

**ADDRESS BY THE VICE-CHANCELLOR AT THE 2ND SESSION OF THE 4TH
CONGREGATION CEREMONY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MEDIA, ARTS
AND COMMUNICATION (UniMAC)**

© Salutations

The Director-General of GTEC,
Chair and Members of the Governing Council,
The Pro Vice-Chancellor,
Rectors of UniMAC's Constituent Institutes,
Ag. Registrar,
Deans, Directors and Institute Registrars
Distinguished Faculty,
Staff of UniMAC,
Honoured Guests,
Proud Parents and Families,
Friends from the Media,
And most importantly, our Distinguished Master's Graduands,
Everyone, Good morning.

© Opening

It is with great pride and a profound sense of accomplishment that I welcome you to the 2nd Session of the 4th Congregation of the University of Media, Arts and Communication (UniMAC). Today's ceremony is dedicated to celebrating the academic excellence, resilience, and scholarly achievements of our postgraduate graduands, who have distinguished themselves through advanced study, research, and professional development. We take particular pride in your contributions to knowledge production and to the advancement of media, arts, culture, and communication in Ghana and beyond. congratulations!

Chairman, I stand before you to deliver an account of the state of our university and the transformations since the 1st Session of the 4th Congregation on our collective journey to excellence.

© **Graduating Statistics of Master's Class of 2026**

Today, we graduate students who have distinguished themselves in various Master's programmes of this university. A total of two hundred and fourteen (214) students would be awarded Master degrees at this 2nd session of the 4th congregation. Out of this total, we are graduating 128 females, representing 60% of the graduating class and 86 males, representing 40% of the graduation class, into an evolving world of communication impact.

Key Achievements at UniMAC since the First Session

➤ **Migration of Staff**

Chairman, since I was entrusted with the responsibility of serving as Vice-Chancellor in May 2024, our collective focus as management has been consolidation, clarity, and advancement. I am pleased to inform this august gathering that our institutional migration of staff unto the single spine payroll officially took effect at the end of January 2026. This marks a significant milestone in our journey as a unified and fully integrated university.

I am particularly excited about this good news. Like every major transition, it has come with a few operational challenges. Let me assure everyone that these challenges are being addressed with diligence, transparency, and utmost urgency.

➤ **New Academic Programmes**

We are strengthening governance at UniMAC, and we are deepening academic standards. We are therefore positioning ourselves not only as a teaching university but also as a research-driven institution. The launch of our PhD programme in Communication and Media Studies signalled that intention clearly. It declared that UniMAC will not only disseminate knowledge, but we will also generate it.

And as part of advancing our research depth and interdisciplinary strength, I am pleased to announce that we have introduced additional postgraduate programmes, and these programmes are at various stages of accreditation at GTEC. They reflect our

understanding of the contemporary world, a world where language, creativity, and commerce intersect; where storytelling, culture, and enterprise must speak to each other fluently.

➤ **Post Graduate Admissions for 2026**

On the heels of enhancing our post graduate programmes, I am happy to announce that we made steady and incremental progress in our admissions into various postgraduate programmes with a 58% total increase over the 2025 admissions at a figure of 462. The breakdowns are as follows: PhD in Media and Communications - 24; MPhil programmes - 28, Masters programmes - 410. The percentage of females to males is still disproportionate at UniMAC with females making 58% and the males make 42%.

➤ **Partnerships & Collaborations**

At the 1st Session of the 4th Congregation, I detailed out a catalogue of collaborations, partnerships and Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) that UniMAC signed. Building on that achievement, I am happy to announce that our university continues to attract partnerships for the advancement of teaching and learning. This year, we have signed an MoU with Sputnik News Agency of Russia. In an era where information shapes policy, the collaboration with Sputnik empowers African voices to reach a global stage through authentic storytelling. This partnership seeks to leverage Sputnik's network, not just to import expertise, but to equip our students and faculty with the tools to share our continent's narrative with professional integrity.

Significantly also, we have partnered with YFM Ghana to bridge the gap between academic training and the professional media industry. This collaboration focuses on providing students with internships, practical experience, and career opportunities in broadcasting and the creative arts to strengthen Ghana's media landscape.

➤ **Unified UniMAC Student Representative Council (SRC)**

Chairman of Council, as a lifelong student of political communication and a past students' leader, one of the nightmares I often had was the fact that we did not have a UniMAC Student Representative Council (SRC). Today, I am happy to announce that we have successfully conducted SRC elections and have sworn in the first UniMAC SRC.

This is a big feather in our cap as UniMAC and we must be proud of this achievement. At our executive management meeting with the UniMAC SRC, it was exciting to hear the SRC articulate their innovative plans for unity and progress of this University. Although, autonomous, management has assured them of our unwavering support in their tenure.

