on my own behalf, I am pleased to welcome you all to South Eastern Kenya University. It is indeed a great honour to have you as the 6<sup>th</sup> JAB intake of undergraduate students of South Eastern Kenya University.

Matriculation ceremonies are undertaken in all Universities the world over. It is during the matriculation ceremony that you formally acquire studentship status of the University by taking the “matriculation oath” like the one that you have taken today and after writing your names in the register of students.

We all recognize that your long journey through Primary and Secondary education has ended, and another important journey has just begun for you.

May I take this opportunity to congratulate all of you for being able to gain admission to South Eastern Kenya University from thousands of aspiring High School candidates.

You have every right to feel proud to be students of this institution. It is my strong conviction that you will learn, nurture and develop knowledge and skills that will propel you forward in the challenging world of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We have a strong team of professors and lecturers to ensure you fulfill your dream.

I am well aware that you have been oriented for the past few days to the systems and running of the Institution. This orientation will end tomorrow. I believe you will take the opportunity to familiarize yourselves with the institution and also get to know your lecturers.

I would wish to give a brief overview of SEKU, your home for the next four years. SEKU started in the 1970s as Ukamba Agricultural Institute (UKAI). The Ukamba Agricultural Institute was elevated to the status of a University College in July 2008, as a constituent College of the University of Nairobi and given the name South Eastern University College (SEUCO). SEUCO was elevated to a

fully-fledged University by his Excellency Former President Mwai Kibaki on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2013 to become South Eastern Kenya University (SEKU). You are therefore the second group of students to be admitted by SEKU after acquiring its new status as a fully fledged University.

This Main Campus lies on a 10,000 acres piece of land. The University boasts of a further 4,500 acres at Emali and a 1.5 acres of a prime plot in Nairobi's Upper Hill area. The University has other campuses at Kitui Town, Machakos Town, Wote Town, and Mtito Andei. Currently the University has about 6,000 students registered for various degree programmes, diploma and certificates.

The University is governed by the University Council and guided by the University Act No. 42 of 2012, the charter and the statutes. The University is headed by the Vice-Chancellor who is assisted by three DVCs and three registrars and a Finance officer. That group constitutes the University Management and deals with the day to day running of the University.

As earlier pointed out, currently, SEKU has a student population of about 6000 students who come from each of the 47 counties. There are various Diploma, Bachelors degree, Masters and PhD programmes being offered under the 10 Schools at the University. Each School is headed by a Dean. Get to know your Deans and

chairmen of departments well as they will play a key role in your studies during your stay at the Institution.

In a growing Institution, there are bound to be challenges as well as teething developmental hurdles. We should all expect these along our journey and be ready to together come up with solutions and/or ways of how best to handle those situations.

At SEKU, we have well trained academic staff and they are, therefore, well qualified to tutor and mentor you. You are all about to embark on a unique life experience, one that you will refer back to at all periods in your life.

One of the many things that you should look forward to over the next four years is establishing lasting friendships both with your lecturers and fellow classmates. You will encounter other students who are quite different from you. Get to know them. We learn from our differences. From your records, it is clear that you have all come from diverse geographical and ethnic backgrounds. Together therefore, we all represent the diverse and universal nature of the University where the main goal is pursuit of knowledge. Diversity is not about how we differ but about appreciating and embracing each other's uniqueness and enriching ourselves with other's tremendous body of knowledge and experiences.

You have now joined a community of scholars, gaining the envious status of students in an Institution of Higher Learning. An institution of higher learning is where:

- ❖ Students, professors and the supporting staff work hand in hand to achieve the desired institutional common goals and aspirations.
- ❖ Top-notch research and scholarship thrives through joint effort to improve learning and teaching programmes.
- ❖ Every student gives his or her best in the effort to tackle challenges at the personal and institutional levels.
- ❖ Everyone's ideas, views and contributions matter and are given due weight and attention.
- ❖ The community of scholars desires nothing but the best for themselves, the institution, the nation and humanity.
- ❖ Positive out-look and mind-set motivates every member of the academic community in their execution of the set tasks and meeting the agreed targets.
- ❖ Mutual respect, discipline, cooperation and diligence govern everyday life and the entire institutional process.
- ❖ Honesty and integrity are the supreme values for all members.
- ❖ Equal opportunity is availed to all regardless of their age, gender, race, class or background.
- ❖ Innovation, creativity and imagination are the key guiding lights.

