

President's address to incoming students Class of 2024-25

- Good morning.
- Welcome RHU
- I am excited to see you here.
- There is a reason I asked to meet this incoming class.
- There is a special affinity between you and me I am an incoming President, and you are the incoming students. How about that? That is something!
- My friends, I am full of hope that in due time, you and I will shake hands again on the big stage as I hand you your graduation diploma.
- Before we got started, we got to know one another. I am asking all the students to rise, shake hands and introduce yourself to the person to your right, left, in front and at the back. You just made four friends.
- Now the barriers are down, we know each other,

- I want to share with you a learning encounter which took place many years ago.
- It taught me a lesson.
- A lesson about life and how one should become.
- The incident took place at Heathrow airport (that is in London) as I was switching terminals on my way to the US.
- I visited the restroom for a quick stop

There, I observed a formally dressed person washing his hands, grabbing a couple of napkins, drying his hands then wiping the sink, the faucet into spotless clean.

- I asked him What triggers you to do that?
- He looked me in the eye and smiled, then said Son:
- It is not a bad idea to leave things better than you found them.
- He through his paper towels in the bin and walked away.
- I dried my hands then for the first time I did myself cleaning the sink.
- It made an impact on me, and then I began thinking
- What would our world look like if every thing we left, we left it a bit better than we found it?
- I want to ask you.
- Did Prime Minister Rafik Hariri leave this country better than he found it?
- Did he make an impact?
- We all should learn from the actions of our founder.
- We should plan to make an impact.

Dear Students

While at RHU, you all have an obligation to learn, to study, to succeed to impact your surroundings and to leave the place better than what you found it.

- Before I get started, I want to introduce you to a few distinguished individuals who are at the leadership of RHU.
- As I call the name of the Provost, the VPs, and the deans, please rise so that the students would know you by name and by face.
- Provost Halablab
- VP Finance and Administration Mr. Akkawi
- VP Development and IT Mr. Kobrosli
- Now, I will introduce the RHU deans:
- Dean of College of Business Administration Dr. Hammoud
- Dean of College of Engineering Dr. Hijazi.
- Dean of College of Arts and Sciences Dr. Salameh
- If you have any academic issues, challenges, or concerns, the deans and the VPs, the provost and myself, we all have an open door policy, and we will be delighted to see you and help to get acquainted with RHU.

My message to you is four-fold.

1. **Academic**
2. **Professional Mindset**
3. **Technical skills**
4. **Social Skills**

1 Academic

- Do not miss classes.
- Study hard.
- Study daily.
- Take notes in class.
- Review your notes daily.
- Prepare for your exams at least two weeks ahead of time.
- Submit your assignments on time.
- Do not miss classes (cost of missing a week of classes = \$210).
- Take your education seriously.
- We at RHU take your education very seriously.

On the subject of you being human.

- That is why your colleges and your programs are accredited.

Assume leadership and responsibility for your life and your career.

- Never show up late. Showing up on time means that you are late.
- Got to show up at least 15 minutes ahead of time.
- **Now, before I move to item two, I want all the students to rise, raise your right hand,**
- Repeat after me.
- I will not miss class
- I will not be late for class
- I will take notes in class
- I will submit all my assignments on time.
- I will succeed
- I am determined to graduate on time.
- **Now you have no excuse. You have stated the oath in the presence of the deans and the provost.**
- *I am sure that you would not get any sympathy if you were to break the oath.*

2 **PROFESSIONAL Mind Set**

- Know your advisor. Look at the person next to you, and ask yourself how much he/she knows about life or college education. Can you take her advice?
- Visit your advisor,
- Visit your course instructor as frequently as possible.
- Develop a personal rapport and relationship with your advisor.
- Make sure that he/she knows by name.
- Your advisor knows the ins and out of higher education, curriculum, jobs, etc.
- Your fellow classmate is NOT a reliable source of information for you or about RHU.
- He/she may provide an opinion. Opinions are not based on facts. It is just a hunch or a gut feeling.
- Do you want to build your career on assumptions or facts?
- Now you know how important it is to go to your advisor.
- Make sure to ask about training opportunities, summer internships, and summer jobs. Your advisor knows people he/she could place you.
- We have lots of events on **campus (Silver Anniversary).**
- Make sure to attend

On the subject of you being human.

- Make sure to mingle, introduce yourself to the invited speakers he may offer you a job.
 - **I want you to get into the habit of visiting the library.**
 - Make sure to go there. Check out the most recent books in your area of study.
 - Get yourself into the habit of doing extracurricular weekend reading.
 - This is a sure way to develop yourself.
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- **Read, my dear read.**
 - What Gabriel told the prophet, "Read".
 - He did not say chill around campus
 - What did he say?
 - So you read as well.

3 Technical Skills

- Do not waste your time.
- Make sure to have a summer job. An internship.
- If you cannot find a job, volunteer.
- Do not sit idle.

Assuming

I have a company and I want to recruit people:

- Two candidates applied for the open position:

Candidate A:

Question: What did you do this summer?

Answer: Not much, woke up late, slept late, went to the beach, some partying, one trip abroad. Just enjoyed my time.

Candidate B:

What did you do this Summer?

- Well, my friends and I recognized that our local beach needs some cleanup. We asked the municipality if we could volunteer and clean the beach twice a week.
- We cleaned the beach twice a week.
- Since a couple of our friends are into music, we also decided to form a band and visit nursing homes, orphanages and play music for home residents.
- I tell you our activities were well received, and we were recognized by the local authorities.
- Now I am asking you all which candidate you would like to hire.
- Candidate A or Candidate B?

On the subject of you being human.

4 Social Skills:

- Find a way to get along with people.
- You do not have to like everybody you meet, but you have to have the appropriate soft skills to succeed in life.
- In life, you do not choose your boss.
- You must get along with your boss.
- Now it the time to experiment and develop all needed skill sets to survive the future.
- **Consider your journey at RHU as an experimental exercise to develop your skills.**
- Be human.
- Be transparent
- Be sensitive
- Understand others.
- Respect others.
- Appreciate people for who they are
- Appreciate and embrace differences.
- If someone does things in a way that differs from the way that you do things.
- Say hum, that is how you do things? Interesting.

Do not say.

- Your way is wrong.
- Mine is the only way, and it is the right way.
- Do not be judgmental.

In conclusion.

- Embrace change
- Celebrate your success and that of others.
- Savor the moment. You will cherish it for years to come
- Your brain is your best asset. Make sure to develop it. Nurse the talent within you.
- Good days are waiting for you.
- I will not take any more of your time.
- Thank you for being here, and I wish you all the best.

On the subject of you being human.