

Inauguration speech - Assoc. Prof. Jaroslav Roh, 1/3/2022

Your Magnificence, Dear Rector,

Dear Chairman,

Rectores magnifici, spectabiles, honorabiles, Dear Colleagues, Dear Guests,

I am very honoured that I can stand here before you today as the eighth Dean of the Faculty of Pharmacy, Charles University, in its more than fifty-year history. First, let me thank on behalf of the entire academic community my predecessor, the outgoing dean, Professor Tomáš Šimůnek, for his selfless and invaluable work he did on behalf of our faculty and all of Charles University over the past eight years. I was honoured to be part of his team during his second term in office and see from up close his immense commitment and determination to develop our faculty in all respects. I am thus very happy that he has accepted my offer and will remain involved in the management and development of the faculty in the role of vice-dean for internal affairs, project activities and the strategic development of the faculty.

When people take stock of a term that has just ended, they usually mention that it was not an easy time. However, this was even more true during Professor Šimůnek's second term in office, as he had to tackle the consequences of the global coronavirus pandemic throughout the whole second half of his term, which largely disrupted educational activities at all levels, impeded international cooperation and travel, hampered research and educational internships, and paralysed cultural and social lives. On the other hand, the pandemic has forced us to focus much more on the development of online teaching and the use of new teaching methods. A whole range of electronic teaching materials have been produced. We can use all of this for the further development of our teaching activities at the faculty. The pandemic has also forced us to use new, or up until then, seldom used communication methods, which quite often make processes like holding meetings and sessions of the faculty and university bodies easier and more effective. We have learnt to deal with the practical consequences of the pandemic and perhaps we can now be optimistic in that we will soon overcome them. However, what we will be tackling for a long time to come are its moral impacts, the fragmentation of opinions in society and a massive loss of trust in official and scientifically based information, which is linked to a loss of trust in elites and matters essential for the existence of our entire society. Training and education, together with faculties and universities as their vehicles, must play a key role in our efforts to overcome the impacts of the pandemic.

When I presented myself in front of the academic community of our faculty in October before the dean made his selection, a large part of my presentation dealt with the planned construction work at the Charles University campus in Hradec Králové. After the following few months, several meetings and intensive work done by the whole team, I can say that we

are now another step closer to making our plans a reality. The planning permit procedure is currently under way, and we should receive a legally effective decision later this month. However, just as in October, I am still not making any secret of the fact that the construction work is going to entail a considerable financial expense for both faculties, and by extension, for the whole university. Therefore, my utmost priority is and will be to minimise the impacts of the campus construction work on the further development of teaching and scientific activities at our faculty and those associated with its third role. To do so, I am going to need cooperation and understanding from all of you, the whole academic community of the faculty, because we are all surely well aware what the price increase situation and trends are, and on the other hand, what the state of public funds is. I believe that at the end of my term in office, we will jointly open our much-needed, modern campus that will facilitate the further development of good-quality teaching and research in medical and pharmaceutical sciences at Charles University. I would like to use this opportunity to thank Professor Šimůnek again, as well as the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine in Hradec Králové, Professor Jiří Mandák, and the entire preparatory team for the years of complex negotiations and preparations that will hopefully come to fruition this year, and we will be able to start the actual building work.

We are proud to be part of Charles University, which is the oldest, largest and most prestigious university in the Czech Republic, and we wish to continue in spreading the university's good name. In the international ranking of scientific activities at Charles University, the Faculty of Pharmacy in Hradec Králové placed among the top five faculties in terms of quality of science. Even though it would be more difficult to evaluate the quality of our teaching activities, I dare say that here we would rank among the leading faculties within the university as well. For this, the whole of our academic community is due thanks. Graduates from our pre-graduate degree programmes are outstanding experts in pharmacy and laboratory diagnostics, of which virtually 100 per cent are able to find employment in their branch in the job market. We can boast one of the best doctoral study courses in the whole Czech Republic, which has a high rate of study success while maintaining a high level of quality and placing demands on students. We are regularly awarded projects from national grant agencies. We have acquired projects from operational programmes supporting excellent science and excellent science teams, we are working on several Horizon projects and have greatly opened ourselves to foreign doctoral students, postdoctoral fellows and academic workers. We must continue in this trend and must develop international cooperation, create a bilingual environment at the faculty and provide the right conditions for good-quality workers coming from both this country and abroad. We must focus on acquiring European projects, such as Horizon and ERC, and create appropriate conditions to do so.

In relation to the above, I am very happy that important representatives of our associated universities, faculties, medical facilities and state-owned institutions have accepted my invitation and are here with us today. Together we are working on a number of significant science projects, we collaborate in teaching future pharmacists and laboratory

diagnosticians, and produce many findings in both fundamental and applied research. Thank you, dear colleagues. I am looking forward to continuing in our intensive cooperation.

However, we must also recognise that despite the aforementioned objective achievements, the demand to study at our faculty is not as high as we would like it to be. One of my main tasks will be to promote our study courses, as well as to present our graduates' profiles as professionals who can apply their skills in all areas of pharmacy and laboratory diagnostics. Furthermore, I would like to offer graduates from Bachelor's programmes provided by other faculties a more thorough education in selected pharmaceutical sciences and disciplines that go beyond actual pharmacy and clinical pharmacy, so that we can fill the gap in the pharmaceutical job market that is at the moment filled by graduates from chemical, natural sciences and medical faculties.

Dear Colleagues,

All that is left for me to do now is to wish our faculty and the university many good things, a lot of happiness, welfare and success for the years to come,

Quod bonum, felix, faustum, fortunatumque eveniat

and I make a pledge to you, your Magnificence Rector, and you, dear colleagues, that I will perform the duties of a dean to the best of my knowledge and beliefs, and will do everything I can not to betray the trust invested in me by the academic community. I firmly believe that together with my closest co-workers, i.e. vice-deans and the secretary, as well as members of the faculty's academic community who care about the future of the faculty, we will manage to move the faculty up to the top level of training, science and research in pharmaceutical sciences not only in the Czech Republic, but in international comparison as well.

Vivat, crescat, floreat facultas pharmaceutica Universitatis Carolinae.

Before I end, please allow me to digress a little from our faculty and university affairs, and talk about matters that would not normally be mentioned at an occasion such as this. The ongoing pandemic has shown us how the masses can be easily manipulated, maligned ideas implanted, uncertainty and chaos spread, and divisions in a democratic society created through online space. It begins with expressing doubt about anti-epidemic measures, then it goes on to fallacies regarding vaccinations and ends in twisting the facts and downplaying international threats, the consequences of which we are now witnessing ourselves during these tragic days. I have been personally deeply affected by the situation in Ukraine. I cannot even find the words to accurately describe my feelings when I realise what kind of "problems" we are dealing with both at work and in our personal lives, while a few hundred kilometres away from us, people are dying at the hands of an invasion army. I would like to express my personal support and admiration for those who are defending freedom and democracy in Ukraine, and will personally support any non-military measures aimed against

the aggressor, even if this leads to a steep decline in my standard of living. Let us not forget that concessions, looking for painless solutions and reconciliation, known as the politics of appeasement, led to an outcome that resulted in the outbreak of World War II. What is now happening in the country that was once our neighbour can also happen very fast and in a much worse form in other European countries, including our own. Please, let us be prepared, if it becomes necessary, to economize with pride and hope in the future.

Thank you.