- ❖ Selfless consideration and sacrifice are the cornerstones of service delivery to the community.

I wish to assure you that if you adopt and are guided by these and other similar values and attitudes, you will reap maximum benefits from your stay here at SEKU.

For example, as a student, you must ensure that you do not miss classes without official permission; make full use of our library and other resources. You also need to consult your lecturers as often as the need may arise. By so doing, you will be able to complete your course and attain the best results possible. This is the only way to justify the heavy investment you are making in your university education.

Appreciate early enough the fact that your future is in your hands and that it is really up to you to succeed in making it or failing to realize your dreams. Students who do not have a vision and a dream of what they want to achieve, are like boats without sails in turbulent waters. While concentrating on your studies and pursuing your dream, make excellent use of all the extra-curricular opportunities offered to you by the University. Some of the valuable lessons you will learn from this Institution will occur outside the classroom. You will soon encounter numerous opportunities to get involved in, in this community. Some of you will spend a

considerable amount of time participating either in the University sports teams, volunteering in the community, and the church choir, drama and dance, among other activities. Each of these activities represents important learning opportunities to acquire life skills that will add to the quality of your lives.

As an adult, you must weigh the consequences of your individual and collective actions. What you do individually or collectively will affect your future. As you enroll in SEKU, you have done so as an individual and you are the only one who can protect your future. You should therefore never forget your individuality within the collective and do not let your individuality be swallowed up by the collective. Always think seriously about the consequences, to you as an individual, of collective decisions.

I wish to emphasize that SEKU takes examinations very seriously. Consequently, you are encouraged to carefully read all regulations regarding the conduct of examinations here at South Eastern Kenya University. You need to conduct yourselves properly during all the University examinations but most importantly, never cheat in examinations because cheating leads to discontinuation.

We expect you to keep off trouble. Avoid excessive drinking and undesirable behaviour which is likely to land you into trouble. Many of your loved ones have sacrificed to ensure that you pursue

university education. Honour their sacrifice by behaving responsibly and making the most of this opportunity. HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases are still prevalent. Ensure that you behave responsibly to avoid these self inflicted diseases.

Finally ladies and gentlemen, may I remind you that you need to stay focused on your goal to attain your degree in the shortest time possible. In order to do this, you must plan your time wisely and use all the opportunities and facilities provided effectively. Similarly, when you have concerns to raise, please make use of the laid down channels for doing so and avoid any form of behaviour that may ruin both your studies and your future.

You must have noticed that there is a lot of work going on in the Institution especially in construction. The University is in the process of upgrading its infrastructure to the level of a World class Institution of Higher Learning. Throughout your stay at SEKU, you will witness numerous developments both in the infrastructure and its systems. These facilities are aimed at making the students' stay at the University both comfortable and productive. I urge you to be part of this development as this goal cannot be realized without your contribution. The student body is one of the main components of an Institution. SEKU is incomplete without you.

May I once again thank you for choosing to study at South Eastern Kenya University and assure you of my willingness and readiness to assist you reach your goal of becoming an accomplished scholar. As the University Management, we will continue to improve the Institution's infrastructure and mainstream quality management systems in order to ensure you will get the best of your time as a student of SEKU.

We look forward to teaching and interacting with you during your stay at this Institution. Be proud of your institution as we are proud of you. Make a difference, leave a mark to emulate. Always strive to do what is good. Make this institution a better and more peaceful place.

As you matriculate here today, I look forward to your graduation in four years from now.

Thank you.

Prof Geoffrey M Muluvi,  
Vice-Chancellor  
SEKU