

Valedictorian Speech for Ceremony C16 - 14 July 2026 Tuesday (2:30pm)

Low Kae Wei

Bachelor of Engineering (Chemical Engineering) with Honours

Theme: Stay Steady under Uncertainties

Professor Tan Eng Chye, NUS President;
Professor Ho Ghim Wei, Vice Provost (Academic Affairs);
Professor Teo Kie Leong, Dean, College of Design and Engineering;
Mr Lin Jingze, Director, Advanced Technology Engineering, Micron Technology;
Distinguished Guests, Fellow Graduates, Parents and Friends;
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good afternoon!

It is a tremendous honour and privilege to speak on behalf of the graduating class of 2026 from the Bachelor of Engineering programme today. I am truly grateful for the opportunity given.

Time flies, hasn't it? 3 or 4 years ago, we were just freshmen who played with water to learn mass balance in our introductory lab course. Now, we are graduates waiting to unlock our final achievement – the degree scroll, after years of levelling up and beating the final bosses – the final year design project (FYDP) and dissertation. Congratulations, Class of 2026! WE DID IT!

Throughout the journey, we have created many unforgettable memories, including having meals together at Techno Edge and Dr. Suraj Vasudevan taking class photos to cross-check attendance against the QR code system. Now we shall see who scanned the QR code but somehow disappeared from the picture.

We also encountered challenges and uncertainties along the way. We once dreaded the red status bar from Aspen HYSYS, the simulation software used in our FYDP. We were elated to see a green status bar, but frustrated when it crashed, knowing that we had to redo everything again. It was an iterative project, right?

Yet what remains are the memories of consuming caffeine and Monster drinks, the late-night grindings near deadlines, and the friendships forged as we worked side by side.

We were also once questioned on our choices of distillation column and reactor during FYDP presentations. Despite these challenges and uncertainties, we managed to overcome them. Looking back, we remember not the challenges themselves, but the people and moments that carried us through them.

Looking ahead, we will continue to face uncertainties in future, whether in our careers, personal relationships or the economy. Here, I would like to share 2 ways of staying steady amid uncertainties: upskill constantly and stay grounded in our values.

Just like chemical engineering transforms raw materials into valuable products, NUS has shaped us from students into capable professionals. Routinely upskilling will ensure that our professionalism does not waver. Remember that our degree today marks not the end, but the start of our lifelong journey of growth.

Furthermore, we should stay grounded in our values by upholding our integrity, resilience and humility while remaining true and kind to ourselves. Hard skills open doors, but our values and well-being keep us steady behind the doors.

While the future may be uncertain, one thing remains certain: none of us arrived here alone. So, let's take a moment to thank everyone who has accompanied us thus far.

To our parents and loved ones, thank you for your unwavering love and support that founded our success.

To our professors, thank you for your guidance and mentorship that illuminated our paths ahead.

To Micron Technology, thank you for your generous support through scholarships and sponsorships that helped foster future engineers like us.

To our fellow batchmates, thank you for your steadfast companionship over the years.

To the department admins and staff, thank you for making our journey possible behind the scenes.

Personally, I would like to thank my dad, mum and siblings, for their constant belief, support and love.

I am grateful to Dr. Cindy Lee too, for guiding me through my first semester in NUS while I was adapting to a new learning environment.

Not to forget Dr. Suraj Vasudevan, for his late-night replies on projects. I hope he will have a good night's sleep now.

Lastly, thanks to my FYDP teammates, for our hard work and teamwork throughout the year that finally brought us here.

Fellow graduates, today, we bid farewell to NUS with memories left in our hearts. NUS was our pilot plant. Starting today, we begin operating at full scale. There will be disturbances ahead, but with self-optimisation through upskilling ourselves and control via upholding our values, we can turn those disturbances into opportunities.

To the graduating class of 2026, let's embrace the challenges ahead, be who we want to be and live the lives we want to live.

I wish you all the best.

Thank you.