

## **WHITE COAT CEREMONY-2023**

Dear Rector, esteemed faculty members, dear students, and families, I extend a warm welcome to all of you on behalf of our Dean's Office.

We're delighted to have you here for the 15<sup>th</sup> white coat ceremony at the School of Medicine.

I want to express my heartfelt thanks to my dedicated colleagues who have worked tirelessly to make this ceremony a reality.

Since we have students and families from the preparatory class in attendance, the ceremony will primarily be conducted in Turkish. However, there will be sections with explanations in English, and we'll be sharing the English version of the text of this speech with our international students.

*Dear international students,*

*Welcome to the School of Medicine.*

*First of all, I would like to congratulate you on being accepted into a great medical school and having a successful start to your University life. I am sure you won't regret choosing this school.*

*I hope you have completed the adaptation period to your new city and university.*

*I know it's not easy to move to a new country and start studying at the same time. However, this institution is now your home. Please don't forget that. I want you to know that our doors are wide open to you. Please feel free to contact us whenever you need or want. Your well-being and success are our top priority.*

*I wish you success and good luck.*

Dear families of our students, you can't help but feel immense pride in your children's accomplishments. After a long and challenging journey, they have achieved outstanding success. They have earned the privilege to receive education at one of the best medical faculties in Turkey, and they accomplished this during a particularly difficult period. We experienced a pandemic and subsequent earthquakes that caused significant destruction. Today, among us, there are families and students affected by these disasters, and I would like to express our condolences and wishes for a speedy recovery once again.

I am confident that, just as you have been there for them until now, you will continue to stand by them and provide support. By choosing this institution together and placing your trust in us, you've shown awareness of the importance of a good university education for the future of your children. For that, we thank you.

At every graduation ceremony, our graduates and their families express how accurate and gratifying their decision was years ago. We take great joy in hearing this affirmation.

Although we are a relatively young medical faculty, witnessing the development of free-thinking, health advocacy-oriented, professionally valued, and critical thinking minds as part

of our bright, republican, and freedom-loving institution, we are pleased to see our faculty institutionalizing, becoming rooted, and establishing itself as a tradition.

Students starting this year will graduate in 2029, marking our 15th graduation ceremony with approximately 1,200 graduates. You'll be using the hashtag AcibademSoM'29.

Starting university in 2023, the centennial year of the Republic, is a great feeling. You're experiencing the pride of commencing medical education in the 100th year of the Republic. Similarly, we take pride in providing education in an institution that has internalized the values of the Republic. We are aware that citizenship, equality, freedom, and solidarity, the achievements of the Republic, have become even more crucial after a century. Additionally, there's another special aspect to this year: the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of women in our country gaining the right to medical education. We are pleased to see that today, over half of our graduates are women, and this year, the ratio is exactly fifty-fifty.

Our fundamental goal is to nurture excellent physicians and scientists. After graduation, wherever you go, and whatever field you choose to work in, we want you to face no difficulties and be fully prepared for your responsibilities in your profession. Moreover, you may choose to work as a researcher in a significant research center, and if that's the case, we want you to be well-versed in scientific methods, both ethically and technically competent.

In embarking on the journey of medical education, we make a commitment to society. We enter into a tacit agreement and take on a responsibility: the students who will be brought up here will become competent physicians and qualified scientists delivering healthcare in a proficient manner. Accreditation and similar external evaluations are processes that assess the extent to which this goal is achieved on behalf of society. In a sense, they signify the sustainability of quality and the faculty's social responsibilities and accountability.

This year, we have once again received internationally recognized accreditation. Additionally, we are one of the few medical faculties that have earned the right to use the Turkish Qualifications Framework (TQF) logo on graduation certificates, indicating that our program is one of the few that meets the standards of competencies.

I can confidently say that we now have a medical education program that has completed its institutionalization and proven its competence.

Dear students, undoubtedly, the acquisition of academic knowledge alone is insufficient to become a qualified physician and scientist. Development is multi-faceted. On one hand, there is an academic environment where you will not only gain knowledge and skills in basic and clinical sciences but also develop a professional attitude. This involves courses, practical applications, projects, assignments, and exams. Additionally, the inspiration and mastery knowledge you receive from your professors will significantly contribute to your development. One of the crucial components of this academic environment is the creation of spaces that enhance your scientific thinking, aligning with our goal of nurturing future scientists. Allow me to inform you about this:

From your early years, you will take mandatory and elective courses on scientific approach, scientific reasoning, critical evaluation of evidence, conducting and sharing research, including:

- Research courses in Health Sciences within the Clinical and Professional Skills program (CMPS)
- Elective research projects within your Medical Elective courses (EMED)
- Student research groups

Moreover, there are independent projects conducted by students in this field.

This year, we have implemented the MD-PhD program. A limited number of second-year students, selected after a rigorous evaluation, can complete both medical education and a chosen doctoral program, graduating from both the medical faculty and the doctoral program in 8 years.

ACUTBAT (the scientific research community of the Medical Faculty) organizes a student congress every year, providing students with the opportunity to present their research. ACUMSA (Acibadem Medical Students Association) and TEÖK (Medical Education Student Commission) are also student groups you can engage with.

When you merge the academic and social environments, achieving a more qualified and exciting outcome becomes possible. Therefore, actively participate in student societies and clubs. Additionally, consider becoming a member of the Alumni Association while still a student, establishing early connections with our graduates.

Having ethical and human values, being a good team member, and communicating effectively are so crucial that being a good physician and scientist is impossible without them.

The strength of ties with culture and art is not only vital for personal development but also enhances the capacity to understand oneself and humanity. Developing a humanistic personality and understanding people deeply are valuable qualities for becoming a good physician because a connection with any form of art or literature is important for both personal and professional development.

In addition to academic studies, I know that active engagement with any area of art and literature is important for the personal and professional development of a good medical student. We have a very rich program and diverse education-research infrastructure. I believe you will frequently hear from our graduates and upper-class students about how valuable the things you initially wondered about will become in the future.

Dear students,

In a little while, by putting on your white coats, you will take the first step on the path to becoming a physician. Of course, there is a long journey ahead, but the symbolic significance of the coat you'll wear today is immense.

I don't want to scare you, but the white coat is a responsibility. It gives you the feeling of having an egg in your pocket that you need to carry without breaking. It is also a symbolic representation of the "power" that comes from the ancient traditions of the profession. You will see your white coat as the assurance that you will always use this power for the benefit of your patients and society. You will carry your white coat as a symbol of cleanliness, honesty, equality, and trust. You will have the advocacy duty for peace and human rights.

Yes, you are at the beginning of a long journey. We will always be by your side throughout this journey. It is our responsibility to ensure that you make the best use of all the opportunities for your education, personal, and professional development. We know that you are aware of your responsibility for your own development, and as a good medical student, we expect you to make the best use of these opportunities.

I wish you a successful and enjoyable medical education. Welcome to our family. May your path be clear.

Prof. Dr. Nadi Bakırcı

Dean