President Su,

Distinguished Guests,

Colleagues and Students,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning.

Globalisation is a major ‘force of change’ in the world today. Hence, NTU aims to better equip our students to be global talents. For our graduates to function effectively in the global community, you need to be culturally intelligent, nimble to changes and be mobile.
In this regard, we have implemented several overseas programmes to provide opportunities and challenges for our students. We believe they will provide you with the necessary skills, knowledge, and exposure for the global challenges to stay relevant. And that is why NTU introduced the Global Immersion Programme back in 2004. Since its inception, the GIP has provided invaluable experience for an increasing number of NTU students. Our students get to spend a semester abroad to study in top overseas universities. You also get to experience working attachments in multinational companies, start-ups as well as well-known hi-tech parks. This global education experience will help you develop your potential, nurture your capabilities and build a global network. In addition, the experience you gain will definitely give you the confidence and courage to venture into new territories; and more importantly, an edge in your future career.

When the GIP was first launched, NTU sent the first batch of some 163 students to China and to the United States the following year. We have since increased the geographical coverage of the Global Immersion Programme. In a few weeks time, some 280 outstanding NTU students will be travelling to various parts of the world including
China, France, India, Switzerland, the United States, and for the very first time, Vietnam.

The GIP has also grown more and more popular with our students. Applications have increased from 500 in its first year to more than 800 this year. We have also increased the number of students selected to meet the growing demand. The number of students selected has also grown from 194 in 2005 to 280 for only the first half of 2008. The total number of students who have benefited from GIP is close to 930.

You may find it encouraging to know that our GIP participants are well sought after by employers upon graduation. A total of 315 GIP participants have graduated from NTU so far. While a small number of them have chosen to pursue higher degree studies, the rest have found employment easily. Many of them have reported that GIP has enabled them to acquire critical skills for the workplace, such as global adaptability and good interpersonal skills. Our 2006 Graduate Employment Survey showed that the first batch of students who went to China and the United States through NTU's GIP earned an average monthly salary of $2,900 – this is $200 more than the average NTU graduate from the Class of 2006.
In closing, I hope that our GIP participants will treasure the opportunity given for the overseas immersion and have an enriching experience. You will be our ambassadors to promote NTU and Singapore. May you have a life-changing experience through the GIP.

Thank you.