

Good Morning, Ladies and Gentlemen, Colleagues and Friends:

It is a great pleasure to add my welcome to that of our University's President, His Excellency Sheikh Nahayan, as we celebrate the beginning of our 12th year as one of the premier universities in our region. I am confident that again this year we will achieve new heights in our pursuit of excellence.

I am especially pleased to welcome those of you who are returning to Zayed University and I hope that you had a refreshing and renewing summer. It is your work that so enriches the lives and education of our students.

And to those of you who are joining us for the first time, welcome. You are now part of this dynamic university and we look forward to the many ways that you will contribute to the intellectual wealth of Zayed University.

I am also very pleased to welcome Dr. Karen Holbrook and to thank her for that inspiring address. You have given us much to think about as we continue to develop and expand Zayed University. I know that your remarks will inform our discussions over the next few days and continue to challenge us during the entire academic year. Thank you.

Friends and Colleagues:

Earlier this morning our President, His Excellency Sheikh Nahayan, described the five **core values** that guide the development of the university. He also reminded us of the seven **strategic priorities** that he gave us last year. The core values must continue to guide us in planning for the future of Zayed University while we continue to respond to the seven initiatives. I ask that you carefully read Sheikh Nahayan's address which will soon be on our website. During this year we will continually refer to those items as we, collectively, use these initiatives in planning and action.

One of Sheikh Nahayan's seven priorities is the development and implementation of a strategic plan for the second decade of Zayed University. Last spring we began this work by developing the "**Destined to Lead**" document. This document contains a collection of ideas and initiatives to consider, sort out, prioritize and begin to implement. I expect that this work will be one of our highest priorities for this year. It will also be both challenging and rewarding.

Later today, Provost Dan Johnson will discuss in more detail some of the ideas in the "Destined to Lead" document. I will therefore limit my remarks to only four of the key items from Sheikh Nahayan's address. I stress that these items are essential to "**Enhancement of the Student Experience**" that His Excellency discussed this morning.

First—Our commitment to academic excellence and creation of a world class university must remain foremost in everything we do. Through focus on our Learning Outcomes, Core Values, and Strategic Priorities, we will continue to

advance Zayed University. Through our assessment programs, we will continue to monitor our accomplishments, making improvements wherever necessary.

Second—I want to stress the importance of the fourth Core Value that Sheikh Nahayan identified this morning: **Integrity, Open Mindedness and Tolerance**. A key component of integrity is for students to understand and incorporate in all aspects of their behavior the highest standards of academic honesty. As Sheikh Nahayan said, students must take “**responsibility to act against all forms of dishonesty and cheating or other such behavior.**”

As His Excellency asked us this morning, we will develop and put into practice an honor code by the end of the fall semester. However, I want to caution that promoting academic honesty will require far more than simply approving a document or expecting that the Office of Student Affairs can and will change student attitudes and behavior. While Student Affairs can assist in out-of-the-classroom development, ultimately it is faculty commitment to the elimination of academic dishonesty that will carry the day. Consequently, I expect the faculty, collectively, to address this matter. I have great faith in each of you to help us deal with this problem.

Third—This year Provost Johnson has organized a “**Conversation on Leadership**” which will engage the entire university in discussing the role of leadership studies and development at Zayed University. This will be a very important discussion as “**Leadership and the Public Good**” and “**Enrichment of the Student Experience**” were emphasized by Sheikh Nahayan this morning, and leadership has been one of our **Learning Outcomes** since the University’s founding.

The formal leadership program at Zayed University began by establishing a relationship with the Athena Foundation in the United States. While the Athena Foundation provided a mentoring opportunity for our students with successful women in the United States, we soon realized that we needed to expand and develop the program internally. Under the guidance of several dedicated ZU faculty, we began to offer leadership development workshops and seminars involving our faculty and students. The “**Women as Global Leaders**” conference was created to give our students direct and extensive contacts with students from around the world. Many of those relationships continue to this day.

However, we have now reached a point where we need to re-examine the leadership development program offered to our students. We need to explore how we can ensure that all students have the opportunity to expand their understanding of leadership and develop their skills to best serve their own futures as well as that of our country.

I am hopeful that this year’s “Conversation on Leadership” will be informative, inspirational and inclusive as various leadership theories are explored and ideas developed to enrich the leadership program at Zayed University.

Fourth—I want to emphasize the importance of research, service and community outreach. Again, these items are included in Sheikh Nahayan's strategic priorities.

As a public university, we have the responsibility to work with government and the private sector. Together, we must identify national needs and priorities and develop programs and initiatives to address them. Already faculty and students at Zayed University have contributed to achievement of national priorities. I expect that we will increase our commitment to these goals.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Friends and Colleagues:

I want to close by reiterating Sheikh Nahayan's emphasis on teamwork as the one overriding requirement for accomplishing our goals and objectives. Working together to meet challenges, pursue opportunities, and solve problems is essential if we are to make Zayed University the leading institution of higher learning in our region.

Teamwork is, indeed, one of the essential ingredients for our success. It requires open communications between faculty and staff, and a management style that makes effective use of teams for planning, assessment, and establishing academic criteria. It also calls for an environment in which dedication and hard work are valued and rewarded --- one in which individual initiatives are expected and encouraged. Today, I pledge to you that I will continue to work with all of you in order to encourage and maintain these elements of teamwork and effectiveness in the operation of our university.

I welcome all of you, once again. I thank you for the many contributions that you make to the development of Zayed University. My best wishes to everyone for a successful academic year.

Thank you.