1949 Freshman Convocation

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PRESIDENT STOE, DEAN CALDWELL, MEMBERS OF THE
FACULTY AND STAFF AND ESPECIALLY MEMBERS OF THE LOUISIANA
STATE UNIVERSITY CLASS OF 1953:

It gives me keen personal pleasure to add my
greetings to those so eloquently expressed by the
President of the University. As a class, I suppose,
you will speedily acquire a nickname. Perhaps, it will
be "the lean class" or, perhaps, it will be "the leap
year class", to signify that, relatively smaller in
numbers, you have a status not enjoyed this year by
hundreds who would like to be with you but who
have been prevented to accomplish their
plans to enter the University as Louisiana
used to grant for another year; it
adds a year to its preparatory system. The application
I hope you will collectively merit is that of "the
Freshman men and women students, are
privileged to undertake a new and stimulating edu-
cational venture. It is one which is unlimited in its
potentialities in terms of your individual development,
in terms of your individual plans and aspirations, in
terms of your future happiness and in terms of your
ability to gain all the satisfaction which accompanies
the acquisition of a higher education.
On an occasion such as this, it is usual for the custom to mete out advice. Youth will not always heed it. The result is ever what one makes it. Dean Caldwell has kindly allotted three minutes to me on this program. I should like to devote the first, the second, and the third of that allocation to advice—advice, though it be obvious, concerning the importance of diligent application to your studies if you are to make a success of the opportunity now unfolds before you.

It is related that a great monarch once asked Euclid whether there were any more easier way to master mathematical science than the method of application to study being then exacted even of a mighty prince. Euclid’s reply has become classic; he simply said “there is no royal road to geometry.” I trust that this Freshman class will not try to find a non-existing royal or easy road to the acquisition of learning. There
is no pathway save along the roadway of diligent application to educational tasks as they are assigned to you from day to day. My advice is to acquire sound study habits from the very start. In this manner, the road can be made less rugged and you can make it a joyful and meaningful intellectual experience. You can experience the thrills that come from a task well performed, that come from exhilarating explorations into new fields and new ideas. L.S.U. does not expect that you all become book-worms but the University expects and exacts of you a standard of competence which you must be able to meet.

As one college President put it: "Vague good intentions will not do. No amount of piety will compensate for a sloppy job in the classroom or in the laboratory."

As I look over these eager faces, I wish you all well. You realize, I am sure, that your studies constitute the "main trust." Enjoy a well balanced college life; form new friends and associates
Never lose the habit of study. It is the only guaranty of your success in achieving a sound education as young men and women of I.S.U.

It will make your sojourn here as young men and women of I.S.U. worthwhile. May intellectual achievement, character, the lean but learned class of 1953.