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Transcript of speech given by Provost Abdelal at the President's Convocation, September 7, 2004

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Speeches

President's Convocation

Tuesday, September 7, 2004
11 a.m. to Noon
Matthews Arena

It is now my great pleasure to welcome you to this ceremony that formally marks the beginning of your academic experience. You made an excellent choice by coming to Northeastern - a great institution for learning. Equally important, as I am confident you will quickly learn, both the University and the city present you with an enormous array of artistic and cultural experiences. I trust that you will enjoy and learn a great deal from these experiences. As the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, I would like to focus my remarks on certain aspects of learning at Northeastern.

The first is regarding our model of cooperative education and experiential learning, an area in which Northeastern is the leader nationally and internationally. Our educational model deepens and enhances your learning in your chosen major, provides opportunities to acquire valuable experiences in the workplace, and opportunities for exploring different professional tracks; all three elements prepare you better for success in your chosen career.

Three other hallmarks of undergraduate education at Northeastern are in harmony with the cooperative/experiential education model. The first of these is an emphasis on inter-disciplinary learning; meaning opportunities for combining and connecting disciplines. Solutions for many problems in the work place or in academic research often reside at the interface between disciplines. I encourage you to partake of the rich opportunity for inter-disciplinary learning at Northeastern. One organized approach to ensuring inter-disciplinary learning is doing one or more minors in another department or another college.

The second relevant hallmark is doing undergraduate research project in your major. In such a project, you work with one of the world class faculty in your major. One way to learn more about what our faculty does in this research is to click on [research.neu.edu](#) and read about faculty research. A research experience is one that I encourage you to consider from your sophomore year on.

The third type of experience that I encourage you to consider is an international experience. We also have a vibrant, study-abroad program that provides opportunities for first-hand immersion in another culture while you are pursuing your education. Better yet, you can combine coop experience with the international experience through our international co-op program. Before and after such an international experience, take advantage of the rich representation of different cultures of the world right here at Northeastern. Gaining an appreciation for different cultures of the world through courses, through interactions on Campus, and through study-abroad or international coop all prepare you to be a better-informed global citizen. Not only does that enable you to take advantage of wider career opportunities that deal with or are in other parts of the world but also contribute to better harmony around the globe.

Thank you and welcome again to Northeastern.



Provost Ahmed Abdalal

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