On this note, I congratulate the Dean of Students and all who supported in diverse ways to elect and swear in the first UniMAC SRC.

➤ Workshops & Webinars

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, since the last congregation, we have held a number of inter-faculty workshops and seminars. The Faculty of Applied Languages at the Institute of Languages, held an Inter-faculty workshop that examined how social media advertising of gamified sports betting influences the financial motivation of GenZs, with a focus on students in public universities. The research, led by Rev. Yaw Odame Gyau, Dean of the Faculty of Applied Languages at the Institute of Languages noted that, *“Greed and a feeling of insatiability have become direct predictors of staking and re-staking due to the influx of promo codes and financial incentives presented in online betting advertisements.”* As communicators, it is important how we project the communication around Gaming for social impact.

Additionally, we held a seminar that sought to interrogate research conducted at UniMAC on the topic, *“Terminologization, Determinologization, and Translanguaging: Pure linguistic aesthetics or useful pedagogical tools for effective communication?”* This seminar, led by Dr. Samson Dodzi Fenuku, Dean of the School of Translation and Bilingual Business Studies, examined how introducing technical terms clearly, simplifying difficult concepts, and allowing students to use multiple languages in class can enhance learning.

I am grateful to the Directorate of Research, Innovation and Outreach for these impactful lectures and I challenge faculty to conduct more research and bring out innovative solutions to promote media, arts and communication in Ghana.

Chairman, in operationalising the Centre for Gender and Communication Research here at UniMAC, the Centre organised a Breakfast Workshop for female faculty on the theme, “Working Together; Rising Together.” The workshop brought together women in academia at UniMAC around the table to share experiences, build networks, and foster stronger collaboration. As a university with a female to male ratio of 3:1, the event reinforced the importance of unity, mentorship, and mutual support among women in academia; a role modelling for our female students to strive to greater heights in their academic quests.

➤ **International Day Celebrations at UniMAC**

As a university steeped in excellence with a global outreach, international day celebrations afford us the opportunity to speak to the themes and frame narratives around them from students-faculty perspectives. We have celebrated two international days that impact our university. The first is the International Men’s Day Celebrations, ably led by the Centre for Gender and Communication Research with a webinar on the theme, “The Pressure to Be Tough: Men and Masculinities in Ghana.” The Director at the Centre, Dr. Obeng-Hinneah highlighted the pressure around performance and capability, explaining that society often measures masculinity by success, provision, physical strength, and sexual or reproductive ability. These expectations, she noted, can create anxiety, shame, and strained relationships when men feel they fall short.

The Second, the World Radio Day, was celebrated at UniMAC by the School of Journalism and Media Studies on the theme, “Radio and Artificial Intelligence: The Future of Media Practice in Ghana.” The celebration saw academics, media practitioners, students, and policy leaders converge at UniMAC, to discuss how Artificial Intelligence is reshaping radio broadcasting and journalism in Ghana. The Dean of the School, Prof. Etse Sikanku, emphasised that while Artificial Intelligence may support media operations, it cannot replace the human voices that shape radio broadcasting.

The University also celebrated the International Women’s Day, 2026 with a creatively produced video from the Directorate of Public Affairs that speaks to the theme of the celebrations, “Rights. Justice. Action. For ALL Women and Girls”. We can only

defend, enforce, and fully exercise the rights of women and girls, by dismantling structural barriers, such as discriminatory laws and harmful social norms. I am therefore happy that as a university we have in place ‘Anti -Sexual Harassment’ and ‘Gender, Disability and Social Inclusion’ policies in place to safeguard our women as we proudly celebrate them.

➤ **Implementation of UniMAC Policies**

Chairman, distinguished ladies and gentlemen, we are grateful for the Council’s approval of nine (9) policies for implementation. To operationalise these policies and to ensure that the university community is fully aware of the tenets of these policies, this year, we have appointed Focal Persons to ensure the full operationalisation of the policies. We have also instituted webinars dubbed, “Webinars on UniMAC Policies.” Through these webinars, the Focal Persons lead discussions on these policies offering a platform for the university to ask questions, clarify facts and gain clarity on how to function as a university within the scope of the policies. The webinars have so far been insightful and we are encouraged to continue doing so for all policies approved at UniMAC.

➤ **Appointments and Reshuffle for a Stronger Unified UniMAC**

Ladies and Gentlemen, to fully integrate as a holistic University requires organisational culture adaption and evolution across UniMAC’s three Constituent Institutes. In doing so, nine (9) new appointments have been made within the university that aimed at reshuffling key human resource for the operational efficiency of our university. These reshuffling include the Institute Registrars, Finance team and Internal Auditors in the university, who play a key fiduciary role in safeguarding our resources as we advance as a university of great repute.

