



**Address at the 2016 FIU Chaplin School of Hospitality and Tourism Management in
Tianjin Commencement Ceremony**

**Given by Mark B. Rosenberg and Graduates Representative Zhou Xin
on May 15, 2016**



This speech was presented to the graduating class of the 2016 China Commencement Ceremony held at the Tianjin University of Commerce, Science Hall, on May 15, 2016.

I am thrilled to be here, celebrating the ninth graduating class of Florida International University's Chaplin School of Hospitality and Tourism Management in Tianjin.

Today is the day that your friends, family and loved ones have been waiting for!

Today is Graduation Day – your graduation day!

Class of 2016, this is a time for reflection. For appreciation. For celebration.

Please take a moment to thank family and loved ones for their support. Please acknowledge our faculty and staff for their hard work. They know that every student counts. They take pride in your accomplishments!

You can be proud to be graduates of this groundbreaking, award-winning program in Tianjin. It has gained recognition for the Worlds Ahead education that we are providing to our students. The Tianjin Marriott program has been an important part of our success as a global university!

Let me share with you just a few of our recent accomplishments:

- In July 2015, the Marriott Tianjin China Program was accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Programs in Hospitality Administration. All faculty members of TUC-FIU Program received Certified Hospitality Educator certificates in April 2016. Enrollment has continued to rise – 342 students are currently enrolled.
- Over the past year, we have conducted live, co-taught simulcast courses between Miami and Tianjin. This learning experience has bridged the geographic gap, enhancing the learning experience for our Miami and Tianjin students. Our Tianjin program has been so successful that TUC and FIU signed a new 10-year agreement in March 2016.

There is a Chinese proverb: "Reading ten thousand books is not as useful as traveling ten thousand miles."

As students of FIU, you have probably read 10,000 books!

Now, as graduates of FIU, you are ready to begin your journey of 10,000 miles!

You are ready to put what you learned in the classroom to work in the real world. You are ready to tackle the 21st century challenges of a thriving, vital, global industry.

As an FIU graduate, you have been taught by some of the finest minds in the hospitality and tourism management field. You have had a curriculum that is world class. You have been surrounded by dedicated and hard-working students who understand the value of an FIU degree. You have experienced all of this through exceptional educational opportunities in and out of the classroom!

Many of your fellow students have been rewarded for their hard work and determination. We are very proud of the 2015-16 recipients of the Marriott Scholarship. These students have taken what they were given in the classroom and took it to the next level. They have exceeded expectations and already have made their mark in the hospitality and tourism industry.

Class of 2016, the education you have received here has given you the tools you need to be engaged global citizens ready to compete in a globally competitive industry.

Before you leave here today, I would like to ask you for three things:

1. To be proud of FIU – this degree that you are receiving is not just for a day – it is for a lifetime!
2. To tell the story of your great education – how FIU has prepared you for the challenges of the 21st century.
3. To support your alma mater. Show your pride for FIU! Wear your FIU t-shirts! Join our alumni association, if you haven't already. Become active supporters of FIU!

Finally, we are thankful that you chose us, FIU. We express our gratitude to you and your families for your confidence in FIU!

We are proud of you – Class of 2016.

Now go out and show the world how FIU and its graduates are truly Worlds Ahead!

Zhou Xin (Valedictorian)

Good morning, distinguished guests, honored faculty, proud parents, and most importantly the Class of 2016, I am Elaine from Class 1205. It is my great honor to deliver the commencement speech here.

Four years ago, we came from all over China to gather in this city, in this school; today, we are sitting here, and ready to sail/set off for different cities and places. In these four years, our WeChat Moments have been occupied by April graduation photos for three years; and this time, finally it is our turn.

In these four years, I bet you definitely have had eggplant dumplings in Second Canteen of South area and chicken hot pot on the third floor of The First Canteen; you must have been called “dude, answer this question” by Professor Song; and you must have heard “practice makes perfect” from Louis; you must have lined up in front of Xiaopeng’s printing room; and you definitely bought Pepsi Cola and dined in Haidilao hotpot to finish professor Yunfei’s case assignment.

Four years later, you will still remember the stay-up nights for entrepreneur competition, the early getting-ups for Friday’s Job Fairs; you will remember the calm but non-logical analysis when playing Game of Werewolves (a poker game); and you will still remember professor Luo Sen’s class that you never dare to be late; you will remember “are you with me my friends?” said by Professor Danqing, “thank you” from professor Tao Wei, and professor Yunfei’s square dance and her TF boys; you will remember that Professor Tian Xin’s daughter’s name is Xiao Guai; and there is a Goddess Dai in TUC-FIU; you will remember chef’s “morning guys”, Professor Pelzer’s silver eyelash and some weird voice he made, like uh!

Did Professor Dongyun Oh ever accurately pronounce your Chinese name? How many times have you heard the anecdotes told by Professor Wenbo? Did you figure out what MICE stands for taught by Professor Wang Miao; and how many life philosophies you can still remember from Professor Sun Jizhe? Do you still know how to do a web page taught by Professor Wang Hongye?

We used to be divided into eight classes, but when we loudly called out every professor’s name together at the afternoon when we took graduation photos, we all are class of 2016. However, after today, we will be separated again, we are gonna say goodbye to this building, which is called Dubai Tower of Beichen District by us, and we are gonna say goodbye to the lake view dormitory, say goodbye to our lovely professors, to our dear fellow classmates; we are gonna say goodbye to our college life, to our colorful youth.

So, do not forget to say “take care” to your partners in the student union or association who stayed up to write event plan with you, to say “thank you” to the school bus driver; do not forget to give a huge hug to your roomie, to take a photo with our dearest professors and lovely classmates. Tonight, Dubai Tower of Beichen district is light for us.

I hope that in the following years, we can still be shiny and confident like today; and hoping that we can do what we want, love what we love; just try more and do more, as we are still young. Find out what you like, figure out what you really want to do, and then go fight for it! Be true to yourself.

From now on, we are not class 120X, we are the class of 2016!

So, congratulations! Class of 2016!