

Graduation Speech

Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor, distinguished guests, fellow graduates, University Staff and guests. On behalf of the graduates receiving their awards today, I would like to thank a range of people who have played major parts in our journey, from first-day students here at the university, to today, as graduating students.

Firstly, the staff of the university. Tutors, lecturers and all the other various university staff. You have instilled in us a passion for learning, and provided us with valuable guidance and support that played a major role in us being here today. The countless hours of preparation and extra assistance you offered, is definitely something that has not gone unnoticed, and on behalf of us as graduates, I offer great thanks and appreciation to all of you who have been a vital part of our journey here.

I would also like to acknowledge all our families, friends and significant others. These are the people that have seen the many sides of a university student, who have been beside us throughout all the obstacles a University Degree throws at you and supported us throughout the duration of our studies. Many of these people have been with us since that very first day of school, during our secondary schooling, our VCE, and now today, where we have completed something that has given us the knowledge and skills we need to move into the next chapter of our lives.

Some people who are graduating today have completed some of their studies in other locations both within Australia, and throughout the world, or have moved from other places, to this Mt Helen campus. Many of us today have graduated from very different courses to one another, but we all have something in common, we all have the ability to take control and look forward to whatever our futures have in store for us, we are all graduating students of Federation University in 2016.

So where to from here? The answer to that question is as varied as the students who make up this year's graduating class. Many of us know (or claim to know) exactly the next step to take, whether that step is an internship, a full-time job, further study, or even a backpacking trip through Europe. Others, will tell you they have no idea. As one door closes, that of our university degree, many others will now open. But there is no doubt that opportunities will come knocking. Whatever we decide, most of us will agree that Federation University was a perfect place to foster our minds and bodies in this critical learning phase.

Famous inventor Thomas Edison once said "If we achieved everything we were capable of, we would astound ourselves". Today we stand here as graduates, achieving a goal that we have worked towards for numerous years. But it is important for us to aim for continual improvement and utilise the skills we have gained to become valued members of society. This mindset of constant improvement can also help inspire and lift those around us to achieve great things. We can achieve many brilliant things, if we set our minds to it.

Fellow graduates, before you leave today and embark on the next part of your journey, I urge you to take a moment to reflect on your time at University and the journey you have been on. How do you want to be remembered? What marks have you left? Consider the many hours of work you have put in, the changes and challenges you have had to go through just to be here, and all the great people you have come into contact with. These times have allowed us to be where we are today. We should all leave here today with our heads held high, feeling accomplished and proud of ourselves for what we have achieved during our time at Federation University.

I'll leave you with something an influential person both to myself and many others here at the university once said, 'if you have found something you enjoy doing and are truly passionate about, than you will never have to work a day in your life'.