

Graduate Speech – Laura Gillett

Faculty of Education and Arts

10.30am, Thursday 7 May, 2015

Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor, distinguished guests, fellow graduates, University staff and guests. It is an honour to be asked to speak on behalf of the graduates gathered here from many campuses and degrees. On behalf of the graduates receiving their awards today I thank you all for being here with us to celebrate the journey that you have helped us along over the past years.



Firstly I would like to acknowledge and congratulate my fellow graduates who have put in more collective hours and tears than we'd care to remember but who leave here today the proud recipients of that coveted piece of paper. We all have those special people in our lives whom we need to thank for their love and support throughout our degrees. To try and list them would only lead to someone being erroneously forgotten but know that we are all thankful for all of the little things you have taken on and given to us that have made our lives more manageable whilst we pretended that 'last minute' was the only possible way to write that assignment or that all-nighters were a legitimately good idea because we did our best thinking late at night.

To the staff here at Federation University we thank you for your support and guidance throughout our studies and we want you to know that we are appreciative of it all. We have all undertaken different opportunities whilst here at FedUni that would not have been open to us elsewhere. For me that includes studying overseas for a semester and undertaking a teaching placement in China. All of our journeys have been different but it is safe to say that our time here has pushed us well beyond our comfort zones and prepared us for the future in ways we probably still haven't even considered.

As we look to our futures it is important to take the time today to share the end of this part of the journey with our friends and colleagues here at the university. This has been a once in a lifetime experience that has brought together some of the most unlikely of friends. As we move into the next stage of our lives and begin our new careers we can take comfort in the knowledge that our friends will stay with us long after the memory of 8:30am classes on a freezing Ballarat morning has faded.

As Dr Seuss famously said, "You have brains in your head, you have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself any direction you choose." Let's go forth in whichever direction life is taking us and give it our best shot.

Thank you.