➤ **Loss, the Transience of Life**

Whilst we celebrate our achievements and plan for a better future, we were made to pause, reflect and put in place measures for the safety of the university community. Early in the year, we lost one of our students - Mr. Nelson Blay Narkotey. A Level 300

Top-Up Journalism student described by many as brilliant and dedicated, with a budding career in media. Nelson Blay Narkotey's tragic and untimely death was as a result of a fatal knock-down accident involving a hit-and-run driver, while returning from campus. UniMAC was with the family throughout the period and travelled to Somanya to give him an honourable burial. May Nelson's soul continue to journey into higher glory.

Chairman, clearly, Nelson's death speaks to the fact that our roads are not safe for pedestrians and especially students of UniMAC who have to sometimes brave-up and cross the N1 just to attend to lectures.

I therefore make this passionate appeal to His Excellency John Dramani Mahama, through the well-meaning municipal authorities, security agencies, transport and road safety institutions, and the local government bodies, to review and implement enhanced road safety measures within and around our South Legon Campus. **We need a footbridge to safeguard the lives of our students and the larger community, and to prevent future accidents' occurrences.**

© **Our Challenges and Prospects**

Ladies and gentlemen, for some time now, student accommodation has been one of the pressing challenges confronting our university community. Access to safe, affordable and proximate housing is not a luxury, it is foundational to academic success.

It is, therefore, my pleasure to announce that through the strong support of Government, construction work has officially commenced on a 400-bed capacity student hostel facility at our East Legon campus. We are grateful for the partnership and support that has made this possible. And, we remain committed to pursuing additional solutions that will further address accommodation and student welfare needs.

© **Graduates at the Precipice of History Making**

And now, to you, our Master's graduands! You have navigated rigorous academic demands, evolving technological landscapes, and the shifting realities of higher education in our time.

You have proven that you can do more than consume information. You can analyse it. You can question it. You can transform it.

Some of you have produced research addressing misinformation and digital ethics. Some have explored development communication and public engagement. Others have interrogated the creative industries and the economics of storytelling. Each thesis you defended contributes to a larger intellectual conversation about how societies communicate and how they grow.

Technology will evolve. Platforms will change. Artificial intelligence will become more sophisticated. But there is one asset that must remain constant, your integrity and care for humanity.

Never forget that your voice can build or break, unite or divide, enlighten or inflame. Choose always to build. Choose always to enlighten.

As you leave this ceremony, do not leave UniMAC behind; carry it with you. In the boardrooms and newsrooms, in studios and lecture halls, in ministries and creative enterprises, because your conduct will reflect this institution. Let your professionalism speak eloquently. Let your scholarship command respect. Let your humility invite collaboration.

If there is one message, I hope remains with you long after the applause fades, it is this: **Excellence is not an event; it is a habit. Today is an event. What you do from tomorrow will define your habit.**

Rise, therefore, not only when your name is called, but in every space you enter. Rise in competence. Rise in courage. Rise in credibility.

Go forth and shape conversations that elevate our nation and our continent. Go forth and demonstrate that a UniMAC graduate does not merely follow trends, a UniMAC graduate sets standards.

© Acknowledgements of support

To our parents and families, today is your day as well. Behind every graduate seated here is a network of sacrifice. You invested resources. You offered encouragement. You

exercised patience. You believed in the value of advanced education in a time when distractions are many and discipline is rare. Thank you for entrusting us with your sons and daughters. The pride you feel today is well earned.

To the families who sacrificed, the parents who prayed, the spouses who managed the home front, the children who shared their parent with the demands of academia—we see you, and we thank you. This achievement is yours as much as theirs!

To my colleagues in faculty and all UniMAC staff, I extend my deepest appreciation. Academic excellence is not accidental. It is the product of supervision that is thorough, assessment that is rigorous and mentorship that is intentional. You demanded clarity in research questions. You insisted on methodological precision. You upheld ethical standards. Because of you, the degrees we confer today carry integrity, thank you.

© Conclusion

UniMAC, we are unique! We will continue to challenge the status quo until media, arts and communication education's relevancy is proudly projected, amplified and screened across the length and breath of Ghana, West Africa for the world to appreciate the impact we make.

On behalf of the Governing Council, management, faculty and staff of the University of Media, Arts and Communication, I congratulate you wholeheartedly. May your knowledge remain sharp, your creativity bold and your character unwavering. And, may your words be true and your impact be profound.

Congratulations!

God bless us all. God bless UniMAC. And, God bless the Republic of Ghana.

Thank you.

Prof. Eric Opoku Mensah

Vice-Chancellor

