

## **Ceremony Script**

**(Dr. Clough) Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. Will everyone please stand for the reflection by Mr. Carlton O. Parker, director of the YMCA, and remain standing for our national anthem.**

**(Carlton Parker) Reflection**

**(Brass Ensemble) National Anthem**

**(Dr. Clough) Please be seated.**

**Once again, good morning. It is my pleasure to welcome everyone to Georgia Tech's summer commencement.**

**Approximately 107 years ago, Georgia Tech held its very first commencement. On that day in 1890, just two men graduated, obtaining undergraduate degrees in mechanical engineering.**

**Throughout the 107 years in between the Class of 1997 and Tech's first graduating class, thousands of other students have accepted a diploma from a Georgia Tech president. Although much has changed in those years, I imagine the feelings of each student who graduates are much the same. Then, as now, I expect most would admit to feeling some pride, elation, and relief...as well as perhaps a bit of sadness.**

**Besides your emotion upon “getting out,” you also share something else with those who have gone before you. You share the common bond of the Georgia Tech educational experience. As part of this, you share common traits of perseverance, grit, intelligence, and drive. Character traits which have helped you survive at Georgia Tech and arrive at a culmination of your educational experience—commencement.**

**Although you do have much in common with other Georgia Tech classes, the Class of 1997 is unique in Georgia Tech’s history.**

**Some interesting facts about your Class and fellow graduates includes:**

- The Class of 1997 has the highest number of degrees awarded to African Americans in the Institute’s history as well as the second highest number of female graduates;**
- The Class of 1997 can also be proud of your Olympic participation and your role in crafting the Student Honor Code.**
- Finally, the Class of 1997 holds the somewhat unique distinction of being the class whose members in one night stole the “T”—and then put it back just to say it could be done.**

**As you can see, you have much to be proud of. However, the pride you feel today, should extend to others in today's audience. Throughout your Georgia Tech experience, you were supported —and yes, sometimes put up with—by parents, friends, and other family. Parents, will you please stand so our graduates can show their thanks? (Lead applause.)**

**Another group was also instrumental to your success: the Georgia Tech faculty. Although the naturalist W.H. Auden once defined professors as individuals who “talk in someone else's sleep,” I think you'll agree that your professors worked hard to help you lay a foundation for a successful future. Faculty, will you please stand and let us recognize and thank you. (Lead applause).**

**Of course, those who deserve the most recognition are those who graduate today. Those who entered this room as students and who will leave as Georgia Tech alumni. Would all of you please stand so that we may recognize you and your achievement? (Lead applause)**

**(Pause)**

**It is now my pleasure to introduce the summer commencement graduation speaker. Although I always enjoy the commencement speaker, I will confess that I enjoy the summer speaker the most. Because during the summer, the speech is traditionally given by the winner of that year's Distinguished Professor Award, the highest award given to a faculty member at Georgia Tech.**

**This year's Distinguished Professor is a man who has made an indelible impression upon Georgia Tech. Dr. Charles Eckert is recognized campuswide for his scholarly achievements, his teaching ability, and his contributions to the personal and professional development of Georgia Tech students.**

**Internationally, Dr. Eckert is known as "the father of supercritical fluids," for his breakthrough work in molecular interaction and chemical processes; however, here on campus he is known by students and faculty alike as Chuck.**

**In fact, Chuck is so well esteemed by his students that come November he is allowing several of his former students to throw him a bachelor party in honor of his upcoming wedding.**

**Chuck, that takes courage and the line that keeps coming to my head is one from some movie, maybe one of the Terminator movies, and goes something like this: "Be Afraid. Be Very, Very Afraid."**

**On campus, Chuck is the J. Erskine Love Jr. Institute Professor in the School of Chemical Engineering, and holds a joint appointment in the School of Chemistry. In addition to teaching courses, directing student theses, and conducting seminars and research projects, he also directs the Specialty Separations Center. A teacher and scholar for more than 30 years, Chuck received his B.S. and M.S. from MIT and his Ph.D. from the University of California at Berkeley.**

**He came to Georgia Tech in 1989 from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where he headed the Chemical Engineering Department for six years.**

**A prolific author, Dr. Eckert has authored or co-authored nearly 200 research papers, books, and monographs. He has directed more than 60 Ph.D. theses and approximately 20 of his students have followed his footsteps into academia, as faculty, chaired professors, department heads, and deans.**

**Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in welcoming Georgia Tech's 1997 Distinguished Professor and groom to be, Dr. Charles Eckert.....**

*(Lead applause.)*

***SPEAKER'S SPEECH***

**Dr. Eckert, as a token of our appreciation, I present you with this special award. (*PRESENT AWARD*)**

**(Dr. Clough) We come now to the time for conferring of degrees. Dr. Robert McMath, vice provost for Undergraduate Studies and Academic Affairs, will introduce the academic deans who will then present the candidates for the bachelors degree.**

