

THE SPEECH BY THE PRINCIPAL DURING THE 1ST YEAR STUDENTS
ORIENTATION HELD ON 15TH SEPTEMBER 2015 AT THE
GRADUATION SQUARE, RONGO UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

The Deputy Principals

Deans and Directors

Heads of Departments/Sections

Staff and students

Ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning.

Congratulations! On behalf of Rongo University College and on my own behalf, I wish to take this earliest opportunity to congratulate you for the excellent performance in the KCSE examinations that enabled you to gain access to an institution of higher learning. You are among the over sixty thousand students admitted to Kenyan Universities and Constituent Colleges out of the over four hundred and fifty thousand that sat KCSE last year. *But I hesitate to say do not over-congratulate yourself basing on your past performance, for the new battle has already begun. Do not depend too much on what was, for what was is not what is.*

Rongo University College is a multicultural society! Rongo University College is a Constituent College of Moi University. It was established by the Kenyan government in 2012 by upgrading the former Moi Institute of Technology which was a middle level college offering certificate and Diploma. At the time of upgrading MIT, there were only 1,500 students, mainly from the neighboring communities. Today the student population stands at about slightly over 6,000 representing diversity of Kenyan ethnic communities. This makes RUC a multicultural society and a melting-pot for sharing cultures, beliefs and traditions. *It is a market place and a melting-pot where we trade academics, progressive ideas, culture and beliefs. Here we embrace,*

tolerate, accommodate and cherish our cultural diversity while ignoring ethnic jingoists and those with incurable inferiority complexes. In this society or community we set you free to realize your academic potential by sharing facilities made available to you by the government. At RUC we say it is yours to discover!

You are joining a government institution, set up in Migori County by Kenyans to serve all Kenyans irrespective of where one comes from. Rongo University College provides opportunity to all that qualify and would want to study here. The admission to any program is based on academic performance and not on any other consideration.

The long academic journey! I am aware that this has been a hectic week for you as you have been registering, familiarizing yourselves with various facilities and trying to get new friends and acquaintances. Today we provide a cloud of witnesses, to witness over 1,000 new students start on this long academic journey, meant to take 4 years or two years depending on whether your journey is for a degree or diploma. *I hesitate to say that long journeys are fraught with many challenges: challenges of over indulgence, fees payment, love and hate experiences, loss of family members and friends, thieves in hostels, conmen and women, selecting friends, entering wrong competitions on clothes, football matches, chasing after men or*

women who do not need you, jilting or being jilted, difficult examinations or CATs that have no respect for university students!

The list of challenges are endless and remember there are no parents or school teachers to guide, harass or cane those who are already harassed and stressed enough by the challenges of the long journey to certificate, diploma or degree programs. Many of you must be wondering what university life would be like in a world so different from your high school, and living environment so different from that of your family back home. Everyone here belongs, and everyone will find their place. *All you need is to take your armor, wade through the*

myriad of challenges and convert them to opportunities. Success is yours not failure! Wise people change their minds, learn new transforming ideas!

Waiting to be chartered! Ladies and Gentlemen, This University College has been evaluated by the Commission for University Education and is ready for upgrading to a full-fledged university status. The human resource, infrastructural and library and ICT facilities were evaluated and found to be adequate and meets the minimum criteria for a ward of charter. RUC is awaiting to be

chartered to a full-fledged university any time from now. *Long live RUC.*

Exemplary Performance! RUC has performed exemplary well over the last 3 years. The University College has graduated over 600 students. Even just three years since its establishment, RUC has obtained respectable position in the national and global ranking of Universities and Constituent Colleges. This strong improvement is due to the quality of the students we admit, the quality of the academic staff the University engages, the quality of learning and teaching resources that the university avails to staff and students including the quality of

the learning environment and services enjoyed by our staff and students.

In music festival, it emerged *first place in Luo Sacred folk song, and Second places in Choral poem, Shairi la Kikundi and Taarab Music.* Overall, the RUC emerged position *3* out of *20* Universities and University Colleges.

Through automation we have improved our service delivery in finance, and other key areas of the institution such as examinations, admissions among others.

It is my belief therefore, that in pursuit of your academic goals, you will play your role in uplifting the standards of this great University College.

Peace and Security in and outside the University! Study in the university needs a peaceful environment where insecurity threat is not a problem. Unfortunately in this Country of-late Kenyans have witnessed growing insecurity. This has happened in secondary schools, communities, universities, in churches and many more. *It is individual's responsibility to keep peace, report any extraordinary behavior that can interfere with peace. Report to the government*

security apparatus, University college administration, security department, fellow students. Kenyans and by the same token Rongo University students, let us avoid predisposing ourselves to risky undertakings, so no to violence and be ambassadors of peace. The University College has put some measures in place for your security. Support the move to secure the University College.

Pieces of advice! *Be diligent and follow your passion, do not gamble and do not follow others blindly!* Follow things that catch your imagination. If there is something you really want to do, some

curiosity that you want to pursue, make sure that you do it, and don't let anything stand in your way.

- **Seek guidance from staff, friends!** The University College staff are here for you. There is no more important responsibility for any of us than teaching and working with you and helping you to attain your goal in life. I promise you that you will find schools very willing to respond to your interests, to your curiosity, and to your invitations. Do not feel that you are ever wasting anyone's time pursuing your curiosity or your interest. That is what we are all here for.

- **Be prepared always!** *Be always in the lookout and prepared for opportunities that may arise in your environment. For luck is when opportunities meet preparedness.* This is an extraordinary, rich, and diverse community. There are enormous opportunities of all kinds -- extracurricular, athletic, and social. Those experiences will have a huge impact on many of you. But I hope that none of you will lose sight of how special this time in your life is. It's a time to learn. It's a time to expose yourself to ideas that are completely different from what you have done, seen, or perhaps what you will see.

- **Remember you will always be responsible for your actions!** *Unfortunately, choices and actions have consequences. Avoid over indulgence of any nature!* University life will accord you a lot of freedom which most of you may not have experienced. This freedom comes with its own social risks. *I implore you to keep off activities that will not add value to your future life. Such activities include: use of drugs, sex, even eating beyond your means, spendthrift, HIV/ AIDS pandemic among others.*
- **Seek Providence Intervention!** *All believers have faith in God's providence. For it is written, seek yee first the kingdom of God and all you need or aspire will be given to, for if the ravens of*

the earth are provided for, how much more will God provide for us HIS children!

With those many remarks, I wish you the most fulfilling and rewarding experience at this great University College.

Thank you for your undivided attention

Professor Samuel Gudu, PhD, EBS
Principal Rongo University College.