

On the Brink

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We live in a world built on expectations and assumptions. Nowadays, university students are easily misguided into believing that once entering a university and then graduating later in the future, their chances to attain job prospects is higher. Simply being able to enrol into a university does not mean we have the means to achieve success in life. A university is a platform where we gain experiences and the opportunity to meet a diverse set of individuals. Students should be a part of the university in order to have the chance to experience the many exciting prospects university life has to offer. There are some who actually understand the full potential of what a university could offer. Students are easily influenced. It is not meant in a sense that we are unable to think critically. As we age, we learn that all decisions made have consequences and we must learn to live with them. However, we can be brought round to a different way of thinking. We do not need much cajolement in the matter. All we require is a little convincing of our resolve at ensuring the betterment of our futures and voila! Sold!

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Students gain numerous benefits from the university. One of them is the knowledge imparted by lecturers. Some students do not fully appreciate this benefit and they tend to take it for granted. As we all know, teaching in higher education institutions is one of the few professions that require years of study, dedication, commitment and perseverance. So lecturers' specialised knowledge, together with their life experience, is invaluable. As a student, I once made an important life decision based on a lecture I had had. No matter how the lecturer chooses to share information, whether in an angry or cheerful manner, it all eventually boils down to the students' perspectives and how they decide to view the lectures. Based on my experience, I decided to resign from a part-time job in a coffee shop after, you can say, getting a revelation on the intricacies of life after one of lectures I attended. So without my lecturer's teachings, I would never be as content as I am today since I was always one to stress over little things. Honestly, it doesn't really matter what a lecturer teaches the students, I believe it is all down to the students; I believe it is all down to the students to learn to think for themselves. Lecturers are after all only there to just give you that little nudge at the beginning. The rest is down to us.

Moreover, I believe the facilities that are provided by the university benefits a great deal towards a student's performance. For instance, the Hamzah Sendut library at Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM). I have lost count the number of times I found myself there at the end of the day. With it being very well equipped and the tranquil as well as the comfortable atmosphere it exudes, it is no wonder the students are fonder of doing their revisions in the library than in their own rooms. However, the hostels provided by the university are at top notch quality too. Compared to other prestigious universities, I am pleased to say that USM is indeed very attentive to the students' needs and wellbeing, for not all universities, it seems, are as considerate as ours.

I also very much appreciate the fact that my university is an internationally acclaimed one. That way, students from all over the globe are encouraged to study here. Exposure to the international students would indeed benefit both parties greatly. By that I mean, local students would come to learn and respect the various values concerning the international students like their culture, religion etc. We would also learn to have an open mind about things as well as develop the skills to work together in order to build stronger connections.

As we all know, due to the vast decline of the economy, it is expected for the university's fees to slowly increase overtime. However, this may not necessarily be a problem anymore to university students due to the funding aid given by the university. Students are eligible to attain scholarships especially if they are able to maintain a solid CGPA throughout each semester.

Basically, all a student really wants is to ensure that once he/she leave university, a secure future is in his/her grasps. With that in mind, they depend on their university to shape them and prepare them mentally as well as physically for all their future undertakings. USM, I believe, is capable of meeting and even exceeding its students' expectations. The university as it is, with its dedicated lecturers and prestigious name globally known could easily ensure a student would be able to do well once they have graduated. However, it takes two to tango so the students must be aware that their efforts too are vital in pursuing their goals and in attaining a promising future.

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Watkins, D. (1998). A cross-cultural look at perceptions of good teaching: Asia and the West. In J. J. F. Forest (Ed.), *University teaching: International perspectives*. New York: Garland.

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