

REMARKS
POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS' ORIENTATION
TUESDAY, AUGUST 29, 2017 at 5:30 PM
SCHOOL FOR GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

Campus Coordinator, Professor Eddy Ventose, Senior Assistant Registrar (Graduate Studies & Research), Mr Owen Ellis, Deans and Heads of Departments, faculty and staff of the UWI, Cave Hill Campus, members of the media, new, postgraduate students, a very good evening to all.

I wish to extend a very warm Caribbean/Barbadian/Cave Hill greeting to those of you from outside the region. I wish to extend a very warm welcome to Ms Chanelle Perrier-Telemaque, incoming graduate student from Canada registered in the MSc in Gender and Development programme. If you are from one of our neighbouring Caribbean countries, we are delighted to have you here. To all Barbadian students, welcome home. A most heartfelt Cave Hill shout out to all of you who are now proud members of the Cave Hill community.

Whether you are new to Cave Hill, or you are a returning member of the campus community, whether you are someone who is transitioning from the undergraduate level to do your Master's, or even rejoining us to complete a second postgraduate degree, whether an MPhil or PhD, we are delighted to have you here. We are committed to doing all that is within our power to make your stay with us a mutually satisfying, enjoyable and productive one.

You will be pleased to learn that you are embarking on your new academic journey at a very exciting time. The University of the West Indies has just launched its 2017-2022 Triple A Strategic Plan which has as its goals: access, alignment and agility. These goals will serve as the guiding principles for our Campus as we transform the Cave Hill Campus into a smart campus for the 21st century.

The Smart Campus Initiative is a model for the transformation of the delivery of higher education at the Cave Hill Campus to support national and regional development. It involves transforming:

- Campus facilities and resources.
- Services to students, governments, the private sector research and regional and international institutions, national communities and Caribbean societies.
- A full and comprehensive embrace of e-learning, asynchronous and synchronous delivery of all programmes.
- Revenue earning strategies.

The start of this academic year has also ushered in the UWI's new Vision and Mission Statements. I am appealing to all of you to familiarise yourselves with the new Vision and Mission Statements and to internalize what they mean. You are central to our vision and mission. It is therefore imperative that you join us on our journey to becoming an excellent global university which advances learning, creates knowledge and fosters innovation for the positive transformation of the Caribbean and the wider world.

We live in a rapidly changing society. In order to excel and achieve our goals as a University and as a Campus, we **must** be prepared to embrace change, thereby demonstrating our agility. As a region, we cannot, and will not be left behind. The Cave Hill Campus intends to ensure that the region keeps pace with changes on the global higher education landscape. We intend to achieve this by: revisiting our programme offerings with a view to remaining relevant; enhancing the pedagogical skills and classroom strategies of our faculty; conducting timely quality assurance reviews of our various disciplines; maintaining the accreditation of our institution and seeking international accreditation of all of our disciplines; and by partnering with international universities and other institutions through memoranda of understanding which redound to the benefit of our faculty and students.

Here at Cave Hill we are also committed to the renewal of our infrastructure. The current economic climate forces us to temper our ambitions; however, we will not allow it to destroy our dreams. I often say and do believe that we must not be defined by our circumstances, but must rise to the challenges facing us and use our creative talents to produce new ideas to help facilitate our journey. We will not be defined by our circumstances, but alter these to suit our vision and underscore our relevance.

In 2018 The University of the West Indies will be celebrating its seventieth anniversary, and we intend to be around for a long time to come. We are here to stay. The university takes very seriously its mission to be the catalyst for our

region's development. We will harness our research to partner with governments and the private sector on charting the economic and social change. The application of knowledge gained and skills obtained at the graduate level, including critical thinking skills, have the potential to propel our region's social and economic development. The UWI has to do whatever it takes to come through for our region. If each one of us commits himself or herself to excellent research, we will master our current, difficult economic circumstances.

In our quest to transform the Cave Hill Campus into a smart campus, one of our major initiatives is to rebuild the Faculty of Sciences and Technology and bring it into the 21st century. We note the global trends in the STEM areas, and have a duty to our students and our region to raise the standard of our facilities to support a teaching and learning environment that meets international standards. Another initiative is to offer more online delivery of degree programmes across all faculties.

In keeping with our strategic plan's goal of access, led by Vice Chancellor Sir Hilary Beckles, the UWI has already initiated strategies to enhance its presence on the global stage. Through MOUs, as referenced earlier, and other agreements, our inter-collegiate collaborations on a global scale are growing rapidly. As part of that internationalisation strategy, The UWI has placed renewed emphasis on graduate studies, especially graduate research, as one of the factors that will help to distinguish us in the global academic community. The best known universities throughout the world have earned their reputation because of the

high quality of their research and the way that that research has contributed to improving the quality of life.

The research on which you are setting out or continuing is, therefore, very relevant. Research helps to unearth knowledge, find solutions to societal problems and can create employment and civic opportunities to drive the well-being of our regional economies and societies. Our research across all disciplines, has gained worldwide recognition. Our social science research provides the basis for the formulation of much regional policy.

Here at the Cave Hill Campus we intend to become even more research-intensive and globally-engaged as we seek to deepen involvement in graduate research to solve the social, economic and environmental challenges facing Caribbean communities.

Students, we are well aware that graduate research can be an individual, often lonely journey, and can require you to spend long hours in classrooms, libraries or laboratories. In an attempt to make your experience as comfortable as possible, we have made our graduate facilities here at Paradise Park accessible to you 24/7. You will have access to the facilities at any time of the day or night. The facilities have been outfitted with several amenities to meet your needs. In the Sidney Martin Library, you will also find we have reserved a special section for graduate students. I want you to use that space to hone your writing skills in order to share your research with the public. With your new findings, you can create new products, solve existing problems and make critical contributions to

knowledge, as well as assist faculty in conducting joint research and undertake joint publishing.

In closing, I wish to urge to take a serious approach to your graduate studies, especially your research undertakings. The future of the Caribbean may well rest on the new knowledge that you unearth, especially that which is unique to our Caribbean environment.

I thank all of you for choosing the Cave Hill Campus. Once again, I welcome you into the Cave Hill graduate community and I wish you an engaging, fulfilling and successful academic journey.

Eudine Barriteau, PhD, GCM

August 29, 2017