**(Dr. McMath) Dean Peter Freeman will introduce the undergraduate candidates for degrees in the College of Computing.**

**(Dean Freeman) Candidates for the bachelor of science degree in the College of Computing please rise and remain standing. *(Pause)***

**(Dean Freeman) Mr. President, I have the honor to introduce to you those candidates for the bachelor of science degree who have completed the requirements for this degree.**

**(Dr. McMath) Dean Robert Hawkins will introduce the undergraduate candidates for degrees in the Ivan Allen College of Management, Policy & International Affairs.**

**(Dean Hawkins) Candidates for the bachelor of science degree in the Ivan Allen College of Management, Policy & International Affairs please rise and remain standing. *(Pause)***

**(Dean Hawkins) Mr. President, I have the honor to introduce to you those candidates for the bachelor of science degree who have completed the requirements for this degree.**

**(Dr. McMath) Dean Thomas Galloway will introduce the undergraduate candidates for degrees in the College of Architecture.  
(Dean Galloway) Candidates for the bachelor of science degree in the College of Architecture please rise and remain standing. *(Pause)***

**(Dean Galloway) Mr. President, I have the honor to introduce to you those candidates for the bachelor of science degree who have completed the requirements for this degree.**

**(Dr. McMath) Associate Dean Anderson Smith will introduce the undergraduate candidates for degrees in the College of Sciences.**

**(Associate Dean Smith) Candidates for the bachelor of science degree in the College of Sciences please rise and remain standing. *(Pause)***

**(Associate Dean Smith) Mr. President, I have the honor to introduce to you those candidates for the bachelor of science degree who have completed the requirements for this degree.**

**(Dr. McMath) Associate Dean J.N. Davidson will introduce the undergraduate candidates for degrees in the College of Engineering. (Assoc. Dean Davidson) Candidates for the bachelor's degree and bachelor of science degree in the College of Engineering please rise and remain standing.**

**(Assoc. Dean Davidson) Mr. President, I have the honor to introduce to you those candidates for the bachelor's degree and the bachelor of science degree who have completed the requirements for those respective degrees.**

**(Dr. Clough) Upon the recommendation of the faculty of the Georgia Institute of Technology and by authority of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, I confer upon each of you the bachelor's degree, with all the rights, privileges, and responsibilities thereunto appertaining.**

**(Dr. Clough) Please be seated. We will now award the degrees. Will the faculty marshals please bring the candidates forward.**

*(College of Computing candidates will come forward, then IAC, Architecture, College of Sciences and College of Engineering)*

*(Walk to the table: dean presents diplomas and Dr. Clough shakes hands) (Announcer will pause between colleges to allow the Dean time to come forward)*

*(Dr. Clough, return to podium)*

**(Dr. Clough)** Now, please join me in congratulating these fine new graduates of Georgia Tech. *(Lead applause)*

**(Dr. Clough)** At this time the candidates for the master's degree will be presented by Dr. Jean-Lou Chameau, vice provost for Research and dean of Graduate Studies.

**(JLC)** Will the candidates for the master and master of science degrees please rise?

**(JLC)** Mr. President: I have the honor of presenting to you for the master's and master's of science degrees those candidates who have completed all requirements for those degrees.

**(Dr. Clough)** Upon the recommendation of the faculty of the Georgia Institute of Technology and by authority of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, I confer upon each of you the master's degree, with all the rights, privileges, and responsibilities thereunto appertaining.

**(Dr. Clough)** We shall now present the diplomas. Will the faculty marshals please bring the candidates forward.

*(Walk over to diploma table: Jean-Lou presents diplomas, Dr. Clough shakes hands, hooding table volunteers will hood all Master's candidates)*

*(Dr. Clough, return to podium)*



**(Dr. Clough)** Please join me in congratulating these master's graduates. *(Lead applause)*

**Dr. Chameau** will also present the candidates for the doctor of philosophy degree.

**(JLC)** Will the candidates for the doctor's degrees please rise.

**(JLC)** Mr. President: I have the honor of presenting to you for the doctor's degrees those candidates who have completed all requirements for those degrees.

**(Dr. Clough)** Upon the recommendation of the faculty of the Georgia Institute of Technology and by authority of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, I confer upon each of you the degree of doctor of philosophy with all the rights, privileges, and responsibilities thereunto appertaining.

