

Address by Professor Way KUO, President

Pro-Chancellor, Chairman and Members of the Council, Honorary Graduates, Honoured Guests, Graduates and Colleagues:

We are gathered here to celebrate CityU's most important day of the year—the students' graduation day.

I am delighted by the presence of so many family members and friends of our graduating students. Let me extend a warm welcome and thank you all for joining us to celebrate this joyous occasion.

As I look around this assembly of fine young people—the professionals of tomorrow—I am overcome by a tremendous sense of satisfaction. I think we all have been very fortunate. CityU has been privileged to have had such bright students. And I am sure you, dear students, are proud to be graduating from a university that is now recognised as one of the leading institutions of learning and research.

The University has probably helped many of you to sharpen your focus on what you want to do with your lives. For just as many of you, it has highlighted the myriad opportunities and choices that are available out there in the big, wide world. As the saying goes, life isn't a bed of roses. But let me assure you, for bright and competent young men and women like you, there is no reason for apprehension. Life is a journey and university education is just one stop. No doubt, the journey you are embarking upon is long. Sometimes it will be rewarding. Sometimes it may be trying. But for the able and the determined, it is always invigorating.

CityU has always placed great emphasis on professional education and research. It has, if I may say so, successfully kept pace with changing times, in terms of curriculum, research and its knowledge base. No matter what your dreams and goals are, whether you plan to study further, join the workforce or undertake research, I, as the head of this vast family, and as a teacher, have aimed to make sure that CityU has equipped each of you to take your next step in life with confidence.

I should also caution you. Your chance of becoming a successful professional, producing creative and innovative work and acquiring leadership status in your chosen careers increasingly depends upon how you adapt to the accelerating process of globalisation. I do not have to stress the significance of globalisation. It will continue to impact the world as a change agent. Change has, in fact, become the only constant in today's fast-moving world. The way in which trade and industry function will continue to change. Technology too. And the structure of markets will change along with other developments. Change should not surprise you. It is the most important characteristic of the world you are stepping into.

I am sanguine about the fact that more than anything else, CityU has prepared you to manage changes influenced by megatrends such as globalisation. You are all too aware of it. It is in your veins. Each of you has grown up in an inexorably connected world. Only by observing trends and anticipating changes will you stay one step ahead, and enjoy the benefits of continuous self-advancement and sustained success.

As one who has lived through changes that would once have seemed incomprehensible, I would encourage you to see farther beyond, beyond Hong Kong and beyond the scope of your professional training. I would ask you to remember that nothing is impossible. Be alert to opportunities and possibilities.

Do not resist change. Drive it.

I am sure you all appreciate the beautiful diversity of cultures CityU has nurtured over the years. Whether the graduates assembled here today are Hong Kongers, mainland Chinese, or international students, each of you has your own rich sense of self and, at the same time, cultural uniqueness. Do not underestimate the importance of your cultural heritage. As you make your mark on the world, you will always be able to draw strength and inspiration from your respective heritages.

As is evident to most of you, after having spent some years on the campus, CityU itself is undergoing a major transformation. Our campus is set to grow by nearly 60 percent over the next few years, with new buildings and facilities that will be a source of pride to both our university community, and the city as a whole. The new buildings will not only benefit students yet to arrive, but will long serve as a source of pride and a sense of belonging for today's graduates and all alumni.

Some years ago, one of my presidential predecessors touched upon the importance of adapting to new conditions willingly and swiftly. In doing so, he drew upon two Chinese proverbs that many among you would have learned as children: 學而後知不足 (Only after you learn will you realise there is much more to learn.) and 自強不息 (Never cease to strengthen yourself.)

The University is your repository of knowledge. When you need reinforcement of knowledge, you can always come back to the University. When you acquire new knowledge, you are also welcome to deposit back to share it with your University. As a knowledge hub for working professionals, CityU stands ready to support you with further studies to help you achieve career breakthroughs and professional fulfillment. We hope that the strong bond between you and CityU will grow ever stronger.

Remember that CityU will always be eager to nurture the binding relationship we have fostered. I would like to stress to each of you that you will forever remain valued members of the university community.

As you pursue your goals and continue through life, it is my hope that you will continue to serve as brand ambassadors for CityU. The University, its students and alumni together form a potent collaborative partnership against a backdrop of the historic rise of greater China and the Asia Pacific region in the global arena.

On this wonderful occasion, I offer my congratulations to your parents, families and loved ones and to all those who have helped you reach this momentous occasion at which you will stand and receive your degree and move on in life. And I congratulate each of you for reaching this joyous point in the journey of your lives.

Thank you and well done.
