

College of Social Sciences, Mathematics and Education

Dean Jack Geller—

As Dean of the College of Social Sciences, Mathematics and Education, I want to congratulate the graduating class of 2020. Of course I know this is not the commencement celebration that you had imagined when you entered UT as a freshman. But I must admit that in many ways and for many reasons, you are the most memorable graduating class during my tenure as dean.

You see, each summer when the campus slows down, I take the opportunity to review our college's out-of-classroom activities, because it is those types of experiences that are truly the hallmark of a UT Education. During your time at UT I have watched you conduct and present your original research at academic conferences across the nation; I've watched you travel overseas with your professors; and I've watched you participate in national competitions such as Moot Court and the Harvard National Model UN program.

And since March 16, when life changed for all of us due to the Coronavirus, I have observed the most resilient, adaptable and determined group of students in my career. Sure there were hiccups, technical glitches, and mistakes along the way. I'm sure at times it was quite stressful; but you also showed a tremendous amount of grit, determination and adaptability. And those are very qualities that will serve you well in the work place, in graduate school, or wherever life leads you.

I also want to say a few words to our graduating masters' candidates. I'm sorry that I did not get a chance to place your hood over your head. But I do want to share just a little bit of information with you about your hood. If you look at it you will notice that the color of the outer border represents your discipline; either a light blue for education or science gold for criminology. And the inner silk lining of the hood represents the colors of the University of Tampa. So as you think about it, from now on, every time you wear that hood you are telling the world that you are a Tampa Spartan. And that's pretty cool!

So to the graduating class of 2020, I salute you and wish you well. Please keep in touch; and I hope you will remember to return to your University of Tampa often.