



Henrik C. Wegeners tale til de nye studerende på Københavns Universitet

Taler

Henrik Caspar Wegener
Rektor ved Københavns
Universitet

Dato

27. august 2021

Sted

Københavns Universitet

Omstændigheder

Bemærkninger fra taleskriver:

Talen blev holdt af rektor ved den traditionelle immatrikulation i sensommeren (27. august 2021), hvor de studerende formelt blev indskrevet som akademiske borgere i universitetets "matrikel". Der er normalt drøn på traditionerne med mange ritualer, herunder håndtrykket, som rektor giver de tusindvis af studerende – som modsat lover at overholde universitets love fra år 1479. I 2021 var håndtrykket dog droppet som følge af smittefare, men arrangementet blevet fornyet med regulær festivalstemning og mini-popkoncert, som plaster på såret for alle de aflyste festivaller den sommer.

Hensigten med talen var at give de studerende håb og glæde i det genåbnede universitet efter en lang periode med corona-nedlukninger af samfundet og universitetet. Deraf titlen med "University of OPENhagen"

Som særlig gestus til de mange internationale studerende, er denne velkomsttale på engelsk.

As the Rector number 259 of the University of Copenhagen,

I now have the pleasure and honor to welcome you – some of the most

tormented

resilient

and courageous students

since the university saw the face of the Earth in 1479.

Just consider the sacrifices you've made.

All the things you've missed.

What you've had to endure.

No hugging.

No clubbing.

The feeling of being trapped in Zoomland: Online - and off life.

Too much privacy – being home alone.

Not enough privacy with the webcam in your personal space.

Less casual sex – although Søren Brostrøm said it was OK.

More casual clothes – pajamas as the work outfit.

And testing, testing, testing – including the big test of your patience.

Listen up - today I bring you good news:

YOU ARE HERE

and the University of OPENhagen is open for business

– and indeed for pleasure.

Åben – det er KU også for alle de internationale studerende.

Og det er netop i respekt for dem, at denne tale er på engelsk.

Selvom KU jo også er dybt forankret i Danmarks kultur, sprog og historie.

Allow me to hijack that little, big word – “open”.

Because “being open” is key to what the university is all about.

Your education will open the door to a world of opportunities.

And I don't just mean all the practical stuff that will make your parents proud - and please the politicians.

Like a nice job title

money in the bank

and status at dinner conversations.

All the boxes they expect you to tick off before you turn 30.

The university is so much more.

It's like reading a book or learning a language.

It will expand your universe.

It will *open* your mind.

And - beware – it will *change* your mind.

Our planet desperately needs the mind-blowing knowledge that only the university can deliver.

Just like when the international scientific community came together and came up with a comprehensive cure for Covid.

From vaccines

to guiding our behavior

and helping those in financial trouble.

Our planet desperately needs the mind-blowing knowledge that the university will empower *you* to deliver.

- such as a cure for the climate crisis.

I have faith in you.

Not only as future researchers who can crack the code of green technology.

But also as the open-minded generation of academics that can change the mindset of humanity itself.

After all, who carried the alarming data of a looming climate disaster from the scientific journals to the streets and all the way to the kitchen table and “vegan-filled” refrigerators?

Not your parents.

Not the politicians.

Not even the researchers, although they tried.

But you – the young people and students who – unleashed a green mass movement that conquered our green hearts and minds.

In a moment, I will introduce the university heads wearing their gowns made from centuries of learning.

You’ve already met some of them on video.

Sometimes, the students only cheer for their “own” dean.

But please remember: this is not a sports competition.

The champions are not the youngest, the oldest or the biggest

– but the brightest.

And do you know what scientists have in common with people in a pandemic?

Well, we don't work well in isolation.

We have to work together across faculties

to fix the problems that we know we know

as well as the problems that we know we don't know...yet.

Please welcome onstage - according to the old ceremonial order:

Prorector for Education Bente Merete Stallknecht

Prorector for Research David Dreyer Lassen

Dean of the Faculty of Theology, Carsten Selch Jensen

Dean of the Faculty of Law, Jacob Graff Nielsen

Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences, Mikkel Vedby Rasmussen

Dean of the Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences, Ulla Wewer

Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, Kirsten Busch Nielsen

Dean of the Faculty of Science, Katrine Krogh Andersen

And University Director Jesper Olesen.

Six months ago, a graduate from Harvard University entered a stage in Washington D.C. - slightly larger than this one.

At President Biden's inauguration ceremony, she read a poem that gave us hope in the wake of conflict and Covid.

Amanda Gorman said:

*"We lay down our arms
so we can reach out our arms
to one another."*

Today, I urge you to reach out to one another.

Because we need community and campus life to combat what Covid has left us with: A pandemic of loneliness and anxiety.

Please be kind to each other, including man-kind, plant-kind and indeed all kinds of life.

I'm sure you will – and that you will leave this planet in a better condition than you inherited it.

And do come and rock and dance with your fellow students at the University festival on 17 September.

Standing in front of the Capitol, Amanda Gorman seemed almost more presidential than the President himself.

She said:

“We have learned that quiet isn't always peace”.

And yes - it was quiet staying at home with the computer as the only one to keep you company.

But it gives me peace of mind to know that, in a moment, you

– the open-minded students of 2021 –

will open the door to the university and to life itself.

Welcome to the University of OPENhagen!!!!

Kilde

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Immatrikulationstale

URI

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