

Dunong at Paglilingkod
Pambungad na Pananalita sa KAPP Araw ng Pagkilala, 25 Hulyo 2020
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Mga mahal kong mag-aaral na magsisipagtapos sa CSSP sa makasaysayang taon ng 2020.

Nakikiisa kami na inyong mga guro sa kaligayahan ninyo at ng inyong mga magulang sa inyong pagtatapos sa kolehiyo. Ito ang araw ng inyong tagumpay.

Sa kabila ng kasiyahan sa pagtatapos, marahil ang isip ninyo ngayon ay puno ng ligalig at pangamba, puno ng pagtatanong at pagkatakot. Kung ano ang mundo na inyong gagalawan pagkatapos nito, kung handa ba kayo sa bagong kalagayan ng lipunan, kung naihanda ba kayo ng iyong pag-aaral para sa bagong realidad na kasalukuyang nagaganap.

Hindi lamang ito dahil sa bagong realidad dulot ng pandemya, ito rin ang realidad ng mga bagong kaganapan. Ngayong taon ang simula ng dekada ng mga batang matatanda, ang henerasyon naming mga boomers na young old, na magdudulot ng malawakang pagbabago sa ekonomiya at kultura. Isa pa, sa kabila ng paglawak ng sariling pahayag sa social media, lalo namang kumitid ang ating malayang pamamahayag. Gayundin, sa higit na paglaganap ng interconnectivity, lalong tumingkad ang pagkawala ng ugnayan sa kapwa. At sa kabila ng pag-unlad ng mundo, kalahati ng populasyon nito ay nasa ilalim ng mga autokratikong rehimen. At tayo naman, ang ipinaglabang demokrasya ay kusang lumalapit sa isang bansang siyang pinakamakapangyarihang diktadurya sa buong mundo na nangunguna sa paglabag sa karapatang pantao at sa ating soberanya.

Ang bawat henerasyon ay may sarili niyang kasaysayan, at ito ang sa inyo ngayon. Ito ang mga hamon na maaaring magdudulot ng malaking agam-agam sa inyo.

Ibabahagi ko sa inyo ang ilang pinagdaanan ng ating kolehiyo sa nakaraang apat na buwan.

The decisions we had to make during the lockdown were difficult and agonized because we were likewise going through uncharted territory, a time of a novel crisis accompanied by the objective fear of catching the new coronavirus. We were beset by conflicting ideas and competing demands in our academic and administrative duties: the clamor to end the semester immediately; the call to revise the course learning outcomes and requirements, the necessity to institute an inclusive and compassionate academic assessment, the need to redesign the targets and outputs in an abnormal work from home environment; the need to help the college personnel who were under the no work, no pay conditions, and to reinforce a threatened healthcare system by raising up our own community quarantine facility. While all around us the threat to democracy was growing most evidenced by the attacks against media and free expression.

In other words, we all experienced the challenge of education in all its urgency and immediacy that at its very core raised the question about the nature and purpose of a UP education.

It was in our individual and collective response where we displayed the full strength of our mandate as the national university, as konsensiya ng bayan, as iskolar ng bayan. There were no sure models, no firm assurances on the steps we were to take. We went by the

enduring values that we hold deep and believe in, to make sense and judgment of the questions we were all confronting, and to remain coherent in our response and true to our history of honor, excellence, and service. It is captured by our theme for this recognition ceremony: *dunong at paglilingkod*.

Our integrity as persons, as citizens who are academics and scholars, is found in *dunong at paglilingkod*. We do not simply gather data, for learning goes beyond knowledge. That is what we did as a college and as a university: gather the facts, evaluate the information, learn new skills, collaborate with others, and then act in the best interest of the community. It explains the choice of our keynote speaker today.

That is the conviction and the disposition that your education in the social sciences and philosophy has sought to instill in you these past four years. That the goal of information is formation, because the summit of learning is service.

It is the formation of the conscience and a heart for service.

That is how we renewed ourselves and charted new territory as well. When we called for help for the custodial workers, CSSP security guards, and the stranded construction workers, you donated a total sum that exceeded our hopes. Faculty members came to bring donations, staff members cooked meals for our guards. A student brought in a truckload of vegetables, and a student assistant after receiving the small honorarium of an SA, gave a hundred pesos for the guards. Such an outpouring of generosity, *dunong at paglilingkod*. Staff and faculty members even adopted the stray cats. And Palma Hall, our noble building that in February was at the center of Diliman's remembrance of the 50th anniversary of the first quarter storm, transformed into a community quarantine health facility by April. In the midst of all that, we issued a call for the release of the UP students, among them from CSSP, who were detained while engaging in civic work in a barangay. We took a decisive college position against the anti-terrorism bill then at the cusp of becoming a law.

All these show how our scholarship is responsive, engaged, and committed. You are, too.

We your teachers affirm, you have received the best education, the best preparation, the best exposure to discourse, inquiry, community and society. The years you went through to reach this day were tough, rough, and yes, even painful. But they were also fun because there is joy in triumph over struggles, in growth and discovery. Discovery of skills, potentials, abilities, and lifelong friends.

CSSP has served as your home for the past four years, the place of integral development where the foundation is *dunong at paglilingkod*.

So we your teachers bid you, do not be afraid, for you did not receive an education to develop a spirit of fear but of daring, not a spirit of timidity but of passion, bravery, and selflessness.

You are *iskolar ng bayan*. You are *anak ng bayan*. You are *konsensiya ng bayan*. Become what you are. *Naghihintay ang bayan*.

Our hopes and our prayers are with you. Now go.

Maraming salamat.