**Congratulations on your earning of Georgia Tech's highest academic degree. Will you please come forward and receive your diplomas.**

*(Walk over to diploma table: Jean-Lou present diplomas, Dr. Clough shakes hands, and major professors step on stage to hood their students)*

*(Dr. Clough, return to podium)*

**(Dr. Clough)** Please join me in congratulating these doctoral graduates. *(Lead applause)*

*(President's remarks)*

Once again, I would like to offer my personal congratulations to the Class of 1997. You have worked hard—and one of your rewards, is that today—and all the days and years afterward, you may say with pride that you graduated from the Georgia Institute of Technology.

As a Georgia Tech graduate, you'll find that your degree will help open many doors. As a Tech grad myself, I have found that to be true throughout my career.

It especially didn't hurt when I interviewed for the job I now hold.

The respect you will be accorded has been earned; I doubt there are any of you out there who would say that obtaining your degree was easy. I know it took me many long hours and hard work to obtain mine. In that respect, Georgia Tech hasn't changed much.

There is a common saying in Japan that goes something like this: "That which is difficult, is sweet to recall."

While it may be a bit early yet for you to recall all of your memories of Georgia Tech as "sweet", I can assure you the day will come when you will wonder how the years went by so fast and you will want to return to campus to recollect and reminisce about the good times you experienced here.

**I believe it is one of my obligations to help prepare you for life on the outside by providing you with the answer to the most commonly asked, and singularly uninformed, question about Georgia Tech.**

**(Pause)**

**The question goes something like this: “Why isn’t Georgia Tech called a university? After all, most schools are.”**

**When you hear this question, above all, refrain from losing your temper. After all, it is a step in the right direction that the question is being asked in the first place and that the individual asking it is not referring to us as the dreaded and nonexistent Georgia Tech University.**

**Instead, smile when asked the question and say the following:**

**“Universities are defined as institutions where knowledge accumulates....the freshmen come in with a little, the seniors go out with none, so the knowledge accumulates. And, since Georgia Tech seniors graduate with more knowledge than when they entered, we cannot, in good faith, be called a university.”**

If the individual asking the question still needs clarification, tell them to visit Athens and they'll no doubt soon figure out the difference.

Your Institute education has well prepared you for a successful future. Indeed the knowledge you are taking out will render you well prepared to meet and exceed the challenges of the 21st century.

However, success in life is not guaranteed by a degree or having worked hard to get one. This is just the start. In his book, *The Road Ahead*, Bill Gates states, "Success is a lousy teacher. It seduces smart people into thinking they can't lose. And it's an unreliable guide to the future."

Although he is talking about high-tech business products, not students, I think his quote can easily be applied to people. Continued success comes not to those who wait, but those who grow. Those who continue to learn and continue to overcome challenges.

As a Georgia Tech graduate, I hope you have learned to enjoy the challenge. I hope you take from your Georgia Tech experience resiliency, tenacity, creativity, a love of learning, and a willingness to make the hard decisions that life will invariably bring.

**Finally, as a Tech graduate, I hope you will use your intelligence, gifts, and talents to make a difference. In this year alone, three Tech alums have manned space flights, a current student has won the U.S. Amateur Golf Tournament, a recent alum is on track to win the American League Rookie of the Year Award and has already made it the All Star game in his first year, and another alum has been recognized as the winner of the senior level Entrepreneur of the Year Award for the southeast and is up for the same at the national level.**

**All have used their Tech experience to pursue and gain their dreams.**

**I hope you may do the same.**

**Thank you.**

*(Pause)*

*(Introduction of Frank Spears)*

**(Dr. Clough) Now, it is my pleasure to present Mr. Frank Spears, class of 1973, Vice President and District Manager of HCB Contractors and president of the Georgia Tech Alumni Association. He will welcome the members of the graduating class into the fellowship of Tech alumni.**

**(Mr. Spears) Induction of graduates into the Alumni Association.....**

**(Dr. Clough) Please join me immediately following this ceremony for a special reception honoring today's graduates, their families and friends in the Glade of the President's Home, located one block from this coliseum.**

**(Dr. Clough) I would like to express my appreciation to the Georgia Tech Music Department for their participation in our program this morning. Thanks also to Dr. Heidi Rockwood for the calling of graduates' names. And many thanks go to all my associates for arranging this important event.**

**(Dr. Clough) The faculty recessional will immediately follow the alma mater. The audience is requested to remain standing for the recessional. I invite all of you to join in the singing of the Ramblin' Wreck, which will accompany the student recessional.**

**Thank you for your attendance this morning. And now our alma mater sung by the Georgia Tech Chorale, directed by Dr. William Caldwell!**

*(At the end of the alma mater, the mace bearer will be the first one off the stage. Dr. Clough will immediately follow then the remainder of the Presidents Party, Deans, and Faculty.)*

**PLEASE NOTE: You will recess faculty off stage first and then students will recess from their seats.**